



State of Protection of Women against Violence in Tabuk City

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Abstract— Violence against women committed by their intimate partners is a phenomenon that exists anywhere. Laws were passed to ensure that women were protected from violence. Knowledge of authorities on the laws that protect women is therefore imperative. This study looked into the protection of women against violence in Tabuk City, specifically the modes of violence committed against women; the level of awareness of barangay officials, women-residents and victim-survivors on laws protecting women against violence; and the services mandated by law to be provided to victim-survivors of violence. This study used quantitative and qualitative research designs using a questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide as data-gathering tools. In attaining the objectives, the study involved the 13 barangay officials of the selected urban barangays, 356 women-residents, and 29 victim-survivors of violence in the City. The data gathered from victim-survivors revealed that physical and psychological violence is the most common mode of violence experienced by women in the urban barangays of Tabuk City. Barangay officials, victim-survivors, and women residents are aware of the laws relative to protecting women against violence and the services provided to victim-survivors. Services provided to victim-survivors by barangay officials generally are done not because of the law mandating its provision but because their culture tells them to do so. Further, the barangay officials' awareness of services to be provided to victims-survivors is connected with their comprehension of the law.

Keywords— Violence against women (VAW); victim-survivor; physical violence; psychological violence; intimate relationship, VAW desk

I. INTRODUCTION

United Nation (U.N.) Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defined Violence against Women (VAW) as “any act of gender-based violence that results, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.” VAW includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological violence, non-spousal violence, and sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions, and elsewhere. As herein used, violence is defined as the use of physical force to cause injury or abuse.

Intimate partner violence is the most common form of VAW cases committed. A recent analysis of WHO with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

and the Medical Research Council, based on existing data from over 80 countries, found that globally 35% of women have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. Most of this violence is intimate partner violence. The term “intimate partner violence” describes physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression (including coercive acts) by a current or former intimate partner (Bond, 2015). Worldwide, almost one-third (30%) of all women in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner; this is much higher in some regions. Globally, 38% of all murders of women are committed by intimate partners. An intimate partner is a person with whom one has a close personal relationship that can be characterized by the following: emotional connectedness, regular contact, ongoing physical contact and/or sexual behavior, identity as a

couple, and familiarity and knowledge about each other's lives. The relationship need not involve all these dimensions. It includes current or former: spouses (married spouses, common-law spouses, civil union spouses, domestic partners), boyfriends/girlfriends, dating partners, and ongoing sexual partners. Intimate partners may or may not be cohabiting. Intimate partners can be opposite or same-sex ("Intimate Partner Violence," n.d.).

In addition, a press release by the U.N. Women (2014) states that two women are murdered, on average, each day in Guatemala. In India, 8,093 cases were dowry-related death reported in 2007; an unknown number of murders of women and young girls were falsely labeled 'suicides' or 'accidents.' In Australia, Canada, Israel, South Africa, and the United States, 40 to 70 percent of female murder victims were killed by their intimate partners. In the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, 66 percent of murders of women were committed by husbands, boyfriends, or other family members.

Further, *Violence Against Women* (2014) of the World Health Organization cited that among women aged 15-49: a) between 15% of women in Japan and 71% of women in Ethiopia reported physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime; b) between 0.3–11.5% of women reported experiencing sexual violence by someone other than a partner since the age of 15 years, and c) the first sexual experience for many women was reported as forced – 17% of women in rural Tanzania, 24% in rural Peru, and 30% in rural Bangladesh reported that their first sexual experience was forced."

The first letter of Paul the Apostle to Timothy (1 Timothy 2:11-12) speaks about the status of a woman being submissive to a man. Old Testament culture was overwhelmingly patriarchal. Many feminists claim violence against women results from a deeply entrenched patriarchal culture that encourages and rewards male domination. They say that in a patriarchal culture, men are likelier to use violence to maintain their dominant position. In the culture of masculinity, heroes are often predicated on some violent action. The traditional model of masculinity encourages men to exude an aura of daring and aggression. In contrast, Confucius teaches that husbands should respect their wives (Ariola, 2009).

In connection with patriarchal culture, violence against women is deemed to be closely linked with the unequal power relationship between women and men, otherwise known as "gender-based violence." Societal norms and traditions dictate people think men are the leaders, pursuers, and providers and take on dominant roles in society. At the same time, women are nurturers, men's companions, and supporters and take on subordinate

roles in society. This perception leads to men gaining more power over women. With power comes the need to control to retain that power, and VAW is a form of men's expression of controlling women to retain power ("What is VAW?," n.d.). According to Felson (2006), family violence is committed by a stronger family member who repeatedly injures a weaker counterpart. A violent husband or boyfriend might harm a woman enough for intimidation and control. Further, Ranjana Kumari cited in a *Press Release* (2014) by the U.N. Women, "Violence against women is institutionalized through family structures, wider social and economic frameworks, and cultural and religious traditions and is a widely accepted method of controlling women."

In the Philippines, violence against women (VAW) appears as one of the pervasive social problems. According to the 2008 National Demographic and Health Survey conducted by the National Statistics Office, one in five Filipino women age 15-49 has experienced physical violence since age 15. It is indeed alarming that despite efforts to address the concern, VAW persists.

National Demographic for Health and Safety ("Statistics on Violence," 2014) also said that emotional and other forms of non-personal violence are the most common types of spousal violence (23% of ever-married women). It further states that one in seven ever-married women experienced physical violence by their husbands, while eight percent experienced sexual violence by their husbands.

According to National Demographic for Health and Safety, 14.4 percent of married women have experienced physical abuse from their husbands; and more than one-third (37%) of separated or widowed women have experienced physical violence, implying that domestic violence could be the reason for separation or annulment.

In addition, four percent of women who have ever been pregnant have experienced physical violence during pregnancy. The incident increases slightly with age, decreases with educational level, and declines with wealth quintile ("Statistics on Violence," 2014).

Lack of concrete information to show the extent of VAW in the country as many cases of violence against women go unreported due to women victims' "culture of silence" posed a problem. Many victims are ashamed to relate their experiences. In contrast, others tend to dismiss their ordeal due to their lack of faith in the country's justice system caused by frustrations over the lack of results in filing complaints.

Discrimination against women is indeed rooted in the culture of society. This is one of the significant reasons

why violence against women is tough to lessen. Women who grew up in a society where women are stereotyped sometimes believe and adopt such practices to be expected.

Assaults on wives by their partners may have been declared illegal, but reports show that it still exists. It continues to be practiced not only by husbands but also by boyfriends or partners of women. No matter how slight the abuse or violence, it is still abuse or violence. This should not be condoned.

The information gathered from informal interviews and observation of the researcher with some community members reveals a much more number of VAW cases, surpassing the PNP's record. The absence of a VAWC Desk in some urban barangays, a specific officer assigned to handle VAW cases in a gender-sensitive manner as prescribed by law, the presence of unreported VAW cases, and why they are not reported drives the researcher to conduct this study.

Violence against women reported to the police reveals that from 1997 to 2013, VAW cases reached their highest 2013 with 23 865 reported cases (“Statistics on Violence,” 2014). At the provincial level, VAWC cases also peaked in 2013 with 26 filed cases, and 15 filed physical injury cases based on the data given by the Kalinga Provincial Prosecutors Office.

In the City of Tabuk, a pre-survey conducted by the researcher in some urban barangays reveals that there are VAW cases, which, compared to the number of reported cases provided by the Tabuk City Police Office, is higher. This is because the pre-survey was conducted only in some urban barangays out of the 42 barangays of Tabuk City. The pre-survey also revealed that most of the barangays do not have an established VAW Desk where women who experience physical, psychological, and sexual abuse can go to seek assistance and flee from the violence inflicted on them. This alarming information gathered motivated the researcher to conduct the study to verify the pre-survey result and barangay officials' capability to address VAW cases. Their capability will be determined through their awareness of the laws protecting women and of services to be provided to victim-survivors of violence.

Conceptual Framework

The philosophical underpinnings of this study are presented in the succeeding paragraphs. The presentation was divided into three: modes of violence against women, awareness of violence-related laws, and services provided to victim-survivors by the barangay officials, victim-survivors, and women residents in the urban barangays of Tabuk City.

Modes of Violence against Women

One of the theoretical foundations of violence against women is Personality Characteristics and Psychopathology. This theory claims that individuals who use violence against women may have some personality disorder or mental illness that gets in the way of otherwise normal inhibitions on using violence (Jasinski, 2001). This explanation of the existence of domestic violence supports the view of Liberal feminists. Liberal feminists point out that heterosexual marriage is a site of gender inequality and that women do not benefit from marriage as men do (Crossman, 2017). In Liberal Feminism, violence experienced by women shows the inequality between men and women in a romantic relationship.

In contrast, in the view of Personality Characteristics and Psychopathology, violence results from a personality disorder or mental illness. It is the existence of violence within a heterosexual marriage that shows women do not benefit from a romantic relationship. Therefore, this theory shows the necessity of protecting women from the effects of inequality in a romantic relationship. The inequality existing in a romantic relationship leads to violence, emphasizing power inequality. When violence becomes repetitive, the abuser becomes less remorseful. When abusers become less remorseful with each new violent incident, that violence tends to increase in severity over time. It posits that the battering becomes increasingly violent with each successive incident (Cycle of Violence).

Inequality in a relationship, as mentioned above, results in domestic violence. Domestic violence is a manifestation of unequal power relationships in two ways. Domestic violence exists largely because men and women do not have equal access to power in most societies. Second, domestic violence—violence to maintain power and control over another—is causally related to beliefs that women occupy a subordinate role in society. Batterers do not just learn domestic violence behaviors. Instead, they learn that these behaviors are acceptable and, to some extent, expected because they are men or their partners are women. Batterers learn that it is appropriate for a man to control his wife and enforce this control through violence. They learn this through observing others, from culture, from their family, colleagues, and peers. What they learn is reinforced when the community fails to sanction them for this behavior (“Causes and Theories,” n.d.). This is somewhat the same as how Social Control Theory views the existence of violence.

Social Control Theory explains that obedience to rules is due to fear of the consequence of breaking them (Ortiz, n.d.). Violence existed when

the community failed to control its perpetration by building a solid bond between the individual and the control agency. This emphasizes the role of the community (as an agency) in the protection of women from violence. Social Control Theory, originally known as the Social Bond Theory in 1969, suggests that people engage in criminal activity when their bond to society has weakened. In other words, when an individual has experienced a lack of social connections or social networks that would generally prohibit criminal activity, the possibility of an individual participating in criminal activity increases (Ortiz, n.d.). In like manner, when the man intends to go against the community's culture where he resides, he is more likely to be confident in inflicting violence on his partner.

Another theory that is somewhat similar to Social Control Theory is the Social Exchange Theory. This theory, developed by George Homans, proposes that social behavior results from an exchange process. The purpose of this exchange is to maximize benefits and minimize costs. According to this theory, people weigh social relationships' potential benefits and risks. People will terminate or abandon the relationship when the risks outweigh the rewards (Cherry, 2018).

Exchange Theory and Social Control Theory posit that violence and abuse are higher when the rewards exceed the costs (exchange theory). Due to the privacy of the family institution and the reluctance of others to intervene (control theory), it helps reduce the costs of violence. Cultural approval of the use of violence increases the rewards for violent behavior. This theory says that men hit women because they can. Gender theory says men and women view violence differently, and violence is one means of constructing masculinity.

Domestic abuse, also known as *spousal abuse*, occurs when one person in an intimate relationship or marriage tries to dominate and control the other person. Domestic abuse that includes physical violence is called *domestic violence*. Also, forced sex, even by a spouse or intimate partner with whom you have consensual sex, is an act of aggression and violence. Furthermore, people whose partners abuse them physically and sexually are at high risk of being seriously injured or killed. Abusive behavior is never acceptable, whether from a man, a woman, a teenager, or an older adult (Smith & Segal, 2015). Everybody, which includes women and their children, deserves to feel valued, respected, and safe. Women, who are most vulnerable to domestic violence, need protection.

The existence of violence needs to be prevented

or eliminated. One way to deter the repeat of violence is to have police officers arrest violators. However, some research has found that arrest intensifies violence. Other studies have revealed that only certain batterers are deterred by arrest. Nevertheless, many victim advocates insist that arrest is the most successful response for deterring repeat violence. As a result, mandatory arrest has emerged as the standard response to domestic violence in American society ("Cycle of Violence," n.d.).

Violence against women is defined in several ways. The Philippine definition of violence against women is contained in several laws. Under Sec. 4k, Chapter 11, Republic Act No. 9710 (2009) or the Magna Carta of Women (2009), Violence against Women refers to any acts of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. It shall be understood to encompass, but not limited to, the following: 1) Physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence, and violence related to exploitation; 2) Physical, sexual, and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women, and prostitution; and 3) Physical, sexual, and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.

As used in the above definition, gender-based violence refers to violence involving men and women. The female is usually the victim; it is derived from unequal power relationships between men and women. Violence is directed specifically against a woman because she is a woman or affects women disproportionately (UNFPA Gender Theme Group, 1998). Under the Magna Carta for Women, this term is used interchangeably with Violence against Women (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2010). Gender-based violence also includes acts of violence against women as defined in Republic Act 9262 (Anti-Violence against Women and Their Children's Act of 2004) and 9208 (Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003).

Republic Act 9262 defines Violence against Women and their Children as "any act or a series of acts committed by any person against a woman who is his wife, former wife, or against a woman with whom the person has or had a sexual or dating relationship, or with whom he has a common child, or against her child whether

legitimate or illegitimate, within or outside the family abode, which result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering, or economic abuse including threats of such acts, battery (unlawful beating), assault (unlawful attack or threat to attack another physically), coercion, harassment or arbitrary deprivation of liberty.” Thus, VAW, as defined by RA 9262, includes, but is not limited to, the following acts: physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, and economic violence (Republic Act 9262, 2004). Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act (VAWCA) only protects women and their children and does not include men. It also protects women who are or were in lesbian relationships. The essential elements that must be present are a) any of the punishable acts under Section 5, and b) the woman is married to the offender or has a common child with him, or she has or had a sexual or dating relationship with the offender. Since sexual relations refer to a single act, even prostituted women or those who bore the child of their rapists can avail of the remedies under the law (Mamañgun, 2011).

Anti-VAWC Act did not use in its provisions the colloquial verb romance that implies a sexual act. It did not say that the offender must have romanced the offended woman. Instead, it used the noun romance to describe a couple’s relationship, *i.e.*, a love affair (Ang v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 182835, 20 April 2010).

Awareness on Laws Relative to the Protection of Women from Violence

Numerous initiatives by different governments worldwide have been done to address the prevalence of violence against women. The U.S. Congress has passed two primary laws related to violence against women, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act. The VAWA was the first significant law to help government agencies and victim advocates work together to fight domestic violence, sexual assault, and other types of violence against women. It created new punishments for certain crimes and started programs to prevent violence and help victims (Swanson, 2014).

The FVPSA was the first federal law to address domestic violence. Since the law was enacted in 1984, it has focused primarily on providing shelter and services for survivors. It has increasingly supported children exposed to domestic violence and teen dating violence (Fernandes-Alcantara, 2017) . In the Philippines, several legislative measures were adopted to protect all women's rights. Violence against women constitutes a violation of women's rights and fundamental freedoms and impairs their

enjoyment of these rights. These include Republic Act Nos. 9262, 9851, 8353, 8505, 9995, 7877, and 9745 (Guanzon, 2008).

Republic Act No. 9262 provides the security of the woman-complainant (victim-survivor of violence) and her children through the issuance of temporary or permanent orders of the barangay. It also identifies the duties of barangay officials, prosecutors, court personnel, social welfare and health care providers, and the Local Government Units to provide the necessary protection and support for VAWC victims. As provided under Section 4 of this Act, this law shall be liberally construed to promote the protection and safety of victims of violence against women and their children (Republic Act 9262 and IRR, 2004).

Protection of women under RA 9262 can be achieved by issuing a Protection Order. Specifically, this is an order issued under this act to prevent further acts of violence against women or their children. This is a remedy or relief available to victims of VAW/VAWC (Sec.8, RA 9262). The relief granted under a protection order serves the purpose of safeguarding the victim from further harm, minimizing any disruption in the victim’s daily life, and facilitating the opportunity and ability of the victim to regain control of her life independently. Law enforcement agencies shall enforce the provisions of the protection order. A protection order can be either a Barangay Protection Order issued by the Barangay; Temporary and Permanent Protection Order, which can be issued by a judge (Mamañgun, 2011).

Barangay Protection Order, according to Section 4 of A.M. No. 04-10-11-S, refers to the protection order issued by the Punong Barangay, or in his absence, the Barangay Kagawad, ordering the perpetrator to desist from committing acts of violence against the family or household members, particularly women and their children under Sections 5a and 5b of R.A. No. 9262 (“Barangay Protection Order,” n.d.). This is a significant way of ensuring women's protection from violence. Another way of ensuring immediate assistance to victim-survivor within the barangay is the installation of a VAW Desk.

Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2010-2 and the Inter-Agency Council's guidelines on Violence against Women and their Children (IAC-VAWC) state that a VAW Desk shall be established in every barangay. The VAW Desk refers to a facility that would address VAW cases in a gender-responsive manner, managed by a person designated by the Punong Barangay. It is where the victim-survivor can immediately go to seek help (Philippine Commission on Women, 2012).

The government has created several laws to

protect women from violence, such as the Republic Act's 9851, 8353, 8505, 9995, 7877, and 9745.

Republic Act No. 9851 (Philippine Act on Crimes Against International Humanitarian Law, genocide, and Other Crimes Against Humanity of 2009) is an act defining and penalizing crimes against international humanitarian law, genocide, and other crimes against humanity, organizing jurisdiction, designating special courts, and for related purposes (RA 9851, 2009).

RA 8353 (Anti-Rape Law of 1997) reclassifies rape as a crime against a person, defining it as a public rather than a private crime. It recognizes marital rape and questions the notion of sexual obligation in marriage. It also notes that rape happens even without penile penetration and objects constituting sexual assault, which is also considered a form of rape. This law also increases the penalties against Rape (Republic Act 8353).

RA 8505 (Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act of 1998) provides assistance and protection to rape victims, establishing for the purpose a rape crises center in every province and City, authorizing the appropriation of funds for the establishment and operation of the rape crisis center and legal management of rape cases (Republic Act 8505).

RA 9995 (Crime of Photo and Video Voyeurism Act of 2009) defines and penalizes photo and video voyeurism crime, prescribing penalties, therefore, and for other purposes (Republic Act No. 9995).

RA 7877 (Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995) makes incidents involving unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature made directly or indirectly in the employment, education, or training environment unlawful. Sexual harassment is about abusing power relations – using one's power to extract sexual favors ("Q & A: Sexual Harassment Cases", 2008).

RA 9745 (Anti-Torture Act of 2009) penalizes physical acts by persons in authority or their agents that cause "severe pain, exhaustion, disability or dysfunction" on detainees as well as mental or psychological acts "calculated to affect or confuse the mind or undermine a person's dignity and morale" (Laserna, 2009).

In addressing VAW cases within the barangay, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) provides referrals at the barangay level. Referral refers to the process by which a victim of VAW's immediate needs is assessed and helped to gain access to a comprehensive and supportive service provided by various agencies/organizations.

A referral system is a cooperative framework

through which government agencies carry out their obligations to protect and promote the human rights of victims-survivors of violence, coordinating their efforts in a strategic partnership with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/Faith-based Organizations (FBOs) and civil society as a whole. The primary purpose is to ensure the human rights of victims of violence are respected and to provide an effective way to refer these victims to support services to address their various needs (Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), 2010).

Reintegration refers to the process focused on reuniting the victim-survivor with her family and community or integration with a new family or/and community. It implies a package of measures towards restoring the victim-survivors rights, social status, and health, helping her regain self-respect, and interventions such as education, vocational training, and employment. Reintegration is the concluding stage of an integrated system of rendering protection and support to VAW survivors (PCW, 2010).

Reintegration is the stage when the victim-survivor is already herself. A victim-survivor is said to be ready when she has regained confidence or put the broken pieces of her heart into one. It is like living a new life with a "new" person. She is deemed "new" because she is whole again after being broken by the subjection of any kind of abuse (PCW, 2012).

The case manager is the social worker or focal person of the social service provider responsible for providing and monitoring service provision to a woman victim-survivor of violence. They ensure that services the victim-survivor needs are provided by the agency or other agencies in charge. They are in charge of case management.

A Referral network is a group of agencies/organizations working together within a cooperative framework and coordinating their efforts in a strategic partnership to protect and provide comprehensive services to victims-survivors of VAW and their families (PCW, 2010).

Another means of protection provided by law to V-S is the protection order. A protection order is a relief or remedy available to the victims of VAW/VAWC.

As defined by Section 8, RA 9262, a protection order is issued to prevent further acts of violence against a woman or her child and grant other necessary relief. The acts referred to in Section 8 are punishable under Section 5, RA 9262 (Guanzon, 2008). The relief granted under a protection order safeguards the victim from minimizing any disruption in the victim's daily life and facilitating the opportunity and ability of the victim to regain control over her life independently. Law enforcement agencies shall

enforce the provisions of the protection order.

Any relief provided under Section 8, RA 9262 shall be granted even in the absence of a decree of legal separation or annulment, or declaration of absolute nullity of marriage.

Petition for a protection order shall be in writing, signed, and verified by the petitioner: section 8, Part 1 of A.M. No. 04-10-11-SC enumerates who may file the petition.

Barangay officials and court personnel shall assist applicants in preparing the application. Law enforcement agents shall also extend assistance in applying for protection orders in cases brought to their attention (Section 20, Rule IV of the IRR of RA 9262).

A standard protection order application form, written in English with translation to the major languages, which is readily available, shall contain the following information: a) Names and addresses of the petitioner and the respondent; b) Description of relationships between the petitioner and respondent; c) Statement of the circumstances of abuse; d) Description of the reliefs requested by the petitioner; e) Request for counsel and reasons for such; f) Request for waiver of application fees until hearing; g) An attestation that there is no pending application for a protection order in another court (Mamañgun, 2011).

If the applicant is not the victim-survivor, the application must be accompanied by an affidavit of the applicant attesting to (a) the circumstances of the abuse suffered by the victim-survivor and (b) the circumstances of consent given by the victim-survivor for the filing of the application. When disclosure of the address of the victim-survivor/petitioner will pose a danger to her life, it shall be stated in the application. In such a case, the applicant shall attest that the victim-survivor/petitioner resides in the municipality or City over which the court has territorial jurisdiction and shall provide a mailing address for service processing purposes.

The ex parte determination on the application for a protection order shall have priority over all proceedings. Barangay officials and the courts shall schedule and conduct hearings on applications for a protection order above all other businesses and, if necessary, suspend other proceedings to hear applications for a protection order (Sec. 20, R.A. 9262).

The above-mentioned provision of RA 9262 implies a need to address the case immediately. This is to prevent further violence from being committed. Further, delayed processing of cases of violence filed or reported to their office might endanger the victim/s. The protection

order must be issued within 24 hours without any delay. This exempts those cases that the barangay officer personally assesses as not serious.

The venue for Protection Orders is the Family Court, where the woman resides. In the absence of such court in the place where the offense was committed, the case shall be filed in the Regional Trial Court where the crime or any of its elements was committed at the complainant's option (Guanzon, 2008).

The following statement must be printed in bold-faced type or capital letters on the protection order issued by the Punong Barangay or court: "VIOLATION OF THIS ORDER IS PUNISHABLE BY LAW" (Sec. 17, R.A. 9262).

Protection Order is of three types, Barangay, Temporary, and Permanent Protection Order. According to Sec. 14, RA 9262, this is issued by the Punong Barangay or when he or she is unavailable, by any Kagawad, ordering the perpetrator to desist from: a) causing physical harm to the woman or her child and b) threatening to cause the woman or her child physical harm. This is issued on the filing date after ex parte determination of the basis of the application. BPOs shall be effective for fifteen (15) days and is not extendible. It shall also be issued free of charge and is enforceable within the barangay that issues the BPO (Section 14d and f, Rule IV of the IRR of RA 9262).

The second type of Protection order is the Temporary Protection Order. As mentioned under Section 15, RA 9262, this is issued by the court on the application filing date. The victim can file a petition for Temporary and Permanent Protection Order. The court must issue a TPO on the same day the petition was filed after an ex parte determination, without notice to the respondent, that such an order should be issued ("Republic Act 9262", n.d.). The court shall order the immediate personal service of the TPO on the respondent by the court sheriff, who may obtain the assistance of law enforcement agents. The TPO shall include notice of the date of the hearing on the merits of a PPO issuance (Section 17, Rule IV of the IRR of RA 9262). Temporary Protection Order shall be effective for thirty (30) days and extend until a decision is rendered on whether the protection should be permanent.

The last type of Protection Order is the Permanent Protection Order. The court issues this after notice and hearing scheduled before or on the date of the TPO expiration. Non-appearance of the respondent, despite proper notice, or his/her lack of a lawyer, or the non-availability of his/her lawyer, shall not be a ground for rescheduling or postponing the hearing on the merits of the issuance of a PPO. All TPOs and PPOs shall be

enforceable anywhere in the Philippines. A violation thereof shall be punishable with a fine ranging from Five Thousand Pesos to Fifty Thousand Pesos and or imprisonment of six months (Section 22, Rule IV of the IRR of RA 9262). Violation of TPO or a PPO shall constitute contempt of court without prejudice to any other criminal or civil action that the offended party may file for any of the acts committed (Section 23, Rule IV of the IRR RA 9262).

The reliefs that may be granted under the TPO and PPO are provided under Section 18, Rule IV of the IRR of RA 9262.

II. METHODS

2.1. Study Design

This study made use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, specifically descriptive methods.

This study assessed the State of protection of women against violence in the urban barangays of Tabuk City. Hence, the respondents were victim-survivors of violence and barangay officials of the different urban barangays of Tabuk City. As used in this study, victim-survivor refers to those who have experienced violence and reported it to the proper authorities. Intimate partners refer to a man or a woman who has an intimate relationship with a woman during or before the study's conduct.

The conduct of this study was delimited to the 13 urban barangays of Tabuk. Tabuk City is the capital of Kalinga Province, Cordillera Administrative Region, Philippines. It is composed of 42 barangays. However, this study was delimited to the urban barangays.

Data on the level of awareness on the laws directly related to the protection of women against violence and the services mandated by law to be provided to victim-survivors of violence were taken from barangay officials, victim-survivors, and women-residents of the 13 urban barangays of Tabuk City.

Data for the level of awareness on the laws relative to the protection of women against violence and the services mandated by law to be provided to victim-survivors were gathered from the victim-survivors, women residents, and barangay officials.

Women residents who experienced violence provided their reasons for not reporting. In contrast, those who did not experience violence provided their perception of why those that experienced violence did not report it to the proper authorities.

In gathering the needed data relative to the protection of women against violence in Tabuk City, the

researcher asked from

A questionnaire for barangay officials was handed to them. The researcher waited while barangay officials in charge of the reception of violence against women cases were accomplishing it. The researcher answered questions or clarifications from Barangay Officials about the questionnaire's content. For instances where the barangay official preferred being interviewed, the researcher was the one who filled out the questionnaire based on the answers of the barangay official. The researcher also asked questions to clarify responses.

Domestic violence against women needs to prioritize women's safety and ensure that the research is conducted ethically and appropriately sensitively (WHO Department of Gender, Women, and Health, 2001). In this connection, the researcher was guided by the ethical and safety principles in dealing with victim-survivors of violence. For women experiencing violence, participating in a survey may provoke further violence or place the researcher at risk. At the same time, as the subject and beneficiary of the research, the woman needs to give full informed consent. Thus, the study was introduced for ethical and safety reasons to study women's health and life experiences. However, the victim-survivors and women residents as respondents were fully informed about the nature of the questions. The researcher first got the respondents' consent and, at the same time, raised the sensitivity of the research topic. Individual Consent Form in adherence to WHO ethical guidelines for the conduct of violence against women research, was used in getting the consent of women respondents.

During the interview, the researcher carefully introduced the first part of the interview guide that enquired about violence, forewarning the respondent about the nature of the questions and allowing her to either stop the interview or answer the questions. When the victim-survivor/women-resident gave them consent, she was informed that the interview might be conducted in another area where she was more comfortable. The interview was then conducted in the presence of a licensed psychologist. When the respondent becomes emotional, the psychologist intervenes to control the respondent's emotional outpour. In those cases, the interview was temporarily stopped and proceeded when the respondent was already emotionally stable. The Interview was terminated by thanking the respondent for her cooperation and assuring her that she could contact the researcher on the number given to them if she needed assistance. Before termination, however, the respondent was asked if she had any questions. When there was none, the interview was terminated.

Confidentiality of information collected from

survivors of violence is of fundamental importance. In this connection, an interview was conducted only in a private setting. The participant was informed that if she desires, reschedules or relocate the interview to a time or place that may be safer or more convenient.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data gathered was treated using descriptive and inferential statistical tools.

The percentage was used to describe the forms of violence against women in Tabuk gathered from the women respondents in the urban barangays of Tabuk. This was also used in describing the factors contributing to the non-reporting of violence against women.

The respondents' perception of the factors affecting the non-reporting of violence committed against women in Tabuk City was interpreted based on the ranks given by the different women residents of the respondent barangays.

A weighted mean was used in determining the respondents' level of awareness on the laws relative to women's protection and on the services mandated to be provided to victim-survivors of violence.

Further, data on the level of awareness of the respondents on the laws relative to the protection of women against violence and on the services provided to victim-survivors of violence were treated with the following limitations:

Limits	Symbol	Description
3.25-4.00	VMA	Very Much Aware (can easily explain the law/service)

2.50-3.24 (knows but has difficulty in elaborating)	MA	Much Aware
1.75-2.49 (knows but cannot elaborate when asked)	A	Aware
1.00-1.74	NA	Not Aware

In comparing the difference of the perceptions of the respondents on awareness on the services mandated by law to be provided to victim-survivors of violence and, the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used.

Qualitative and quantitative data from women residents who experienced violence and victim-survivors were gathered in adherence with the ethical considerations provided by the World Health Organization.

III. RESULTS

3.1. Modes of Commission of Violence Against Women by their Intimate Partner/s in Tabuk City

The data presented was gathered from the 29 victim-survivors from the 13 urban barangays of Tabuk City. The violence was those experienced within the year 2015 only.

Physical Violence

Figure 1 presents the mode of physical violence experienced by the victim-survivors of the urban barangays of Tabuk City.

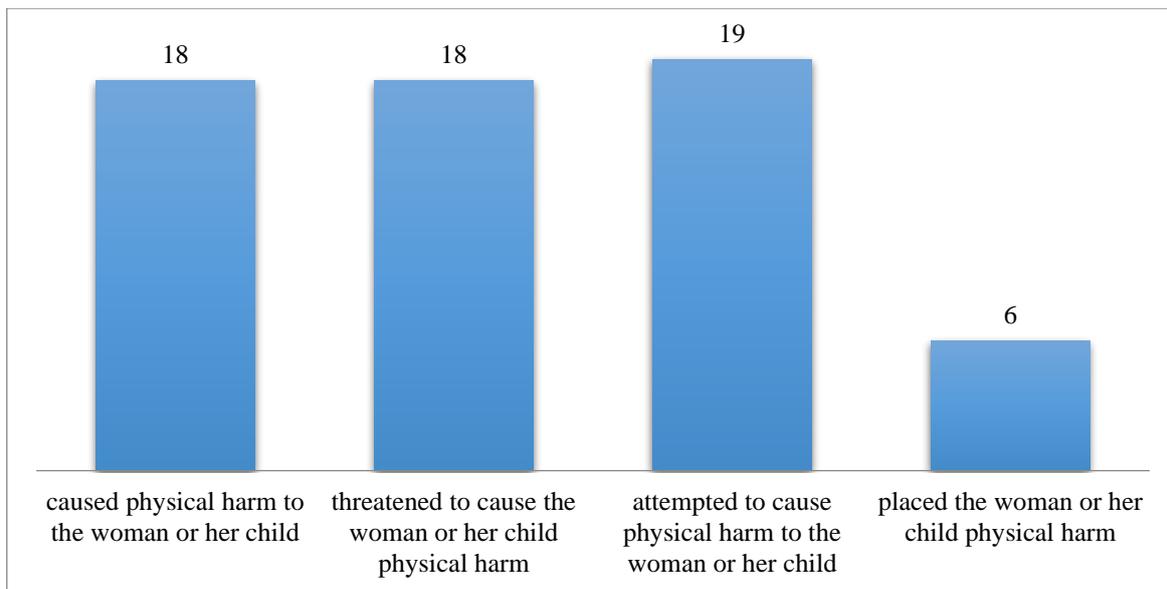


Fig.1. Physical Violence Experienced by Victim-Survivors

Sexual Violence

Figure 2 presents the mode of sexual violence experienced by the 29 selected victim-survivors of the 13 urban barangays of Tabuk City.

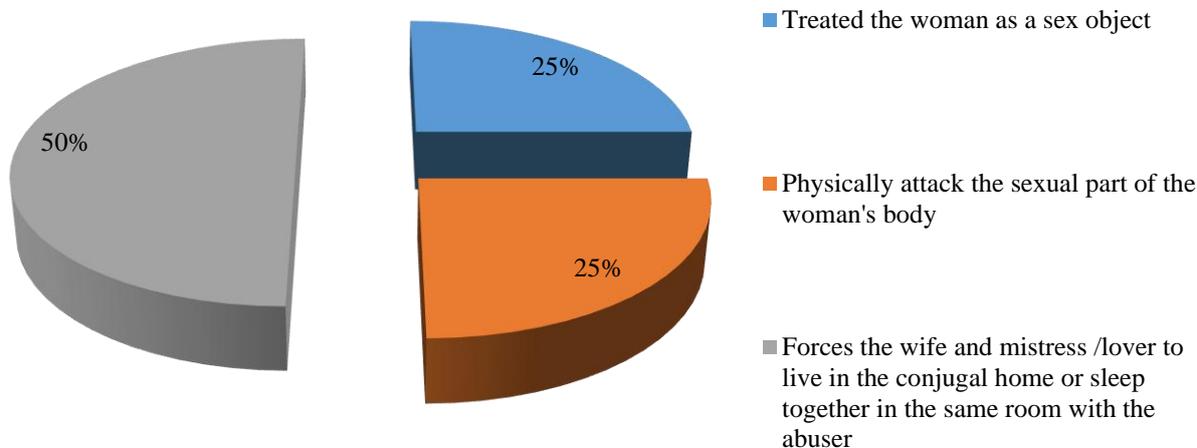


Fig.2. Sexual Violence Experienced by Victim-Survivors

Psychological Violence

Figure 3 presents the modes of psychological violence experienced by V-S of the urban barangays of Tabuk City.

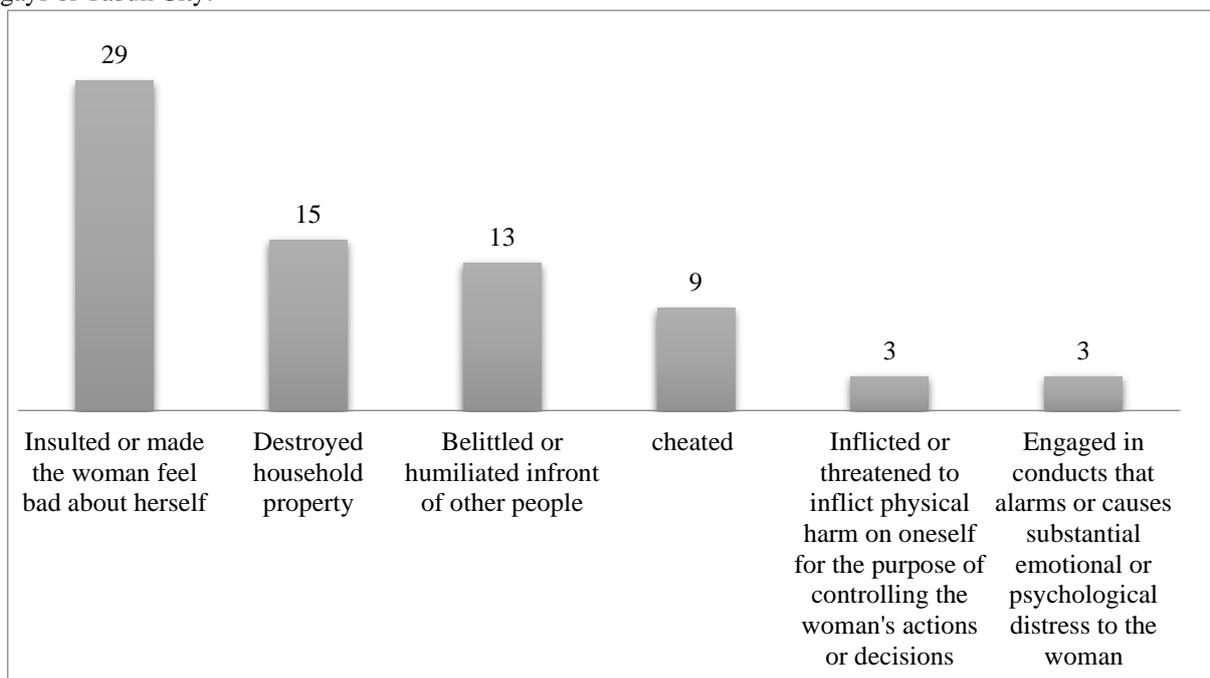


Fig.3. Psychological Violence Experienced by Victim-Survivors

Economic Violence

Figure 4 presents the mode of economic violence experienced by the victim-survivors of the urban barangays of Tabuk City.

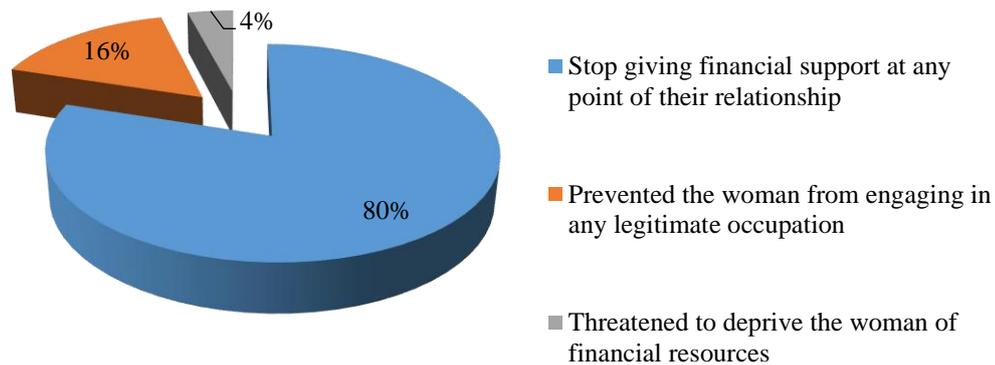


Fig.4. Economic Violence Experienced by Victim-Survivors

3.2. Level of Awareness of Women residents, V-S, and Barangay Officials on the Laws Directly Related to the Protection of Women against Violence

This part presents the study's findings on the level of awareness of the 13 barangay officials, 356 women residents, and 29 victim-survivors of violence on laws directly related to the protection of women.

Level of Awareness of Women-Residents

All the women-residents who participated in the study acknowledged being aware of the presence of the laws protecting women from violence. This means that they are aware of the existence of the law but cannot elaborate when asked. This implies that they know that the law exists but are not aware of the specific provisions of the law.

Women from barangays 8 and 9 are generally more aware than those in the other barangays on the existence of the different laws relative to the protection of women against violence which implies that the barangay officials in this barangay might be more familiar on the different laws.

The law that women-residents of the different urban barangays of Tabuk City are much aware which they can explain but with difficulty is Republic Act 9262 and RA 9745. Their awareness on this law was from news aired over televisions or radio. This explains their limited awareness of the law. When asked to provide provisions of the law, most of them said that this is the law that prohibits violence against women. The mode of violence they identified however are those that are physical and sexual in nature. This implies that the awareness of the women depends on those that are of importance to them.

Women-residents from the urban barangays of Tabuk City acknowledged being aware on RA 8353, RA 9995, and RA 7877. Their awareness is limited however on knowing that such law exists. This implies that the implementation of the law on these barangays might not

have been felt by the women-residents who responded to this study.

The laws to which women are not aware of are RA 9851 and RA 8505. These laws have been in place for quite some time. However, women who responded to this study said that they are not aware of the existence of such. All of the barangays practice Bodong even if some are of mixed tribes or culture. This implies that the limited knowledge on RA 8505 might be because rape can still be subjected to amicable settlement through Bodong. This is in addition to the fact that the law of Bodong, the Pagta, allows the settlement of such. As what Bonifacio (1994) found in his study that the only mode of settlement among natives is the amicable settlement. This, according to Gunday and Tiwang (1994), shows that the Kalingas have a government of their own organized by themselves to promote peace and orders. This is supported by Balbin (1990) saying that every tribal members covered by the Bodong is duty bound to line up to the traditions, customs and practices and regulations set by the BodongPagta.

The foregoing paragraph might be true to the barangay which is almost homogenous in terms of the tribal affiliation of most of the residents but it is another story in barangays with a mixture of tribes.

Furthermore, Republic Act 8505 mandates the establishment of rape crisis center in every city and province which shall be located in a government hospital or health clinic or in any other suitable place (Guanzon, 2008). This law authorizes the appropriation of funds for the establishment and operation of the rape crisis center and legal management of rape cases (Republic Act 8505).

Women-residents who participated in this study however, are not aware of any such center within the city or province. It is therefore plausible that unawareness of the existence of the center is related to their unawareness on the existence of the law.

The women-residents are also not aware of the existence of RA 9851. Republic Act No. 9851 (Philippine

Act on Crimes Against International Humanitarian Law, genocide, and Other Crimes Against Humanity of 2009) is an act defining and penalizing crimes against international humanitarian law, genocide and other crimes against humanity, organizing jurisdiction, designating special courts, and for related purposes (RA 9851, 2009). Most of the respondents asked what the law is to the researcher to which the researcher answered. When told about the title of the law, they said that they know it. They however cannot elaborate when asked what they know about the law. This implies that they might not have an idea on the contents of the law but knows that there is a law.

Women-residents from the 13 urban barangays of Tabuk City are generally aware on laws relative to the protection of women against violence. This means that they are aware of the laws' existence but are not familiar as to their provisions. Specifically, they are much aware of Republic Act No. 9262 and Republic Act No. 9745 which means that they can provide and is familiar with at least one provision of the law. The women-residents are also aware which means they know the existence of Republic Act No. 8353, Republic Act No. 9995, and Republic Act No. 7877. Lastly, they are not aware of Republic Act No. 9851 and Republic Act No. 8505.

Level of Awareness of Barangay officials

A majority (61%) of barangay officials of the urban barangays of Tabuk City have difficulty in elaborating the laws protecting women from violence. There were barangay officials who said that they are much aware of the laws. However, when asked to discuss or provide the law provisions, they were unable to give or discuss. Thus, their answer was changed into being aware only. This implies that the knowledge of barangay officials is limited. This further implies that the handling of VAW incidents by barangay officials may be affected. When there is limited awareness of the salient provisions of the law protecting women from violence, it may mean that the handling will be limited. The barangay official perceived it to be handled, which may further mean that the basis will be solely their common sense or culture. This means that disregarding the provision of the law in handling VAW incidents is possible.

Barangay officials from Barangays 1, 2, 7, 10, and 13 were very much aware of the laws relative to women's protection against violence. The one thing common in all these barangays is the fact that the population is of mixed culture, tribes, and origin. This implies that the Bodong is not usually resorted to when a VAW-related case is committed.

Most of the barangay officials are much aware of Republic Act 9262. This finding was verified when they

were asked to write or discuss what they know about the law. The majority of barangay officials provided and explained provisions specifically on the type of abuse prohibited to be committed. Their usual response was that this law is the law that prohibits violence to be inflicted against women and their children. When asked how they learned about the law, most of them said that it was through seminars. However, further questions revealed that only the two adopted barangays of the College of Criminal Justice Education of Kalinga State University to which the researcher is a member, underwent seminar on law, specifically Republic Act 9262. It is plausible that limited knowledge on other laws is somewhat attributed to the law's lack of information dissemination.

In relation to this, Republic Act 9262 defines Violence against Women (Republic Act 9262, 2004). It is a law that protects women and their children only and does not include men. It also protects women who are or were in lesbian relationships. One provision of the law is the establishment of VAW Desk.

Barangay officials were also asked what a protection order is and what is VAW Desk. Most of them, even those who have answered the box for much aware, were unable to discuss or answer. Being the nearest agency to V-S of violence, barangay officials must know their role, responsibilities or functions in addressing VAW incidents that may be reported to their office. It is only when they are aware of their function that services for victim-survivors are given.

Barangay officials are also much aware of RA 8353, RA 7877, and RA 9745. However, their awareness of RA 8353 is limited to rape being filed by anybody aside from the victim. This implies that the barangay officials are aware that rape is already a public crime but are not aware of additional acts that are considered rape.

Their knowledge on RA 7877 and RA 9745 is also, according to them was from seminars they have attended. Some, just like women-residents, were also from the radios and television shows or news. This implies that their knowledge of the said laws was from its application, whether in real situations or dramas.

All the other barangay officials from the eight remaining urban barangays acknowledged being aware of laws protecting women. Their awareness, however, is limited to the fact that there is a law protecting women against violence, nothing else. They can neither identify nor explain the provisions of those laws. This implies that the procedures in addressing VAW cases might not be clear or within their awareness. This means that there is a possibility that the handling of VAW cases in a gender-sensitive manner might not be followed. There is also a

possibility that the provisions of the laws protecting women against violence will not be implemented when confronted with VAW cases. When asked who conducts an interview with victim-survivors who are filing for complaints, one barangay official said that it is him, which should not be as interviewing V-S must be conducted by somebody of the same sex and trained to handle VAW cases in a gender-sensitive manner. When further asked where V-S's reception is, at least 3 of the barangay officials said that it is on the office where other people are present. In the same office, cedula and other transactions are done. This is evidence of the violation of the privacy of receiving VAW cases.

However, at least five barangay officials who checked the allotted box of "Aware" told the researcher that they do not know about RA 9851. The other three who have the same answer said that they know this law exists yet cannot elaborate or give any detail about the law. This implies that the barangay officials may not know the details of the RA 9851 because it is not usually implemented in their jurisdiction. This means that, like other human beings, the level of awareness of a certain thing is sometimes dependent on whether it applies to them.

Furthermore, data gathered in this study reveals it a contradiction to RA 8353. One barangay official said that rape is included in the Pagta (bylaws of Bodong) as a case subjected to an amicable settlement. This implies that his awareness of RA 8353 is limited since in their barangay, being homogenous, rape is settled. However, this practice is contrary to the law that says that rape shall be filed directly in court and shall not be settled under the barangay. This is the exact opposite of the barangay official's practice in barangay 4 where rape is one among those cases allowed to be settled by their customary laws as written on their Pagta.

Barangay officials in the urban barangays of Tabuk City are aware of laws relative to women's protection against violence. Being aware as used in this study, means that their awareness on the existence of the law is limited as they cannot elaborate or give any explanation about the laws relative to the protection of women. This means that barangays officials are just generally aware that there are laws that protect women from violence. They are, however, not aware of the salient provisions of such laws. This is attributed to the practice of Bodong in handling cases, including VAW incidents within the community. This means that VAW incidents that come to their attention might be limited to those involving immigrants of Tabuk City who are not subjects of Bodong. This implies that they have learned these laws as they were not confronted with cases where these will be applied.

However, the barangay official who said that rape is among other modes of violence committed against women clarified that although, they apply Bodong in settling these, the victim-survivor is not prohibited from filing a case against the abuser in the courts of law. He further said that although women are aware that they can file the case in court, they usually chose to be subjected to the restorative justice of Bodong. This explains the low rate of reported VAW incidents. He further said that "*kababain no rumuardagitangan banag ketaddakam met*" (it is shameful if these kinds of things go out from us).

Level of Awareness of Victim-Survivors

Victim-survivors are much aware of Republic Act 9262 and RA 9745. Searching questions asked to determine what they know about the law reveals that their knowledge is focused on the type of violence committed against them and on the Barangay Protection Order (for those who have applied for a protection order). When asked how they came to know about this law, 18 answered that it was when they reported their experience to the barangay, 11 said it was through television or radio. However, their knowledge on Barangay Protection Order is limited to the fact that it can be issued for their protection in order that their partner cannot cause harm to them or their child. Ten of the V-S interviewed who mentioned that they have sought the Barangay Protection Order's protection were those who acknowledged having been subjected to physical violence by their intimate partners.

Generally, the different urban barangays are aware of laws aimed at protecting women from violence but have a hard time explaining or identifying provisions of the said laws. When asked to identify a provision of the law or expound what the law is all about, the women-residents just repeated the title of the law or what the answer of the researcher when asked about the law. This implies that although the laws are already in place, its implementation is not felt nor seen by the V-S in the urban barangays of Tabuk City, thus the level of their awareness.

Victim-survivors from barangays 7, 10, 11, and 12 are much aware of the laws relative to women's protection against violence. These barangays are composed mostly of immigrants except Barangay 12. This implies that the V-S level of awareness is somewhat affected by whether Bodong is resorted in any conflicts. The application of the laws as observed by the V-S might affect the level of their awareness. When they see the laws applied, the more aware they become. The barangays being acculturated may mean that VAW cases are addressed by the regular justice system instead of Bodong.

The level of awareness of the victim-survivors on the laws relative to the protection of women against violence is generally limited to being aware of the laws' existence.

Comparison of the Level of Awareness on Laws Directly Related to the Protection of Women

Table 2 presents the analyses of variance on the level of awareness on laws.

Table 2 Analyses of Variance on the Level of Awareness on Laws

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. RA 9262: Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004					
Between Groups	.471	2	.236	.369	.6
Within Groups	253.306	397	.638		
Total	253.778	399			
2. RA 9851: Philippine Act on Crimes Against International Humanitarian Law, Genocide, and Other Crimes Against Humanity of 2009					
Between Groups	11.989	2	5.995	13.274	.000
Within Groups	179.288	397	.452		
Total	191.278	399			
3. RA 8353: Anti-Rape Law of 1997					
Between Groups	11.890	2	5.945	9.321	.000
Within Groups	253.207	397	.638		
Total	265.098	399			
4. RA 8505: Rape Victim Assistance and Protection of 1998					
Between Groups	8.334	2	4.167	7.862	.000
Within Groups	210.426	397	.530		
Total	218.760	399			
5. RA 9995: Crime of Video and Photo Voyeurism Act of 2009					
Between Groups	.839	2	.420	.742	.000
Within Groups	22.538	397	.566		
Total	225.377	399			
6. RA 7877: Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995					
Between Groups	2.084	2	1.042	1.566	.210
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Within Groups	264.214	397	.666		
Total	266.298	399			
7. RA 9745: Anti-Torture Act of 2009					
Between Groups	.040	2	.020	.046	.955
Within Groups	173.057	397	.436		
Total	173.097	399			

3.5. Level of Awareness of the Women-residents, V-S, and Barangay Officials on Services Mandated by Law to be Provided to Victim-Survivors of Violence

All women-residents of the different urban barangays of Tabuk City acknowledged being aware but cannot elaborate the different services mandated by law to be provided to women subjected to violence. It implies that their awareness is limited to knowing the existence of these services.

On the other hand, Barangay officials are very much aware of the services mandated by law to be provided to victim-survivors of violence specifically on the prompt issuance of protection order, psychosocial services, medical assistance, and medico-legal assistance. When asked to talk about these services, they readily answered that these are the things which are expected to be given to any victim even without a law demanding for its provision. This implies that their awareness of the services is not only because of the existence of a law that mandates for its provision but because it is their culture to help people who are in need.

Lastly, V-S are much aware that women subjected to violence should be received in a comfortable reception by the service-providers when reporting. This implies that when they had reported the violence committed against them, the reception was comfortable. Despite the absence of a separate room primarily for VAW victims, the V-S still had considered it to be comfortable. This implies that the comfort might not be the concern of the V-S when reporting.

Nine of the V-S interviewed acknowledged that their awareness of the provision of transportation allowance is grounded on the reason that it is a normal action towards person who is in need, not because the law mandates it.

Prompt issuance of Barangay Protection Order and Emergency Financial Assistance comes very close to the aforementioned service mandated by law which they are also much aware of. Their awareness however is different from the first as it based on their experience. This means that they came to know about this after experiencing violence and reporting the same to proper authorities which informed them about such. This further implies that not knowing whether there are existing services mandated to be provided to V-S of violence is not a factor affecting the decision of V-S to report the VAW incident. Their responses show that the type of violence inflicted against them plays a major role on the decision of reporting it. When the violence is still not physical in nature, the woman usually takes it as normal in a relationship.

The level of awareness of the barangay officials,

victim-survivors and women-residents from the 13 urban barangays of Tabuk City on the services provided to women subjected to violence is similar. They are all generally aware of the existence of the services but not because there is a law mandating its provision. Instead, it is because it is but natural for those services to be provided to somebody in need.

IV. DISCUSSION

The total number of physical violence is similar to the number of reported VAW cases in the City of Tabuk as per record of Tabuk City Police Office. This shows that the record does not actually reflect the actual prevalence of VAW in Tabuk City. This implies there are still victim-survivors who need protection yet are not given the proper attention as these do not come to the attention of appropriate

agencies in charge of addressing VAW victim-survivors.

The data on modes of violence committed against women gathered from the V-S in the urban barangays implies that violence is not dependent on the characteristics of the area where a couple lives but may also be affected by the homogeneity of the culture of their locality. This is shown by the settlement of VAW cases because of the intervention of elders within the community applying the Pagta (Law of Bodong). However, the barangay official who said that rape is among other modes of violence committed against women clarified that although they apply Bodong in settling these, the V-S is not prohibited from filing a case against the abuser in the courts of law.

The level of awareness of the barangay officials, women residents, and V-S may be considered factor attributing to the non-reporting of V-S incidents in the urban barangays of Tabuk City, especially when basing it with the comparison of reported and non-reported incidents.

The level of awareness of the barangay officials, V-S, and women-residents from the 13 urban barangays of Tabuk City are all generally aware of the services' existence but not because there is a law mandating its provision. Instead, it is because it is but natural for those services to be provided to somebody in need. Thus, the level of awareness on the services therefore, is not a factor that affects the reporting of violence. The result of this study shows that even without knowing that there are services mandated by law, the services are already being provided not only by barangay officials but also by relative, neighbors and friends of victims.

Any form of violence is never acceptable by a man

or a woman, child or adult. Everybody deserves to be free from any form of pain. This is especially true within the family. Comfort, love, and care should be the seeds that grew and nurtured within the home. Thus domestic violence should never be condoned.

Violence against women in Tabuk City is existing, but their culture of resolving conflicts is very much alive. Most women rely on this culture of resolving conflicts aside from the different laws protecting women from violence. Non-reporting of violence is somehow connected with the awareness of the laws and on the services to be provided to victim-survivors. However, this study shows no connection to such. The law and the services may be in place and known by barangay officials and women, but non-reporting of violence is still an issue. This study shows that every community's culture and practices play an important factor on how violence against women were addressed despite what the law says and on the protocol provided by law. This culture also dictates how victim-survivors are treated. Assisting people in need is observed not because it is dictated by law but because it is the right thing to do in such a situation.

The homogeneity of a community somewhat dictates how violence against women is addressed. The barangays with the heterogenic population in terms of culture apply the law when the ones involved are immigrants. However, this is not the case when the victim-survivor is a native or has Kalinga blood. When this is the case, their elders intervene and influence the victim-survivors decision to settle or file a case (where usually the settles on the first).

Lack of concrete information to show the extent of VAW in the country as many cases of violence against women go unreported due to women victims' "culture of silence" posed a problem. Many of the victims are ashamed to relate their experiences. In contrast, others tend to dismiss their ordeal due to their lack of faith in the country's justice system caused by frustrations over the lack of results in filing complaints.

Protection of women against violence is comfortable when talked about in the context of the existence of laws. There are already several laws protecting women from violence. These are already in place. The reporting or monitoring of violence, however, is still a problem. This is because women chose to settle, protect their family from being broken and forgive and remain within the abusive relationship. There are still women who chose to neglect or convinced themselves that violence is part of a relationship.

The most common mode of violence committed against women in the urban barangays of Tabuk City is

psychological violence, both acknowledged by victim-survivors and women-residents of the urban barangays of Tabuk City. This means that majority of reported and unreported VAW incidents are in the form of psychological. The frequency of unreported VAW incidents also shows that the reported figure does not represent the total incidents of VAW in Tabuk.

Barangay officials, victim-survivors, and women-residents are generally aware of laws relative to women's protection against violence. This means that they are all aware that laws protect women against violence but are unable to give and explain specific provisions of such. The three groups of respondents are also generally aware of the services provided to VAW victim-survivors. These services are practiced not only because of a law mandating but also because it is natural to extend help to persons in need. Therefore, the level of awareness of the three groups of respondents on the laws and services plays an insignificant role in the non-reporting of violence. Non-reporting of violence as perceived and acknowledged by women-residents who participated in this study revealed their hope, fear, shame, forgiveness, and perception that violence is expected in a relationship.

To address the issue of awareness of barangay officials, victim-survivors, and women-residents on the laws relative to women's protection against violence, a proposal was drafted. An enrichment activity was also drafted and implemented in the two barangays subjected to the study. These two barangays were those with the highest frequency of unreported VAW incidents. The barangay officials and women-residents were the targeted participants to enrich their awareness of the laws' salient features relative to the protection of women against violence. The protocol in handling VAW cases was included among the topics on the drafted enrichment action plan. This is to address the researcher's issue, which is the conduct of an interview to the victim-survivor even with the presence of people who are not concerned or involved in the case. This is also to ensure that all the rights afforded to victim-survivors will be respected by people who are involved in handling VAW incidents.

As a result of the study, there is a need to intensify the State of protection of women in the urban barangays of Tabuk City. This is based on the low level of awareness of the barangay officials, women-residents and victim-survivors on the laws relative to the protection of women and the services mandated to be provided by victim-survivors of violence. Barangay officials are responsible for handling VAW incidents since barangay is the nearest agency to the community. To effectively and efficiently ensure the protection of women from violence, there is a

need to equip the concerned officials with enough information regarding the laws and services given to victim-survivors. Women and victims of violence shall also be aware of law protecting them and the services that may be given to them to be more confident in reporting VAW incidents and more assured of their protection.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result of the study, the following conclusions were derived. Women understand violence as physical in nature, which affects whether to report to proper authorities. Also, women, including barangay officials, are familiar with the laws related to protecting women against violence but are not well-oriented with their salient features. The awareness of the victim-survivors and women-residents on the services availed from the service providers like the barangay depends on the women's orientation on the laws.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Statement of Human Rights

All domestic violence against women needs to prioritize women's safety and ensure that the research is conducted in an ethical and appropriately sensitive manner (WHO Department of Gender, Women, and Health, 2001). In this connection, the researcher was guided by the ethical and safety principles in dealing with victim-survivors of violence. For women experiencing violence, the mere act of participating in a survey may provoke further violence or place the researcher at risk. At the same time, as the subject and beneficiary of the research, the woman needs to give full informed consent. Thus, for both ethical and safety reasons, the study was introduced to study women's health and life experiences. However, the victim-survivors and women-residents as respondents were fully informed about the nature of the questions. The researcher first got the respondents' consent and, at the same time, raised the sensitivity of the research topic. Individual Consent Form in adherence to WHO ethical guidelines for the conduct of violence against women research was used in getting the consent of women respondents. The Form was lifted from the WHO VAW Instrument.

During the interview, the researcher carefully introduced the first part of the interview guide that enquired about violence, forewarning the respondent about the nature of the questions and giving her the opportunity to either stop the interview or answer the questions. When the victim-survivor/women-resident gave the consent, she was informed that the interview might be conducted in another area where she was more comfortable. The interview was then conducted with the presence of the licensed

psychologist. In events that the respondent becomes emotional, the psychologist intervenes to control the respondent's emotional outpour. In those cases, the interview was temporarily stopped and proceeded when the respondent is already emotionally stable. The Interview was terminated by thanking the respondent for her cooperation and assuring her that if she needed assistance, she could contact the researcher on the number given to them. Before termination, however, the respondent was asked if she had any questions. When there was none, the interview was terminated.

Confidentiality of information collected from survivors of violence is of fundamental importance. In this connection, interview was conducted only in a private setting. The participant was informed that if she desires, rescheduling or relocation of the interview to a time or place that may be safer or more convenient.

To minimize any possible distress caused by the research to survivors, all questions about violence were asked in a supportive and non-judgmental manner. In addition, the researcher was accompanied by a registered psychologist during the conduct of the interview in order that the best response based on the woman's level of distress was given.

Statement on the Welfare of Animals

Ethical Approval: This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by the author.

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