

Awareness on Gender and Development Services of a Barangay

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Abstract:

Awareness of Gender and Development (GAD) services is vital for enabling individuals and communities to access essential support and resources that promote well-being and equality. Given this context, this study assessed the level of awareness of barangay residents regarding the services, specifically in the areas of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) cases, maternal health, and livelihood. Two hundred eighty-six respondents participated, with demographic data collected on age, civil status, sex, educational attainment, and socio-economic status. Findings revealed high levels of awareness in VAWC and Maternal Health across all demographic groups, suggesting effective dissemination of GAD information in these areas. However, only moderate levels of awareness were observed in livelihood services. Notably, a significant difference in awareness levels was found when respondents were grouped by educational attainment, with those with elementary or high school education showing greater awareness of livelihood services than college graduates. This suggests that community-based economic initiatives are more accessible or relevant to those with lower formal education. The study highlights the need for improved outreach strategies targeting more educated individuals and recommends integrating GAD-related content into formal and professional education to ensure inclusive participation. The findings underscore the importance of tailoring GAD communication efforts to address specific demographic gaps, particularly in promoting awareness of economic empowerment programs.

Keywords: Gender and Development (GAD) services; Awareness; Barangay residents; Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC); Maternal health; Livelihood

Introduction:

Nature of the Problem

The Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710), enacted on August 14, 2009, is a comprehensive Philippine law aimed at eliminating discrimination against women by recognizing, protecting, fulfilling, and promoting their rights, particularly those of marginalized sectors. It aligns with international human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), reflecting the Philippines' commitment to these standards (Violon, 2024).

Laws have been implemented to guarantee that governmental bodies and local government units allocate a minimum of 5% of their yearly budget for gender equality programs. This provision clearly states that financial resources are allocated to eliminate the gender gap and promote women's rights. On top of this, it is the responsibility of the local barangays to put up Violence Against Women (VAW) desks to give direct assistance to the women in their communities who are victims of violent acts that are being committed against them. Therefore, the introduction of such centers will enable female victims to report what happened and seek support, while ensuring that gender considerations are applied in the handling of cases. Additionally, statistics and databases on gender and sex must be retained for use in formulating policies, programs, and planning. This kind of data plays a significant role in knowing the needs of women more clearly and, thus, ensuring that policies are women-centric (Francisco, 2023).

Despite these provisions, challenges persist in implementing the Magna Carta of Women. A study by Leal and Saguibo (2018) investigated the gender responsiveness of a municipality and discovered that, although the data in the local government's annual accomplishment report indicated progress in terms of facility accessibility, the number of conducted training programs, and the availability of economic support services for women, the researchers strongly advocated for local government units to establish a dedicated long-term plan for monitoring and enforcing various

gender-responsive services. They also recommended that programs and activities be designed for equitable and responsive distribution.

Driven by her personal experiences as a former barangay official in a highly urbanized city in the Central Philippines and as a female researcher, the investigator initiated this study. It critically examines community awareness of the diverse services offered through the Gender and Development (GAD) program. Furthermore, the research explores the correlation between observed awareness levels and the annual reports of barangays recognized for their exemplary utilization of GAD services. This study holds significant pertinence and timeliness, as it seeks to pinpoint existing disparities in awareness and utilization, thereby offering crucial insights that can inform the development of more effective strategies for GAD program implementation at the grassroots level.

Current State of Knowledge

In the field of Gender and Development (GAD) services, research consistently points to challenges in awareness and utilization, particularly regarding gender-based violence (GBV) and essential support. Palermo, Black, and Peterman (2014) identified lack of awareness, fear of retaliation, custody concerns, and perceived impunity as key reasons for GBV underreporting. Conversely, Jennings et al. (2021) showed that legislation like the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) significantly improves law enforcement responses, leading to increased reporting and better outcomes for women. However, Yee (2020) noted that despite the presence of VAW Desks in Philippine barangays, consistent psychological support remains unreliable due to inadequate training and financial limitations at the community level.

International research reveals diverse strategies and persistent gaps in GAD services. Educational workshops with tailored livelihood training are practical, like those in South Asia (Haq et al., 2021; FAO, 2021), significantly boosting participation. Despite improved maternal healthcare in lower-income countries, economic empowerment programs often lack tailored communication for working women (Zhou et al., 2021; WHO, 2016). Lower education levels correlate with greater stigma and limited awareness, hindering mental health service access (Al-Darmaki et al., 2022; WHO, 2021; CEDAW, 2017). Gender norms restrict access to agricultural services, often overlooking men (Aregu et al., 2020; FAO, 2019). Formal employment does not assure GBV recovery access without active employer promotion (Heise & Kotsadam, 2015; United Nations, 2020; UN Women, 2022). Youth's disinterest in traditional farming necessitates modernized education and support (Khanal et al., 2021; Pun & Shrestha, 2020). These studies emphasize inclusive, intersectional approaches, participatory governance, and grassroots mobilization for gender equality (World Bank, 2016; Chant & Sweetman, 2012; Cornwall & Rivas, 2015).

In the Philippines, local studies mirror global GAD challenges. Livelihood and economic empowerment initiatives in barangays are often underpublicized and underutilized due to funding and advocacy issues (Reyes, 2019), despite mandates like the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710). Though the Barangay GAD Planning and Budgeting Handbook (Philippine Commission on Women, 2016) stresses gender-responsive livelihood training, projects are frequently deprioritized due to budget and expertise gaps (De Luna, 2017). VAWC desks often provide limited documentation, with long-term psychological support largely unavailable (Tupaz & Enriquez, 2019; Delos Santos, 2020). Low awareness and participation in livelihood training among rural married women persist due to time and caregiving constraints (Medina & Santos, 2020; ILO, 2019), necessitating community-led outreach (Galdas et al., 2020; NEDA, 2017). Traditional dissemination methods for agricultural programs fail to engage working adults, requiring flexible, tech-integrated models (Pretty et al., 2022; ILO, 2021; García et al., 2023). Lastly, visible health-related GAD services contrast with inconsistently implemented and poorly visible livelihood programs that often fail to cater to diverse interests, especially youth (Latorre, 2019; Baring et al., 2021), highlighting the need for customized and accessible initiatives.

Palermo, Black, and Peterman (2014) identified multiple barriers to reporting gender-based violence (GBV), including fear of retaliation, normalization of violence, and lack of awareness about available support services, contributing to global underreporting. In contrast, Jennings et al. (2021) demonstrated the positive impact of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the U.S., showing improvements in reporting, investigations, and prosecutions. In the Philippines, Yee (2020) noted that while barangays meet legal mandates for VAW Desks, the lack of trained personnel and limited funding hinders effective psychological support. Haq et al. (2021) and the FAO (2021) emphasized the need for gender-sensitive, localized training to support marginalized rural communities. Al-Darmaki et al. (2022) and WHO (2021) highlighted how low education and stigma reduce access to mental health services, a concern echoed by CEDAW (2017) in its call for psychosocial care for survivors. Aregu et al. (2020) and FAO (2019) urged equal access to agricultural services, while Khanal, Dhital, and Christian (2021) and Pun and Shrestha (2020) advocated youth and women engagement through modernization and market integration. Heise and Kotsadam (2015), along with UN Women (2022) and the UN SDG 5 (United Nations, 2020), stressed the need for workplace-based GBV recovery pathways. Zhou et al. (2021), WHO (2016), and the World Bank's Gender Equality Strategy (2016–2023) underscored integrating economic support into healthcare and development, aligning with Chant and Sweetman's (2012) and Cornwall and Rivas's (2015) calls for systemic, participatory, and intersectional gender equality approaches.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is anchored in Giulio Tononi's Integrated Information Theory (IIT), which posits that consciousness arises from integrating information across a system, with components exerting physical cause-and-effect influences on one another (Tononi, 2004; Fallon, 2020). This theoretical lens clarifies how awareness of concepts like gender and development services is formed through integrated information within social systems. This understanding is further complemented by Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT), which emphasizes how individuals acquire behaviors and perceptions, including awareness of GAD services, through observational learning from their social environments (Bandura, 1977). Extending this, E.M. Rogers' Theory of Diffusion of Innovation explains how new knowledge, such as GAD awareness, disseminates through a community, suggesting that a more integrated social information network enhances the acceptance and adoption of innovations. Therefore, the combined application of Bandura's SLT and Rogers' Theory of Diffusion provides mechanisms for how awareness and consciousness diffuse and integrate into a community's collective understanding of gender-related services.

This integrated framework allows the study to examine the evolution of individual awareness of GAD services into a collective consciousness within the barangay, offering a comprehensive approach to measuring and improving the quality and coverage of these services.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the level of awareness of gender and development services in a barangay of a highly urbanized city in Central Philippines during Calendar Year 2023 as the basis for an action plan. Specifically, this study aimed to: 1) determine the profile of the respondents in terms of age, civil status, sex, highest educational attainment, and socioeconomic status; 2) assess the level of awareness regarding GAD services, particularly in Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) cases, maternal health, and livelihood; and 3) determine whether or not significant differences exist in awareness levels of gender and development services when grouped and compared according to variables.

Methodology:

This section presents the discussion of the research methodology used, the subjects and respondents of the study, the research instruments used, the validity and reliability of the instruments, the procedure for data gathering, and the statistical tools and procedure for data analysis.

Research Design

The proposed research utilized the descriptive research design to determine the level of awareness on gender and development services in a highly urbanized city for the Calendar Year 2023 as the basis for an action plan. The descriptive research design utilizes various research methods to probe one or more variables, with the researcher only observing and measuring the variables (McCombes, 2019). This makes the design most appropriate for the study because this scientific method involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way, and it is also aimed at finding out the prevailing relationships, held opinions and beliefs, processes, effects, and developing trends.

Study Respondents

The study's respondents were male and female barangay residents aged 18 to 70, residing in the puroks closest to the barangay (village) hall. The total population of the barangay is 1,113. However, a sample size of 286 was surveyed. Given the substantial number of respondents, a stratified random sampling technique was employed, utilizing Cochran's formula to determine the appropriate sample size. The sampling technique used was stratified random sampling. Hayes (2023) defined stratified random sampling as dividing a population into smaller subgroups called strata. The strata are then formed based on members' shared characteristics like educational attainment and length of service.

Instruments

To assess the level of awareness on gender and development services in a barangay within a highly urbanized city, a researcher-designed survey questionnaire was utilized, consisting of two parts: Part I gathered demographic data such as age, civil status, sex, educational attainment, and socio-economic status, while Part II focused on evaluating awareness levels across three key areas—Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) cases, maternal health, and livelihood—through 30 items (10 per area). Respondents rated each item on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 ("completely unaware") to 5 ("highly aware"). The average rating of the three jurors was used as basis for the validity of the instrument. Validation average is 4.59, interpreted as "excellent". This showed that the research instrument was "Valid". And the reliability result was 0.850 which signifies that said instrument is highly reliable.

Data Gathering Procedure

Once the validity and reliability of the researcher-made instrument were established, the researcher sent a letter to the barangay chairperson of the targeted puroks under their jurisdiction, requesting approval to conduct the test and actual surveys. Upon receiving approval, the researcher met with the respondents to explain the purpose of the study and provide clear instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. Following research ethics, the respondents were assured that their data would be kept confidential and that their anonymity would be maintained. The researcher guided the respondents in filling out the survey questionnaires and personally retrieved the instruments thereafter. The data gathered were then categorized, tabulated, and prepared for subsequent statistical treatment.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objective No. 1 used the descriptive-analytical scheme and frequency count and percentage distribution to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of age, civil status, sex, highest educational attainment, and socio-economic status.

Objective No. 2 utilized descriptive-analytical methods and mean to determine the level of awareness on gender and development services in a highly urbanized city, in protection from violence (VAWC), maternal health, and livelihood.

Objective No. 3 utilized the comparative-analytical scheme and Mann-Whitney U Test to determine the level of awareness on gender and development services in a highly urbanized city, when the respondents are grouped and compared according to the variables.

Ethical Consideration

Researchers must strictly observe the research ethics protocol when conducting a study. The researcher must seek ethical clearance that must be subsequently approved, paving the way for issuing an ethical clearance certificate (Ramrathan, Grange & Shawa, 2016). The participants and respondents were fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in the research. They were asked for their consent to participate in the study. The research also explained to them the procedures of the entire research. Safeguards were established to minimize harm in a research protocol involving vulnerable participants or delicate topics (Peter & Ferdinand, 2017). Additionally, the participants were assured that identifying information would not be made available to anyone not directly involved in the study. There were also strict standards that required the participants to remain anonymous. Processed data were destroyed permanently with participants' consent. All identifying details shall be made irretrievable.

Results and Discussion:

This section deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered to carry out the objectives of this study. All these were made possible by following certain appropriate procedures so as to give the exact data and solution to each specific problem.

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Age, Civil Status, Sex, Highest Educational Attainment, and Socioeconomic Status

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Younger (below 36 years old)	150	52.45
	Older (36 years old and above)	136	47.55
	Total	286	100
Civil Status	Single	117	40.91
	Married	169	59.09
	Total	286	100
Sex	Male	145	50.70
	Female	141	49.30
	Total	286	100

Highest Attainment	Educational	Lower (Elementary and High School Graduate)	181	63.29
		Higher (College Graduate)	105	36.71
	Total		286	100
Socio-economic Status		Employed	193	67.48
		Unemployed	93	32.52
	Total		286	100

The demographic profile of respondents provides significant insights into the level of awareness on Gender and Development (GAD) services at the barangay level. Table 1 presents data on the profile of respondents in terms of age, civil status, sex, highest educational attainment, and socio-economic status. Of 286 respondents, the majority (52.45%, or 150) were younger barangay residents, specifically below 36 years old, while 136 (47.55%) were older than 36 years old. The predominance of younger respondents (52.45% aged below 36) implies potential receptiveness to GAD initiatives, especially those delivered through digital platforms or community-based youth programs. According to the Philippine Commission on Women (2021), younger populations tend to be more open to gender-related advocacies due to increased exposure to inclusive narratives via social media and education campaigns.

The data also show that the majority of respondents, 169, were married (59.09%), which may influence their perspectives on gender roles within households and communities. Married individuals are likely to be more affected by GAD programs related to family planning, women's rights, and reproductive health, making their inclusion in awareness campaigns crucial. This finding aligns with the study of Ramos and Lagman (2020), who noted that marital status significantly affects awareness and participation in GAD programs, with married individuals being more active in barangay-level discussions on gender issues. One hundred seventeen respondents were single.

A nearly equal representation of males (50.70%) and females (49.30%) allows for a balanced view on gender awareness, reflecting both perspectives. However, the slightly higher male representation may indicate a need to examine how men perceive and engage with GAD services, as their participation is often lower in gender-focused programs (Dela Cruz, 2019). This underscores the importance of inclusive and gender-sensitive approaches in program implementation.

The lower educational attainment of most respondents (63.29%) suggests that awareness efforts must be designed to be accessible and easily understandable. As supported by Del Mundo (2018), educational attainment has a direct impact on an individual's comprehension of gender equality and development policies, and lower education levels often correlate with reduced awareness of GAD services. The remaining 105 respondents (36.71%) were college graduates (higher educational attainment).

Finally, with 67.48% or 193 respondents employed, economic participation could contribute to greater exposure to workplace-related gender issues, including equal pay, maternity leave, and sexual harassment policies. Socio-economic status, therefore, provides an entry point for mainstreaming GAD policies through workplace orientations and community outreach efforts. The remaining 93 (32.52%) respondents were unemployed, while 93 or 32.52% were unemployed.

Overall, these findings conform to related literature that emphasizes the influence of demographic factors on awareness and responsiveness to GAD programs. Understanding these profiles can help barangay leaders and policy-makers design targeted, inclusive, and effective GAD awareness initiatives.

Level of Awareness on Gender and Development Services of a Barangay in Violence Against Women and Children Cases, Maternal Health, and Livelihood

Table 2

Level of Awareness on Gender and Development Services of a Barangay in Violence Against Women and Children Cases

Items	Mean	Interpretation
1. the barangay provides temporary shelter through the Barangay Desk facility.	4.09	High Level
2. the barangay provides clothes to the victim if needed.	4.08	High Level
3. the barangay provides food.	4.13	High Level

		Moderate Level
4. the barangay can facilitate the provision of legal assistance.	3.28	
5. the barangay gives medicine to the victims	4.07	High Level
6. the barangay provides security or protection to the survivors	3.52	High Level
		Moderate Level
7. the barangay provides psychological counseling	3.29	
8. the barangay provides a VAW Desk in the barangay hall for quick response	4.21	High Level
		Moderate Level
9. the barangay provides transportation assistance	3.45	
		Moderate Level
10. the barangay provides therapy sessions for the traumatized victims	3.15	
Overall Mean	3.73	High Level

Table 2 presents data on residents' level of awareness on gender and development services of a barangay in Violence Against Women and Children cases.

The overall mean score is 3.73, interpreted as a "high level" of awareness. Item 8, "the barangay provides a VAW Desk in the barangay hall for quick response," got the highest mean rating from respondents, 4.21, interpreted as a "high level" of awareness. Item 10, "the barangay provides therapy sessions for the traumatized victims," obtained the lowest mean score of 3.15, interpreted as a "moderate level" of awareness.

There remains limited awareness or implementation of deeper psychosocial support services like therapy. This finding indicates a gap in community knowledge or service delivery concerning the long-term rehabilitation of survivors. This aligns with findings in Yee's (2020) study on barangay-based responses to VAWC, which noted that while barangays are compliant with Republic Act No. 9262 (Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004) in setting up VAW Desks, the provision of continuous psychological interventions, such as therapy or counseling, is inconsistent, often due to lack of trained personnel or funding. According to the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Memorandum Circular 2015-102, barangays are mandated to ensure that survivors of VAWC have access to reporting mechanisms and psychological and legal assistance. The moderate awareness rating may indicate a need for increased visibility, funding, and advocacy around these more complex support services (Yee, 2020).

Table 3
Level of Awareness on Gender and Development Services of a Barangay in Maternal Health

Items	Mean	Interpretation
Our barangay provides the following assistance:		
1. monthly medical check-up	4.52	Very High Level
2. gives medicine	4.40	High Level
3. transportation assistance	3.47	Moderate Level
4. pangkabuhayan seminars	3.13	Moderate Level
5. pre-natal care assistance	4.44	High Level
6. post-natal care assistance	4.40	High Level
7. family planning	4.36	High Level
8. boosting breastfeeding support	3.99	High Level
9. counselling	3.79	High Level
10. medical mission	3.42	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.99	High Level

Data in Table 3 reveals residents' level of awareness on gender and development services of a barangay in maternal health.

The overall mean score is 3.99, interpreted as a "high level" of awareness. Item 1, "provides monthly medical check-up," obtained the highest mean score, 4.52, interpreted as a "high level." Item 4, "pangkabuhayan seminars," got the lowest mean score of 3.13, interpreted as a "moderate level."

The item under the Maternal Health area that received the lowest mean score indicates a moderate level of awareness among barangay residents. This suggests that residents are aware of health-related services such as medical check-ups. However, they are less informed about livelihood initiatives targeted at women, equally vital in promoting maternal well-being and empowerment. This finding aligns with the observations of Reyes (2019) in her study on

gender-responsive programs, where she highlighted that livelihood seminars and economic empowerment initiatives are often underpublicized and underutilized at the barangay level due to limited funding and insufficient advocacy.

Moreover, the Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710) mandates that local government units ensure women's access to health services and capacity-building opportunities such as livelihood and entrepreneurial training as part of gender and development (GAD) initiatives. The Barangay GAD Planning and Budgeting Handbook (Philippine Commission on Women, 2016) also emphasizes that sustainable development for women includes economic empowerment programs integrated with health services.

The current study's moderate awareness of livelihood-related seminars highlights a gap in GAD implementation that must be addressed through more aggressive promotion and integration of these services into existing maternal health programs (Dimayuga, 2017). Doing so would comply with national mandates and help women achieve holistic well-being by combining physical health care with economic resilience.

Table 4

Level of Awareness on Gender and Development Services of a Barangay in Livelihood

Items	Mean	Interpretation
Our barangay provides the following livelihood support services:		
1. Food Preservation Training	3.36	Moderate Level
2. Micro Finance	3.25	Moderate Level
3. Transportation Services	3.03	Moderate Level
4. Urban Gardening	3.70	High Level
5. Market Vending and Retail	3.02	Moderate Level
6. Home-Based Services	3.02	Moderate Level
7. Beauty and Wellness	3.04	Moderate Level
8. Promotion of livestock and fish varieties	2.73	Moderate Level
9. Pig Breeding	3.48	Moderate Level
10. Barangay Council for the protection of children's activities	3.60	High Level
Overall Mean	3.22	Moderate Level

Table 4 presents data on residents' level of awareness on the gender and development services of a barangay in livelihood.

The overall mean score is 3.22m interpreted as a "moderate level" of awareness.

Item 4, "urban gardening," got the highest mean score of 3.70, interpreted as a "high level." Item 8, "Promotion of livestock and fish varieties," got the lowest mean score of 2.73, interpreted as a "moderate level."

The research result suggests that barangay residents are less informed about agricultural-based livelihood initiatives, particularly animal and fish production. This limited awareness may reflect a lack of focused promotion or accessible training programs at the barangay level, despite the importance of such initiatives in enhancing household income and food security.

This result is supported by the Barangay Gender and Development (GAD) Planning and Budgeting Handbook (Philippine Commission on Women, 2016), which emphasizes that GAD programs must include gender-responsive livelihood training, particularly in rural and agrarian communities. The handbook outlines that barangays must allocate GAD funds to support sustainable livelihood projects, including agriculture and aquaculture, to promote women's economic empowerment. The observed low awareness suggests that these provisions may not be fully translated into visible or accessible programs in the barangay studied.

Similarly, De Luna (2017), in her thesis on implementing Gender and Development Programs in Selected Barangays in Bulacan, found that livelihood projects were among the least prioritized in GAD implementation due to budget constraints and lack of technical know-how. This supports the current study's result and further indicates the need to strengthen the promotion and implementation of diversified livelihood programs, especially those involving livestock and aquaculture, to fully maximize the developmental potential of GAD funds.

Comparative analysis in the Level of Awareness on Gender and Development Services of a Barangay in Violence Against Women and Children Cases, Maternal Health, and Livelihood when grouped and compared according to Age, Civil Status, Sex, Highest Educational Attainment, and Socioeconomic Status

Table 5

Difference in the Level of Awareness on Gender and Development Services of a Barangay in Violence Against Women and Children Cases when grouped and compared according to Variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	150	140.42	9737.500	0.506	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	136	146.90				
Civil Status	Single	117	141.95	9705.000	0.791		Not Significant
	Married	169	144.57				
Sex	Male	145	143.64	10201.500	0.976		Significant
	Female	141	143.35				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	181	147.13	8845.000	0.328		Not Significant
	Higher	105	137.24				
Socio-economic Status	Employed	193	140.20	8338.500	0.330		Not Significant
	Unemployed	93	150.34				

The findings in Table 5 indicate no significant differences in awareness on gender and development services of a barangay when grouped according to age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and socio-economic status, particularly in Violence Against Women and Children cases, maternal health, and livelihood. These demographic factors do not substantially influence barangay residents' awareness of GAD services. Therefore, the null hypothesis, "There is no significant difference in the level of awareness on gender and development services of a barangay when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables," is accepted across all tested variables.

The results show that although older barangay residents have a higher mean rank of 146.90 than younger barangay residents (140.42), both respondents have similar levels of awareness regarding gender and development services. The data, particularly the *p-value* of 0.506, higher than the 0.05 significance level, indicate that respondents' awareness levels do not significantly vary.

The results indicating no significant differences in awareness of gender and development (GAD) services based on age, civil status, educational attainment, and socio-economic status suggest that information about such services has been disseminated uniformly across barangay demographic groups. This may point to the effectiveness of inclusive community-based outreach or a shared exposure to localized awareness efforts. These findings align with the World Bank's Gender Equality Strategy (2016–2023), which advocates for systemic approaches to improving gender equality and stresses that interventions should cut socio-economic and demographic boundaries to ensure broad accessibility and impact (World Bank, 2016). Moreover, Chant and Sweetman (2012) emphasize that gender development frameworks must go beyond targeted interventions and consider broader, intersectional structures of social inclusion, mirroring the current study's observation that demographic variables alone do not drive disparities in awareness. These insights are supported by Cornwall and Rivas (2015), who argue that participatory governance and grassroots mobilization can level the playing field in gender-related awareness. Thus, the study's findings support global recommendations to institutionalize GAD services at the community level and invest in awareness programs that are integrated and holistic, rather than tailored to specific demographic segments.

On the other hand, in terms of sex, the results show that male residents (MR = 143.64) have only a slightly higher level of awareness than their female counterparts (MR = 143.35). However, the *p-value* of 0.976, substantially higher than the standard significance level of 0.05, suggests that this difference is not statistically significant. This implies that both male and female barangay residents have comparable levels of awareness regarding gender and development (GAD) services in their community. The minimal variation in mean ranks is statistically negligible and likely due to random variation. Therefore, the null hypothesis, "There is no significant difference in the level of awareness on gender and development services of a barangay when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables," is accepted.

This finding suggests that gender-inclusive awareness efforts in the barangay may effectively reach both men and women equally, a positive indication for local governance and community-based advocacy. It aligns with the insights

of UNESCO (2022), which underscores that equitable access to community education programs can mitigate traditional gender-based knowledge gaps. Furthermore, this result supports the policy framework outlined in Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (Global Affairs Canada, 2017), which emphasizes that addressing structural barriers to gender equality begins with ensuring that both men and women are equally informed and engaged in gender-related community services and interventions. The similarity in gender awareness levels in this study suggests a potential success in mainstreaming gender-sensitive communication at the grassroots level, supporting broader international goals of gender parity and empowerment through informed participation. Similarly, the study by Doguiles and Rapsing (2024) at Caloocan High School revealed that teachers exhibited a high level of awareness about GAD programs, with no significant differences based on gender. This uniformity in awareness suggests that gender-sensitive communication has been effectively mainstreamed within the educational institution, aligning with international goals of gender parity and informed participation.

Table 6

Difference in the Level of Awareness on Gender and Development Services of a Barangay in Maternal Health when grouped and compared according to Variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	150	141.93	9964.500	0.735	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	136	145.23				
Civil Status	Single	117	149.47	9188.000	0.308		Not Significant
	Married	169	139.37				
Sex	Male	145	142.40	10063.000	0.819		Not Significant
	Female	141	144.63				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	181	148.43	8609.500	0.184		Not Significant
	Higher	105	135.00				
Socio-economic Status	Employed	193	139.75	8250.500	0.268		Not Significant
	Unemployed	93	151.28				

Table 6 examined whether the level of awareness of residents on gender and development services of a barangay differs significantly based on age, civil status, sex, highest educational attainment, and socio-economic status. The null hypothesis, which states, "There is no significant difference in the level of awareness on gender and development services of a barangay when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables," is accepted across all variables.

The results from the Mann-Whitney U test indicated no significant difference in the level of awareness on gender and development services of a barangay between younger and older residents ($p=0.735$). Although older residents had a slightly higher mean rank (145.23) than younger residents (141.93), the difference is not statistically significant.

This finding suggests that age alone does not significantly influence the level of awareness. This could imply that barangay-level gender and development (GAD) services are effectively communicated and disseminated across all age groups, ensuring inclusive access to information regardless of age. The implication is that current strategies employed by the barangay may be age-neutral in their outreach efforts, a positive indicator of inclusivity in grassroots public service communication.

This result aligns with the findings of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2020), which underscores that age should not be seen as a barrier to gender-related awareness and participation. According to EIGE, effective GAD strategies often incorporate intergenerational approaches that allow younger and older populations to engage equally in community-based services when awareness materials and activities are tailored to be accessible across age groups. Similarly, a study by de Jong and Klerk (2021) on age-inclusive community programs in the Netherlands found that strategic messaging and accessible platforms led to uniform awareness levels across age demographics, which parallels the present study's outcome.

Furthermore, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE, 2019) promotes age-inclusive policymaking through its Policy Brief on Ageing, which advocates for community programs that do not discriminate based on age but instead integrate older and younger citizens into shared spaces of learning and service. The current findings reinforce the merit of such approaches, suggesting that local GAD efforts may be aligned with international best practices for inclusive governance.

The insights from the study underscore the importance of maintaining or even strengthening current outreach strategies that target residents of all ages, ensuring sustainability in inclusive awareness efforts. They also suggest the potential benefit of documenting and replicating effective communication strategies in other barangays or local governments to enhance age-inclusive service delivery in gender and development initiatives. Similarly, Sagcal and Ramos (2024) recommended capacity-building initiatives, gender-sensitive budgeting, awareness campaigns, and collaboration with stakeholders to enhance the institutionalization of Gender and Development (GAD) programs and promote gender equality and women's empowerment at the grassroots level.

Regarding civil status, single respondents have a slightly higher mean rank score (149.47) than married respondents (139.37). Female barangay residents' mean rank rating is slightly higher (144.63) than that of their male counterparts (142.40). Barangay residents with lower educational attainment have a higher mean rank score (148.43) than those with higher educational attainment (135.00). Finally, unemployed respondents have a higher mean rank rating (151.28) than employed respondents (139.75).

These results suggest that civil status, sex, educational attainment, and employment status may play subtle roles in shaping levels of awareness of gender and development (GAD) services, even though the differences are not statistically significant. Notably, unmarried, female, less-educated, and unemployed respondents reported slightly higher levels of awareness. This may reflect greater exposure or access to barangay-based support services among more vulnerable or community-dependent groups. According to the International Labour Organization (2020), unemployed individuals and those with lower educational attainment often rely more on local public services, including gender-focused programs, leading to higher engagement and awareness.

Similarly, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women, 2021) stresses that gender and socio-economic factors influence how individuals interact with public services, with women and marginalized populations often more attuned to local support systems due to lived experiences of inequality. These findings support the study's results and imply that GAD initiatives must remain accessible and inclusive, especially for employed and more formally educated individuals who may engage less frequently with community-based services.

Table 7

Difference in the Level of Awareness on Gender and Development Services of a Barangay in Livelihood when grouped and compared according to variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	150	135.90	9060.500	0.101	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	136	151.88				
Civil Status	Single	117	138.89	9347.500	0.430		Not Significant
	Married	169	146.69				
Sex	Male	145	139.11	9586.000	0.360		Not Significant
	Female	141	148.01				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	181	152.07	7952.000	0.021		Significant
	Higher	105	128.73				
Socio-economic Status	Employed	193	146.25	8443.500	0.415		Not Significant
	Unemployed	93	137.79				

Table 7 examines whether the levels of awareness of residents on gender and development (GAD) services of a barangay in Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) cases, Maternal Health, and Livelihood differ when grouped according to age, civil status, sex, highest educational attainment, and socio-economic status. The null

hypothesis, "There is no significant difference in the level of awareness on gender and development services of a barangay when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables," is accepted for age ($p = 0.101$), civil status ($p = 0.403$), sex ($p = 0.360$), and socio-economic status ($p = 0.415$). Since all p -values are greater than the 0.05 significance level, the results indicate that these demographic factors do not significantly influence awareness levels on GAD services.

However, a significant difference was observed when the respondents were grouped according to their highest educational attainment. The Mann-Whitney U test reveals that individuals with lower educational attainment (mean rank = 152.07) demonstrated a higher level of awareness compared to those with higher educational attainment (mean rank = 128.73), with a p -value of 0.021, which is below the 0.05 threshold. Therefore, the null hypothesis, "There is no significant difference in the level of awareness on gender and development services of a barangay when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables," is rejected for this variable.

This finding suggests that those with lower educational attainment may be more engaged in or reliant on barangay-level GAD services, potentially due to limited access to private or institutional support mechanisms. It supports the observations of the International Labour Organization (2021), which emphasized that individuals with lower educational backgrounds tend to rely more on localized social programs and community services, making them more aware of available interventions. Similarly, the World Bank (2020) reported that awareness and participation in public services are often higher in lower-income communities due to greater need and proximity to local governance structures.

Locally, this aligns with the Philippine Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710), which underscores the importance of grassroots gender programs targeting women in marginalized sectors. The findings support these perspectives, highlighting the need for inclusive, accessible, and community-based awareness initiatives tailored to varying education levels. This suggests a policy implication: local governments must maintain or enhance grassroots GAD campaigns, especially in communities with lower educational attainment, while simultaneously creating strategies to improve outreach to more educated individuals unaware of barangay-level gender-focused programs.

Conclusions:

The study's conclusions highlight strengths and areas needing attention in the implementation and dissemination of Gender and Development (GAD) programs at the barangay level. Barangay residents generally exhibit high levels of awareness of GAD services, particularly concerning Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) cases and maternal health. However, a moderate level of awareness was observed in livelihood programs, indicating a notable gap in residents' knowledge or engagement with economic empowerment initiatives.

Further analysis revealed no statistically significant differences in GAD awareness across age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, and socio-economic status for VAWC and maternal health services. This suggests that GAD information in these areas has been effectively and uniformly disseminated among diverse demographic groups within the barangay. Conversely, a statistically significant difference in awareness was explicitly noted in livelihood programs when respondents were grouped by educational attainment. Residents with lower educational attainment (elementary or high school) demonstrated higher awareness of livelihood services than college graduates. This higher awareness among those with lower education may reflect their increased participation in or direct need for community-based livelihood initiatives, which are more accessible locally.

This disparity suggests that residents with higher education levels may be less aware of localized livelihood services, potentially due to their tendency to seek economic opportunities beyond barangay-level interventions. Consequently, there is a clear need for barangay-level GAD programs to enhance communication and outreach strategies, primarily by targeting individuals with higher educational attainment for livelihood programs. Intertwining GAD with skill study and improvement sectors could help bridge this perception gap, ensuring that the cooperative aspects of GAD programs are universally available and inclusive.

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