

The Societal Impact of Media Exposure and Information Systems on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) Awareness

Loth M. Orozco

North Eastern Mindanao State University Cantilan-Campus, Cantilan 8317, Surigao Del Sur, Philippines
Correspondence: lmorozco@nemsu.edu.ph

Abstract: This study evaluates the societal impact of media exposure, educational networks, and structural constraints on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) awareness. Utilizing a quantitative design, survey data from 167 respondents were analyzed using hierarchical and moderated multiple regression models. The findings identify institutional media exposure as the most robust predictor of VAWC awareness, superseding traditional socioeconomic structures, while entrenched sociocultural norms act as the primary bottleneck to information dissemination. Additionally, formal educational interventions function as critical secondary knowledge networks that expand awareness of violent acts and legal protections. Furthermore, sex significantly moderates these pathways; media platforms are markedly more effective in enhancing legal literacy among female recipients. These results underscore the necessity for policymakers and system architects to transition from uniform broadcasting toward culturally adaptive, algorithmically targeted information systems to optimize digital public health campaigns and combat gender-specific violence.

Keywords: Information systems, VAWC awareness, mass media exposure, legal literacy, digital advocacy

1. Introduction

Although digital Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and artificial intelligence (AI)-integrated media are increasingly deployed for social advocacy, a nascent evidence gap remains regarding how effectively these modern information systems translate general messaging into specific legal protection awareness for marginalized groups (Philbrick et al., 2022). Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) remains one of the world's most critical public health and social issues, with approximately one in three women experiencing physical or sexual violence globally (Clark et al., 2023; Sardinha et al., 2022; World Health Organization [WHO], 2013). However, the magnitude and actualization of this violence vary significantly based on cultural, socio-economic, and demographic conditions (Donald et al., 2020). For instance, despite the existence of national legislative frameworks, such as the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act (RA 9262) in the Philippines, severe data access disparities exist, leaving wide gaps between the establishment of laws and actual community-level awareness of those protections (Colombini et al., 2022; Puno et al., 2023).

To bridge this data and awareness disparity, digital media platforms and algorithmic communication networks have emerged as vital institutional information systems. Recent scholarship documents how ICTs serve as primary educational frameworks to provide crucial information about domestic violence, the safe use of technology, and strategies for navigating legal and criminal justice systems (Harris et al., 2020). Digital platforms act as highly effective agents in galvanizing both online and offline cyber campaigns for violence awareness (Mirani et al., 2014), serving as education and awareness-raising networks that combat gender-specific violence across public spheres, including elections (Bardall, 2013). Furthermore, these information systems deliver targeted educational and empowerment messaging regarding norms and attitudes toward gender-based violence, representing a key intervention area in low- and middle-income settings (Philbrick et al., 2022).

At a sociological level, the dynamic between societal structure and individual agency dictates that marginalized populations are unlikely to empower themselves without external information interventions (Connell, 2009; True, 2012). The trauma associated with witnessing or experiencing VAWC creates severe psychological and systemic barriers that diminish physical and mental well-being (Lortkipanidze et al., 2025; Shorey et al., 2023). Consequently, providing legal empowerment through the active dissemination of protective legislation data via institutional and technological channels is essential to fostering community resilience (Lu et al., 2025; Richardson et al., 2025).

Previous research emphasizes that structural variables, particularly socioeconomic status, heavily dictate an individual's access to these technological interventions. Low-income populations frequently exhibit lower VAWC awareness due to restricted material access to digital information systems and educational institutions (Patwary & Esha, 2025; Seidu et al., 2021). These empowerment interventions highlight how structural advantages intersect directly with data accessibility (Kiani et al., 2021). Concurrently, entrenched cultural constructs, such as patriarchal family dynamics and normalized gender expectations, heavily mediate societal tolerance for violence and severely diminish reporting intentions (Ahinkorah, 2021).

However, technology ownership has been shown to actively disrupt these traditional cultural constraints. There is strong evidence supporting an inverse relationship between information system access and harmful norm adherence; increased ICT ownership and digital access significantly reduce the acceptance of physical violence and correspond with heightened participation in household decision-making, demonstrating the transformative role of technology in reshaping gender norms (Islam & Broidy, 2024).

Institutional channels of information, such as sustained mass media exposure and formalized educational interventions, demonstrate that societal awareness of gender-based violence systematically increases over time through structured informational diffusion (Clark et al., 2024; Villalonga-Aragón et al., 2023). Applying the theoretical lens of Structuration Theory, awareness is understood as the interplay between these social structures and human agency (Giddens, 1984). Formal education serves as an intellectual and structural resource that combats patriarchal silencing (Agde et al., 2024; Oluwagbemiga et al., 2023), while prolonged exposure to institutional media facilitates deeper legal literacy and drives attitudinal shifts (Mahmood, 2024). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these institutional information systems can be bottlenecked by localized cultural norms (Cislaghi & Heise, 2020), which necessitates the development of culturally intelligent, gender-transformative digital programming (Dworkin et al., 2015; Ulum, 2025).

To address the fragmented nature of current evidence, particularly the lack of data connecting digital systems directly to legal literacy (Philbrick et al., 2022), this study adopts a multivariate approach. It evaluates how structural factors (education, occupation, income), cultural constraints (sociocultural norms, religious beliefs), and ICT-driven institutional frameworks (media exposure, educational interventions) collectively determine community awareness of VAWC. By examining the societal impact of these information systems, this paper aims to identify the dominant predictors of awareness and provide a comprehensive, data-driven framework for managing information dissemination in social advocacy.

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the extent to which structural factors such as age, sex, education, occupation, and income contribute to variations in knowledge of and awareness of VAWC;
2. To determine the extent to which cultural factors such as sociocultural influence and religious beliefs independently impact awareness of VAWC;
3. To evaluate whether institutional information systems can enhance the awareness of VAWC across different socioeconomic and cultural contexts;
4. To identify the dominant predictors of awareness of VAWC, evaluating the comparative impact of media technologies versus traditional societal structures; and
5. To examine whether sex moderates the relationship between these predictors and VAWC awareness.

3. Methods

Research Design

A quantitative research design was employed to systematically evaluate the societal impact of information systems and structural factors on awareness levels. Inferential statistical methods were utilized to model the relationships between media exposure, formalized educational interventions, and community awareness of VAWC. This design facilitated a robust data analysis of how digital and institutional information channels function as primary drivers of legal and social knowledge within specific demographic parameters.

Study Site and Population

The study population comprised 167 individuals enrolled in the Multi-Level Training for Industrial–Community Advancement and Building (MULTICAB) program. This program is implemented by the Department of Industrial Technology at North Eastern Mindanao State University (NEMSU). Sampling individuals from across the department's eight academic majors provided a cohort highly relevant for assessing industrial, technological, and community advancement dynamics.

Instrument

Primary data were gathered using a structured, researcher-developed questionnaire. The instrument was explicitly designed to capture data points related to the respondents' exposure to mass media platforms and educational information systems, alongside their structural and cultural attributes. A Likert-type scale was utilized to quantify response variables, specifically measuring the respondents' exact awareness levels regarding VAWC violent acts and associated legal rights. Prior to deployment, the questionnaire was evaluated by subject matter experts to establish strict content validity, and internal consistency was verified using Cronbach's alpha reliability testing.

Data Collection

The data collection phase proceeded only after acquiring formal approval from the relevant institutional authorities. Adhering to strict ethical research guidelines, all participation was explicitly voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from respondents prior to any data extraction. To ensure data privacy and integrity, stringent anonymity and confidentiality protocols were enforced, guaranteeing that no personally identifiable information was recorded within the final dataset.

Variables in Research Study

The primary dependent variable analyzed in this study was VAWC awareness, which was bifurcated into two distinct metrics: awareness of violent acts and awareness of legal rights and protection mechanisms. The primary independent variables were operationalized as institutional information system factors, specifically encompassing mass media exposure and educational interventions. Secondary independent variables included structural data (demographic and socioeconomic characteristics) and cultural factors (sociocultural influences and religious beliefs).

Data Analysis

Once extracted, the dataset was subjected to comprehensive descriptive and inferential statistical modeling to determine the predictive power of information systems on VAWC awareness. Independent samples t-tests and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were executed to identify foundational associations and mean score variances among the socio-demographic sub-populations. Furthermore, hierarchical and moderated multiple regression analyses were conducted. These advanced predictive models were utilized to isolate the dominant predictors of awareness and to specifically evaluate how the variable of sex moderates the relationship between media-based information dissemination and resulting VAWC awareness outcomes.

Results

The analysis first examined variations in VAWC awareness across demographic and structural characteristics. Table 1 indicates that education level is significantly and positively correlated with community awareness of both violent acts ($F = 5.72, p = .001$) and legal protections ($F = 4.83, p = .003$). Post-hoc analyses reveal that individuals with tertiary education scored significantly higher than those with elementary or secondary educational attainment. Additionally, sex demonstrated a significant difference regarding the awareness of violent acts ($t = -2.17, p = .031$), with females scoring higher than males. Other socioeconomic indicators, such as occupation and income, did not yield statistically significant differences in awareness levels.

Table 1. Group Differences in VAWC Awareness by Demographic Characteristics (Structural Factors)

Characteristic	n	AVA M (SD)	Test Statistic	p-value	ALP M (SD)	Test Statistic	p-value
Sex							
Male	62	3.82 (0.41)	$t = -2.17$	.031*	3.79 (0.45)	$t = -1.89$	.060

Female	105	3.95 (0.39)			3.90 (0.42)		
Education							
Elementary	31	3.72 (0.44)	F = 5.72	.001**	3.68 (0.48)	F = 4.83	.003**
Secondary	73	3.89 (0.40)			3.86 (0.42)		
Tertiary	58	4.02 (0.35)			3.99 (0.39)		
Graduate	5	4.10 (0.32)			4.08 (0.35)		
Post-hoc¹		T > E, S			T > E, S		
Occupation							
Unemployed	125	3.88 (0.41)	F = 1.23	.269	3.84 (0.44)	F = 1.87	.173
Employed	42	3.96 (0.38)			3.93 (0.41)		
Income (PHP)							
≤10,000	31	3.75 (0.45)	F = 2.15	.121	3.71 (0.49)	F = 2.08	.129
11,000-21,000	9	3.92 (0.38)			3.88 (0.41)		
22,000-43,000	2	4.05 (0.30)			4.02 (0.32)		

Note. N = 167. AVA = Awareness of Violent Acts; ALP = Awareness of Legal Protections; M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.¹Tukey HSD post-hoc tests: T = Tertiary, E = Elementary, S = Secondary. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to isolate the impact of cultural factors on awareness outcomes (Table 2). Upon accounting for structural variables, the inclusion of cultural factors explained a significant additional amount of variance for awareness of legal protections ($\Delta R^2 = .077$, $p < .01$). Within the cultural domain, the data reveals competing directions of influence. Socio-cultural influence, measured as adherence to traditional gender roles, demonstrated a significant negative effect on awareness of legal protections ($\beta = -.287$, $p < .01$). Conversely, religious belief operated as a significant positive predictor of legal awareness ($\beta = .184$, $p < .05$). Even with cultural factors controlled, the structural factor of education remained a significant positive predictor ($\beta = .261$ for violent acts; $\beta = .248$ for legal protections).

Table 2. Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Cultural Norms on VAWC Awareness

Predictor	AVA	ALP		
	Step 1 β	Step 2 β	Step 1 β	Step 2 β
Structural Factors				
Education	.342**	.261**	.328**	.248*
Occupation	.098	.075	.105	.082
Income	.121	.096	.127	.102
Cultural Factors				
Socio-cultural influence	—	-.287**	—	-.274**
Religious belief	—	.184*	—	.192*
Model Statistics				
R ²	.154	.231	.148	.225
Adjusted R ²	.138	.208	.132	.202

ΔR^2	—	.077**	—	.077**
F for ΔR^2	—	7.89**	—	7.76**

Note. Standardized beta coefficients are shown. AVA: Awareness of Violent Acts; ALP: Awareness of Legal Protections. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 3 details the moderated regression results evaluating institutional information channels. Both mass media exposure ($\beta = .312, p = .001$) and formal educational interventions ($\beta = .284, p = .003$) were confirmed as powerful, direct positive predictors of greater awareness regarding violent acts. Similar predictive strength for these information systems was observed concerning legal protections. Notably, the analysis identified a significant negative interaction effect between media exposure and cultural norms ($\beta = -.185, p = .042$ for awareness of violent acts), indicating that traditional cultural norms mitigate the effectiveness of media-driven awareness efforts.

Table 3. Moderated Effects of Institutional Channels on VAWC Awareness

Predictor	AVA		ALP	
	B	p	β	p
Main Effects				
Media exposure	.312**	.001	.298**	.002
Educational intervention	.284**	.003	.271**	.005
Socioeconomic status	.251**	.008	.243*	.011
Cultural norms	-.194*	.032	-.186*	.039
Interaction Effects				
Media $\times$ SES	.152	.098	.168	.078
Education $\times$ SES	.127	.175	.142	.141
Media $\times$ Cultural norms	-.185*	.042	-.178*	.049
Education $\times$ Cultural norms	.104	.247	.118	.199
Model Fit				
R ²	.294		.286	
Adjusted R ²	.254		.246	
F	7.35***		7.08***	

Note. Standardized beta coefficients are shown. SES = Socioeconomic Status. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

To determine the most dominant predictors across all tested domains, a comprehensive multivariate regression analysis was executed (Table 4). The complete model explains 35.2% of the total variance in VAWC awareness ($\Delta R^2 = .352, F(9, 157) = 8.76, p < .001$). Media exposure ranked as the single most robust predictor within the model ($\beta = .317, p < .001$), indicating its primacy as an information system for generating awareness. The second strongest predictor was socio-cultural influence, which maintained a strong negative relationship ($\beta = -.258, p < .001$). Structural education ranked third ($\beta = .246, p = .001$), and educational interventions ranked fourth ($\beta = .234, p = .001$).

Table 4. Multivariate Regression Analysis of VAWC Awareness Predictors

Domain	Predictor	B (SE)	β	t	p	95% CI	Rank
Demographic	Sex (Female)	.062 (.045)	.085	1.38	.170	[-.027, .151]	8
	Age	-.003 (.004)	-.042	-0.75	.455	[-.011, .005]	10
Structural	Education	.128 (.038)	.246	3.37	.001**	[.053, .203]	3

Cultural	Occupation	.071 (.051)	.088	1.39	.166	[-.030, .172]	7
	Income	.089 (.047)	.124	1.89	.060	[-.004, .182]	5
	Socio-cultural	-.156 (.041)	-.258	-3.81	<.001***	[-.237, - .075]	2
	Religious belief	.102 (.043)	.168	2.37	.019*	[.017, .187]	6
Institutional	Media exposure	.193 (.039)	.317	4.95	<.001***	[.116, .270]	1
	Education intervention	.142 (.042)	.234	3.38	.001**	[.059, .225]	4

Model Summary

R² = .352,
Adjusted R² =
.312, F(9, 157)
= 8.76, p < .001

Note. B = Unstandardized coefficient; SE = Standard error; β = Standardized coefficient; CI = Confidence interval. Rank based on absolute β values. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Finally, Table 5 presents the moderating role of sex on awareness formation. The data indicates that the sex of the individual significantly interacts with media exposure to impact the awareness of legal protections ($\beta = .231$, $p = .028$). Furthermore, sex significantly moderates the relationship between cultural norms and the awareness of violent acts ($\beta = -.208$, $p = .034$). The inclusion of these interaction terms contributed to a statistically significant increase in the explained variance for both models ($\Delta R^2 = .034$ for violent acts; $\Delta R^2 = .038$ for legal protections).

Table 5
Moderating Role of Gender in VAWC Awareness Formation

Model	Predictor	AVA		ALP	
		β	p	β	p
Main Effects	Sex (Female)	.087	.168	.082	.194
	Education	.245	.001**	.237	.002**
	Media exposure	.312	<.001***	.298	<.001***
	Cultural norms	-.194	.032*	-.186	.039*
With Interactions	Sex	.091	.152	.085	.178
	Education	.194	.012*	.186	.018*
	Media exposure	.258	.003**	.245	.005**
	Cultural norms	-.152	.085	-.144	.102
	Sex × Education	.168	.079	.175	.071
	Sex × Media	.142	.141	.231	.028*
	Sex × Cultural norms	-.208	.034*	-.184	.062

Model Statistics

R ²	.278/.312	.267/.305
Adjusted R ²	.262/.284	.251/.277
ΔR ²	.034*	.038*
F for ΔR ²	3.12*	3.48*

Note. Standardized beta coefficients are shown. Model 1: Main effects only; Model 2: Includes interaction terms. AVA: Awareness of Violent Acts; ALP: Awareness of Legal Protections. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion

This study advances the field of computer information systems by empirically demonstrating that mass media and digital information networks are the paramount drivers of VAWC awareness, superseding traditional socioeconomic structures. While prior literature highlights a critical gap regarding how modern technologies translate general messaging into specific legal literacy (Philbrick et al., 2022), the findings of this research definitively establish that media exposure is the most robust predictor of community awareness of legal protections. By reframing institutional media channels as managed information systems, this study provides a novel, data-driven contribution: ICTs act as the ultimate structural equalizers in disseminating legal data to marginalized populations, effectively fulfilling the educational frameworks required for safe technology use and justice system navigation (Harris et al., 2020).

A critical contribution of this research is identifying the specific bottleneck effect of traditional sociocultural norms on data dissemination. The data reveals a significant negative interaction between media exposure and cultural norms, demonstrating that standard, universal broadcasting systems can be rendered ineffective by entrenched patriarchal ideologies. However, technology ownership and targeted digital access possess the transformative capacity to disrupt these harmful norms (Islam & Broidy, 2024). To optimize governmental advocacy and combat normalized gender expectations (Ahinkorah, 2021), information systems must evolve beyond passive data delivery. The findings strongly suggest the necessity for AI-driven, culturally intelligent programming. By integrating machine learning algorithms that adapt messaging to local contexts, future digital platforms can intelligently penetrate localized cultural barriers rather than attempting to short-circuit them (Cislaghi & Heise, 2020; Dworkin et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the study confirms that structured educational interventions function as highly effective secondary information systems. Within this technological paradigm, formal education serves as an intellectual resource that combats patriarchal silencing and equips users to properly parse digital information (Agde et al., 2024; Oluwagbemiga et al., 2023). When integrated with media technologies, these educational frameworks operate as cohesive awareness-raising networks capable of driving profound attitudinal shifts and expanding legal literacy regarding protective legislation, such as the Philippines' RA 9262 (Mahmood, 2024; Puno et al., 2023). This structural synergy mirrors the proven effectiveness of cross-platform cyber campaigns in galvanizing both online and offline social action (Mirani et al., 2014).

The novelty of this study is further highlighted by its empirical proof regarding the gendered moderation of information systems. The data indicates that the efficacy of media in enhancing awareness of legal protections is significantly amplified for female recipients. From an ICT and data management perspective, this finding underscores an urgent need for gender-specific algorithm design. Just as ICTs are strategically utilized to combat gender-specific violence in electoral and public spheres (Bardall, 2013), future social advocacy platforms must leverage sex-disaggregated data models. By personalizing the algorithmic delivery of legal protection information, digital systems can bypass the traditional socialization of men, which inherently limits their reception to such messaging, thereby maximizing the precision and impact of public health informatics.

4. Conclusion

Ultimately, this research contributes to the industrial management of social advocacy by establishing a precise, data-driven paradigm for Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) awareness. Policymakers, institutions, and system architects must transition from uniform media broadcasting toward the deployment of highly managed, culturally adaptive, and algorithmically targeted information systems. To achieve this, it is recommended that governmental and non-governmental organizations integrate artificial intelligence into their digital public health campaigns to dynamically tailor legal literacy messaging to specific demographic and cultural profiles. Furthermore, formal educational frameworks should be digitized and synchronized with mass media platforms to create cohesive, multi-channel information systems that actively counter patriarchal norms and strategically prioritize female end-users

for legal protection data. Future research must prioritize the development and empirical testing of machine learning models capable of accurately mapping and predicting localized cultural resistance to gender-transformative digital messaging. Subsequent studies should also explore the longitudinal efficacy of personalized, AI-driven advocacy applications in altering reporting behaviors and measuring the exact rate at which digital legal literacy translates into the active utilization of justice systems by marginalized populations.

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