

## **The Implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 in Tabuk City, Kalinga Province**

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### **Abstract**

This descriptive type of research looked into the implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 in the City of Tabuk, Province of Kalinga, particularly on the awareness of the respondents on the provisions of this Act; extent of implementation; and degree of seriousness of the factors that affect the implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000. The questionnaire was the primary tool for gathering data. The retrieved questionnaire was evaluated using the three point-Likert Scale. The weighted mean and ANOVA were used in order to have an objective analysis of the data. The findings on the extent of awareness of the respondents on the provisions of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 is "moderately aware," while the extent of implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act Of 2000 is "moderately implement." Moreover, the degree of seriousness of the factors that affect the implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 in Tabuk City is "moderately serious." The findings of this study give a picture of how the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 is being disseminated and implemented in the locality. Also, it provides data to the concerned agencies as the basis to look into the implementation process of this Act. Moreover, the study's findings shall be used to formulate policies to enhance the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000.

**Keywords:** Provisions, Solo Parent, Barangay Development Council, Welfare, Act

### **Introduction**

A family is a social institution and structural unit that serves as the child's first socializing agent and significantly impacts the person's developmental, psychological, ethical, and cultural well-being. The foremost responsibility of the family is to prepare and nurture the child in societal norms and values. According to Davis (2011), the core of whom a person becomes in society occurs in the home during the early years of one's life. Some such family situations, however, entrust childrearing solely to a single parent.

Solo parenting can arise due to family breakdown, the death of one's spouse, teenage pregnancy, or a person's adoption. A solo parent is responsible for raising a child or children, depending on the situation.

According to Thompson and Google, a solo parent entails many responsibilities, including caring for the children physiologically, physically, and psychologically. When a single parent cannot satisfy these responsibilities, the child's psychological state and self-preservation suffer. Children in single-parent families are deeply involved with the daily running of the family. The children should often share more roles and responsibilities, such as housework and self-care, than other children. The solo parent frequently shares decision-making with their children in ways that parents in two-parent families do not.

A child's natural mother or father does not have to be the sole parent; some people choose to be the child's sole parent by adopting the child. This situation tends to happen when the birth parents are incapable of looking after the child owing to illness, the death of one or both parents, and the loss of the ability of the relatives to care for the child or family abandonment. Child rearing by oneself is a recent social trend.

According to <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/curid=226109>, in the 1980s, 19.5% of households in the United States were solo-parent households. It also claims that between 1980 and 2009, the proportion of single-parent households increased to 29.5%, owing to an increase in births to unmarried women and the number of failed couple relationships. The same report claims that unmarried parents raised 11% of children in 2000, 15.6% by divorced families, and 1.2% by widowed parents. The 2010 United States Census states that 27% of children live with a single parent, which is consistent with the new paradigm in 2000. Related data obtained from <http://yourblackwiki.blogspot.com/2018/06/single-parent.html> says that the proportion of children living completely with their mothers rose dramatically between 1960 and 2016, continuing to increase from 8% to 23%, while the proportion of children living completely with their fathers increased from 1% to 4%. The rate of children living without a parent increased from 3% to 4%. 6.

In the case of the Philippines, a study funded by the World Health Organization but carried out by the Ministry of Health and the University of the Philippines-National Institutes of Health states that the Philippines has 14 to 15 million solo parents, with 95% of them being women. This statement is stated in a press release issued by the Senate of the Philippines on December 15, 2021. In another study by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies cited in (the Asian Institute of Management on 2022-08-05., n.d.), eight out of every twenty women are in underprivileged employment situations. Many factors contribute to the country's growing number of single parents.

The State has come a long way in recognizing solo parents' welfare. Finally, on November 7, 2000, the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000, Republic Act No. 8972, was signed. The Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000 declares that it is the State's policy to advocate for the family as the framework of the nation, intensify its solidarity, and guarantee its holistic development. The law requires the development of a comprehensive package of services to meet the needs of and ensure solo parents' well-being. The Act establishes a comprehensive program of services for solo parents and their children. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is required by law to assist solo parents by providing social development and welfare services, critical incident stress debriefing, and other special projects for individuals in need of protection.

The Act also safeguards fathers and mothers who support their children alone following the death, abandonment, separation of a spouse, or even having a child resulting from sexual assault. This Act applies to single parents who care for children who are not their biological children, such as nieces, nephews, or godchildren. Furthermore, by allocating funds for other purposes, such as education, this Act offers additional help, support, benefits, and privileges to single parents and their children like 1. For two (2) years following childbirth, a 10% (10%) discount on all purchases of clothing materials for the child; 2. 15% discount on all medicines and other medical supplements/supplies purchased for the child; 3. 15 percent (15%) of all baby milk, food, and supplement purchases; and 4. Individual income tax fundamental exemption. Furthermore, this Act established the qualifications for solo parents, the procedure for obtaining services for solo parents, and the benefits.

Moreover, solo parent employees responsible for their children are eligible for exclusive government benefits. Section 7 of (RA 8972) states that no employer shall discriminate against any solo parent employee regarding employment terms and conditions based on his or her status. Moreover, the benefits of solo parent employees are explained in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 8972, which entitles them to Parental Leave and a Flexible Work Schedule due to their status. Flexible working hours will be at the prerogative of the agency's head for government employees. The weekly working hours cannot be reduced if the agency uses the flexible working

hours schedule format (flextime). When implementing flexi-time, the core working hours must be prescribed while considering the service's needs.

Other economic advantages stipulated in this Act for solo parents include (a) training in livelihood skills, essential business management, value orientation, and the provision of seed capital or job placement; and (b) counseling services, which include individual, peer group, or family counseling. These emphasize resolving personal relationships and role conflicts. The requirements and procedure for assessing beneficiaries to receive the benefits of this item will be identified by the DSWD; (c) Parent effectiveness services which include the provision and expansion of knowledge and skills of the solo parent on early childhood development, behavior management, health care, and proper nutrition, rights, and duties of parents and children; (d) Critical incidence stress debriefing, which includes preventive stress management strategy designed to assist solo parents in coping with crises and cases of abuse; and (e) Special projects for individuals in need of protection which include temporary shelter, counseling, legal assistance, medical care, self-concept or ego-building, crisis management, and spiritual enrichment. This Act includes additional education, housing, and medical benefits.

It has been a decade that the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000 was implemented in the Philippines. The provisions of the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000 address the welfare of solo parents. However, the implementation of these provisions is of another concern. Many questions arise: Are this Act's provisions known to the implementers at the barangay level? Are the Barangay Development Council or the Barangay Officials familiar with this Act? The Barangay Development Council is in charge of the development of the barangay. Barangay development includes looking into the welfare of solo parents. Under Republic Act No. 8972, the government provides benefits and privileges to solo parents and their children by allocating funds for these and other purposes. The implementation of this Act at the barangay level is partly dependent on the barangay officials manning the barangay. These ideas founded the conduct of this study to look into the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000 in Eastern Tabuk, which is composed of the three barangays: Barangay Local Government Units of Lacnog, Bulo, and Agbannawag. The study specifically looked into the Barangay Development Council's level of awareness, as this has implications for the implementation of this Act, as well as the factors that affect the implementation of this Act at the barangay level. The findings of this study will be forwarded to relevant agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), which is in charge of disseminating this Act, and the Department of Interior and Local Government, which has authority over barangay officials. Furthermore, the findings may aid these organizations in reconsidering their strategies for empowering the Barangay Development Council (BDC) in light of the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000.

### **Materials and Methods**

The study is a descriptive type of research with the structured questionnaire as the primary tool in gathering the data along with the implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 in Eastern Tabuk, Tabuk City, Kalinga. An informal interview with the respondents was conducted to clarify their answers. The retrieved questionnaires were collated, tabulated for statistical treatment using the 3-point Likert Scale, and interpreted using the statistical tools of weighted mean to qualify the responses along the variables and ANOVA to test the status of the null hypothesis.

### **Results and Discussions**

Table 1 presents the gathered and analyzed data on the extent of awareness of the respondents on the provisions of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 and its interpretation.

**Table 1. Extent of Awareness of the Provisions of Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000**

<b>Provisions of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 (RA 8972) on the definition of “solo parent”.</b>	<b>3 (ME)</b>	<b>2 (MoE)</b>	<b>1 (LE)</b>	<b>WM</b>
A woman who gives birth as a result of rape and other crimes against chastity even without a final conviction of the offender. Provided, that the mother keeps and raises the child.	52	40	13	2.37
Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to death of spouse.	32	59	14	2.28
Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood while the spouse is detained or is serving sentence for criminal conviction for at least one (1) year.	36	49	20	2.26
Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to physical and/or mental incapacity of spouse as certified by a public medical practitioner.	30	54	21	2.19
Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to legal separation or de facto separation from spouse for at least one (1) year as long as he/she is entrusted with the custody of the children.	34	57	14	2.30
Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to declaration of nullity or annulment of marriage as decreed by a court or by a church as long as he/she is entrusted with the custody of the children.	36	57	12	2.34
Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to abandonment of spouse for at least (1) year.	36	53	16	2.30
Unmarried mother/father who has preferred to keep and rear her/his child/ children instead of having others care for them or give them up to a welfare institution.	44	49	12	2.42
Any other person who solely provides parental care and support to a child or children.	41	54	10	2.41
Any family member who assumes the responsibility of head of family as a result of death, abandonment, disappearance or prolonged absence of the parents or solo parent.	40	51	14	2.36
TAWM				2.32

The table shows the respondents' perceptions of the extent of awareness of the Barangay Development Council on the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 (RA 8972) in Eastern Tabuk, Tabuk City, as "moderately extent" with a mean of 2.32.

Of the ten indicators, indicator no. 8 on, "Unmarried mother/father who has preferred to keep and rear her/his child/ children instead of having others care for them or give them up to a welfare institution," got the highest mean of 2.42 which means, "much extent"; followed by indicator no. 9 on "Any other person who solely provides parental care and support to a child or children" with a mean of 2.41; and indicator one on "A woman who gives birth as a result of rape and other crimes against chastity even without a final conviction of the offender. Provided, that the mother keeps and raises the child" with a mean of 2.37, respectively. The four groups of respondents perceive these

indicators as "much extent," meaning they have enough knowledge or understanding of these provisions.

**Table 2. Extent of Implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 in Eastern Tabuk, Tabuk City**

Indicators	3 (ME)	2 (MoE)	1 (LE)	WM
Livelihood development services, which include training on livelihood skills, basic business management, value orientation and the provision of seed capital or job placement.	33	60	12	2.20
Counseling services, which include individual, peer group or family counseling. These will focus on the resolution of personal relationship and role conflicts.	28	59	18	2.10
Parent effectiveness services which include the provision and expansion of knowledge and skills of the solo parent on early childhood development, behavior, management, health care and proper nutrition, rights and duties of parents and children.	38	55	12	2.25
Critical incidence stress debriefing, which includes preventive stress management strategy designed to assist solo parents in coping with crisis situations and cases of abuse.	36	50	19	2.16
Special projects for individuals in need of protection which include temporary shelter, counseling, legal assistance, medical care, self-concept or ego building, crisis management and spiritual enrichment.	39	46	20	2.18
Flexible work schedule. The employer shall provide for a flexible work schedule for solo parents: Provided, that the same shall not affect individual and company productivity: Provided further that any employer may request exemption from the above requirements from the DOLE on certain meritorious grounds.	33	54	18	2.14
Work Discrimination. No employer shall discriminate against any solo parent employee with respect to terms and conditions of employment on account of his/her status.	36	61	8	2.27
Parental Leave. In addition to leave privileges under existing laws, parental leave of not more than seven (7) working days every year shall be granted to any solo parent employee who has rendered service of at least one (1) year. The seven-day parental leave shall be non-cumulative.	31	60	14	2.16
Educational Benefits	44	51	10	2.32
Housing Benefits	25	62	18	2.07
Medical Assistance	46	53	6	2.38
TAWM				2.20

On the one hand, the indicators that got the lowest means are indicator four, "Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to physical and mental incapacity of spouse as certified by a public medical practitioner," with a mean of 2.19; indicator three on "Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to death of spouse" with a standard of 2.28, and

indicator two along "Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood while the spouse is detained or is serving sentence for a criminal conviction for at least one (1) year" with a mean of 2.26. These indicators fall under "moderately extent."

An informal follow-up interview was conducted with the respondents as to why their overall awareness of the provisions of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 is moderate, and they claimed that this program is not given much attention during barangay assemblies and barangay seminars or training. As an impact of this limited knowledge or awareness of this Act, the barangay local government units have not so much enacted ordinances to this effect; neither did they include programs for solo parents in their barangay development plans.

The table shows that the extent of implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 in Eastern Tabuk, Tabuk City, is "moderately implemented," as demonstrated by a mean of 2.20.

Based on the table, all the indicators are perceived as moderately implemented except "Medical Assistance." Respondents stated that the indicators are rated as such because they observed that the services outlined in the Act are not being provided in their communities. According to one interviewee, the LGU scholarship is the educational benefit that single parents have access to. She also stated that she is unaware of any scholarships available to single parents in their area. In another interview, one respondent said seminars on the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 are extremely rare or non-existent among BDC members.

**Table 3. Degree of Seriousness of the Factors that Affect the Implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 in Eastern Tabuk, Tabuk City**

INDICATOR	3 (MS)	2 (MoS)	1 (LS)	WM
No local support groups	31	56	18	2.12
Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 (RA 8972) is not a priority issue in the community	24	55	26	1.98
No additional powers and functions of DSWD	28	57	20	2.08
Openness of community on cases of solo parents	28	56	21	2.07
Female or male dominated venue	27	63	15	2.11
No criteria for support	26	53	26	2.0
Not set up to support cultural needs	22	58	25	1.97
No comprehensive package of social development and welfare services	31	50	24	2.07
No formal seminar of Barangay Development Council on Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 (RA 8972)	37	50	18	2.18
Barangay Development Council is not fully aware on Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 (RA 8972)	40	50	15	2.24
TAWM				2.08

The indicator that got the lowest mean is indicator ten on "Housing Benefits," with a mean of 2.07; followed by indicator two along, "Counseling services, which include individual, peer group or family counseling. These will focus on the resolution of personal relationships and role conflicts" with a mean of 2.10, and indicator six along "Flexible work schedule. The employer shall provide for a flexible work schedule for solo parents: Provided that the same shall not affect individual and company productivity: Provided further that any employer may request exemption from the above

requirements from the DOLE on certain meritorious grounds" with a mean of 2.14. All of these indicators are classified as "moderately implement," and when asked why they perceived these indicators as "moderately implement," respondents responded that indicators are not implemented in their communities, thus their answers.

Table 3 presents the analyzed responses of respondents on the degree of factors that affect the implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 in Eastern Tabuk, Tabuk City.

The table shows the perceptions of the four groups of respondents on the degree of factors that affect the implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 (RA 8972) in Eastern Tabuk, Tabuk City. As evidenced by the table, their perceptions of the indicators are "moderately serious."

Of all the indicators, indicator ten, "Barangay Development Council is not fully aware on Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 (RA 8972)," got the highest mean of 2.24; followed by indicator nine along, "No formal seminar of Barangay Development Council on Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 (RA 8972)" with a mean of 2.18; indicator one along "No local support groups" at 2.12; and indicator five along "Female or male dominated venue" with a mean of 2.11, respectively. These indicators are perceived as "moderately serious."

Based on the interview with the respondents, they claimed that the indicators moderately affect the implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 (RA 8972) in their localities.

### **Conclusion**

The study concluded that the extent of awareness of the respondents on the provisions of Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 is "moderately extent" while the extent of implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act Of 2000 in Eastern Tabuk, Tabuk City is "moderately extent". On the other hand, the degree of seriousness of the factors that affect the implementation of the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000 in Eastern Tabuk, Tabuk City is "moderately serious".

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