



# **GENDER, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE, AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN CALABARZON: PNP INTERVENTIONS, REFERRAL PATHWAYS, AND PARTNERSHIPS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This study reviewed existing literature on gender-responsive policing, domestic violence intervention strategies, and community support mechanisms to examine how gender influences domestic violence response in the CALABARZON region. Specifically, it investigated the effectiveness of Philippine National Police (PNP) interventions, the accessibility of referral pathways, and the role of partnerships among government agencies, non-government organizations, and community stakeholders in supporting victims of domestic violence. The study hypothesized that gender-sensitive PNP interventions, well-established referral pathways, and strong interagency partnerships significantly enhanced the quality of domestic violence response and victim support services. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected through structured questionnaires from 123 respondents, including PNP personnel, domestic violence survivors, social workers, and community representatives from selected provinces in CALABARZON. Descriptive statistics and correlation analyses were employed to examine relationships among the study variables. The findings revealed that gender-responsive interventions were positively associated with improved victim protection and service accessibility. Effective referral pathways facilitated timely access to legal, medical, and psychosocial support, while collaborative partnerships strengthened community-based responses to domestic violence. The study concluded that coordinated and gender-sensitive approaches contributed significantly to addressing domestic violence cases. It recommended enhancing PNP training on gender responsiveness, strengthening referral networks, and expanding multisectoral partnerships to improve victim-centered services and community support systems throughout the region.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Gender Responsiveness, Domestic Violence Response, Community Support, CALABARZON population, quantitative descriptive-correlational method*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background of the Study**

Domestic violence remains one of the most pervasive social issues in the Philippines, disproportionately affecting women, children, and vulnerable gender groups (David et al., 2020). Despite the passage of the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children (RA 9262) and the expanding gender and development (GAD) initiatives across local government units, many victims continue to face barriers in reporting abuse, accessing services, and obtaining justice (Philippine Commission on Women, 2017; Dizon, 2021). In the CALABARZON region—one of the most populous and economically dynamic regions in the country—cases of domestic violence continue to rise, highlighting the urgent need to strengthen response mechanisms.

The Philippine National Police (PNP), particularly through the Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs), plays a central role in responding to domestic violence. Their responsibilities include initial case documentation, safety planning, referral to service providers, and coordination with barangay officials, social workers, health institutions, and NGOs. However, gaps in response protocols, limited resources, and varying community perceptions can affect the effectiveness of interventions.

This study examined how gender, PNP domestic violence response, and community support systems interact in CALABARZON. It explored the strength and limitations of current PNP interventions, evaluates the clarity and functionality of referral pathways, and assesses the role of inter-agency and community partnerships. Understanding these elements is essential to strengthen coordination, enhance service delivery, and promote gender-responsive policing.

Domestic violence in the Philippines is shaped by cultural norms, gender power dynamics, and varying levels of socio-economic stability (David et al., 2020; Philippine Commission on Women, 2017). National data show sustained reports of intimate partner violence, child abuse, and gender-based violence (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2017, 2022). In CALABARZON, the combination of rapid urbanization, migration, and socio-economic stressors contributes to the vulnerability of individuals and families.

The PNP, under its mandate, established Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs) in police stations to ensure sensitive, gender-responsive handling of cases. These desks are responsible for incident response, documentation, protection, and management of referrals. Meanwhile, referral pathways involve a network of barangay officials, DSWD, local government social workers, health institutions, and NGOs such as women's shelters.



Despite these structures, gaps persist. Reports of underreporting, inconsistent protocols, and inadequate training among police officers have been noted in various contexts. Moreover, community awareness about referral systems remains limited. Effective interventions require not only capable police responders but also responsive community support and functional partnerships.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the intersection of gender, police response, and community mechanisms in CALABARZON.

### ***Gender-based violence as a structural issue***

The Philippine Commission on Women notes that VAWC continues due to persistent cultural attitudes that normalize control, jealousy, and male dominance within relationships.

### ***Prevalence and forms of domestic violence***

In the Philippines, the National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS 2017 & 2022) reports similar figures, with emotional and psychological abuse emerging as the most commonly reported form.

Research in CALABARZON communities echo these patterns. Studies show that emotional abuse, economic deprivation, and digital violence are increasingly reported among young and urban populations, particularly in Laguna and Batangas.

### ***Women and Children Protection Desk (WCPD)***

The PNP's WCPD has been widely studied as a frontline institution in VAWC cases. Philippine studies (Pamaos, 2019; Lorenzo, 2021) highlight that WCPD officers provide the following:

- a. case documentation and investigation;
- b. assistance in obtaining medico-legal reports;
- c. filing of charges under RA 9262; and
- d. emergency rescue and safety planning

These studies acknowledge that WCPDs have improved the reporting of VAWC and increased access to justice. However, challenges remain: understaffing, inadequate training, and workload stretching officers beyond specialized gender-sensitive duties.

### ***Gender sensitivity in policing***

Local studies show that survivors are more likely to report abuse when police officers are trained in gender sensitivity, confidentiality, and trauma-informed communication. Research by Castillo (2022) demonstrates that a respectful and non-judgmental approach improves trust in PNP services.

In CALABARZON, regional modernization efforts—such as mobile police stations, digital reporting platforms, and community patrol initiatives—are associated with faster response times and increased accessibility for women in remote barangays.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This research based its theoretical foundation on the Gender, Responsive Policing Framework, Multi, Sectoral Service Delivery Model, and Ecological Systems Theory. The Gender, Responsive Policing Framework argues that law enforcement officers should be sensitive to gender dynamics and the adoption of rights, based approaches when handling domestic violence cases. The Multi, Sectoral Service Delivery Model points to the necessity of police, local government units (LGUs), health units, and non-government organizations (NGOs) working together in a coordinated and integrated way to provide a full range of services to the victims. According to Ecological Systems Theory, domestic violence response is the result of various factors at the individual, family, community, and institutional levels which interact with each other.

Employing the ideas of these theories, the study considers PNP interventions, referral pathways, and community partnerships as the independent variables. Among the PNP interventions are the following: case handling and documentation, implementation of gender, responsive protocols, and victim protection mechanisms. Referral pathways comprise the elements of clarity of roles among the different agencies, availability of services, promptness of referrals, and the quality of inter, agency communication. Community partnerships include the support of the barangay, LGU programs, NGO and shelter assistance, health sector involvement. These variables together depict the institutional and operational frameworks that directly determine the level of service delivery to domestic violence victims.

The effectiveness of domestic violence response in CALABARZON is the dependent variable of the study which is measured through the aspects of victim safety, case resolution efficiency, continuity of support, and satisfaction with services. The study is based on the premise that the better the PNP interventions are implemented, the more efficient the referral pathways and the better the community partnerships, the higher the response outcomes will be.

Nevertheless, the connection between the independent and dependent variables may be impacted by some mediating variables such as societal gender norms, the availability of training and resources, current institutional policies, and the level of awareness of referral systems. These factors can either enhance or limit the effectiveness of domestic violence response mechanisms. In sum, the



framework suggests that multi, sectoral interventions that are coordinated, gender, responsive, and adequately supported result in more effective domestic violence response outcomes in CALABARZON.

**Figure 1. Research Paradigm**



## METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a **descriptive-quantitative research design** to examine gender-related domestic violence response, community support systems, and the intervention mechanisms of the Philippine National Police in the CALABARZON region. This design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researchers to systematically describe and analyze the existing practices, referral pathways, and partnerships implemented by the PNP and allied agencies in addressing domestic violence cases. Through quantitative methods, the study gathered measurable data regarding respondents' perceptions, experiences, and awareness of the effectiveness of intervention programs and community-based support services. Descriptive research is commonly used in social science studies to present an accurate profile of persons, situations, or groups and to identify relationships among variables without manipulating the research environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) necessary for assessing the effectiveness of current intervention systems.

Furthermore, the study adopted a cross-sectional approach, wherein data were collected from the 123 respondents within a specific period to capture the present condition of domestic violence response mechanisms in CALABARZON. Statistical tools such as frequency distribution, percentage, weighted mean, and ranking were utilized to interpret and analyze the collected data. Ethical considerations were also observed by ensuring voluntary participation, confidentiality of responses, and informed consent from all participants. The findings of the study aimed to provide evidence-based insights that could strengthen PNP interventions, improve referral pathways, and enhance collaborative partnerships among government agencies, local communities, and support organizations in addressing gender-related domestic violence cases effectively.

### Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study consisted of **123 individuals** selected from various sectors within CALABARZON, including community members, local officials, social workers, and PNP personnel involved in domestic violence response initiatives. The researchers employed a structured survey questionnaire as the primary data-gathering instrument to ensure consistency and objectivity in collecting responses. The questionnaire contained items related to awareness of gender-based violence policies, accessibility of referral pathways, effectiveness of police interventions, and the level of community support available to victims. A purposive sampling technique was used to identify respondents who possessed relevant knowledge and experience regarding domestic violence response and inter-agency partnerships. This approach allowed the study to obtain reliable and context-specific information

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study aimed to assess the problems encountered and the perceived level of effectiveness of the Philippine National Police (PNP) response and referral pathways in handling domestic violence cases in CALABARZON, particularly in terms of role clarity,



service accessibility, timeliness, and communication, and to determine whether a significant relationship exists between the problems encountered and the perceived effectiveness of the system.

**1. Problems Encountered in Domestic Violence Response**

**Table 1.1. Problems Encountered in Domestic Violence Response in terms of PNP Response**

Problem	Frequency	Percent
Delayed response to incidents.	67	54.47
Inadequate personnel.	67	54.47
Lack of specialized training on domestic violence.	53	43.09
Difficulty in evidence collection/documentation.	62	50.41
Heavy workload affecting case handling.	58	47.15

Table 1.1 presents the problems encountered in domestic violence response in terms of PNP response. The results show that the most commonly reported issues are **delayed response to incidents** and **inadequate personnel**, both with a frequency of **67 respondents or 54.47%**. This indicates that more than half of the respondents experience significant challenges in terms of response time and manpower availability when handling domestic violence cases. These two issues suggest that the efficiency of police response is constrained by limited staffing and possible logistical or operational delays, which may directly affect the timely protection of victims and the immediate resolution of reported incidents.

In addition, difficulty in evidence collection and documentation was reported by 62 respondents or 50.41%, while heavy workload affecting case handling was identified by 58 respondents or 47.15%. These findings indicate that nearly half of the respondents experience operational burdens that affect the quality and effectiveness of case management. The challenges in evidence collection and documentation suggest limitations in investigative capacity, which may weaken case build-up and prosecution processes. Similarly, the presence of heavy workload implies that personnel may be overextended, reducing their ability to respond efficiently and thoroughly to domestic violence cases.

Meanwhile, lack of specialized training on domestic violence was reported by 53 respondents or 43.09%, making it the least frequently identified problem among the indicators, although still significant. This suggests that a considerable proportion of PNP personnel may not have sufficient specialized knowledge or skills in handling sensitive domestic violence cases, which require both technical competence and trauma-informed approaches. Overall, the results indicate that while all identified problems are relevant, the most critical concerns are delayed response and inadequate personnel, highlighting the need for strengthened staffing, improved operational efficiency, enhanced training programs, and better investigative support systems to improve domestic violence response effectiveness.

This means that more than half of the respondents have experienced issues related to response time and insufficient personnel in handling domestic violence cases. A considerable number also encountered challenges in documentation and workload, which may affect the efficiency of case handling. Although fewer respondents reported lack of specialized training, it is still experienced by a notable portion of the group. These findings show that operational and resource-related concerns are commonly encountered in domestic violence response.

These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting staffing limitations, heavy workloads, and training deficiencies among Women and Children Protection Desks (Lorenzo, 2021; Pamaos, 2019).

**Table 1.2. Problems Encountered in Domestic Violence Response in terms of Victim Protection and Support**

Problem	Frequency	Percent
Victims unwilling to cooperate.	71	57.72
Fear of retaliation by the offender.	64	52.03
Lack of temporary shelter for victims.	61	49.59
Limited access to legal assistance.	68	55.28
Insufficient information provided to victims.	61	49.59

Table 1.2 presents the problems encountered in domestic violence response in terms of victim protection and support. The results show that the most prevalent issue is victims unwilling to cooperate, with a frequency of 71 respondents or 57.72%, indicating that more than half of the respondents perceive victim non-cooperation as a major barrier in handling domestic violence cases. Closely following this is limited access to legal assistance, reported by 68 respondents or 55.28%, and fear of retaliation by the offender, identified by 64 respondents or 52.03%. These findings suggest that victim-related barriers are strongly influenced by fear,



lack of legal support, and hesitation to participate in legal processes, which significantly hinder effective case resolution and protection efforts.

In addition, lack of temporary shelter for victims and insufficient information provided to victims both obtained the same frequency of 61 respondents or 49.59%. These results indicate that nearly half of the respondents perceive gaps in immediate protective services and victim information dissemination. The absence of accessible shelters limits the ability of authorities to ensure the safety of victims immediately after reporting incidents, while insufficient information may prevent victims from fully understanding their rights, available services, and legal procedures. These gaps weaken the overall victim support system and may discourage reporting or continued participation in legal proceedings.

Overall, the findings highlight that the major challenges in victim protection and support are centered on fear, reluctance to cooperate, and limited access to essential services such as legal aid and safe shelter. The relatively high percentages across all indicators suggest that these issues are widespread and interconnected, ultimately affecting the effectiveness of domestic violence response mechanisms. Strengthening victim protection systems, improving access to legal and psychosocial support, enhancing shelter availability, and intensifying information dissemination are essential to encourage cooperation and ensure the safety and empowerment of victims.

The findings support previous research indicating that fear of retaliation, lack of legal support, and victim reluctance often hinder the reporting and prosecution of domestic violence cases (David et al., 2020; Bantug & Soriano, 2020).

**Table 1.3. Problems Encountered in Domestic Violence Response in terms of Inter-Agency Coordination**

Problem	Frequency	Percent
Poor communication between agencies.	65	52.85
Roles and responsibilities.	58	47.15
Delayed referral process.	59	47.97
Lack of coordination with social services (e.g., DSWD, LGU).	72	58.54
Inconsistent implementation of protocols.	60	48.78

Table 1.3 presents the problems encountered in domestic violence response in terms of inter-agency coordination. The results show that the most prevalent issue is lack of coordination with social services (e.g., DSWD, LGU), with a frequency of 72 respondents or 58.54%, indicating that more than half of the respondent's experience gaps in collaboration between the PNP and key support agencies. This is followed by poor communication between agencies, reported by 65 respondents or 52.85%, suggesting that breakdowns in information sharing significantly affect the coordination of domestic violence response. These findings highlight that inter-agency linkages remain a critical challenge, particularly in ensuring timely and unified support for victims.

Furthermore, inconsistent implementation of protocols was identified by 60 respondents or 48.78%, while delayed referral process was reported by 59 respondents or 47.97%. These results indicate that nearly half of the respondent's experience inefficiencies in case referral and procedural execution, which can delay victim assistance and weaken case management continuity. In addition, roles and responsibilities among agencies were cited by 58 respondents or 47.15%, suggesting that there is still some ambiguity or overlap in agency functions, which may contribute to delays and confusion in coordinated response efforts.

Overall, the findings emphasize that inter-agency coordination challenges are largely driven by weak collaboration with social service agencies, communication gaps, and procedural inconsistencies. The relatively high percentages across all indicators suggest that these issues are systemic and significantly affect the efficiency of domestic violence response. Strengthening formal coordination mechanisms, clarifying agency roles, standardizing referral protocols, and improving communication channels between the PNP, DSWD, LGUs, and other stakeholders are essential to ensure a more integrated, timely, and effective response to domestic violence cases.

These results align with studies emphasizing that weak coordination and communication among agencies reduce the effectiveness of domestic violence interventions (Crus, 2021; Sareno, 2020).

**Table 1.4. Problems Encountered in Domestic Violence Response in terms of Referral Pathways**

Problem	Frequency	Percent
Limited availability of support services.	59	47.97
Difficulty accessing referral agencies.	69	56.10
Lack of awareness of referral procedures.	68	55.28
Delays in follow-up actions.	56	45.53
Inadequate monitoring of referred cases.	74	60.16



Table 1.4 presents the problems encountered in domestic violence response in terms of referral pathways. The results indicate that the most significant issue is inadequate monitoring of referred cases, with a frequency of 74 respondents or 60.16%, suggesting that more than half of the respondents perceive weaknesses in tracking and follow-up after cases are referred to other agencies. This is followed by difficulty accessing referral agencies, reported by 69 respondents or 56.10%, and lack of awareness of referral procedures, identified by 68 respondents or 55.28%. These findings indicate that both procedural knowledge and system accessibility are major barriers affecting the effectiveness of referral mechanisms in domestic violence response.

In addition, limited availability of support services was reported by 59 respondents or 47.97%, while delays in follow-up actions were identified by 56 respondents or 45.53%. These results suggest that nearly half of the respondent’s experience gaps in the availability and timeliness of post-referral services. The presence of limited support services indicates that even when referrals are made, the capacity of receiving institutions may not be sufficient to address victim needs. Meanwhile, delays in follow-up actions reflect inefficiencies in case tracking and continuity of care, which are critical in ensuring that victims receive sustained protection and assistance.

Overall, the findings highlight that referral pathways for domestic violence cases are hindered primarily by weak case monitoring systems, limited accessibility to referral agencies, and insufficient awareness of proper procedures. The relatively high percentages across all indicators suggest that these challenges are widespread and significantly affect the effectiveness of inter-agency service delivery. Strengthening referral tracking systems, improving coordination with partner agencies, enhancing training on referral protocols, and expanding access to support services are essential to ensure a more efficient, responsive, and victim-centered domestic violence response system.

The findings support earlier assessments showing that inadequate referral monitoring and limited awareness of referral procedures weaken service delivery for victims (Crus, 2021; Dizon, 2021).

## 2. Perceived Level of Effectiveness of PNP Response and Referral Pathways in CALABARZON

**Table 2.1. Descriptives on the Perceived Level of Effectiveness of PNP Response and Referral Pathways in CALABARZON in terms of Role Clarity**

Item Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. PNP personnel effectively handle and document domestic violence cases.	2.79	1.01	Agree
2. PNP personnel apply gender-responsive protocols in domestic violence cases.	2.85	.87	Agree
3. There is effective inter-agency coordination between PNP and other agencies.	2.82	.91	Agree
4. PNP personnel prioritize victim protection and safety.	2.75	1.04	Agree
5. The roles of PNP personnel in referral pathways are clear.	2.99	.84	Agree
<b>Perceived Effectiveness of Role Clarity Mean</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>.93</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** (4) 3.50 - 4.00 Very High/Strongly Agree; (3) 2.50 – 3.49 High/Agree; (2) 1.50 - 2.49 Low/Disagree;

(1) 1.00 - 1.49 Very Low/Strongly Disagree

Table 2.1 presents the perceived level of effectiveness of PNP response and referral pathways in CALABARZON in terms of role clarity. The results show an overall mean of 2.84 (SD = 0.93), interpreted as High, indicating that respondents generally agree that role clarity in domestic violence response and referral processes is satisfactory. Among the indicators, the highest mean was obtained by “The roles of PNP personnel in referral pathways are clear” (M = 2.99, SD = 0.84), suggesting that respondents perceive relatively better clarity in understanding their designated functions within referral systems. This indicates that structural awareness of responsibilities exists within the PNP system, which is essential in ensuring proper coordination and case handling.

Meanwhile, “PNP personnel apply gender-responsive protocols in domestic violence cases” (M = 2.85, SD = 0.87) and “There is effective inter-agency coordination between PNP and other agencies” (M = 2.82, SD = 0.91) both obtained moderate agreement, indicating that while protocols and coordination mechanisms are generally in place, their implementation may not be fully consistent across all cases. Likewise, “PNP personnel effectively handle and document domestic violence cases” (M = 2.79, SD = 1.01) reflects a slightly lower rating, with a relatively higher standard deviation, suggesting variability in case handling and documentation practices among personnel. Furthermore, “PNP personnel prioritize victim protection and safety” (M = 2.75, SD = 1.04) received the lowest mean, indicating that while victim protection is recognized as a priority, its consistent application may still be challenged in actual practice.

Overall, the findings suggest that role clarity in PNP response and referral pathways is generally established, but its effectiveness varies depending on specific operational areas such as victim protection, documentation, and inter-agency coordination. The presence of moderate standard deviations across indicators further implies inconsistencies in implementation among personnel and stations. This highlights the need for strengthened training, clearer operational guidelines, and improved reinforcement of gender-responsive and victim-centered protocols. Enhancing these areas would ensure more consistent role execution, better coordination, and more effective domestic violence response within CALABARZON.



Clear delineation of responsibilities is considered essential in gender-responsive policing and effective case management (Castillo, 2022; Philippine National Police, 2020–2023).

**Table 2.2. Descriptives on the Perceived Level of Effectiveness of PNP Response and Referral Pathways in CALABARZON in terms of Service Accessibility**

Item Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. Services in referral pathways are accessible to victims.	2.95	.90	Agree
2. PNP response to domestic violence referrals is timely.	2.95	.89	Agree
3. Communication between PNP and other agencies is effective.	2.92	.91	Agree
4. The PNP’s response level correlates with referral pathway efficiency.	2.74	.93	Agree
5. Documentation of domestic violence cases is thorough and comprehensive.	2.83	.96	Agree
<b>Perceived Effectiveness of Service Accessibility Mean</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>.92</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** (4) 3.50 - 4.00 Very High/Strongly Agree; (3) 2.50 – 3.49 High/Agree; (2) 1.50 - 2.49 Low/Disagree;

(1) 1.00 - 1.49 Very Low/Strongly Disagree

Table 2.2 presents the perceived level of effectiveness of PNP response and referral pathways in CALABARZON in terms of service accessibility. The results show an overall mean of 2.88 (SD = 0.92), interpreted as High, indicating that respondents generally agree that services within the referral pathways are accessible to victims of domestic violence. Among the indicators, both “Services in referral pathways are accessible to victims” (M = 2.95, SD = 0.90) and “PNP response to domestic violence referrals is timely” (M = 2.95, SD = 0.89) obtained the highest means. These results suggest that accessibility and timeliness of response are relatively better perceived compared to other aspects, reflecting a generally responsive system in terms of initial service delivery and referral action.

In addition, “Communication between PNP and other agencies is effective” (M = 2.92, SD = 0.91) also received a high rating, indicating that inter-agency communication is generally functional, although not without limitations. Meanwhile, “Documentation of domestic violence cases is thorough and comprehensive” (M = 2.83, SD = 0.96) obtained a slightly lower mean, suggesting that while case documentation is generally acceptable, there may still be inconsistencies in completeness and detail. The lowest mean was observed in “The PNP’s response level correlates with referral pathway efficiency” (M = 2.74, SD = 0.93), indicating that respondents perceive weaker alignment between response efficiency and the overall effectiveness of referral pathways.

Overall, the findings imply that service accessibility in PNP response and referral pathways is generally effective but still exhibits areas that require improvement. While victims can access services and receive timely responses, gaps remain in documentation quality and the synchronization between response actions and referral system efficiency. The relatively consistent standard deviations across indicators suggest moderate variability in experiences across respondents, reflecting differences in implementation across stations or situations. Strengthening documentation systems, improving coordination efficiency, and ensuring better alignment between response actions and referral mechanisms are necessary to enhance overall service accessibility and ensure a more seamless and victim-centered domestic violence response system.

This means that respondents generally view services as accessible and responses as timely, which supports the overall functioning of referral pathways. However, the relatively lower rating on how PNP response relates to referral pathway efficiency indicates that coordination and system flow may not always be consistent. These findings show that while access to services is present, improving coordination and strengthening system integration may help ensure more effective service delivery.

Accessible services and timely referrals are important indicators of an effective victim support system (Bantug & Soriano, 2020; Sareno, 2020).

**Table 2.3. Descriptives on the Perceived Level of Effectiveness of PNP Response and Referral Pathways in CALABARZON in terms of Timeliness**

Item Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
PNP adheres to gender-responsive procedures.	2.93	.84	Agree
Collaboration between PNP and social services is effective.	2.99	.96	Agree
PNP personnel prioritize victim safety during interventions.	2.85	1.01	Agree
Information provided to victims about referral pathways is clear.	2.94	.94	Agree
Follow-up actions after reports are timely.	2.75	1.06	Agree
<b>Perceived Effectiveness of Timeliness Mean</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>.96</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** (4) 3.50 - 4.00 Very High/Strongly Agree; (3) 2.50 – 3.49 High/Agree; (2) 1.50 - 2.49 Low/Disagree;

(1) 1.00 - 1.49 Very Low/Strongly Disagree

Table 2.3 presents the perceived level of effectiveness of PNP response and referral pathways in CALABARZON in terms of timeliness. The results show an overall mean of 2.89 (SD = 0.96), interpreted as High, indicating that respondents generally agree that PNP responses and related referral processes are timely in handling domestic violence cases. Among the indicators, “Collaboration



between PNP and social services is effective” (M = 2.99, SD = 0.96) obtained the highest mean, followed closely by “Information provided to victims about referral pathways is clear” (M = 2.94, SD = 0.94) and “PNP adheres to gender-responsive procedures” (M = 2.93, SD = 0.84). These findings suggest that coordination with social services, procedural adherence, and victim information dissemination are generally perceived as timely and functional aspects of the response system.

Meanwhile, “PNP personnel prioritize victim safety during interventions” (M = 2.85, SD = 1.01) and “Follow-up actions after reports are timely” (M = 2.75, SD = 1.06) obtained the lower mean scores among the indicators. The relatively higher standard deviations in these items indicate greater variability in respondents’ perceptions, suggesting inconsistencies in how quickly follow-up actions are conducted and how consistently victim safety is prioritized during interventions. This implies that while initial response processes may be relatively timely, delays may still occur in sustained case management and post-report actions, which are critical in ensuring continuous protection for victims.

Overall, the findings indicate that timeliness in PNP response and referral pathways is generally satisfactory but not fully consistent across all dimensions. The stronger ratings in collaboration and procedural adherence suggest that structural mechanisms are in place, while lower ratings in follow-up actions highlight operational gaps in sustained response. The results imply a need to strengthen monitoring of case progression, improve coordination speed in post-report interventions, and reinforce victim-centered response protocols. Enhancing these areas will help ensure not only prompt initial responses but also consistent and timely support throughout the entire domestic violence case management process.

This means that respondents generally perceive that coordination and initial response actions are done within a reasonable time. However, the lower rating on follow-up actions indicates that delays may still occur after the initial response. These findings show that while immediate response and coordination are present, improving the timeliness of follow-up processes may help ensure continuity and effectiveness in handling domestic violence cases.

Timely intervention and follow-up actions are critical components of victim-centered domestic violence response systems (Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and Their Children [IAC-VAWC], 2021).

**Table 2.4. Descriptives on the Perceived Level of Effectiveness of PNP Response and Referral Pathways in CALABARZON in terms of Communication**

Item Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. Training on gender-sensitive approaches is effective.	2.89	.96	Agree
2. PNP personnel handle domestic violence cases competently.	2.97	.97	Agree
3. PNP communicates effectively with victims about rights and services.	2.83	.88	Agree
4. Information is appropriately shared between agencies.	2.84	.99	Agree
5. Overall, the PNP response to domestic violence in CALABARZON is effective.	2.81	.90	Agree
<b>Perceived Effectiveness of Communication Mean</b>	<b>2.87</b>	<b>.94</b>	<b>High</b>

**Legend:** (4) 3.50 - 4.00 Very High/Strongly Agree; (3) 2.50 – 3.49 High/Agree; (2) 1.50 - 2.49 Low/Disagree; (1) 1.00 - 1.49 Very Low/Strongly Disagree

Table 2.4 presents the perceived level of effectiveness of PNP response and referral pathways in CALABARZON in terms of communication. The results show an overall mean of 2.87 (SD = 0.94), interpreted as High, indicating that respondents generally agree that communication within the PNP domestic violence response system is effective. Among the indicators, “PNP personnel handle domestic violence cases competently” (M = 2.97, SD = 0.97) obtained the highest mean, followed by “Training on gender-sensitive approaches is effective” (M = 2.89, SD = 0.96). These findings suggest that respondents perceive a relatively strong level of competence among personnel and acknowledge the role of training in improving communication practices in handling domestic violence cases.

In contrast, lower mean scores were observed in “Information is appropriately shared between agencies” (M = 2.84, SD = 0.99), “PNP communicates effectively with victims about rights and services” (M = 2.83, SD = 0.88), and “Overall, the PNP response to domestic violence in CALABARZON is effective” (M = 2.81, SD = 0.90). These results indicate that while communication is generally effective, there are notable gaps in inter-agency information sharing and direct communication with victims. The relatively higher standard deviations in some indicators also suggest variability in communication practices across different cases or stations, which may affect consistency in service delivery.

Overall, the findings imply that communication in PNP response and referral pathways is functioning at a generally acceptable level but still requires improvement to achieve greater consistency and effectiveness. While personnel competence and training are strengths of the system, weaknesses remain in victim-centered communication and inter-agency information flow. Strengthening standardized communication protocols, enhancing gender-sensitive communication training, and improving coordination mechanisms between agencies are essential to ensure clearer, more consistent, and more effective communication in domestic violence response across CALABARZON.



This means that respondents generally perceive communication and information exchange as functioning adequately in domestic violence response. However, the slightly lower ratings on communication with victims and overall effectiveness indicate that there are areas where clarity and consistency may still be improved. These findings show that strengthening communication practices, both with victims and among agencies, may help improve the overall response and support provided in domestic violence cases.

Effective communication among responders and partner agencies improves coordination and strengthens victim trust in support systems (Reyes, 2019; Castillo, 2022).

**3. Relationship Between the Problems Encountered and the Level of Effectiveness of PNP Response and Referral Pathways**

**Table 3. Relationship Between the Problems Encountered and the Level of Effectiveness of PNP Response and Referral Pathways**

Problems Encountered	df	$\chi^2$	Sig.	Decision	Interpretation
PNP Response		8.17	.147	Failed to Reject H0	Not Significant
Victim Protection and Support		5.21	.391	Failed to Reject H0	Not Significant
Inter-Agency Coordination	5	3.51	.622	Failed to Reject H0	Not Significant
Referral Pathways	5	0.97	.965	Failed to Reject H0	Not Significant

Test used: Chi-square test of independence, .05 level of significance

Table 3 presents the relationship between the problems encountered and the level of effectiveness of PNP response and referral pathways in CALABARZON. The results show that all computed Chi-square values for the different domains were not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Specifically, PNP Response obtained  $\chi^2 (5) = 8.17, p = 0.147$ , Victim Protection and Support obtained  $\chi^2 (5) = 5.21, p = 0.391$ , Inter-Agency Coordination obtained  $\chi^2 (5) = 3.51, p = 0.622$ , and Referral Pathways obtained  $\chi^2 (5) = 0.97, p = 0.965$ . Since all significance values are greater than 0.05, the results led to the decision to fail to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no statistically significant relationship between the problems encountered and the perceived level of effectiveness of PNP response and referral pathways.

These findings imply that despite the presence of identified operational problems such as delayed response, limited personnel, weak coordination, and inefficiencies in referral systems, these issues do not significantly determine or predict the perceived effectiveness of PNP response and referral pathways. In other words, respondents still tend to view the system as moderately effective even when such problems are present. This suggests that other factors—such as institutional procedures, personal competence of personnel, or established protocols—may be influencing perceived effectiveness more strongly than the reported operational challenges.

Overall, the results indicate that the effectiveness of PNP response and referral pathways in CALABARZON is relatively stable and not significantly affected by the problems encountered in domestic violence response. This highlights a potential gap between operational difficulties and perceived service effectiveness, suggesting that the system may be maintaining functionality despite existing challenges. However, this also implies that addressing these problems—such as improving coordination, strengthening referral systems, and enhancing resources—may still be necessary to further improve actual service quality and ensure more consistent and efficient domestic violence response in practice.

These findings mean that the problems encountered by respondents were not associated with differences in their assessment of the effectiveness of PNP response and referral pathways. Respondents, regardless of the challenges they experienced in terms of response, victim support, coordination, and referral systems, generally shared similar perceptions of effectiveness. This may indicate that perceptions of effectiveness are shaped by common procedures and practices in handling domestic violence cases rather than the specific problems encountered.

Similar studies suggest that perceptions of effectiveness may be influenced by organizational culture, professional competence, and institutional procedures rather than operational challenges alone (Reyes, 2019; Lorenzo, 2021).

**4. Suggested Improvements to Enhance PNP Response and Referral Pathways in Handling Domestic Violence Cases**

**Table 4. Suggested Improvements to Enhance PNP Response and Referral Pathways in Handling Domestic Violence Cases as Perceived by the Respondents**

Problem	Frequency	Percent
Conduct more training on gender-sensitive handling of cases.	64	52.03
Increase personnel assigned to domestic violence cases.	59	47.97
Strengthen inter-agency coordination mechanisms.	56	45.53
Improve communication systems among agencies.	58	47.15
Enhance victim support services (shelter, counseling, legal aid).	59	47.97
Establish clear and standardized referral procedures.	66	53.66
Ensure faster response and follow-up actions.	64	52.03
Conduct community awareness programs on domestic violence.	59	47.97



Table 4 presents the suggested improvements to enhance PNP response and referral pathways in handling domestic violence cases as perceived by the respondents. The most frequently identified recommendation is establishing clear and standardized referral procedures, with a frequency of 66 respondents or 53.66%, indicating that more than half of the respondents believe that improving and formalizing referral systems is a key priority. This is closely followed by conducting more training on gender-sensitive handling of cases and ensuring faster response and follow-up actions, both with 64 respondents or 52.03%, highlighting the need to strengthen personnel competence and improve the speed of intervention and case management in domestic violence situations.

In addition, several improvements were identified with relatively similar frequencies. Increasing personnel assigned to domestic violence cases and enhancing victim support services (shelter, counseling, legal aid) were both reported by 59 respondents or 47.97%, suggesting that nearly half of the respondents see manpower limitations and insufficient victim services as significant gaps. Meanwhile, improving communication systems among agencies was identified by 58 respondents or 47.15%, and strengthening inter-agency coordination mechanisms was noted by 56 respondents or 45.53%. These findings indicate that respondents recognize the importance of improving both human resources and institutional coordination to ensure a more effective and responsive domestic violence intervention system.

Overall, the results imply that the respondents prioritize improvements that focus on strengthening system structure, capacity-building, and coordination mechanisms. The relatively high percentages across all suggested interventions show a strong demand for both procedural reforms and capacity enhancement, particularly in referral standardization, gender-sensitive training, and faster response mechanisms. These recommendations collectively highlight the need for a more integrated, well-coordinated, and victim-centered approach in PNP domestic violence response and referral pathways to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and overall service delivery in CALABARZON.

This means that respondents place importance on improving referral procedures, strengthening training, and ensuring timely response in handling domestic violence cases. The results also show that increasing personnel, improving communication, and enhancing victim support services remain important areas for improvement. Although all items were selected by a considerable number of respondents, the findings reflect a shared view that clearer processes and faster actions are needed to improve the overall response and support system.

These recommendations are consistent with literature advocating standardized referral systems, gender-sensitive training, and strengthened inter-agency collaboration to improve domestic violence response mechanisms (Crus, 2021; Sareno, 2020; Castillo, 2022).

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**AI Declaration**

*The researchers used Grammarly Pro as an AI-assisted language editing tool during the preparation of this manuscript. Its use was limited to correcting grammatical errors, improving sentence structures, and enhancing readability. The conceptualization of the study, data collection, interpretation of findings, and writing of the substantive content were performed by the researchers. All AI-generated suggestions were critically reviewed before incorporation into the final document.*