

Policy Analysis: Development of Programs and Services for Solo Parents in Antipolo City

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.903SEDU0554>

Received: 02 October 2025; Accepted: 08 October 2025; Published: 21 October 2025

ABSTRACT

The Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022, or Republic Act No. 11861, affirms the government's commitment to promoting social justice and inclusive development by providing a support system for solo parents. The law provides a national framework that guides local government in its implementation. Many solo parents faced multi-faceted challenges like parenting responsibilities, wherein most of the solo parents play dual roles as providers and caregivers. Financial hardship is another challenge that solo parents experience in their journey due to limited skills and opportunities with consideration their other role as sole care provider for their children.

This policy paper looks at what the Antipolo City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO) has done for the city's registered solo parents. It also assesses the needs of solo parents in terms of parenting, financial stability, and skill development. The study shows that many solo parents struggle to provide adequate supervision and emotional support to their children, live paycheck-to-paycheck, and never hear about the existing law for solo parents and other opportunities.

To improve policy responsiveness, the study recommends: (1) strengthening community collaboration through barangays, schools, and women's groups; (2) increasing access and flexibility through hybrid sessions and user-friendly materials; (3) incentivizing participation with practical benefits; and (4) institutionalizing monitoring and feedback mechanisms for continuous program improvement. By aligning programs and services with the expressed needs of solo parents, Antipolo City can lead the way in localizing the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act and ensuring that no parent is left behind.

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines, often described as a deeply religious and family-centered society, is one of the few countries in the world—alongside Vatican City—that does not recognize divorce as a legal option. Within the fabric of Filipino culture, the family serves as a foundational institution, embodying the values of loyalty, respect, and unity. These principles are instilled from an early age and are preserved through generations of cultural and religious traditions. However, recent demographic trends appear to diverge from these long-standing ideals.

According to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, 2021), a significant proportion of children born in the country were delivered outside of marital unions. Of the 1,364,739 live births recorded in 2021, approximately 779,154—or 57.1%—were born to unwed mothers. This figure reflects a striking shift in societal patterns, especially in a nation where premarital sex is traditionally discouraged and marriage is regarded as a moral and social expectation.

The rise in children born outside of wedlock is closely linked to the growing number of single-parent households, a phenomenon that is not unique to the Philippines. Globally, the incidence of solo parenting has increased significantly. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2017) estimates that the Philippines is home to approximately 15 million people in solo households in 2017, with women comprising around 95% of this demographic. In comparison, the United States records the highest percentage of single-parent families, with about one in four families with children under 18 led by a solo parent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Similarly, in

the United Kingdom, single-parent households account for 15% of all families, with 3 million families headed primarily by mothers (Office for National Statistics, 2021).

Single or solo parents in the Philippines face a multitude of challenges, with financial strain emerging as one of the most pressing concerns. Unlike two-parent households, solo parents often struggle to meet their children's needs due to limited income and support. Bugayon et al. (2024) emphasize that financial sustainability is a predominant concern among single mothers. This finding is corroborated by Dagupon and Garin (2022), who found that most solo parents in their study grappled with inadequate and unstable sources of income.

Beyond financial hardship, solo parents must also navigate the complexities of fulfilling dual parental roles. Fornancio et al. (2021) note that solo parents frequently experience compounded stress related to employment responsibilities, child-rearing duties, social stigma, and limited access to government support. These overlapping burdens substantially impact their overall well-being and the quality of life of their children.

In recognition of these challenges, the Philippine government enacted Republic Act No. 8972, also known as the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000, which seeks to extend legal, economic, and social support to solo parents. Various stakeholders—including local government units, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private institutions—also contribute to addressing the needs of solo parents through the implementation of diverse programs and services.

SOLO PARENTS AND THEIR CHALLENGES

Solo parents are individuals who raise their children without the support of a spouse or partner due to various circumstances such as death, separation, annulment, abandonment, or unmarried parenthood. Solo parents refer to those who bear the burden of raising their children alone, either because of the absence of a spouse or partner, or circumstances such as the death of one or separation and annulment, legal separation, or abandonment by a spouse, among others or being an unmarried mother or single parent. In the Philippines, a significant rise in the count of the solo parent heads of households exists, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) estimates around 14-15 million solo parents in the country (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 2021). This increasing demographic highlights the need to understand the experiences and challenges of sole parents, in a social and cultural context where conventional family practices generally revolve around the two-parent family.

To be a single parent in the Philippines is particularly challenging because we have to wear two hats – that of a provider and a nurturer. Such obligations are worsened by emotional, social, and financial burdens as well (Del Mundo, Macanlalay, & Del Mundo, 2019). The majority of solo parents are widowed; there are also some who are separated, and others who were abandoned or deserted by their respective partners because of infidelity, overseas work, or domestic dispute. With the roles of mother and father resting on their shoulders, they wade through complicated emotions and obligations, oftentimes without the help of institutions or family.

Financial stress is one of the most urgent challenges. Solo parents, unlike two-parent families, have a limited source of income support, and this inequation situation makes it easily for them to meet their daily needs for their children. Bugayon et al. (2024) also argued that concern about financial sustainability continues to loom large for lone mothers as instability employment and limited economic opportunities are common for single mothers. This is consistent with Dagupon and Garin (2022), where most of the solo parents in their study experienced a lack of stable and predictable income, which indeed affects their capability to sustain the family.

Similarly, Abing (2018) examined the family, educational, and economic values of solo parents in Capiz province. The findings suggest that while solo parents place the highest importance on family values, they struggle particularly in the areas of financial management and self-image. Despite facing time constraints and parenting difficulties, many adopt adaptive coping mechanisms such as spending quality time with their children and engaging in productive household activities.

Aloro et al. (2024) further affirmed the dual pressure of earning income while raising children. Their study noted that many solo parents face serious difficulties in finding sustainable employment while managing the day-to-

day care of their children. The tension between caregiving duties and economic survival creates a cycle of stress and time poverty, limiting their ability to provide adequately for their families.

Del Luna et al. (2022) observed that solo parents often contend with limited financial resources, insufficient time, and the consequences of raising children in a non-traditional family structure. These factors can negatively influence nutritional practices and parenting quality, particularly in households with no co-parental support.

Moreover, single-mother households are statistically more vulnerable to poverty. Florentino and Medenilla (2023) pointed out that the absence of a second income, lower levels of maternal education, and persistent gender-based wage inequality increase the likelihood of economic hardship. Many solo parents are forced to accept any form of employment, regardless of its alignment with their skills or long-term career prospects, in order to meet their basic needs.

In Catanduanes, Lopez and San Juan (2019) conducted focus group discussions that shed light on the persistent challenges faced by solo parents, with financial difficulties emerging as the most pressing concern. Participants also expressed deep frustration over the insufficient support available to them, emphasizing a significant disconnect between the promises of existing policies and the actual assistance they receive in their daily lives. These lived experiences underscore the broader struggles solo parents encounter as they navigate economic hardship and seek institutional support.

To respond to these pressing issues, the Philippine government enacted Republic Act No. 8972, also known as the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000. This law was later expanded through Republic Act No. 11861 (Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022), which aims to strengthen the delivery of comprehensive services and benefits for solo parents and their children. These benefits include housing assistance, medical and health care access, educational scholarships, skills training, flexible work arrangements, additional parental leave, and protection against workplace discrimination.

Despite the progressive legal framework, the implementation and responsiveness of local government units (LGUs) remain inconsistent. This policy analysis seeks to examine the challenges faced by solo parents in Antipolo City and assess the effectiveness and responsiveness of existing programs and services offered by the Local Government of Antipolo. Understanding the alignment between policy provisions and actual needs is essential to ensuring that solo parents are supported in achieving economic security, emotional resilience, and quality parenting outcomes.

CONTEXT OF THE POLICY PROBLEM

The legal framework addressing the rights and welfare of solo parents in the Philippines has evolved significantly over the past two decades. Rooted in the principles of social justice and human rights, Republic Act No. 11861, otherwise known as the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022, strengthens the State's commitment to alleviating poverty and promoting inclusive development. As outlined in Section 2 of the Act, the government is mandated to foster a just and progressive social order that prioritizes human dignity, equality, and access to essential services. This includes offering adequate welfare support to solo parents to ensure the well-being of their children and compliance with national and international standards for family protection and social welfare.

Republic Act No. 8972, or the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000, was the first legislation to institutionalize the rights of solo parents in the Philippines. Section 3 of the Act delineates various categories of solo parents, including:

1. 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;
2. Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to the death of a spouse;
3. Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood while the spouse is detained or is serving a sentence for a criminal conviction for at least one (1) year;
4. 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;

5. 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;
6. 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;
7. Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to abandonment of spouse for at least one (1) year;
8. 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;
9. Any other person who solely provides parental care and support to a child or children;
10. Any family member who assumes the responsibility of head of family as a result of the death, abandonment, disappearance or prolonged absence of the parents or solo parent.

In 2022, the enactment of RA 11861 expanded these classifications to include additional circumstances reflective of evolving family dynamics. Newly recognized categories now include:

1. A spouse, any family member, or a guardian of the child or children of an overseas Filipino worker [OFW], provided that the OFW belongs to a group of low/semi- skilled workers and has been away for an uninterrupted period of 12 months;
2. An unmarried parent who keeps and rears the child or children;
3. Any legal guardian, adoptive, or foster parent who solely provides parental care and support;
4. Any relative within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity of the parent or legal guardian who assumes parental care and support of the child or children as a result of death, abandonment, disappearance, or absence of the parents for at least six months; and,
5. A pregnant woman who provides sole parental care and support to the unborn child.

These legal provisions recognize the diverse pathways by which individuals become solo parents and affirm the State's duty to extend support across various dimensions of their lived realities.

Despite the robust legal framework, the implementation of these policies at the local level remains uneven. Daanoy (2023) highlights the critical role of local government units (LGUs) and community-based organizations in operationalizing the law. He recommends that LGUs offer targeted support to solo parents through programs such as financial literacy training, seminars on household and time management, and access to psychological first aid. Furthermore, emotional support and decision-making consultations with professionals are essential in helping solo parents navigate the complex challenges of caregiving, employment, and social stigma.

As solo parenting continues to rise in the country, it is imperative to assess not only the comprehensiveness of the legal protections in place but also the responsiveness and accessibility of programs and services at the community level. Doing so ensures that the goals of RA 8972 and RA 11861 are translated into meaningful impact for solo parents and their families.

Programs and Services for Solo Parents

Solo parents in the Philippines encounter multifaceted challenges that are deeply influenced by the diverse circumstances surrounding their solo parenthood. These challenges include financial strain, emotional stress, limited access to support systems, and the difficulty of balancing work and parenting responsibilities. To address these complex situations, the Philippine government passed Republic Act No. 8972, otherwise known as the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000 and was later amended under Republic Act No. 11861 or the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022. Said laws combine to exercise the mandate to promote the rights and welfare of solo parents, including providing for a full package of social protection services, under the Family Development Program. The common provisions of both laws (Section 2) including the State's obligation to provide for and ensure the welfare of solo-parent families and the promotion of their full development.

The Results on the priority initiatives are clustered in 4 major dimensions, which are socio-economic, health,

education and social protection that the RA 8972 and RA 11861 entitlements bring. Solo parents who have worked for at least six months, irrespective of their status, are eligible for seven working days of paid parental leave each year. The law also requires employers to offer flexible work hours to solo parent employees as long as work efficiency is not affected and outlaws discrimination against solo parents with respect to hiring, promotion, and terms of employment. Financial literacy programs, employment support, housing assistance, and monthly cash subsidies to solo parents who receive minimum wage or less are also important financial provisions. In Lagarde (2023), these reforms have had a notably positive impact on the socioeconomic situation of single-parent families by increasing their access to labor market programs and financial support. However, obstacles to broader availability remain in implementation issues such as minimal inter-agency coordination and poor information sharing.

In the aspect of health, the DOH, in coordination with LGUs, provides that health programs must be designed and implemented to address the medical needs of solo parents and their children. The measures include using government hospitals, free medical check-ups and being part of the universal healthcare system. Educational grants are administered by the Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). RA 11861 ensures scholarships and other forms of financial assistance and educational support for solo parents and their children throughout formal education in all levels—elementary, tertiary and technical-vocational—as well as in non-formal learning. Those families below the poverty line (as defined by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)) may also be given support for housing arrangements with flexible repayment terms. In spite of these laws, Broncano (2023) highlighted the lack of knowledge and access to services, most especially in poor solo parents in backward rural localities. On the contrary, Redoña (2023) found that, significantly, solo parents working in higher education institutions were more informed about certain benefits, such as parental leave, which indicates inequalities in access based on occupation and educational achievements.

Social protection services are just as critical. Section 5 of RA 8972, as amended by RA 11861, provides that the package of benefits granted to solo parents shall be comprehensive, both material and non-material, both developmental and restorative. It should come with temporary shelter, legal assistance, psychological counseling, crisis intervention and sufficient spiritual support. Solo parents in the formal sector are likewise assured of other privileges, including workplace-based child-minding centers and breastfeeding stations.

At the local level, various LGUs have undertaken efforts to localize the provisions of the law and respond to the specific needs of solo parents within their communities. Quezon City serves as a prominent example of a highly urbanized LGU that has institutionalized a Solo Parent Welfare Office under its Social Services Development Department. This office actively delivers a range of services, including financial subsidies, job placement programs in partnership with local businesses, and discounts on essential services (Ramilo, 2024). Quezon City also maintains accessible databases and regularly publishes program updates, making it a model for data transparency and service delivery.

In contrast, the Province of Albay offers insight into the implementation of solo parent programs in a mixed urban-rural setting. In its effort to fulfill the mandates of RA 11861, Albay launched the Grava Para sa Pag-eskwela initiative, which provides PHP 4,000 per semester in educational assistance to solo parents or their children enrolled in tertiary education (Philippine News Agency [PIA], 2025). While not as data-intensive as Quezon City, Albay's initiatives reflect an LGU committed to aligning national policy with local realities, despite limitations in resources and infrastructure.

Antipolo City presents another instructive case. As of February 15, 2025, a total of 1,571 solo parents had been registered, including new applicants, renewals, and transferees. This figure is based on administrative records from the Antipolo City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO, 2025). To support effective planning and policy implementation, the city has developed a demographic-based database of solo parents and has organized solo parent groups across all 16 barangays into a unified federation. The CSWDO, in coordination with designated barangay focal persons, implements services such as parenting seminars, counseling, educational and livelihood assistance, and psychosocial interventions. These programs are anchored in the Family Development Program and reflect Antipolo's commitment to ensuring that solo parents and surrogate caregivers receive holistic support.

Beyond the Philippines, global approaches to solo parent welfare highlight a diversity of policy frameworks. In Japan, welfare support for single mothers historically relied on child allowances, which were restructured in 2003 to promote workforce reintegration and reduce state dependency (Koch, 2016). In Hungary, Fűrész and Molnár (2023) documented a state-supported family policy that allows solo parents to opt for extended maternity leave or receive subsidized childcare while returning to work. In Malaysia, AbdRahman et al. (2022) recommended integrating Islamic welfare concepts, such as the wali system, to improve access to moral and financial support for single mothers.

In the Philippines, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) continues to roll out the Strengthening Opportunities for Lone Parents (SOLO) Program, which offers psychosocial, financial, and employment assistance. Several LGUs—such as Tagum City, which formed a solo parent association in 2019—have also initiated community-based programs, including capacity-building workshops and direct assistance in health, education, and livelihood.

In summary, while the passage of RA 8972 and RA 11861 has laid the groundwork for a comprehensive national support system for solo parents, localized implementation remains critical to ensuring that these legal benefits translate into meaningful, lived improvements. Quezon City, Albay, and Antipolo illustrate the diverse ways LGUs adapt national mandates to their own contexts. However, challenges related to program awareness, inter-agency coordination, and data monitoring persist. This policy analysis aims to assess the effectiveness of Antipolo City's current programs and services for solo parents, providing evidence-based recommendations to enhance policy responsiveness and implementation.

Statement of Intent

This policy analysis aims to evaluate the responsiveness and effectiveness of the programs and services developed by the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO) of the Local Government of Antipolo City in addressing the identified needs of solo parents within the city. It seeks to determine whether existing initiatives align with the lived experiences and expressed needs of solo parents, particularly in the areas of parenting, economic stability, and capacity-building.

Specifically, the study aims to address the following research questions:

1. What are the assessed needs of solo parents in Antipolo City in terms of:
 - a. Parenting responsibilities
 - b. Financial capacity
 - c. Skills and knowledge development?
2. What programs and services are currently provided by the Local Government of Antipolo City to support solo parents?
3. What policy options or recommendations can be proposed to improve or enhance the delivery of services based on the identified needs and existing interventions?

Stakeholders Involved

The findings of this policy analysis are intended to inform and benefit multiple stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of policies and programs for solo parents in Antipolo City. These stakeholders play a critical role in ensuring that services are responsive, inclusive, and aligned with the actual needs of solo parents.

Solo Parents -This analysis provides valuable insights into the specific needs and challenges faced by solo parents in Antipolo City. By highlighting their lived experiences, the study supports the development of targeted and evidence-based policies, programs, and services. Importantly, it recognizes the need to empower solo parents not merely as beneficiaries, but as active partners and stakeholders in policy development and implementation. Their meaningful participation can strengthen community engagement and the sustainability of interventions.

Local Government Unit of Antipolo City -The results of the policy analysis serve as a practical guide for the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Antipolo City in evaluating, enhancing, and localizing existing programs and

services for solo parents. It ensures that interventions are responsive to the actual needs of the community, particularly in the areas of parenting support, economic assistance, and personal development. The findings also support the city's continuing efforts to strengthen inter-agency collaboration and barangay-level implementation.

Policymakers- at the local and national levels, this study offers evidence-based recommendations to support the formulation, revision, and expansion of inclusive and equitable policies for solo parents. It underscores the importance of addressing policy gaps related to accessibility, program quality, beneficiary engagement, and the diverse profiles of solo parents. By integrating the study's findings into the policymaking process, more responsive and nuanced policies can be developed to address both immediate and long-term concerns of solo-parent families.

Social Workers and Social Development Workers- Frontline workers—including registered social workers, community development workers, and barangay focal persons—can use the results of this analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the evolving needs of solo parents. The findings provide a framework for improving service delivery, designing effective interventions, and implementing person-centered approaches. This evidence-based perspective strengthens the role of practitioners in advocating for client rights and facilitating access to appropriate social welfare services.

National Government Agencies-Agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and Commission on Higher Education (CHED) can integrate the findings into program planning and policy refinement, particularly in the areas of livelihood, healthcare, education, and employment for solo parents.

Academic and Research Institutions- Universities and research centers can use the analysis as a reference for future studies, baseline assessments, and the community extension initiatives. Academic institutions involved in social work, public administration, and community development can also align their curriculum, research, and field instruction to the real-world challenges and policy needs of solo-parent families.

Civil Society Organizations and NGOs-Non-governmental organizations working in family welfare, women's empowerment, child protection, and livelihood development can utilize the findings to design community-based programs, launch advocacy campaigns, or establish partnerships with LGUs to complement government initiatives for solo parents.

Employers and the Private Sector-Employers, especially those operating in Antipolo City, may benefit from this policy analysis by understanding their legal obligations and opportunities to support solo-parent employees, including flexible work arrangements, non-discriminatory practices, and leave benefits. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives can also be directed toward supporting solo-parent welfare.

Faith-Based Organizations and Community Leaders-Religious institutions and local leaders may use the study to promote inclusive, values-based support networks and

community initiatives for solo parents. They can provide psychosocial support, spiritual guidance, or serve as key partners in advocacy and outreach efforts.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This policy analysis employed a quantitative research design to assess the needs, challenges, and experiences of solo parents in Antipolo City. A total of 300 registered solo parents were selected through convenience sampling, primarily among those applying for or renewing their solo parent identification (ID) cards at the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO). This approach was selected due to accessibility and time constraints, allowing for practical data collection within the operational setting of solo parent registration. This is also equivalent to 20% of active solo parents as of Feb 15, 2025. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire, which was distributed to participants during their application or renewal process. The instrument

included a combination of closed-ended and Likert-scale items designed to capture demographic information, perceived challenges, parenting responsibilities, financial capacity, access to government services, and perceived effectiveness of current programs. This instrument was validated and approved by the president of the Federation of Solo Parents in Antipolo City and the division head and section head who lead the implementation of programs and services for solo parents, who are both social workers.

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted, including the calculation of means and standard deviations, to identify patterns, central tendencies, and variations in participant responses. The results provided a basis for identifying priority concerns and informing policy recommendations for the enhancement of services for solo parents.

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the research process.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation.

Respondents were assured of their anonymity, and no personally identifiable information was collected or disclosed. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

Limitations of the Study

While this policy analysis offers valuable insights into the lived experiences of solo parents in Antipolo City, several limitations must be acknowledged:

1. **Sampling Method:** The use of convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of findings, as the sample may not fully represent all solo parents across different barangays or socioeconomic groups.
2. **Self-Reported Data:** Responses were based on self-report, which may be subject to personal bias, social desirability, or recall errors.
3. **Geographical Scope:** The study is limited to registered solo parents in Antipolo City and may not reflect the conditions or experiences of solo parents in other municipalities or regions.
4. **Time Constraints:** The data collection was conducted within a limited timeframe, potentially affecting the diversity of respondents and the depth of responses.

Despite these limitations, the study provides a foundational assessment that can guide further research and policy formulation aimed at improving the welfare of solo parents in the local context.

Problem Description

This policy analysis engages solo parents residing in Antipolo City to assess their expressed needs in relation to parenting responsibilities, financial capacity, and knowledge and skills. The results of this assessment are intended to guide the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO)—through its Family Development Section—in reviewing and strengthening existing programs and services. By aligning interventions with the actual concerns of solo parents, the local government can more effectively respond to their evolving social and economic conditions.

Antipolo City's solo parent population is diverse and geographically distributed across its 16 barangays. As of February 15, 2025, there are a total of 1,571 active solo parents, where 1,435 or 91.34% are female, while 136 or 8.66% are male. Barangay San Jose reported the highest number of registered solo parents, totaling 287 individuals, indicating a significant concentration of solo-parent households in this area. This is followed by Barangay Dalig with 163 solo parents and Barangay Mayamot with 136. In contrast, Barangay Beverly Hills and Barangay Calawis reported the lowest numbers, with only 6 and 4 solo parents, respectively.

The variation in the number of solo parents across barangays highlights the need for localized program planning and barangay-specific interventions. Understanding this Demographic distribution is essential to ensuring that services are equitable, needs-based, and accessible to all solo parents, regardless of location.

This background sets the context for the subsequent assessment of how well the CSWDO's current programs meet the needs of solo parents and whether adjustments in policy or service delivery are warranted.

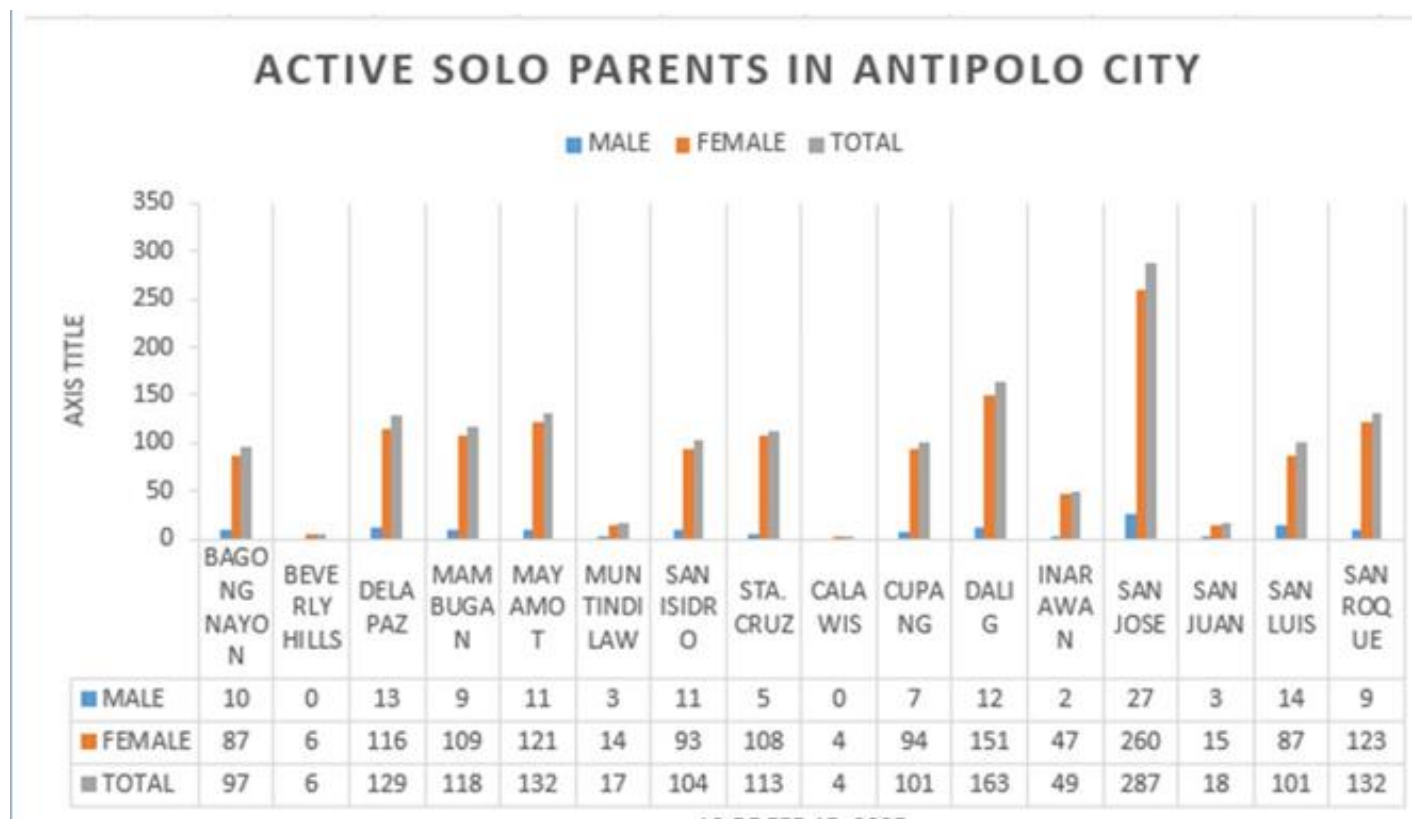


Figure 1.0 Population of active solo parents in Antipollo City

Parenting Responsibilities, Financial Capacity, Knowledge, and Skills of Solo Parents Parenting Responsibilities

Solo parents face a wide range of multifaceted challenges as they juggle the demands of parenting, employment, and household responsibilities. Unlike dual-parent households, solo parents often encounter difficulties in achieving work-life balance, especially when raising young children. According to Aloro et al. (2024), solo parents prefer employment that offers flexibility, allowing them to manage their competing responsibilities more effectively. Farnacio and Reyes (2021) emphasize that solo parents not only contend with the burden of child-rearing and financial constraints, but also with the stigma associated with single parenthood and limited access to government support—factors that collectively affect their overall quality of life.

Parenting roles vary based on the classification of solo parenthood. Rago et al. (2024) noted that widowed solo parents often take on dual parenting roles, while those who become solo parents due to separation initially assume sole responsibility before transitioning into co-parenting arrangements. These varied circumstances influence the parent-child dynamic, often affecting the quality of emotional connection and the ability to spend meaningful time with children. Saiin et al. (2024) argue that single parents not only support their children's physical needs but also guide them in their intellectual and spiritual development. This perspective is echoed by Abing (2018), who highlighted that solo parents view education as a vital tool for improving their family's future, often going to great lengths to ensure their children's academic success.

Masduki et al. (2024) found that solo parents typically adopt a combination of authoritarian and democratic parenting styles, shaped by their own education and occupational background. While this can promote discipline and respect, it may also lead to reduced creativity and introversion among children. Mendoza (2023) further revealed that solo parenting significantly impacts children's psychosocial well-being, though variables such as gender, education level, and family income showed no strong correlation with mental health outcomes—except for the educational qualifications of the parent, which were associated with emotional and behavioral development. Due to the pressures of fulfilling multiple roles, many solo parents struggle to engage their children

in open conversations about emotions, problems, and needs. Time constraints and life stressors limit opportunities for emotional bonding, which may have long-term implications for child development.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES (INCLUDING SKILLS)

One of the most pressing concerns among solo parents is financial instability. As sole providers, they carry the full burden of supporting their households, which often leads to economic strain and impacts their ability to fulfill other parental roles. Lopez and San Juan (2019) reported that 62% of solo parents surveyed in their study belonged to low-income households and faced substantial financial difficulties. This finding aligns with those of Bugayon et al. (2024) and Dagupon and Garin (2022), who identified financial limitations as a primary challenge for solo parents due to irregular or insufficient sources of income.

Apat (2019) noted that solo parents' purchasing power tends to diminish over time, especially in the absence of proper budgeting and financial literacy. Limited income often forces solo parents to incur debt, compounding their economic vulnerability. Even those who are employed struggle with managing expenses and maintaining financial stability.

Economic empowerment is therefore essential to improving the well-being of solo-parent households. The type of employment available to solo parents varies depending on their life circumstances. Younger solo parents with small children may rely on part-time or informal jobs, while those with older children may be able to sustain longer working hours. Educational attainment is also a key factor, as solo parents with higher education qualifications are more likely to secure stable, well-paying jobs. Morales and Tiu (2024) emphasized that employment status is a significant predictor of financial empowerment among solo parents. Fix (2022) further supports this argument by showing that structured support programs can improve family well-being. Her study found that mother-daughter relationships improved through coping skill development and emotional bonding exercises, which also contributed to more effective household budgeting and stress reduction.

While employment remains a primary source of income for solo parents, many also seek alternative income-generating opportunities such as livelihood programs. These options are particularly important for solo parents with younger children, as they offer flexibility and allow for more time spent at home. Lopez and San Juan (2019) emphasized the need to create more community-based employment and skills development programs to improve the economic prospects of solo parents. Equipping solo parents with practical skills not only enhances their employability but also empowers them to achieve long-term financial security and personal growth.

Solo Parents' Knowledge of the Law

Knowledge of solo parent-related policies—particularly Republic Act No. 8972 (Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000) and Republic Act No. 11861 (Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022)—is critical for ensuring that solo parents access the benefits and services to which they are entitled. However, awareness of these laws remains low among many solo parents. Broncano (2023) found that solo parents generally have limited knowledge about the qualifications, benefits, and comprehensive welfare services provided under RA 8972. This includes services such as livelihood development, counseling, parenting effectiveness training, educational and medical assistance, housing benefits, and flexible work arrangements. Redoña (2023) confirmed that awareness of the provisions under RA 11861 was also limited, resulting in underutilization of the available programs.

In contrast, Lagarde (2023) reported more positive outcomes in areas where awareness and implementation were strong. Her findings revealed that the expanded law led to improved financial stability, better access to healthcare, reduced disparities, and increased educational opportunities for solo-parent households.

Policy Options

The Chapter presents the analysis of policy options and alternatives that will address the challenges faced by solo parents in Antipolo City, particularly the expressed needs in terms of parenting responsibility, financial capacity, knowledge and skills. The Conceptual Framework is also presented to analyze the appropriateness of existing services in responding to the expressed needs of the solo parents.

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

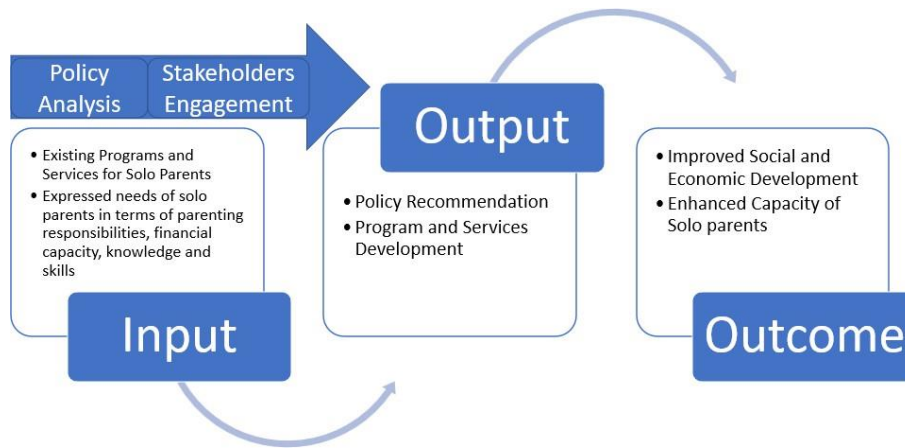


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework suggests that the implementation of various existing programs and services intended for solo parents, as presented in the Magna Carta for the Solo Parents, is not the only applicable intervention that could address the challenges they face. It needs to take note of the expressed needs of the solo parents themselves, which is very vital in the development of appropriate programs and services.

This policy analysis will help analyze the appropriateness of existing services in responding to the expressed needs of the solo parents. Solo parent engagement or participation in the process is essential for the program implementers and policy makers in coming up with appropriate programs and services for solo parents.

This framework proposed that the output of this policy analysis will result in needed policy reforms and the development of appropriate programs and services for solo parents in Antipolo City. Likewise, empowerment of solo parents is very essential for them not just to be dependent on government services but as productive citizens with a strong support system.

The final outcome of the analysis focused on the target outcome of improved economic and social development and enhanced social protection programs for solo parents in Antipolo City.

In a case that after the implementation of policy recommendation and the target outcome was not met, a post-analysis will be conducted to revisit and revalidate the policy analysis. These include the conduct of stakeholders' consultation, policy dialogue and advocacy.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents in terms of Gender, Barangay, and Employment Status

Demographic	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	21	6.4 %
	Female	309	93.6 %
Barangay	Bagong Nayon	24	7.3 %
	Cupang	27	8.2 %
	Dalig	33	10.0 %
	Dela Paz	28	8.5 %
	Inarawan	14	4.2 %
	Mambugan	22	6.7 %
	Mayamot	19	5.8 %
	Muntindilaw	2	0.6 %
	San Isidro	20	6.1 %
	San Jose	59	17.9 %
	San Juan	5	1.5 %
	San Luis	19	5.8 %

	San Roque	37	11.2 %
	Sta. Cruz	21	6.4 %
Employment Status	Employed	229	69.4 %
	Self-Employed	52	15.8 %
	Unemployed	49	14.8 %
	TOTAL	330	100.0%

Table 1 presents the profile of the respondents in terms of their gender, barangay, and employment status. A total of 330 solo parents participated in the survey process.

In terms of gender, there are significantly more females (n = 309, 93.6%) than males (n = 21, 6.4%), this coincide with the total number active registered solo parents in Antipolo City wherein out of the 1,571 total number of registered active solo parents 1,435 or 91.34% are female while 136 or 8.66% are male, implying that females have greater tendencies of becoming solo parents over males.

Regarding barangay, the majority of the respondents come from San Jose (n = 59, 17.9%), San Roque (n = 37, 11.2%), and Dalig (n = 33, 10.0%), which are all within the city proper of Antipolo City and 3 of the most populous barangays in Antipolo. The fewest number of respondents come from Muntindilaw (n = 2, 0.6%) and San Juan (n = 5, 1.5%), which are both far from the city proper and also less populous barangays of Antipolo City. Other barangays are all represented with around 10 to 29 respondents. Another factor is that the participants of the study were selected based on the timing, wherein only solo parents who are applying and renewing their IDs were selected.

In terms of employment status, most solo parents are employed (n = 229, 69.4%). This was followed by solo parents who are self-employed (n = 52, 15.8%) and who are unemployed (n = 49, 14.8%).

Demographic Analysis Shows a Large Proportion of Survey Participants are Employed or Self-Employed.

Table 2: Parenting Responsibilities of Solo Parents

Parenting Responsibilities	Yes	No	No comment
1. Nagkaroon kami ng problema sa isa't isa ng aking anak/mga anak.	117 (35.5%)	213 (64.5%)	0 (0.0%)
2. Napag-uusapan namin ng aking anak/ mga anak kung mayroon man silang problema, dinaramdam o pangangailangan.	200 (60.6%)	128 (38.8%)	2 (0.6%)
3. Nareresolba namin ng aking/mga anak ang hindi namin pagkakaunawaan.	212 (64.2%)	117 (35.5%)	1 (0.3%)
4. Nakakapagsabi sa akin ang aking anak ng kanilang naramdaman, saloobin, o pangarap.	203 (61.5%)	127 (38.5%)	0 (0.0%)
5. Natutulungan ko ang aking anak kapag mayroon silang problema.	232 (70.3%)	98 (29.7%)	0 (0.0%)
6. May mga pagkakataong nahihirapan akong intindihin ang aking anak.	171 (51.8%)	159 (48.2%)	0 (0.0%)
7. Napaglalaanan ko ng sapat na panahon ang aking anak o mga anak.	159 (48.2%)	171 (51.8%)	0 (0.0%)
8. Nababantayan/napapabantayan ko nang mabuti ang aking anak.	178 (53.9%)	79 (23.9%)	73 (22.1%)

Note: Total is 330.

RESULTS

From Table 2 show that more solo parents do not have conflicts with their children (64.5%); can talk with their children whenever their children have problems, concerns, or needs (60.6%); are able to resolve misunderstandings with their children (64.2%); and feel that their children are able to share their feelings, thoughts, or dreams

With them (61.5%). In addition, more solo parents are able to help their children whenever they have problems (70.3%). Relationships and conflict resolution between solo parents and children, like any other family, varies depending on the situation and is not just depicted by just coming from different family structures.

When it comes to solo parents who have who sometimes have difficulties understanding their children, opinion is nearly evenly split, with 51.8% saying yes and 48.2% saying no. Similarly, responses are almost equally divided regarding whether they give enough time to their children, with 48.2% answering yes and 51.8% saying no.

Data shows that, regarding solo parents' responsibilities, they may have issues or concerns with understanding their children better, spending enough time with their children, and ensuring that they—or at least someone—watches over their children. In the study of Mikolajczak et al (2022), they highlighted those single parents are experiencing parenting stress that hampers in responding to the emotional needs of their children. It was supported by the study of Redd & Skinner (2023), wherein solo parents often limit quality time to their children due to time constraints from employment.

Table 3: Financial Capacities of Solo Parents

Financial Capacities	Yes	No	No comment
1. Sapat ang aking kinikita para sa amin ng aking anak o mga anak.	71 (21.5%)	257 (77.9%)	2 (0.6%)
2. Nahihirapan akong pagkasyahin ang aking kita para sa amin ng aking anak o mga anak.	165 (50.0%)	164 (49.7%)	1 (0.3%)
3. Nakakapagtabi ako ng pera para sa mga hindi inaasahang pangangailangan namin ng aking anak o mga anak pati ng na rin ang para sa kanilang pag-aaral.	84 (25.5%)	245 (74.2%)	1 (0.3%)
4. Nakakapag-abot ako buwan-buwan ng halagang kailangan ng aking magulang.	64 (19.4%)	265 (80.3%)	
5. Nakakapagbigay din ako ng regular at sapat na halaga sa aming simbahan.	79 (23.9%)	250 (75.8%)	1 (0.3%)
6. May sapat na halagang pampuhunan sa maliit na negosyo.	48 (14.5%)	281 (85.2%)	1 (0.3%)

Note: Total is 330.

The data presented in Table 3 reflect significant financial strain among solo parents. A substantial 77.9% of respondents reported that their income is not sufficient to meet the needs of their family, and 50% expressed difficulty in making ends meet. These findings highlight the economic vulnerability experienced by solo-parent households, where a single income must often sustain multiple dependents.

Compared to two-parent households where financial responsibilities can be shared, solo parents typically carry the full economic burden alone. As the Asian Development Bank (ADB, 2022) highlights, a household with two persons working will have more flexibility and capacity to cope with the shock of inflation and cost of living, which have to be justified, as with the household's pooled resources, its members can at least share the pooled burdens. Solo parents are also more vulnerable to financial setbacks, such as losing their job, falling ill, or needing cash urgently, without a second income earner on hand to pick up the slack.

Further exacerbating the issue is the rising cost of living in the Philippines. The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, 2023) reported a continuous increase in inflation, particularly in essential goods such as food, electricity, transportation, and education. For solo parents—many of whom already earn at or below the minimum wage—this inflation makes it even more difficult to allocate income to savings, educational needs, or emergency expenses. This is reflected in the data, with 74.2% stating they cannot set aside money for emergencies or their children's education.

In addition to basic necessities, 80.3% said they cannot financially support their elderly parents on a monthly basis. This is indicative of inter-generational financial pressure – solo parents are caught between supporting children and elderly parents, with inadequate resources to do either. Likewise, 75.8% say they're unable to give consistently to their church, and 85.2% they don't have the money to even launch a small business — a potential route to financial independence.

The absence of business capital and savings can show how poverty cycles can perpetuate for solo parents to escape poverty. The Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act (RA 11861) provides for livelihood assistance, but these services (as studies such as the ones made by Broncano (2023) and Redoña (2023) concluded) are usually plagued by low use (stemming from low awareness and administrative barriers).

Furthermore, financial strain is not just a matter of economic distress; it also influences solo parents psychosocial health. Economic instability they experience is a consistent trend among them, leading to stress, parental burnout, and an "inability" to do quality parenting (Labay, 2022; UNICEF Philippines, 2021).

Thus, the economic resources of single parents are significantly limited. Most of them can't afford to fulfill even the minimum financial requirements of solo parenting — let alone invest in other self-building projects like business or savings. These results highlight the immediate requirement for targeted, accessible, and well-disseminated socio- economic interventions, which recognize the special financial jeopardy faced by solo- parent families. Policy makers will also need to take into account inflation-indexed subsidies and economic development programs targeted at entrepreneurs as part of long- term support for solo families.

Table 4: Knowledge of Solo Parents

Knowledge on Various Policies and Laws	Enough knowledge	Not enough knowledge	No comment
1. Pagnenegosyo at Pagpapalago ng Pera	154 (46.7%)	174 (52.7%)	2 (0.6%)
2. Pag-aaruga, Pagpapalaki, at Pagdidisiplina sa anak o mg Anak.	265 (80.3%)	64 (19.4%)	1 (0.3%)
3. Tamang Nutrisyon para sa Pre-school at School aged Children	252 (76.4%)	77 (23.3%)	1 (0.3%)
4. Mga Batas na Nagpoprotekta sa mga Bata	216 (65.5%)	113 (34.2%)	1 (0.3%)
5. Mga Batas na Nagpoprotekta sa Pamilya	204 (61.85%)	125 (37.9%)	1 (0.3%)
6. Mga Batas na Nagpoprotekta sa Kababaihan	209 (63.3%)	120 (36.4%)	1 (0.3%)
7. Mga Karapatan ng Batang Filipino	206 (62.4%)	123 (37.3%)	1 (0.3%)
8. Solo Parents Act of 2000	188 (57.0%)	141 (42.7%)	1 (0.3%)
Note: Total is 330.			

Table 4 presents the solo parents' knowledge on a range of parenting topics and legal frameworks that affect their role and responsibilities. When it comes to nurturing and raising children, a substantial majority of respondents demonstrate adequate knowledge. Specifically, 80.3% reported sufficient knowledge in child-rearing, including discipline and care, and 76.4% indicated they are well-informed about proper nutrition for

preschool and school-aged children. These findings suggest that despite economic or emotional challenges, many solo parents prioritize the physical and developmental needs of their children. Their high awareness in these areas may be attributed to accessible health campaigns, community-based parenting seminars, or personal motivation driven by sole responsibility. This capacity to understand basic caregiving, however, may not be sufficient if not paired with financial or institutional support—especially considering their often-limited time and income resources (David et al., 2020).

By contrast, beliefs and understanding about applicable laws and policies paint a more mixed scenario. Although more than half of the respondents consider themselves aware of laws that protect children (65.5%), families (61.8%), women (63.3%) and the rights of every Filipino Children (62.4%), this also means that more or less a third of the solo parents are not knowledgeable or not sure of these basic protections. More alarmingly, awareness of the Solo Parents Act of 2000 is seen to be low at 57.0 percent. The coverage of this act, which includes important services such as parental leave, flexible work arrangements and care services in educational and housing assistance, is left unfulfilled if the potential beneficiaries themselves fail to understand the essence of the law (Republic Act No. 8972; Amended by R.A. 11861, 2022). The ignorance about this particular law is concerning, especially when it is a law that directly impacts their rights and ability to access support.

More specific findings were in the area of entrepreneurship and financial growth, with 52.7% of solo parents stating that they have less knowledge in this strand. This underscores an important target for intervention, as financial empowerment is a cornerstone of self-sufficiency. Lacking financial literacy and entrepreneurial capability, solo parents find it hard to supplement income, save or gain access to sustainable livelihood undertakings, a predicament that is exacerbated by inflation and the higher cost of rearing dependent children in solo-headed households (Albert et al., 2018).

Collectively, the results support the value of focused educational interventions. These should not just center around parenting or child development; they should also be about increasing legal literacy and finance. There are community-based workshops, barangay information campaigns, and digital literacy programs that could fill these knowledge gaps. Empowering solo parents to both know their rights and how to actually access government services is crucial so that they can make a home for their children.

Table 5: Skills of Solo Parents

Skills	Enough skills	Not enough skills	No comment
1. Hairdressing	46 (13.9%)	284 (86.1%)	0 (0.0%)
2. Dressmaking	24 (7.3%)	297 (90.0%)	9 (2.7%)
3. Hilot and wellness	36 (10.9%)	282 (85.5%)	12 (3.6%)
4. Bayong making	21 (6.4%)	301 (91.2%)	8 (2.4%)
5. Meat processing	25 (7.6%)	297 (90.0%)	8 (2.4%)
6. Soap making	36 (10.9%)	293 (88.8%)	1 (0.3%)
7. Candle making	25 (7.6%)	297 (90.0%)	8 (2.4%)
8. Bangus deboning and smoking	18 (5.5%)	306 (92.7%)	6 (1.8%)
9. Basic baking	34 (10.3%)	294 (89.1%)	2 (0.6%)
10. Perfume making	41 (12.4%)	288 (87.3%)	1 (0.3%)
Note: Total is 330.			

Table 5: Skills of Solo Parents illustrates a striking trend—an overwhelming majority of solo parents reported a lack of sufficient skills across various livelihood areas, including hairdressing, dressmaking, wellness services (hilot), and home-based processing like meat, soap, candle, and fish deboning. For instance, 90% or more of respondents reported insufficient skills in dressmaking, bayong-making, candle-making, and bangus deboning and smoking. Even in areas with relatively better skill retention, such as hairdressing (13.9%) and perfume-making (12.4%), the numbers are still low and suggest limited economic utility unless supported by deeper skill enhancement and market integration.

This data indicates a massive disconnect between the potential of livelihood programs and the readiness of single fathers and mothers to engage in them. While raising skill levels has been promoted as a stepping-stone out of

poverty, results from this study suggest that the training itself is not a panacea. In the absence of basic or prior training, technical trades education will likely not result in sustainable achievements for these people. And most troubling, there is a risk that policy responses will focus too much on training without preparing or aligning these programs with the reality of the market.

According to existing literature, the results are consistent with the papers of DSWD and ILO (2021), which indicated that vulnerable groups like solo parents need skill training and entrepreneurship mentorship, psychological support, and networking and access to resources as they transition to income-generating activities. Take hairdressing, for instance, if it is the most popular skill type, it comes with a saturated market unless the user can supplement it with modules on branding, customer acquisition, digital marketing, etc. This becomes even more salient when one considers the urban setting in which informal livelihood saturation is high.

In view of this, government ministries and local welfare offices should reconsider the conceptual and delivery approaches in training programs. There is a compelling position for a market-led skills training model – one that starts with market assessment before introducing livelihood packages. That would obviate redundancy, such as training multiple people in skills that already have too many supplies, such as bayong-making or candle-making, which may no longer be profitable in some towns. Furthermore, linkages with microfinance institutions, local cooperatives and private sector retailers need to be in place, so that after training, solo parent trainees can be directly connected to suppliers or buyers, improving their prospects for entrepreneurial sustainability.

Finally, the results point to the importance of multifaceted interventions beyond skills practice alone. These could range from mentoring to business planning workshops to loans or starter kits and institutional or household gate-keeping. Should agencies engage in brokerages to connect solo parents to clients or “users”? This integrated strategy recognizes the systemic disadvantages solo parents face and is designed to improve their standing within the local economy.

Table 6: Significant Relationship between Parenting Responsibilities and Demographic Characteristics

Parenting Responsibilities	Demographic Profile	χ^2 -Stat	p-value	Remarks
5. Natutulungan ko ang aking anak kapag mayroon silang problema.	Employment status	4.95	0.084*	Significant
6. May mga pagkakataon na nahihirapan akong intindihin ang aking anak.	Employment status	7.64	0.022**	Significant
7. Napaglalaanan ko ng sapat na panahon ang aking anak o mga anak.	Employment status	10.2	0.006***	Significant

Null Ho: Parenting responsibility (per item) is associated with demographic profile. Note: p-value is significant at .10*, .05**, .01*** levels of significance.

Table 6 presents the results of a chi-square test of association between selected parenting responsibilities and the employment status of solo parents. The null hypothesis tested was that there is no association between a given parenting responsibility and the employment status of the solo parent. The results indicate that, for three specific parenting responsibilities, the null hypothesis is rejected at different levels of significance, meaning employment status is statistically associated with these parental functions.

Firstly, the statement “Natutulungan ko ang aking anak kapag mayroon silang problema” (I am able to help my child when they have a problem) showed a marginally significant relationship with employment status ($\chi^2 = 4.95$, $p = 0.084$). This implies that employment status has some influence on a solo parent’s perceived ability to provide emotional or problem-solving support to their children. While the association is weak (significant only at the 10% level), it may reflect that employed or self-employed parents have better resources—emotional, social, or financial—to support their children’s problems, possibly due to more exposure, networks, or confidence developed through work engagement (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The second item, “May mga pagkakataong nahihirapan akong intindihin ang aking anak” (There are times I find it hard to understand my child), was significantly associated with employment status ($\chi^2 = 7.64$, $p = 0.022$). This result suggests that unemployed solo parents are more likely to struggle in understanding their children. This may be related to stress, lower self-esteem, or a lack of routine engagement outside the household, which can affect communication dynamics and emotional resilience (Conger & Donnellan, 2007). Financial instability among the unemployed may also generate stress that interferes with parent-child relationships.

Lastly, the strongest association was found in the item “Napaglalaanan ko ng sapat na panahon ang aking anak o mga anak” (I am able to spend enough time with my child or children), with a highly significant result ($\chi^2 = 10.2$, $p = 0.006$). This indicates that employment status plays a critical role in time allocation. Employed solo parents— particularly those in precarious, multiple, or shift-based jobs—may struggle to devote time to their children, an issue that has been highlighted in various studies on time poverty and solo parenting (Milkie et al., 2010). The findings raise important implications for work-life balance policies. Flexible work arrangements, subsidized childcare, and mental health support may enhance employed solo parents' ability to remain emotionally and physically present in their children's lives.

Overall, these associations underline the complex intersection between employment and parenting roles. While employment can enhance a parent's ability to provide material and emotional support, it may simultaneously limit their available time and increase stress. This suggests that employment interventions should not focus solely on job placement but should also include holistic support systems such as parenting workshops, mental health services, and flexible employment policies tailored to the unique circumstances of solo parents.

Table 7: Significant Relationship between Financial Capacity and Demographic Characteristics

Financial Capacity	Demographic Profile	χ^2 -Stat	p-value	Remarks
3. Nakakapagtabi ako ng pera para sa mga hindi inaasahang pangangailangan namin ng aking anak o mga anak	Gender	8.50	0.004***	Significant
pati ng na rin ang para sa kanilang pag-aaral.	Barangay	21.0	0.073*	Significant
4. Nakakapag-abot ako buwan-buwan ng halagang kailangan ng aking magulang.				
6. May sapat na halagang pampuhunan sa maliit na negosyo	Gender	2.76	0.097*	Significant
	Employment status	5.29	0.071*	Significant
	Employment status	8.80	0.012**	Significant

Null Ho: Financial capacity (per item) is associated with demographic profile. Note: p-value is significant at .10*, .05**, .01*** levels of significance.

Table 7 presents the significant relationships between the solo parents’ demographic characteristics and their financial capacities using a chi-square test of association.

Findings show that women are less likely to save contingency funds for their children, including for their studies

($\chi^2 = 8.50$, $p = 0.004$). Similarly, solo parents from Brgy. Dela Paz, San Isidro, San Jose, Bagong Nayon, and Cupang are also less likely to prepare such emergency funds ($\chi^2 = 21.0$, $p = 0.073$).

Females seem to have a lesser tendency to provide regular monthly assistance to their parents ($\chi^2 = 2.76$, $p = 0.097$). In the same way, respondents who are only self-employed or unemployed are also less likely to assist their parents ($\chi^2 = 5.29$, $p = 0.071$). Regarding having enough capital to start a small business, all three categories – employed, self-employed, and unemployed – have an equal tendency to claim that they do not have enough capital to start one ($\chi^2 = 8.80$, $p = 0.012$), although this claim is much more strongly manifested among employed solo parents due to their large representation.

Table 8: Significant Relationship between Knowledge of Policies and Law Titles and Demographic Characteristics

Policies or Law Titles	Demographic Profile	χ^2 -Stat	p-value	Remarks
6. Mga Batas na Nagpoprotekta sa Kababaihan	Gender	3.42	0.064*	Significant
8. Solo Parent Act of 2000	Gender	3.22	0.073*	Significant
3. Tamang Nutrisyon para sa Pre-school at School aged Children	Barangay	21.6	0.062*	Significant
7. Mga Karapatan ng Batang Filipino	Employment status	6.38	0.041**	Significant

Null Ho: Knowledge (per law) is associated with demographic profile. Note: p-value is significant at .10*, .05**, .01*** levels of significance.

Table 8 presents the significant relationship between the solo parents' demographic characteristics and their knowledge of certain policies and law titles using a chi-square test of association.

Data show that either gender is knowledgeable about laws that protect families, although there is evidence that women have a stronger tendency to show this knowledge than men ($\chi^2 = 3.42$, $p = 0.064$). Either gender is also knowledgeable about the rights of every Filipino child; however, men seem to be more knowledgeable than women ($\chi^2 = 3.22$, $p = 0.073$). In the same way, those who are employed seem to know more about these rights of the Filipino child than those who are self-employed or unemployed ($\chi^2 = 6.38$, $p = 0.041$).

In terms of their knowledge of proper nutrition for pre-school and school-aged children, all barangays are mostly knowledgeable about this policy, except for Brgy. Bagong Nayon has an almost equal proportion of residents between those who are knowledgeable and those who are not ($\chi^2 = 21.6$, $p = 0.096$).

Table 9: Relationship between Skills of Solo Parents and Demographic Characteristics

Skills	Demographic Profile	χ^2 -Stat	p-value	Remarks
1. Hairdressing	Gender	0.488	0.485	Not significant
	Barangay	7.93	0.719	Not significant
	Employment	0.640	0.726	Not significant
	status			
2. Dressmaking	Gender	1.75	0.186	Not significant
	Barangay	8.66	0.654	Not significant
	Employment	2.99	0.224	Not significant
	status			
3. Hilot and wellness	Gender	2.26	0.133	Not significant
	Barangay	9.39	0.586	Not significant
	Employment	3.11	0.211	Not significant
	status			

4. Bayong making	Gender	0.659	0.417	Not significant
	Barangay	13.2	0.283	Not significant
	Employment	1.64	0.441	Not significant
	status			
5. Meat processing	Gender	2.11	0.146	Not significant
	Barangay	13.2	0.281	Not significant
	Employment	0.730	0.694	Not significant
	status			
6. Soap making	Gender	0.360	0.549	Not significant
	Barangay	9.83	0.546	Not significant
	Employment	0.787	0.675	Not significant
	status			
7. Candle making	Gender	1.56	0.212	Not significant
	Barangay	9.65	0.562	Not significant
	Employment	4.34	0.114	Not significant
	status			
8. Bangus deboning and smoking	Gender	0.0125	0.911	Not significant
	Barangay	7.30	0.775	Not significant
	Employment	0.716	0.699	Not significant
	status			
9. Basic baking	Gender	0.00307	0.956	Not significant
	Barangay	8.90	0.631	Not significant
	Employment	1.25	0.537	Not significant
	status			
10. Perfume making	Gender	0.126	0.723	Not significant
	Barangay	8.50	0.668	Not significant
	Employment	0.337	0.845	Not significant
	status			
Null Ho: Skill is associated with demographic profile.				
Note: p-value is significant at .10*, .05**, .01*** levels of significance.				

Table 9 presents the significant relationship between the solo parents' demographic characteristics and their livelihood skills using a chi-square test of association.

Based on the chi-square statistic, there is no significant relationship between any of the livelihood skills when paired with any demographic, as evidenced by p-values greater than the .05 significance level. Regarding gender, both male and female respondents admitted having insufficient knowledge in all ten livelihood skills. The same may be said about barangay and employment status. Solo parents who are employed, self-employed, or unemployed do not have enough skills regarding the same livelihood opportunities.

Basis for Policy Formation

1. Parenting Concerns: Single parents have immense difficulty coping with their responsibilities of parenthood, most especially in the areas of knowing their children, giving them enough time, and keeping an eye on them. A lot of them are worried about their capacity to provide emotional support for their kids and just being able to be present with them day to day. Evidence indicates that employed sole parents, in general, are likely to be able to assist their children when they have personal concerns, but the assistance they can give may be time-pressured. In contrast, unemployed solo parents have difficulty understanding children to a greater extent. This is suggestive of a trade-off between available time and emotional support, which may necessitate job-specific parenting programs or counseling tailored to employment status. And some places, like Brgy. Bagong Nayon shows a lack of knowledge about appropriate feeding practices for preschool and school-aged children among solo parents, thus stressing the importance of appropriate, comprehensive community-based parenting support.

2. **Financial Challenges:** Financial instability is a persistent issue for solo parents. Seven in ten report experiencing financial difficulties, including challenges in meeting basic income sufficiency, saving for emergencies, supporting extended family or religious obligations, and raising capital for a business. Moreover, only about 23% of solo parents know at least one livelihood skill that they can rely on to generate income. More concerning is that nearly half of solo parents, regardless of gender, barangay, or employment status, lack any income-generating skills altogether. This highlights a critical vulnerability across demographics and suggests the need for more robust, inclusive financial empowerment programs.
3. **Potential Livelihood Opportunities:** From among single mothers, there is a keen focus of attention on the improvement of financial independence using entrepreneurial and skill training. Almost 8 in 10 solo parents with low business and financial literacy were willing to be trained in business and financial literacy, a high demand for capability building programs. Popular livelihood options include hairdressing and perfume-making, while less common but potentially competitive skills such as bangus deboning, bayong-making, and dressmaking may be introduced strategically to reduce market saturation. However, despite the interest, only 5 in 10 solo parents without existing livelihood skills are open to learning new ones, suggesting a gap that may require motivational outreach, incentives, or hands-on support to increase uptake.

Policy Program

Based on the results and findings, this policy program has been formed aimed at addressing the parental responsibilities, financial capacities, knowledge on various laws and policies, and livelihood skills among solo parents. The following components are highlighted, including steps that may be taken.

Strengthening Parenting Responsibilities

Solo parents face significant challenges in fulfilling their parenting responsibilities, such as understanding their children's needs, spending quality time with them, and ensuring consistent supervision—especially among employed solo parents. These challenges also extend to gaps in knowledge related to their children's nutrition and health. To address these issues, the following strategies may be pursued:

- Conduct regular parenting workshops, ideally monthly, covering topics such as child development, communication techniques, discipline, emotional support, and mental wellness.
- Create a community-based caregiver network, tapping barangay volunteers or trusted neighbors to assist working solo parents with child supervision during work hours.
- Organize barangay-wide “Family Event Days”, which serve both recreational and developmental purposes by encouraging bonding moments between solo parents and their children.
- Promote flexible working conditions in companies employing solo parents, including options like compressed work hours, telecommuting, or “Bring Your Child to Work” days.
- Initiate barangay-specific nutrition education programs, especially in areas like Brgy. Bagong Nayon, where knowledge on children's proper nutrition is limited. Solo parents should be engaged in feeding programs that demonstrate low-cost, nutritious meal preparation.

Economic Empowerment Through Financial Literacy and Livelihood Development

Most solo parents encounter financial difficulties, whether employed or not. Many lack sufficient income, savings, or access to startup capital for small businesses. Additionally, a considerable number do not possess any livelihood skills, while those with existing skills tend to concentrate on a few popular trades, creating competition within small local markets. Therefore, a combined strategy is recommended:

- Facilitate financial literacy seminars focused on essential topics such as budgeting, saving, debt management, and responsible spending tailored for solo parents. Support access to microfinance, encouraging local government units or municipal offices to offer capital assistance via zero- to low-interest microloans targeted at solo parents starting small businesses.
- Promote cooperative-based saving schemes, wherein solo parents are encouraged to organize themselves into small cooperatives to foster mutual trust and build collective financial resilience.
- Offer diversified livelihood training programs. While hairdressing and perfume-making remain popular,

undervalued but potentially viable trades such as bayong- making, dressmaking, or bangus deboning should also be promoted. Real-life success stories from other solo parents in different regions may help boost interest and motivation.

- Ensure provision of starter kits and basic materials to help newly trained solo parents begin their home-based ventures.
- Establish partnerships between solo parents and local entrepreneurs, creating a mentorship ecosystem that can provide guidance, market insights, and support in product development and customer engagement.

Strengthening Legal Awareness and Access to Rights

A significant number of solo parents are unaware of their rights and the benefits entitled to them under existing national laws, such as the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000 and related policies. Lack of awareness hampers their ability to access support systems and public services that could ease their burdens. The following measures are proposed:

- Deliver law literacy sessions that introduce and explain essential laws for solo parents, including the Solo Parents Act, the Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) Law, child protection laws, and food and nutrition policies. These sessions must be conducted in a simplified, accessible manner.
- Distribute printed educational materials, such as brochures or infographics in local dialects, detailing the entitlements of solo parents and the process for availing of government services

Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Program

To ensure the effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of this policy program, a structured monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework will be implemented. The baseline is important as it is a benchmark to evaluate if the program objectives are being met over time. A pre-intervention baseline study will be undertaken, covering key indicators including parenting capability, financial well-being, knowledge of entitlements under the law and livelihood skills. This is in accordance with good practice in public policy and project assessment that stresses the importance of baseline information for understanding the initial situation, and the ability to measure the impact of interventions (UNDP, 2009; Kusek & Rist, 2004).

For example, baseline information about parenting practices will include the amount of time parents spend with children, level of parenting confidence, and child- rearing challenges. Baseline financial data on income, sources of financial support, current debt obligations, access to credit, and savings practices will be collected. Legal literacy and nutritional knowledge (especially children's nutritional needs) will also be measured in order to inform appropriate interventions.

Monthly monitoring will be performed in the field during program delivery, using attendance logs, activity report forms and feedback forms from the participants on the workshops or the trainings. These feedback mechanisms will enable evaluation of immediate participant satisfaction, the level of knowledge gained and recommendations for improvement. Continual feedback loops have also been found by the Asian Development Bank (ADB, 2020) to increase accountability and effectiveness of program delivery.

Following business start-up rates, loan disbursement and repayment performance and income changes on a quarterly basis will provide a sense of the program's impact on the economic welfare of solo parents. Additionally, follow-up surveys, focus groups and comparisons between post-intervention measurements and baseline data will be used as part of the annual assessments. Such a longitudinal monitoring perspective is crucial in order to monitor changes concerning what students know, do, and think, as well as their contexts and broader patterns of relations over time (OECD, 2010).

As such, the information obtained through this M&E system will be synthesized in annual reports for dissemination to LGUs, community stakeholders, and policy partners. This research-informed reporting will shape changes to programs so that they continue to be effective and relevant for solo parent families.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the conclusions on the findings and obtained results, including the recommendations for the policy program formed.

Summary of Findings

1. **Parenting responsibilities.** Solo parents, in general, have difficulties understanding their children, providing quality time with them, and ensuring safety and supervision over them.
2. **Financial capacities.** Solo parents experience financial difficulties in saving their incomes, supporting their families, and securing the needed capital to start their business. In general, most solo parents do not possess sufficient livelihood skills. Hairdressing (13.9%) and perfume-making (12.4%) were the most commonly identified skills, but these still received very low response rates among the solo parents. The least popular livelihood skills include bangus deboning and smoking (5.5%) and bayong-making (6.4%). Only about 23% of solo parents know at least one livelihood skill they can use to support their families. However, it is more concerning that about 1 in every two single parents does not know any livelihood skills at all. Problems associated with employment status. Employed solo parents have difficulties spending time with their children. Unemployed solo parents have more difficulty understanding their children. Financially, even employed solo parents claim they lack the capital to start their own small business.
3. **Knowledge and awareness of existing laws and policies.** Solo parents have the lowest level of knowledge on financial growth and income, including their awareness of the Solo Parents Act of 2000.
4. **Problems associated with the barangay.** Brgy. Bagong Nayan needs to improve solo parents' knowledge of proper nutrition for preschool and school-aged children. In other barangays, more solo parents are knowledgeable than not.

Recommendations for Policy Implementers

The following recommendations are proposed for policy implementers:

1. **Community collaboration.** Policy implementers are encouraged to collaborate with existing community systems such as barangays, women's groups, and even schools to help mobilize and disseminate information about the implemented policy. These groups are already well-established and trusted, making them effective for communicating with solo parents. In fact, schools and barangay centers may serve as reliable and accessible venues for conducting training workshops for solo parents.
2. **Access and flexibility of programs.** Policy implementers should carefully consider the time constraints of solo parents, who often have to balance work and childcare responsibilities. Attending scheduled sessions can be difficult for them. Therefore, it is recommended that programs be designed with flexible schedules, such as evening or weekend sessions, or by offering online or hybrid formats. Policy implementers may also consider using easy-to-read, quick, and light learning materials, and maximize the use of social media, keeping in mind the accessibility and flexibility that solo parents need.
3. **Incentivized participation.** Policy implementers should expect some resistance from solo parents when it comes to participating in programs. However, offering small but meaningful incentives can help encourage their involvement. These may include—but are not limited to—transportation allowances, certificates of completion or participation that are recognized where applicable, starter kits for livelihood programs, and even special access to priority services. These incentives can provide much-needed support for solo parents and motivate them to continue attending despite their busy schedules.
4. **Monitoring and feedback mechanism.** Policy implementers must create a well-defined system for collecting feedback from their participants. Each session or phase of the program should include opportunities to gather input from solo parents for continual improvement of the program. Policy implementers should ensure that solo parents understand that this program is for their benefit; hence, their honest feedback is highly essential. Regular evaluation ensures that the program for solo parents remains relevant and responsive to the ever-changing needs of the target audience.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

REC Protocol Approval



La Consolacion University Philippines
Bulihan, City of Malolos, Bulacan 3000



Research Ethics Committee **Protocol Approval**

June 7, 2025

FRESCIAN O. CANLAS

Principal Investigator

Re: **Policy Analysis: Development of Programs and Services for Solo Parents in Antipolo**
(1518/202505-CanlasF01)

Sir/Madam:

We wish to inform you that the study protocol entitled, **"Policy Analysis: Development of Programs and Services for Solo Parents in Antipolo"** has been reviewed and is hereby granted **ETHICS CLEARANCE** for implementation by the LCUP-REC. The study has been assigned study protocol code **1518/202505-CanlasF01**, which should be used for all communication to the LCUP-REC related to this study. This ethical clearance is valid for one year until **June 8, 2026**.

The following technical documents were submitted for review on which this approval was based:

1. Study Protocol/Investigator's Brochure
2. Proposal manuscript
3. A review of literature that justified the conduct of the study
4. Procedure of research data gathering was found to be scientific
5. Adherence and observance of ethical standards set for research undertaking as seen in Chapter 2 – Ethical Consideration
6. References List
7. Informed consent/Assent form
8. Research instrument
9. Curriculum Vitae illustrating the investigator's qualification to conduct of the study
10. Budget Proposal using the PRE-REC-FO-011-Detailed Budget Sheet
11. Compliance and justification report on the protocol assessment form

While the study is in progress, the Principal Investigator is requested to submit the following documents:

1. Progress report using the PRE-REC-FO-018 (*Continuing Review Application Form*) every six months from the date of approval which includes the following: (**NOTE: In view of active ethical clearance, this report is mandatory even if the study has not started or is still awaiting release of funds.**)
 - a. Date covered by the report (if any)
 - b. Protocol summary and status report on the progress of the research
 - c. Number of participants accrued
 - d. Withdrawal or termination of participants
 - e. Complaints on the research since the last LCUP-REC review
 - f. Summary of relevant recent research literature, interim findings and amendments since the last LCUP-REC review
 - g. Any relevant multi-center research reports

PRE-REC-FO-027

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- h. Any relevant information especially about risks associated with the research
 - i. A copy of the accomplished informed consent document
2. Any changes in the protocol, especially those that may adversely affect the safety of the participants during the conduct of the study/trial including changes in personnel, must be submitted, or reported using the PRE-REC-FO-017 (*Study Protocol Amendment Submission Form*).
 3. Revisions in the informed consent form using the PRE-REC-FO-017 (*Study Protocol Amendment Submission Form*).
 4. Reports of adverse events including from other study sites using the PRE-REC-FO-017 (*Serious Adverse Event Report*).
 5. Notice of early termination of the study and reasons for such using the PRE-REC-FO-019 (*Early Termination Report Form*).
 6. Any event which may have ethical significance.
 7. Any information which is needed by the LCUP-REC to do ongoing review.
 8. Notice of time of completion of the study using the PRE-REC-FO-020 (*Final Report Form*).
 9. Application for renewal of ethical clearance 90 days before the expiration date of this approval through submission of PRE-REC-FO-018 (*Continuing Review Application Form*).
 10. Any unreported protocol amendments, deviation, serious adverse events, suspected unexpected serious adverse events, and other gross violation determined by the REC, ethics clearance may be revoked after thorough investigation and determination of REC.

Thank you.

Respectfully,



GERALD LESTER A. CAOILI, PTRP, MSPT, DrPH(c)
Chair, LCUP-REC

APPENDIX B PERMISSION LETTER



LA CONSOLACION UNIVERSITY PHILIPPINES
Bulihan, City of Malolos, Bulacan

GRADUATE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT



2 June 2025

ATTY. HENRY R. ROSANTINA

Acting City Administrator
City Government of Antipolo
Antipolo City

Dear **Atty Rosantina**:

Greetings!

The undersigned is a graduate student at the La Consolacion University Philippines who is currently pursuing the degree **Master of Science in Social Work (MSSW)** and completing the policy paper entitled, **Policy Analysis: Development of Programs and Services for Solo Parents in Antipolo City.**

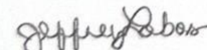
In this regard, may I respectfully request your good office to, please, allow this researcher to administer the research instruments to the solo parents of Antipolo City and gather the necessary data to complete the study. Rest assured that all the gathered information/data will be handled with utmost care and confidentiality.

Your positive response is highly appreciated. Thank you.

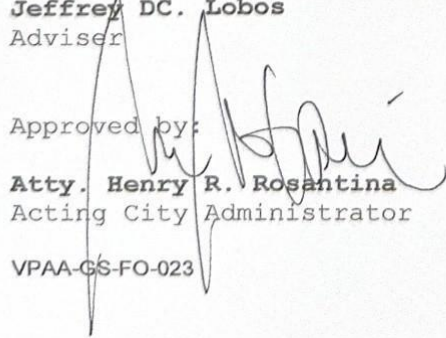
Yours truly,


Freseian O. Canlas
Student

Noted by:


Jeffrey DC. Lobos
Adviser

Approved by:


Atty. Henry R. Rosantina
Acting City Administrator

VPAA-CS-FO-023

APPENDIX C INSTRUMENT OF THE STUDY



Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF ANTIPOLLO
Province of Rizal



City Social Welfare and Development Office

1st Flr., Gender Advocacy & Development (GAD) Center
P. Burgos Street, Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City

Telephone No.: 8584-77-58/8689-45-83/8689-45-45 e-mail Address: socialwelfare@antipolo.ph

SOLO PARENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT FORM

New ☐ Renewal ☐

Ang survey na ito ay naglalayon na matukoy ang mga pangangailangan ninyo bilang isang solo parent at ang mga makakalap na impormasyon dito ay gagamiting batayan sa pagbuo ng mga plano at pagbibigay ng mga serbisyo na tuwirang sasagot sa mga naitalang pangangailangan ng inyong sector. Kung kaya't mangyari lamang po na sagutin ninyo ito ng maayos at totoo.

Nais din po naming ipabatid sainyo na ang lahat ng inyong sagot ay gagamitin lamang para sa nabanggit sa itaas at maari po kaming makipag-ugnayan sa inyong barangay kung sakali po kayo ay mapabilang na benepisyaryo sa mga programa at serbisyong ilulunsad ng Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Antipolo sa pamamagitan ng aming tanggapan at ibang pang tanggapan na katuwang ng Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Antipolo.

Petsa:

Pangalan:		Edad:
Address:		
Gaano katagal nang Solo Parent:	Bilang ng anak:	Bilang ng iba pang kasama sa bahay:
Trabaho:	Buwanang Kita:	
Numero ng Telepono:	Email address:	

Lagyan ng tsek (✓) ang korespondeng kolum ng inyong sagot.

I. PAGGAMPAN SA MGA TUNGKULIN BILANG ISANG MAGULANG

ITEM NO.	ITEM	OO	HINDI
1	Nagkaroon kami ng problema sa isa't isa ng aking anak/mga anak.		
2	Napag-uusapan namin ng aking anak/ mga anak kung mayroon man silang problema, dinaramdam o pangangailangan.		
3	Nareresolba namin ng aking/mga anak ang hindi namin pagkakaunawaan.		
4	Nakakapagsabi sa akin ang aking anak ng kanilang naramdaman, saloobin, o pangarap		
5	Natutulungan ko ang aking anak kapag mayroon silang problema.		
6	May mga pagkakataong nahihirapan akong intindihin ang aking anak.		
7	Napaglalaanan ko ng sapat na panahon ang aking anak o mga anak.		

APPENDIX D

CERTIFICATE OF VALIDATION

This is to certify that the instrument to assess the needs of solo parents in Antipolo City in terms of parenting responsibilities, financial capacity, skills and development had undergone validation by experts. The experts can attest that the questionnaire had pass through careful examination and were proven useful for the policy paper entitled: *"Policy Analysis: Development of Programs and Services for Solo Parents in Antipolo City"*.

CERTIFIED BY:


Ms. Lorena R. Pineda, RSW
Division Head
Community Outreach Division II, CSWD
Antipolo City


Ms. Susie L. Dakis, RSW
Section Head
Solo Parent Section, CSWD
Antipolo City


Ms. Maria Melisse Bilbao
President
Federation of Solo Parents
Antipolo City