

# Assessment of Solo Parents' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perceptions of Republic Act No. 11861 in the Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, Philippines

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**Keywords:** Solo parents, Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act (RA No. 11861), Knowledge, Attitudes, Perceptions

**Type:** Research Article

Submitted: March 13, 2025

Accepted: August 8, 2025

Published: August 31, 2025

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## Citation

Paraguison, A.M., Dela Cruz, J.M., Reyes, Domingo, P.G., & Batino, J.A.L. (2025). Assessment of Solo Parents' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perceptions of RA 11861 in the Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, Philippines. *CLSU International Journal of Education and Development Studies*, 2:000006. <https://doi.org/10.22137/IJEDS.2025.000006>

## Abstract

This study examines the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of solo parents in the Science City of Muñoz regarding the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022 (RA No. 11861). Using a self-administered questionnaire and a convenient sampling method, data were collected from 186 solo parents and analyzed with a Cronbach's Alpha reliability score of 0.91. The results revealed that solo parents had low levels of awareness and understanding of the Act. While their attitudes and perceptions were average, their experiences with the Act remained limited. Significant differences were observed based on gender and educational attainment, with single mothers and those with higher education levels demonstrating greater knowledge. Additionally, positive correlations were found between knowledge and attitudes, knowledge and perceptions, and attitudes and perceptions. The study highlights the need for targeted public awareness campaigns and educational programs to enhance understanding of the Act, particularly among those with lower education levels. Simplifying the application process and improving information accessibility are recommended to help solo parents fully utilize the benefits provided by the Act. Overall, the study underscores the importance of increasing knowledge to foster positive attitudes and perceptions, thereby improving the support system for solo parents.

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## Introduction

About 15 million single parents are struggling in the Philippines, which is an increasing number that has become a public concern (Pinugu, 2024). Raising a child as a solo parent is a huge responsibility. Being a solo parent in today's culture is one of the most difficult problems a person can experience. Solo parents need to assume multiple responsibilities, which could lead them to face various challenges. Since they are solely responsible for raising their children, solo parents find themselves fulfilling duties typically shared by couples. These situations demand additional effort and can lead to heightened stress, sometimes resulting in grief or depression in worst cases. Despite the challenges, some solo parents believe that this condition brings certain benefits, which they feel outweigh

the difficulties they encounter. The Solo Parents Welfare Act, also referred to as Republic Act No. 8972, was created in 2000 to provide comprehensive services to single parents who are raising their children single-handedly. Among the provisions of the law are flexible work schedules, protection from discrimination, parental leave, discounts on educational materials, medical and hospitalization benefits, and livelihood assistance. After two decades, RA 8972 was succeeded by RA 11861, otherwise known as the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act. This law expands the benefits and privileges that solo parents and their children can enjoy. As such, this law now includes increased monthly cash subsidies, the expansion of the definition of solo parents, child care assistance, the

inclusion of private sector employees, and special protection for adolescent solo parents.

There are qualitative studies about policy evaluation and solo parents as a vulnerable sector of society. A study conducted by Farnacio & Reyes (2021) reveals that the Expanded Solo Parents Act of 2020 is not well-known among solo parents. Another study by Lu (2023) explains that solo parents are in a precarious situation and belong to the vulnerable sectors of society. Further studies in the Philippines suggest that solo parents face difficulties and risks across economic, mental health, and social domains. For instance, a qualitative study by Cruz *et al.* (2024) explains that Solo parents in Bulacan experience financial difficulties. Meanwhile, in Catanduanes, Bashir *et al.* (2022) emphasize that solo parents confront social stigma and emotional stress, resulting in mental health burdens. The worst case was reported in the study of Kareem *et al.* (2024), where solo-parents experience emotional trauma due to their difficulties. Knowing the predicament of solo parents in raising their children alone, the government enacted a law that gives assistance and support to solo parents.

Despite existing studies that highlight the challenges experienced by solo parents in the Philippines, few have explored the importance of understanding and engaging with the provisions of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022. Furthermore, the study's emphasis regarding the use of knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions (KAP) addresses the lack of empirical data on quantitative aspects and the actual utilization of government benefits. This study aims to bridge the gap in solo parenting by concentrating on assessing their knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions. Moreover, the study focused on the Science City of Muñoz which has 358 solo parents. Among them, 305 are single mothers while 53 are single fathers (CSWDO of Science City of Muñoz, 2023).

The completion of the study contributed to understanding the effectiveness of RA 11861 to solo parents and determined possible hindrances to its implementation. The provisions of the aforementioned acts significantly help solo parents in reducing the burden they face in raising their children. Though this may be the sought effects, solo parents could only enjoy the provision of the law if they understand and avail the provisions of the Solo Parent Act. The study also addressed the challenges confronted by solo parents as a vulnerable and often marginalized group in a society by accessing support systems available, such as the provisions. Moreover, the study provided a basis for policy refinements, improving awareness campaigns, application processes, and service delivery, especially in remote areas in the Philippines.

The study answered the following objectives such as assessing the level of knowledge, determining the attitudes, and evaluating the perceptions of solo parents of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022. Furthermore, the study also explored the relationships between knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of solo parents. By exploring the relationship, the researchers also identified the factors influencing the level of knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions. Lastly, the study provided suggestions for policymakers to enhance the dissemination, awareness, and utilization of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022.

## Materials and Methods

A quantitative method was employed to describe the knowledge, attitude, and perception of solo parents on the Expanded Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2022. The study was conducted in the Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, Philippines, with a total of 186 out of 358 solo parents surveyed. It adopted the theoretical framework proposed by Schwartz (1976) (as cited by Seinso, Lyford, & Oldewage-Theron, 2022), known as the Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP) Model. Under this theory, Schwartz states that increasing personal knowledge corresponds to changes in attitude or 'behavior' and preferences.

Moreover, this model also explores the relationship between the socio-demographic profiles of the study participants as an important factor influencing the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of an individual. Hence, the model also examines the linkage of an individual's respective knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding the scope of a certain study. Thus, Schwartz believes that the KAP model significantly contributes to conducting studies and surveys, enabling the collection of information in relation to the knowledge, opinion, attitude, and behavioral practices of any specific groups regarding a certain issue. By determining and evaluating the individual's knowledge, opinion, attitude, and behavioral practice about an issue, it becomes possible to identify relationships among these variables. Hence, the model can then support the development and implementation of various interventions. For instance, it may be applied to examine the correlation between solo parents' knowledge and attitude toward the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022.

The study used convenient sampling, selecting available and willing participants. This method was chosen due to the limited availability of respondents. The researcher prioritized readiness, accessibility, and willingness to participate among the respondents. Not all respondents were available, as solo parents faced

challenges related to work-life balance, multiple responsibilities, and overlapping roles. As Etikan, Musa & Alkassim (2016) mention, convenience sampling can be utilized if the representative sample is difficult to survey. The respondents were engaged through the assistance of CSWDO officers and through direct outreach in public spaces, such as markets and government offices, where the solo parents were likely to be present. Additionally, the researcher conducted house to house to reach potential participants. The content of the survey questionnaire consisted of the following; (1) Socio-Demographics of the respondents; (2) Knowledge of Solo Parents; (3) benefits of the provisions that are most helpful and source of information; (4) attitudes of Solo parents toward the provisions; (5) perceptions of the solo parents about the provisions; (6) experiences of solo parents with the provision of Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022. Since the survey questionnaire was a self-administered questionnaire, its reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha with the following results: knowledge (0.92 excellent), attitudes (0.89, good), and perception (0.77, acceptable). Overall consistency was excellent (0.91).

The data gathering commenced upon receiving approval from the Ethics Committee of Central Luzon State University. A list of the solo parents was acquired from the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO), and informed consent was secured from the respondents prior to conducting the survey. The researchers gathered data from the respondents from April to May of 2025 at Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija. After data collection, the data were organized, analyzed using SPSS and EXCEL, and reviewed for clarity. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and Pearson's *r* were employed to identify patterns in the data. Ethical measures ensure data integrity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation through informed consent.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1.** Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Socio-demographic Characteristics		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	<29	37	19.9
	29 to 51	108	58.1
	>51	41	22
Gender	Male	43	23.11
	Female	143	76.89
Educational Attainment	Elementary Level	48	25.8
	High School Level	92	49.5
	College Level	46	24.7
No. of Children	1 to 2	131	70.4
	3 to 4	42	22.6
	5 and above	13	7
Occupation	Employed	119	64
	Unemployed	67	36
Status as Solo Parents	Separated	123	66.1
	Widowed	63	33.9

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The majority of them belonged to the middle-aged group of 29 to 51 years old (58.1%). This age group is typically in their prime working years, often carrying both career responsibilities and the role of family breadwinner.

However, solo parents in the Philippines face significant challenges in securing stable employment due to childcare responsibilities (Agero & Guhao, 2016). While the findings showed that 64% of the respondents were employed, there remains a pressing need to further increase employment opportunities for solo parents. Employment status is a critical factor that directly impacts their economic stability and their capacity to support their families.

In terms of gender, the majority of the respondents were female, accounting for 76.89% while only 23.11% were male. This suggests that women are more likely to become solo parents. This trend is also reflected in the statistical data of the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO, 2023), which reports that out of 358 registered solo parents, 305 are single mothers.

The educational attainment of the respondents is a crucial factor in the accessibility of the benefits and awareness of the Expanded Solo Parents of 2022. Nearly half of the respondents were high school graduates and a quarter (25.8%) had an elementary level of education. Only 24.7% of the respondents had attained a college level of education, indicating a relatively low number of solo parents with high education.

Childcare responsibilities are extremely important to solo parenting. The data showed that a substantial majority of respondents (70.4%) had one to two children. This reflects both global and national trends toward smaller numbers of children in a household. According to the Philippine Statistical Authority PSA (2022), the average number of family members per household in the Philippines declined from 4.6 in 2010 to 4.1 in 2020. On the other hand, 22.6% of the respondents reported having three to four children, and a minority (7%) of them had five or more children.

Regarding civil status, 66.1% of the respondents were separated, while 33.9% were widowed. This indicates that separation of husband and wife is a common reason for solo parenthood. As such, an integral part of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022 should prioritize legal, social, and emotional support.

**Table 2.** Knowledge of Solo Parents Regarding the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022

	Knowledge	Mean	SD	Description
1.	Awareness of the provisions	2.24	1.29	Low Level
2.	Understanding the benefits	2.29	1.26	Low Level
3.	Familiarity with the eligibility criteria	2.40	1.31	Average
4.	Knowledge on where to seek information	2.30	1.36	Low Level
5.	Received sufficient information	2.22	1.28	Low Level
6.	I know the application process to avail the benefits	2.09	1.18	Low Level
7.	I understand my rights as a solo parent	2.71	1.40	Average
8.	Belief on the adequacy to address the needs of solo parents	2.22	1.23	Low Level
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2.31</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>Low Level</b>

Legend:

1.00-2.33- Low Level    3.67-5.00- High Level

2.34-3.66- Average Level

Table 2 reveals that respondents' knowledge of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022 was generally low ( $M = 2.31$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ). Only 2 out of 8 criteria reflected an average level of knowledge—specifically, familiarity with the eligibility criteria and understanding of the rights of solo parents—highlighting an overall lack of knowledge. Notably, access to benefits under the Act was not being fully utilized, as the data showed a low level of understanding of the benefits ( $M = 2.29$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ) and the application process to avail them ( $M = 2.09$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ). Similar findings by Garcia *et al.* (2021) and Tagopa (2017) indicate that many solo parents are not fully informed about their entitlements. Furthermore, the implementation of the Act is somewhat limited, resulting in many solo parents not obtaining the benefits provided by the act. This signifies the need to enhance the information dissemination by the government on the provision. Empowering solo parents through enhanced awareness is necessary to ensure they can access the full range of benefits and protections available to them.

**Table 3.** Knowledge of Solo Parents Regarding the Benefits Under the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022

	Knowledge	Mean	SD	Description
1.	The Comprehensive Package of Social Development provided for solo parents includes livelihood assistance, psychological support, and protection from Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC).	2.56	1.51	Average
2.	Solo parents are entitled to 7 days of parental leave from their workplace.	1.97	1.39	Low Level
3.	There are education benefits available for solo parents and their children under DepEd, CHED, and TESDA.	2.13	1.40	Low Level
4.	Solo parents have the option for a flexible work schedule.	1.99	1.27	Low Level
5.	Additional benefits such as monthly cash subsidies and discounts on essential items like milk, diapers, medicine, and vaccinations.	2.69	1.35	Average
6.	Automatic coverage of health insurance like PhilHealth	3.09	1.60	Average
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2.41</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>Average</b>

Legend:

1.00-2.33- Low Level    2.34-3.66- Average Level    3.67-5.00- High Level

Table 3 shows that respondents had an average understanding of the benefits of health insurance like PhilHealth, with a mean score of 3.09 and an SD of 1.60. According to Cruz Marcelo & Tenefrancia (n.d.), this provision is a crucial benefit under RA 11861 that ensures accessible healthcare coverage for solo parents.

The data also indicated an average level of knowledge regarding the Comprehensive Package of Social Development, which includes protection against Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC). The level of knowledge is important, as one out of five Filipino women aged 15-49 experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence from their partner, regardless of whether married or not (National Demographic and Health Survey, 2022). Furthermore, the Philippine Commission on Women (2023) also reveals that 8,055 cases of the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act (RA 9262) were filed in 2023. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Local Government Unit (LGU) did an excellent job of increasing the level of knowledge of the Comprehensive Package of Social Development.

Areas with lower levels of awareness included parental leave, which received a mean of 1.97 and an SD of 1.39. Similarly, flexible work schedules got a low awareness with a mean of 1.99 and an SD of 1.27. This may be attributed to the fact that 49.5% of the respondents were high school graduates, many of whom had limited opportunities for employment in government sectors where such benefits are more commonly implemented. Nonetheless, improved dissemination of awareness is needed to address the lack of understanding and application of the process for parental leave and flexible work schedules. These benefits are essential in reducing the burden of too many responsibilities of solo parents.

The study also found a low level of knowledge regarding educational benefits, with a mean of 2.13 and an SD of 1.40. Knowing this provision can help solo parents in continuing their education, such as completing a college degree. The low level awareness suggests that many solo parents are missing out on a crucial opportunity to uplift and develop their situation, especially in terms of economic advancement.

In terms of the additional benefits that target the needs of the solo parents' children, the study revealed an average level of awareness. According to the Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines (Republic Act No. 11861, 2022), solo parents earning minimum wage or below are entitled to a monthly P1,000 cash subsidy, a 10% discount, and VAT exemption—all of which provide meaningful financial relief.



**Table 4.** Specific Provisions or Benefits of the Act Most Helpful to Solo Parents

Services	Mean	SD	Description
1. Financial Assistance	4.55	0.981	Essential
2. Tax Benefits	1.58	1.182	Neutral
3. Leave Entitlements	1.71	1.368	Neutral
4. Healthcare Access	4.14	1.438	Essential
5. Educational Support	4.07	1.492	Essential

Legend:

1.00-2.33- Neutral 3.67-5.00- Essential

2.34-3.66- Beneficial

Table 4 shows that the most essential benefit for solo parents under Republic Act No. 11861 is financial assistance, with a mean of 4.55 and SD of .981. According to UNICEF (2020), in countries like the Philippines where poverty is prevalent, financial assistance is essential for overcoming economic adversity. This revamps the solo parents' capability to better provide for their families' basic needs. The Philippine Statistics Authority (2023) also mentioned that most solo-parent households only have a single income, making them vulnerable to economic hardship. Furthermore, the respondents also valued health care access, garnering a mean of 4.14 and an SD of 1,438. The health care access using Philhealth aid can help to overcome the financial barriers to accessing medical services, which are often costly. Another important aspect to break out from poverty is the solo parents' access to educational support, garnering a mean of 4.07 and an SD of 1.492. This high rating indicates that a strong educational support system can provide better opportunities to improve quality of life.

The areas that need to be reevaluated are tax benefits (mean = 1.58, SD = 1.182) and leave entitlement (mean = 1.71, SD = 1.368), both of which were rated as neutral by the respondents. As Agero & Guhao (2016) state, flexible work arrangements and leave essentials are valuable for solo parents who juggle multiple roles, such as being both a provider and caregiver. Although most of the respondents are high school graduates, the findings indicated that the solo parents either do not perceive these benefits as significant or face challenges in accessing them.

The findings emphasized that the most essential and helpful aspects of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act are financial assistance, healthcare access, and educational support, which are crucial pillars of support for single parents. These provisions directly address the immediate needs of solo parents and their families, offering vital assistance in navigating economic challenges, accessing essential healthcare services, and securing educational opportunities for both parents and children. In

contrast, Maldonado & Nieuwenhuis (2018) advocate for a policy focus on stimulating employment rather than relying solely on cash transfers. Their argument suggests that empowering single parents through employment opportunities can lead to greater long-term economic stability and self-sufficiency.

**Table 5.** Sources of Information in Disseminating Information about the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act

Source of Information	Distribution of Respondents				Description
	1	2	3	4	
1. Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	85	70	25	6	Not helpful at all
2. Government Websites (e.g., Department of Social Welfare and Development)	51	52	55	28	Very helpful
3. Community Workshops or Seminars	40	42	49	55	Extremely helpful
4. Printed Materials (e.g., Brochures, Pamphlets)	51	90	36	9	Slightly helpful
5. Television	44	92	39	11	Slightly helpful
6. Personal Interaction with Social Workers or Legal Advisers	17	48	45	76	Extremely helpful
7. Word of Mouth (Information shared by friends, family, or acquaintances)	7	81	76	22	Slightly helpful
8. Radio Broadcast or Public Service Announcements)	35	66	61	24	Slightly helpful

Legend:

1-Not helpful at all 3-Very helpful

2-Slightly helpful 4-Extremely helpful

Table 5 shows how helpful the different sources were to the respondents in accessing information about the benefits of the Republic Act No. 11861. Based on the frequencies and mode, the data revealed that the most effective communication platforms were personal interaction with social workers or legal advisers, as well as community workshops or seminars. These sources of information received the highest mode of rating of "extremely helpful". In addition to the crucial role of DSWD social workers in disseminating information, Hattie & Timperley (2007) emphasize the effectiveness of the direct feedback method. When incorporated into sessions and practical exercise workshops, direct feedback enhances both comprehension and retention of information.

Indirect forms of communication—such as government websites, printed materials, television, word of mouth, and radio broadcasts—were found to be less effective, with respondents rating them as only "slightly helpful". Notably, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram emerged as the least effective, with the mode indicating they were "not helpful at all.". This finding is surprising given that, according to Statista (2025), the Philippines ranks second in social media penetration

and has one of the highest rates of social media usage in the Asia-Pacific region.

**Table 6.** Attitudes of Solo Parents Toward the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022

Attitudes	Mean	SD	Description
1. The process of applying Solo Parent ID was easy (not time-consuming)	2.14	1.24	Low Level
2. The Expanded Solo Parent Welfare Act adequately addresses the needs of solo parents and their Families	2.39	1.18	Average
3. The Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act Contributes positively to the overall well-being of Solo Parents and their children.	2.72	1.26	Average
4. The Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act Effectively implemented and enforced to ensure that Solo Parents received the support they need	1.92	0.86	Low Level
5. Public awareness and advocacy are essential in promoting the benefits and importance of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act	4.54	0.86	High Level
6. I feel supported by the government through the provisions of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022	2.19	1.00	Low Level
7. I am satisfied with the support services provided to solo parents under the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022	2.07	0.94	Low Level
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>0.732</b>	<b>Average</b>

Legend:

1.00-2.33- Low Level    3.67-5.00- High Level

2.34-3.66- Average Level

The results regarding attitudes toward the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act were generally average. Solo parents in the Science City of Muñoz generally agreed that public awareness and advocacy were crucial for promoting the Act's benefits (mean = 4.54, SD = 0.86). However, their own perceived experience with the Act was less positive. Public awareness and advocacy received the highest rating in terms of importance, which aligns with the findings in Table 5, indicating that seminars and workshops were the most effective communication platforms. Legarde (2023) emphasizes that solo parents acknowledge the relevance of knowing the provision of the Expanded Solo Welfare Act to get the most out of the benefits, thus reinforcement for information campaigns is needed.

Table 6 also shows a low score on feeling supported by the government (mean = 2.19, SD = 1.00) and satisfaction with the provided support services (mean = 2.07, SD = 0.94). Additionally, respondents viewed the process of applying for a Solo Parent ID as difficult and time-consuming (mean = 2.14, SD = 1.24). Time is essential to solo parents who have multiple roles, limited time and resources. Thus, it negatively affects the accessibility of the provision (Agero & Guhao, 2016). While they held an

average attitude on whether the Act itself addresses their needs (mean = 2.39, SD = 1.18) and contributes to their well-being (mean = 2.72, SD = 1.26), low scores on implementation and enforcement (mean = 1.92, SD = 0.86) suggested they might not be seeing the Act's full potential realized. This disconnect highlights a need to bridge the gap between the Act's provisions and their practical application in supporting solo parents.

**Table 7.** Solo Parents' Perceptions of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022

Perceptions	Mean	SD	Description
1. I believe that the benefits provided by Act will significantly improve my quality of life	1.84	0.86	Low Level
2. The Solo Parent ID provides easier access to cash subsidy, processing of documents, and availing discounts and promos in the market and other institutions/places	1.75	0.85	Low Level
3. The Expanded Solo Parent Welfare Act are perceived as beneficial for Solo Parents and their families	2.55	1.17	Average
4. There is sufficient support available for Solo Parents to access the benefits provided by the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act	2.06	0.80	Low Level
5. The provisions and benefits of The Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act are useful	2.84	1.16	Average
6. Implementing acts to benefit solo parents is important	4.40	1.06	High Level
7. Overall, The Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act has a positive impact on society by supporting solo parents and their children	3.12	1.18	Average
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.66</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>Average</b>

Legend:

1.00-2.33- Low Level    3.67-5.00- High Level

2.34-3.66- Average Level

Table 7 reveals that solo parents held an overall average level of perception regarding the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act (mean = 2.66, SD = 0.67). Specific criteria also received average ratings, such as the perception that the provision is beneficial (mean = 2.84, SD = 1.16) and useful (mean = 2.55, SD = 1.17). Respondents likewise rated, at an average level, the law's positive impact on society through its support for solo parents and their children (mean = 3.12, SD = 1.18). According to Legarde (2023), solo parents significantly contribute to such provisions by enabling access to medical services and financial assistance. The findings suggested that while solo parents recognized the relevance and potential benefits of the provision, many also encountered challenges due to its ineffective implementation. The respondents consistently indicated that they viewed the implementation of benefits for solo parents as highly important, as reflected in the highest mean score of 4.40 (SD = 1.06). However, this recognition of importance contrasts with their perception that such benefits did not significantly improve their quality of life (mean = 1.84, SD = 0.86). Moreover, the provision allowing the Solo Parent ID to facilitate easier access to

cash subsidies, processing of documents, and availing discounts as well as promos in the market and other institutions received the lowest perception rating (mean = 1.75), SD = 0.85. This low score may be attributed to the provision's lack of popularity, stemming from limited dissemination of clear information and the absence of an adequate support system to guide the solo parents in availing themselves of the benefits. These findings align with Cruz *et al.* (2021), who observe that while the provision improves access to certain benefits, implementation gaps and low awareness continue to hinder its full effectiveness.

**Table 8.** Experiences of Solo Parents with the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022

Experiences	Mean	SD	Description
1. I have successfully applied for and received with benefits under the Act	2.35	1.70	Average
2. I encountered difficulties in obtaining the necessary documents for the Solo Parent ID Application.	3.22	1.59	Average
3. I received a cash subsidy under this law.	2.05	1.63	Low Level
4. The cash subsidy is sufficient to meet my basic needs.	1.57	0.92	Low Level
5. I can avail of the discounts and exemptions offered on essential items.	1.44	0.87	Low Level
6. The discounts and exemptions offered on essential items are beneficial and useful.	1.56	1.04	Low Level
7. The Act has made it easier for me to provide for my children's needs	1.65	0.94	Low Level
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.98</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>Low Level</b>

Legend:

1.00-2.33- Low Level

3.67-5.00- High Level

2.34-3.66- Average Level

Table 8 presents the experiences of solo parents with the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act, indicating an overall low level of experience. While some respondents had successfully applied for benefits (mean = 2.35, SD = 1.70), but many continued to face challenges. Only a few received cash subsidies (mean = 2.05, SD = 1.63) or enjoyed discounts on essential items (mean=1.44, SD = 0.87). Even among those who availed of these discounts, the benefits were perceived as insufficient (mean score of 1.57) and least beneficial and useful (mean score of 1.56), indicating the limited impact of the provision on their daily lives. Obtaining the necessary documents for the Solo Parent ID application emerged as a common challenge, with a mean score of 3.22 indicating an average level of difficulty. Overall, the low mean score of 1.98 suggested that many solo parents in Science City of Muñoz had yet to fully benefit from the Act's provisions.

This finding aligns with the study of Pinatil *et al.* (2023), who note that acquiring Solo Parent ID, a key component of the program, remains difficult due to uneven enforcement by the responsible agency. Despite recognizing the value of the Act, respondents reported that the requirements and the application process were both burdensome and time-consuming, resulting in many not receiving the benefits they are entitled to. Similar to the study of Farnacio and Reyes (2021), solo parents experience difficulties in complying with requirements, which often led them to abandon their applications altogether due to the inconveniences.

**Table 9.** Differences in Respondents' Knowledge of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022 Across Socio-demographic Characteristics

SDC	Category	Knowledge Score (Mean)	Inferential Statistical Results (F, p)		Interpretation
Age	<29	2.24	F=1.215	p=0.299	Not significant
	29 to 51	2.51	F=1.59		
	>51	2.28	F=1.63		
Gender	Male	1.73	F=24.342	p=0.001	Significant
	Female	2.61			
Educational Attainment	Elementary Level	1.94	F=8.878	p=0.001	Significant
	High School Level	2.42			
	College Level	2.86			
No. of Children	1 to 2	2.44	F=0.865	p=.423	Not significant
	3 to 4	2.33			
	5 and above	2.62			
Occupation	Employed	2.37	F=0.383	p=.537	Not Significant
	Unemployed	2.47			
Status as Solo Parents	Separated	2.31	F=2.840	p=0.094	Not Significant
	Widowed	2.60			

Table 9 reveals a significant gender difference ( $F = 24.342, p = 0.001$ ), with female respondents demonstrating higher knowledge compared to male respondents. This finding aligns with the study of Ramos & De Guzman (2021), which suggests that women often have higher literacy in health and social policy than males due to their multiple roles in the household and community. On educational attainment, a significant difference was also observed in education ( $F = 8.878, p = 0.001$ ). The level of knowledge increases with the respondents' educational attainment. Solo parents with a college degree reported the highest level of knowledge ( $M = 2.86$ ), followed by high

school graduates ( $M = 2.42$ ). Those with an elementary level of education demonstrated the lowest level of knowledge ( $M = 1.94$ ). This supports Nutbeam (2008) findings, which indicate that higher educational attainment is associated with increased knowledge of social policies. The findings contradict the studies by Lee & You (2021), stating that policy knowledge is less directly influenced by gender and education.

On the other hand, the age ( $F = 1.215, p = 0.299$ ), number of children ( $F = 0.865, p = 0.423$ ), and occupation ( $F = 0.383, p = 0.537$ ) had no significant differences.

**Table 10.** Differences in Respondents' Attitude Toward the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022 Across Socio-demographic Characteristics

SDC	Category	Attitude Score (Mean)	Inferential Statistical Results (F, p)		Interpretation
Age	<29	2.35	F=2.910	p=0.057	Not significant
	29 to 51	2.58			
	>51	2.74			
Gender	Male	2.37	F=2.377	p=0.096	Not Significant
	Female	2.64			
Educational Attainment	Elementary Level	2.45	F=2.058	p=0.131	Not Significant
	High School Level	2.54			
	College Level	2.75			
No. of Children	1 to 2	2.50	F=2.885	p=0.058	Not significant
	3 to 4	2.70			
	5 and above	2.91			
Occupation	Employed	2.50	F=2.078	p=0.151	Not Significant
	Unemployed	2.66			
Status as Solo Parents	Separated	2.40	F=21.401	p=0.00	Significant
	Widowed	2.90			

Table 10 shows that there was no significant difference ( $p$  - value is greater than 0.05 significance level) in attitude toward the Act across age, gender, educational attainment, number of children, and occupation, indicating that these characteristics are associated with statistically similar attitude levels. However, being classified as a solo parent revealed a statistically significant difference ( $F = 21.401, p < 0.05$ ). Specifically, widowed solo parents (mean = 2.90) exhibited a higher level of positive attitude toward the

act compared to separated solo parents (mean = 2.90) solo parents. This difference may be attributed to the social stigma faced by separated solo parents. In Filipino culture, which is strongly family-oriented, marital separation is often regarded as deviant behavior and associated with harsh judgment. As Bernardi *et al.* (2018) note, separated solo parents tend to have fewer positive attitudes toward such provisions, partly due to feelings of shame and social stigma they frequently encounter.

**Table 11.** Differences in Respondents' Perception of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022 Across Socio-demographic Characteristics

SDC	Category	Perception Score (Mean)	Inferential Statistical Results (F, p)		Interpretation
Age	<29	2.53	F=0.804	p=0.499	Not significant
	29 to 51	2.68			
	>51	2.71			
Gender	Male	2.52	F=2.973	p=0.044	Significant
	Female	2.70			
Educational Attainment	Elementary Level	2.48	F=7.336	p=0.001	Significant
	High School Level	2.59			
	College Level	2.97			
No. of Children	1 to 2	2.63	F=1.613	p=.202	Not significant
	3 to 4	2.65			
	5 and above	2.98			
Occupation	Employed	2.63	F=0.709	p=0.401	Not Significant
	Unemployed	2.71			
Status as Solo Parents	Separated	2.55	F= 9.871	p=0.002	Significant
	Widowed	2.87			



Table 11 shows that perception of the Act differed by gender ( $F = 2.2973, p < 0.05$ ), with females (mean = 2.70) demonstrating higher levels of perception than male respondents (mean = 2.52). Single mothers generally viewed the Act more positively than single fathers. A key consideration was that the majority of the respondents were female or single mothers (76.89%), reflecting the higher prevalence of solo parenthood among women. Moreover, educational attainment also showed a significant difference ( $F = 7.336, p < 0.05$ ), suggesting that respondents with a college level tended to have higher levels of perception compared to those with lower educational backgrounds. Additionally, the status of solo parents also showed a significant difference in perception, indicating that widowed respondents (mean = 2.87) had a much deeper understanding of the Act than those separated (mean = 2.55) ( $F = 9.871, p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 12.** Correlation of Respondents' Knowledge with their Attitudes and Perceptions Toward the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022

Knowledge	Attitude		Perception	
	Pearson r	p-value	Pearson r	p-value
Awareness on the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022	.632	.000	.538	.000
Benefits under the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022	.474	.000	.431	.000

Note: p-value less than 0.05 is significantly correlated

Pearson's correlation analysis revealed that respondents' knowledge of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022 and its benefits was significantly correlated with their attitudes and perception toward the Act (Table 12). The study found significant positive and statistically significant correlations ( $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ ) between solo parents' awareness and their attitudes and perceptions. Similarly, knowledge of the specific benefits offered by the Act also correlated positively with these factors. There were positive correlations between knowledge to attitudes, knowledge and perceptions, and attitudes and perceptions. These findings suggested that increased awareness and understanding of the Act led to more positive attitudes and perceptions. Attitudes become more positive, and perceptions also tend to become more positive. Solo parents who are better informed about the Act are likely to view it more favorably, perceive it as more relevant to their needs, and be more likely to seek out and utilize the available support. Similar to the study by Redoña (2023), efforts to enhance awareness and education are crucial for maximizing the positive impact of the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act.

**Table 13.** Correlations of Attitude with Perception

Correlations	Perception	
	Pearson r	p-value
Attitude	.757**	.000

A strong positive correlation between attitudes and perception was found in the study, with a Pearson r of .757 (Table 13). This indicates that attitudes and perceptions are statistically significant to each other. As solo parents showed positive attitudes toward the provisions of the Act, their perceptions tend to become more positive.

The assessment of Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perception (KAP) of solo parents regarding the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022 reveals several implications for the implementation of this law. Firstly, the low level of awareness and understanding among solo parents indicates a significant need for better dissemination of information about the Act. Many solo parents are not fully aware of the provisions and benefits they are entitled to, which hinder their ability to utilize the support available to them. This lack of awareness aligns with previous studies, highlighting the lack of government initiatives to share information effectively. Secondly, while solo parents generally have an average level of knowledge about the benefits of the Act, their experiences remain low. This suggests that although they are somewhat familiar with the benefits, they do not fully understand or utilize them.

The average attitudes and perceptions toward the law imply that solo parents see its potential benefits, but implementation shortcomings hinder their ability to access them fully. This situation mirrors findings from other studies, indicating a consistent issue with the government's support for solo parents despite the existence of supportive legislation. Therefore, the implication is clear: there is a critical need for the government to address these awareness and implementation gaps to ensure that all solo parents can effectively benefit from the support intended by the law.

## Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of ensuring that solo parents are both aware of and understand the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act. Guided by the Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP) Model, this study developed new insights and a comprehensive explanation for evaluating the policy's implementation. Findings revealed that many solo parents, particularly those with lower levels of education, lack sufficient knowledge about the Act and the process for availing themselves of its benefits. This highlights the need for clear and accessible

public awareness campaigns and programs from both Local Government Units (LGUs) and the national government.

The study found that seminar workshops served as an effective tool for information dissemination, which government authorities can utilize to better inform and empower solo parents. Moreover, ensuring that solo parents are well-informed about the provision can also enable them to utilize the benefits that enhance their quality of living. Additionally, government authorities should also develop educational programs for solo parents, as this study suggests that solo parents who have more knowledge about the Act are more likely to see it as helpful and useful. Making information easier to access and applications less complicated could significantly improve the lives of solo parents. Direct forms of communication such as workshops, seminars, and personal interactions of DSWD social workers—should be held more regularly to develop higher levels of awareness of solo parents. Lastly, this study emphasized that the higher level of knowledge solo parents have about the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act, the more they perceive it as beneficial and actively utilize its provisions.

In general, KAP assessment of the respondents revealed increasing knowledge about the Act can lead to positive changes in how solo parents perceive it and how they utilize it, ultimately developing a better support system for them. This study suggests that government support will always be a critical factor in lessening the burdens of solo parents. This study serves as a powerful call to action for policymakers to enhance the implementation and accessibility of the Act's benefits. Addressing these challenges can help create a more supportive environment for solo parents and their families, thereby promoting their well-being and enhancing their socioeconomic stability.

For future researchers, the assessment of Knowledge-Attitude-Practices of solo parents about the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act proves to be relevant in developing comprehensive findings and implications. However, the limitations of the study hindered the collection of robust data; thus, increasing the number of respondents is essential, as a larger sample size can further enhance the depth of the study using the KAP model. A key to consideration is the application of, which can help reduce biases and improve the accuracy of the data collected. Furthermore, exploring the context of the challenges experienced by solo parents necessitates a qualitative approach to achieve deeper understanding of their circumstances.

## Ethical Statement

The authors secured ethical approval from the Central Luzon State University Ethical Committee. Participants were informed about the research study, and the data would be used solely for the research. Furthermore, participation was voluntary, as informed consent was also secured from the respondents before conducting the study. Strict confidentiality was applied throughout the study and the reporting of its findings.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest related to the conduct and publication of this research. All procedures followed were in accordance with institutional and ethical standards, and there were no financial or personal relationships that could have influenced the outcomes of this study.

## Acknowledgements

The authors are thankful to the City Social Welfare and Development Office of the Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija, for their assistance in the identification of respondents.

## Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies

The authors used the AI-assisted tool Grammarly to assist in the refinement of grammar, spelling, referencing, citation and punctuation. This is essential for the clarity and readability of the study to make it comprehensible to the public. The authors assume full responsibility for the content of the publication and its entirety of use of the Grammarly AI tool.

## Data Availability

All data supporting the findings of this study are available within the paper.

## Author Contributions

**AMP:** Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing (Original Draft), and Resources; **JMDC:** Supervision, Project Administration and Writing (Original Draft); **PGD:** Formal Analysis, Data Curation, and Writing (Review and Editing); **JALB:** Writing (Review and Editing), Visualization, and Formal Analysis

## Funding

The authors declare that no specific grant from public, commercial, or nonprofit organizations was received for this study.

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