

Strengthening Child Protection at the Grassroots: Assessing the Compliance of Barangay Councils for the Protection of Children in Managing Children at Risk

Damayon, Samuel B*, Manghi, Judy-ann D., Domingo, Kristine Arwen G., Jallorina, Glendale P., Salunat, Moira B

Social Sciences and Philosophy Department, School of Teacher Education and Humanities, Saint Mary's University, Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines

*Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

Youth is considered a source of hope and an instrument of change, and it is important to protect the future, starting at the grassroots level. For this reason, this study assessed the compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) with the Barangay Protocol in selected barangays of Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, specifically the process of implementing the Barangay Protocol to address cases involving children at risk, and identified the issues and strategies involved in dealing with these cases. To gather more accurate data, triangulation was utilized through surveys, semi-structured interviews, and document review. The study found that perceived compliance with procedures related to children, including custody, intake, and post-intervention follow-up, was high. However, moderate compliance concerning documentation and procedural requirements was observed, including form completion and record submission, revealing implementation gaps. Statistical analysis indicates that compliance with Barangay protocol relies more on practical experience, role responsibilities, and access to training than on formal education and years of service. Major challenges identified from the qualitative insights gathered include insufficient training, limited resources, insufficient parental cooperation, inactive council, and improper case reporting. Thus, the study underscores the need for strengthened institutional support, adequate funding, and continuous capacity-building initiatives to enhance effective protocol implementation. In response to the study's findings, a seminar on strengthening BCPC Capacity in Managing CAR cases is proposed as a research-based intervention to improve the council's competence and confidence in managing CAR cases.

Keywords: Community-based program, Restorative Justice, Protection of Children, Youth Development

INTRODUCTION

Children are regarded as the hope of the nation and are expected to become future contributors to society. However, the increasing exposure of minors to social problems such as neglect, abuse, poverty, violence, and juvenile delinquency has become a growing concern both globally and locally. Juvenile delinquency continues to challenge families, communities, and institutions responsible for child protection. In the Philippines, children who become vulnerable to committing offenses due to personal, family, or social circumstances are identified under Republic Act No. 9344 as "Children at Risk" (CAR). Unlike Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL), CAR are not yet fully involved in criminal offenses against national laws, but are already exposed to circumstances that may eventually lead them toward delinquent behavior. Because of this vulnerability, the government emphasizes preventive, community-based interventions to protect children before they become involved in more serious offenses.

To address these concerns, the Philippine government institutionalized a restorative justice framework through Republic Act No. 9344, otherwise known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, later strengthened by Republic Act No. 10630. These laws promote child-sensitive approaches that focus on prevention, diversion,

rehabilitation, reintegration, and aftercare rather than punitive measures. Central to the implementation of these laws at the grassroots level is the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC), which is mandated to protect and assist CAR and CICL through community-based intervention programs. The BCPC operates under the Barangay Protocol developed by the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC), which outlines standardized procedures for handling CAR and CICL cases, including taking custody, registration and intake, referral procedures, turnover of custody, and post-intervention follow-up. Through these mechanisms, the BCPC serves as the frontline institution responsible for ensuring the welfare and protection of vulnerable children within the barangay.

At the barangay level, the BCPC plays a crucial role in implementing child protection and intervention programs. Gonzales et al. (2025) found that BCPC members generally possess adequate knowledge regarding juvenile justice procedures, parental notification, proper documentation, and intervention processes. However, despite this awareness, the actual implementation of mandated duties remains inconsistent. Cuevillas (2024) argued that knowledge among BCPC members does not always translate into practice due to insufficient training opportunities, limited resources, weak documentation systems, and limited coordination among agencies. Likewise, Roche and Flynn (2021) emphasized that local child protection systems in the Philippines continue to experience institutional weaknesses and inadequate community-level support, which limit their effectiveness in implementing child protection mechanisms.

Existing studies also identified several operational and structural challenges affecting the implementation of intervention programs for CAR. Naynes et al. (2022) stressed that inconsistent training and limited procedural knowledge among BCPC members often result in weak compliance with mandated protocols. Dela Cruz et al. (2021) further highlighted that the successful implementation of child protection programs depends heavily on strong coordination among barangay officials, social welfare institutions, and other stakeholders. Furthermore, UNICEF (2015) reported that limited funding, insufficient manpower, and weak institutional support continue to hinder the effectiveness of restorative justice programs and preventive interventions at the grassroots level.

Despite the growing body of literature on juvenile justice, restorative justice, and child protection systems, there remains a significant gap in studies specifically examining the BCPC's compliance with the Barangay Protocol in managing Children at Risk. Most previous studies focused on the functionality, effectiveness, or awareness of BCPC programs without assessing whether the council strictly adheres to the mandated procedures outlined in the protocol. Moreover, limited attention has been given to how profile variables, such as educational attainment, years of service, training, and actual case-handling experience, influence BCPC members' compliance. Existing literature also focuses more on CICL cases rather than CAR, leaving a gap in understanding how preventive measures at the barangay level can stop vulnerable children from progressing into criminal behavior. This inconsistency between policy expectations and actual implementation demonstrates the need for a more focused investigation into the compliance practices of BCPC members.

This study aimed to contribute to the current understanding of the implementation of community-based juvenile justice by providing empirical evidence on BCPC members' compliance. The findings may serve as a basis for strengthening child protection systems through capacity-building programs, policy improvements, and enhanced coordination among stakeholders. More importantly, the study highlights the importance of prevention in addressing juvenile delinquency, recognizing that protecting children during their vulnerable stages is more effective than intervening only after they become involved in criminal activities. Guided by the principle that "prevention is better than cure," this research underscores the essential role of the BCPC in safeguarding children and promoting a more compassionate, child-centered, and restorative approach to justice at the grassroots level.

This study examined the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children's (BCPC) compliance with the Barangay Protocol in managing Children at Risk (CAR) cases and determined how this compliance affects the implementation of CAR programs. The study specifically sought to determine the profile of BCPC members in terms of position, educational attainment, length of service, training, and seminars attended related to juvenile justice or child protection, and the number of juvenile cases handled. It also assessed the perceived compliance of the BCPC regarding council composition, taking custody of CAR, registration and intake, handling non-resident CAR, turnover of physical custody, and after-turnover procedures. Furthermore, the study examined whether significant differences in perceived compliance existed across groups defined by profile variables. It

also identified the challenges encountered by BCPC members, the strategies they employed, and the support needed to strengthen CAR case management and BCPC operations. Based on the findings, recommendations, and intervention measures were proposed.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative research to assess the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC)'s compliance with the Barangay Protocol for managing Children at Risk (CAR) in nine selected barangays of Bayombong. The quantitative component utilized a descriptive-comparative design to examine the profiles of BCPC members and their perceived compliance in areas such as council composition, custody procedures, registration and intake, handling of non-resident CARs, turnover of custody, and after-turnover procedures. The qualitative component described the challenges encountered, the strategies employed, and the support needed by the BCPC members in handling CAR cases, using inductive analysis.

The study focused on selected población and near-center barangays, chosen for their accessibility to administrative, social welfare, and judicial services, as well as their diverse urban and peri-urban community settings relevant to BCPC operations and CAR management. Using total-population sampling, 93 active BCPC members from 9 barangays participated in the study based on the mandated BCPC composition under the Barangay Protocol for the 2023–2026 term. One respondent from each barangay was randomly selected for the semi-structured interview to ensure qualitative representation.

Data were gathered through a researcher-developed questionnaire based on the JJWC Barangay Protocol in managing Children at Risk cases, semi-structured interviews, and document review of BCPC records, resolutions, and assessment reports. The instrument obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.855, indicating good reliability. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically the Kruskal–Wallis H test and Mann–Whitney U test, with Dunn's post hoc test applied when significant differences were identified at the 0.05 level of significance; qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Compliance levels were interpreted as high (76%–100%), moderate (51%–75%), low (26%–50%), and very low (0%–25%).

Methodological triangulation was employed by comparing and integrating survey results, interview responses, and documentary evidence to validate findings and ensure consistency across data sources. Documentary evidence also served as objective performance indicators, strengthening the accuracy and reliability of the findings. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings provided a comprehensive evaluation of BCPC compliance and served as the foundation for the proposed intervention program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 Profile of the members of the BCPC

Variables		f(n=93)	Percentage (%)
Position	Punong Barangay, Barangay Council, and SK Chairman	26	28.0
	Barangay Nutrition Scholar (BNS), Barangay Health Worker (BHW), Barangay Nurse/Midwife	26	28.0
	Chief Tanod, NGO Representative	17	18.3
	Daycare Worker, DepEd Principal, and PTA President	24	25.8
	Total	93	100.0
	Elementary Level	0	0

Educational Attainment	High School Level	5	5.4
	College Level	88	94.6
	Total	93	100.0
Length of Service	Less than 1 year	5	5.4
	1–3 years	39	41.9
	4–6 years	8	8.6
	More than 6 years	41	44.1
	Total	93	100.0
Number of Cases Handled	None	57	61.3
	1–3 cases	23	24.7
	4–6 cases	5	5.4
	7–10 cases	2	2.2
	More than 10 cases	6	6.5
	Total	93	100.0

The findings revealed that most BCPC members were college graduates with more than 6 years of service, indicating a generally high level of educational attainment and experience. However, most reported never handling Children at Risk (CAR) cases, showing limited practical involvement in case management. Case handling was mainly concentrated in governance-related positions, such as the Punong Barangay and Barangay Council, leaving many members less exposed to the actual implementation. This suggests that education and length of service do not necessarily translate into practical competence. The findings partially support Gonzales et al. (2025), who found that members are knowledgeable of their roles, and align with Cuevillas (2024), who noted that knowledge and experience alone do not ensure effective practice. Overall, the results highlight the need for broader hands-on involvement in CAR case management to strengthen BCPC effectiveness.

Perceived Compliance of the BCPC With the Barangay Protocol in Managing Children at Risk

Table 2 Proper composition of the Council

STATEMENTS	No		Yes	
	f (n=93)	Percentage (%)	f (n=93)	Percentage (%)
1. The BCPC meets the required twelve BCPC members.	23	24.73	70	75.27
2. The BCPC has a localized Flowchart available in the Citizens' Charter.	35	37.63	58	62.37

Legend: 76%–100% = High perceived compliance; 51%–75% = Moderate perceived compliance; 26%–50% = Low perceived compliance; and 0%–25% = Very Low perceived compliance

The findings revealed that BCPC members perceived moderate compliance with localized flowcharts and proper council composition; however, document analysis showed inconsistencies between perceptions and actual practice. None of the nine barangays had a localized flowchart in their citizens' charters; three barangays did not

meet the required 12 council members; and some executive orders were outdated. This indicates that administrative and documentation requirements are less prioritized due to limited technical capacity and coordination. These results contrast with those of Gonzales et al. (2025), who reported strong BCPC documentation and procedural knowledge. The gap between perceived and actual compliance highlights weaknesses in administrative systems, particularly in documentation, organizational maintenance, and updating of official records. Overall, the findings underscore the need to strengthen technical and administrative capacity to improve child protection governance at the barangay level.

Table 3 Turnover of physical custody

STATEMENTS	No		Yes	
	f (n=93)	Percentage (%)	f (n=93)	Percentage (%)
1. The BCPC turns over custody to the parents/guardian only after completing BCPC Intake Form (Form No. 1).	19	20.43	74	79.57
2. The BCPC ensures that the child is not “high risk” before releasing them to the parents/guardian.	7	7.53	86	92.47
3. The BCPC provides proper advice or guidance to the child before turnover.	4	5.30	89	95.70
4. The BCPC provides appropriate advice, reprimand, or warning to parents/guardians regarding their duties.	5	5.38	88	94.62
5. The BCPC turns over the child to the LSWDO when the child is considered “high risk.”	11	11.83	82	88.17
6. The BCPC consults the LSWDO when unsure whether the child is “high risk.”	11	11.83	82	88.17
7. The BCPC assesses whether turning over the child to the parents/guardian is in the best interest of the child.	3	3.23	90	96.77
8. The BCPC refers the case to the LSWDO for further assessment and intervention, even when custody is returned to parents/guardians.	8	8.60	85	91.40
9. The BCPC turns the child over to DSWD social workers and provides a child-friendly temporary holding space when LSWDO cannot be located.	8	8.60	85	91.40
10. The BCPC submits all required forms and documents (Form No. 1, Form No. 3, attachments) to the LSWDO.	24	25.81	69	74.19

Legend: 76%–100% = High perceived compliance; 51%–75% = Moderate perceived compliance; 26%–50% = Low perceived compliance; and 0%–25% = Very Low perceived compliance

The findings revealed that BCPC members demonstrated high compliance in child-centered decision-making during custody turnover, particularly in assessing the child’s best interest, providing guidance, determining risk status, and coordinating with the LSWDO. This reflects a strong understanding of child protection and restorative justice principles and effective inter-agency collaboration. However, lower compliance was noted in

documentation and record-keeping, indicating gaps in procedural and technical skills. These results suggest that while members are competent in intervention and decision-making, weaknesses remain in documentation due to limited training and supervision. This supports Gonzales et al. (2025), who found strong knowledge but procedural compliance that needed improvement, and aligns with Naynes et al. (2022), who noted that poor documentation weakens child protection implementation. Overall, the findings highlight the need to strengthen documentation training, standardize reporting, and improve LSWDO supervision.

Table 4 Overall level of compliance of the BCPC

Range	Groups	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation	QD
0-25.99%	Very Low	2	2.2	88.76	17.88	High
26-50.99%	Low	2	2.2			
51-75.99%	Moderate	6	6.5			
76-100%	High	83	89.2			
	Total	93	100.0			

Legend: 76%–100% = High perceived compliance; 51%–75% = Moderate perceived compliance; 26%–50% = Low perceived compliance; and 0%–25% = Very Low perceived compliance

The findings revealed that most BCPC members perceived themselves as highly compliant with the Barangay Protocol, indicating strong adherence to child protection standards and procedures. However, only moderate compliance was observed in documentation practices, particularly in accomplishing BCPC forms and case recording, suggesting gaps in technical knowledge and procedural consistency. Qualitative responses also highlighted issues such as limited awareness of duties, inactive participation by some members, and reliance on a few active individuals, all of which affected program implementation. While overall compliance was rated high, variations in participation and competence indicate that implementation is not uniform across members. This supports Gonzales et al. (2025) on high procedural knowledge among BCPC members, but contrasts with Roche and Flynn and Cuevillas (2024), who reported persistent implementation gaps due to resource and participation constraints. DILG document analysis further confirmed that although barangays are functionally compliant on paper, they still show weaknesses in actual implementation, coordination, and documentation in child protection responsibilities.

Comparison of the Perceived Compliance when Respondents are Grouped According to their Profile Variables

Table 5 Position of members of the BCPC

Position	f (n=93)	Median	test statistic (H)	p-value	Decision
Punong Barangay, Barangay Council member, and SK Chairman	26	98.86 ^A	8.908*	0.031	Do not accept the Null Hypothesis
Barangay Nutrition Scholar (BNS), Barangay Health Worker (BHW), Barangay Nurse/Midwife	26	88.64 ^B			
Chief Tanod, NGO Representative	17	97.73 ^{AB}			
Daycare Worker, DepEd Principal, and PTA President	24	95.45 ^{AB}			

*significant at $\alpha=0.05$, Mean groups that do not share a common letter are significantly different from each other.

The findings revealed a significant difference in perceived compliance among BCPC members, largely due to variations in roles, responsibilities, and training exposure. Members in governance-related positions, such as the Punong Barangay, Barangay Council member, and SK Chairman, reported higher compliance because they are directly involved in policy-making, decision-making, monitoring, and enforcement of protocols for Children at Risk (CAR). In contrast, BNS, BHW, and nurses/midwives showed lower perceived compliance as their roles are mainly focused on health services and limited to identifying and referring CAR cases. Support roles such as Chief Tanods, NGO representatives, daycare workers, school headteachers, and PTA presidents primarily assist in coordination, education, and support functions. These differences are further reflected in training exposure: governance-related members attended more relevant seminars on juvenile justice and child protection, while some support-role members reported no such training. Contrary to Gonzales et al. (2025), who found no significant differences due to shared training and collaboration, the present findings are better explained by Role Theory, suggesting that behavior and compliance are shaped by assigned social roles. This implies that members with greater authority and responsibility tend to demonstrate higher involvement and adherence to BCPC protocols.

Table 6 Number of Children at Risk Cases Handled by the members of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC)

Number of Cases	f (n=93)	Median	test statistic (H)	p-value	Decision
None	57	90.91 ^B	13.238***	.001	Do not accept the Null Hypothesis
1–3 cases	23	97.73 ^A			
4 or more cases	13	100.00 ^A			

*** significant at $\alpha=0.001$, Mean groups that do not share a common letter are significantly different from each other.

The findings revealed a significant difference between the positions of BCPC members and the number of CAR cases handled, in relation to their perceived compliance with the Barangay Protocol, whereas educational attainment and years of service showed no significant difference. This indicates that practical experience and role responsibilities have a greater influence on compliance than formal education or length of service. Members directly involved in planning, decision-making, monitoring, and case management reported higher perceived compliance, likely due to greater exposure to actual procedures such as documentation, coordination, and intervention. Likewise, respondents with more experience handling CAR cases demonstrated a better understanding, competence, and confidence in implementing barangay protocols. These findings suggest that hands-on involvement is essential in strengthening BCPC competency and improving protocol implementation. The result supports the studies of Agustin et al. (2025) in Quezon City and Palitayan (2023) in Baguio City, which emphasized that direct case handling and practical experience improve BCPC performance, coordination, and effectiveness in child protection services.

Challenges, Strategies, and Support Needs in BCPC CAR Case Management

This section outlines the areas of concern of the BCPC in compliance with Barangay Protocol, specifically on challenges, strategies, and support needed by BCPC in managing CAR cases. The findings are organized thematically to provide a comprehensive understanding of these factors presented affecting BCPC's performance.

Table 7 Challenges, Strategies, and Support Needed by the BCPC

Areas of Concern	Challenges	Strategies	Support needed
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1. Financial Matters	Lack of Resources	Resource Optimization	Adequate Funding
2. Administration	Inactive Council	Council Capacity Enhancement	Capacity Building
3. Support	Insufficient Training	Inter-agency Collaboration	Institutional Support
4. Community	Community Disengagement	Community-Based Intervention	Community Participation
5. Monitoring	Improper Case Reporting	Information Dissemination	Institutional Support

Table 7 presents the BCPC's areas of concern in managing Children at Risk cases. This includes challenges encountered by the BCPC in complying with the Barangay Protocol in managing CAR Cases, along with the corresponding strategies and support needs identified for complying with mandated procedures. The challenges, strategies, and support needed were identified as related to financial matters, administrative matters, support mechanisms, community involvement, and monitoring.

Challenges Encountered by the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC)

Lack of resources

Lack of resources was identified as a major challenge affecting the operations of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC). Limited budget allocation restricted the implementation of trainings, diversion programs, and other interventions for Children at Risk (CAR), reducing the council's ability to provide effective and timely child protection services. Participants emphasized that insufficient funding also affected capacity-building activities, service delivery, and the sustainability of child welfare programs. These findings support previous studies showing that inadequate funding, poor resource allocation, and lack of infrastructure weaken BCPC operations and child protection efforts. The study highlights the need for increased budget allocation, proper resource utilization, and stronger institutional support to improve child welfare services at the grassroots level.

Inactive Council

Another challenge identified in the study is the lack of participation by some BCPC members. Participants reported low attendance during meetings and activities, a lack of cooperation among members, and weak coordination in implementing programs and handling CAR cases. The absence of active participation often leads to delays in case management and difficulties in conducting child protection initiatives effectively. The findings suggest that inactive involvement among council members affects BCPC's overall functionality and productivity. Furthermore, the situation contradicts the expectations of policy frameworks that emphasize active collaboration and collective participation in child protection efforts. These findings are consistent with the studies of Reupert et al. (2022) and Ellermeijer et al. (2023), which highlighted the importance of proactive participation and collaborative engagement in strengthening child protection systems.

Insufficient Training

The study also identified insufficient training as a significant challenge affecting the preparedness and competence of BCPC members in managing CAR cases. Participants emphasized the lack of seminars, workshops, and formal training opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills in child protection protocols and procedures. The absence of structured training contributes to confusion, inconsistent decision-making, and limited understanding of members' roles and responsibilities. Consequently, some members become overly dependent on a few knowledgeable council members. The findings indicate that inadequate capacity-building programs weaken coordination and reduce the effectiveness of case management and intervention services. These findings support the studies of Yang (2015), Molina-Lingvall (2024), and UNICEF (2015), which

emphasize that inadequate training and a lack of technical knowledge negatively affect coordination, monitoring, and the implementation of child protection services.

Community Disengagement

Community disengagement was identified as a major challenge for the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) in managing Children at Risk (CAR) cases, due to limited parental cooperation and children's resistance during interventions. Participants reported that some parents were uncooperative or absent, while some children were resistant and unwilling to provide truthful information, making case management difficult. Findings also suggest that poverty, neglect, and problematic family relationships contribute to these challenges. These findings support Cuevillas (2024), Bartolome et al. (2017), and Roche and Flynn (2020), who emphasized that limited parental involvement, lack of institutional support, and family-related issues negatively affect child protection efforts.

Improper Case Reporting

Improper case reporting emerged as a major challenge in managing Children at Risk (CAR) cases, particularly when proper referral procedures were not followed, and cases were reported directly to the police rather than to the barangay. This resulted in delays, confusion, and inefficiencies, as cases were often returned to the barangay for proper processing. Participants emphasized that weak reporting systems, limited procedural knowledge, and poor coordination hindered effective case management. They also noted that direct police involvement sometimes causes fear and anxiety among children. These findings support Palafox and Mantillas (2025), who identified weak coordination and limited procedural knowledge as barriers to effective CAR case management, and the Global Initiative on Justice and Children (2021), which highlighted the negative effects of police exposure on children. The findings emphasize the need for stronger coordination, proper referral systems, and child-sensitive reporting procedures.

Strategies Employed by the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC)

Resource Optimization

Resource optimization emerged as a key strategy used by BCPC members to address financial and operational constraints in managing Children at Risk (CAR) cases. Due to limited funding and costly training programs, members formed partnerships with agencies such as peace and order councils and anti-drug councils to access training and support services. This helped sustain child welfare initiatives and improve service delivery, although reliance on external agencies may affect the consistency and sustainability of interventions. These findings support Arnika et al. (2024) and Zia ud din et al. (2023), who emphasized that collaborative governance improves coordination and capacity but requires strong mechanisms to ensure effective implementation.

Council Capacity Enhancement

The study identified council capacity enhancement as a strategy used by the BCPC to improve organizational effectiveness and address inactive member participation. Participants emphasized seminars, workshops, team-building activities, and knowledge-sharing as important in strengthening competence and preparedness in handling CAR cases. Findings showed that training and shared learning improve coordination, decision-making, and implementation of the child protection program, while also promoting teamwork among members. These findings are consistent with studies by Yang (2015), Molina-Lingvall (2024), and Dela Cruz et al. (2021), which highlighted that structured training and collective learning enhance child protection effectiveness.

Inter-agency Collaboration

Inter-agency collaboration emerged as an important strategy for the BCPC to address inadequate training and limited organizational capacity to manage Children at Risk (CAR) cases. Participants reported coordinating with schools, social workers, and other agencies to improve child protection activities, strengthen case management, and access technical expertise and support services. The findings indicate that collaboration enhances

coordination, communication, and referral systems among stakeholders, supporting UNICEF (2015) and Molina-Lingvall (2024), who emphasized the importance of strong inter-agency coordination in effective child protection systems.

Community-Based Intervention

Community-based intervention emerged as an important strategy for BCPC members in managing Children at Risk (CAR) cases, through information dissemination, home visits, and counseling to promote community awareness and cooperation. However, findings revealed inconsistencies in implementation, as some BCPC members lacked active participation and effective strategies, while limited parental and child cooperation reduced intervention effectiveness. These findings support Naynes et al. (2022) and Dela Cruz et al. (2021), who emphasized that insufficient capacity, weak coordination, and limited stakeholder engagement hinder effective implementation of interventions.

Information Dissemination

Information dissemination emerged as a key strategy in addressing improper case reporting involving Children at Risk (CAR). BCPC members conducted information campaigns and allocated funds to educate the community about proper reporting procedures and child-protection protocols, as improper reporting often resulted from limited awareness among parents, volunteers, and local officials. Through this strategy, the BCPC aimed to improve community awareness, strengthen compliance with reporting guidelines, and enhance case management practices. These findings support the studies of Evidor and Villacruz (2025), which emphasized that strengthening information dissemination improves reporting practices and child protection efforts at the barangay level.

Support needed for the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC)

Adequate Funding

The findings revealed that adequate funding is essential to strengthen the BCPC's functionality and sustainability. Participants emphasized that insufficient financial resources limit the implementation of child welfare programs, training, seminars, and other support activities, and also affect the motivation and capacity of local personnel. As a result, inadequate funding weakens the council's ability to consistently fulfill its mandate in protecting children's welfare. These findings support the study of Dela Cruz (2022), which emphasized that the lack of resources and infrastructure weakens preventive measures and limits comprehensive child protection programs.

Capacity Building

The study identified capacity building as an essential support needed to improve the effectiveness of BCPC members in addressing child-related concerns. Participants emphasized the need for intensive, continuous training programs, as many members reportedly have a limited understanding of protocols, manuals, and responsibilities. Findings suggest that insufficient comprehension contributes to ineffective program implementation and inconsistent case management, while practical, competency-based training could strengthen coordination and the handling of CAR cases. These findings are consistent with studies by Yang (2015) and Molina-Lingvall (2024), which emphasized that inadequate and unstructured training limits the effectiveness of child protection interventions.

Institutional Support

The findings revealed that institutional support is necessary to sustain effective collaboration, training, and overall BCPC operations. Participants emphasized that inter-agency collaboration depends on consistent institutional, technical, and material support, including regular training, sufficient funding, technical assistance, and formal coordination mechanisms. Without these support systems, collaboration and service delivery become inconsistent and dependent on individual efforts rather than institutional structures. These findings support the

study of Wessells (2015), which emphasized that effective child protection systems require continuous institutional support, adequate resources, and sustained capacity-building initiatives.

Community Participation

Community participation was identified as an important factor in strengthening BCPC implementation and child protection efforts. Findings emphasized the need for active involvement of parents and community members through seminars, orientations, and prevention activities to improve awareness of parental responsibilities and encourage cooperation in managing Children at Risk (CAR) cases. The study supports Cuevillas (2024), who noted that low parental participation and poor supervision weaken child protection efforts, highlighting the importance of community involvement in promoting effective BCPC operations.

Institutional Support

Institutional support also emerged as essential in improving case reporting and sustaining BCPC programs. Participants emphasized the need for training, monitoring, supervision, funding, and technical assistance to strengthen BCPC members' capacity to handle child-related cases. Findings revealed that adequate institutional support enhances compliance with proper procedures, improves record-keeping, and promotes effective responses to child protection concerns. These findings align with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (2021), which emphasized that functional BCPC operations require strong institutional support through policies, monitoring, and resource provision.

Recommendations Based on the Findings of the Study

Based on the study's findings, a seminar entitled “Strengthening Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) Capacity and Compliance in the Barangay Protocol in Managing Children at Risk Cases” was proposed as a research-based intervention. The seminar aims to enhance BCPC members' knowledge, skills, and compliance in managing Children at Risk (CAR) cases, particularly in proper documentation, reporting procedures, and referral systems. The study identified issues such as non-compliance with documentation requirements and improper case reporting, including the direct referral of minor cases to the police rather than addressing them at the barangay level.

The proposed one-day seminar-workshop will focus on strengthening BCPC competencies through interactive lectures, workshops, and case analyses on child protection laws, case management, documentation, and coordination with agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). With a proposed budget of ₱26,325.00, the program is expected to improve compliance with child protection protocols, enhance coordination with partner agencies, and promote a more responsive and effective child protection system at the barangay level.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study:

1. The BCPC members demonstrate a relatively high level of perceived compliance with CAR management protocols, indicating sufficient awareness of their roles and functions.
2. Deficiencies were identified in council composition, Citizens' Charter flowcharts, and BCPC intake forms.
3. No significant difference in compliance was found in terms of educational attainment and length of service.
4. A significant difference in compliance was observed based on position and case load, indicating that actual participation influences compliance more than personal background.
5. Overall compliance is influenced by institutional support such as training, financial resources, and technical assistance, with a noted gap between reported compliance and actual implementation.

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Conduct capacity-building seminars to enhance BCPC members' knowledge and skills in managing Children-at-Risk (CAR) cases.
2. Utilize standardized tools such as flowcharts, manuals, and the Citizens' Charter to improve consistency in protocol implementation.
3. Strengthen coordination with key agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Philippine National Police, schools, and health offices.
4. Institutionalize regular and continuous training programs within the Barangay Local Government Unit and ensure sustained monitoring of BCPC capacity development.

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