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## Marginalized women: The case in Tarlac City

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ABSTRACT: The study aims to shed light on the daily lives of women, focusing on women's empowerment. Through this research, the goal was to enhance understanding and contribute to empowering women. Women demonstrated their capabilities in various roles, whether as single mothers, full-time moms, or hardworking individuals, mirroring the situations faced by the researcher. The challenges of being a woman were multifaceted, encompassing reputation management, family responsibilities, and the demands of daily life. To empower women effectively, this research served as a tool to explore and analyze different situations, offering guidance to protect themselves under the Violence Against Women Act. Ensuring equality without discrimination was crucial for women to recognize that empowerment enabled them to sustain their rights.

The objectives of this study included: (a) narrating the experiences of marginalized women in Tarlac City, (b) identifying the challenges they faced, (c) the government support programs, (d) proposing potential measures, and (e) the implications for public administration. The study was specifically focused on Tarlac City, with respondents encompassing Solo Parents, Migrants, Indigenous People, and Informal Settlers. To delve into the lived experiences of women's empowerment, a qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing a phenomenological design to explore the definition of empowerment. Purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, was chosen for participant selection. Data collection involved interviews and documentary analysis. The subsequent data analysis employed frequency and ranking methods.

Based on the findings, most of the marginalized women in Tarlac City were single, and they didn't have decent jobs due to societal standards and qualifications. They also graduated from primary and secondary education. In terms of income, most of them ranged from 2,000 to 5,000 pesos per month.

The primary aim of the study was to advocate for women's rights and empowerment while scrutinizing the government's support to enhance their active participation in society. Through narratives, the study captured the diverse experiences of women, shedding light on their rights and empowerment amidst life's challenges."

## I. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Women are typically portrayed as weak, submissive, chasing, demure, caring, nurturing, and tethered to the kitchen. House is their priority and jurisdiction. Every action a woman they would take should be for the benefit of her family's happiness and harmony. In a world where men predominate, women are typically undervalued. Male is dominant and greatly influenced by society, particularly on how their offspring adopt the roles of men and women. The modern world must need women to be empowered. The main issue that needs to be solved is violence against women, gender inequality, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and illiteracy. This essay examines how society and the government have helped women achieve equality. They perceive themselves as being inferior men in terms of status, society, and the economy. Despite several initiatives by the government and Social reformers, the status of women in society needs to be improved.

Governmental and social service organizations are attempting to the national, state, and local levels to improve the position of women levels throughout numerous domains. many women's policies empowering decisions have been and are being made, including in the areas of education and employment prospects, domestic violence, political participation, and gender-based. But it is the community that makes policies and implements them, level is something different. In order to empower women, giving them the resources, they

require to be powerful and over their own life or in control. strong ladies have the right to freedom, access to opportunity, and the capacity to options in every aspect of their existence. However, we live in a modern day where women are powerful and have access to the same opportunities as men. They may seek for legal assistance. Based inequalities or discrimination, Women have long been mistreated by society (Sangar, 2017). The comprehensive women's human rights law of the Philippines is known as the Magna Carta of Women (R.A. 7910). When it evaluates inequality in primary goods, The Magna Carta of Women is shown to be particularly in line with Rawlsian concepts of equality. The Magna Carta of Women includes identity-based inequality evaluation as implied by its definition of marginalization and discrimination. The Magna Carta of Women emphasises an instrumental perspective of agency because participation is mediated through state institutions and mechanisms, with the state serving as the primary obligation bearer. The importance of care work and the effects of the gendered division of labour are not recognised in the Magna Carta of Women. The challenges associated with these insights are highlighted by the capabilities approach. The MCW is successful in drawing attention to aspects of women's lives that call for official help in a context where human rights are seen as ethical demands.

In Tarlac City, there are women's organizations that are continually helping and taking care of the women's constituents in the city of Tarlac to improve their lifestyle and financial stability by supporting them with different activities such as providing training in livelihood, agriculture, and leadership that engages into the social aspect. This organization considered a Charitable organization – Non- Governmental Organization (NGO).

## 1.2 Statement of the Objectives

This study described and narrates the life experiences of women empowerment and its right in the society. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

- 1. To narrate the Rights and Empowerment experiences of marginalized women in society.
- 2. To determine the problems of women in the society.
- 3. To identify Government support programs for marginalized women.
- 4. To propose measure to improve the empowerment of women rights.
- 5. To determine the implications of the study to Public Administration.

## 1.3 Delimitations of the Study

The study examines the women's rights, employment, family responsibilities, received from the government services, how they being part of marginalize women, and other lifestyle habits, the study highlighted the life experiences of a total of thirty (30) marginalized women who participated in this research, including solo parents, indigenous people, migrants, and informal settlers. Similarly, the study demonstrated that women were treated equally in society and played significant roles in both their families and communities.

Additionally, the study identified the problems encountered, government support programs, and proposed measures to improve the empowerment rights of women. Moreover, the study provided resolutions and implications for public administration. The delimitation of this study was within the area of Tarlac City, and it covered the year 2023.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to narrate the life of Right's empowerment, the study used a qualitative research approach to investigate the concept. A Case study of phenomenological design was used to explore the definition of rights empowerment. This method allowed the researcher to explore and analyze the lived experiences of the respondents in determining the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women in the City Government of Tarlac, considering various factors and the problems encountered by the respondents in its implementation. The qualitative research method case study had been developed in the social sciences to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena, observe feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and the beliefs of the mass society.

## 2.1 Population and Sample

The respondents of the study were the female citizens of the City of Tarlac. The criteria for selection were based on individuals aged between 20 and 60 years old, females, and residing in the City of Tarlac. The respondents comprised five migrants, five solo parents, five informal settlers, and five Indigenous People, totaling 20 respondents. They were purposively selected to describe and narrate the life experiences of women's empowerment and how the government marginalized their programs, projects, and activities in engaging with society.

The study utilized a purposive sampling method or the convenient sampling because of the readily available respondents within the specific area. According to Campbell et al. (2020), Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or convenient sampling, was a type of non-probability sampling in which researchers selected respondents from the public to participate in surveys based on their own judgment. The researcher had chosen this sampling method as the study required a particular set of respondents who could provide the necessary information regarding the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women in the City Government of Tarlac. They are selected base to the area, and the grouped were they belong within Tarlac City.In order to collect data for the research, the respondents were selected based on the criteria needed and applicable, using a method of convenient sampling. The selection of respondents was one of the bases for better assessing the research in terms of faculty assistance in availing scholarships, and convenient sampling was considered a non-probability sampling approach depending on the requirements specified by the researchers.

## 2.2 Data and Sources of Data

The instrument used in the study was a researcher-made set of interview questions designed to address the research questions previously presented. These questions aimed to describe and narrate how the government marginalized women's empowerment and hindered their active engagement in society. Researchers employed two methods for collecting data and information:

Interview. This data gathering method targeted respondents who could provide necessary information regarding the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women in the City Government of Tarlac. The interviews were conducted over a period of two weeks with all selected respondents. Each interview lasted between 40 to 90 minutes to ensure accurate data collection. Prior to scheduling the interviews via Zoom App Messenger, phone calls, or any accessible means for the respondents, the researcher discussed the participants' rights and the study's objectives.

Documentary Analysis. The researcher utilized thematic analysis to synthesize the gathered data. This approach facilitated the answering of research questions by allowing the extraction of themes from the respondents' data, capturing both similarities and differences. Warm and cool analysis was conducted to discern the feelings and emotions of the respondents. As the analysis and interpretation progressed, the researcher identified themes and categories crucial in obtaining comprehensive information about the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women in the City Government of Tarlac.

## 2.3 Theoretical Framework

The Purpose of this study was to address the rights of women in empowerment and to marginalize the support of government in order for them to be more active in the society. This study able to narrate the experiences of women including their rights and empowerment on their different stories and those are people who are experiencing difficulties in the battle of their life. Therefore, it serves as the basis and guideline for continuing to carry out our greatest obligation to the community. The study uses the Input-Process-Output scheme in order to show the paradigm. The process involves the in-depth interview of the respondents to gather the necessary data needed in the study. Lastly, the document contains the suggested strategic intervention to evaluate the advancement of women's rights.

## 2.4 Statistical tools

- **2.4.1 Frequency:** The study, experiment, or statistical analysis showcased the occurrences or instances of something or an event within a specified period.
- **2.4.2 Ranking:** This involved organizing outcomes or data based on their order, from highest to lowest, as conducted in the past.

The ranking system served as a valuable tool for discerning the significance and prevalence of various aspects related to scholarship availability.

## 2.5 Ethical Considerations

Respecting and treating participants properly was crucial, in line with the researcher's responsibility. All possible issues were considered and appropriately addressed. Ethical approval was obtained from the ethical committee. Equally important was the acquisition of informed consent from all the respondents who were part of the study. The main ethical consideration was heightened in the need for anonymity and confidentiality. All the respondents were given an informed consent form, allowing them to review and understand the study before deciding to participate.

#### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

## 3.1 Overall Life Experiences of Marginalized women in Tarlac City

To assess all the cases discussed above, stories of various life experiences have been shared and narrated, shedding light on the lives of marginalized women in Tarlac City.

Table 3.1: The Common Life Experiences of Marginalized women

Similarities	Experiences of Marginalize women in Tarlac City			
Status	Most of the respondents are single, particularly solo parents and informal settlers who are suffering due to their situation.			
Educational Attainment	Most of the respondents have graduated from primary and secondary school. However, few of them have enrolled in and completed a two-year vocational program.			
Family income	The reported family income range is 2,000 to 5,000. Those who answered this question are more likely to be Indigenous People and informal settlers.			
Type of Family	Marginalized women in Tarlac City often come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds These women face obstacles such as restricted entry to high-quality education, financial limitations impeding enrollment, and societal expectations that often prioritize educational opportunities for males.			
In terms of Education	These women confront challenges such as restricted entry to well- established schools, financial limitations that hinder enrollment and cultural norms that may favor educational opportunities for male members.			
In terms of Employment	Most of the respondents for Marginalized women frequently face limitations in employment opportunities, marked by low-paying positions, limited chances for skill development, and workplace discrimination based on gender.			
Government Benefits	The experiences reveal gaps in accessibility and awareness. Barriers such as complex application processes and inadequate information dissemination hinder these women from fully benefiting from the intended government support systems.			
Barrier to achieve the rights as a woman	Women marginalized in Tarlac City encounter various obstacles, encompassing entrenched gender biases, societal stereotypes, and cultural norms that contribute to their continued marginalization.			

They share similarities in terms of rights for education, employment, and access to government programs. The stories also highlight common problems faced by marginalized women, including discrimination, limited resources, and societal stigmas. Understanding these challenges is crucial for designing targeted interventions and policies that address the root causes of their marginalization in Tarlac City. Moreover, it is essential for marginalized individuals to receive the rights-based services necessary for them to feel valued and empowered in all aspects of life.

## 3.2 Problems of Marginalized women in the Tarlac City

The marginalized women in Tarlac City, especially those belonging to the categories of Solo Parent, Indigenous People, Informal Settler, and Migrant, encounter numerous challenges stemming from societal, economic, and systemic factors. The following problems are identified, and respondents were able to choose multiple response based on their life experiences being marginalized.

Problems Encountered	f	R
Discrimination / Culture Differences	17	1
Limited Resources in insecurity (Food and Housing)	13	2
Lack of Legal Action and Protection	9	3
Lack of Educational system and opportunities	7	4.5
Lack of Social Services	7	4.5
Lack of knowledge to women's programs	5	5

Table 3.2: Problems of Marginalized Women in Tarlac City

Based on the presented Table 1, discrimination emerges as a major challenge for marginalized women in Tarlac City, with a frequency of seventeen (17). Women belonging to marginalized groups may face discrimination and social stigma, impacting their self-esteem, mental health, and overall well-being. Solo parents, for instance, encounter a lack of self-esteem and discrimination due to societal norms that deem young mothers unacceptable. Their situation, where a woman bears children without a partner, is often met with judgment. Similarly, informal settlers experience discrimination based on their socioeconomic status, limiting their freedom to make choices about their lives. They often find themselves constrained by societal expectations. Migrants also confront discrimination, particularly upon returning from abroad. People around them may make assumptions about the nature of their work overseas, contributing to a sense of stigma. In addition, indigenous women, who play a vital role in preserving cultural heritage, face discrimination. Despite their capability to empower others, they encounter prejudice based on their personality and cultural background.

Next the cultural differences have surfaced as a hurdle for marginalized women in Tarlac City. Predominantly, Indigenous women and informal settlers constitute the respondents facing cultural obstacles that impede their opportunities and curtail their complete integration into society. This difficulty frequently from preconceptions linked to their individualities and clothing preferences. Specifically, Indigenous women encounter challenges in maneuvering through cultural barriers that hinder their access to diverse opportunities. Likewise, informal settlers grapple with constraints resulting from disparities in cultural norms, influencing their capacity to actively participate in society.

The third identified challenge for marginalized women in Tarlac City is the issue of limited resources and insecurity in areas such as food, health, and housing, as reported by thirteen (13) respondents. Marginalized women frequently encounter obstacles in securing stable and well-paying employment, resulting in financial insecurity. This is particularly true for informal settlers and migrants who may grapple with housing insecurity, residing in substandard conditions with restricted access to essential facilities. Consequently, it becomes evident that addressing limited resources is crucial for fostering social involvement among marginalized women.

Next the Lack of Legal Action and Protection and the Lack of Educational system and opportunities got the same number of respondents of nine (9). In terms of the legal action, the marginalized women are very much sensitive in any cases in their life. They are making them vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and violations of their rights. On the other hand, the lack of education system and opportunities has the limited access to quality education can hinder the personal and professional development of marginalized women, restricting their opportunities for advancement.

Furthermore, the lack of social services including the educational system and opportunities is identified as a concern among marginalized women in Tarlac City, as reported by seven (7) respondents. These women often contend with numerous needs that may go unmet, adversely affecting their capacity to access essential support. Social services play a crucial role for women as they seek not only to meet their practical needs but also to feel valued and acknowledged in society. The absence of adequate social services underscores the challenges faced by marginalized women in managing their multifaceted needs. most of the respondents was unable to attend and finish their schools because of the lack of educational opportunity, some are far from their school zone and others was the lack of financial support from their family.

The lack of awareness regarding women's government programs poses a challenge for marginalized women in Tarlac City, as reported by five (5) respondents. Informal settlers, in particular, are disproportionately affected due to personal preferences and a limited engagement in government programs, resulting in a knowledge gap. The remaining two respondents, who are Indigenous people residing in distinct areas, also encounter difficulties in accessing the programs provided by the Tarlac City government.

This underscores a notable disparity in social inclusion and civic engagement. To tackle these issues effectively, it is essential to amplify awareness and outreach efforts. This involves ensuring that all marginalized women, irrespective of their backgrounds, are well-informed about and have the opportunity to benefit from the various government initiatives that are available.

## 3.3 Government support programs for marginalized women

In order to provide opportunities, the marginalized women in the country particularly in Tarlac City, the following are the government support programs to ensure that they can provide their needs.

Table 3.3 Government support programs for marginalized women

Programs	Objective	Strategic	Expected Outcomes
The Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710) defines Gender and Development Program (GAD)	This process aims to comprehensively assess and address the impact of actions on both genders	Ensure equal distribution of benefits and opportunities between genders across social, political, civil, and economic spheres.	Enhanced well-being and quality of life for women and men alike, leading to a more inclusive and equitable society.
IP Women Congress	To ensure the sustainability of this endeavor, a multi-year plan and budget have been established.	The project adopts a programmatic approach, setting realistic targets for each year	As the project progresses over the years, the results are expected to become increasingly impactful.
Women's Welfare Program (WWP)	Prevent and eliminate any form of exploitation against marginalized women.  Foster the development of skills for employment and self-actualization among marginalized women.	Offer education and skill development programs tailored to the needs of marginalized women, and Conduct workshops focused on personal development, maternal and child care, livelihood, self-improvement, and community engagement.	Marginalized women equipped with skills and knowledge for employment and self-actualization, and increased economic independence and livelihood opportunities for women through skill development programs.
Home for Girls (DSWD)	The primary objective of the Center is to empower girls facing	Offer programs focused on rebuilding self-worth and dignity, preparing	Enhanced mental health and emotional stability through
	special needs and challenging circumstances to address their problems and restore them to normal functioning.	girls for family reunification and community reintegration.	counseling and therapeutic activities.

## 3.3.1 The Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710) defines Gender and Development Program

The development perspective and process, as envisioned, are participatory, empowering, equitable, sustainable, devoid of violence, respectful of human rights, and supportive of self-determination and the realization of human potentials. This approach aims to attain gender equality as a foundational value that should be evident in development decisions. It asserts that women are not passive recipients of development but active agents in the development process.

Gender and Development (GAD) concentrate on Gender Mainstreaming, employing a strategy that involves: (1) Integrating the concerns and experiences of both women and men as essential elements in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies, programs, and projects across social, political, civil, and economic domains. This ensures that benefits are equally distributed between women and men. (2) Evaluating the repercussions for women and men resulting from any planned action, encompassing legislation, policies, or programs, in all areas and at all levels.

## 3.3.2 IP Women Congress

In collaboration with the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP), programs are being implemented to specifically address the needs of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) women, who continue to face reported instances of discrimination. Despite this, only a limited number of cultural bearers remain, and the younger generations of IPs are gradually moving away from practicing their traditional cultures. Notably, a significant majority of IP children and youth are no longer fluent in their mother tongue. As a response, this initiative seeks to initiate an annual convention for IP women, facilitated by the NCIP, with the goal of contributing to the preservation of indigenous cultures and empowering IPs to lead their own development.

The primary focus of the project is to underscore the pivotal role of IP women as catalysts for community development and as custodians of indigenous culture. The anticipated outcomes include (a) increased participation of IP women culture bearers in various forums, (b) a rise in the number of IP professionals working within their ancestral domains, and (c) an improvement in the survival rate of NCIP Scholarship grantees. By fostering an environment that values and celebrates the unique contributions of IP women, this initiative not only seeks to reverse the trend of cultural erosion but also aspires to create a sustainable and empowered future for Indigenous Peoples.

## 3.3.3 Women's Welfare Program (WWP)

The Women's Welfare Program, a recurring initiative under the Ministry of Social Services, is dedicated to advancing the well-being of marginalized women. It places specific emphasis on preventing and eliminating any form of exploitation against women while concurrently fostering the development of skills for employment and self-actualization. The intended recipients of this program are women facing social disadvantages, specifically those aged between 18 and 59 years old, who require social welfare services. This group encompasses women with restricted or no access to education, as well as limited opportunities for personal development, maternal and child care, livelihood, self-improvement, and community engagement. These challenges hinder their active participation in development initiatives.

## 3.3.4 Home for Girls (DSWD)

The Home for Girls serves as a temporary residential facility designed as an alternative family care arrangement. It offers 24-hour group living on a temporary basis to girls below 18 years old with special needs. This is particularly crucial when their own families and relatives are unable to meet their needs adequately over an extended period. The residential services create an opportunity for residents to receive temporary and well-supervised care within a controlled therapeutic environment. The ultimate goal is to facilitate the reunion or reintegration of these girls with their families and communities, allowing them to lead normal lives.

This process aims to rebuild their self-worth and dignity through the provision of protective and rehabilitative programs and services. The ultimate aim is to prepare them for family reunification and community reintegration. The specific objectives of the Center include offering temporary shelter to children at risk of further abuse who cannot remain in their own homes.

The Center employs a multi-disciplinary approach to observe the child's behavior and facilitate their healing and recovery. It also aims to assist children in overcoming the trauma of sexual abuse through regular counseling, group work sessions, and therapeutic activities.

## 3.3.5 Kaisa Women's Organization (Tarlac City)

The Kaisa Women's Organization (KWO) appears to be making significant strides in empowering women in Tarlac City. Their collaboration with Mayor Cristy Angeles reflects a concerted effort to redefine gender roles and foster women's advancement within the community. By partnering with key entities like the Tarlac City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), KWO has been able to provide valuable skills training to women in three different villages: Barangays Balingcanaway, Dalayap, and San Miguel.

The training initiative, which commenced on July 25, is geared towards enhancing the skills of its beneficiaries. The focus on skills related to hairdressing, massage therapy, and beauty care services indicates a thoughtful approach to increasing the employability and productivity of these women. Such training programs not only equip individuals with practical skills but also pave the way for economic opportunities, potentially offering a stable source of income for the participants.

Beyond the immediate impact on the individuals receiving training, these programs likely contribute to the broader societal goal of gender equality and women's empowerment. By enabling women to develop marketable skills and fostering their involvement in various sectors, KWO, alongside its collaborators, is actively working towards creating a more inclusive and empowered community.

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