

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES AMONG
FILIPINO SOLO PARENTS****Aristeo C. Salapa**<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0934-3571>

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ABSTRACT

Under the PRISMA guidelines, this study explored access to information and support services of Filipinos solo parents. Thirty articles which originated from primary (53%) and secondary (47) data in Google Scholar (40), Philippine e-Journals online (30%), as well as government databases met the inclusion criteria. These were quantitative (43%), qualitative (37%), mixed-method (13%) and policy papers (7%). The review identified seven key barriers: low levels of digital infrastructure and literacy; lack of awareness; poor inter-agency collaboration; and a number of implementation issues. Legal frameworks (RA 11861, Magna Carta of Woman), digital governance initiatives, local innovations, community outreach, social media, streamlines procedures, solo parent offices, and educational programs were identified as eight facilitating factors. Even with extensive legislation, there are still gaps in information democratization that need to be filled immediately in order to improve accessibility and awareness.

Keywords:

Information access, Solo Parents, Information Democratization, Digital divide, Support services, Awareness, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The democratization of information is essential for empowering marginalized groups, especially single parents who must navigate government support systems while dealing with complex socioeconomic issues. The ability to efficiently disseminate information about available benefits, services, and legal protections has become a crucial indicator of inclusive policy implementation as digital governance grows rapidly in the Philippines (Pinugu, 2024). Information access has become a crucial indicator of how well support programs reach their intended beneficiaries due to growing demands for transparent and easily accessible government services (Ruelo & Law-ay, 2025).

Solo parents—defined under Republic Act 11861 as individuals raising children alone due to various circumstances including death of spouse, abandonment, separation, or unwed parenthood—represent a significant vulnerable population requiring comprehensive support services. These stakeholders include biological parents, adoptive parents, or legal guardians who assume sole parental responsibility. Their experiences offer valuable insight into how responsive and accessible government information systems are in addressing the needs of marginalized families.

In the Philippine context, several long-standing challenges continue to hinder effective information dissemination to solo parents. Limited digital infrastructure, low literacy rates in rural communities, fragmented service delivery systems, and inadequate awareness campaigns remain major barriers to accessing vital information about available support (Farnacio & Reyes, 2021; Fish et al., 2019). Even with progressive legislation such as the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act (RA 11861) and the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710), many solo parents remain unaware of their entitlements or struggle to navigate complex application

processes. the gap between policy existence and beneficiary awareness represents a critical failure in information democratization that perpetuates inequality and prevents vulnerable families from accessing desperately needed support.

Understanding information access patterns is therefore crucial to improving support service utilization among solo parents. Research shows that when information about government benefits is transparent, accessible, and widely disseminated, target populations are more likely to utilize available services, strengthening both family stability and social welfare outcomes (Kabeer, 1999). Conversely, poor information dissemination perpetuates exclusion, reduces program effectiveness, and undermines policy objectives.

OBJECTIVES

In light of these concerns, this study seeks to examine information access, awareness, and dissemination strategies for solo parents in the Philippines. Through a systematic literature review, it aims to identify factors influencing information access, highlight recurring barriers experienced by solo parents, and provide evidence-based recommendations for improving information democratization. More specifically, the study intends to: (a) determine the data sources, research designs, and data types utilized in previous studies; (b) examine the legal frameworks, policies, and information dissemination strategies relevant to solo parent support; and (c) identify the barriers and facilitators affecting information access across the reviewed literature.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design. A systematic review of literature was made to determine the access, awareness and utilization of the support services among solo parents in the Philippines. To promote a strict, transparent and reproducible approach, the study was conducted according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta- Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. PRISMA provides a standardized format that can be used to report the justification, methodological steps, and final outcomes of its review (Page et al., 2021). Following these established methodologies, the review utilized several important steps: (a) Clearly defined eligibility criteria were set to determine which studies to include or exclude; (b) Identification of suitable data sources was included that involved academic databases, a government research repository and policy documents; (c) Terms related to solo parents, information access, awareness and support services were developed and applied; (d) The fine-tuned systematic study selection process was conducted; and (e), Data extracted from the selected studies then extracted organized and reported on. This systematic process assured that the review collected a full, quality, and methodologically strong evidence based on information democratization for solo parents in the Philippines.

Eligibility Criteria. To be included in this systematic review of the literature, specific selection criteria were set. Studies were eligible if they: (1) presented empirical or theoretical data on solo parents, single parents, or female-headed households; (2) focused on information access, awareness, dissemination strategies, or support service use; (3) identified challenges and barriers to accessing government benefits and social services; (4) were conducted in the Philippines as a part of studies which included Philippine-specific contexts; and (5) had been published between 2014 to the year 2025 due to this period as it reflects most recent government policy reforms and digital governance initiatives; and (6) appeared in peer-reviewed journals, academic sources that are reputable source of knowledge/reference readily available for end-users worldwide); credible institutional research reports.

On the other hand, studies that were not in English and Filipino; articles that do not deal with solo parents, single parents or related marginalized groups; studies that did not discuss access to information, awareness, and support services; viewpoints without academic foundation nor empirical evidence base; scholarly works concentrating on two-parent families where finding may be applied to the context of a solo parent family context were excluded. This resulted in only methodologically strong, current and contextually valid studies being included in the review that were appropriate to the aims of this systematic review.

Information Sources. The authors searched various electronic academic databases, search engines and institutional repositories to obtain all relevant studies for this systematic review. To guarantee the originality of

the work, an initial scoping review was performed to validate that there were no previous systematic reviews exclusively addressing democratization of information and awareness strategies for solo parents in Philippine setting. Setting up this lag, we conducted a systematic search across four main databases: Google Scholar, Philippine e-Journals, government databases (Official Gazette, the Philippine Statistics Authority and legislative repositories) and international policy repositories (UN, CEDAW, UDHR).

We used Google Scholar because of its availability of academic literature in varied fields, such as social science, public administration, gender studies, and development studies. The Philippine e-Journals database was added to collect locally published research for the context of the Philippines. Government databases were required to obtain official policy documents, laws and regulations, implementing rules and statistical reports. International policy archives offered a context and framework for addressing women's rights, human rights, and sustainable development with reference to solo parent empowerment.

Given that each platform operates with distinct search capabilities, the researchers customized search strings, Boolean operators, and filtering options to fit the features of each database. For transparency and reproducibility, all search-related details including platform name, type of source, search fields utilized, search terms applied, and the exact date of each search were carefully recorded and are presented in Table 1.

Source Category	Source Name	Search Method	Date of Search
Search Engine	Google Scholar	Full Text, Abstract, Title, and Keywords	2025-01-15
Online Repository	Philippine e-Journals	Full Text, Abstract, Title, and Keywords	2025-01-18
Government Database	Official Gazette, PSA, Legislative	Title, Keywords, Policy Document	2025-01-20
International Repository	UN, CEDAW, UDHR, SDGs	Title, Keywords, Policy Framework	2025-01-22

Table 1. Search space for selected databases

Search Terms. Search Terms. These concepts ranged from access to information and awareness, dissemination strategies, digital inclusion, government support schemes, social welfare and at-risk groups. The researchers developed search strings that included key words such as “solo parent,” “single parent,” “information access,” “awareness,” dissemination, support services, government benefits and Philippines. This was based on the rationale that single-parent information democratization consists of multiple layers including legal structures, digital platforms, community-level interventions, and organizational capacity.

Other relevant keywords relating to barriers and facilitators were added to these primary terms; for example “digital divide”, “digital literacy”, “information inequality”, “rural access”, “marginalized communities”, “e-governance”, community outreach, and “policy implementation”. Boolean operators such as AND and OR were used to develop more issues-focused searches by combining search terms (eg, constructs) in a manner similar to the following:

- “solo parent AND access to information AND Philippines”
- “single parent AND mindfulness AND government assistance”
- “information dissemination AND marginalized AND support services”
- “digital divide AND solo parent AND Philippines”

We look for studies which have the specified legislative or conceptual terms in their context using exact phrase searches (e.g., “solo parent welfare”, “information democratization,” “Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act” and “Magna Carta of Women”). Relevant laws and policy terms (“Solo Parent Office”, “NHTS”, and “CEDAW”) were also looked up.

These techniques ensured greater accuracy by identifying studies in which relevant concepts appeared closely aligned within the text. Collectively, these search strategies enabled the researchers to identify a broad yet focused body of literature, allowing the review to capture diverse perspectives, methodological approaches, and empirical evidence on information access and awareness among solo parents in the Philippines.

Study Selection. A predefined methodological rigorous and structured study selection approach was followed that relied on locating the highest quality and clinically relevant studies. These stages are detailed in Table 2 and presented in the PRISMA diagram (Figure 1) as an overview of the selection process.

Stage	Description
S1	Identification of studies related to solo parents, information access, awareness, and support services in the Philippines
S2	Selection of studies gathered from all identified information sources
S3	Exclusion of duplicate studies retrieved across databases
S4	Exclusion of studies based on title, abstract, and keyword screening against eligibility criteria
S5	Exclusion of studies based on full-text screening

Table 2. Stages of the study selection process

Google Scholar, Philippine e-Journals, government databases, and international policy repositories were the four chosen sources from which all potentially pertinent studies about single parents, information access, awareness, and support services in the Philippines were retrieved during the Identification stage of the selection process. A total of 285 records were first collected from these databases using the predetermined search strings.

After that, 65 overlapping studies that had been retrieved from various sources were removed by eliminating duplicate entries. As a result, the dataset was reduced to 220 distinct records, all of which moved on to the screening stage.

In this phase, each study's titles, abstracts, and keywords were scrutinized to ascertain their applicability to the eligibility standards established by the investigators. In particular, studies that clearly focused on information access, awareness, support services, or single parents in the Philippine context were screened. This screening led to the exclusion of 145 studies because they did not align with key variables, concentrated on non-Philippine settings, addressed unrelated populations or discussed subjects outside the purview of information access.

A total of 75 studies advanced to the Eligibility stage, where full-text evaluations of each article's methodological rigor, contextual relevance, and empirical contribution were carried out. At this point, studies that lacked empirical support, did not specifically address information access or awareness barriers, or were solely opinion-based without supporting data were eliminated. Furthermore, studies with inadequate documentation or no full-text availability were eliminated. As a result, 45 full-text articles were eliminated for lack of empirical data, methodological flaws, or inadequate relevance.

Ultimately, 30 studies met all inclusion criteria and were deemed suitable for systematic synthesis. These studies offered substantial, evidence-based insights on information access, awareness, and support service utilization among solo parents in the Philippines, and thus formed the final dataset for review, analysis, and data extraction.

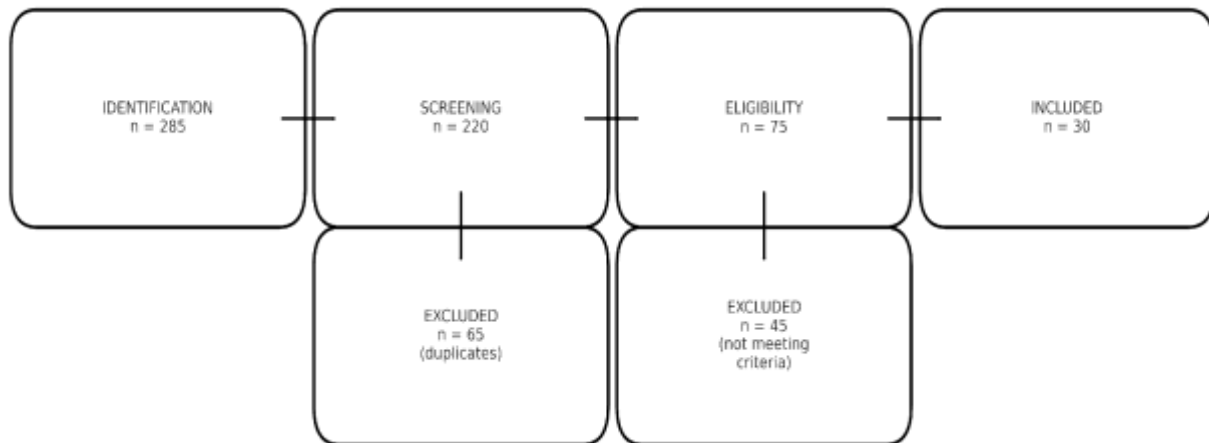


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

Table 3 Distribution of articles among the four chosen sources before and after the study selection process. Of the 285 articles initially found in Google Scholar, Philippine e-Journals, government databases, and international repositories, only 30 met both criteria and were included in final analysis. This set of 30 studies are the main evidence base for this systematic review.

Source	Before	After
Google Scholar	115	12
Philippine e-Journals	85	9
Government Databases	60	6
International Repositories	25	3
Total	285	30

Table 3. Before and after the selection process

Data Extraction and Synthesis. The thirty (30) articles regarding information access, awareness, and support service utilization among solo parents in the Philippines were extracted and synthesized. Each of the studies was examined carefully, and all relevant data were extracted in a structured format to ensure reliability and consistency. Extracted data contained information about the author (s), year of publication, study type and participant/respondent characteristics, main themes identified, legal frameworks used as frame of reference and particular results on barriers and facilitators to access information.

Policy documents and legal frameworks were also reviewed to examine the provisions on support for solo parent, dissemination of information need and implementation mechanisms. This systematized data was used as foundation to pattern patterns, ascertain commonalities and make significant inferences or statements on the present information democratization between solo parents within a Filipino point of view.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presented the results and discussion of the systematic literature review. It begins by outlining the data sources, research designs, and key characteristics of the included studies. This is followed by an examination of the legal frameworks, policies, and information dissemination strategies relevant to solo parent support in the Philippines. The section also highlights the major barriers and facilitating factors influencing information access and awareness, as reflected in the reviewed articles. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are presented to summarize the overall insights and propose directions for enhancing information democratization for solo parents in the Philippines.

Characteristics of Included Studies. As shown in Table 4, the majority of the reviewed articles were sourced from Google Scholar, which accounted for 40% of the total studies included in the review. Philippine e-Journals contributed 30%, government databases provided 20%, and international repositories accounted for 10%, indicating that relevant literature on solo parents and information access is distributed across multiple academic and institutional platforms.

Distribution of Articles	<i>n</i>	%
Based on Sources		
Google Scholar	12	40
Philippine e-Journals	9	30
Government Databases	6	20
International Repositories	3	10
Based on Research Design		
Quantitative	13	43
Qualitative	11	37
Mixed Method	4	13
Policy Document	2	7
Based on the Type of Data		
Primary	16	53
Secondary	14	47

Table 4. Articles Based on Sources, Research Design, and Type of Data

In accordance with the PRISMA criteria, all articles underwent systematic screening to ensure that only studies directly aligned with the review's objectives were included. In terms of research design, quantitative studies comprised 43% of the reviewed literature, reflecting the widespread use of survey-based methods and statistical analysis in examining solo parent challenges and information access patterns in the Philippines. Qualitative studies represented 37% and provided in-depth insights into lived experiences, barriers to information access, and perceptions of support services. Mixed-method research contributed 13%, demonstrating a meaningful integration of complementary approaches. Policy documents accounted for 7%, providing legislative and regulatory context.

With respect to data types, 53% of the studies utilized primary data such as surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies with solo parents, government personnel, and service providers, while 47% relied on secondary data, including government reports, policy documents, legislative analyses, and statistical databases. This balance between empirical stakeholder input and institutional documentation highlights the importance of both firsthand lived experiences and policy context in understanding information access challenges for solo parents in the Philippines.

Key Philippine Policies Referenced in Studies on Solo Parents and Information Access. This systematic review examined thirty (30) studies focusing on solo parents, information access, awareness, and support service utilization in the Philippines. Across these works, several national laws and international policy frameworks repeatedly emerged as the primary foundations for understanding the rights, entitlements, and information dissemination mechanisms relevant to solo parents. These legal instruments guided researchers in assessing how effectively information about available support reaches intended beneficiaries and what barriers prevent equitable access.

Global Frameworks:

A variety of international instruments that established the rights of single parents, especially women, were frequently mentioned in the reviewed literature as foundational documents:

1. The right to access information and social services without discrimination is established by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which is often referred to as the international bill of rights for women. Given that the majority of solo parents in the Philippines are women, this framework is especially pertinent.

2. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which emphasizes that everyone should have access to information about their entitlements, is cited in studies that address the fundamental right to social security and family support.
3. Goals 5 (Gender Equality), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and 16 (Inclusive Institutions) of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were mentioned in studies looking at fair access to information and services for marginalized groups, including single parents.

National Legal Structures:

International commitments have been translated into comprehensive national legislation in the Philippines. The reviewed literature most frequently cited the following laws:

1. Republic Act 11861, also known as the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act, was mentioned in almost every study that looked at support for solo parents. It offers the most extensive framework for benefits for solo parents, including housing priority, financial aid, parental leave, educational scholarships, and job support. However, research has consistently shown that people are still unaware of these rights, which highlights important information gaps.
2. **Republic Act 9710 (Magna Carta of Women)** – Cited frequently as the local implementation of CEDAW, this law addresses discrimination against women and mandates equal access to information, education, and social services. Studies referenced this in discussing the gendered dimension of solo parenthood and information access barriers.
3. **Republic Act 10931 (Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act)** – Referenced in studies examining educational support for solo parents and their children, emphasizing how lack of awareness about scholarship provisions limits utilization.
4. **E-Governance Act of 2023 (Republic Act 11032)** – Cited in studies examining digital information platforms and online service delivery. While this law promises to improve information accessibility through digital channels, implementation gaps and digital divide issues were consistently noted.
5. **Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173)** – Referenced in studies discussing concerns about data security and privacy that may inhibit solo parents from registering for benefits or providing personal information.

Local Initiatives and Implementation Mechanisms:

Several studies referenced local government initiatives designed to improve information access:

1. **Solo Parent Ordinances and Solo Parent Offices (SPOs)** – Multiple studies cited the establishment of SPOs in various cities including Davao City as positive developments for centralized information and service provision. However, geographic disparities in implementation were consistently noted.
2. **National Household Targeting System (NHTS)** – Referenced in studies examining how vulnerable populations are identified and how information about benefits reaches them, with concerns about exclusion errors and accessibility.
3. **Freedom of Information (FOI) Executive Order** – Cited in discussions about transparency and the public's right to access government information about available services.

Policy Gaps Identified:

Researchers consistently found a gap between the availability of comprehensive legal frameworks and the real awareness and use of benefits by single parents in all thirty of the reviewed studies. Despite the fact that laws such as RA 11861 offer many benefits, research has shown that many single parents:

- Are not aware that these advantages exist.
- Do not know how to obtain information or where to apply

- Deal with bureaucratic, complicated application procedures
- Experience uneven execution in different locations
- See inadequate communication from governmental organizations

These results highlight the fact that information dissemination, implementation, and accessibility—the main goals of information democratization initiatives—are more important than legislation, as comprehensive laws already exist.

Barriers to Information Access for Solo Parents. Table 5 presented the different barriers encountered by solo parents in accessing information about available support services in the Philippines, as identified in the reviewed literature. These barriers directly affect awareness, utilization, and the effectiveness of support programs. A total of seven (7) major barriers were extracted, arranged according to their relative frequencies based on recurring themes across the thirty studies.

Barriers	Frequency
Limited Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity	22
Low Awareness of Available Benefits	21
Geographic Disparities (Rural-Urban Gap)	18
Inadequate Dissemination Strategies	17
Insufficient Digital Literacy	15
Poor Inter-Agency Coordination	12
Implementation Gaps and Bureaucratic Complexity	11

Table 5. Barriers to Information Access for Solo Parents

Limited Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity. The lack of reliable digital infrastructure emerged as the most frequently cited barrier across 22 studies. Limited broadband coverage, outdated hardware, slow network speeds, and inconsistent internet connectivity, especially in rural and remote areas, significantly impede solo parents' ability to access online information about government benefits (Fish et al., 2019; Ruelo & Law-ay, 2025). The digital divide creates structural inequality where solo parents in urban areas with better connectivity can more easily access information, while those in underserved regions remain excluded. This infrastructure gap is particularly problematic given the Philippine government's increasing reliance on digital platforms for service delivery and information dissemination under the E-Governance Act.

Low Awareness of Available Benefits. Twenty-one studies identified low awareness as a critical barrier. Many solo parents remain completely unaware that comprehensive support services exist under RA 11861 and related legislation (Farnacio & Reyes, 2021; Pinugu, 2024). This lack of awareness stems from inadequate public information campaigns, limited community outreach, and poor communication strategies by implementing agencies. Solo parents who are unaware of their entitlements cannot access benefits regardless of how comprehensive the legal framework may be. Studies noted that awareness is particularly low among solo parents in rural areas, those with limited education, and those working in the informal economy who have less exposure to government information channels.

Geographic Disparities (Rural-Urban Gap). Eighteen studies documented significant geographic disparities in information access. Rural solo parents face compounded disadvantages due to distance from government offices, limited internet connectivity, fewer information channels, and weaker implementation of information dissemination programs (National Household Targeting System, n.d.). Urban areas typically have established Solo Parent Offices, better digital infrastructure, and more active civil society organizations that help disseminate information, while rural communities often lack these resources. This geographic inequality perpetuates exclusion and prevents equitable access to information and services.

Inadequate Dissemination Strategies. Seventeen studies criticized current information dissemination strategies as inadequate, fragmented, and not tailored to solo parents' needs and circumstances. Government agencies often rely on traditional methods (printed materials, office postings) that do not effectively reach solo parents who are juggling multiple responsibilities and may have limited time to visit government offices (Sussman & Hanson, 2014). Studies called for multi-channel approaches including social media, community radio, text

messaging, and grassroots outreach through barangay officials and community organizations. The absence of targeted, sustained information campaigns specifically designed for solo parents contributes to persistent low awareness.

Insufficient Digital Literacy. Fifteen studies identified digital literacy as a significant barrier. Even when digital information platforms exist, many solo parents lack the skills to navigate websites, complete online forms, or access digital resources (Ruelo & Law-ay, 2025). This is particularly problematic for older solo parents, those with limited formal education, and those who have not had exposure to digital technologies. The rapid shift toward digital governance without corresponding investment in digital literacy training creates a situation where information is theoretically accessible online but practically inaccessible to those who need it most.

Poor Inter-Agency Coordination. Twelve studies noted that poor coordination among government agencies creates confusion and inefficiency in information dissemination. Different agencies may provide conflicting information, have overlapping mandates, or lack integrated systems for sharing information about solo parent benefits. This fragmentation forces solo parents to visit multiple offices, repeat applications, and navigate bureaucratic complexity—all of which serve as deterrents to accessing information and services. Better coordination could create "one-stop shop" information hubs where solo parents can learn about all available benefits in one place.

Implementation Gaps and Bureaucratic Complexity. Eleven studies documented that even when solo parents become aware of available benefits, they encounter implementation gaps and bureaucratic complexity that impede access. Complex application procedures, excessive documentary requirements, long processing times, and unclear guidelines create barriers that discourage utilization (Bresenio & Salapa, 2023; Ramos & Tus, 2020). Studies noted that information about *how* to access benefits is often as important as information about *what* benefits exist, yet procedural information is frequently unclear, inconsistent across localities, or not communicated effectively.

Facilitating Factors for Information Access. Table 6 presented the facilitating factors that emerged from the literature as enablers of improved information access for solo parents. These represent both existing resources and recommended strategies identified across the thirty studies.

Facilitating Factors	Frequency
Comprehensive Legal Frameworks (RA 11861, RA 9710)	28
Digital Governance Initiatives (E-Governance Act)	19
Local Government Innovations (Solo Parent Offices)	16
Community-Based Outreach Programs	14
Social Media and Digital Platforms	13
Simplified Application Processes	11
Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships	9
Educational Support and Capacity Building	8

Table 6. Facilitating Factors for Information Access

Comprehensive Legal Frameworks. Twenty-eight studies acknowledged that the Philippines has established robust legal frameworks providing comprehensive support for solo parents. RA 11861, RA 9710, RA 10931, and related legislation create the foundational entitlements that solo parents should be able to access. While implementation and awareness remain problematic, these laws represent significant policy achievements that provide the legal basis for support services. Studies emphasized that the challenge is not the absence of supportive legislation but rather the need to bridge the gap between policy and practice through improved information dissemination.

Digital Governance Initiatives. Nineteen studies identified digital governance initiatives, particularly the E-Governance Act of 2023, as having significant potential to improve information access if properly implemented. Digital platforms can provide 24/7 access to information, reduce geographic barriers, streamline application processes, and enable more efficient service delivery. However, studies emphasized that digital solutions must be accompanied by investments in infrastructure, digital literacy training, and inclusive design to ensure they benefit all solo parents, not just those who are already digitally connected.

Local Government Innovations. Sixteen studies highlighted local government innovations, particularly the establishment of Solo Parent Offices (SPOs) in cities like Davao, as important facilitators of information access. SPOs serve as dedicated information hubs, centralize services, provide personalized assistance, and can conduct targeted outreach to solo parent communities. These local initiatives demonstrate that when government brings services closer to beneficiaries and creates specialized support structures, information access improves significantly.

Community-Based Outreach Programs. Fourteen studies emphasized the importance of community-based outreach conducted through barangay officials, civil society organizations, solo parent associations, and community health workers. These grassroots approaches leverage trusted local networks, use culturally appropriate communication methods, and can reach solo parents who are not connected to digital channels or formal government offices. Studies recommended expanding and systematizing community-based information dissemination as a complement to digital strategies.

Social Media and Digital Platforms. Thirteen studies identified social media platforms (Facebook, community groups, messaging apps) as increasingly important channels for information dissemination. Many solo parents, even those in rural areas, access Facebook through mobile phones, making social media a potentially effective way to share information about available benefits. Studies recommended that government agencies and civil society organizations develop stronger social media strategies tailored to solo parent audiences.

Simplified Application Processes. Eleven studies noted that efforts to simplify application procedures, reduce documentary requirements, and streamline processes facilitate both information access and service utilization. When processes are complex and opaque, information dissemination becomes more difficult because explaining intricate procedures requires extensive communication. Simplification makes it easier to communicate clearly about how to access benefits.

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships. Nine studies emphasized the value of partnerships among government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector entities, and solo parent associations. Collaborative approaches can pool resources, expand information channels, leverage diverse networks, and create more comprehensive support ecosystems. Studies recommended institutionalizing such partnerships to sustain information dissemination efforts.

Educational Support and Capacity Building. Eight studies identified educational programs—including digital literacy training, information literacy, legal rights awareness, and empowerment seminars—as important facilitators. When solo parents are equipped with knowledge and skills to seek information, navigate systems, and advocate for their rights, they become active agents in accessing support rather than passive recipients dependent on others to inform them.

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CONCLUSION

The results of the systematic literature review informed a look at the 30 studies which followed to identify factors associated with access, awareness and service utilization for information and support among solo parents in the Philippines. Review showed that even if adequate policy provisions are in place (especially RA 11861, RA 9710 and RA 10931), a chronic disjuncture between policy enunciation and clients' knowledge still remains.

From the synthesis, seven (7) predominant barriers to access of the information on healthcare services were identified: low digital infrastructure and connectivity; limited awareness about available benefits; geographical disparities for rural areas compared with urban centres; poor strategy for dissemination; weak digital literacy skills; poor communication among the agencies involved in cooperation and multiple levels of bureaucracy due to a failure to implement publications. These barriers may have greater implications for solo parents in rural and disenfranchised neighborhoods, reinforcing systemic differences in knowledge and support systems.

On the other hand, eight (8) enablers were noted: enabling legislation, e-governance projects, local government innovations (specifically Solo Parent Offices), community-based initiatives including social marketing and digital platforms simplification of process and application forms participation in multi-stakeholder partnerships educational aid and training. These enablers are drawn from both current assets and promising practices that would improve information democratization for solo parents if they were scaled up.

Taken together, these results demonstrate that although the Philippines has achieved considerable legislative strides in providing support systems for solo parents, the implementation of such policies is still greatly compromised by access to information issues. Solo parents cannot access benefits they are unaware exist, negotiate systems they do not comprehend, or reach digital tools without connectivity and digital literacy. The fulfilment of this evidence is crucial to transforming policy intentions into measurable impact and helping vulnerable families access the help to which they are legally entitled.

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