

**Compliance of barangay council for the Protection of Children on Juvenile Justice Welfare  
Act: Basis for a comprehensive action plan**

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**Abstract**

**Aim:** This study aimed to assess the degree of compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act (Republic Act No. 9344, as amended) in selected barangays in Caloocan City and to use the findings as a basis for developing a comprehensive action plan to strengthen barangay-level juvenile justice implementation.

**Methodology:** A quantitative descriptive-comparative research design was employed involving 150 respondents comprising BCPC implementers and parents or guardians of children at risk and children in conflict with the law. Data were collected using a validated structured questionnaire covering key compliance domains, problems encountered, and proposed solutions. Weighted means were used for descriptive analysis, while independent samples t-tests were applied to determine significant differences between respondent groups at the 0.05 level of significance.

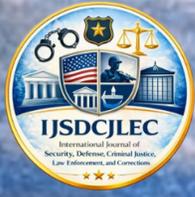
**Results:** The findings revealed a generally high level of BCPC compliance across major procedural domains, including the filing of complaints, initial contact with the child, intake and initial interview, referral and turnover of custody, intervention, and diversion. Significant differences were observed between implementers and parents' assessments in most compliance areas, except for intervention and diversion, where perceptions converged. Problems encountered were generally rated as less serious, while proposed solutions—particularly capacity building, ICT-based records management, and resource augmentation—were strongly supported by stakeholders.

**Conclusion:** The study concludes that barangay-level juvenile justice mechanisms are largely compliant with legal mandates. However, variations in stakeholder perceptions and persistent operational gaps indicate the need for improved systematization, capacity enhancement, and stronger inter-agency coordination. The findings provide a strong empirical basis for a comprehensive action plan aimed at ensuring consistent, child-centered, and effective implementation of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act at the barangay level.

**Keywords:** *Barangay Council for the Protection of Children, Children at risk, Children in conflict with the law, Community-based interventions, Diversion programs, Juvenile Justice Welfare Act, Rehabilitation*

**INTRODUCTION**

Juvenile justice systems have evolved from punitive models to child-centered, rehabilitative, and restorative frameworks, acknowledging children's vulnerability and developmental needs (United Nations, 1989). This shift aligns with international conventions, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which promotes community-based interventions, diversion, and reintegration rather than incarceration (United Nations, 1989). These frameworks emphasize reducing the criminalization of children and prioritizing prevention, restoration, and support to better meet their developmental requirements (United Nations, 1989). Despite these progressive policies, implementation gaps persist at the community level, particularly in urban and high-risk areas, where systemic challenges such as inadequate resources, a lack of coordinated cross-system responses, and the overrepresentation of marginalized groups undermine effective child protection and juvenile justice outcomes. Addressing these gaps requires multi-agency collaboration, culturally appropriate diversion strategies, and the inclusion of lived experiences in policy design and evaluation to enhance rehabilitative and protective measures for juveniles globally (Ball et al., 2024; White et al., 2024).



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The Philippines' Republic Act No. 9344, also known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act, amended by RA 10630, institutionalizes a child-friendly justice system that prioritizes diversion, rehabilitation, and aftercare over punitive sanctions (United Nations, 1989). This legislative framework aligns with global juvenile justice reforms, emphasizing restorative approaches tailored to the developmental needs of children in conflict with the law (CICL) (United Nations, 1989; Snehil & Sagar, 2020). Central to this system is the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC)... The BCPC's role reflects the law's commitment to community-based, child-centered mechanisms aimed at preventing formal judicial proceedings and promoting social reintegration (United Nations, 1989; Aryana, 2020). However, research indicates that despite well-defined national policies and detailed manuals, the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system hinges on the capacity, coordination, and resources available at the barangay level. Challenges in implementation arise due to uneven local government capabilities, limited training, and coordination gaps, underscoring the importance of strengthening grassroots governance to fully realize the law's rehabilitative objectives (Aryana, 2020; Snehil & Sagar, 2020).

Barangays 168 and 171 in Caloocan City have problems with children at risk and those who break the law. The way they handle these cases is inconsistent. Barangay Council, for the Protection of Children (BCPC) members do not receive sufficient training or guidance. This leads to uneven programs to help these children. There are also bigger issues, such as poor coordination, lack of documentation, and insufficient resources, which are common in barangay governance in the Philippines (Reyes et al., 2023; Roche & Flynn, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic worsened the situation by disrupting services and increasing problems such as poverty and family stress. This shows weaknesses in child protection services (United Nations, 1989). Research on barangay health workers in urban areas also shows issues such as lack of training, resources, and the need for better community support and teamwork to improve services (Reyes et al., 2023; Yamaguchi et al., 2023). To address these problems, better training and coordination are needed to protect children effectively at the barangay level.

Although Republic Act No. 9344 provides a comprehensive legal framework for juvenile justice in the Philippines, its effectiveness largely depends on how well it is implemented at the barangay level. In practice, operational challenges such as inconsistent procedures, limited capacity, and post-pandemic child protection demand often affect the translation of policy into daily practice. While previous studies have focused on juvenile delinquency, rehabilitation outcomes, and legal analyses of the law, few have examined actual barangay-level compliance, particularly the performance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) in key procedures, such as complaint filing, intake and interviews, custody turnover, and intervention and diversion. Existing research rarely compares the perspectives of barangay implementers and community stakeholders, such as parents, despite barangays serving as the first point of contact for children at risk and in conflict with the law (United Nations, 1989). This gap results in a disconnect between policy and practice, particularly in urban communities. Addressing this gap, the present study assesses BCPC compliance at the grassroots level, incorporates stakeholder perspectives, and develops a data-driven, context-specific action plan to strengthen juvenile justice implementation and child protection at the community level (United Nations, 1989).

This study contributes to juvenile justice research by providing empirical barangay-level evidence on the compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act. Unlike previous studies that focused mainly on national policies or institutional settings, this study examines how juvenile justice procedures are implemented at the community level, where policies are directly put into practice. It compares the perspectives of barangay implementers and parents or guardians, offering insights into the differences in stakeholder perceptions of BCPC compliance. The study also identifies operational problems and proposes practical solutions, resulting in a data-driven action plan tailored to the Barangay context. Academically, this study adds grassroots-level evidence to the juvenile justice literature by emphasizing actual implementation rather than legal frameworks alone. Practically, the findings provide useful guidance for barangay officials... to improve child protection services and strengthen community-based juvenile justice implementation (United Nations, 1989).

## Review of Related Literature and Studies

### *Juvenile Justice Paradigms and Child-Centered Approaches (Global Perspective)*

Juvenile justice systems worldwide are changing. They are moving from punishing young offenders to helping them. This change focuses on what is best for children (United Nations, 1989). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) supports this idea (United Nations, 1989; Haydon, 2020). The UNCRC suggests keeping children out of court and using community programs instead of jails (United Nations, 1989). This approach involves caring for children (Omarova, 2022). It highlights children's rights to safety, support, and involvement in justice systems (United Nations, 1989; Theobald, 2019). Studies have shown that early help and keeping children out of court can lower repeat offenses. This works by solving problems and helping children fit back into society (Haydon,



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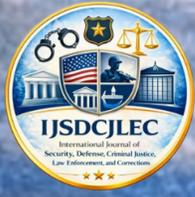
2020). However, these policies only work well if they are implemented properly. Local communities play a significant role in making these ideas work (Riddell & Tisdall, 2021; Vaghri et al., 2019). Although many countries agree with the UNCRC, they struggle to make it work in real life. Problems include collecting data, accountability, and responding to children's rights (Vaghri et al., 2019). This gap between policy and practice can lead to violations of children's rights, especially in custody (United Nations, 1989), where violence and lack of support make things worse (Haydon, 2020). To address this, it is imperative to examine not only the laws but also the real conditions children face in the justice system. Including children's voices in decisions that affect them is important (United Nations, 1989; Angelöw & Psouni, 2025). Community involvement and advocacy help improve services and build strength in vulnerable youth, such as street children. This shows how child-focused approaches can work in practice (Bhattacharyya & Chakraborty, 2024). While global juvenile justice paradigms increasingly endorse rehabilitative and restorative models anchored in the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989), the realization of these frameworks' child-centered aspirations critically depends on effective, rights-compliant implementation at the community and local governance levels. Evaluating compliance where policies are operationalized remains a key priority to bridge the gap between international standards and the lived realities of children in juvenile justice systems (Haydon, 2020; Riddell & Tisdall, 2021; Vaghri et al., 2019).

### ***Philippine Juvenile Justice System and Legal Framework (RA 9344)***

Republic Act No. 9344 (RA 9344) established a rights-based juvenile justice system (United Nations, 1989; Aryana, 2020) in the Philippines, focusing on protecting children in conflict with the law (CICL) by emphasizing the non-criminalization of those below the age of criminal responsibility and mandating diversion and intervention programs (Aryana, 2020). This comprehensive framework was further strengthened by RA 10630, which enhanced the system's rehabilitative focus through multi-agency coordination involving barangays, Local Social Welfare and Development Offices (LSWDOs), the Philippine National Policewomen and Children Protection Desk (PNP-WCPD), and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) acts as the primary grassroots implementer, facilitating community-based programs aimed at preventing detention and promoting reintegration (Aryana, 2020). The literature indicates that RA 9344 aligns with international juvenile justice principles, highlighting diversion as a preferred resolution rooted in children's rights and protection principles (United Nations, 1989; Aryana, 2020) in local culture and social realities, akin to practices in other Southeast Asian countries (Aryana, 2020; Nashriana et al., 2023). However, studies have also revealed significant variability in local implementation, with inconsistent policy interpretation among barangays, potentially limiting the law's intended rehabilitative outcomes (Aryana, 2020). This observation aligns with global findings that emphasize that the effectiveness of juvenile justice systems largely depends on consistent policy execution at the community level (Snehlil & Sagar, 2020). Despite manuals and national guidelines supporting RA 9344's provisions, challenges persist in terms of capacity, resource availability, and inter-agency coordination, leading to uneven compliance across local jurisdictions. Strengthening monitoring and support mechanisms at the barangay level is crucial for ensuring the law's child-centered objectives are realized in practice (United Nations, 1989), reflecting calls for improved frontline implementation in juvenile justice reform (Nashriana et al., 2023; Snehlil & Sagar, 2020).

### ***Barangay-Level Implementation and BCPC Functionality***

Local studies consistently identify several challenges confronting Barangay Councils for the Protection of Children (BCPCs) in the effective execution of their mandates, including insufficient training and capacity-building efforts, the absence of standardized procedures and documentation, limited manpower, and inadequate logistical resources (Ostermeier et al., 2023). These limitations undermine the BCPCs' ability to deliver consistent and high-quality child protection services and contribute to variability in compliance across barangays. Research further indicates that barangays often juggle multiple governance responsibilities concurrently, which constrains their capacity to devote adequate attention and resources to child protection functions, thereby affecting operational efficiency and decision-making (McGregor & Devaney, 2020). Evidence from educational and community-based settings likewise demonstrates that limited training and role misalignment among frontline implementers adversely affect service quality and the consistency of policy implementation (Anselmo & Anselmo, 2024). In urban environments, these challenges are intensified by higher population densities and increased caseloads, placing additional strain on BCPC functionality and resource availability and heightening the complexity of addressing the needs of children at risk and children in conflict with the law (CICL) (Buckley et al., 2024). The literature emphasizes that strengthening BCPC effectiveness requires systemic interventions, including enhanced training, standardized operational protocols, increased staffing, and adequate logistical support. Moreover, the application of implementation science frameworks can guide these reforms by accounting for contextual factors and aligning interventions with local capacities and



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needs, thereby optimizing the BCPCs' role in safeguarding children and fulfilling the mandates of the juvenile justice system at the community level (McGregor & Devaney, 2020; Ostermeier et al., 2023).

## **Key Compliance Domains under the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act**

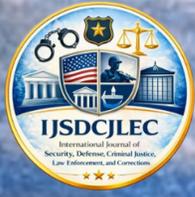
Proper documentation and filing of complaints under the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act are critical for tracking cases and ensuring accountability. Studies have highlighted that manual systems and the absence of standardized forms often result in inconsistent or incomplete records, undermining oversight and effective management of juvenile cases (Donnelly, 2023). Initial contact with the child must be made in a child-sensitive and rights-based manner (United Nations, 1989) to avoid potential rights violations and trauma (United Nations, 1989). The literature stresses that improper handling during this stage can adversely affect a child's well-being and legal protection (Green et al., 2019). Structured intake and initial interviews are vital to classify the child appropriately as a Child in Need of Assistance and Rehabilitation (CAR) or a Child in Conflict with the Law (CICL). These procedures help ensure accurate case management and proper referral to intervention pathways; however, research shows that inconsistent intake practices weaken referral accuracy and case outcomes (Donnelly, 2023). The referral and turnover of physical custody require effective coordination between barangays, Local Social Welfare Development Offices (LSWDOs), and law enforcement. Delays or mismanagement at this stage increase children's exposure to further risks and rights violations (United Nations, 1989; Green et al., 2019). Diversion and intervention programs have been shown to reduce juvenile reoffending, particularly when they are properly funded and staffed with trained facilitators. However, studies have revealed a pervasive lack of resources and program availability, especially at the barangay level, which limits the effectiveness of these rehabilitative alternatives (Barrett et al., 2022; Gigante et al., 2022). This underscores the necessity of strengthening support for diversion initiatives to fulfill the rehabilitative goals of the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act (United Nations, 1989).

## **Problems Encountered and Operational Gaps**

Studies on barangay-level juvenile justice implementation consistently identify operational gaps that hinder effective compliance with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act. Commonly reported problems include the absence of reference materials and procedural flowcharts, which limit clarity and guidance for frontline workers. Weak records management systems further compromise case documentation, monitoring, and accountability, resulting in difficulties in tracking cases and evaluating their outcomes (Nelson & Vincent, 2018). Inadequate funding and logistical support also constrain the capacity of barangays to carry out mandated interventions, while limited monitoring and evaluation mechanisms reduce opportunities for systematic oversight and continuous improvement (Nelson & Vincent, 2018). These challenges reflect a broader disconnect between national policy expectations and the actual institutional capacities of barangay units, encompassing resource shortages, skill limitations, and structural constraints that undermining effective project implementation in protecting children's rights (United Nations, 1989). Studies have highlighted that effective frontline implementation requires strong analytical and decision-making skills, as critical thinking supports consistent policy application and sound case handling (Anselmo et al., 2025). Moreover, the existing literature often prioritizes institutional perspectives while giving limited attention to community viewpoints, leading to an incomplete understanding of the barriers encountered at the grassroots level. Addressing these gaps requires strengthened capacity-building initiatives, standardized documentation systems, improved resource allocation, and context-responsive monitoring mechanisms. Integrating evidence-based practices and structural reforms that recognize local operational realities is essential to bridging the divide between policy mandates and barangay-level practice and ensuring more effective protection and rehabilitation of vulnerable youth (Bowser et al. 2019).

## **Solutions, Interventions, and Action-Oriented Approaches**

The literature identifies several effective solutions to address the challenges faced by the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) in juvenile justice implementation. Regular training and seminars for BCPC members are key interventions to build capacity, improve knowledge, and enhance child-sensitive practices (Elkington et al., 2020). The development and dissemination of standardized operational manuals are recommended to promote procedural uniformity, guide decision-making, and reduce practice variability. Additionally, the adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) for record-keeping and case monitoring can improve data accuracy, facilitate timely reporting, and support efficient case management (Dunan et al., 2025). Strengthening inter-agency coordination further ensures holistic service delivery by leveraging the expertise and resources of multiple stakeholders, including social welfare, law enforcement, and health agencies (Elkington et al., 2020). Despite these recommendations, much of the existing research halts at suggesting improvements without advancing to concrete,



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data-driven action plans tailored to specific contexts. However, there is limited evidence on how to systematically operationalize these solutions to ensure sustainability and scalability within resource-constrained settings. The literature calls for a transition from problem identification to the development and evaluation of actionable intervention strategies that consider local realities and stakeholder capacities (Cavanagh, 2022; Nashriana et al., 2023). This shift would enhance the practical impact of juvenile justice reforms by bridging the gaps between policy aspirations and barangay-level implementation challenges through targeted, evidence-informed actions.

## Synthesis of Related Literature and Studies

The reviewed literature consistently emphasizes a shift toward child-centered, rehabilitative, and community-based approaches in juvenile justice, highlighting the importance of diversion, early intervention, and family involvement in improving outcomes for children in conflict with the law. While Republic Act No. 9344 provides a strong legal framework, studies have revealed persistent inconsistencies in local implementation, particularly related to limited training, inadequate resources, weak documentation, and coordination challenges among frontline actors. Existing research largely concentrates on national policies, institutional mechanisms, or program outcomes, with limited empirical attention to actual compliance at the barangay level, despite the fact that barangays serve as the primary point of contact for children at risk and CICL. Moreover, few studies integrate the perspectives of both implementers and community stakeholders, resulting in an incomplete picture of how policies operate in practice. Addressing these gaps, the present study synthesizes policy- and implementation-focused literature by empirically examining BCPC compliance across key procedural areas, comparing stakeholder assessments, and translating the findings into a data-driven action plan that bridges policy and grassroots practice.

## Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Child-Centered Juvenile Justice Theory and Implementation Theory, which emphasize that the effectiveness of juvenile justice laws depends not only on sound legal frameworks but also on consistent, rights-based implementation at the community level (United Nations, 1989). Guided by the principles of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act (R.A. 9344, as amended), the framework assumes that the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC), as the frontline implementing body, plays a decisive role in translating national policy into actual child-protective practice. The degree of BCPC compliance—operationalized through the filing of complaints, initial contact with the child, intake and initial interview, referral and turnover of custody, and intervention and diversion—is influenced by organizational capacity, resources, coordination mechanisms, and stakeholder engagement. Differences in perceptions between implementers and parents/guardians reflect variations in lived experiences of policy execution, which may reveal gaps between intended procedures and actual practices. These compliance outcomes, together with the identified problems and proposed solutions, serve as empirical inputs for the development of a comprehensive action plan aimed at strengthening barangay-level juvenile justice implementation, ensuring that child-centered, rehabilitative, and restorative objectives are effectively realized.

## Statement of the Problem

Despite the enactment of Republic Act No. 9344, as amended, which provides a comprehensive framework for the protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children at risk (CAR) and children in conflict with the law (CICL) (United Nations, 1989), the law's effective implementation largely depends on the compliance of frontline institutions at the barangay level. The Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) plays a crucial role in ensuring that child-appropriate procedures are observed from the filing of complaints to intervention and diversion processes (United Nations, 1989). However, variations in implementation, operational challenges, and differing perceptions among stakeholders may affect the consistent application of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act in local communities.

In selected barangays in Caloocan City, concerns have been raised regarding the adequacy of procedures, availability of resources, and effectiveness of intervention mechanisms in handling cases involving CAR and CICL (United Nations, 1989). These concerns necessitate an empirical assessment of the degree of compliance of the BCPC with the provisions of the law, as well as an examination of the problems encountered, and solutions offered by key stakeholders. Moreover, understanding whether differences exist in the assessments of implementers and community observers is essential for identifying gaps that may inform policy and program improvements in line with the best interests of the child (United Nations, 1989). Thus, this study sought to assess the degree of compliance of the BCPC with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act as a basis for comprehensive, child-centered action plan (United Nations, 1989).



## Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to determine the degree of compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act in selected barangays in Caloocan City and to use the findings as a basis for formulating a comprehensive action plan to enhance the implementation of the law in accordance with the principles of child protection and the best interests of the child (United Nations, 1989).

Specifically, this study aimed to do the following:

1. Determine the degree of compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act in terms of:
  - 1.1. Filing complaints with the barangay.
  - 1.2. The initial contact was made with the child.
  - 1.3. Conduct of intake and initial interviews.
  - 1.4. Referral of the case and turnover of physical custody of the child; and
  - 1.5. Interventions and diversions.
2. Identify the problems encountered by the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children in the implementation of the JJWA.
3. Determine the solutions offered to address the identified problems in the implementation of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act.
4. Determine whether there is a significant difference in the assessment of the two groups of respondents regarding:
  - 4.1. Degree of compliance of the BCPC.
  - 4.2. The problems encountered and the solutions offered.
5. Develop a comprehensive action plan based on the study's findings to improve the compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act.

## Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following question:

1. What is the degree of compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act in terms of:
  - 1.1 Filing complaints to the barangay
  - 1.2 Initial contact with the child.
  - 1.3 Conduct of intake and initial interview
  - 1.4 Referral of the case and turnover of physical custody of the child; and
  - 1.5 Intervention and diversion
2. What problems are encountered by the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children in implementing the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act?
3. What solutions are offered to address the problems encountered in the implementation of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act?
4. Is there a significant difference in the assessment of the two groups of respondents regarding the following?
  - 4.1. Degree of compliance from the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children.
  - 4.2. The problems encountered; and
  - 4.3. The solutions offered.
5. Based on the findings of the study, what comprehensive action plan may be proposed to enhance the compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act in selected barangays in Caloocan City?

## METHODS

### Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-comparative research design to assess the degree of compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act in selected barangays in Caloocan City. A descriptive approach was utilized to determine the level of compliance across key procedural domains, as well as to identify the problems encountered and solutions offered in the implementation of



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the law in accordance with child protection and children's rights principles (United Nations, 1989). The comparative component of the design allowed the researcher to examine whether there were significant differences in the assessments of the two groups of respondents. Although qualitative techniques were initially considered, the analysis and interpretation of the findings were primarily based on quantitative survey data. Hence, the study's results and discussion are anchored in a quantitative methodological framework consistent with the research outputs.

## Population and Sampling

The study population consisted of stakeholders involved in or observing the implementation of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act in Barangay 168 (Deparo) and Barangay 171 (Bagumbong), Caloocan City. The respondents were divided into two groups: the first group comprised implementers of the law, including barangay officials, BCPC members, barangay tanods or volunteers, police officers, and Local Social Welfare and Development Officers (LSWDOs). The second group consisted of parents or guardians of children at risk (CAR) and children in conflict with the law (CICL) who served as community observers of BCPC compliance. A total of 150 respondents participated in this study. The implementers were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in juvenile justice implementation, while the parents and guardians were selected using random sampling, with the sample size determined through an online sample size calculator to ensure the representativeness of the sample.

## Instruments

Data were collected using a researcher-developed structured questionnaire based on the provisions of Republic Act No. 9344, as amended. The instrument comprised three major sections. The first section measured the degree of compliance of the BCPC in terms of filing complaints to the barangay, initial contact with the child, conducting intake and initial interviews, referral of the case and turnover of physical custody, and intervention and diversion in a manner consistent with children's rights and protection standards (United Nations, 1989). The second section focuses on the problems encountered in the implementation of the law, while the third section covers the solutions offered to improve compliance. All items were rated using a Likert-type scale, which allowed the responses to be quantified for statistical analysis. The questionnaire underwent expert validation to ensure content validity and was pilot tested to establish clarity and reliability prior to its administration.

## Data Collection

Prior to data gathering, formal permission was secured from the appropriate barangay authorities and the offices concerned. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents to ensure proper orientation and accurate completion. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire. The researcher retrieved the completed questionnaires and checked them for completeness to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data collected.

## Treatment of Data

The gathered data were encoded, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe respondents' demographic profiles. Weighted means were computed to determine the level of compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act, as well as to assess the extent of the problems encountered and the solutions offered in its implementation. To examine whether there were statistically significant differences in the assessments of the two groups of respondents, an independent samples t-test was employed at a 0.05 level of significance, with the computed t-values compared against the critical value to guide the hypothesis testing. All statistical labels in the results tables were aligned with the independent samples t-test used in the analysis to ensure consistency. These statistical results served as the basis for the interpretation and discussion of the findings and the development of a comprehensive action plan.

## Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to their participation. Respondents were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and all data collected were used solely for academic and research purposes only. No identifying information was disclosed, and the respondents were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty.

**RESULTS and DISCUSSION**

Table 1. Assessment of the Two Groups of Respondents on Filing of Complaints to the Barangay

Indicator	Barangay Officials/ Tanod/Volunteers/ Police Officers/ Local Social and Welfare Development Officers			Parents/Guardians			Grand Mean		
	WM	VI	RANK	WM	VI	RANK	AWM	VI	RANK
1. The barangay council member interviews victims and family members prior to filing the complaint.	3.96	SA	2	3.82	SA	4	3.89	SA	4
2. The barangay council members ask the complainant to fill out the Complaint Form.	3.93	SA	4	3.77	SA	6	3.85	SA	6
3. The complaint being filed is the basis to identify the alleged crime/offense committed by the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL).	3.89	SA	8	3.95	SA	1	3.92	SA	3
4. Filing of complaint in the barangay is systematic and easy to follow.	3.87	SA	9	3.63	SA	8	3.75	SA	8
5. The barangay council member entertains immediately any form of complaint being filed to their office.	3.93	SA	4	3.76	SA	7	3.84	SA	7
6. Filing of complaint against Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) in the barangay requires the full cooperation of their parents.	4.00	SA	1	3.87	SA	3	3.93	SA	1
7. Complaint filed against Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) is being evaluated and assessed for determining probable cause of the offense.	3.96	SA	2	3.89	SA	2	3.93	SA	2
8. The complaint files in the barangay are being settled by the officials in charge.	3.93	SA	4	3.81	SA	5	3.87	SA	5
9. Filing of complaint in the barangay is a long and time-consuming process.	3.55	SA	10	3.33	SA	10	3.44	SA	10
10. Barangay in charge verifies the validity of the complaints being filed in their office against Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL).	3.91	SA	7	3.43	SA	9	3.67	SA	9
<b>OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>3.89</b>	<b>SA</b>		<b>3.73</b>	<b>SA</b>		<b>3.81</b>	<b>SA</b>	

As presented in Table 1, both groups of respondents rated the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) as highly compliant in the filing of complaints, yielding an overall weighted mean interpreted as "Strongly Agree." This finding indicates that barangays effectively perform their mandated role as the first point of contact in

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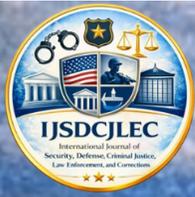
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juvenile justice case processing, ensuring the protection and rights of children (United Nations, 1989). Proper complaint documentation and systematic intake procedures are critical components of early intervention, as they facilitate accurate case identification and timely referral of children at risk (CAR) and children in conflict with the law (CICL) in accordance with their rights (United Nations, 1989). This result aligns with the child-centered justice framework emphasized by Aryana (2020) and Haydon (2020), which highlight that structured complaint handling at the community level strengthens diversion mechanisms and prevents unnecessary court involvement while upholding children’s rights (United Nations, 1989). Moreover, Donnelly (2023) noted that standardized reporting procedures improve accountability and transparency in local justice systems. Thus, the high compliance observed in Table 1 suggests that barangays have established functional foundational processes consistent with the objectives of Republic Act No. 9344 and the principles of the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989).

Table 2 Assessment of the Two Groups of Respondents in Terms of Initial Contact with the Child

Indicator	Barangay Officials/ Tanod/Volunteers/ Police Officers/ Local Social and Welfare Development Officers			Parents/Guardians			Grand Mean		
	WM	VI	RANK	WM	VI	RANK	AWM	VI	RANK
1. The barangay official identifies himself/herself to Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL).	3.88	SA	5	3.59	SA	3	3.74	SA	3
2. The barangay official introduces himself/herself as elder brother or sister to the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) and explains his/her role in the barangay.	3.53	SA	9	3.40	SA	7	3.47	SA	9
3. The barangay official shows proper identification as a proof of being a barangay official or Barangay Council for thr Protection of Children (BCPC) member.	3.40	SA	10	3.41	SA	6	3.41	SA	10
4. The barangay official uses a child-friendly approach in terms of his words, tone, and dealing with Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL).	3.87	SA	6	3.34	SA	10	3.60	SA	8
5. The barangay official explains the reason for taking child into custody, the offense allegedly committed and his/her constitutional rights.	3.87	SA	6	3.42	SA	5	3.64	SA	5
6. The barangay official taking custody uses simple language/dialect that the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) understands.	3.92	SA	3	3.43	SA	4	3.68	SA	4
7. The barangay official taking custody registers the child as a Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) in the CICL	4.00	SA		3.64	SA	2	3.82	SA	1



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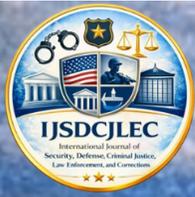
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logbook.			1						
8. The barangay official taking custody informs the child's parents/guardians, social worker, public attorneys office (PAO), and local health officer.	3.89	SA	4	3.36	SA	8	3.63	SA	7
9. The barangay official ensures that prohibited acts when taking custody of the child shall NOT be committed such as use of instruments of force or restraint, unnecessary violence or force, vulgar language, sexual advances on child and torture.	3.93	SA	2	3.34	SA	9	3.64	SA	6
10. The barangay official conducts body search in a friendly, non-degrading and gender-sensitive manner.	3.85	SA	8	3.69	SA	1	3.77	SA	2
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.81	SA		3.46	SA		3.64	SA	

The results in Table 2 reveal that BCPC personnel demonstrate a high level of compliance in ensuring respectful, child-sensitive initial contact with children (United Nations, 1989). Respondents agreed that barangay officials explain their roles, use appropriate language, and observe safeguards against coercive or degrading practices in accordance with children's rights (United Nations, 1989). This finding supports the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989), which emphasize dignity, protection, and non-traumatizing engagement during first contact. Studies by Roche and Flynn (2021) and Green et al. (2019) similarly stress that the quality of initial contact significantly influences children's cooperation and psychological well-being. However, slightly lower ratings on documentation and systematic orientation suggest minor procedural inconsistencies. As noted by Nelson and Vincent (2018), the absence of standardized protocols may reduce uniformity of service delivery. These findings imply that while practices are generally child-friendly, further procedural standardization may strengthen consistency to fully uphold the rights of children as outlined in the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989).

Table 3 Assessment of the Two Groups of Respondents in Terms of the Conduct of Intake and Initial Interview

Indicator	Barangay Officials/ Tanod/Volunteers/ Police Officers/ Local Social and Welfare Development Officers			Parents/Guardians			Grand Mean		
	WM	VI	RANK	WM	VI	RANK	AWM	VI	RANK
1. Personal information is obtained from the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) such as name, address of the child, date and time of intake, offense allegedly committed, name of parents or guardians, contact details, and the barangay official who took custody.	3.65	SA	6	3.40	SA	7	3.53	SA	6
2. The barangay council member informs the Children in Conflict with the Law's parents/guardians regarding	3.93	SA	3	3.51	SA	3	3.72	SA	3



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the incident happened and advise them to go to the barangay.									
3. Assistance from guardian or social worker is necessary in case the child is unable to communicate or refuses to give his/her name, information needed for registration.	3.96	SA	1	3.62	SA	2	3.79	SA	2
4. There is always note in the intake form that the parent/guardian is not available or cannot be contacted and soon after informing the Local Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO) of such fact.	3.68	SA	5	3.40	SA	6	3.54	SA	5
5. The barangay council member always informs the relative or any person who assist the child (or take temporary custody) after the intake is completed.	3.96	SA	1	3.65	SA	1	3.80	SA	1
6. A note in the intake form that the child may be "neglected" or "abandoned" if no parents/ guardian and immediately inform the Local Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO).	3.53	SA	7	3.40	SA	8	3.47	SA	7
7. The barangay council member takes the statement of the CIKL and filing out the Intake Form.	3.27	SA	10	3.42	SA	4	3.34	SA	8
8. The age of the Children in Conflict with the Law (CIKL) is determined through his birth certificate, baptismal certificate, school records, medical or dental records, travel papers, other pertinent documents that may indicate his age.	3.71	SA	4	3.40	SA	5	3.55	SA	4
9. Barangay official takes a photo of the Children in Conflict with the Law (CIKL) to be kept on record to serve as reference in cases of repeat offenses or cases when a child uses a different name.	3.44	SA	9	3.18	A	9	3.31	SA	9
10. The child is brought to the proper medical or health officer for a thorough physical and mental evaluation after taken into custody.	3.48	SA	8	2.57	A	10	3.03	A	10

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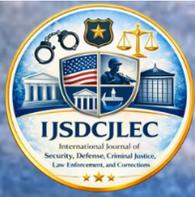
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OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.66	SA		3.36	SA		3.51	SA	
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As shown in Table 3, respondents reported strong compliance in the conduct of intake and initial interviews, particularly in gathering personal information, notifying parents, and coordinating with social workers in accordance with children’s rights and protection principles (United Nations, 1989). Effective intake procedures are essential for determining appropriate intervention pathways and ensuring individualized case management that respects the best interests of the child (United Nations, 1989). This observation is consistent with the restorative justice literature, which emphasizes the importance of thorough assessment to guide rehabilitative responses (Snehil & Sagar, 2020). Similarly, Donnelly (2023) highlighted that structured intake enhances classification accuracy and prevents mismanagement of juvenile cases. Nevertheless, lower scores on medical and mental evaluations indicate potential resource constraints. These gaps reflect challenges commonly reported in community-based systems where specialized personnel are limited (Barrett et al., 2022). Hence, strengthening technical capacity may improve the comprehensiveness of intake processes to fully uphold the rights of children as articulated in the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989).

Table 4 Assessment of the Two Groups of Respondents in Terms of Referral of the Case and Turnover of Physical Custody of the Child

Indicator	Barangay Officials/ Tanod/Volunteers/ Police Officers/ Local Social and Welfare Development Officers			Parents/Guardians			Grand Mean		
	WM	VI	RANK	WM	VI	RANK	AWM	VI	RANK
1. The barangay official, tanod, or barangay council for the protection of children (BCPC) member brings the children in conflict with the law (CICL) to the barangay for initial investigation.	3.88	SA	4	3.58	SA	3.73	SA	2	SA
2. The barangay council determines the circumstances that require urgent police assistance (e.g. extreme violence), the barangay can bring the child directly to the police station.	3.55	SA	7	3.40	SA	3.47	SA	7	SA
3. The barangay personnel taking the child’s custody immediately refers the Children in Conflict with the Law’s case to the Women and Children Protection Desk (WCPD).	4.00	SA	1	3.62	SA	3.81	SA	1	SA
4. If the child is above fifteen (15) years old but below 18 years old, the barangay always turns over physical custody of child to Local Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO).	3.45	SA	9	3.40	SA	3.43	SA	8	SA
5. The Local Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO) gives report to the barangay handling the CICL’s case	3.96	SA	3	3.39	SA	3.68	SA	4	SA



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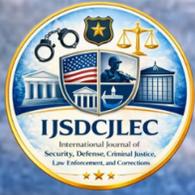
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bearing the initial assessment of whether the child acted with or without discernment.									
6. The barangay council member forwards the children in conflict with the law's case to the prosecutor after getting LSWDO's discernment assessment report.	4.00	SA	1	3.41	SA	3.70	SA	3	SA
7. The barangay completes the initial investigation and prepares to refer the CICL for diversion if child is above 15 years old acted with discernment.	3.56	SA	5	3.40	SA	3.48	SA	6	SA
8. The official refers CICL case to Punong Barangay (diversion at the Katarungang Pambarangay level) or police (diversion at the law enforcement level) if the penalty is six (6) years and below.	3.52	SA	8	2.97	A	3.24	A	10	A
9. The official refers the children in conflict with the law (CICL) case to LSWDO/Social Worker (diversion at the LSWDO level) if the crime committed is victimless.	3.29	SA	10	3.55	SA	3.42	SA	9	SA
10. The official refers the CICL case to Women and Children Protections Desk (WCPD) for diversion if the offense committed by the child has a penalty above six years	3.56	SA	5	3.75	SA	3.66	SA	5	SA
<b>OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>3.68</b>	<b>SA</b>		<b>3.45</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>SA</b>		

The findings in Table 4 demonstrate a high level of compliance in the referral and turnover of custody, ensuring that children's rights and welfare are protected throughout the process (United Nations, 1989), indicating that barangays coordinate effectively with the Women and Children Protection Desk and Local Social Welfare and Development Offices. Such coordination is central to the multi-agency approach mandated under RA 9344 in line with child protection principles (United Nations, 1989). Prior studies emphasize that timely referrals minimize risks to children and ensure continuity of care (Reyes et al., 2023). Likewise, Buckley et al. (2024) argue that inter-agency collaboration enhances service integration and safeguards child welfare outcomes in accordance with international children's rights standards (United Nations, 1989). Despite the generally favorable results, lower ratings related to procedural clarity suggest that communication and logistics may still require improvement. These findings reinforce the need for clearer referral protocols and stronger coordination mechanisms to fully uphold the rights of children as articulated in the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989).



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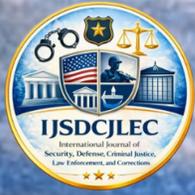
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Table 5 Assessment of the Two Groups of Respondents in Terms of Intervention and Diversion

Indicator	Barangay Officials/ Tanod/Volunteers/ Police Officers/ Local Social and Welfare Development Officers			Parents/Guardians			Grand Mean		
	WM	VI	RANK	WM	VI	RANK	AWM	VI	RANK
1. The barangay council member gives an intervention program if there is no discernment.	3.29	SA	9	3.22	A	3.26	A	10	A
2. The Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) undergoes diversion if proven with discernment.	3.55	SA	7	3.35	SA	3.45	SA	8	SA
3. Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) who is fifteen (15) years old or below who acted without discernment qualifies for Intervention Program.	3.56	SA	6	3.62	SA	3.59	SA	6	SA
4. The Local and Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO) brings the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) to a youth care facility for the child to undergo a center-based intervention program.	3.53	SA	8	3.45	SA	3.49	SA	7	SA
5. The Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) undergoes an intensive community-based intervention program if he/she is released by the Local and Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO) to the parents.	4.00	SA	1	3.95	SA	3.97	SA	1	SA
6. The input of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) is being solicited by the Local and Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO) in the preparation of either intervention program.	3.88	SA	4	3.95	SA	3.91	SA	4	SA
7. The Local and Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO) seeks the help of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) in monitoring and implementing the intervention program for the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) in case of an intensive community-based intervention program.	3.88	SA	4	3.77	SA	3.82	SA	5	SA



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8. The Local and Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO) is in charge of implementing and monitoring the intervention program for the child.	3.89	SA	3	3.95	SA	3.92	SA	3	SA
9. Minors who violate the ordinances on juvenile status offenses are considered Children at Risk (CAR) and should be given appropriate intervention.	4.00	SA	1	3.95	SA	3.97	SA	1	SA
10. The Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) determines if diversion is appropriate or desirable after reviewing the CICL's case and consulting the Local and Social Welfare Development Officer (LSWDO).	3.27	SA	10	3.33	SA	3.30	SA	9	SA
<b>OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>SA</b>		<b>3.65</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>SA</b>		

The results in Table 5 indicate strong compliance in implementing intervention and diversion programs that respect children's rights and best interests (United Nations, 1989), with both groups demonstrating similar perceptions. This convergence suggests that diversion practices are visible, participatory, and directly experienced by families in a rights-based manner (United Nations, 1989). Diversion is widely recognized as a core strategy for reducing recidivism and promoting reintegration (Aryana, 2020; Barrett et al., 2022). The present findings affirm that barangays are actively implementing rehabilitative alternatives that uphold child-centered and rights-based approaches (United Nations, 1989) rather than punitive approaches. However, variations in the availability of programs point to capacity limitations. As noted by Gigante et al. (2022), resource constraints often affect the breadth and sustainability of community-based interventions. Expanding program options may therefore enhance outcomes while ensuring compliance with children's rights as outlined in the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989).

*Test of significant difference in the assessment of the two groups of respondents on the degree of compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children on the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act.*

Table 6. Independent Samples t-Test Results on the Comparison of the Assessment of the Two Groups of Respondents on the Degree of Compliance

Indicator	Computed t-value	Critical Value ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )	Decision	Interpretation
Filing of complaints	5.50868	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Initial contact with the child	5.89680	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Conduct of intake and initial interview	6.03393	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Referral of the case and turnover of physical custody	4.76320	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Intervention and diversion	-0.16770	1.96	Fail to reject $H_0$	There is no significant difference

The independent samples t-test results show significant differences between the two groups of respondents in their assessment of BCPC compliance across several procedural indicators. Specifically, for the filing of complaints,

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initial contact with the child, conduct of intake and initial interview, referral of the case, and turnover of physical custody, which are all procedures grounded in the protection and rights of children under the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989), the computed t-values (5.50868, 5.89680, 6.03393, and 4.76320, respectively) exceeded the critical value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. These findings indicate statistically significant differences in perceived compliance between the two groups during the early and referral stages of handling cases. In contrast, for intervention and diversion, which are guided by child-centered and rights-based principles (United Nations, 1989), the computed t-value (-0.16770) did not exceed the critical value, resulting in the acceptance of the null hypothesis and suggesting no significant difference in compliance assessment for this stage. Overall, the results indicate that perceptions of compliance vary across procedural stages, particularly in the initial processes, whereas greater consistency is observed during intervention and diversion. These findings support previous studies emphasizing that differences in local policy implementation are often influenced by variations in institutional capacity, coordination, and monitoring at the community level (Gile et al., 2025), and that intake and engagement processes significantly affect stakeholders' perceptions of compliance in accordance with children's rights standards (United Nations, 1989) (Hurlocker et al., 2023).

Table 7. Assessment of the Problems Encountered in the Compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act as Assessed by Two Groups of Respondents

Indicator	Barangay Officials/ Tanod/Volunteers/ Police Officers/ Local Social and Welfare Development Officers			Parents/Guardians			Grand Mean		
	WM	VI	RANK	WM	VI	RANK	AWM	VI	RANK
Insufficient training and seminar for barangay volunteers and Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) members.	1.36	NS	4	2.36	LS	1	1.86	LS	2
No available reference and manual of operation.	1.17	NS	6	1.19	NS	7	1.18	NS	6
No posted flow charts for handling cases of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) and Children at Risk (CAR).	1.13	NS	7	1.22	NS	6	1.18	NS	7
Insufficient manpower of Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC).	1.51	NS	2	1.76	LS	4	1.64	NS	3
No suitable intervention programs.	1.20	NS	5	1.87	LS	3	1.53	NS	4
No strict implementation of diversion program at Katarungan Pambarangay.	1.11	NS	8	1.11	NS	10	1.11	NS	10
Lack of funds and logistical support for the programs.	2.25	LS	1	2.14	LS	2	2.20	LS	1
No systematic records management.	1.40	NS	3	1.18	NS	9	1.29	NS	5
No qualifications standard for appointments of barangay council members.	1.08	NS	9	1.19	NS	8	1.14	NS	9
Non-compliance with the physical and mental evaluation of the child.	1.07	NS	10	1.26	NS	5	1.16	NS	8

Table 7 indicates that respondents generally perceived the problems encountered in implementation as less serious, suggesting that major structural barriers may be limited. This finding implies that existing mechanisms are largely functional, supporting effective implementation of RA 9344 at the barangay level in alignment with children's rights and protections under the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989). Similar results have been reported in studies highlighting gradual improvements in local juvenile justice governance (Reyes et al., 2023). Nevertheless, specific issues, such as the lack of standardized manuals and record-keeping systems that could compromise children's rights to proper protection and due process (United Nations, 1989), remain evident. These concerns are consistent with the literature identifying administrative limitations as persistent challenges in community-based justice implementation (Donnelly, 2023). Addressing these issues may further enhance procedural efficiency and ensure compliance with the UNCRC's principles for safeguarding children in conflict with the law (United Nations, 1989).

Table 8. Assessment of the Solutions Offered to Address the Problems Encountered in the Compliance of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act as Assessed by Two Groups of Respondents

Indicator	Barangay Officials/ Tanod/Volunteers/ Police Officers/ Local Social and Welfare Development Officers			Parents/Guardians			Grand Mean		
	WM	VI	RANK	WM	VI	RANK	AWM	VI	RANK
1. Additional training and seminar for barangay volunteers and Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) members for handling cases of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) and Children at Risk (CAR).	3.68	HR	2	4.00	HR	1	3.84	HR	2
2. Reference in RA 9344 as amended, implementing rules, and Manual in handling cases of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) and Children at Risk (CAR) must be available at the office.	2.22	LR	9	4.00	HR	1	3.11	R	9
3. Creation of flow charts to properly implement the law.	2.41	LR	7	4.00	HR	1	3.20	R	7
4. Appoint additional manpower for Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC).	3.68	HR	2	4.00	HR	1	3.84	HR	2
5. Additional Intervention Programs.	3.62	HR	5	4.00	HR	1	3.81	HR	5
6. Strict implementation of Diversion Program.	2.26	LR	8	4.00	HR	1	3.13	R	8
7. Request to local government for additional funds for the implementation of programs.	3.68	HR	2	4.00	HR	1	3.84	HR	2
8. Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in managing records.	3.81	HR	1	4.00	HR	1	3.91	HR	1
9. Formulate qualification	3.18	R	6	4.00	HR	1	3.59	HR	6

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standards for the appointment of Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) members.									
10. Request assignment for medical or health officer for physical and mental evaluation of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL).	2.18	LR	10	4.00	HR	1	3.09	R	10

The results in Table 8 show strong agreement on the proposed solutions, particularly those related to training, resource provision, and institutional support that uphold the rights and best interests of children (United Nations, 1989). This indicates a shared recognition among stakeholders of the strategies needed to enhance compliance and effectiveness of the program in accordance with the UNCRC's child-centered principles (United Nations, 1989). The literature supports that continuous training and logistical support contribute to implementing children's rights effectively in juvenile justice contexts (Barrett et al., 2022). The high ratings across solution indicators suggest the readiness of stakeholders to support reform initiatives that respect children's rights and promote their protection (United Nations, 1989). This consensus provides a strong empirical basis for the proposed action plan and reinforces the feasibility of implementing the recommended improvements.

Table 9. Independent Samples t-Test Showing the Significant Difference in the Problems Encountered by the Two Groups of Respondents

Indicator	Computed t-value	Critical Value ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )	Decision	Interpretation
Insufficient training and seminars	0.101	1.96	Fail to reject $H_0$	No significant difference
No available reference/manual	0.140	1.96	Fail to reject $H_0$	No significant difference
No posted flow charts	6.083	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Insufficient manpower	0.115	1.96	Fail to reject $H_0$	No significant difference
No suitable intervention programs	8.624	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
No strict diversion implementation	9.705	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Lack of funds/logistical support	1.470	1.96	Fail to reject $H_0$	No significant difference
No systematic records management	8.954	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
No qualification standards	-2.981	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
No physical/mental evaluation	-3.239	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference

The significant differences identified in Table 9 indicate that parents and implementers diverge in their perceptions of operational challenges, particularly regarding the absence of flow charts, limited intervention programs, weak records management, lack of qualification standards, and insufficient physical and mental evaluations that may affect the protection and rights of children in conflict with the law (United Nations, 1989). These findings suggest that while implementers may perceive existing procedures as manageable, parents directly experience gaps in transparency, coordination, and service accessibility that have implications for children's rights under the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989). Similar studies in community-based juvenile justice systems emphasize that unclear workflows and weak documentation reduce accountability and hinder consistent case handling (Nelson &

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Vincent, 2018; Donnelly, 2023). Moreover, frontline effectiveness is strongly influenced by personnel competencies and procedural guidance that ensure children’s rights to protection, participation, and due process are upheld (United Nations, 1989). In support, Anselmo et al. (2025) found that strengthening practitioners’ critical thinking and technical skills enhances decision-making and implementation quality in public service settings. Applying this perspective to BCPC operations, improving procedural clarity, qualifications, and monitoring systems may help reduce inconsistencies and strengthen stakeholder trust in barangay-level juvenile justice implementation.

Table 10. Independent Samples t-Test Showing the Significant Difference in the Solutions Offered by the Two Groups of Respondents

Indicator	Computed t-value	Critical Value ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )	Decision	Interpretation
Additional training and seminars	1.092	1.96	Fail to reject $H_0$	No significant difference
Availability of RA 9344 manuals	0.807	1.96	Fail to reject $H_0$	No significant difference
Creation of flow charts	2.005	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Appointment of additional manpower	2.946	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Additional intervention programs	6.528	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Strict implementation of diversion	0.957	1.96	Fail to reject $H_0$	No significant difference
Request for additional funds	11.295	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Use of ICT in records management	2.314	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Qualification standards for BCPC	2.529	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference
Assignment of medical/health officer	4.138	1.96	Reject $H_0$	There is a significant difference

As shown in Table 10, several proposed solutions yielded significant differences between implementers and parents, particularly in the creation of flow charts, appointment of additional manpower, expansion of intervention programs, requests for additional funding, adoption of ICT-based records management, formulation of qualification standards, and assignment of medical or health officers to better safeguard children’s rights and welfare in accordance with the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989). These findings indicate that parents generally express stronger support for structural and resource-related improvements, likely reflecting their direct experiences with service limitations at the barangay level that may impact the protection, participation, and best interests of children (United Nations, 1989). The shared agreement on capacity building, system standardization, and logistical support suggests that strengthening operational resources—rather than introducing new policies—may substantially enhance BCPC compliance and effectiveness in line with UNCRC principles for child-centered juvenile justice (United Nations, 1989). Similar studies emphasize that investments in training, manpower, and technological systems improve frontline service delivery and implementation consistency in community-based programs (Elkington et al., 2020; Dunan et al., 2025). Thus, the significant differences observed highlight priority areas for targeted reforms within the proposed action plan.

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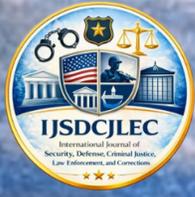
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*Proposed recommendations for a comprehensive action plan*

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for a comprehensive action plan.

Activities	Objectives	Timeline	Accountability	Budget (₱)	Expected Output
Additional seminars and training for Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) personnel	To enhance the knowledge and skills of BCPC personnel in handling cases of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) and Children at Risk (CAR)	Short-term	Barangay Chairperson, BCPC Officials	30,000	Improved competence and confidence of BCPC personnel in case handling
Hiring or designation of additional manpower	To ensure close monitoring and proper handling of CICL and CAR cases	Mid-term	Barangay Chairperson, Local Government Unit	70,000	Adequate number of BCPC personnel to manage cases effectively
Implementation of additional intervention programs (e.g., anger management, problem-solving skills, values formation, family drug abuse prevention)	To provide appropriate intervention programs for CAR and CICL who acted without discernment	Mid-term	Barangay Chairperson, BCPC Officials	30,000	Strengthened intervention programs and reduced risk of repeat offenses
Request for additional funding from the local government	To sustain the implementation of intervention, diversion, and rehabilitation programs	Long-term	Barangay Chairperson, BCPC Officials	10,000	Continuous financial support for child-focused programs
Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in records management	To improve access to information, documentation, and monitoring of juvenile cases	Short-term	Barangay Chairperson, BCPC Officials	80,000	Organized, accessible, and efficient records management system
Formulation of qualification standards for BCPC members	To ensure the appointment of competent and qualified BCPC personnel	Long-term	Barangay Chairperson, BCPC Officials	1,000	Clearly defined qualification standards and improved governance

This study shows that the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) mostly follows the rules of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act. They excel in filing complaints, first contact with the child, interviews, referrals, and interventions, indicating that the local barangay systems are generally effective in handling juvenile justice in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989). This supports earlier studies highlighting the importance of early intervention and local governance in assisting children in conflict with the law (Aryana 2020; Haydon 2020). High levels of compliance also reinforce the law's emphasis on rehabilitation and diversion, rather than punishment in line with the child-centered, rights-based approach advocated by the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989). However, differences exist in how implementers and parents or guardians perceive compliance, with the former focusing on procedural completion and the latter placing greater importance on accessibility and transparency (Donnelly, 2023; Nelson & Vincent, 2018). In the area of intervention and diversion, both groups showed similar assessments, suggesting that these practices are more visible and participatory in nature and reflect children's right to participate and be heard (United Nations, 1989). Previous studies have also emphasized that family involvement strengthens trust in juvenile justice processes (Snehl & Sagar, 2020). Despite overall compliance, persistent problems such as funding limitations, lack of manuals, weak record-keeping, and insufficient staffing remain evident, consistent with the findings of local child protection studies (Barrett



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et al., 2022). These challenges indicate that capacity building remains essential, as research shows that strengthening critical thinking through targeted training improves decision-making and supports effective frontline implementation (Anselmo et al., 2025). Strong agreement on proposed solutions—such as training, use of technology, institutional support, and structured programs—reflects readiness for improvement, aligning with studies that stress the need for continuous training and adequate resources in juvenile justice implementation. The findings suggest that strengthening barangay-level juvenile justice requires improved implementation, standardization, and community engagement, rather than creating new policies to fully uphold children's rights and protections under the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989).

## Conclusions

This study found that the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) demonstrates a high level of compliance with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act, particularly in complaint filing, child-sensitive initial contact, intake procedures, case referral, and intervention and diversion in line with the rights of children under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989). These results affirm the effectiveness of barangay-based, community-centered mechanisms in implementing the restorative and rehabilitative principles of Republic Act No. 9344 consistent with the child-centered, participatory approach emphasized by the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989). However, significant differences in perceptions between implementers and parents or guardians reveal that compliance is experienced unevenly across stakeholders, particularly during the early procedural stages and highlight the UNCRC principle that children's rights must be realized consistently at all stages of intervention (United Nations, 1989). While implementation challenges were manageable, recurring concerns related to resources, administrative systems, and standardization remained evident. Strong stakeholder agreement on capacity building, institutional support, and system enhancement underscores the feasibility of the proposed comprehensive action plan. Overall, the findings highlight the need to strengthen existing mechanisms through systematic support, participatory governance, and operational refinement to ensure consistent and rights-compliant, child-centered juvenile justice practices as mandated by the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989) at the barangay level.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following actions may be considered to further enhance compliance with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act:

1. Capacity-building initiatives may be strengthened through regular training and refresher seminars to improve BCPC members' knowledge of child-sensitive procedures and restorative justice practices.
2. Procedures and documentation systems may be standardized through the development of manuals, flowcharts, and reporting templates to promote consistency in case handling.
3. ICT-based records management systems may be adopted to enhance documentation accuracy, monitoring efficiency, and transparency of juvenile justice cases.
4. Additional resources and manpower support may be provided to sustain intervention, diversion, and rehabilitation programs at the barangay level.
5. Collaboration among barangays, families, and partner agencies may be reinforced to promote inclusive, transparent, and child-centered implementation of juvenile justice services.

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