Our shield to a steel fist

Violence against women (VAW) is a serious crime in the Philippines. It is a violation of human rights. There are laws that are made just to avoid this but it is still rampant these days. Maybe some people are still unaware of the consequences of committing this crime but we should stop this already.

Men are considered as the head or the providers of the family and women support the husbands while taking care of their children. This fact leads men to think like they can do everything. They thought that they have more power than women just because they are the ones who make them alive by working all day and giving them money for their finances. This unequal power relationship made an effect on how our society views about gender and sexuality.

Women’s participation in many organizations and activities are being recognized by other countries and we were even ranked as 9th on their most gender-fair list. Yes this is acceptable, but we can’t ignore the rapid increase of VAW case that was recorded by the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the past years.

Anti-Sexual Harassment Act in 1995, Amended Anti-Rape Law in 1997, Rape Victim Assistance Act in 1998 and Anti-VAWC Act in 2004 are some of the laws that our country implemented and fortunately, violent cases continued to decrease. Although lesser crimes are committed in the future, we cannot stay calm because they are still women and children that are experiencing the steel fist. More of them are not scared to speak up because they knew that our laws got their backs. In 2013, Western Visayas had the most VAW cases while ARMM had the lowest.

VAW are categorized in different categories: Physical, Sexual, Psychological and Economic. Anybody that is considered guilty in committing this crime will be imprisoned and they should give support to their victims if needed. Protection orders (PO) are allowed by the law for prevention to further abuse, it may be temporary or permanently.

Dignity is not the only thing that can be taken away to victims of this horrible experience; it can also cause our death. Physical health, reproductive health, mental state and emotional state may be affected. Women should not be treated abusively; they also deserve love and respect. So we should put an end to this pathetic crime and let women stand confidently.