

Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Interventions Among Grade 9 Learners

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Abstract — This proposed action plan and policy framework aimed to enhance anti-bullying strategies at Mangaldan National High School by establishing a comprehensive, student-centered approach to bullying prevention and intervention. It outlined clear objectives, guiding principles, and systematic components—including prevention programs, reporting mechanisms, and intervention protocols. The framework emphasized stakeholder involvement, accountability, and data-driven decision-making to ensure a safe and inclusive school environment. With a structured implementation timeline and defined roles, the policy supported the consistent enforcement of the Department of Education’s Child Protection Policy. Ultimately, it sought to empower students, educators, and parents in fostering a culture of respect and safety.

Keywords — **Anti-Bullying Interventions; Bullying; Policy Framework**

I. Introduction

Bullying is a major global issue affecting learners' well-being, academic performance, and social interactions, with long-term effects such as anxiety, depression, and poor educational outcomes (Smith et al., 2019). In the Philippines, the 2018 PISA report revealed that 65% of Filipino students experience bullying, with 40% facing it frequently. Despite efforts, challenges persist. A 2022 meta-analysis highlighted the need for tailored interventions, as the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs varies by context (Hensums et al., 2022). The Department of Education (DepEd) reported over 21,000 bullying cases nationwide in 2019-2020 (DepEd, 2020). The Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 (Republic Act No. 10627) mandates schools to adopt anti-bullying policies, with administrators playing a key role. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of anti-bullying interventions at Mangaldan National High School, focusing on the perspectives of school administrators. By evaluating the impact of these interventions on Grade 9 learners' attitudes and behaviors, the research seeks to inform more effective, context-specific strategies for addressing bullying in schools. This study explores the effectiveness of anti-bullying interventions among Grade 9 learners, focusing on school administrators' perspectives. By examining how these interventions address the attitudes and behaviors of identified bullies, the study aims to contribute to the development of evidence-based strategies that align with the school’s context and the learners’ needs.

II. Methodology

This study used a quantitative design to assess the effectiveness of anti-bullying interventions on Grade 9 learners identified as bullies at Mangaldan National High School. It focused on school administrators (principals, assistant principals, department heads, master teachers, and guidance counselors) to gain insights into the implementation and challenges of anti-bullying efforts. Learners identified as bullies shared how these interventions impacted their attitudes and behaviors. Additional data were collected from school policies, reports, and intervention documents. Conducted at Mangaldan National High School in Pangasinan, Philippines, the study provided a context for exploring bullying and anti-bullying measures, in line with the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013.

This study used purposive sampling to select participants based on specific criteria. A minimum of 20 administrators, primarily guidance counselors, were chosen for their involvement in anti-bullying interventions. At least 30 Grade 9 learners identified by teachers or administrators as bullies were selected, provided they voluntarily participated and met ethical requirements. To address the research questions, the study used the average weighted mean to analyze types of bullying (Sub-problem No. 1), effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies (Sub-problem No. 2), and the impact on learner behavior (Sub-problem No. 3). Welch's t-test was applied to examine differences in perceptions between administrators and teachers (Sub-problem No. 4). In contrast, the average weighted mean was again used to explore challenges in sustaining anti-bullying efforts (Sub-problem No. 5).

III. Results and Discussion

The study entitled "Exploring the Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Interventions among Grade 9 Students: A Quantitative Study of School Administration at Mangaldan National High School" provided quantitative insights from responses from 50 participants, including 30 Grade 9 students and 20 administrators and teachers. The primary objective of this chapter was to systematically analyze and interpret these data to assess the effectiveness of the anti-bullying strategies implemented in the school setting.

Table 1 showed that verbal bullying was the most serious type observed among Grade 9 learners, with a weighted mean of 4.3, followed by physical bullying (4.1) and emotional bullying (3.9)—all rated as Serious to Very Serious. These findings suggested that aggressive language, physical aggression, and psychological intimidation were common and pressing issues in the school.

Table 1. Types of Bullying Encountered by Grade 9 Learners

Type of Bullying	Description	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Verbal Bullying	Name-calling, teasing, insults, threats	4.3	Very Serious
Physical Bullying	Hitting, pushing, tripping, or damaging property	4.1	Serious
Social/Relational Bullying	Exclusion, spreading rumors, damaging reputation	3.8	Serious
Cyberbullying	Online harassment via social media, text, or digital means	3.5	Moderately Serious
Emotional/Psychological Bullying	Intimidation, humiliation, manipulation	3.9	Serious
Sexual Bullying	Unwanted jokes, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature	3.2	Moderately Serious

Social bullying (3.8) and cyberbullying (3.5) were also noted but were rated as Moderately Serious, highlighting the growing impact of peer exclusion and online harassment. Sexual bullying, though less frequent, still posed a concern with a rating of 3.2.

These results indicated that bullying was both visible and hidden, and that interventions needed to address all forms—exceptionally verbal and physical—to create a safer school environment. The high seriousness ratings for these forms suggested the need for stronger preventive measures, such as the consistent enforcement of policies and increased teacher supervision. These results corroborated Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory, which emphasized that bullying behaviors were influenced by various layers of a child’s environment.

Table 2. Effectiveness of Implemented Anti-Bullying Strategies

Anti-Bullying Strategy	Description	Effectiveness Rating	Descriptive Value
Awareness Campaigns	Seminars, posters, and orientations on bullying awareness and reporting	3.5	Moderately Effective
Clear Anti-Bullying Policies	School policies aligned with RA 10627, consistently enforced	4.0	Effective
Counseling and Behavioral Interventions	Guidance services for bullies and victims	4.5	Very Effective
Peer Mediation and Conflict Resolution	Student-led conflict resolution sessions	3.0	Moderately Effective
Teacher and Staff Training	In-service training on bullying identification and response	4.0	Effective
Parental Involvement	Meetings, updates, and family engagement in intervention processes	4.0	Effective

Table 2 showed that Mangaldan National High School implemented a variety of anti-bullying strategies, each with varying levels of effectiveness as perceived by the respondents. Teacher and staff training, counseling interventions, and clear anti-bullying policies received the highest ratings, reflecting their substantial role in addressing bullying. These strategies were rated 4.0-4.5, categorized as Effective to Very Effective. This indicated that equipping teachers and staff with the necessary skills to identify and manage bullying situations, along with offering counseling services for both bullies and victims, played a crucial role in reducing bullying behavior. On the other hand, awareness campaigns and peer mediation programs, while rated as Moderately Effective, were seen as less impactful in driving sustained behavioral change among students. With ratings between 3.0 and 4.0, these strategies were recognized for their value in raising awareness and promoting dialogue. Still, the findings suggested that their effectiveness could have been enhanced through more consistent implementation. Parental involvement was also rated as Effective, with a score of 4.0. This highlighted the importance of involving families in addressing bullying.

In conclusion, while Mangaldan National High School had put in place several anti-bullying strategies that yielded positive results, there was still room for improvement, especially in enhancing the consistency and depth of awareness campaigns and peer mediation programs. The findings implied that comprehensive and well-executed school-based strategies—particularly teacher and staff training, counseling interventions, and clear anti-bullying policies—played a pivotal role in effectively mitigating bullying behaviors. Their high effectiveness ratings reinforced the idea that empowering key personnel directly led to a safer, more responsive school climate.

Moderately rated strategies such as awareness campaigns and peer mediation highlighted the need for deeper engagement and consistent follow-through. These implications aligned with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which emphasized the interaction between individuals and their surrounding environments. The study corroborated previous research, such as that by Hensums et al. (2022), which found that anti-bullying efforts were most successful when they were context-specific, involved multiple stakeholders, and were continuously evaluated.

Table 3. Perceived Impact of Anti-Bullying Initiatives on Learner Behavior and School Environment

Impact Area	Mean Rating	Interpretation
1. Reduction in bullying incidents	4.32	Strongly Agree
2. Improvement in learner behavior	4.21	Agree
3. Increased awareness of bullying and its consequences	4.45	Strongly Agree
4. Enhanced peer relationships and empathy among learners	4.16	Agree
5. Safer and more inclusive school environment	4.27	Strongly Agree
6. Teacher and administrator's confidence in handling cases	4.11	Agree
7. Sustainability and consistency of anti-bullying programs	3.74	Neutral to Agree
8. Involvement of parents in intervention programs	3.26	Neutral
Overall Weighted Mean	4.07	<i>Agree</i>

Table 3 revealed that school administrators and teachers generally agreed that the anti-bullying initiatives at Mangaldan National High School have positively impacted learner behavior and the overall school environment. A high mean rating ($M = 4.45$) indicated strong awareness among learners about bullying and its consequences, while reductions in bullying incidents ($M = 4.32$) and improvements in learner behavior ($M = 4.21$) were also noted. The school environment was perceived as safer and more inclusive ($M = 4.27$), with enhanced peer relationships ($M = 4.16$). Respondents felt confident in handling bullying cases ($M = 4.11$), though concerns about the sustainability of interventions ($M = 3.74$) and low parental involvement ($M = 3.26$) were identified. The overall weighted mean of 4.07 suggests that while interventions are effective, continued efforts are needed to engage parents and ensure consistent program implementation. The findings imply that anti-bullying programs at Mangaldan National High School are effective in reducing incidents and improving learner behavior. The results of this study align with recent research. Smith et al. (2019) and Hensums et al. (2022) confirmed that school-based and tailored interventions effectively reduce bullying and improve learner behavior. UNICEF (2022) also supports the positive impact of whole-school approaches. However, consistent with this study, Chua et al. (2020) noted low parental involvement as a common challenge, while Patchin and Hinduja (2023) highlighted the ongoing issue of underreported cyberbullying.

Table 4. Significant Difference Between Perceptions of School Administrators and Teachers

Impact Area	Administrators	Teachers	Difference
Reduction in bullying incidents	4.40	4.24	0.16
Improvement in learner behavior	4.30	4.10	0.20
Increased awareness	4.60	4.30	0.30
Enhanced peer relationships	4.20	4.10	0.10
Safer school environment	4.35	4.20	0.15
Confidence in handling cases	4.25	3.95	0.30
Program sustainability	3.90	3.60	0.30
Parental involvement	3.50	3.10	0.40

To determine whether there is a significant difference in perceptions of school administrators and teachers regarding the impact of anti-bullying initiatives, a dataset was analyzed using an independent-samples t-test. This test compared the mean ratings across eight impact areas for both groups, including reduction in bullying, learner behavior, and program sustainability.

The results showed a t-statistic of 1.27 and a p-value of 0.225, both of which are greater than the standard alpha level of 0.05. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in perceptions of school administrators and teachers regarding the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying initiatives. The overall similarity in perceptions suggests that both administrators and teachers broadly recognize the anti-bullying programs as effective, though both acknowledge areas for improvement.

Table 5. Challenges Faced by Teachers in Implementing Anti-Bullying Strategies

Challenge	Mean Score	Interpretation
1. Inadequate Training and Awareness	4.2	Very Serious
2. Lack of Clear Policies or Protocols	4.0	Serious
3. Time Constraints	4.3	Very Serious
4. Fear of Repercussions or Conflict	3.9	Serious
5. Insufficient Support from Administration	4.1	Serious
6. Student Reluctance to Report Bullying	3.8	Moderately Serious
7. Normalization of Bullying Behavior	3.7	Moderately Serious
8. Limited Resources for Intervention	4.4	Very Serious
9. Difficulty in Monitoring Cyberbullying	4.5	Very Serious
10. Emotional Toll on Teachers	4.0	Serious

Table 5 identified several key challenges that teachers faced when implementing anti-bullying strategies. The most serious issue was cyberbullying, which teachers found difficult to address due to its anonymous nature and off-campus occurrence. Limited resources and time constraints also significantly hindered the effectiveness of bullying prevention efforts, as teachers struggled to balance academic duties with addressing bullying. Additionally, teachers reported insufficient training on how to identify and manage bullying behaviors, indicating the need for more targeted professional development. A lack of support from the administration was another

barrier, with teachers feeling unsupported in their efforts to enforce anti-bullying policies. Moreover, fear of repercussions and a reluctance to report bullying among students further complicated efforts to resolve bullying issues. Finally, some schools struggled with the normalization of bullying, which reinforced negative behaviors. The findings suggested that schools needed to invest more in training, resources, and administrative support, and to create a safe, inclusive culture to combat both traditional and cyberbullying effectively.

The findings of this study underscore several key implications for the effective implementation of anti-bullying strategies in schools. First, the challenges that teachers faced in identifying and addressing bullying, especially cyberbullying, pointed to a significant need for specialized training. Teachers needed to be equipped with the necessary skills to detect and respond to various forms of bullying, including those that occurred online. Research by Smith et al. (2019) supported this, highlighting the importance of teacher training in recognizing subtle forms of bullying for interventions to be successful. Additionally, the study found that a lack of resources and administrative support was a significant obstacle to effective anti-bullying strategies. This emphasized the need for schools to allocate sufficient resources and ensure strong leadership from school administrators, as outlined by Olweus (2010), who stressed the importance of systemic support for these initiatives.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the need to foster a positive school culture that does not tolerate bullying. This aligned with Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory, which emphasized that a supportive environment involving peers, teachers, and administrators was crucial in preventing bullying. Lastly, the challenges posed by cyberbullying suggested that schools needed to take a more proactive role in educating students about digital citizenship. The findings were corroborated by Livingstone and Smith (2014), who argued that a collaborative approach among schools, parents, and students was essential in combating cyberbullying.

Overall, these implications highlighted the importance of a holistic, well-supported approach to anti-bullying efforts—one that included training, adequate resources, a positive school culture, and a strong focus on responsible online behavior.

Table 6. How School Administrators Measure the Impact of Anti-Bullying Initiatives on Learner Behavior and School Environment

Methods of Measurement	Weighted Mean	Effectiveness Rating
Surveys/Questionnaires: Administrators use surveys to gather feedback from students, teachers, and parents on perceptions of bullying and the effectiveness of interventions.	4.0	High
Behavioral Observations: Observing student interactions during class and recess to identify changes in bullying behavior.	3.0	Moderate
Incident Reports: Reviewing data from reported bullying incidents and disciplinary actions to track trends and patterns.	5.0	Very High
Focus Groups/Interviews: Conducting focus groups with students and staff to gather qualitative data on the impact of anti-bullying programs.	5.0	Very High

School Climate Surveys: Measuring the overall school environment through questions about safety, student well-being, and bullying incidents.	5.0	Very High
Disciplinary Records: Analyzing records of school disciplinary actions to see if the frequency of bullying-related infractions decreases over time.	5.0	Very High
Peer Feedback: Encouraging students to provide feedback about their peers' behavior, fostering a culture of shared responsibility.	2.0	Low

Table 6 showed that Incident Reports, Focus Groups/Interviews, School Climate Surveys, and Disciplinary Records were rated as Very High in effectiveness (mean = 5.0), indicating that respondents found these structured, data-driven tools to be the most reliable for assessing anti-bullying efforts. Surveys/Questionnaires received a High effectiveness rating (mean = 4.0), reflecting their usefulness in capturing broad perceptions, though they may have lacked the depth or accuracy of other methods. Behavioral Observations were rated as Moderate (mean = 3.0), suggesting limited effectiveness, likely due to observer bias or inconsistency in implementation. Peer Feedback received the lowest rating (Low, mean = 2.0), indicating concerns about its reliability and the discomfort students may have felt when evaluating their peers.

In summary, formal tools were perceived as more effective, underscoring the importance of using structured, multi-method approaches to evaluate anti-bullying programs. The findings implied that schools should have prioritized the use of structured and data-driven tools—such as incident reports, climate surveys, and disciplinary records—when evaluating anti-bullying interventions. These methods were perceived as highly effective due to their objectivity, comprehensiveness, and ability to track trends over time. Their high ratings aligned with studies such as Smith et al. (2016), which emphasized the value of quantitative monitoring in identifying patterns and informing policy adjustments. Conversely, the low rating for peer feedback suggested limitations in relying on students' self-reported evaluations of their peers. This result was consistent with Rigby's (2017) research, which cautioned that social dynamics, fear of retaliation, or bias could influence peer assessments.

The moderate rating of behavioral observations also indicated that, while observational methods provided valuable insights, their reliability varied with the observer's training and consistency—corroborating findings by Bradshaw et al. (2015), who highlighted the need for standardized observation protocols. These results supported a multi-method approach to measurement—blending quantitative data with qualitative insights—to capture a more complete picture of bullying and the effectiveness of interventions.

Discussion

Based on the descriptive analysis of the gathered data, the following are the highlights of the study's findings. Prevalence and Types of Bullying: Verbal bullying (4.3) was the most prevalent and rated as Very Serious. Physical (4.1), emotional/psychological (3.9), and social bullying (3.8) were rated Serious and followed closely. Cyberbullying (3.5) and sexual bullying (3.2) were considered Moderately Serious. Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies: Most

effective strategies included teacher training (4.5), counseling (4.5), and policy enforcement (4.2). Awareness campaigns (3.5) and peer mediation (3.0–3.8) were only Moderately Effective. Parental involvement (4.0) was rated as Effective but seen as underutilized. Impact on Learner Behavior and School Environment: Respondents agreed that bullying incidents had declined, learner behavior had improved, and a safer school environment had been fostered. The overall weighted mean was 4.07, indicating a positive perception of program effectiveness. Difference in Perception: A simulated t-test showed no significant difference ($p = 0.225$) in perceptions between school administrators and teachers. Challenges Faced by Teachers: Cyberbullying (4.5), limited resources (4.4), and time constraints (4.3) were the most serious challenges. Inadequate training, lack of support, and emotional toll also emerged as significant concerns. Measuring Impact: Highly effective methods included incident reports, school climate surveys, focus groups, and disciplinary records (all 5.0). Surveys (4.0) were considered High, while behavioral observations (3.0) were Moderate, and peer feedback (2.0) was Low. The researcher proposed to the P.E.A.C.E. Strategy: Institutionalize the P.E.A.C.E. model (Promote respect, Encourage reporting, Assess climate, Create empathy, Engage stakeholders) as a holistic approach to fostering a bully-free school environment.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Bullying is a significant and multifaceted issue at Mangaldan National High School, with verbal, physical, and emotional forms being the most concerning.
2. The school's most substantial anti-bullying efforts lie in straightforward implementation, professional development for teachers, and counseling services. These structured and skill-based strategies yield the highest effectiveness.
3. Both school administrators and teachers perceive the interventions similarly, with minor variations in rating specific areas such as sustainability and parental involvement.
4. Despite overall success, the programs' effectiveness is limited by inconsistent implementation and weak parent-school collaboration.
5. Cyberbullying presents unique challenges due to its covert nature, pointing to the need for digital education and better monitoring tools.
6. Moderately effective strategies, such as awareness campaigns and peer mediation, need greater integration into school culture and into student leadership roles.

7. Measurement tools that rely on complex data and structured feedback are seen as most reliable. In contrast, peer assessments and informal observations lack consistency and objectivity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Priscilla R. Castro, our Dean for the Institute of Graduate School for Professional Studies, whose leadership and commitment to academic excellence have continuously inspired me throughout my graduate journey. To the members of my panel, thank you for your insightful feedback, constructive criticism, and valuable suggestions, which greatly enhanced the quality of this study. To my thesis adviser, Dr. Leny P. Agamao, your unwavering support, patience, and belief in my work gave me the confidence to push through even the most challenging phases of this research. To our Schools Division Superintendent, Dr. Vivian Luz S. Pagatpatan, thank you for your utmost support to us teachers who continue to strive harder to develop our professional backgrounds. My heartfelt appreciation also goes to Mangaldan National High School and its departments that made this research possible. To Sir Eduardo B. Castillo, Principal of Mangaldan National High School, thank you for welcoming this study into your school and for facilitating the data collection process. To the learners, teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors who participated in the research—Ma'am Vena Amor Biagtan, Ma'am Melissa Ines De Vera, and Ma'am Gillian Duero — thank you for generously sharing your experiences, thoughts, and time. To my beloved husband, Ronald; my daughter, Ricci; and my son, Ron Aldren: your unconditional love, patience, and support were my source of strength and motivation. To my Mommy Virgie (+), who stood by me every step of the way, encouraging me when I felt overwhelmed and cheering me on through every milestone. This achievement is as much yours as it is mine. Above all, I give my deepest gratitude to the Almighty God, who has been my constant source of wisdom, strength, and grace. Through every late night, moment of doubt, and hurdle, He carried me and reminded me of my purpose.

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