
Assessment of Implementation of Child Protection Policy and Its Challenges towards an Improved Action Plan

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Abstract — This research sought to assess implementation of child protection policy and its best practices in Magalang North District during the School Year 2024-2025 to have a proposed action plan. The study utilized mixed method design as a guide for the completion of the study. In this particular study, a sequential-explanatory design was applied in conjunction with a mixed method approach. There were 16 school heads, 80 PTAs and 149 teachers who became the respondents of the study. There were 10 participants in qualitative part. Weighted mean, anova and thematic analysis were used for interpretation. Results tell that school heads, teachers and PTAs gave a great extent implementation on preventive measures to address child abuse (M=3.00, M=2.98, M=2.93), addressing exploitation (M=3.16, M=3.20, M=3.14). In addition, addressing violence is rated as very great extent by school heads (M=3.30), teachers (M=3.31) and great extent by PTAs (M=3.17). Also, preventing discrimination and bullying is rated as very great extent by school heads (M=3.36), teachers (M=3.38) and PTAs (M=3.30). The difference on assessment of implementation of the child protection policy of the three groups of respondents including school heads, teachers and PTAs has an F value of 1.4347 and p value of 0.0412. Tapping Pupil-Leaders as In-Charge of Discipline and Improving Visibility on Hard to Reach Areas are the best practices of school in implementing child protection policy. An action plan is proposed based on the findings of the study.

Keywords: child protection, discrimination, action plan, discipline

I. THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

Introduction

Schools are considered as second home for learners. It is a place where they learn and spend most of their times learning and playing with people around. In the four corners of the school, they meet their friends, classmates and teachers which are known to be their second family. This means that school should be safe it is considered as a home. It is a place where they should feel love and protection.

However, it was not until many more years had passed that the responsibility of protecting children was recognized as being shared by society as a whole. The first statute to protect children from abuse was passed by the British Parliament in 1889; but, for a considerable amount of time, child protection services continued to be the responsibility of private philanthropic organizations rather than the government. Awareness of the problem increased following the publication in 1962 of a revolutionary article by Kempe et al. titled “The battered child syndrome” (Fegert & Stotzel, 2016).

For schools to be considered safe zone, they must be free from child abuse, which is one of the most challenging jobs that schools must accomplish. According to Alok and Olatunji (2014), the abuse of children is one of the most difficult social calamities that is gaining the attention of the public all over the world. This is one of the more delicate subjects that we deal with in the academic world. Protecting students from any form of abuse, whether it be verbal, physical, or emotional, is an important responsibility.

The Child Protection Policy at schools is highly important because it protects students from all kinds of abuse, exploitation, prejudice, and neglect. This makes sure that every kid grows up in a safe and caring place. It makes it obvious what teachers, staff, and students should do, which helps the school community be respectful, fair, and responsible. Schools protect children's rights as set out in Philippine legislation and international agreements by having a well-implemented policy. This builds confidence between parents, teachers, and students. This not only keeps kids

safe physically and emotionally, but it also creates a safe and welcoming environment where kids may learn.

Moss and Moss (cited in Dlamini & Makondo, 2017) posits that child abuse is any act of omission by parents, guardians or the person in charge to give care that results in intentional physical or mental strain or injury including sexual abuse. Child abuse comes in when the children receive any form of violence. It also happens when their rights are not given to them.

Children are vulnerable to abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying and other forms of abuse as they are being described in the Philippine legislation as “persons below eighteen years of age or those over eighteen years of age but incapable to take care of themselves or safeguard themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation, or discrimination because of physical, mental disability or conditions” (Saplala 2007).

In addition, even Denga and Denga (2007) that in school, cruel behavior on children by teachers, parents, peers and even guardians or siblings and the society is a form of child abuse. When they are treated in a way that violates their rights is a form of child abuse. Unfortunately, according to Augustine and Abubaker (2016), child abuse is rampant and there is no safe place anymore for children. Also, the policy is very important for encouraging overall growth and academic performance. When kids feel protected and supported, they are more likely to study hard, gain confidence, and make friends. Schools can deal with dangers before they become big problems because they have preventive and response measures like reporting systems, learner leaders, and guidance programs. So, the Child Protection Policy is more than just a rule to follow; it is a necessary framework that makes sure that every student can reach their full potential in a safe, welcoming, and free of fear environment.

Another factor that the school must take into consideration is the exploitation of children, which can take many various forms. One of these activities is the exploitation of sexuality. As stated by Sharp-Jeffs, Coy, and Kelly (2017), child sexual exploitation is a type of child sexual abuse that occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power in order to coerce, manipulate, or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into engaging in sexual activity. This may be done (a) in exchange for something that the victim requires or desires,

and/or (b) for the perpetrator or facilitator to gain financial advantage or an increased status. The teachers of the students should be considered one of the guardians that the students have in the school because they are the ones who serve as the second parents for these young minds.

Equal treatment in the school is another issue needed to be addressed. The concepts of equality among the students should be properly discussed and understood by the teachers. Mountfield and Chamber (2009) pointed out it is an idea that should be turned into reality. Each student despite their uniqueness should have equal chance and opportunity that they can enjoy in the school. Discrimination should not exist.

Even in gender, school must be sensitive. The young of the students is the time when they become confused with their gender identity. Others call it as bisexual gender preference. An individual who is sexually attracted to persons of both genders—that is, people of the opposite sex and people of the same sex—is referred to as bisexual (Harris & Emberley, 2011). On the other hand, bisexuals assimilate into the cultures of heterosexual people and may be classified into a variety of LGBT groups, including gay and lesbian. Bisexuality is not a permanent "third type" of sexual orientation; rather, it is a transitional stage of denial or transition (Diamond, 2008).

The most familiar challenges in ensuring a child- protection school is bullying. It exists in all communities as well as in the school. It starts in the elementary years until it reach the secondary level. This denotes that even in the young age, bullying may happen if there is a higher authority who uses power or position to oppress others (Dickerson, 2005). As a form of violence, it contributes to the negative feeling of students toward the school. The feeling that they are not safe anymore in the four corners of the classroom increases as the day passes by (Maliki, et al., 2009). Bullying is considered a significant issue in academic institutions throughout the globe, according to Shahria et al. (as stated in Al-Raqqad, 2017). They discovered that being bullied had a detrimental effect on academic achievement. Bullying had a greater impact on females than on males.

In the Philippine setting, Ramiro, et al. (2010) posited that the child maltreatment plays a significant role and impact on the development of the learners, still this topic is being neglected in the academe. Department of Education acknowledges that it is necessary for every school to have

programs, projects and activities that will eradicate the existence of child maltreatment in the school. Because of this, DepEd Order 40 S. 2012 has been released to ensure that each school is child-protective.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the primary welfare agency of the government in the Philippines, and it is focused on the welfare of children. The DSWD's role includes setting principles, providing consultative services to private and public institutions, organizations, and individuals involved in social welfare activities, monitoring the performance of the implementing bodies, and enforcing compliance with standards. It acknowledges that, similar to the Department of Education, incidences of abuse may emerge in a school environment due to the difficult circumstances that teachers and other officials encounter both inside and outside of the school. Consequently, it put the Child Protection Policy into effect, which provided children who were in danger or whose development was threatened by circumstances that they were unable to control with special protection and assisted the relevant agencies in their rehabilitation efforts (DO #40, s. 2012). The policy emphasizes once again the obligations and responsibilities of school personnel, from the school head to the students themselves, as well as the actions that are both preventative and protective in nature, with the goal of addressing child abuse, mistreatment, violence, discrimination, bullying, and other cruel acts.

The Philippine government is making every effort to provide national policy and programs that address child abuse in accordance with the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which states that the state must protect the rights of children to receive assistance, including appropriate nutrition and care, and to be protected from all forms of mistreatment, abandonment, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions that are harmful to their development (Article XV, Section 3 (2)). The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the first of a list of agencies that have the responsibility of establishing standards, accrediting, and providing consultative services to institutions, organizations, and individuals in the public and private sectors who are involved in social welfare activities. In addition, these agencies monitor the bodies that perform these activities and ensure that they comply with the standards (Yacat, 2011).

To ensure this, DepEd works hand in hand with different agencies such as Council for the Welfare of Children which is the agency for children's issues and policy in the Philippines (Bessell, 2009).

On the other hand, child-protection school also provides opportunity for students to avoid child labor or exploitation. Rickey (2009) states that this is due to the poverty. Majority of the learners belong to the marginalized sector of the community. Those who are enrolled in the public schools are those who are challenged in their economic status. However, this is something that is really beyond the control of the schools. Economic status of learners and their families are tough to solve for it will require a huge amount of financial resources.

Gender preference in the school is not a new issue nowadays. As the time passes by, this reality becomes more rampant. Ocampo and Alonso-Belmonte (2016) highlighted that those who belong to the LGBT community experience discrimination and unequal treatment from the people around them. Most of these feelings and experiences come from their classmates or just school mates. They tend to be the center of laughter of their classmates.

Francisco (2015) magnified that bullying exist in the Philippine schools. Most of this are student to student type of bullying which mostly occurs during the time that the teacher is not around to check the students or done secretly because of the fear received by the one being oppressed.

The presentation of literature and studies show child protection policy is a topic that is under investigation by educators and the community. Since children are very vulnerable to abuse, laws and policies about it are implemented in various countries including the Philippines. However, there are few studies that will highlight its implementation in the school. This helps the researcher to have a study that assessed the implementation of child protection policy and its best practices in the Magalang North District during the School Year 2024-2025 towards a proposed improved action plan.

Conceptual Framework

This research was anchored in the Social Situational Theory of Bandura (cited in Guney & Al, 2012). It emphasized that learning takes place in social relationship with the people around the individual. It is coned in a social setting where the individual exists. In the school, the interaction between the environment and the learners become a factor on their development and ensuring that they are safe in the school.

The said theory matched the study for its main aim was to assess the compliance of the school regarding provision of child- protection school. The conduct of this research is going to be guided by the IPO model

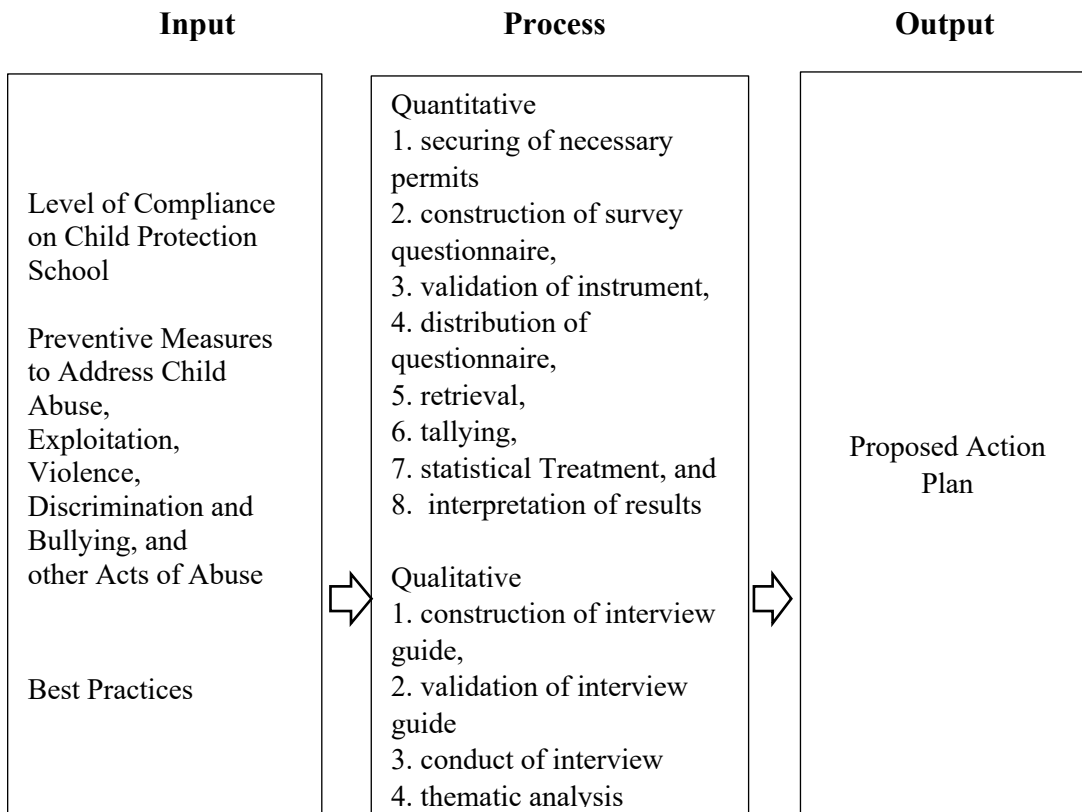


FIGURE 1
PARADIGM OF THE STUDY

Figure 1 highlighted that the input started with assessment on the child protection school compliance in terms of preventive measures to address child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination and bullying, and other acts of abuse. In addition, the best practices in the implementation of Child Protection Policy was tackled.

Process contained securing of necessary permits, construction of survey, validation of instrument, distribution of questionnaire, retrieval, tallying, statistical Treatment, and interpretation of results for the quantitative part. The qualitative part focused on construction of interview guide, validation of interview guide, conduct of interview and thematic analysis.

The output was the proposed improved action plan to improve the compliance of Child-Protection school.

Statement of the Problem

This research sought to assess implementation of child protection policy and its best practices in Magalang North District during the School Year 2024-2025 to have a proposed action plan.

Specifically, the study answered the following questions:

1. How may the extent of implementation of child protection policy by teachers, PTAS and school heads be assessed based on the following:
 - 1.1. Preventive Measures to Address Child Abuse,
 - 1.2. Exploitation,
 - 1.3. Violence, and
 - 1.4. Discrimination and Bullying?
 2. Is there significant difference on the assessment of the implementation of child protection policy based on the assessment of respondents?
 3. What are the best practices of schools in implementing child protection policy?
 4. Based on the findings, what improved action plan may be proposed?
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Hypothesis

There is no significant difference on the extent of the implementation of child protection policy based on the assessment of respondents.

Significance of the Study

The final output of the study may be of great help to the following:

School Heads. The assessment on the implementation of the Child Protection School will be a wake up call for the school heads regarding the status of their compliance. With this, there will be an action that the school heads may adopt to increase their level of compliance in Child Protection School.

Teachers. Ensuring that school complies with the Child Protection School policy will give them a relaxing ambiance while they are teaching. Because of this, they can have more time to focus on their teaching rather than thinking about the safety of their learners.

Pupils. A safe environment will motivate the learners to continue going to school for it is safe, conducive and inviting the learners to stay in the school. The longer stay of the pupils will give them more time for classroom interaction and will definitely affect their academic performance positively.

Future Researchers. This research is going to be added to the existing body of literature and studies about Child Protection School compliance, which may serve as reference for others. Also, the suggestion on possible topics will give the researchers ideas on what to explore.

Scope and Delimitation

This research aimed to assess the implementation of child protection policy and its best practices during the School Year 2024-2025 to have a proposed improved action plan. It was conducted and completed in Magalang North District, which is one of the 33 districts of the Division of Pampanga.

Teachers, school heads and PTA officers were the respondents of the study.

Primarily it centered on assessing the implementation of child protection policy based on preventive measures to address child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination and bullying, and other acts of abuse. Furthermore, the challenges in the implementation of Child Protection Policy were tackled.

Definition of Terms

These terms were defined to have a deeper understanding of the study:

Best Practices. It deals with actions and ways that helped in further improvement of child protection policy implementation.

Child Protection Policy. This means placing the child as the first priority when dealing with all identified or suspected cases of child abuse. Empowering and educating children on their rights, personal safety and steps they can take, if there is a problem. In this study, it centers on actions and programs on how to ensure that the children are safe in school.

II. METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses research design, respondents and sampling technique, instrumentation, data collection and statistical treatment.

Research Design

The researcher used a mixed-method design as a guide to help them complete the investigation. As the name would imply, it is the combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods into a single investigation. Mixed methods research helps the researcher to capitalize on the advantages of both approaches and to overcome the disadvantages of each of the two methodologies (Wisdom & Creswell, 2013). The goal is not simply to merge the advantages of the two approaches, but to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon that is being studied.

In this particular study, a sequential-explanatory design was applied in conjunction with a mixed method approach. Within the context of a particular investigation, this strategy is centered on the gathering, analysis, and combination of qualitative and quantitative statistics. The purpose of this study is to provide a better understanding of the nature of the problem by combining qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

In this study, the researcher collected first quantitative data regarding the implementation of child protection policy. The results of the analysis of the data collected on quantitative part will be the basis for the researcher to craft the questions to be asked for the qualitative phase.

Considering the traits of sequential explanatory, the researcher found it appropriate to be used because it tailor fits the purpose of the study, which was to assess the implementation of child protection policy and its best practices in the Magalang North District during the School Year 2024-2025 to have a proposed action plan.

Respondents/Participants

The main locale of the study is the Magalang North District where the researcher is currently located and assigned as public school teacher. There were three of respondents for the quantitative part who provided the necessary information needed in this study. These three groups of individuals were considered to represent the different personnel who stay in the school premises and witness the implementation of Child Protection School.

The researcher requested the total population of the school heads, teachers, and PTAs to be the respondents of the study. This means that everyone had the chance to represent themselves in the data gathering.

TABLE 1
RESPONDENTS OF THE STUDY

Schools	Teachers	School Heads	PTA
School 1	18	1	5
School 2	9	1	5
School 3	9	1	5
School 4	12	1	5
School 5	8	1	5
School 6	7	1	5
School 7	5	1	5
School 8	6	1	5
School 9	11	1	5
School 10	12	1	5
School 11	8	1	5
School 12	9	1	5
School 13	10	1	5
School 14	8	1	5
School 15	9	1	5
School 16	8	1	5
Total	149	16	80

Table 1 shows that the there were 16 school heads, 80 PTAS and 149 teachers who became the respondents of the study.

Another consideration of the study was to have set of participants for qualitative part. On this aspect, the researcher used judgmental sampling technique for the selection. It is a type of sampling technique that focuses on the quality and qualifications of the source of information rather than the volume of data (Baraceros, 2016). In this technique, not everyone in the population has the chance to be selected.

The researcher considered the three schools who had highest scores in child protection policy implementation.

Research Instruments

To solicit the necessary information for this study, the researcher adopted the instrument of Quito (2022). It was the main tool to solicit the responses of the target respondents. According to Eng (2013), a research instrument is used to gather or collect information that will provide answer to the specific problem of a study. It is the way of the researcher to gather the pertinent information that can describe the phenomenon being examined.

The tool focused solely on assessing the level of compliance in the implementation of the following programs of the child protection policy prescribed by the mandates of the department (1) Preventive Measures to Address Child Abuse, (2) Exploitation, (3) Violence, and (4) Discrimination and Bullying.

The qualitative part of the study had semi-structured interview. The questions will be crafted based on the results of the quantitative part. These questions were presented research adviser and panel of experts for validation purposes and for betterment.

Data Collection

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the dean of graduate school. The researcher also write a letter duly noted by the research adviser which was sent to the office of the schools division superintendent. Once all the permits are secured, the researcher proceeded with the reproduction of the survey questionnaire.

For the data collection, the researcher used the online platform like google form, messenger, social media, phone call, emails and others.

In terms of qualitative data gathering, the interviews was done online. The researcher needed to record the conduct of the interview for accurate transcription of the data. However, the researcher got the permission of the participants' first.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher explained to the respondents the purpose of the study. Each respondent had the liberty to ask question when they found it necessary. Another consideration was to ensure that the participation was on voluntary basis. To do this, there was a letter of consent that was signed by the respondents to show their approval. Furthermore, the researcher protected their identity by giving them the chance to write their names optionally.

In addition, there was no information in the entire manuscript that would pinpoint the identity of the respondents. All of the data were coded and no answer was singled out in the entire manuscript.

Statistical Treatment/Data Analysis

The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative analysis of data. For the quantitative part, the researcher used the following:

1. Weighted mean, to assess the implementation of child protection policy.

The following will be the norms for interpretations:

Scale Value	Descriptive Ratings	Range of the Weighted Means
4	Very Great Extent	3.25 and above
3	Great Extent	2.50 – 3.24
2	Fair Extent	1.75 – 2.49
1	Least Extent	1.00 – 1.74

2. Anova, to determine the difference on the assessment of school heads, teachers and PTAs

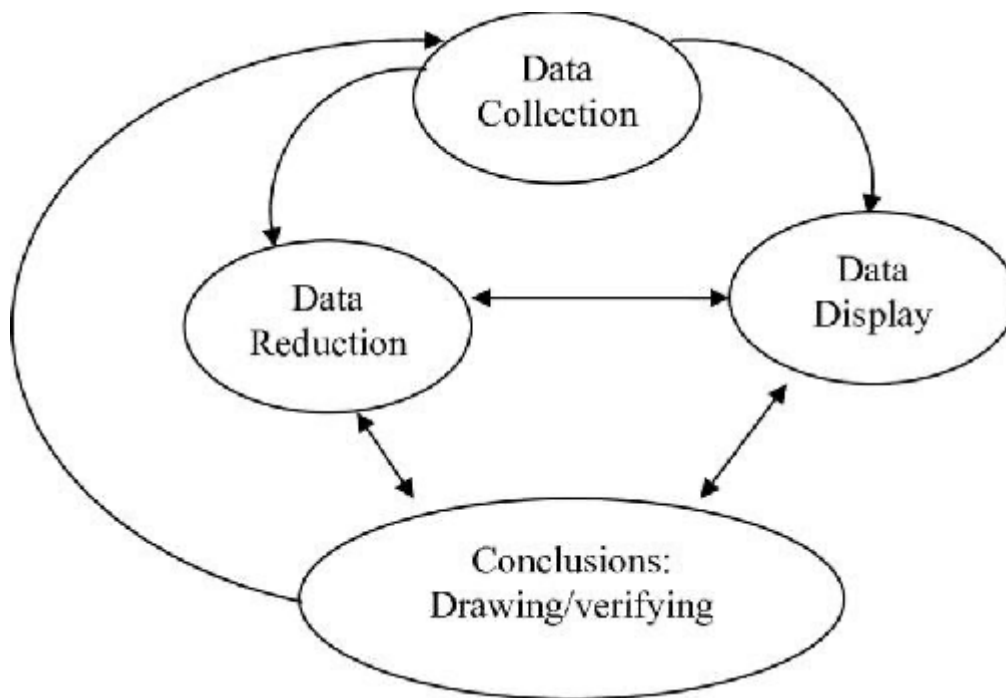


FIGURE 2
DIAGRAM OF QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The second stage in the process of data analysis is data reduction, as described by the Miles and Huberman (1994) model. It incorporates the procedure of choosing, reducing the complexity of, and converting the data.

Data display is the third primary phase of the Miles and Huberman Model, which was introduced in 1994. Data display will be used to retrieve information during this step. It is impossible to distinguish it from data reduction due to the fact that the two are complementary. According to Ibid, data presentation is "the organized, compressed assembly of information" (Ibid, p. 11). It strives to organize the data that has been gathered in a way that makes sense. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), data presentation serves to organize facts and assist in the arrangement of concepts and thoughts.

Data drawing and conclusions are the final components of the Miles and Huberman Model, which was published in 1994. It is these professionals who have proposed the usage of a number of points to aid researchers in coming to conclusions after displaying data in a variety of formats. This investigation incorporated a number of the concepts that they had developed in order to extract meaning from the data.

These comprised of:

- 1- The notation of any motifs or themes and the significance of any statements, particularly in cases where they were comparable or in contrast
2. The process of organizing or creating categories of "information that can be grouped together"
3. Determining the ways in which various factors and variables are connected to one another
- 4- Establishing conceptual coherence and consistency, which should ultimately be used to investigate the validity of the findings in order to ensure that they conform to the theoretical framework of the study.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of application of statistical treatment and thematic analysis on the gathered data.

1. Extent of Implementation of Child Protection Policy

The extent of implementation of child protection policy was assessed by teachers, PTAs and school heads based on preventive measures to address child abuse, exploitation, violence, and discrimination and bullying.

It can be seen from Table 2 that implementation of preventive measures to address child abuse is rated as great extent by school heads (M=3.00, SD=0.30), teachers (M=2.98, SD=0.34) and PTAS (M=2.93, SD=0.36).

Also, first indicator “forming a prefect of discipline” was assessed by school heads (M=3.43, SD=0.32) and teachers (M=3.39, SD=0.37) as very great extentch which is their highest rating, while PTAs provided great extent (M=3.14, SD=0.41) rating on it. A closer look on the table tells that the school heads (M=2.14, SD=0.34), teachers (M=2.13, SD=0.39) and PTAs (M=2.06, SD=0.42) gave their lowest rating on great extent on fifth indicator “providing students’ or pupils’ handbook to all learners”.

The information gathered indicates that school principals and teachers believe they are offering avenues for preventive actions to combat child abuse by establishing committees and telling students about them. Nevertheless, the poor ranking could be attributed to the possibility that Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) are not informed regarding the availability of these kinds of activities.

It was brought to light by Silaji (2024) that child abuse can always be best addressed through preventative measures. The likelihood of child abuse happening in schools will be reduced when schools are able to set up preventative measures such as committees and information drives since the students will be more informed about the problem. They will be aware of the potential behaviors they could take that are in any way connected to child abuse.

TABLE 2
IMPLEMENTATION OF CPP ON PREVENTIVE MEASURES TO ADDRESS CHILD ABUSE

Indicators	School Heads			Teachers			PTAs		
	WM	SD	VD	WM	SD	VD	WM	SD	VD
1. forming a prefect of discipline	3.43	0.32	VGE	3.39	0.37	VGE	3.14	0.41	GE
2. keeping a record on the unwanted circumstance of each pupil in their anecdotal record	2.97	0.28	GE	2.78	0.34	GE	2.69	0.38	GE
3. setting up a school policy on how to deal with child abuse	3.35	0.23	VGE	3.36	0.29	VGE	3.12	0.29	GE
4. assigning of in charge of Violence Against Women and Children	3.31	0.23	GE	3.29	0.32	VGE	3.18	0.28	GE
5. providing students' or pupils' handbook to all learners	2.14	0.34	GE	2.13	0.39	GE	2.06	0.42	GE
Grand Mean	3.00	0.30	GE	2.98	0.34	GE	2.93	0.36	GE

It is noticeable on Table 3 that school heads (M=3.16, SD=0.33), teachers (M=3.20, SD=0.36) and PTAs (M=3.14, SD=0.35) rated addressing exploitation as great extent. A closer look on the table tells that fifth indicator “treating sensitive data or record confidentially” is assessed the highest by school heads (M=3.26, SD=0.35) and teachers (M=3.31, SD=0.40) with a verbal description of very great extent, while a great extent rating is given by PTAs (M=3.22, SD=0.41). On the other hand, school heads (M=3.14, SD=0.35), teachers (M=3.11, SD=0.34) and PTAs (M=3.01, SD=0.42) rated the first indicator “means for students to lessen the chance of

working during school days such as feeding program” the lowest with verbal description of great extent.

According to the data, the schools are doing a good job of implementing child protection policies when it comes to addressing exploitation. They find several methods of dealing with exploitation in schools. Exploitation is extremely widespread, and it needs to be dealt with as soon as feasible, as Rimer (2024) has observed. Learners need to have the feeling that their school is a secure setting and that the people who are there are doing their best to keep them safe. This is one of the ways in which we can guarantee that they are in a school environment that is suitable for children. With this, they will feel that they are safe.

TABLE 3
IMPLEMENTATION OF CPP ON ADDRESSING EXPLOITATION

Indicators	School Heads			Teachers			PTAs		
	WM	SD	VD	WM	SD	VD	WM	SD	VD
1. providing means for students to lessen the chance of working during school days such as feeding program	3.14	0.35	GE	3.11	0.34	GE	3.01	0.42	GE
2. visiting students’ houses to know their economic status	3.20	0.34	GE	3.27	0.29	VGE	3.05	0.39	GE
3. having a partnership with VAWC Committee of the LGUs	3.19	0.32	GE	3.23	0.33	GE	3.16	0.29	GE
4. addressing report of exploitation among students	3.20	0.29	GE	3.29	0.27	VGE	3.11	0.28	GE
5. treating sensitive data or record confidentially	3.26	0.35	GE	3.31	0.40	VGE	3.22	0.41	GE
Grand Mean	3.16	0.33	GE	3.20	0.36	GE	3.14	0.35	GE

Implementation of Child Protection Policy on Violence garnered a very great extent rating from school heads ($M=3.30$, $SD=0.36$) and teachers ($M=3.31$, $SD=0.38$). In addition, a great extent rating is provided by the PTAs with a mean of 3.17 ($SD=0.38$). Considering the same illustration, third indicator “taking immediate actions to threats to the students either inside or outside the school premises” recorded the highest mean from school heads ($M=3.34$, $SD=0.37$), teachers ($M=3.35$, $SD=0.37$) and PTAs ($M=3.26$, $SD=0.35$). School heads, teachers and PTAs are on very great extent rating. The same illustration, the rated second indicator “having a record of all the violence happened in school for record keeping” as great extent with a mean of 3.05 from school heads, 3.06 from teachers and 3.00 from PTAs.

In order to address violence that occurs in schools, the data that demonstrated that schools had put in place child protection policies. It is apparent from their actions that they are supplying guards and personnel who will be conspicuous in order to reduce the likelihood of violence. Students who are subjected to acts of violence while at school are more likely to drop out of school, as emphasized by Smarrelli et al. (2024). As a result, it is of utmost importance to acknowledge and identify methods for providing remedies in instances of infractions in order to guarantee that students will be able to graduate. It is salient that schools are safe zone where students will feel safe as they learn and as they stay.

TABLE 4
IMPLEMENTATION OF CPP ON ADDRESSING VIOLENCE

Indicators	School Heads			Teachers			PTAs		
	WM	SD	VD	WM	SD	VD	WM	SD	VD
1. ensuring guard's visibility to lessen the chance of violence	3.24	0.32	GE	3.21	0.32	GE	3.08	0.38	GE
2. having a record of all the violence happened in school for record keeping	3.05	0.34	GE	3.06	0.38	VGE	3.00	0.39	GE
3. taking immediate actions to threats to the students either inside or outside the school premises	3.34	0.37	VGE	3.35	0.37	VGE	3.26	0.35	VGE
4. ensuring that corporal punishment does not exist	3.30	0.35	VGE	3.33	0.34	VGE	3.29	0.32	VGE
5. establishing a classroom setting with no room for humiliation	3.27	0.39	VGE	3.28	0.41	VGE	3.24	0.42	GE
Grand Mean	3.30	0.36	VGE	3.31	0.38	VGE	3.17	0.38	GE

Lastly, implementation of child protection policy in terms of preventing discrimination and bullying is rated as very great extent by school heads (M=3.36, SD=0.39), teachers (M=3.38, SD=0.41) and PTAs (M=3.30, SD=0.41). It is also shown that second indicator “respecting students’ gender identity” is rated the highest as very great extent by the school heads (M=3.48, SD=0.38), teachers (M=3.52, SD=0.34) and PTAs (M=3.37, SD=0.41). The same illustration magnified that the school heads (M=3.20, SD=0.40), teachers (M=3.31, SD=0.42) and PTAs

(M=3.26, SD=0.40) also provided their least mean on fifth indicator “ensuring that students can exercise their own free will in attending religious activities”.

Data reveals that schools are coming up with methods to reduce the likelihood of bullying and prejudice, which are elements of a school that is pleasant to children. It is essential that students feel that they are safe and that they are in an environment where discrimination is not present. Ernst (2021) argued that discrimination and bullying are quite widespread in educational institutions. Schools should be vigilant observers in this regard because there are instances or incidents that go undocumented due to the fact that the person being bullied is hesitant to speak up or ask for assistance.

TABLE 5
IMPLEMENTATION OF CPP ON PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION AND BULLYING

Indicators	School Heads			Teachers			PTAs		
	WM	SD	VD	WM	SD	VD	WM	SD	VD
1. providing equal opportunity to all learners in participating to school activities	3.38	0.37	VGE	3.41	0.38	VGE	3.34	0.42	VGE
2. respecting students’ gender identity	3.48	0.38	VGE	3.52	0.34	VGE	3.37	0.41	VGE
3. setting a classroom environment where the bully and the bullied do not sit next to each other	3.38	0.43	VGE	3.40	0.38	VGE	3.29	0.36	VGE
4. giving opportunity to all kind of religions to lead the prayer or other religious activities	3.32	0.38	VGE	3.37	0.34	VGE	3.29	0.35	VGE
5. ensuring that students can exercise their own free will in attending religious activities	3.29	0.40	VGE	3.31	0.42	VGE	3.26	0.40	VGE
Grand Mean	3.36	0.39	VGE	3.38	0.41	VGE	3.30	0.41	GE

2. Significant Difference on the Assessment of the Respondents on Implementation of Child Protection Policy

The researcher subjected the data from the school heads, teachers and PTAs, the into analysis of variance to test statistical significance.

Table 6 provides details regarding the difference on assessment of implementation of the child protection policy of the three groups of respondents including school heads, teachers and PTAs.

From the illustration, the difference marked an F value of 1.4347 and p value of 0.0412. Having a p value lower than 0.05 helps the researcher to reject the null hypothesis. This denotes that difference on the assessment of child protection policy of the respondents is statistically significant. When compared to the Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), the heads of schools and teachers provided greater ratings. This is based on the knowledge of the school principals and instructors, which is founded in the Department of Education (DepEd) Order on Child Protection Policy. When it comes to child protection policy, there is a discrepancy between the knowledge that school heads and instructors have and that of the Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs).

TABLE 6
DIFFERENCE ON ASSESSMENT OF RESPONDENTS

Assessment of Child Protection Policy	F- value	p-value	Decision
School heads, teachers and PTAs	1.4347	0.0412	Reject Null

3. Best Practices in Implementing Child Protection Policy

The researcher focused on the best practices that the participants used in the implementation process because of the high rating of the respondents on the implementation of the child protection policy.

Theme 1: Tapping Pupil-Leaders as In-Charge of Discipline

It is already an element of the teaching and learning process to provide students with opportunities to take the lead and govern their own behaviour. Students that perform well in their academic studies are the ones who are most frequently selected to serve as leaders or managers of the activities that the class engages in.

When it comes to policies that are in place to protect children, individuals who are suspected of or who have a history of committing infractions of school rules are given the opportunity to lead and supervise the orderliness of the classroom. This will make them believe that they have a responsibility to serve as examples of good behavior because teachers assign them to make sure that everything is in order.

This is found on the following key points of the participants:

I assigned the class president for monitoring (P1)

Those who have strong will are assigned as sergeant at arms (P4)

Those who can lead are given the chance to monitor discipline in classroom (P6)

Tapping learners that they believe in (P9)

It is more on picking the right pupil to monitor (P10)

It is quite crucial to keep in mind that each and every student should be provided with the opportunity to take on a leadership role. Be that as it may, the students ought to be safe within the schools because this is where they spend the majority of their time. In order to achieve the two objectives that have been set, schools provide opportunities for students who have been accused of bullying to take on the responsibility of enforcing discipline in the schools.

Audrey et al. (2024) made the observation that schools are still obligated to provide everyone with the opportunity to be protected while simultaneously ensuring that their rights to develop while attending school are not being compromised. Even if assigning learners to be in

charge of the discipline is an excellent strategy, it is impossible to deny that teachers and school administrators are still need to regularly watch pupils for their own safety.

Theme 2: Improving Visibility on Hard to Reach Areas

Making school staff members more visible to students reduces the likelihood that students may be subjected to abuse or bullying. When learners are aware that they are being observed or monitored, they are more likely to postpone or cease acts such as bullying. Nevertheless, it is impractical to expect that a teacher or other member of staff will constantly be there with them. As a result of this, the implementation of child protection policy will be improved in schools thanks to the use of technology such as cameras and the presence of additional workers. Cameras may be utilized in order to keep an eye on locations that are not visible to teachers.

This practice is found on the following ideas of the participants:

We get lady guard that go around the school as well those who are in charge of cleaning (P2)

Installing CCTV (P3)

We installed CCTV on areas that are not easily visible (P5)

Additional personnel through MOOE (P7)

Assigned someone on the gate for monitoring of people (P8)

When one is aware that their behaviors are being monitored, they are more likely to stay on the correct path. The students themselves are aware of the strain that accompanies being monitored, which is why they conduct themselves in an appropriate manner when they are under the watchful eye of another person. This is accomplished in person or via the internet.

Kunwar (2024) said that modern technology is a great instrument for reducing the likelihood of bullying and improving the implementation of child protection policies. Merely

having a person in plain sight has a significant impact on reducing the likelihood of undesirable acts and incidents occurring.

4. Proposed Action Plan

Using the findings of the study, the researcher came up with a proposed action plan that aims to improve the implementation of child protection policy.

Objectives	Activities / Strategies	Persons Involved	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Success Indicators
To strengthen awareness and compliance with the Child Protection Policy among teachers, learners, and stakeholders	Conduct orientation/reorientation on Child Protection Policy for teachers, parents, and learners	School Head, Guidance Counselor/ Designated Teacher, Child Protection Committee (CPC)	Quarterly	Printed/soft copies of CPP, modules, projector	100% of teachers and learners oriented; increased awareness measured through survey
To promote peer monitoring and learner participation in ensuring a safe classroom environment	Assign Learner Leaders/Monitors per class to help observe, report, and remind classmates about positive behavior and CPP provisions	Class Advisers, Supreme Pupil/Student Government (SPG/SSG), Learner Leaders	Every school year	Monitoring forms, recognition certificates	Active learner leaders monitoring classrooms; decrease in reported bullying cases
To improve surveillance and safety	Install CCTV cameras in strategic areas	School Head, CPC, PTA, LGU support	Within school year	CCTV units, installation	Reduced incidence of bullying and

Objectives	Activities / Strategies	Persons Involved	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Success Indicators
within the school premises	(hallways, gates, playground, canteen) while respecting privacy		(phased installation)	service, maintenance budget	misconduct; documented evidence for investigations
To strengthen reporting and response mechanisms for child protection concerns	Establish a confidential reporting box and digital reporting channel for learners	CPC, ICT Coordinator, Guidance Counselor	Start of school year	Reporting forms, drop box, online platform	More timely reporting of child protection concerns; improved response time
To ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of CPP implementation	Regular CPC meetings to review cases, assess trends, and recommend improvements	CPC, School Head, Teachers, Learner Reps	Bi-monthly	Minutes templates, data reports	Action points implemented; improved resolution of cases
To involve parents and community stakeholders in sustaining CPP	Organize Parent-Teacher-Community meetings highlighting child protection updates	School Head, CPC, GPTA, Barangay Council	Twice a year	IEC materials, venue setup	

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This part of the study provides information about the summary of findings, conclusions drawn and recommendations offered.

Summary of Findings

The following were the summary of findings:

1. School heads, teachers and PTAs gave a great extent implementation on preventive measures to address child abuse (M=3.00, M=2.98, M=2.93), addressing exploitation (M=3.16, M=3.20, M=3.14). In addition, addressing violence is rated as very great extent by school heads (M=3.30), teachers (M=3.31) and great extent by PTAs (M=3.17). Also, preventing discrimination and bullying is rated as very great extent by school heads (M=3.36), teachers (M=3.38) and PTAs (M=3.30).

2. The difference on assessment of implementation of the child protection policy of the three groups of respondents including school heads, teachers and PTAs has an F value of 1.4347 and p value of 0.0412.

3. Tapping Pupil-Leaders as In-Charge of Discipline and Improving Visibility on Hard to Reach Areas are the best practices of school in implementing child protection policy.

4. An action plan is proposed based on the findings of the study that aims to be of great help to the implementation of child protection policy in schools.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study:

1. School principals, teachers and PTAs take the implementation of child protection policies in schools very seriously, but there are still areas that need to be improved, particularly in the search for methods to reduce the number of instances of bullying.

.2. There is a significant difference on the assessment of the school heads, teachers and PTAs on the implementation of child protection policy, which is rooted on the difference on knowledge on policies about child protection policy.

3. While providing opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own safety under tight supervision, schools make use of technology for monitoring learners and keeping them safe.

4. The proposed action plan aims to help schools to better implement child protection policy.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered based on the conclusions:

1. School administrators and teachers may place their attention on dealing with the requirements for the implementation of child safety policies that are centered on preventative measures. This might involve visible service desks as well as a hotline that can be reached when necessary.

2. School heads and teachers may provide orientation to parents about child protection policy implementation so they will be aware about the expectations from the school about child protection.

3. Schools may have partnership with PTAs and other stakeholders to provide CCTV to school for monitoring of learners' safety.

4. The proposed action plan may be adopted in one school to test its effectiveness.

5. Future researchers may conduct study regarding the challenges of other schools regarding child protection policy.

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