

# Teachers' Awareness and School's Responsiveness to the Child Protection Policy: Basis for a Development Plan

Shallimar A. Bayuca

Teacher I, Department of Education, Schools Division of City of Meycauayan, Meycauayan City, Bulacan, Philippines  
Email: shallimar.bayucca@deped.gov.ph

**Abstract:** *This study determines the level of awareness of the teachers in the Child Protection Policy and the level of its implementation in the Schools Division of Meycauayan City. The study used a descriptive research with survey as its primary data gathering tool. 165 elementary teachers chosen through random sampling took part in the survey. With the help of Microsoft Excel, the researcher used the following statistical tools: frequency and percentage to describe the demographic profile; mean and standard deviation to describe the indicators under level of awareness and level of implementation. The study found out that most of the teachers are aware of the Child Protection Policy, but its implementation in the schools is not that rigid. Therefore, it is recommended that implementing the Child Protection Policy be monitored and a more comprehensive information drive be given to teachers. Training modules which include positive and non-violent discipline in classroom management, anger and stress management and gender sensitivity should be included in seminars to be conducted.*

**Keywords**—Child Protection Policy; protecting children; child abuse; teacher's awareness; school implementation

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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, 88).

Different government agencies in the Philippines focused in the welfare of the children including the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) who is the primary welfare agency of the government whose part is to set principles, recognize and provide consultative services to public and private institutions, organizations and persons involved in social welfare activities, and monitor the performing bodies and enforce compliance to standards. As with the Department of Education, it recognizes that cases of abuse may arise in a school set-up because of the tough situations faced by teachers and other officials within and outside the school. Thus, it implemented the Child Protection Policy to offer special protection to children who are threatened or endangered by conditions which affect their usual development and over which they have no control, and to assist the concerned agencies in their rehabilitation (DO #40, s. 2012). The policy further reiterates the duties and responsibilities of the school personnel from the School Head down to the learners themselves, preventive/protective and remedial measures to address child abuse, mistreatment, violence, discrimination and bullying and other deeds of cruelty.

However, a report by Yacat (2011) argues that there is lack of reliable data, official data, to inform child protection responses, and there is a prevailing lack of understanding and capacity of government agencies to enforce, implement and uphold responses to child protection issue and which further suggests that current legislative, policy and operational frameworks of child protection may be inadequate, poorly implemented or managed or lack meaningful congruence with what children and families experience and need.

They also broadcast cases of abuse in television where it involves teachers and learners, parents and children, guardians and wards and other cases of abuse. These news articles are damaging the image of teachers in particular as the second parents of learners and the school as a second home. The researcher then was prompted to conduct the study to determine the level of awareness of the teachers on the Child Protection Policy and if the stated guidelines are being implemented in their respective schools as a basis for a policy revisiting or for an awareness drive on Child Protection Laws and Policies.

## 1.1 RELATED WORKS

Child Protection is a vital international phenomenon. It emphasized preventing abuse and maltreatment. The United Nations General Assembly approved the Child Rights Convention in 1989 to avert any impairment that could threaten children and warrant that it protects their rights (Mulinge, 2010).

Child abuse, as stated in World Health Organization (2006), is categorized as physical, sexual and emotional

abuse. The WHO further reiterated instances of abuse physically, sexually and emotionally.

Anchored with the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the State shall protect the right of children to help, including appropriate care and nutrition, and special safeguard from all forms of abandonment, mistreatment, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions detrimental to their development (Article XV, Section 3 (2)), the Philippine government is trying its best to provide national policy and program in response to child maltreatment. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is first in the list of these agencies whose role is to set standards, accredit and provide consultative services to the public and private institutions, organizations and persons engaged in social welfare activities, and monitor the performing bodies and enforce compliance to standards(Yacat, 2011).

The Department of Education is one of the government agencies who recognize the need for a child protection policy in collaboration with its partners, and stakeholders shall ensure that all schools are conducive to educating the children. For the best interest of the child shall be the vital contemplation in all decisions and engagements encompassing children.

The department targets to guarantee such special protection from all forms of abuse and exploitation and care as is essential for the child's well-being, taking into account the principal rights and duties of parents/ legal guardians (DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012).

The DepEd Order also enumerated preventive and protective measures to address child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination and bullying and other acts of abuse. Preventive measures suggest that school personnel, pupils and parents should attend trainings and seminars with topics about dealing with abuse, including positive peer relationships and enhancement of social and emotional competence. Protective and Remedial measures are the procedures to be employed in handling incidents in school.

Likewise, Cervancia et al., (2019) recommends in their study to dwell on implementing the DepEd Child Protection Policy focusing on monitoring the system adopted by schools and on probing on the capacity of activities afforded to teachers in both public and private educational settings.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Design

The researcher used the descriptive survey method of research in the study with a devised questionnaire as its instrument. Descriptive research was used to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied.

It answers question "what." The characteristics used to describe the situation or population is some kind of categorical scheme also known as descriptive categories (Zulueta&Costales, 2003). Thus, this method fits in the study as it described the level of awareness of the respondents on the Child Protection Policy and the level of its implementation in their respective schools.

### 2.2 Respondents of the Study

There are 165 public elementary teachers in the City Schools Division of Meycauayan, Bulacan who took part in the survey. The researcher used a random sampling technique. Using Slovin's formula, it helped the researcher to determine the sample size.

### 2.3 Instrument of the Study

The researcher used an adapted instrument entitled Survey Questionnaire on Awareness and Implementation of the DepEd Child Protection Policy in Schools by Macatimpag (2018). The instrument contains the following parts: Part I comprise the demographic profile of the respondents as to gender, age and length of service. Part II comprises 15 items pertaining to the teacher's knowledge containing the DepEd Order No. 40 series of 2012 or the DepEd Child Protection Policy. Part III comprises a 15 item statement concerning the implementing the above order in the school where the teacher is teaching.

### 2.4 Data Analysis

The study used descriptive statistics with the help of Microsoft Excel in data tabulation and analysis. The researcher used frequency and percentage to describe the demographic profile of the respondents; mean to measure the central value/score which stand the entire group; and standard deviation to measure the variability of the scores. The used a five point Likert Scaling for the responses of the teachers.

## 3. RESULTS

This study analyzed the level of awareness of teachers regarding the Child Protection Policy and the level of its implementation in the school level. The researcher used different statistical tools to treat the data gathered. The researcher presents the results of the study below:

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
GENDER		
Male	12	7
Female	153	93

AGE		
20-29	29	18
30-39	58	35
40-49	47	28
50-59	26	16
60-65	5	35
Length of Service (in years)		
1-10	107	65
11-20	29	18
21-30	22	13
31-40	7	4
Total	165	100

Table 1 shows that out of the 165 respondents, there are 12 males which consists 7% of the total sample and 153 females (93%). This further portrays that there are more female teachers than male. Regarding the age, it displays that thirty-five percent of the respondents' age is in the 30-39 range with 58 teachers while the 60-65 age range reaped a total of 5 responses (3%). Furthermore, 107 teachers are 1-10 years in the service which comprises 65% of the total respondents while only 4% or 7 teachers served for 31-40 years. This further shows that there are more new teachers than the seasoned teachers who answered the instrument.

Table 2. Level of awareness of the respondents on the child protection policy

ITEM	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
1) There is a DepEd Order on Protecting Children in School from Abuse, Violence, Exploitation, Discrimination, Bullying and other forms of abuse	4.38	0.65	Knowledgeable
2) I have read and understood the DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012	3.43	0.88	Moderately Knowledgeable
3) Pursuant to the 1987 Constitution, the State shall defend the right of children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect treatment, maltreatment and exploitation, including sexual abuse	4.06	0.72	Knowledgeable
4) The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) aims to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment and exploitation, including sexual abuse	3.48	0.78	Moderately Knowledgeable
5) This DepEd aims to ensure that all schools are conducive to the education	4.23	0.80	Knowledgeable

of children			
6) Teachers and learning facilitators especially in learning centers are their substitute parents, and are expected to discharge their functions and duties with this in mind	4.18	0.80	Knowledgeable
7) This policy aims to provide special protection to children who are gravely threatened or endangered by circumstances which affect their normal development and over which they have control, and to assist the concerned agencies in their rehabilitation	4.04	0.81	Knowledgeable
8) DepEd aims to ensure such special protection from all forms of abuse and exploitation and care as is necessary for the child's well-being	4.07	0.85	Knowledgeable
9) This DepEd Order has zero tolerance policy for any act of child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination, bullying and other forms of abuse	3.93	0.84	Knowledgeable
10) There are different forms of bullying	4.26	0.85	Knowledgeable
11) Bullying is committed when a student commits an act or a series of acts directed towards another or several students in a school setting, which results in physical and mental abuse, harassment, intimidation, or humiliation	4.24	0.84	Knowledgeable
12) Corporal punishment is a penalty imposed for an alleged or actual offense, which carried out, for the purpose of discipline, training by a teacher, school administrator, an adult, or any other child who has been given or has assumed authority for punishment or discipline	4.04	0.90	Knowledgeable
13) Positive and Non-violent discipline of children is a way of thinking and a holistic, constructive and pro-active approach to teaching that helps children develop appropriate thinking and behavior in the short and long-term and foster discipline.	4.14	0.83	Knowledgeable
14) This DepEd Order aims to prevent violence against children in schools and make these available to all schools	4.05	0.85	Knowledgeable
15) Violence against children	4.04	0.84	Knowledgeable

committed in schools is an act or series of acts committed by school administrators, academic and non-academic personnel against a child.

AWM	4.04	0.82	Knowledgeable
<i>Legend:</i>			
	1.00-1.50 = Not Knowledgeable		
	1.51-2.50 = Slightly Knowledgeable		
	2.51-3.50 = Moderately Knowledgeable		
	3.51-4.50 = Knowledgeable		
	4.51-5.00 = Very Knowledgeable		

Table 2 shows the 15 item statements which focused on the provisions of the Child Protection Policy. The computed average mean of these items is 4.04 with Standard Deviation of 0.82 and descriptive value of knowledgeable shows that the respondents have an idea on the provisions of the policy.

However, we see that item #2 (*I have read and understood the DepEd Order No. 49, s. 2012*) got the lowest means score with a rating of 3.43 (SD=0.88), which has a descriptive value of “moderately knowledgeable”. This further shows that although the respondents know that there is an existing policy which pertains to the protection of children, they don’t have an idea on the specific title of the basis for the said policy.

Another item that has a “moderately knowledgeable” descriptive value is item #4 *“The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) aims to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment and exploitation, including sexual abuse”* revealed that they are not aware on the said convention and what are being pushed forward by this organization.

Table 3. Level of implementation of the child protection policy in the school

ITEM	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
1) School adopts a child protection policy	4.34	0.82	Implemented
2) Ensures all pupils, school personnel, parents, guardians or custodians and visitors are made aware of child protection policy	4.20	0.79	Implemented
3) Organize and convene the Child Protection Committee for the School	4.13	0.81	Implemented
4) Conduct disciplinary proceedings in cases of offenses committed by pupils	3.40	1.10	Moderately Implemented
5) Conduct the appropriate training and capability building activities on child protection measures and protocols	3.48	1.01	Moderately Implemented
6) Information-dissemination activities and in-service	4.07	0.83	Implemented

training for teachers on the protection of children in school from abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying or peer abuse and other related cases			
7) Ensure that the school adopts a student Code of Conduct to be followed by every pupil while on school grounds, or when travelling to and from school, or during a school-sponsored activity and during lunch period, whether on or off campus	4.05	0.87	Implemented
8) Coordinate with the Department of Social Welfare and Development or the appropriate government agencies or non-government organization on a Child Protection Hotline for reporting abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying and other similar acts and for counselling	4.05	0.87	Implemented
9) The school administrator, teachers, academic and non-academic and other personnel practice positive and non-violent discipline as may be required under the circumstances; provided, that in no case shall corporal punishment be inflicted upon them.	4.13	0.83	Implemented
10) The school child protection committee initiate information dissemination programs and organize activities for the protection of children from abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination and bullying or peer abuse	4.08	0.85	Implemented
11) Training modules which include positive and non-violent discipline in classroom management, anger and stress management and gender sensitivity are used	3.30	1.18	Moderately Implemented
12) Employ means which enhance the skills and pedagogy in integrating and teaching children’s rights in the classroom	3.42	1.14	Moderately Implemented
13) Any incidents of bullying are filed and reported immediately to the School Head	3.47	1.14	Moderately Implemented
14) The school child protection committee has a system for identifying students who may be suffering from significant	3.39	1.17	Moderately Implemented



harm based on any physical, emotional or behavioral signs			
15) The school child protection committee coordinate closely with the Women and Child Protection Desks of the Philippine National Police (PNP) the Local Social Welfare and Development Office (LSWDO) other government agencies, and non-governmental organizations	3.45	1.09	Moderately Implemented
	<b>AWM</b>	3.80	0.97
<b>Legend:</b>			
	1.00-1.50 =	<i>Not Implemented</i>	
	1.51-2.50 =	<i>Slightly Implemented</i>	
	2.51-3.50 =	<i>Moderately Implemented</i>	
	3.51-4.50 =	<i>Implemented</i>	
	4.51-5.00 =	<i>Highly Implemented</i>	

Table 3 presents 15 items pertaining to the level of implementation of the Child protection policy in the school. It has a computed weighted mean of 3.81 with a standard deviation of 0.97 which is under the Likert scale equivalent of “Implemented”.

Item #1 (*School adopts a child protection policy*) got the highest mean score and has a computed mean of 4.34 which shows that the school has already adopted the DepEd Child Protection Policy. While the lowest mean score among the fifteen items is item #14 (*The school child protection committee has a system for identifying students who may be suffering from significant harm based on any physical, emotional or behavioral signs*) with a 3.39.

Eight items were categorized under the Likert scale equivalent of “Implemented” which mean that it is visible in the school while seven items were under the Moderately Implemented category which further shows that although the policy is existing in the school, it was not fully observed/implemented.

**4. DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study is to find out the level of awareness of teachers regarding the child Protection Policy and the level of its implementation in the school level. Based on the results, the researcher would like to suggest a proposed program focused on the items rated with moderately implemented as this will strengthen the awareness and implementation of the policy to protect the children and capacitate the teachers in facing the challenge of handling diverse behavior. This will also help policy makers to review and craft activities that help fully implement the policy alongside with school policies. Al-

Qaysi (2018) indicated the practice of child protection plays a significant role of professional dealing with children.

Some related studies that will provide prompt and necessary administrative perspectives so that the implementation of such a program include the ideas of Riego de Dios (2020); Asio & Jimenez (2020); Asio and Riego de Dios (2019); and Asio, Riego de Dios and Lapuz (2019). On the other contexts, motivation for teachers in implementing such a program is important. Jimenez (2020) mentioned some vital factors regarding this matter. Aizer and Doyle (2018) also explained the impact of child protection in terms of economics per se. However, in the context of child protection (e.g. bullying) teachers are not spared (Asio &Gadia, 2018; 2019). Roche (2019) investigated the policy in the Philippines relating on the protection of children which remains unexamined by literatures. Furthermore, Munro (2019), explained an argument regarding having a positive error in culture in child protection to improve decision-making and risk management.

It is important to provide an efficient child protection policy in every institution. However, such implementation is an additional task of teachers who at the end will suffer its consequences. However, this matter should not be taken for granted since the law provides for its constituents and we are dealing here with innocent and young individuals. They need a constant amount of nurture and care in each stage of their lives. They do not need to suffer because of mismanagement and maltreatment.

**5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE**

The results of the study showed that there are more female teachers than a male with a dominant 93% and 7%. However, for age, the age range was distributed having 58 teachers within the age range of 30-39 and 47 are within 40-49. Most of the respondents are in the field for 1-10 years.It also revealed that the teachers are knowledgeable on the DepEd Children Protection Policy as shown by the knowledgeable description of the computed mean. However, with the implementation, there is a division of rating having eight items rated as implemented and seven items as moderately implemented which further shows that the schools are not that rigid in implementing the policy despite being aware that there is a policy. With this realization, it is recommended that a regular monitoring of its implementation in schools should be done to ensure its realization and training modules which include positive and non-violent discipline in classroom management, anger and stress management and gender sensitivity should be included in seminars to be conducted.

The study provided a basis for the monitoring and implementation of the Child Protection Policy in Cluster A

of the Schools Division of City of Meycauayan. However, it also has areas of limitations. Firstly, the sample size, taken from five elementary schools, might not be a representative of the population of the division; thus, for future research it is proposed that a larger sample be utilized or to be taken from participants which has a more diverse background. Secondly, the demographic profile showed that most of the respondents are in the service for 1-10 years while experienced teachers has the least frequency; it is therefore paramount to consider participants with the same profile for a more reliable data.

## References

- [1] Aizer, A., & Doyle, J.J. (2018). Economics of child protection: Maltreatment, foster care, and intimate partner violence. *Annual Review of Economics*, 10, 87-108. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-economics-080217-053237>
- [2] Al-Qaysi, N. (2018). The impact of child protection policy on Omani classrooms. *International Journal of Information Technology and Language Studies*, 2(1), 1-11. <http://journals.sfu.ca/ijitls>
- [3] Asio, J.M.R., &Gadia, E.D. (2019). Students' perception on instructor bullying in a local college in Zambales, Philippines. *International Journal of Social & Scientific Research*, 5 (2), 1-10. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3495293>
- [4] Asio, J.M.R., &Gadia, E.D. (2018). Awareness and understanding of college students towards teacher bullying: Basis for policy inclusion in the student handbook. *PAFTE Research Journal*, 8 (1), 142-153. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.32703.15528>
- [5] Asio, J.M.R., & Jimenez, E.C. (2020). Professional development, organizational climate, supervisory rapport and overall satisfaction of employees: An attitudinal study. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Multidisciplinary Study*, 6 (4), 34-40. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341422854\\_Professional\\_Development\\_Organizational\\_Climate\\_Supervisory\\_Rapport\\_and\\_Overall\\_Satisfaction\\_of\\_Employees\\_An\\_Attitudinal\\_Study](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341422854_Professional_Development_Organizational_Climate_Supervisory_Rapport_and_Overall_Satisfaction_of_Employees_An_Attitudinal_Study)
- [6] Asio, J.M.R., &Riego de Dios, E.E. (2019). The college students' perspective on what makes an educator well-qualified. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 3 (3), 126-138. <https://dx.doi.org/10.33902/jpr.v3i3.124>
- [7] Asio, J.M.R., Riego de Dios, E.E., &Lapuz, A.M.E. (2019). Professional skills and work ethics of selected faculty in a local college. *PAFTE Research Journal*, 9 (1), 164-180. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED598225.pdf>
- [8] Cervancia, J.M, Hernandez, K.U, Rodavia, M., Roxas,E. (2019). Child abuse and compliance on child protection policy in private and public basic educational institutions. *International Journal for Cross-Disciplinary Subjects in Education*, 10, (1), 3957-3963.
- [9] DepEd Order No. 40 series 2012. DepEd Child Protection Policy. [https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/DO\\_s2012\\_40.pdf](https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/DO_s2012_40.pdf)
- [10] Glen, S. (2012) Slovin's formula: What is it and when do I use it? <https://www.statisticshowto.com/how-to-use-slovin-formula/#:~:text=When%20Slovin's%20formula%20is%20used,example%2C%20in%20a%20question.>
- [11] Jimenez, E.C. (2020). Motivating factors of teachers in developing supplementary learning materials. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 8 (5), 108-113. <https://doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/10912>
- [12] Macatimpag,L. (2018) A survey questionnaire on the awareness and implementation of deped child protection policy. <https://www.scribd.com/document/371066136/Survey-Questionnaire-for-Deped-Child-Protection-Policy>
- [13] Mulinge, M.M. (2010). Persistent socio-economic and political dilemmas to the implementation of the 1989 United Nation Convention on the rights of the child in sub-Saharan Africa. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 34, 10-17.
- [14] Munro, E. (2019). Decision-mking under uncertainty in child protection: Creating a just and learning culture. *Child & Family Social Work*, 24 (1), 123-130. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12589>
- [15] Riego de Dios, E.E. (2020). Supervisory relationship, organizational climate and satisfaction of employees in a local community college. *International Journal of Academic Management Science Research*, 4 (2), 164-170. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED603382>
- [16] Roche,S. (2019). Childhoods in policy: A critical analysis of national child protection policy in the Philippines. *Children & Society*, 33 (2), 95-110. <https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12295>
- [17] Saplala J.E.G. (2007). Understanding abusive relationships in childhood and violent behavior among convicted felons. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 40 (2), 88-110.

- [18] World Health Organization (2006). Preventing child maltreatment: A guide to taking action and generating evidence. *World Health Organization* [https://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/publications/violence/child\\_maltreatment/en/](https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/publications/violence/child_maltreatment/en/)
- [19] Yacat, J. (2011). Child Protection in the Philippines: A Situational Analysis. *Save the Children Child Protection Initiative in Southeast Asia and the Pacific*. [https://www.academia.edu/6475617/Child\\_Protection\\_in\\_the\\_Philippines\\_A\\_Situation\\_Analysis](https://www.academia.edu/6475617/Child_Protection_in_the_Philippines_A_Situation_Analysis)
- [20] Zulueta, F. M. &Costales, Jr., N. (2003) *Methods of Research: Thesis-Writing and Applied Statistics*, Navotas City, National Bookstore.