

Stakeholders' Awareness and Schools' Responsiveness on Child Protection Policy: Springboard for the Development of School Policy Manual

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Abstract

A child's safety is not just a responsibility - it is a right that begins with awareness and is upheld through actions. This study aimed to determine stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness to the Child Protection Policy (CPP). Using descriptive and correlational method, data were gathered from 184 teachers, 78 Child Protection Committee (CPC) members, 65 PTA officers, and 65 learners through survey questionnaires and analyzed using statistical methods, using pearson r and ANOVA. The findings revealed high awareness among stakeholders, with the domains of composition and proper procedure, engagement, attitudes towards CPP, and awareness on the establishment of CPP rated highly. The school's responsiveness to CPP was also rated high, with the domains of objectives, managing feedbacks, duties and responsibilities, conducting activities, planning and preparation, monitoring and evaluation activities, and delegating human resources all receiving high ratings. Moreover, there was a significance difference in the awareness and schools' responsiveness of CPP across respondent groups. Awareness and perceptions of the schools' responsiveness to the CPP are higher among teachers and CPC members than among learners and parents, highlighting a gap in stakeholder engagement. The study concludes that stakeholders have a strong understanding of CPP and schools are committed to its objectives. Recommendations include strengthening stakeholder participation in capacity building, intensified awareness campaigns, and enhanced feedback systems to ensure a safer and more child-friendly school environment.

Keywords: stakeholder, stakeholders' awareness, schools' responsiveness, Child Protection Policy, stakeholder, CPP, Child Protection, Child Protection Committee

I. INTRODUCTION

Children are naturally susceptible to bullying, prejudice, exploitation, abuse, and violence. Children are individuals who are under the age of eighteen (18) but are unable to care or protect themselves. This vulnerability necessitates robust protective measures.

Recent research conducted in six East Asian and Pacific nations revealed that there is a lack of comprehensive documentation of concerns regarding child abuse and protection in schools. Educational authorities (Thomas et al., 2018)

seldom obtain information about child safety events. The primary focus was on assessing the use of physical or corporal punishment in accordance with the regulations that were put in place to ban the practice. Shewchuk (2016) found that while most school boards document their child protection policies, the detail and comprehensiveness of these documents vary significantly. The topic of sexual assault and harassment in schools were poorly documented via official channels within education ministries (UNICEF, 2020).

The Department of Education (DepEd) acknowledges the potential for abuse within the school environment, often due to the challenging circumstances faced by teachers and other officials inside and outside the school (David, 2021). To mitigate these risks, the Department of Education (DepEd) enforced the Child Protection Policy through DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012, which provides special protection to children threatened by conditions affecting their development and beyond their control (DepEd, 2012).

Meanwhile, studies conducted that there were at least 4 out of 10 children aged 6 to 10 (Grades 1-3) and 7 out of 10 aged 9 to 13 years old (Grades 4-6) and high school students aged 12 to 17 who had experienced violence in school (UNICEF, 2016; Zamora, 2021). There are children who experience violence from their classmates and school personnel (Antiza & Labitad, 2024). Simultaneously, sexual harassment is the most common type of sexual assault in elementary schools, with females being more vulnerable (Asio et al., 2020). However, no studies have conducted looking into the awareness of the stakeholders about the implementation of the CPP.

There are still issues in spite of these efforts, especially with regard to the absence of trustworthy and reliable information to guide child protection responses. Furthermore, there is often a limited understanding and capacity among government agencies to enforce, implement, and uphold responses to child protection issues, suggesting that existing legislative, policy, and operational frameworks may be inadequate or poorly implemented (Castro & Santiago, 2022; Hernandez, 2021). The media also frequently reports cases of abuse involving teachers, learners, parents, and children, which can damage the reputation of educators as second parents and schools as second homes (Lopez, 2023).

The lack of information and cooperation in the side of parents misunderstood the role of teachers in disciplining their children (Quinto & Santos, 2021). The policy was not thoroughly explained to the parents the rights of their children and their role in child protection policy of the DepEd (Mag-atas & Carmona, 2023).

Seemingly, some parents do not know the difference between discipline and child abuse. The use of the word trauma by some parents is a great

way for them to blow up their issue with the teacher (Caballero & Reyes, 2021). Parents nowadays are used to posting on Facebook when their child is victim of child abuse. These parents have lack of awareness that schools have proper procedures and policies on child protection (Cañezal et al., 2024).

In the Division of South Cotabato, there are cases of child violence involving teachers, learners, and parents (DepEd South Cotabato, 2022). However, lack of studies to document the effectiveness of implementation of the CPP involving the awareness of stakeholders, especially the parents (Provincial News Agency, 2023).

Given these concerns, the researcher was motivated to carry out this study in order to determine the awareness of stakeholders and the responsiveness of schools in implementing the Child Protection Policy (CPP). The results of this study will serve as the foundation for policy revisions or the start of a campaign to raise awareness of child protection laws and regulations. It also add to the limited literatures and studies concerning the stakeholders' involvement in CPP.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The study investigates the degree of responsiveness and awareness among stakeholders and schools in the implementation of Child Protection Policy (CPP) with a number of relevant indicators. To provide a strong theoretical framework, several key considerations can be explored: Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) and Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) emphasizes that a child's development is influenced by multiple environments, including family, school, community, and broader societal systems. Schools, as a major micro-system, play a significant role in protecting children. Teachers, as central figures in the school environment, can either positively or negatively influence children's well-being. This theory explains how different environmental layers influence the awareness and responsiveness to policies concerning children. The low awareness weakens the protective role of the microsystem, while stronger collaboration in the mesosystem and effective implementation in the

exosystem are crucial for strengthening child protection efforts.

Moreover, Social Learning Theory focuses on the idea that individuals learn behaviors, norms, and values through observation and interaction with others. Teachers act as role models for children and can foster an environment that promotes protection and safety by exemplifying proper behavior regarding child protection (Alfandri, 2017). By strengthening awareness campaigns, training programs, and positive role modeling, the school can enhance stakeholder engagement and responsiveness to child protection policies. When stakeholders consistently demonstrate child-safe behaviors, learners will internalize these practices, leading to a safer and more responsive school environment.

Furthermore, according to the Theory of Planned Behaviour, attitudes, perceived control of behaviour, and subjective norms all affect how people behave. In the context of child protection, a teacher's willingness to respond appropriately to child protection issues is shaped by their awareness of policies, the school's expectations, and their confidence in carrying out protective actions (Al-Qaysi, 2018). The low awareness of involved individuals affects the attitudes and perceived ability to act on Child Protection concerns, while the high awareness strengthens their intention and capacity to implement policies, emphasizing the need for awareness programs to bridge the gap and enhance responsiveness to issues.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness to the Child Protection Policy (CPP).

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions.

1. What is the extent of stakeholders' awareness to Child Protection Policy (CPP) in terms of:

- 1.1 engagement;
- 1.2 participation in capacity building;
- 1.3 attitude towards CPP;
- 1.4 awareness of the establishment of CPP;

and,

- 1.5 composition and proper procedure?

2. What is the extent of schools' responsiveness on CPP implementation in terms of:

- 2.1 objectives;

2.2 planning and preparation;

2.3 delegating human resources;

2.4 duties and responsibilities; and,

2.5 conducting activities;

2.6 monitoring and evaluating activities; and

2.7 managing feedbacks?

3. Is there a significant relationship between the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness to CPP implementation?

4. Is there a significant difference in the awareness of CPC Members, teachers, parents and learners on CPP Implementation?

5. Is there a significant difference on the extent of school's responsiveness on Child Protection Policy based from CPC Members, PTA Officers, learners, and teachers?

6. What development plan can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were tested @ 0.05 level of significance.

H01. There is no significant relationship between the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness of CPP implementation.

H02. There is no significant difference in the awareness of CPC Members, teachers, parents and learners of CPP Implementation.

H03. There is no significant difference on the extent of school's responsiveness on Child Protection Policy based from CPC Members, PTA Officers, learners and teachers.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study were beneficial to the following persons and entities:

Learners. The result of the study could be beneficial to all learners since they are the recipients of action of the program and services related to child protection. This study would give them new insights on their own rights on how it can affect their academic performance.

Teachers. This study may provide educators with insights about how to integrate child protection policy in their teaching-learning as well as the tools needed since the teachers are the first-hand recipients and implementers of the program. A collaboration between the teacher and the school community in enhancing the child protection program is highly recommended to ensure the

strengthened operation and implementation of the school programs, activities, and projects.

School Heads. They would benefit from the data generated in this research since it would help them identify areas that need greater attention and set standards in the implementation of a program. Results were used in future planning and adjustment, specifically in designing strategies to implement the child protection program and services effectively.

DepEd Officials. The results can serve as a reference point for developing targeted implementation plans tailored to the specific needs of the region and division. By understanding the relationship between the teachers' level of awareness and the school's level of implementation of Child Protection Policy, DepEd can create strategies that directly encourage and facilitate school community engagement. The research can inform potential enhancements to national DepEd guidelines or programs related to Child Protection. By highlighting effective practices identified in this study, DepEd Central can strengthen its policy guidelines and framework.

Researcher. For the researcher, this study would expand the knowledge in the field of research and the topic being studied. This study would be the basis of the researcher to be aware of the existing policies that protects learners against violence and corporal punishment. The findings could help researcher understand and employ appropriate strategy in handling learners' behaviour.

Future Researchers. This study served as a practical guide for researchers investigating the school level of implementation on Child Protection Policy indicating other perspective. The results can act as a springboard for new research endeavours.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The present research focused on the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness in the implementation of the Child Protection Policy (CPP). The stakeholders' awareness of the Child Protection Policy (CPP) was delimited to its engagement, participation in capacity building, attitude towards CPP, awareness of the establishment of CPP, composition and proper procedure. The schools' responsiveness of CPP implementation was focused on its objectives,

planning and preparation, delegating human resources, duties and responsibilities, conducting activities, monitoring and evaluating activities, and managing feedbacks.

The respondents of this study included public elementary school teachers, school heads, PTA officers, learners, and Child Protection Committee (CPC) members from the Sto. Niño District, Division of South Cotabato. It was conducted during the school year 2024-2025.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The quantitative design using descriptive-correlational method utilized in this study. Creswell 2017 (as cited by Sukamolson, 2023) said that quantitative research is explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods. In this study the descriptive method was used determine the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness in the implementation of Child Protection Policy (CPP),

Accordingly, a correlational research design investigates relationships between variables without the researcher controlling or manipulating any of them. A correlation reflects the strength or direction of the relationship between two (or more) variables. The direction of a correlation can be either positive or negative (Bhandari, 2022). The relationship between the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness in the implementation of Child Protection Policy (CPP) and based on the result of the study the researcher developed a policy manual that was strengthened the implementation of the child protection policy.

Operational Definition of Terms

To have a better understanding of the words, to achieve clarity, and to attain logical presentation of the study the following terms were defined operationally.

Attitude towards CPP refers to the responsiveness of the school that highlights the need for ongoing professional development and support to ensure a uniformly high level of understanding and commitment to child protection across all stakeholders and teachers.

Awareness of the establishment of CPP refers to the awareness of stakeholders on the

implementation of CPP and improve the identification and reporting of child protection concerns.

Child Protection Policy refers to a set of guidelines and procedures designed that involves written documentation, staff training, clear reporting mechanisms, and systems for monitoring and supporting affected children in every school.

Composition and proper procedure refers to the actions and measure that are implemented consistently in the event of cases and violation.

Conducting Activities refer to the set of programs for the development of learners' social and behavioural aspects for success implementation of the CPP.

Delegating human resources refer to the implementation of the CPP that make use of the human resources towards policy by means of practice promoting or disseminating knowledge about school-based child safety and/or anti-bullying policies.

Duties and responsibilities refer to the functions and obligations of each committee and effort in legislating policies, programs and activities for the protection of children against abuse.

Engagement refers to an ongoing process of interaction between the school and the stakeholders to understand which issues matter most to stakeholders in regards to CPP implementation.

Managing feedbacks refer to the general assessment of the school on perceptions of stakeholders, teachers and learners about the implementation of CPP.

Monitoring and evaluating activities refers to the assessment and observance of child protection policy implementation through prescribe monitoring and evaluation sheet.

Objectives refer to the direction and goals of the school in the implementation of the CPP concentrated on the code of ethics contained in the school-based child safety or anti-bullying program.

Participation on capacity building refers to the capacitating of teachers, learners and parents to understand and deal CPP by conducting sessions, trainings and seminars.

Planning and preparation refers to the groundwork of implementation of CPP with careful analysis of the mechanisms and guidelines.

Schools' responsiveness refers to the actual engagement in implementing the Child Protection Policy (CPP) based on the objectives, planning and preparation, delegating human resources, duties and responsibilities, conducting activities, monitoring and evaluating activities and managing feedbacks.

Stakeholders' Awareness refers to the degree of knowledge and understanding of the stakeholders regarding the Child Protection Policy and its rules and regulation implementation in school.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in thirteen (13) elementary schools of Sto. Nino District, Division of South Cotabato, Region XII namely Ambaligan Elementary School, Cajanedo Elementary School, Jblanco Elementary School, Guinsang-an Elementary School, Katipunan Elementary School, Magsaysay Elementary School, M.Roxas Elementary School, New Sara Elementary School, San Isidro Elementary School, San Vicente Elementary School, Sto. Niño Central Elementary School, Panay Elementary School and Teresita Elementary School.

The researcher selected all schools because based from DepEd policy, each school must have child protection policy. However, the process was not clear to all schools during cases are happened (DepEd, 2012). Furthermore, these schools do not have yet internal policy and address such.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were composed of public elementary school teachers, school heads and PTA officers, learners and Child Protection Committee (CPC) Members of Sto. Nino District, Division of South Cotabato. The school heads and teacher-respondents are regular permanent teachers assigned to different schools. The researcher excluded the teachers who are locally paid (DepEd, 2014). In selecting the teacher-respondents, the researcher included all regular permanent teachers, with class advisers and has teaching experience of more than 1 year. The researcher utilized 184 teachers.

Moreover, seventy-eight (78) Child Protection Committee (CPC) members who are the primary enforcers and advocates of CPP within the school were selected as respondents. The CPC members include the School head, school Guidance

coordinator, Teacher's Association president, Parent-teachers' Association (PTA) President, Supreme Elementary Learner Government (SELG) President, and Barangay CPC Member. The researcher also included the sixty-five (65) PTA officers as respondents holding major positions in the PTA organization since they are the key representatives of the parent body in bridging communication between the school and families. Lastly, the researcher included the sixty-five (65) SELG officers as respondents of the study for they serve as representatives of the student body and play a key role in promoting awareness of school policies, including the CPP.

Sampling Technique

This study used census or total population sampling to determine the number of respondents among the teachers, CPC members, PTA and SELG officers. The total population sampling is a type of purposive sampling method where the researcher chooses to examine the entire population of the school heads and teachers that have a particular set of characteristics. A total of 184 teachers-respondents based from the Division and District Planning office data (2024), and seventy-eight (78) (CPC) members, sixty-five (65) PTA officers, and sixty-five (65) SELG officers.

In total population sampling according to Canonizado (2020) researcher chooses to study the entire population because the size of the population that has the particular set of characteristics that researcher are interest in is typically very small. Consequently, if a researcher abortively to include a small number of units in the research study a significant piece of the dilemma that the researcher is trying to understand may be missing.

Sugiyono (2015) supported that total sampling is a technique to collect the data which is the total number sample is similar with the total population since the total of students, parents and teachers were all selected and the population became the sample of this study. Thus, the total of population became the representative of the study.

Research Instrument

The researcher utilized the two sets of the data gathering instruments. The first one intended to gather the data on the stakeholders' awareness on

CPP and second part is all about the school responsiveness on CPP.

Part 1 involved the stakeholders' awareness on the implementation of CPP. The data gathering tool compose of five (5) indicators. It was adapted and slightly revised to fit the present concepts of the study from Survey Questionnaire on Awareness and Implementation of the DepEd Child Protection Policy in Schools by Macatimpag (2018); Antiza and Labitad (2024) and Baronía (2020). There are six statements for each indicator. Each item in the questionnaires was answered using a 5-point Likert scale: 5 – Strong Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 – Moderately Agree, 2 - Disagree, and 1 – Strongly Disagree.

Part II on the school responsiveness on CPP was adapted from the study of Antiza and Labitad (2024). Each variable consists of six (6) statement. Each item in the questionnaires were answered using a 5-point Likert scale 5 – Strong Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 – Moderately Agree, 2 - Disagree, and 1 – Strongly Disagree.

Validity and Reliability Test

The data-gathering tool underwent validity and reliability tests. Initially, the Advisory Committee members of the SKSU graduate school reviewed the survey tools. The structure, grammar, and manuscript organization were reviewed and improved. Once enhanced, the contents were subjected to the validation of six (6) research enthusiasts from the DepEd, Youth formation office and recommended internal validators from SKSU.

The content validation aims to evaluate the item questions related to a given construct of a problem by retaining the important while eliminating the unessential items in a given domain. The content validation ratio (CVR) can be calculated using Lawshe's Method (Aithal et al., 2020). The researcher used the validation tool (Youssof, 2019) with an acceptable CVI of 0.83.

Likewise, a pilot test was administered to ensure the tool's reliability in selected elementary schools. In particular, Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the survey instruments. The reliability scores for two instruments were 0.81 (highly acceptable reliability) and 0.91 (excellent reliability) respectively.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher followed the data gathering procedure to have a systematic process and compliance of the research protocol. After finding out that the research instrument was valid and reliable, approval of the Graduate School to conduct the study was secured. Subsequently, upon securing the request from the College of Graduate School, a letter request was forwarded to the Schools Division Superintendent for approval (Ang Karugasik, 2016).

With the consent of the Schools Division Superintendent, a similar letter was drafted and sent to the District Supervisor for a recommendation and approval of the data gathering with the supervision of the school principal. The distribution of the research instrument to the respondents automatically followed.

Persistently, the researcher distributed the survey questionnaire in every elementary school. She asked the permission from her school principal to allow her to file a leave of absence during the data gathering.

The research instrument was retrieved as soon as the respondents finally answer all survey questionnaire items. After all quantitative data were collected and tabulated; data analysis and interpretation were the last stage of the data-gathering procedure.

Statistical Treatment

The data gathered was encoded, processed, computed and analysed using the appropriate statistical tools. Mean and standard deviation was used to determine the level of stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness on the implementation of Child Protection Policy (CPP).

To interpret the findings on the level of stakeholders' awareness, the scale, mean range with the corresponding description (numerical rating, verbal description, and interpretation) shown below was used (Antiza & Labitad, 2024):

Mean Range	Verbal Description	Qualitative Interpretation
4.20 – 5.00	Very High	The respondent has a comprehensive and deep understanding of child protection policies, knows all the protocols, and ensures that they are consistently followed in all school-related activities.
3.40 – 4.19	High	The respondent has a strong grasp of child protection policies, usually follows the procedures, and can effectively apply the policies in most situations.
2.60 – 3.39	Moderately High	The respondent has a basic understanding of child protection policies, but there are areas where the understanding or application could be improved.
1.80 – 2.59	Low	The respondent is somewhat aware of child protection policies, but there are many gaps in their knowledge and application, leading to potential risks.
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low	The respondent is either unaware or has minimal knowledge of child protection policies, leading to inadequate application and potential vulnerabilities.

Lastly, to interpret the findings on the level of school responsiveness, the scale, mean range with the corresponding description (numerical rating, verbal description, and interpretation) shown below was used (Atinza & Labitad, 2024):

Mean Range	Verbal Description	Qualitative Interpretation
4.20 – 5.00	Very High	The school is responsive to the CPP mandates all the times.
3.40 – 4.19	High	The school is responsive to the CPP mandates most of the times.
2.60 – 3.39	Moderately High	The school is responsive to the CPP mandates sometimes.
1.80 – 2.59	Low	The school is responsive to the CPP mandates sometimes.
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low	The school is never responsive to the CPP mandates.

Pearson r was utilized to determine the relationship between the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness on the implementation of Child Protection Policy (CPP), (Obilor & Amadi, 2018). ANOVA was used to determine the significant difference on the stakeholders' awareness and schools responsiveness according to the respondents.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part provides the results and discussion of the data relative to the research questions presented. The succeeding tables present the gathered data and the corresponding meaning and implications based on the data analysis. The discussion of relevant related works of literature and studies supported the results

Extent of Stakeholders' Awareness on Child Protection Policy (CPP)

The first research problem deals on the extent of stakeholders' awareness on Child Protection Policy (CPP) relative to their engagement, participation on capacity building, attitude towards CPP, awareness on the establishment of CPP and composition and proper procedure.

Table 1

Extent of Stakeholder's Awareness on Child Protection Policy

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
Composition and Proper Procedure	4.02	0.56	High
Engagement	3.95	0.52	High
Attitudes towards CPP	3.95	0.56	High
Awareness on the Establishment of CPP	3.73	0.72	High
Participation to Capacity Building	3.43	0.61	High
Overall Mean	3.82	0.48	High

Table 1 displays the summary of stakeholders' awareness on Child Protection Policy. The respondents perceived the awareness at high level ($\bar{x}=3.82$, $SD=0.48$). This shows that the CPP is highly valued for protecting students and that stakeholders are aware of the need to follow the guidelines and maintain a proper and efficient act procedure.

Seemingly, composition and proper procedure ($\bar{x}=4.02$, $SD=0.56$) obtained the highest score. This followed by engagement ($\bar{x}=3.95$, $SD=0.52$), attitudes towards CPP ($\bar{x}=3.95$, $SD=0.56$) and awareness on the establishment of CPP ($\bar{x}=3.73$, $SD=0.72$). Meanwhile, participation to capacity building obtained the lowest mean of 3.43 ($SD=0.61$).

The findings conclude that stakeholders have high level of awareness which indicates a strong grasp of child protection policies which follows the procedures, and effectively apply the policies in most situations affecting the children. The degree of knowledge and understanding of the stakeholders regarding the Child Protection Policy and its rules and regulation implementation in school is high.

The present findings are consistent to the ideas of Gonzalez (2023) states that it is important for schools to have kid protection policies. Moreover, Caballero and Reyes (2021) look at how stakeholders think the policies work, which gives a

more complete picture of their effects. While Flores and Castro (2019) evaluate the effects of these policies on the general school climate, Dela Cruz (2022) identifies specific obstacles and facilitators to policy implementation in rural schools. Gonzales (2023) talks about involving stakeholders and how it can help make child protection steps more effective.

Extent of Schools' Responsiveness on CPP Implementation

The second research problem deals on the extent of schools' responsiveness on CPP implementation in terms of objectives, planning and preparation, delegating human resources, duties and responsibilities, conducting activities, monitoring and evaluating activities and managing feedbacks.

Table 2

Extent of School's Responsiveness in Child Protection Policy (CPP) Implementation

Factors	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
Objective	4.21	0.49	Very high
Managing Feedbacks	4.12	0.54	High
Duties and Responsibilities	4.08	0.51	High
Conducting Activities	4.05	0.55	High
Planning and Preparation	4.03	0.47	High
Monitoring and evaluation Activities	4.01	0.51	High
Delegating Human Resources	3.97	0.50	High
Overall Mean	4.06	0.42	High

Table 2 displays the summary of schools' responsiveness in Child Protection Policy. When taken as a whole, the school's responsiveness is rated high ($\bar{x}=4.06$, $SD=0.42$). This indicates that the school acted on the CPP to lessen the causes of child abuses and bullying in school.

In particular, when taken singly, the school responded very high on the objectives of the CPP with highest mean of 4.21 ($SD=0.49$). Seemingly, the following domains rated high: managing feedbacks ($\bar{x}=4.12$, $SD=0.54$), duties and responsibilities ($\bar{x}=4.08$, $SD=0.51$), conducting activities ($\bar{x}=4.05$, $SD=0.55$), planning and preparation ($\bar{x}=4.03$, $SD=0.47$) and monitoring and evaluation activities with mean of 4.01 ($SD=0.51$). On the contrary, delegating human resources obtained the lowest mean of 3.97 ($SD=0.42$). The school strongly responded when it comes to the objectives of the CPP as guiding factor for the success of its implementation. However, delegating

human resources observed to have lower emphasis as the school minimized the involvement of the teachers, stakeholders and learners because of the child cases are not visible.

This implies that schools possess high rating for being responsive to the rules, policies and guidelines of the CPP by ensuring the positive way to manage the learners' behaviour is underway. The high responsiveness allows students to build self-esteem and confidence, safe from all kinds of abuse and bullying, pushing from a positive, nonviolent way to discipline children.

The results are consistent to the ideas of Cervantes (2020) that heads of schools and teachers look at how the Child Protection Program can be used to set goals. During the introduction of the CPP, it was seen that the code of conduct has specific rules about how to deal with possible risks to students. There is a stated policy at the school to protect children and stop bullying. It is based on the Department of Education's Child Protection Policy (Cervantes, 2020). There is also a code of behaviour that is part of the school's child protection or anti-bullying policy. There are specific parts of the code of behaviour that deal with possible risks to learners. There are official rules that tell people how to handle disciplinary actions when teachers, students, or learners break the rules. The school has clear rules about how to discipline learners in a good and nonviolent way (Baronia, 2020).

Relationship between the Stakeholders' Awareness and Schools' Responsiveness on CPP Implementation

The third research problem investigates the significant relationship between the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness on CPP implementation.

Table 3.

Relationship between the Stakeholders 'Awareness and Schools' Responsiveness on CPP Implementation

Variables	Statistics	Engage ment	Partici pation	Attendanc e	Attitude	Composition and Procedure	Stakeholders' Awareness of CPP
Objectives	Pearson's r p-value	0.54 .001	0.39 .001	0.615 .001	0.552 .001	0.634 .001	0.676 .001
Planning and Preparation	Pearson's r p-value	0.52 .001	0.37 .001	0.543 .001	0.511 .001	0.528 .001	0.611 .001
Delegating human resources	Pearson's r p-value	0.48 .001	0.40 .001	0.536 .001	0.398 .001	0.478 .001	0.562 .001
Duties and responsibiliti es	Pearson's r p-value	0.52 .001	0.36 .001	0.548 .001	0.538 .001	0.536 .001	0.621 .001
Conducting activities	Pearson's r p-value	0.52 .001	0.38 .001	0.571 .001	0.547 <.001	0.578 <.001	0.644 <.001
Monitoring and evaluation activities	Pearson's r p-value	0.53 .001	0.39 .001	0.574 .001	0.53 <.001	0.538 <.001	0.635 <.001
Managing Feedbacks	Pearson's r p-value	0.46 .001	0.37 .001	0.548 .001	0.4 .001	0.549 .001	0.571 .001
Overall Mean	Pearson's r p-value	0.62 .001	0.47 .001	0.696 .001	0.61 .001	0.748 .001	0.778 .001

Notes: $df=390$; $p<.05$, significant

Table 3 shows the relationship between the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness on CPP implementation. When taken as a whole, stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness on CPP implementation possess a significant relationship (r -value=0.778, $p=0.001$). The null hypothesis is rejected. There is a strong evidence to conclude that school's responsiveness is a strong predictor of stakeholders' awareness. When the school observe the responsiveness of the CPP, the stakeholders are fully aware on the rules, policies and guidelines and other things that needs to do to have a smooth and stable policy implementation.

When taken singly, the responsiveness on its objectives (r -value=0.676, $p=0.001$), planning and preparation (r -value=0.611, $p=0.001$), delegating human resources (r -value=0.562, $p=0.001$), duties and responsibilities (r -value=0.621, $p=0.001$), conducting activities (r -value=0.644, $p=0.001$), monitoring and evaluating activities (r -value=0.635, $p=0.001$) and managing feed backs (r -value=0.571, $p=0.001$) show a significant relationship to all the domains of stakeholders' awareness. The awareness depends on the level of schools' responsiveness.

Setting up Child Protection Policy Committees is linked to a number of aspects of how responsive schools are, such as how they handle

discipline, how involved stakeholders are, and how they watch and evaluate (Sapul, 2020).

There was no statistically significant link between the availability of support services and setting up a child safety policy committee, though (Cardona, 2015).

Significant Difference on the Awareness of Child Protection Policy of CPC Members, Parents, Learners and Teachers.

The fourth research problem deals on the significant difference on the awareness on Child Protection Policy of CPC members, parents, learners and teachers.

Table 4
One-way ANOVA Results of the Stakeholder' Awareness of CPP by Types of Respondents

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	35.13	3	11.71	84.0875	0.0000
Within Groups	54.03	388	0.14		
Total	89.16	391	0.00		

Table 4 shows the One-way ANOVA results of the stakeholder' awareness of CPP by types of respondents. As indicated the perception of both teachers, school heads, CPC committee and PTA on their awareness of CPP possess a significant difference (F-value=84.0875, p-value -0.0000). There is strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis because there is an established significant difference on the perception of stakeholders.

The result infers that the teachers and school heads have different perception on how they looked into the bigger picture about CPP implementation which far different from the view of parents and learners. Each group of respondents have different ideas and opinion on how the CPP works to prevent the any cases that involves the learners.

Teachers and parents play a big role in making sure policies are followed and goals are met. Because of this, teachers need to know everything about any strategy that is meant for schools (Bayuca, 2020). Policies are mostly actions that the government takes to guide a certain area in a way that makes it easier to reach goals. Since the law

says that children have the right to enjoy their lives, the government has created the child protection policy to guide and protect those lives, both inside and outside of school (Sapul, 2022).

Table 5
Multiple Comparisons of Means

Type of Respondents	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Learner	65	3.37	
Parent	65	3.42	
Teacher	184		4.02
CPC	78		4.05
Sig.		.828	.934

A post hoc analysis is needed because the difference is significant ($p < .05$). The table presents a multiple comparisons analysis of mean awareness scores among different stakeholder groups regarding the Child Protection Policy (CPP). The results show that learners ($M = 3.37$) and parents ($M = 3.42$) have similar awareness levels, forming Subset 1, while teachers ($M = 4.02$) and CPC members ($M = 4.05$) exhibit significantly higher awareness, forming Subset 2. The significance values (.828 and .934) indicate that there is no significant difference within each subset, meaning learners and parents share comparable awareness levels, just as teachers and CPC members do. However, the clear separation into two subsets confirms a statistically significant difference in awareness between teachers/CPC members and learners/parents ($p < .05$). This finding emphasizes that learners and parents have lower awareness of CPP, while those directly involved in policy enforcement—teachers and CPC members—have higher awareness levels. The disparity suggests a need for targeted awareness campaigns and training programs for parents and students to ensure a more comprehensive understanding and implementation of child protection policies in the school.

Significant Difference on the Extent Schools' Responsiveness on Child Protection Policy based from CPC Members, PTA Officers, Learners and Teachers.

The fifth research problem determines the significant difference on the extent school's responsiveness on Child Protection Policy based

from CPC members, PTA Officers, learners and teachers.

Table 6
One-way ANOVA Results of the School's Responsiveness in CPP Implementation by Types of Respondents

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.76	3	4.59	31.5161	0.0000
Within Groups	56.45	388	0.15		
Total	70.21	391	0.00		

Table 6 presents the One-way ANOVA results of the school's responsiveness in CPP implementation by types of respondents. As shown, there is a significant difference on the school's responsiveness as perceived by teachers, learners, parents and CPC committee. The F-value of 31. 5161 and p-value of 0.000 less than 0.05 level of significance is a strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

This means that different respondents possess contradicting perception or ideas in regards to the responsiveness of school on CPP. The ideas of the teachers on how the school responded on policies of child protection may not be the same to the group of learners and parents. The results reflect the need of understanding, focus and wide dissemination of the policies.

In view of the results, having stakeholders help set up and run a child protection group in schools shows that the schools are taking a proactive approach to protecting students' well-being through planned measures. It shows that systematic approaches to child security are understood to be important in order to make places where safety and well-being are valued (Dela Fuente, 2021). This project shows that people are ready to deal with possible problems and risks right away, and it encourages schools to have a culture of responsibility and teamwork. To make sure that child protection policies are set up and followed correctly, these kinds of proactive steps must be taken to give all students a safe and helpful place to learn (Martinez & Lopez, 2020).

Table 7
Multiple Comparisons of Means

Type of Respondents	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Learners	65	3.78	
Parent	65	3.82	
Teacher	182		4.18
CPC	78		4.24
Sig.		.900	.679

A post hoc analysis is needed because the difference is significant ($p<.05$). able 20 presents the results of a multiple comparisons test, analysing differences in perceptions of school responsiveness in Child Protection Policy (CPP) implementation across different respondent groups. The results show that learners ($M = 3.78$) and parents ($M = 3.82$) form Subset 1, while teachers ($M = 4.18$) and CPC members ($M = 4.24$) form Subset 2. This means that learners and parents perceive the school's responsiveness similarly, while teachers and CPC members also share a comparable perception—but at a significantly higher level than learners and parents. The significance values (.900 and .679) indicate that there is no significant difference within each subset, confirming that learners and parents have a similar perspective, just as teachers and CPC members do. However, the separation into two subsets implies that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($p < 0.05$).

These findings align with previous results, reinforcing the conclusion that stakeholders with higher awareness of CPP (teachers and CPC members) perceive the school as more responsive, while those with lower awareness (learners and parents) view the school's responsiveness less favourably.

The stakeholders help to establish and maintain a child protection committee within educational institutions reflects a proactive stance toward safeguarding students' well-being through structured measures (Dela Fuente, 2021). This gap highlights the need for enhanced communication, training, and engagement efforts to ensure that all stakeholders, especially learners and parents, are more aware of the school's CPP initiatives and perceive its responsiveness more positively.

Development of School Policy Manual on CPP based on the Findings of the Study

The researcher re-developed the School Policy Manual of the school since it was formulated 5 years ago. There are several provisions that evaluated and revised based on the existing school situations and findings of the study.

The School Policy Manual serves as a comprehensive guide to strengthening the implementation of the Child Protection Policy (CPP), ensuring a safe, inclusive, and child-friendly learning environment. Rooted in research findings on stakeholders' awareness and school responsiveness, this manual addresses the significant gap in awareness among learners and parents while reinforcing the crucial role of teachers and Child Protection Committee (CPC) members. It outlines clear policies, responsibilities, and intervention mechanisms to enhance child protection efforts within the school community.

The manual provides an in-depth overview of the Child Protection Policy, detailing its legal foundations, objectives, and the roles of various stakeholders. It emphasizes the importance of positive discipline, anti-bullying initiatives, and digital safety measures, ensuring that learners are protected both within and beyond the school premises. Recognizing the high awareness among teachers and CPC members, it strengthens their responsibilities in implementing and monitoring CPP. At the same time, it introduces capacity-building programs and awareness campaigns specifically designed to educate parents and students on their rights and responsibilities in child protection.

A key feature of the manual is the structured reporting and response mechanism, which ensures a clear and confidential process for reporting child protection concerns. It details the step-by-step procedure for handling cases, the role of the CPC in investigations, and emergency response protocols for immediate threats. The manual also incorporates a code of conduct for teachers, learners, and parents, setting clear behavioral expectations and defining prohibited actions to prevent abuse, bullying, and exploitation.

Furthermore, the manual includes monitoring and evaluation strategies to assess the effectiveness of child protection initiatives. Through stakeholder feedback, periodic policy reviews, and collaboration with local agencies, the school ensures continuous improvement in its child

protection efforts. Ultimately, this policy manual is a proactive initiative to create a safer, more responsive, and well-informed school community, where every child's rights and well-being are upheld.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The Child Protection Policy through DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012 provides a special protection to children threatened by conditions affecting their development and beyond their control. This study aimed to determine the stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness on Child Protection Policy (CPP). The researcher utilized the descriptive and correlational method, using a survey questionnaire from 184 teachers, 13 school heads, 65 PTA officers, sixty-five (65) Child Protection Committee (CPC) member and 65 learners. The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, Pearson r , and ANOVA.

The following are the significant findings of the study:

The stakeholders' awareness on Child Protection Policy is high ($\bar{x}=3.82$, $SD=0.48$) which denotes the importance of awareness towards the protection of learners. The domains on composition and proper procedure ($\bar{x}=4.02$, $SD=0.56$), engagement ($\bar{x}=3.95$, $SD=0.52$), attitudes towards CPP ($\bar{x}=3.95$, $SD=0.56$) and awareness on the establishment of CPP ($\bar{x}=3.73$, $SD=0.72$) and participation to capacity building ($SD=0.61$) are high.

The school's responsiveness on Child Protection Policy was rated very high ($\bar{x}=4.06$, $SD=0.42$). The domain on objectives of the CPP was rated very high with mean of 4.21 ($SD=0.49$). The domains which obtained the high level includes managing feedbacks ($\bar{x}=4.12$, $SD=0.54$), duties and responsibilities ($\bar{x}=4.08$, $SD=0.51$), conducting activities ($\bar{x}=4.05$, $SD=0.55$), planning and preparation ($\bar{x}=4.03$, $SD=0.47$), monitoring and evaluation activities with mean of 4.01 ($SD=0.51$) and delegating human resources with mean of 3.97 ($SD=0.42$).

The stakeholders' awareness is significantly related to the schools' responsiveness on CPP ($r\text{-value}=0.778$, $p=0.001$). The null hypothesis is rejected. Meanwhile, the responsiveness on its objectives ($r\text{-value}=0.676$, $p=0.001$), planning and

preparation ($r\text{-value}=0.611$, $p=0.001$), delegating human resources ($r\text{-value}=0.562$, $p=0.001$), duties and responsibilities ($r\text{-value}=0.621$, $p=0.001$), conducting activities ($r\text{-value}=0.644$, $p=0.001$), monitoring and evaluating activities ($r\text{-value}=0.635$, $p=0.001$) and managing feed backs ($r\text{-value}=0.571$, $p=0.001$) show a significant relationship to all the domains of stakeholders' awareness.

There is a significant difference on the indicators of stakeholders' awareness on CPP and schools' responsiveness as perceived by teachers, school heads, CPC members and PTA ($F\text{-value}=84.0875$, $p\text{-value}=0.0000$). The null hypothesis is rejected. While teachers and CPC members have comparable awareness on CPP implementation, learners and parents are less aware on how the CPP works.

The One-way ANOVA results show how responsive the school was to implementing the CPP based on the types of respondents. It is clear that the null hypothesis is rejected because the $F\text{-value}$ is 31.5161 and the $p\text{-value}$ is 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. The learners and parents perceive the school's responsiveness similarly, while teachers and CPC members also share a comparable perception—but at a significantly higher level than learners and parents.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings and the tested hypothesis.

Stakeholders possess a high level of awareness and understanding of child protection policies, effectively applying them in various situations affecting children, indicating a strong grasp of these policies and their implementation in schools.

Schools are highly responsive to CPP rules, policies, and guidelines, ensuring positive behavior management for students. This fosters self-esteem and confidence, protects students from abuse and bullying, and promotes nonviolent discipline. Schools' commitment to CPP objectives is crucial for successful implementation of human resources delegation.

The study indicates that a school's responsiveness significantly influences stakeholders' awareness, as they are fully informed about rules, policies, and guidelines required for a smooth and stable policy implementation.

Teachers and school heads have differing views on stakeholder awareness and the growth of the CPP, with each group having different opinions on preventing cases involving learners.

The school's responsiveness to child protection policies varies significantly among teachers, students, parents, and the CPC committee. Respondents have differing perceptions, suggesting the need for understanding, focus, and widespread dissemination of these policies to ensure a more effective approach.

Recommendations

Upon a thorough study of the findings, the following actions are recommended:

1. The school may enhance training programs and communication efforts through regular orientations and stakeholder engagement activities to ensure sustained awareness and active participation in CPP implementation.
2. The school may strengthen resource allocation by ensuring well-defined roles and responsibilities among staff.
3. The school may conduct regular training, orientations, and information campaigns to deepen understanding and engagement in CPP initiatives.
4. The creation of CPP may be communicated to the stakeholders to have a unified understanding and very high awareness of the policies, rules and regulation that are align to the existing legal basis.
5. The school head may improve the responsiveness of the school up to very high level considering the different factors on managing feedbacks, duties and responsibilities, conducting activities, planning and preparation, monitoring and evaluation activities and delegating human resources. It is also recommended to align perceptions and involvement through targeted capacity-building programs.
6. The school may improve the CPP policy manual that will adhere to the existing policies of the DepEd.
7. The study was limited to the level of stakeholders' awareness and schools' responsiveness on Child Protection Policy (CPP). It suggests that other factors may be

studied on the effect of CPP on learners' behaviour and parents' feedback.

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