



Implementation of the DEPED Child Protection Policy in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Taguig City and Pateros: Basis for Enhanced Guidance Services

Jimmy C. Gregorio ¹
1 – Mecauayan College
jimmy.gregorio002@deped.gov.ph

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Abstract

This research examined the effectiveness of the Department of Education's Child Protection Policy as implemented in a few public secondary schools in Taguig City and Pateros Schools Division Offices of the school year 2023–2024. The assessment of the policy's implementation with regard to school personnel, roles and responsibilities, preventive measures, and protective and remedial measures were the main goals. Additionally, the study aimed to identify pressing issues faced by the implementers and propose enhanced guidance services to address identified challenges. Using a descriptive research design, the study gathered data from 200 respondents, including 100 teachers and 100 parents, through survey questionnaires. The findings revealed that the DepEd Child Protection Policy was implemented to a “Very High” degree across all indicators. However, issues such as the need for regular training of school personnel and improved coordination with the government agencies were identified. Based on these results, an enhanced guidance services program was proposed to address gaps in training, infrastructure, and community engagement. It was concluded that continuous improvements are necessary to ensure that schools fully protect students from abuse, violence, and exploitation. This research contributed important insights on how child protection policies are carried out in public secondary schools and recommended approaches to enhance guidance services to better safeguard students.

Keywords: *Child Protection Policy, DepEd Order No. 40, public secondary schools, Taguig City, Pateros, guidance services, child abuse prevention, policy implementation, school personnel, student welfare*



1. Introduction

Background

Child protection remains a significant concern in educational institutions as schools serve as second homes for learners. The Department of Education issued DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012, also known as the Child Protection Policy, to ensure that learners are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination, and bullying.

Schools play a vital role in implementing child protection measures through preventive, protective, and corrective interventions. Effective implementation requires collaboration among school personnel, parents, guidance counselors, and community stakeholders.

Despite the existence of policies and programs, challenges remain in ensuring consistent implementation across schools. Assessing the extent of policy implementation provides valuable information for improving guidance services and strengthening child protection mechanisms.

Review of Related Literature

The study was anchored on Functionalism Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Ecological Systems Theory.

Functionalism Theory emphasizes the interconnected roles of institutions in maintaining social order and child welfare. Social Learning Theory explains how children learn appropriate behaviors through observation and modeling. Ecological Systems Theory highlights the influence of family, school, community, and societal factors on child development and protection.

Previous studies revealed that schools generally demonstrate a high level of compliance with child protection policies; however, issues such as inadequate training, limited stakeholder participation, and resource constraints continue to affect implementation.

Statement of the Problem

This study sought to determine the extent of implementation of the DepEd Child Protection Policy in selected public secondary schools in Taguig City and Pateros.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent is the DepEd Child Protection Policy implemented in terms of:
 - Policy
 - School liabilities and obligations



- Duties and responsibilities of school personnel
 - Preventive measures
 - Protective and corrective measures
2. What are the pressing issues and concerns regarding policy implementation?
 3. How is the policy implemented in the school setting?
 4. How do implementers address the challenges encountered?
 5. What enhancement program may be proposed for guidance services?

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to assess the implementation of the DepEd Child Protection Policy and develop recommendations for enhanced guidance services.

2. Materials and Methods

Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods research design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of policy implementation.

Participants

The respondents consisted of 200 participants selected through purposive sampling:

- 100 Teachers
- 100 Parents

The participants were drawn from selected public secondary schools in Taguig City and Pateros.

Instruments

Data were gathered using:

- Adopted Survey Questionnaire



- Semi-Structured Interview Guide
- Document Analysis Checklist

The survey instrument assessed five dimensions of policy implementation.

Procedure

1. Secured approval from the Schools Division Office.
2. Coordinated with school heads and research coordinators.
3. Distributed survey questionnaires through Google Forms and printed copies.
4. Conducted interviews with selected school personnel.
5. Gathered and validated responses.
6. Analyzed quantitative and qualitative data.

Data Analysis

The following statistical tools were used:

- Frequency and Percentage
- Mean
- Independent Samples t-test
- Thematic Analysis for qualitative responses

Data were processed and analyzed using appropriate statistical procedures.

3. Results

Table 1. Summary of Policy Implementation

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Policy	4.33	Highly Implemented
School Obligations	4.29	Highly Implemented
Duties and Responsibilities of School Personnel	4.34	Highly Implemented
Preventive Measures	4.17	Highly Implemented
Protective and Remedial Measures	4.33	Highly Implemented

Issues and Concerns

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
Issues and Concerns in Policy Implementation	3.47	Moderately Agree

Key Findings

- Duties and responsibilities of school personnel received the highest mean score (4.34).
- Preventive measures obtained the lowest mean score (4.17) although still interpreted as highly implemented.
- Respondents identified the need for stronger collaboration, continuous training, and improved support systems.



4. Discussion

The findings indicate that the DepEd Child Protection Policy is highly implemented across all dimensions. Schools have demonstrated commitment to establishing child protection mechanisms, ensuring compliance with legal requirements, and promoting learner welfare.

The results support previous studies which found that schools play a critical role in maintaining safe learning environments through effective policy implementation. The high ratings in policy implementation and personnel responsibilities suggest that educators recognize their roles in child protection.

However, the relatively lower ratings on preventive measures and the issues identified by respondents indicate the need for stronger stakeholder engagement, continuous professional development, and improved coordination with external agencies.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

The DepEd Child Protection Policy has been implemented effectively in the selected schools, with high levels of adherence to policy guidelines, duties, and responsibilities.

Schools successfully fulfill their duties by adopting policies, convening child protection committees, and promoting positive discipline. Despite these achievements, coordinating with external agencies, such as the Department of

Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), requires further strengthening to ensure timely interventions.

Preventive measures, such as awareness programs and involvement of the Parent-Teachers Association (PTA), are in placed.

Although protective and remedial measures are generally implemented well, more emphasis is needed on promoting non-punitive approaches to discipline and ensuring that all school personnel are fully equipped to manage cases of child abuse, bullying, and exploitation.



Recommendations

In light of the foregoing significant findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

School Infrastructure and Resources should be enhanced to provide adequate counseling services, safe spaces for students, and other necessary facilities for child protection.

Capacity-building programs may be provided more frequently to ensure that all school personnel, particularly those in remote areas, receive the training necessary to handle child protection cases effectively.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of child protection initiatives may be conducted regularly, with feedback from students, parents, and teachers guiding future improvements to ensure alignment with DepEd's goals for child protection.

DepEd Schools Division Offices and School Administrators may strengthen inter-agency collaboration by establishing regular communication channels with the DSWD, PNP, and other relevant bodies to ensure timely intervention in child protection cases.

Ongoing training for school personnel needs improvement to ensure better preparedness in addressing child protection cases, schools are meeting their responsibilities, but there is a need for more robust collaboration with external agencies, such as the DSWD, to ensure prompt responses to child protection issues as well as the need for greater teacher engagement in proactive child protection measures.

Preventive measures should be enhanced by increasing parental engagement and tailoring programs to specific community needs.

Future researchers may explore the long-term impact of child protection programs on students' academic and psychosocial development, assess the effectiveness of multi-agency collaboration models, or develop frameworks for community-based child protection practices in school settings.

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