



**IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR STUDENTS’
CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: INPUT TO SCHOOL DISCIPLINE
ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine the relationship of implementing Child Protection Policy among the Junior High School students of La Consolacion College Tanauan and the students’ character development. It also sought to answer what school discipline enhancement program can be designed. The study employed was a qualitative or investigative approach. Percentage, mean, standard deviation, ANOVA and Pearson- r were used to find out the relationship of implementing Child protection Policy and the students’ character development using a researcher-made questionnaire to determine the extent assessment of implementation of Child Protection Policy and the character development among students. The study revealed that there is a viable implementation of Child Protection Policy in the research locality. The school and the community were both aware of the policies and goals of Child Protection Policy. The results also call for more engagement in the process among all school stakeholders. Lastly, intensive implementation of Child Protection Policy positively relates to the development of student character. Thus, the study recommend that school authorities should revisit guiding principles and implementation rules and regulations. Schools should also provide for more avenues for families and community members to engage in the implementation of the policy. Children should be involved in the creation of a community that is safe, secure and protective of their rights. And schools may adapt the programs listed in the proposed paradigm to contribute to their existing discipline programs.

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Keywords: *child protection policy, character development, discipline enhancement program, students*

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, 2017). In the recent times, child abuse has been one of the most pressing problems in the country. One of which was when the legislators have enacted RA 7610 or An Act Providing for Stronger Deterrence and Special Protection Against Child Abuse to curb the ever- growing cases among women and children of all ages. Social research proved that a large percentage of these abuse happen in schools where children stay for an average of six hours every day. The alarming statistics on child abuse prompted the government to promulgate DepEd Order No. 40 s. 2012 popularly known as the Child Protection Policy, which mandates that DepEd shall ensure that our schools are conducive to the education of children. It explained that the best interest of the child shall be the paramount consideration in all decisions and actions involving children.

DepEd is also obliged to develop a system for reporting, information education, monitoring the exercise of disciplinary action, and recommendation to address and prevent all forms of abuse. DepEd also urged the use of modules on positive and non-violent discipline in the classroom, along with anger and stress management and gender sensitivity for school personnel, students and teachers which ideally help them understand and deal with child abuse.

Despite the existing laws before Child Protection Policy was enacted, there were still mild and deliberate cases of abuse being reported to Department of Education. To bridge this gap, the

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policy mandates the establishment of a Child Protection Committee (CPC) in all public and private elementary and secondary schools. CPC will be tasked to draft a code of conduct to ensure child protection and safety.

Private sectarian secondary schools in the Division of Tanauan City, has implemented Child Protection Policy since 2013 for the welfare of its students. In this accordance, the researcher goads to assess the effectiveness of its implementation exploring four essential variables: Information/Awareness Campaign; Establishment of Child Protection Committees; and Preventive and Remedial Measures and School Discipline. Furthermore, the researcher included students, teachers and parents as participants in his study since they are the stakeholders who are directly involved in the implementation. After the study, the researcher gears to present a discipline enhancement program as output of the research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Research variables

Child Protection Policy. Child protection, in a hypothetical sense, is a social-oriented term involving childhood interpretations that include child risk discourses, vulnerability and protection. Child protection, as defined by HM Government (2016), is the employed strategies to safeguard any abused or neglected child to enable them grow safely and with optimum care. Gordon (2015) in his study defined child protection as creation of a systematic mechanism of measures and procedures of identifying, analyzing and acting upon abuse cases against children. Thus, policies should be well defined and that stakeholders.

Information and Awareness Campaign. Elliot (2015) noted that millions of children are not fully protected. Many of them deal with violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, exclusion and/or discrimination every day. Such violations limit their chances of surviving, growing, developing and pursuing their dreams. Additionally, Maehr and Midgley (2013) mentioned that all children have a right to age-appropriate information, to be heard and to participate in making decisions that concern them. Fulfilment of this right enables children to take an active role in their own

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protection against abuse, violence and exploitation, and to become active citizens. Wonacott (2018) remarked that for a policy to be really effective and practical to use; it must be clear, concise and accessible to all those it relates to. In order to achieve this goal, it is important to reflect on the process needed to both develop and implement your policy. The most effective polices are those which have been developed using a participative approach. It makes sense therefore to involve representatives from all the major stakeholders in every stage of this process including planning, developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing. The more involved people are in this process, the more likely they are to understand the policy and to use it effectively.

Establishment of Child Protection Committees. The findings of the study of Arnold and Maio-Taddeo (2017), on "Professionals Protecting Children: Child Protection and Teacher Education in Australia in 33 universities revealed that the long history of lack of specific child protection content in teacher preparation programs appeared to be continuing and that "uncertainty about the most efficient and effective way to address and deliver child protection content in teacher education prevailed. In an effort to protect oneself against trauma, the most effective strategy is to minimize one's exposure. Horwitz (2016), found that child protection workers, in trying to reduce the number of negative workplace experiences to which they are exposed, report avoiding face-to-face client interactions. In this same vein, Regehr et al. (2014), found that workers who feel they do not have the resources or support to face adverse client situations report increased symptoms of depression, avoidance, traumatic stress, and burnout.

Preventive and Remedial Measures. The explicit teaching of conflict resolution strategies, along with modeling and guidance from the teacher, can be a powerful resource for young children who are learning how to effectively express their thoughts and feeling. Conflict resolution education empowers students to solve their own problems, as opposed to relying on others, and this is a valuable skill that can apply to every aspect of life (Heydenberk, 2017). The studies similar to the present study were conducted by Priest (2017) and Heydenberk (2017). In which

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they found out that conflict resolution strategies can provide children with a way to express their feelings and solve a conflict. The teacher will be a facilitator and the guide of the children to find the best solution in the problems being encountered. The difference is that the present study will use the different strategies to make use of CPP to solve conflicts or problems met by the children, but the previous study utilized the result to empower the children to solve their own problem.

School Discipline. Canter (2018) related that the key to Assertive Discipline is catching students being good, recognizing and supporting them when they behave appropriately, and letting them know it is appreciated, day in and day out. He stated it is imperative that classroom teachers have a systematic discipline plan that explains exactly what will happen when students choose to misbehave. An effective discipline plan is applied fairly to all students. The teacher gives specific directions for each classroom situation. Canter suggested that a discipline plan includes a maximum of five consequences for misbehavior, but teachers must choose consequences with which they are comfortable. According to Carter (2014) developing and implementing a child protection policy shows that youth organizations and groups are actively involved in safeguarding children, young people, volunteers and staff. While also fulfilling both moral and legal obligations, a child protection policy represents a genuine commitment on behalf of the organization to upholding children's rights in all aspects of their work.

Character Development. Students' character development is formed and fostered by social interaction. By having constant communication with others, students have opportunities for personal discovery through problem-solving and exploring the norms of the group and society. It will provide opportunities for students to learn from others and understand their moral education through experiential learning (Mak, 2014). Character education is any efforts by the education to influence the character of students. The educators help the students to shape nature by giving good example and sample in speaking, tolerance, and presenting the material of a lesson well (Haryanto & Akhirin, 2018). Atieno (2019) asserted that character development is based on positive psychology, this means it builds on students' strengths rather than weaknesses, and it

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draws on experiences from schools and educators. Rather than being a traditional class, character development underlies all academic and extracurricular pursuits.

Discipline. Romanova (2016) explains that discipline is a condition which is realized and formed from several stages which subsequently leads to the value of order, obedience, respect, and orderliness. Where these values also lead to a result in the form of conditions that are conducive, and orderly behavior both to the rules of law and other legal rules, which are accompanied by voluntary self-conduct in carrying out the rules and prohibitions of each of these laws or regulations. From the definition of discipline, it can be concluded that the character of discipline has a very important role, because it will cause other positive impacts such as attitudes and behaviors of responsibility, diminished delinquency, awareness of obligations, and so forth. Kann (2015) explains that disciplinary behavior is formed through several things, such as; attention from other parties, power or authority, and survival.

Respect for Others. According to Darwall (2016), respect is a fundamental aspect of how human beings relate to each other. Respect between people can be thought of as the esteem paid by one human being to another; however, the object of this esteem is the focus of much academic debate. It could be esteem based on cultural norms, or even fear of others; however, the most common debates about the focus of respect center on a person's dignity. For clarity, the definition of respect relies on Hoban's (1977), as mentioned by Carter (2015), conception as 'an openness to others, esteem for others because of their human decency and the degree of excellence of their performance.

Integrity. As asserted by Mitchelle (2015), students develop integrity and academic honesty when the environment builds their moral vocabulary, respond appropriately to cheating, use meaningful quotes, and inspire them to believe in themselves. The year 2020 brought into sharp focus the importance of a culture of integrity on campuses: one that faculty can bank on when having to deal with students remotely. Last year, academics no longer had the luxury to

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look students in the eye when delivering a lecture; nor did they have the chance to invigilate them in a traditional setting.

2. 2. *Theoretical Framework*

In this research, the application of Complexity Theory to social work and practice was considered since it explores the different contexts of child protection. Byrne argues that social groups such as families are made up of agents interacting with one another in multiple and contingent ways to form complex adaptive systems. By drawing upon concept of self-organization, it can be demonstrated that behavior is as much a product of interactions between agents and their environment as it is a result of individual actions. So, one person's behaviour affects others – but that person is in turn affected by the behavior of the other and by their environment. It is in these interactions that the family *self-organizes* (Read, 2012). The factors which lead to a child being harmed within a family or group can be conceptualized as a self-organizing system. Self-organization gives some insight into the difficulties in predicting occurrences such as harm to children, and helps practitioners to seek a different ontological position in working with child protection issues.

Moreover, Social Construction Theory also provided baseline concept for this research as it takes objection with the notion that there is a singular, fixed reality upon which everyone naturally agrees. According to Berger and Luckmann (1971), human understanding of reality is the product of participation in social processes. Kituse and Spector (1973) expanded on the work of earlier social constructionists, explaining that there is nothing inherently problematic about the social phenomena that are labeled "social problems." Social problems only become defined as such when a group with considerable power or influence suggests that political or social action is required to change a given condition. This proves that abuse, even in schools, happen as a result of children responding to stimuli set by a particular group.

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3. Methodology

This study focused on the assessment of the implementation of Child Protection Policy in the Junior High School Department of La Consolacion College Tanauan. Specifically, it took into account the Information and Awareness Campaign, Establishment of Child Protection Committee Preventive and Remedial Measures and School Disciplines as variables. The researcher used the descriptive research process whereby a meticulous description and analysis of the data was employed to answer the foregoing statements of the problem. Furthermore, the researcher also used qualitative or investigative approach since she conducted interviews with the respondents before and after the administration.

The respondents of the study are the students, teachers, and community members from the Junior High School Department of La Consolacion College Tanauan. The population includes 80 students, 30 teachers, and 40 random community members of the said school and a total of 150 respondents. The sample size was determined by computation using random sampling technique.

The research utilized a researcher-made survey questionnaire to determine the extent assessment of implementation of Child Protection Policy and the character development among students. The questionnaires are divided into two sections. The first section is the assessment of implementation of Child protection Policy. Meanwhile, the second section includes a questionnaire on character development among students and contains subsections discipline, respect for others and integrity. Both questionnaires contain ten (10) indicators which will be rated according to the following scale: (4)- Very Great Extent, (3) Great Extent, (2) Some Extent and (1) Least Extent.

To commence with the study, the researcher sought the approval to conduct from the authorities of La Consolacion College Tanauan. When approved, she distributed the questionnaire through digital platforms since the current situations in schools does not allow for face-to-face distribution. She explained details of the research to the respondents upon sending the survey

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questionnaires to them. After adequate time, the questionnaires were retrieved, tallied and interpreted.

In order to find answers to the different problems conceived in the statement of the problem, statistical tools such as Mean and Standard Deviation to determine the average extent impact in the students' character and in implementing Child Protection Policy, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine the difference among the assessment of the respondents of the factors investigated and Pearson-r to determine the significance or the strength of the relationship between two variables and their association with each other were used.

4. Findings and Discussions

Table 1: Assessment of Implementation of Child Protection Policy in terms of Information/Awareness Campaign

Statements	Students			Teachers			Community Members		
	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI
1. The school holds seminars and forums that explain Child Protection Policy.	3.20	0.77	GE	3.10	0.80	GE	3.31	0.77	GE
2. The school introduces the provisions of the law regarding protection of children's rights.	3.36	0.71	GE	3.23	0.73	GE	3.36	0.71	GE
3. The school acknowledges that bullying and other kinds of abuse are among the scope of Child Protection Policy.	3.49	0.71	GE	3.27	0.74	GE	3.41	0.75	GE
4. The school holds contests such as essay writing, poster making and others that make students aware of Child Protection Policy.	3.47	0.71	GE	3.20	0.81	GE	3.33	0.66	GE
5. The school's information campaign on Child protection Policy involves the immediate community.	3.37	0.65	GE	3.17	0.79	GE	3.26	0.75	GE
6. The school display child protection posters in the community	3.19	0.81	GE	3.03	0.72	GE	3.33	0.74	GE

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to raise awareness for child protection.									
7. The school creates awareness for child protection by using the hash tag #ChildProtectionMonth and sharing stories and resources that could educate, inspire, and inform students and other members of the community about this policy.	3.02	0.82	GE	2.93	0.83	GE	3.23	0.74	GE
8. The school in partner with parents and stakeholders in the community launches child protection initiatives and forums.	3.22	0.75	GE	3.17	0.79	GE	3.33	0.74	GE
9. The school raises awareness about child protection using different platforms including but not limited to social media.	3.28	0.72	GE	3.10	0.80	GE	3.23	0.81	GE
10. The school provides programs and other related informations so that the children themselves are made aware of their rights for their protection.	3.27	0.81	GE	3.17	0.70	GE	3.31	0.77	GE
Overall	3.29	0.62	GE	3.14	0.68	GE	3.31	0.66	GE

Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Least Extent) 1.50-2.49 (Some Extent) 2.50-3.49 (Great Extent) 3.50-4.00 (Very Great Extent)

The results signified that there was a sustainable Child Protection Program in operation in the research local. The assessment of the respondents also reflected their approval and satisfaction of the program implemented by the school. This means that the school's efforts to advertise, inform and advocate have reached their target clientele.

Table 2: Implementation of Child Protection Policy in terms of Establishment of Child Protection Committees

Statements	Students			Teachers			Community Members		
	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI
1. There is a clear and established Child Protection Committee in school.	3.22	0.72	GE	3.23	0.73	GE	3.18	0.76	GE
2. The committee members are aware of their duties relative to child protection.	3.34	0.71	GE	3.33	0.71	GE	3.21	0.77	GE

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3. The school community is well acquainted with the members of Child protection Committee.	3.25	0.74	GE	3.27	0.69	GE	3.18	0.79	GE
4. When cases of bullying or abuse arise, the committee acts upon them right away.	3.25	0.78	GE	3.40	0.67	GE	3.36	0.74	GE
5. The committee includes representatives from student organizations and the immediate community.	3.28	0.70	GE	3.23	0.77	GE	3.13	0.86	GE
6. Child protection committee members takes Leadership and accept responsibility.	3.33	0.72	GE	3.33	0.66	GE	3.23	0.87	GE
7. Child protection committee members were engaged in specialized trainings g conducted to provide schools with properly skilled personnel to man child protection concerns.	3.22	0.71	GE	3.27	0.69	GE	3.28	0.83	GE
8. Child Protection Committee members ensure that learners follow a certain code of conduct in schools and that schools have their localized child protection policy	3.31	0.68	GE	3.30	0.65	GE	3.41	0.72	GE
9. Child Protection Committee members develop and implement a school-based referral and monitoring system of cases of all forms of abuse and bullying.	3.34	0.71	GE	3.30	0.65	GE	3.28	0.79	GE
10. Child Protection committee members are known to the school and community for easy referral of cases.	3.20	0.73	GE	3.40	0.72	GE	3.15	0.84	GE
Overall	3.27	0.62	GE	3.31	0.65	GE	3.24	0.72	GE

Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Least Extent) 1.50-2.49 (Some Extent) 2.50-3.49 (Great Extent) 3.50-4.00 (Very Great Extent)

The results are suggestive that while there were already established committees, it is still imperative to reorient the key persons of their duties, responsibilities and scope of tasks. This is to ensure that their proficiency in the performance of their duty would contribute to children's confidence and feeling of security.

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Table 3: Implementation of Child Protection Policy in terms of Preventive and Remedial Measures

Statements	Students			Teachers			Community Members		
	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI
1.The school issues discipline handbook that explains guidelines and punishment to Child Protection related cases.	3.70	0.56	VGE	3.40	0.67	GE	3.62	0.71	VGE
2. In case of bullying and abuse incidents, victims and perpetrators are immediately called to the discipline office for sanctions and settlement.	3.51	0.75	VGE	3.47	0.78	GE	3.54	0.60	VGE
3. The school is fair in imposing sanctions.	3.41	0.73	GE	3.50	0.73	VGE	3.56	0.50	VGE
4. The school conducts regular monitoring and consultation of students involved in any case related to Child Protection.	3.29	0.76	GE	3.30	0.79	GE	3.36	0.74	GE
5. Decisions and sanctions given to cases are effectively communicated to the family of the people concerned.	3.36	0.71	GE	3.43	0.77	GE	3.46	0.72	GE
6. The school identifies, refers and reports cases of child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination and bullying to the appropriate offices if needed.	3.38	0.73	GE	3.40	0.81	GE	3.41	0.72	GE
7. The school promotes collaborative leadership and partnership working in the delivery of high-quality child protection services and ensure that agreed standards of practice are met and maintained.	3.41	0.72	GE	3.37	0.72	GE	3.54	0.60	VGE
8. The school's goal is to promote, safeguard and fulfil the right of children to protection from abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect.	3.51	0.68	VGE	3.47	0.68	GE	3.41	0.64	GE
9. The school ensures that more children can live in a supportive and caring environment as far as the provisions for protecting children is concern.	3.47	0.75	GE	3.43	0.73	GE	3.49	0.64	GE

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10. The school requires the involvement of communities, families, parents/guardians, teachers, traditional and religious leaders, elected representatives and government authorities	3.43	0.69	GE	3.40	0.81	GE	3.46	0.72	GE
Overall	3.45	0.61	GE	3.42	0.70	GE	3.48	0.56	GE

Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Least Extent) 1.50-2.49 (Some Extent) 2.50-3.49 (Great Extent) 3.50-4.00 (Very Great Extent)

The results affirmed that stakeholders were well informed of the policies of preventive and remedial measures. This also entails knowledge of appropriate actions should bullying, abuse and any other types of abuse arise. Even though this knowledge has already been established, it is still relevant to intensify review and orientation of such policies.

Table 4: Implementation of Child Protection Policy in terms of School Discipline

Statements	Students			Teachers			Community Members		
	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI
1. There is an established rules of conduct communicated to the students through a Discipline Handbook or any similar publication.	3.73	0.57	VGE	3.60	0.67	VGE	3.54	0.60	VGE
2. There is a recognized discipline committee in the school.	3.61	0.65	VGE	3.47	0.68	GE	3.54	0.60	VGE
3. The school gives serious sanctions such as suspension and expulsion.	3.42	0.75	GE	3.30	0.79	GE	3.51	0.60	VGE
4. The system of school discipline maintains safety and order, while also provides support for students.	3.49	0.71	GE	3.40	0.77	GE	3.36	0.71	GE
5. The practice of discipline in school encourages positive relationships between students and adults, promoting students' sense of belongingness.	3.52	0.69	VGE	3.47	0.73	GE	3.41	0.72	GE
6. The practice of discipline is solution-focused minimizes the	3.46	0.69	GE	3.43	0.63	GE	3.33	0.62	GE

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need to resort to harsher school discipline.

7. The school's discipline practices are research-based and locally-tailored especially for minor misbehaviors. 3.44 0.64 GE 3.33 0.71 GE 3.46 0.55 GE

8. The practice of discipline in school is fair regardless of the offender and the time and situation in which the offense was committed. 3.43 0.72 GE 3.47 0.63 GE 3.33 0.62 GE

9. The school holds conference among parents of offenders to discuss disciplinary cases and sanctions. 3.52 0.69 VGE 3.50 0.78 VGE 3.38 0.67 GE

10. The school provides counseling to students involved in disciplinary cases. 3.54 0.66 VGE 3.50 0.78 VGE 3.44 0.60 GE

Overall 3.52 0.57 VGE 3.45 0.64 GE 3.43 0.55 GE

Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Least Extent) 1.50-2.49 (Some Extent) 2.50-3.49 (Great Extent) 3.50-4.00 (Very Great Extent)

Overall, all indicators were interpreted as Great Extent. It is safe to conclude that Child Protection Policy in the subject school responds to the needs of learners in so far as discipline is concerned. Because of this, severe cases of abuse and bullying are avoided. It is also a good conclusion to say that the school is a safe space for every students who intend to study regardless of what the situation of education is. To further deepen the school discipline it is also good to say that all people are aware of the ways of the school in implementing discipline. For it did not only include the discipline of its students but also the behavior of the people within and outside the campus.

Table 5: Assessment of Student Character in terms of Discipline

Statements	Students			Teachers			Community Members		
	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI

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1. I/ Students have both short term and long-term goals to which I/they direct my/their efforts at.	3.34	0.63	GE	3.07	0.64	GE	3.31	0.61	GE
2. I/ Students exhibit patience as it is the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset.	3.06	0.72	GE	2.80	0.66	GE	3.21	0.66	GE
3. I/ Students avoid getting myself/ themselves into fights or any kind of school trouble.	3.81	0.49	VGE	2.97	0.67	GE	3.51	0.68	VGE
4. I/ Students practice discipline through being diligent with time.	3.34	0.76	GE	2.97	0.67	GE	3.38	0.59	GE
5. I/ Students practice self-control especially to things that are addictive like online games that disrupts my/their time for studying.	3.09	0.80	GE	2.63	0.67	GE	3.08	0.74	GE
6. I/ Students schedule leisure time at a rate that does not affect my/their school responsibilities.	3.23	0.74	GE	2.63	0.67	GE	3.31	0.69	GE
7. I am/ Students are aware of my/their priorities as a student.	3.78	0.54	VGE	2.97	0.72	GE	3.38	0.59	GE
8. I am/ Students are well oriented of the school rules, and take conscious effort not to violate any of them.	3.73	0.60	VGE	3.10	0.71	GE	3.46	0.64	GE
9. I/ Students do not let my/ their emotions and moods interfere with my/ their daily tasks.	2.96	0.78	GE	2.77	0.63	GE	3.28	0.56	GE
10. I/ Students practice consistency in terms of my/ their discipline regarding my/ their goals and responsibilities.	3.44	0.61	GE	2.77	0.68	GE	3.33	0.58	GE

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Overall	3.38	0.45	GE	2.87	0.50	GE	3.33	0.44	GE
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Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Least Extent) 1.50-2.49 (Some Extent) 2.50-3.49 (Great Extent) 3.50-4.00 (Very Great Extent)

All indicators in the table were interpreted as Great Extent. This is conclusive that students have acquired the habits of discipline in the performance of their regular tasks as students. This may also mean that students have followed a set of rules for some time, thus cultivating their consistent discipline. It also shows that with the help of the school, students feel more secure of their behavior since it does not only hone their intelligence but also their behavior.

Table 6: Assessment of Student Character in terms of Respect for Others

Statements	Students			Teachers			Community Members		
	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI
1. I/ Students accord my/their parents with much respect by being an obedient son/daughter.	3.64	0.58	VGE	3.03	0.49	GE	3.51	0.68	VGE
2. I/ Students show respect to school authorities such as teachers and school administrators through being polite at all times.	3.80	0.49	VGE	3.10	0.55	GE	3.51	0.72	VGE
3. I/ Students respect the elders in my/ their family and community.	3.72	0.55	VGE	3.20	0.61	GE	3.56	0.64	VGE
4. I/ Students respect my/ their friends and schoolmates by acknowledging individual differences.	3.67	0.55	VGE	3.03	0.67	GE	3.56	0.50	VGE
5. I/ Students address other people's mistakes with respect and kindness.	3.53	0.60	VGE	3.03	0.61	GE	3.36	0.63	GE
6. I/ Students show respect by listening intently and responding politely when someone speaks to me/ them.	3.71	0.56	VGE	3.07	0.52	GE	3.44	0.68	GE

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7. I/ Students respect and recognize other people's feelings in case of unpleasant situations.	3.67	0.57	VGE	2.90	0.55	GE	3.41	0.75	GE
8. I/ Students acknowledge people's efforts by expressing gratitude.	3.76	0.55	VGE	3.03	0.56	GE	3.44	0.55	GE
9. I/ Students respect people regardless of gender, age, social status, family background, race and ethnicities.	3.86	0.43	VGE	3.10	0.71	GE	3.49	0.68	GE
10. I/ Students respect people's privacy and physical boundaries.	3.84	0.45	VGE	3.03	0.61	GE	3.59	0.55	VGE
Overall	3.72	0.42	VGE	3.05	0.52	GE	3.49	0.54	GE

The results can be gleaned in the perspectives of Kohn (2016) who contends that children are more likely to be respectful when important adults in their lives respect them; a view later echoed by Boynton and Boynton (2015) who note that people are more apt to go out of their way to please other people who they believe values them as individuals and treats them with dignity and respect.

Table 7: Assessment of Student Character in terms of Integrity

Statements	Students			Teachers			Community Members		
	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI	Mean	SD	VI
1. I/ Students make decisions based on what is right and not based on what I personally like.	3.35	0.63	GE	3.03	0.56	GE	3.31	0.61	GE
2. I/ Students practice word of honor by means of staying true to my/ their promises and commitment.	3.38	0.67	GE	3.03	0.61	GE	3.38	0.59	GE

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3. I am/ Students are honest at all times.	2.93	0.65	GE	2.63	0.72	GE	3.18	0.79	GE
4. I/ Students own up to my/ their mistakes and apologize to people affected by my/ their behavior.	3.45	0.69	GE	2.97	0.67	GE	3.31	0.73	GE
5. I/ Students perform a task with optimum responsibility.	3.40	0.59	GE	2.87	0.68	GE	3.23	0.63	GE
6. I/ Students willfully give credit to others when they have done something good or has contributed greatly to a group task.	3.75	0.52	VGE	3.03	0.67	GE	3.54	0.51	VGE
7. I/ Students follow the rules in my/ their household, my/ their community, and my/ their school intently.	3.58	0.56	VGE	3.10	0.66	GE	3.33	0.70	GE
8. I/ Students help others without expecting for something in return.	3.60	0.62	VGE	3.07	0.69	GE	3.49	0.51	GE
9. I/ Students accept and listen to constructive criticisms.	3.49	0.63	GE	2.87	0.73	GE	3.36	0.71	GE
10. I/ Students use my/ their time productively.	3.02	0.79	GE	2.80	0.71	GE	3.31	0.73	GE
Overall	3.40	0.46	GE	2.94	0.58	GE	3.34	0.51	GE

Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Least Extent) 1.50-2.49 (Some Extent) 2.50-3.49 (Great Extent) 3.50-4.00 (Very Great Extent)

The table shows that honesty is one of the crucial assets that is very important for every one of us to possess. It can be learned by showing the possibilities of someone's action versus someone's word. It is responsible for every adult to possess this trait so that in return, our students will do the same and make them realize that honesty does not come naturally but it can be processed internally. The results were suggestive that students have developed the virtue of integrity as they consistently follow a pattern of good behavior and character. As asserted by Mitchell (2015), students develop integrity and academic honesty when the environment builds

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their moral vocabulary, respond appropriately to cheating, use meaningful quotes, and inspire them to believe in themselves.

Table 8: Test of Difference among the Assessment of Respondents of the Indicated Variables

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Information and Awareness Campaign	Between Groups	.619	2	.310	.754	.472
	Within Groups	66.918	163	.411		
	Total	67.537	165			
Establishment of Childhood Protection Committee	Between Groups	.073	2	.037	.087	.916
	Within Groups	68.488	163	.420		
	Total	68.561	165			
Preventive and Remedial Measures	Between Groups	.081	2	.040	.107	.898
	Within Groups	61.154	163	.375		
	Total	61.235	165			
School Discipline	Between Groups	.255	2	.127	.378	.686
	Within Groups	54.911	163	.337		
	Total	55.166	165			
Discipline	Between Groups	6.159	2	3.079	14.507	.000
	Within Groups	34.600	163	.212		
	Total	40.759	165			
Respect for Others	Between Groups	10.339	2	5.170	23.386	.000
	Within Groups	36.031	163	.221		
	Total	46.370	165			
Integrity	Between Groups	4.854	2	2.427	9.873	.000
	Within Groups	40.066	163	.246		
	Total	44.920	165			

The table above presents the tests of difference when responses of the groups of participants are compared within and among groups. It was revealed that there is a significant difference between and among the assessment of the respondents on the implementation of Child Protection Policy. The computed value of .472 for Information and Awareness Campaign, .916 for Establishment of Child Protection Committee, .898 for Preventive and Remedial Measures and .686 for School Discipline were all higher than 0.01, thus rejecting the null hypothesis.

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On the other hand, the indicators for Student Character namely Discipline, Respect for Others and Integrity all recorded a value of .000 which was lower than 0.01, thus accepting the null hypothesis. This means that no significant difference was found when their assessment was compared within and among groups.

The difference in terms of their assessment of Child Protection Policy is potentially because of their different levels of exposure to the program. The greater the extent of involvement, the more comprehensive a person's understanding is. The differences of roles, tasks and experiences may have also contributed to the difference.

Table 9: Test of Relationship Between the Implementation of Child Protection Policy and Students' Character Development

3.2.1. Implementation of Child Protection Policy	3.2.2. Students' Character Development		
	Discipline	Respect for Others	Integrity
Information and Awareness Campaign	.529**	.525**	.531**
Establishment of Child Protection Committee	.514**	.541**	.517**
Preventive and Remedial Measures	.489**	.580**	.574**
School Discipline	.441**	.629**	.606**

*Legend: ** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (two-tailed)*

The figures reflected above signifies that there is a significant relationship between implementation of Child Protection Policy and the students' character development. This result provides the impression that Child protection Policy positively influences the students' character. Likewise, the culture of child care and protection inculcate positive values among students, thus also developing desirable characters in them.

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5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions are drawn. There is a viable implementation of Child Protection Policy in the research locality. The school and the community were both aware of the policies and goals of Child Protection Policy. The students who participated in the study have positive set of values that aid their character development. Positive habits and desirable qualities posited as indicators in this study were all exemplified by the students. The participants level of exposure and engagement to the implementation of Child Protection Policy rationalize the degree of difference in their responses. The results call for more engagement in the process among all school stakeholders. Intensive implementation of Child Protection Policy positively relates to the development of student character.

It was revealed in this study that there is a significant difference between and among the assessment of the respondents on the implementation of Child Protection Policy. The computed value of .472 for Information and Awareness Campaign, .916 for Establishment of Child Protection Committee, .898 for Preventive and Remedial Measures and .686 for School Discipline were all higher than 0.01, thus rejecting the null hypothesis.

This study shows that there is a significant relationship between implementation of Child Protection Policy and the students' character development. This result provides the impression that Child protection Policy positively influences the students' character. Likewise, the culture of child care and protection inculcate positive values among students, thus also developing desirable characters in them.

This study suggests that to ensure that schools abide by the DepEd mandates on Child Protection Policy, school authorities may revisit guiding principles and implementation rules and regulations. This will also guarantee that the policy will relevantly respond to the needs of the children. Schools may provide for more avenues and opportunities for families and community members to engage in the implementation of Child Protection Policy. In this way, the implementation will be more inclusive and holistic. Schools and Families may expose children to

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activities and opportunities for ideal character development. More specifically, children should be involved in the creation of a community that is safe, secure and protective of their rights. Schools may adapt the programs listed in the proposed paradigm to contribute to their existing discipline programs. Lastly, more research about Child Protection Policy and character development among children may be done in the future to broaden context and perspectives.



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