Implementation of the Child Protection Program and Its Correlates: Basis for a SAFE School-Based Intervention Plan

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Abstract
Aim: This study assessed the level of implementation of the Child Protection Program (CPP) in a large secondary school under the DepEd Catbalogan City Division, focusing on physical violence, sexual abuse, psychological violence, and bullying and peer abuse as the basis for an intervention plan.
Methodology: A quantitative-correlational design was employed using a validated survey administered to 375 students and 175 teachers/administrators, totaling 550 respondents. Descriptive statistics determined demographic profiles, weighted means measured the extent of CPP implementation, and Pearson's correlation tested the relationship between program implementation and demographic variables.
Results: Findings revealed that the CPP was rated "Fully Implemented" (grand mean = 4.22). Bullying received the highest implementation rating (4.33, Fully Implemented), while physical, sexual, and psychological violence scored slightly lower (4.18, Substantially Implemented). Younger students reported greater vulnerability to violence, and perceptions of school safety decreased as reported experiences of violence increased. Teacher sex was the only demographic variable significantly associated with perceptions of sexual violence.
Conclusion: The results informed the development of the School Advocacy for a Friendly Environment (SAFE) Plan, a contextualized intervention program designed to strengthen prevention, reporting, and support mechanisms. While CPP is generally well implemented, gaps remain in addressing different forms of violence. The study recommends institutionalizing the SAFE Plan to further enhance the protection and safety of learners.
Keywords: Bullying Prevention, Child Protection Program, Intervention Plan, School Safety, Violence in Schools

INTRODUCTION

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment is a fundamental responsibility of schools, as children's well-being and holistic development are directly linked to their educational experiences. Child protection is not merely a welfare initiative but a critical aspect of educational governance, since early experiences of abuse and neglect can significantly impair learning, cognitive development, and long-term educational outcomes (Kyei, 2024). Ensuring safety within schools is therefore essential to sustaining student attendance, engagement, and academic achievement.

In the Philippines, legal safeguards such as Republic Act No. 7610, the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act, and the Department of Education's Child Protection Policy (DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012) have been established to protect children from harm. Despite these frameworks, reports indicate that Filipino children remain highly vulnerable to physical, psychological, sexual, and verbal abuse in schools. The National Baseline Study on Violence Against Children (Council for the Welfare of Children & UNICEF Philippines, 2016) revealed that eight out of ten Filipino children have experienced some form of violence, with schools cited as one of the most common settings.

Empirical studies reinforce this concern. Asio et al. (2020) and Segundo and Guia (2019) reported that while teachers demonstrate awareness of the Child Protection Policy, its implementation at the school level remains moderate and inconsistent. Similarly, Sapul (2022) and Münger and Markström (2019) highlighted persistent gaps in enforcement, monitoring systems, and training, which limit schools' effectiveness in addressing abuse. Roche and Flynn (2021) further confirmed that children remain at risk due to weak enforcement of protective policies, limited stakeholder capacity, and cultural barriers that hinder reporting and intervention. The case of *Asela Briñas y Del Fierro vs. People of the Philippines* (G.R. No. 254005, 2021) also underscores the legal accountability of teachers and administrators in safeguarding children from maltreatment.

Although existing studies have examined awareness and partial implementation of child protection initiatives, few have systematically assessed program implementation from both teachers' and students' perspectives within the same school context. Moreover, research rarely translates quantitative findings into concrete, data-driven intervention plans tailored to local school realities. Addressing this gap is crucial in identifying perception differences between stakeholder groups and in formulating interventions that are both evidence-based and contextually relevant. Similar to the findings of Pangilinan (2025), who emphasized the challenges and commitment of Filipino teachers in handling vulnerable learners in coastal schools, the present study acknowledges that teachers' roles in child protection extend beyond policy compliance and require sustained support and resources.

In response, this study quantitatively assessed the implementation of the Child Protection Program from the perspectives of students, teachers, and administrators. Unlike earlier studies that focused only on awareness or policy compliance, this research goes further by using its findings as the foundation for a School-Based Intervention Plan. The plan is designed to strengthen preventive and responsive child protection measures, enhance reporting mechanisms, and promote awareness and capacity-building in school communities. In line with the perspective of Carvajal et al. (2025), who stressed the importance of reframing teacher education to prepare educators for emerging challenges, this study contributes by bridging the gap between policy and practice, ultimately fostering a safer, more inclusive, and child-centered learning environment.

Objectives

This study aimed to develop a School-Based Child Protection Intervention Plan based on the quantitative evaluation of the implementation of the Child Protection Program from the perspectives of students, teachers, and administrators.

Specifically, the study sought to:
1. Determine the demographic profile of the student participants in terms of: age; sex; parents' highest educational attainment; and parents' occupation.
2. Determine the demographic profile of the teacher/administrator participants in terms of: age; sex; length of service; and highest educational attainment.
3. Evaluate the extent of implementation of the Child Protection Program in the school based on the following indicators: Physical violence, Sexual abuse, Psychological violence, and Bullying/peer abuse.
4. Determine the significant relationship between the extent of Child Protection Program implementation and the demographic profile of the student participants.
5. Determine the significant relationship between the extent of Child Protection Program implementation and the demographic profile of the teacher/administrator participants.
6. Develop a School-Based Child Protection Intervention Plan based on the findings of the study.

Hypothesis

Given the stated research problems, the following hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:
1. H_0: There is no significant relationship between the extent of Child Protection Program implementation and the demographic profile of the student participants.
2. H_0: There is no significant relationship between the extent of Child Protection Program implementation and the demographic profile of the teacher and administrator participants.

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METHODS

Research Design

This study used a descriptive-correlational quantitative design to assess the implementation of the Child Protection Program (CPP) in one of the largest secondary schools in the Schools Division of Catbalogan City. The descriptive part gathered data on the demographic profiles of students, teachers, and administrators, as well as their assessments of child protection measures against physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, and bullying. The correlational aspect examined the relationships between CPP implementation and the demographic characteristics of the participants. The results were then utilized as the basis for developing an Enhanced School-Based Child Protection Intervention Plan to address gaps and strengthen protection mechanisms in the school (Bontuyan, 2025; Pangilinan, 2025).

Population and Sampling

The study involved 5,850 students (Grades 7–12) and 278 teachers and administrators from one of the largest secondary schools in the Schools Division of Catbalogan City. Using cluster sampling, 375 students were proportionally selected from different grade levels. Stratified random sampling was applied to teachers and administrators, resulting in 175 respondents from both Junior and Senior High Schools. Only officially enrolled students and teachers/administrators directly engaged in policy enforcement and student discipline were considered eligible to participate (Abenojar et al., 2025).

Instrument

The study employed a structured survey questionnaire with two parts: Part I collected demographic data (students—age, sex, parents' educational attainment and occupation; teachers and administrators—age, sex, civil status, position, length of service, and highest educational attainment), while Part II assessed the extent of Child Protection Program implementation across four areas—physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, and bullying/peer abuse—using a five-point Likert scale (1.00–1.80 Not Implemented to 4.21–5.00 Fully Implemented). Content validation by three experts in educational management, psychometrics, and research confirmed clarity and relevance, with revisions made accordingly. Reliability testing with 30 respondents yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.87, demonstrating high internal consistency (Amihan, Sanchez, & Carvajal, 2023).

Data Collection

The questionnaires were administered with the assistance of the School Guidance Counselor. Respondents were provided with sufficient time to complete the survey, and clarifications were given as needed. Data collection was conducted from March 26 to April 15, 2025, with students completing the survey during class hours and teachers/administrators during their vacant periods.

Treatment of Data

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics to ensure accurate interpretation of the results. Frequency counts and percentages described the demographic profiles of student and teacher respondents. To assess the extent of CPP implementation, weighted means were computed for each indicator under physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, bullying, and peer abuse. Composite means were also calculated to obtain the overall implementation level for both student and teacher groups. To determine the relationship between the extent of program implementation and the respondents' demographic profiles, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was applied. All data processing and analyses were conducted using SPSS software, ensuring accuracy, consistency, and reliability of interpretation (Pangilinan et al., 2025).

Ethical Considerations

The researchers adhered to all ethical guidelines throughout the study. Formal approval was obtained from the Schools Division Superintendent of Catbalogan City and the school principal. Written informed consent was secured from teachers and administrators, while parental consent and student assent were obtained for minors. Participation was voluntary, and respondents had the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Completed questionnaires were kept confidential, stored in a password-protected file, and used solely for research purposes.

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RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Student-Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the student-respondents of the study.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Age (Years Old)	f	%
11-12	24	6.4
13-14	86	22.9
15-16	112	29.9
17-18	151	40.3
19 and beyond	2	0.5
Total	**375**	**100**
Mean	16 years old	
SD	2 years old	

Sex	f	%
Male	147	39.2
Female	222	59.2
Prefer Not To Say	6	1.6
Total	**375**	**100**

Educational Attainment	Father		Mother	
	f	%	f	%
No Recognized Parent	20	5.3	0	0
No Schooling	2	0.5	0	0
Elementary Level	20	5.3	13	3.5
Elementary Graduate	25	6.7	17	4.5
High School Level	30	8	28	7.5
High School Graduate	43	11.5	51	13.6
Tech-Voc Education	0	0	1	0.3
College Level	43	11.5	57	15.2
College Graduate	152	40.5	138	36.8
With Units in Masters	16	4.3	33	8.8
Master's Degree Holder	20	5.3	28	7.5
with Doctorate Units	0	0	0	0
Doctorate Degree Holder	4	1.1	9	2.4
Total	**375**	**100**	**375**	**100**

Occupation	Father		Mother	
	f	%	f	%
No Recognized Parent	20	5.3	0	0
Unemployed	26	6.9	93	24.8
Government Employee	130	34.7	75	20
Skilled Worker	100	26.7	108	28.8
Private Employee (saleslady, clerk, other)	84	22.4	93	24.8
Business/Self-Employed	13	3.5	3	0.8
Working Abroad (OFW)	2	0.5	3	0.8
Total	**375**	**100**	**375**	**100**

Age and Sex. Most student respondents were adolescents aged 15–18, with 29.9% in the 15–16 range and 40.3% in the 17–18 range (M = 16). This stage of development is marked by vulnerability to peer pressure, identity struggles, and emotional challenges, underscoring the need for age-appropriate CPP interventions such as peer support and emotional intelligence programs. In terms of sex, 59.2% were female, 39.2% male, and 1.6% preferred not to disclose. The higher proportion of female respondents is consistent with findings that women tend to show a stronger link between meaningful engagement and well-being compared to men, highlighting the importance

of designing gender-sensitive and inclusive interventions (Schmelzer et al, 2025). The presence of students with undisclosed gender identity emphasizes the importance of inclusivity, suggesting that the CPP should adopt gender-sensitive and inclusive approaches to foster a supportive school environment.

Parents' Educational Attainment. Parents' Educational Attainment. Most parents had attained higher education, with 40.5% of fathers and 36.8% of mothers being college graduates. This background likely supports student awareness of child rights and protection. Research shows that parental education and involvement have a significant impact on children's outcomes; for instance, Reynolds et al. (2021) demonstrated that parental involvement in early childhood programs, such as the Child-Parent Center, contributes to long-term gains in educational attainment, economic well-being, and overall health. However, the presence of parents with lower educational attainment highlights the need for tailored awareness campaigns to ensure all families, regardless of background, understand and support the CPP.

Parents' Occupation. Fathers were mostly employed in government (34.7%) or as skilled workers (26.7%), while mothers were primarily skilled workers (28.8%) or unemployed (24.8%). Employment stability may enhance parental involvement in child protection. However, the high rate of unemployed mothers signals the need for community-based parenting programs that build capacity for abuse prevention and positive discipline (Garcia & Santiago, 2020). Tailored interventions addressing the varied occupational backgrounds of parents would strengthen CPP implementation.

Demographic Profile of the Teacher and Administrator-Respondents

Table 2 presents the demographic profile of the teacher/administrator- respondents, which includes key information on age, sex, length of service, and highest educational attainment.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Teacher/Administrators'- Respondents

Age (Years Old)	f	%
below 30	42	24.0
30-39	68	38.9
40-49	38	21.7
50-59	23	13.1
60 and beyond	4	2.3
Total	**175**	**100**
Mean	**38 years old**	
SD	**10 years old**	
Sex	**f**	**%**
Male	47	26.9
Female	120	68.6
Prefer Not To Say	8	4.6
Total	**175**	**100**
Length of Service	**f**	**%**
≤ 5 years	51	29.1
6 - 10 years	70	40
11-15 years	28	16
16 - 20 Years	7	4
21-25 Years	5	2.9
26 years and above	14	8
Total	**175**	**100**
Mean	**10 Years**	
SD	**8 Years**	
Highest Educational Attainment	**f**	**%**
College Graduate	33	18.9
With Units in Masters	100	57.1
Masters Degree Holder	37	21.1
with Doctorate Units	3	1.7

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Doctorate Degree Holder	2	1.1
Total	**175**	**100**

Age and Sex. Most respondents were female (68.6%), while 26.9% were male and 4.6% chose not to disclose. This reflects global trends in education where women dominate the profession, which can shape school culture and influence the delivery of child protection initiatives. The mean age was 38 (SD = 10), with the largest group aged 30–39 (38.9%), followed by those 40–49 (21.7%). This distribution indicates a workforce that blends the adaptability and fresh perspectives of younger teachers with the stability and mentoring capacity of more experienced educators (Sammara et al., 2017). Such balance is valuable in implementing the Child Protection Program (CPP), as female teachers often emphasize emotional and psychosocial support.

In contrast, male teachers, though fewer, contribute to reinforcing discipline and physical safety (Nzasi, 2023). The higher number of female teachers likely influences the Child Protection Program (CPP), as they often focus more on emotional well-being and psychosocial support, which are key aspects of the program. Although fewer in number, male teachers play a crucial role in reinforcing physical safety, maintaining school discipline, and setting boundaries.

Length of Service. A plurality of teachers had served for 6–10 years (40%), followed by ≤5 years (29.1%), with fewer in the 11–15 years (16%), 16–20 years (4%), and above 20 years categories. The mean length of service was 10 years, suggesting a mix of relatively new and moderately experienced educators. This balance allows for the integration of updated child protection policies with established practices. Experienced teachers provide mentorship, while newer ones bring familiarity with current trends, though they may require further training (Garcia & Santiago, 2020).

Highest Educational Attainment. Most teacher-respondents have advanced education, with 57.1% having units in a Master's degree, 21.1% holding a Master's degree, 18.9% as college graduates, and 2.8% with doctorate-level qualifications. This shows that the faculty is highly educated and likely capable of understanding and applying child protection policies. However, recent studies note that awareness does not always translate to consistent implementation, as factors like training, resources, and clear policy communication play a role (Han-Awon, 2025). To address these challenges, strengthening teacher training, aligning child protection with broader school goals, and setting up strong monitoring systems are recommended (Badil, 2025).

Extent of Child Protection Program (CPP) Implementation

Table 3 presents the data on the extent of Child Protection Program Implementation along its various aspects as rated by student, teacher,/Administrator respondents.

Table 3. Extent of CPP Implementation

Physical Violence	Means			Interpre-tation
	Student	Teacher	Composite	
1. The school enforces strict rules against physical harm, such as hitting, slapping, or corporal punishment.	4.04	4.71	4.38	FI
2. Teachers and staff receive training on identifying and preventing physical violence among students.	4.07	3.85	3.96	SI
3. There are precise reporting mechanisms for cases of physical violence in school.	3.93	4.21	4.07	SI
5. The school has intervention programs to help students who have experienced physical violence.	4.02	4.24	4.13	FI
6. The school collaborates with parents to prevent and address cases of physical violence.	4.21	4.53	4.37	SI
7. School security personnel are trained to prevent and respond to incidents of physical violence.	4.12	4.15	4.14	SI
Grand Mean	**4.05**	**4.30**	**4.18**	
Description	**SI**	**FI**	**SI**	
Sexual Abuse	**Means**			**Interpre-**

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	Student	Teacher	Composite	Interpre-tation
1. The school conducts awareness programs on sexual harassment and abuse.	4.25	4.4	4.33	FI
2. There are established protocols for reporting and investigating sexual violence cases.	4.02	4.33	4.18	SI
3. Teachers and staff are trained in recognizing signs of sexual abuse among students.	4.02	3.89	3.96	SI
4. The school has confidential support services for victims of sexual violence.	3.95	4.25	4.1	SI
5. Strict policies are in place to prevent inappropriate interactions between students and school personnel.	4.05	4.31	4.18	SI
6. The school partners with child protection agencies to address sexual violence cases.	4.07	4.34	4.21	FI
7. Students are educated on their rights and how to protect themselves from sexual violence.	4.25	4.31	4.28	FI
Grand Mean	**4.09**	**4.26**	**4.18**	
Description	**SI**	**FI**	**SI**	

Psychological Violence	Means			Interpre-tation
	Student	**Teacher**	**Composite**	
1. The school has policies to prevent verbal abuse and emotional harm among students.	4.17	4.41	4.29	FI
2. Teachers and staff promote a positive and inclusive school culture.	4.13	4.51	4.32	FI
3. Counseling services are available for students experiencing psychological distress.	3.98	4.44	4.21	FI
4. Awareness campaigns on mental health and well-being are regularly conducted.	4.05	4.35	4.2	SI
5. The school takes immediate action on reports of psychological violence.	3.94	4.41	4.18	SI
6. Support groups or peer counseling programs exist for students facing emotional difficulties.	3.97	4.23	4.1	SI
7. Teachers are trained to identify students who may be experiencing psychological violence.	4.05	3.81	3.93	SI
Grand Mean	**4.04**	**4.31**	**4.18**	
Description	**SI**	**FI**	**SI**	

Bullying and Peer Abuse	Means			Interpre-tation
	Student	**Teacher**	**Composite**	
1. The school has a clear anti-bullying policy that is strictly implemented.	4.12	4.45	4.29	FI
2. Teachers and staff actively monitor student interactions to prevent bullying.	3.95	4.35	4.15	SI
3. The school encourages students to report bullying incidents without fear of retaliation.	4.13	4.5	4.32	FI
4. Programs promoting kindness, empathy, and respect among students are implemented.	4.23	4.43	4.33	FI
5. The school provides intervention programs for both victims and perpetrators of bullying.	3.99	4.21	4.1	SI
6. Disciplinary measures for bullying incidents are consistently applied.	4.01	4.46	4.24	FI
7. Parent engagement activities include discussions on preventing bullying and peer abuse.	4.1	4.27	4.19	SI

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	Grand Mean	4.08	4.38	4.33	
	Description	SI	FI	FI	

Legend: *4.21 - 5.00: Fully Implemented (FI); 3.41 - 4.20: Substantially Implemented (SI);2.61 -3.40: Moderately Implemented (MI);1.81 - 2.60: Partially Implemented (PI); 1.00 - 1.80: Not Implemented (NI)*

Physical Violence. The findings revealed that the implementation of child protection measures against physical violence in the school was rated Substantially Implemented (SI) by students (grand Mean = 4.05). They were Fully Implemented (FI) by teachers (grand Mean = 4.30), resulting in an overall interpretation of Substantially Implemented (SI) (grand Mean = 4.18). Both groups recognized the presence of intervention programs for victims (M = 4.13) and collaboration with parents (M = 4.37), which suggests that the school is proactive in providing support mechanisms beyond disciplinary measures. However, some areas were only rated Substantially Implemented (SI), particularly teacher training on violence prevention (M = 3.96) and clarity of reporting mechanisms (M = 4.07). This indicates a need to strengthen teacher capacity-building further and streamline reporting procedures to ensure consistent protection practices. The results affirm the school's strong commitment to child protection while highlighting areas for improvement in training and reporting systems.

The findings imply that while the school excels in enforcing rules and involving parents, there is a need for consistent training for teachers and staff to address physical violence more effectively. Strengthening professional development in this area will better equip the faculty to handle situations as they arise. As Ponsford et al. (2022) highlighted, community involvement and clear policy enforcement are crucial. However, Andaya et al. (2025) identify capacity gaps as a persistent challenge in implementing child protection policies, recommending increased investment in capacity building. Enhancing teacher training and improving intervention programs will help the school fully implement the CPP and provide a safer environment for all students.

Sexual Abuse. The findings show that measures addressing sexual abuse in schools are generally Substantially Implemented (grand Mean = 4.18, SD). Teachers (M = 4.26, FI) reported stronger implementation compared to students (M = 4.09, SI), suggesting a gap between policy enforcement and student experience. Both groups recognized strong efforts in awareness programs (M = 4.25) and student education on rights (M = 4.28), reflecting the school's emphasis on preventive strategies. Teachers further highlighted strong partnerships with child protection agencies (M = 4.34, FI). However, areas such as staff training to recognize abuse (M = 3.96, SI) and confidential support services for victims (M = 4.10, SI) require improvement. These results affirm Herbert et al. (2021), who stress the need for active engagement of students, teachers, and external agencies in addressing sexual violence. While preventive structures are in place, enhancing staff capacity and strengthening victim support systems remain essential to move beyond compliance and ensure genuine protection of learners.

Psychological Violence. The implementation of the Child Protection Program (CPP) addressing psychological violence is Substantially Implemented, with a composite mean of 4.18. Key indicators such as the prevention of verbal abuse (4.29), promotion of a positive school culture (4.32), and the availability of counseling services (4.21) were Fully Implemented (FI), indicating that the school has made significant strides in mental health support and policy enforcement. These findings reflect the school's strong commitment to promoting emotional well-being and reducing psychological harm, which aligns with the work of Tasiouli and Lyra (2024), who emphasized the importance of a supportive school climate in preventing psychological violence.

However, particular areas, including teacher training (3.93), peer support programs (4.10), and the school's response to cases (4.18), remained in the Substantially Implemented (SI) range. The gap in teacher training suggests a need for further professional development to better equip teachers in the early identification and intervention of psychological violence. As Dudley et al. (2022) noted, teachers play a crucial role in recognizing and addressing emotional harm. Ongoing capacity-building efforts are essential to ensure that staff members can effectively intervene and support students experiencing psychological distress. Strengthening these areas will enhance the overall effectiveness of the CPP in addressing psychological violence.

Bullying/Peer Abuse. Bullying and Peer Abuse under the Child Protection Program (CPP) is rated Fully Implemented with a grand mean of 4.33, reflecting the school's strong commitment to anti-bullying measures. The highest-rated indicator, the promotion of kindness, empathy, and respect (4.33), shows the school's dedication to fostering positive peer relationships and social-emotional learning. Clear anti-bullying policies (4.29), safe reporting mechanisms (4.32), and consistent disciplinary actions (4.24) further demonstrate a comprehensive framework for prevention and accountability.

However, intervention programs for victims and perpetrators (4.10) and parent engagement (4.19) were only Substantially Implemented, pointing to areas needing improvement. Lodi et al (2021) stress the importance of

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restorative interventions and greater parental involvement to achieve lasting behavior change and broader community support. While the CPP has a solid foundation in bullying prevention and protection from violence, enhancing post-intervention support, strengthening teacher training, and increasing parent engagement will ensure a safer, more inclusive environment for all students. This comprehensive evaluation provides insights into the program's effectiveness and offers a clear direction for future improvements to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

Relationships Between the Demographic Profile of the Student-Respondent and the Extent of CPP Implementation

Table 4 presents the relationship between the Demographic Profile of the student-respondent and the Extent of CPP Implementation.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis of the Demographic Profile of the Student-Respondents and the Extent of CPP Implementation

Variables	Physical Violence			Sexual Violence			Psychological Violence			Bullying and Peer Abuse		
	rho	p-value	Inter.	rho	p-value	Inter.	rho	p-value	Inter.	rho	p	Inter.
Age	**-.140**	**.007**	**S**	-.087	.093	NS	**-.216**	**.000**	**S**	**-.177**	**.001**	**S**
Sex	.060	.243	NS	.034	.510	NS	-.013	.797	NS	.041	.432	NS
Father's Highest Educational Attainment	.074	.151	NS	.073	.158	NS	**.136**	**.008**	**S**	.067	.194	NS
Mother's Highest Educational Attainment	.086	.097	NS	.049	.346	NS	.098	.058	NS	.037	.473	NS
Father Occupation	-.095	.065	NS	-.035	.497	NS	-.040	.436	NS	-.062	.233	NS
Mother Occupation	**-.116**	**.025**	**S**	**-.160**	**.002**	**S**	**-.135**	**.009**	**S**	**-.127**	**.014**	**S**

Significant at ≤ 0.05

The correlation analysis reveals that among the demographic variables, age showed a significant negative relationship with the extent of physical violence ($\rho = -0.140$, $p = 0.007$), psychological violence ($\rho = -0.216$, $p < 0.001$), and bullying and peer abuse ($\rho = -0.177$, $p = 0.001$). This suggests that younger students are more likely to experience these forms of violence, consistent with studies indicating that younger learners are generally more vulnerable to victimization due to limited coping strategies and assertiveness (Hoffman et al., 2017). In policy terms, this highlights the need for age-differentiated protection programs, including tailored peer support systems and resilience-building interventions for younger learners.

Parental educational attainment showed minimal yet notable effects. Father's highest educational attainment was positively correlated with psychological violence ($\rho = 0.136$, $p = 0.008$), indicating that students whose fathers attained higher education reported greater experiences of psychological violence. This counterintuitive finding may reflect heightened awareness or reporting tendencies among students from more educated households (UNESCO, 2021), suggesting the need for awareness campaigns that normalize reporting across all family backgrounds.

Additionally, mothers' occupation was significantly negatively correlated with all four forms of violence except sexual violence, implying that maternal employment may contribute to better protective environments and supervision, thereby reducing violence exposure (Schneider et al., 2024). This finding underscores the importance of

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parental engagement models that acknowledge the protective role of working mothers and encourage schools to build stronger school–home partnerships that support adequate child supervision and monitoring.

Relationship between the Extent of Implementation of Child Protection Program and the Demographic Profile of Teacher/Administrator-Participants

Table 5 presents the correlation analysis between teacher/administrator demographics and the extent of Child Protection Program (CPP) implementation across four domains.

Table 5.Correlation Analysis of the Demographic Profile of the Teacher/Administrators and the Extent of CPP Implementation

Variables	Physical Violence			Sexual Violence			Psychological Violence			Bullying and Peer Abuse		
	rho	p-value	Inter.	rho	p-value	Inter.	rho	p-value	Inter.	rho	p	Inter.
Age	.053	.484	NS	-.025	.743	NS	-.028	.718	NS	-.030	.690	NS
Sex	-.138	.068	NS	**-.203**	**.007**	**S**	-.070	.357	NS	-.129	.089	NS
Length of Service	.100	.190	NS	-.003	.964	NS	-.001	.992	NS	.043	.575	NS
Highest Educational Attainment	.128	.092	NS	.068	.369	NS	.060	.429	NS	.048	.527	NS

Significant at $\leq$ 0.05

Most demographic factors—age, position, length of service, and educational attainment—showed no significant correlation (p > 0.05), indicating consistent CPP application regardless of these characteristics. This supports Combs et al.'s (2022) conclusion that general staff demographics do not necessarily influence the fidelity of school-wide program execution. However, sex revealed a significant negative correlation with CPP implementation in the domain of sexual violence (r = -0.203, p = 0.007), indicating gender differences in how staff engage with or perceive CPP practices. This supports Baronia's (2020) findings that female educators often approach child protection with greater emotional sensitivity, while male counterparts may emphasize disciplinary enforcement.

SAFE Schools Program: School Advocacy for a Friendly Environment

Based on the quantitative assessment of the Child Protection Program (CPP) implementation, the SAFE Schools Program (Schools Advocacy for a Friendly Environment) was developed as an enhanced school-based intervention plan, as presented in Table 6.

Table 6. SAFE Schools Program Components Based on CPP Key Areas and Quantitative Findings

CPP Key Area	Quantitative Findings	Intervention Focus	Proposed Activities	Monitoring & Evaluation
Physical Violence	Substantially Implemented (M = 4.18)	Strengthen preventive measures and establish clearer protocols	- Develop clear and confidential reporting protocols - Conduct awareness campaigns on positive discipline - Provide first aid and safety training for teachers	Implementation overseen by Child Protection Committee; success measured by reduction in reported cases and improved student perception of safety
Sexual Abuse	Substantially	Promote awareness	- Organize gender-	Success is measured

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	Implemented (M = 4.18)	and enhance protective mechanisms	sensitivity and child rights workshops - Establish safe spaces and confidential reporting desks - Peer education on recognizing and reporting abuse	through periodic surveys of students' perceived safety and confidentiality, and a reduction in cases reported
Psychological Violence	Substantially Implemented (M = 4.18)	Foster a favorable school climate and expand psychosocial support	- Launch anti-verbal abuse and anti-discrimination campaigns - Strengthen guidance and counseling services - Teacher training on positive classroom management	Monitoring by guidance counselors and senior teachers; indicators include increased use of counseling services and improved student support ratings
Bullying /Peer Violence	Fully Implemented (M = 4.33)	Strengthen anti-bullying mechanisms and peer support systems	- Implement peer mediation and student leadership training - Establish "Safe Corners" monitored by staff - Conduct regular monitoring of bullying hotspots	Success assessed via student surveys, incident logs, and engagement in peer support programs; overseen by the Child Protection Committee.

The program directly responds to the study's key findings on CPP implementation by addressing gaps in protection and support systems. For physical abuse, it focuses on stronger preventive measures and clearer reporting protocols, noting that younger teachers struggle with reporting procedures. On sexual abuse and exploitation, it includes gender-sensitivity training and confidential reporting desks, reflecting concerns raised by female respondents. For psychological violence, the program expands counseling services and follow-up support, especially in schools with larger student populations where such services are limited. For bullying and peer violence, it strengthens monitoring systems, peer mediation, and safe zones, considering that male respondents reported more peer conflicts. This SAFE Schools Program turns the study's findings into practical, context-based strategies. Aligning with CPP priorities and considering demographic differences ensures interventions are inclusive, equitable, and sustainable, protecting children while engaging the whole school community.

Conclusions

The study concludes that while the Child Protection Program (CPP) is generally effective in schools, notable gaps remain in areas such as reporting mechanisms, gender sensitivity, psychosocial support, and peer-violence interventions, with significant relationships found between demographic profiles and perceptions of CPP implementation. These findings led to the development of the SAFE Schools Program, a responsive, data-driven intervention that strengthens preventive measures against physical abuse, enhances gender-sensitivity training and confidential reporting for sexual exploitation, expands counseling services for psychological violence, and reinforces peer mediation to address bullying. By aligning strategies with both CPP provisions and demographic realities, the program ensures inclusivity, equity, and sustainability, ultimately fostering safer and more empowering school environments for children.

Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, it is recommended that the SAFE Schools Program be formally adopted as a school-based enhancement of the existing Child Protection Program (CPP). For schools, this means institutionalizing strengthened and confidential reporting protocols for cases of physical abuse, expanding counseling and psychosocial services to respond effectively to psychological violence, and implementing structured peer mediation programs and designated safe zones to minimize bullying and peer-related conflicts. For teachers and staff, integrating gender-sensitivity and safeguarding modules into continuous professional development is essential, alongside regular training

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to equip them with updated strategies for addressing various forms of violence. For policymakers and education authorities, adequate resource allocation, investment in capacity-building initiatives, and the establishment of systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are crucial to ensure consistency, accountability, and long-term program effectiveness. These measures provide clear and actionable steps for schools, teachers, and policymakers, reinforcing a comprehensive, inclusive, and evidence-based framework for child protection within the school system.

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