

Perceptions of Secondary School Teachers in Implementing Child Protection Policies: Rules, Procedures, And Structures in Focus

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Abstract

A document written alone does not guarantee a child's safety. Guided by the principles of Policy Implementation Theory, the study aims to understand how teachers experience and navigate policy implementation within the school setting. I explore teachers' perceptions of rules, procedures, and structure, using a descriptive approach. The data from interviews of six (6) purposively selected teachers were thematically analysed. Participants felt the policy worked because they had clear school rules to guide them, a step-by-step process for reporting issues, and a supportive team to help them handle incidents. Future studies should expand the range of participants by including teachers from different educational levels, school types, and geographic locations to determine whether experiences vary across contexts. To build on these findings, upcoming studies could track how teachers' experiences change over time while exploring how school funding, leadership support, training, and overall school culture help or hinder efforts to keep children safe.

Keywords: Perceptions; Secondary School Teachers; Implementation of Child Protection Policy; Rules; Procedures; Structures.

Main Text

The Problem and its Setting

Schools were expected to be safe places where children could learn and grow up without fear of harm. Because of this, educational systems globally have established strict Child Protection Policies (CPPs) to actively shield students from abuse, bullying, and neglect. However, implementing these policies day to day presented real challenges for secondary school teachers, who found themselves acting as the primary frontline defenders of student welfare. Recent global literature emphasizes that when teachers have access to highly formalized child protection frameworks, they view these rules as indispensable tools for managing classroom conflicts safely and objectively (Al-Yateem et al., 2024). Thus, understanding teachers' perception in implementing the Child Protection Policy through these affective dimensions is essential to promoting both compliance and compassion within the educational system. The implementation of child protection policy in

the Philippines is guided by national frameworks such as Republic Act No. 7610 and the Department of Education's Child Protection Policy (DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012), which mandate schools to create safe and supportive environments for learners. However, understanding how this policy translates into tangible classroom practices is a complex and dynamic process, one that merits close examination, Carmona (2023). In practice, schools establish Child Protection Committees, develop reporting mechanisms, and integrate protective measures into daily school operations. However, implementation often varies depending on institutional capacity, resources, and the level of teacher training. According to Fernandez (2016), gaps remained in awareness and consistent enforcement, particularly in public schools, where large class sizes and limited support systems affect responsiveness.

In Davao del Norte, a study conducted by Zamora (2021) found that school leaders and educators face constraints, including inadequate financial and human resources and challenges with student behavior, yet they respond by strengthening communication, collaborating with stakeholders, and adopting child-centered approaches to effectively implement the policy. In some cases, teachers must balance enforcing discipline with respecting students' rights under the policy, creating uncertainty in decision-making. Understanding teachers' perceptions in Davao del Norte is therefore essential to address these gaps and strengthen the protection mechanisms for children within the local education system.

The purpose of this descriptive study was to determine secondary school teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Child Protection Policy. Specifically, it sought to examine how teachers perceive and navigate the policy in relation to the rules, procedures, and structure. Thus, strengthening teachers' knowledge, providing sufficient support systems, and fostering a culture of shared responsibility were essential to ensuring the successful and meaningful execution of the Child Protection Policy in schools.

Nomenclature	
A	radius of
B	position of
C further nomenclature continues down the page inside the text box	

Significance of the Study

This study is anchored on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and it directly supports the implementation of the Child Protection Policy within the school setting. A crucial role in enforcing the Child Protection Policy (CPP) within schools. Understanding it is significant because it provides valuable insights into

teachers' perceptions, illuminating the practical challenges, successes, and areas for improvement in policy implementation. By examining the day-to-day realities of teachers, the study helps identify gaps between policy design and classroom practice, ultimately promoting a harmonious classroom environment.

Moreover, this research served as an important resource for future training and professional development programs aimed at strengthening child protection measures in schools. It also guides revisions or enhancements to existing policies to ensure they are more responsive to the actual conditions and needs educators encounter. The findings could benefit not only teachers and school leaders but also parents, child welfare advocates, and government agencies involved in safeguarding children's rights, thereby promoting a more comprehensive and effective approach to child protection in the education sector.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to explore secondary school teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Child Protection Policy. Specifically, it sought to examine how teachers perceived and navigated the policy in relation to the rules, procedures, and structure. Below is the central research question that guided this study:

1. What are the influences of rules, procedures, and organizational structure on the effective implementation of the Child Protection Policy in schools?

Assumptions of the Study

This study is built on the assumption that secondary school teachers were the frontline guardians of student safety, meaning their daily experiences and understanding were crucial to how child protection policies work in practice. It assumes that while clear rules, proper procedures, and supportive school structures are meant to guide them, teachers often face real-world challenges—such as a lack of training or heavy workloads—that affect how effectively they could protect students. Ultimately, the study assumed that by listening to teachers' honest perspectives, we can uncover the hidden gaps between official safety guidelines and classroom reality, thereby leading to safer, more supportive environments for children.

Theoretical Lens

This study, grounded in the **Policy Implementation Theory**, particularly the top-down and bottom-up approaches developed by Daniel A. Mazmanian and Paul A. Sabatier (1983), provided a useful framework for understanding how the DepEd Child Protection Policy is implemented in schools. From a **top-down perspective**, the policy, such as DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012, issued by the Department of Education, Philippines—establishes clear rules, procedures, and structures that schools were expected to follow, including the formation of Child Protection Committees and reporting mechanisms. This reflects how higher authorities designed policies with specific goals and expect consistent implementation at the school level through supervision, training, and monitoring.

At the same time, the **bottom-up perspective**, associated with Michael Lipsky (1980),

explained that the actual implementation of the Child Protection Policy largely depends on teachers and school personnel who act as frontline implementers. These educators interpret and apply the policy in real classroom situations, using available resources and their professional judgment. As a result, the effectiveness of the policy is shaped not only by official guidelines but also by teachers' experiences, challenges, and decision-making processes. This connection showed that the successful implementation of the DepEd Child Protection Policy required both strong institutional direction and active, informed participation from teachers at the ground level. Moreover, as the study aimed to present the lived experiences of secondary teachers regarding child protection policies and practices, it is pertinent that the fundamental frameworks were understood.

Conceptual Paradigm

This conceptual paradigm presented the key factors influencing the implementation of the Child Protection Policy in a school setting. The model showed that effective implementation (the main variable at the top) is shaped by three major components: rules, procedures, and structure.

- **Rules** refer to the set of policies, guidelines, and standards that define acceptable behavior and outline the steps to protect children.
- **Procedures** focus on the step-by-step processes involved in implementing the policy.
- **Structure** refers to the organizational system within the school that supports policy implementation.

Overall, the paradigm suggested that the successful implementation of the Child Protection Policy depends on the clarity and alignment of rules, procedures, and structure. When these three elements were well-defined and effectively integrated, schools were better equipped to protect learners and respond appropriately to child protection concerns.

Conceptual Paradigm

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presented the research methodology that will be utilized in this research. It covered research design, research locale, participant sample and sampling, data-gathering techniques, data analysis procedures, research instruments, and the study's trustworthiness.

Research Design

In my study, I employed a qualitative-descriptive research design to provide a clear and straightforward description of a phenomenon based on participants' experiences, staying close to

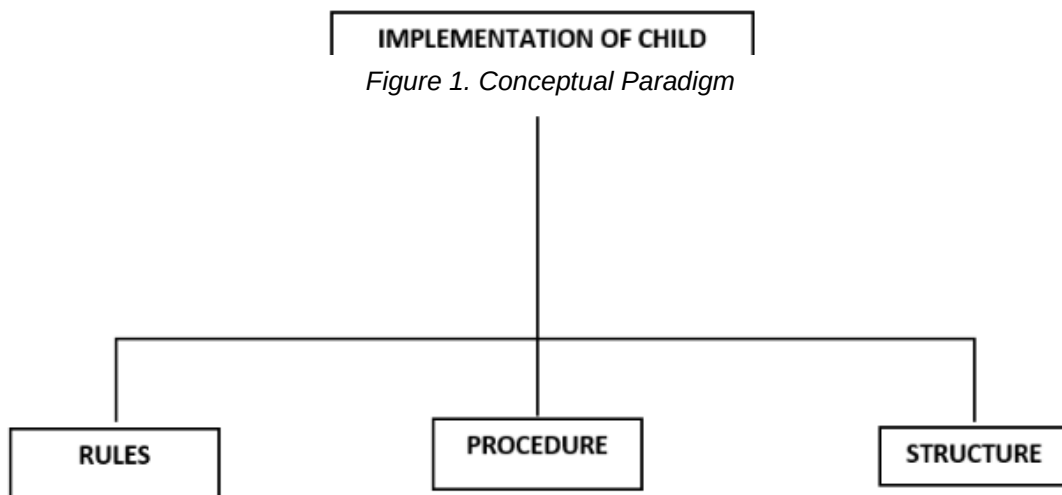


Figure 1. Conceptual Paradigm

their words and meanings (Villamin et al., 2024). Qualitative descriptive research design is applied when a study seeks to provide a clear, straightforward description of participants' experiences or perceptions in everyday language without developing theory or extensive interpretation (Sandelowski, 2000; Kim et al., 2017). This design is advantageous because it is simple, flexible, and produced practical findings that are easy to understand and grounded in participants' perspectives (Villamin et al., 2024).

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted among secondary schools in the Carmen district, where the Child Protection Policy is actively implemented and practiced. The schools were chosen as study sites because they represent educational environments that allow for a comprehensive understanding of teachers' experiences across different contexts. By focusing on this locale, the study aimed to gather perceptions and insights into the challenges and practices of teachers working to uphold child protection, while considering their emotional and psychological needs.

Sample and Sampling

The participants in the study will be six secondary teachers in Carmen, Davao del Norte, who actively implemented the program. Purposive sampling will be used. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a nonprobability sampling technique widely used in qualitative research (Adeoye, 2023). This method involved deliberately selecting particular units of the universe to constitute a sample, on the premise that the investigator's knowledge of the population can be leveraged to select elements that representatively characterize it (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

There were 6 participants in this study with at least 10 years of teaching experience. Two teachers per school were selected to participate in an in-depth interview to determine their experiences with the implementation of the child protection policy.

Research Instrument

The main instrument in this research to understand people was a semi-structured interview. Magaldi and Berler (2020) defined the semi-structured interview as an exploratory interview. They further explain that the semi-structured interview is generally guided by a framework and typically focuses on the main topic, providing a general pattern. In addition, Megaldi and Berler (2020) argued that the semi-structured interview, despite its topical trajectories provided prior to the interview, enables a researcher to go deep for discovery.

Before conducting the study, the interview guide questions were reviewed by experts to ensure credibility. Reviewing the interview guide questions to test their credibility is an essential step in ensuring the reliability and validity of qualitative research. Through their feedback, the researcher identifies and revises any vague, biased, or redundant items.

Data Gathering Procedures

For this qualitative study, the researcher first sought approval from the Dean of the Graduate School through an official endorsement letter and will comply with the requirements of the Society for Moral Integrity and Legal Ethics (SMILE) system prior to data collection. After the certification is secured, the necessary steps in data collection will follow. First, I sought permission to conduct a study at the Division office of Davao del Norte. Then, I visited each school by writing a letter to the principal requesting permission to conduct a study at the institution. Upon completion, the invitation and informed consent forms were distributed to the study participants. This form stated the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, and participants' right to withdraw at any time if they feel uncomfortable.

The data for this study were collected through in-depth interviews (IDIs). These methods were selected because they complemented each other in capturing the experiences of public-

school teachers. The in-depth interviews provided an opportunity to listen closely to the participants' experiences, highlighting their academic, social, and emotional adjustments. Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained to ensure ethical standards. Permission will be asked before recording the interviews, and this will be supported by field notes to capture non-verbal cues such as tones, gestures, and expressions. All the data gathered will be securely stored and accessed only by the researcher to maintain confidentiality and integrity of the study.

Data Analysis

After data collection through in-depth interviews, I transcribed and organized the data for analysis. To analyze the data, Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis was used to identify emerging themes and organize the data. Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data. It involved identifying and reporting patterns in a data set, which are then interpreted for their inherent meaning (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In doing the analysis, this involved a review to ensure that the codes and themes were coherent with each other. This process of systematic analysis yielded the results needed for the study, as its sequential approach to interpreting the data provided consistency and replicability of the findings, enabling a coherent connection between the data, interpretation, and conclusion.

Trustworthiness of the Study

To ensure the study's trustworthiness, the researcher applies Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for construct validity. These include a) credibility, b) transferability, c) dependability, and d) confirmability.

In this study, trustworthiness followed. *The study's credibility* will be ensured by securing

data from participants who meet the inclusion criteria, and it will be triangulated with data from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. *Transferability* supported by providing descriptions and context of the study, including the background of the participants and their engagement with online

*I had to refer to a policy when chaos arises inside the classroom
due to class bullying-IDI-1 (Participant 1, Line 1, Page 1)*

gambling. *Dependability* was ensured by following the necessary procedures and guidelines for data collection at the four secondary schools in Carmen District. Lastly, *confirmability* is proven by securing the validation of the transcribed material from the participants. Furthermore, their responses will be analyzed using a process grounded in credible sources.

RESULTS

In this chapter, I presented the results of my study on the perceptions of secondary teachers in implementing the child protection policy. I also provided the summary of the findings along with the modified paradigm.

Adhering to School Disciplinary Policies

As I interviewed one of my participants, one participant mentioned that...

Hearing this, I can say that having rules in the classroom helps teachers

*Katong sa akong klase nga nay mga estudyante sige'g kusog nga
tabi panahon sa group activities ug nakasamok sa leksyon. Gigamit nako
ang classroom management policy aron e remind sila bahin sa tama nga
pamatasan. (During my class where several students kept talking loudly
during group activities and disrupting the lesson. I referred to the classroom
management policy to remind them about proper behavior and participation
rules.-IDI-3) (Participant 3, Line 8, Page 1)*

guide their class, and in order to create a good classroom environment. Policies help ensure that actions taken are appropriate and focused on students' safety and well-being. Another participant has the same thought.

There was one time when a student was making hurtful remarks towards his classmate during group activity. I had to refer to the policy on anti-bullying. To address the situation-IDI-4) (Participant 4, Line 11, Page 1)

As a teacher myself, I relate to this scenario because we always go back to the rules we established in the beginning to remind the students, especially when they misbehave inside the classroom. By reminding them about proper behavior and participation rules, the teacher reinforced the importance of respect and responsibility during classroom activities. This situation also reflects how policies serve as practical guides for teachers in handling challenging classroom behaviors while ensuring that learning continues effectively. This is similar to another participant which he says that.

Inside the classroom, we cannot avoid students who make fun of their classmates. For them, it is just like simple teasing, but for the victim, it's a form of bullying that may hurt their feelings. That's why we need to be aware of what is going on inside the classroom. Aside from that, we also need to weigh in on this situation by consistently reminding them of the policy and the possible consequences of their actions.

Based on their responses, I can say that having policies, especially inside the classroom, promotes orderliness and respect. These policies guide both teachers and students in creating a safe and positive learning atmosphere. It strengthens discipline among students and the

effectiveness of teachers in their tasks.

Handling Defiant Learners' Behavior

In my conversation with the participants, I felt their disappointment towards students who disregard their rules. As one participant said.

Isa sa mga challenge nga akong nasinati mao ang pagdumala sa mga estudyante nga dili pirmi mosunod sa mga lagda sa klase ug kasagarang magsamok panahon sa diskusyon. (One challenge I encountered was handling students who did not consistently follow classroom rules and often became disruptive during discussions. -IDI-3) (Participant 3, Line 29, Page 1)

After listening, I agree with the response because learners simply listen to your talk without understanding. For them, it's just like simple talk, which is why they did not easily follow the rules being implemented. As other participants responded.

I do complete reminders to them, but they always do not follow the policy. -IDI-6) (Participant 6, Line 6, Page 1)

Hearing the response, I felt sad for the teacher because despite the efforts in doing your work and reminding them not to misbehave. They still do their parts as if they don't have rules to follow. Another participant also had the same case.

Taken together, I can say that handling learners who don't follow rules is one of the

One challenge I faced was helping students understand why the Child Protection Policy is important. Some learners did not immediately follow rules about respect, boundaries, or proper behavior-IDI-2.) (Participant 2, Line 25, Page 1)

challenging responsibilities of a teacher. It requires patience, understanding, and consistency in implementing classroom policies and disciplinary procedures. These experiences highlight the importance of communication in the classroom and of proper guidance in helping students understand the consequences of their actions. By properly handling misbehaving students, teachers can foster positive behavioral change among learners.

I once noticed a student showing signs of possible bullying. I

Addressing Bullying and Misconduct Cases

followed the Child Protection Policy by recording what I observed, talking to the student calmly-IDI-2) (Participant 2, Line 110, Page 3)

Teachers

must observe every action in the classroom and intervene if there's misconduct. One of them stated...

There was one time when students' disagreement escalates to negative interactions until there was physical attacks. I immediately step in to stop it and talk to them to understand the situation. I documented what I observed and wrote an incident report. I also talked to our

Another guidance designate and the school head regarding this matter. - IDI-4 one
said... (Participant 4, Line 119, Page 3)

Hearing this, I felt a sense of urgency for teachers to respond to the situations that

A bullying incident was reported by the father of one of my advisory students at the 2nd week of the school year. He stated that his daughter was being bullied by a male classmate and had a bruise on the arm after being punched. I interviewed the students involved separately to hear their side of the story and interviewed some classmates near their seats. - IDI-1 (Participant 1, Line 124, Page 3)

happened. To avoid further trouble, they immediately respond to the situation in accordance with the child protection policy. Handling such cases is not only about discipline but also about understanding the impact of the behavior on the learners involved, especially the learner who may experience emotional distress. As in the same case experienced by one participant.

Listening to this, I attribute the teacher's fairness. Both sides were given the chance to hear their sides. The teacher responds promptly and fairly while following established school policies and procedures. It also underscores the importance of collaborating with parents and authorities to resolve incidents effectively.

Documenting Incidents and Coordinating Guidance Support

Recording incidents in the classroom and coordinating with guidance support ensures that student concerns and behavioral issues are properly addressed on the premises, as the participants said...

I noticed a student showing signs of emotional distress due to possible bullying. I referred to the Child Protection Policy to make sure I followed the correct steps. Since in our school the Guidance Counselor handles these cases, I documented my observations and referred the student to the Guidance Counselor for proper assessment and intervention, -IDI-3)

(Participant 3, Line 115, Page 3)

participant...

After listening, I reflected on the responses that immediately caught the attention of both parties, understood the situation, took notes, and referred to the guidance counselors. As part of the step-by-step process of child protection policy, implementers know well what to do first and where to ask for help. As it is supported by another participant.

Sa isa ka insidente, sa ka Grade 8 nga estudyante misulod sa elementary classroom ug nang-bully sa mas gagmay nga mga bata busa akong gipahunong dayon ang maong binuhatan ug gisiguro ang kaluwasan sa mga bata. Gisunod nako ang child protection policy pinaagi sa pagdokumento sa insidente ug pagreport niini sa hustong mga awtoridad sa eskwelahan. Dayon, nakigkoordinar ko sa guidance counselor ug sa mga ginikanan ug naghatag og angay nga intervention alang sa mga estudyante. (During one incident, a grade 8 student entered an elementary classroom and bullied younger pupils so I immediately stopped the behavior and ensured the safety of the children. I followed the child protection policy by documenting the incident and reporting it to the proper school authorities. I then coordinated with the guidance counselor- IDI-3.)

(Participant 3, Line 113, Page 3)

Referring Cases to Appropriate Authorities

Following a certain step provides a clear path that guides teachers in handling various situations, especially when dealing with student disciplinary cases and other school-related concerns. One must know the process to follow and refer to the case handled as the participant said...

I followed the Child Protection Policy by recording what I observed, talking to the student calmly, and then reporting the concern to the proper school authority for referral to the Guidance Counselor. -IDI-2) (Participant 5, Line 120, Page 4)

The teacher knows how to handle the cases; she takes notes, understands the root cause of the misbehavior, and then refers it to the higher authorities. Similar cases with another participant.

Una nakong duolon ang gitudlo nga focal person sa child protection committee o ang school head alang sa hustong giya. Sa praktis, ang koordinasyon mahitabo pinaagi sa dali nga pagdokumento sa insidente ug pakigtambayayong sa guidance designate, school head, ug mga ginikanan aron masiguro ang angay nga intervention. (I first turn to the designated child protection committee focal person or the school head for proper guidance. In practice, coordination works through immediate documentation of the incident, and collaboration with the guidance designate, school head-IDI-3) (Participant 3, Line 176, Page 4)

Another participant said...

The first person I turned to was our grade level head, senior high department head and the school's guidance counselor and lastly, the principal-IDI-6 (Participant 6, Line 182, Page 4

Listening to their responses, I realized how coordination works in facing such incidents. It shows the importance of using the proper channels within the school, such as guidance counselors, school administrators, and child protection committees, to ensure cases are handled properly. It also recognizes that some incidents require specialized attention beyond the teacher's capacity, especially when they involve serious misconduct, safety issues, or legal considerations.

Collaborating with Parents and Stakeholders

The school system doesn't only focus on the teacher and the students. Partnerships with parents and other stakeholders also contribute to the overall well-being of the learner. One participant said...

Whenever issue arises, guidance counselor is requested to join the conference in settling the issues. We need to inform them what happened and what time should we meet and settle with the parents. - IDI-1 (Participant 1, Line 167, Page 4)

Aside from the school authorities, such as the guidance counselor, parents are also called to be informed about the incident that happened to their child. As the other participant added...

The guidance coordinator. First, I have to ensure students' safety. Document everything about the incident then coordinates with the guidance coordinator. If needed, parents' will be called or even the school head. -IDI-4 Participant 4, Line 180, Page 4)

Coordinating with the stakeholders fosters transparency, trust, and mutual support in resolving issues and improving the school program.

Na feel nako ang suporta gikan sa organizational structure sa eskwelahan pinaagi sa husto ug dali ma-access nga giya gikan sa child protection committee ug administrasyon. (I feel supported by the school's organizational structure through proper and accessible guidance from the child protection committee and administration-IDI-3) (Participant 3, Line 197, Page 4)

Hearing this, it is really important to have a support system on school premises to promote a conducive environment. Through open communication and consistent support, teachers can better understand the learner's individual concerns and protect their rights.

Collaborating with Guidance Counselors

Guidance counselors are the primary authority responsible for addressing student concerns, especially behavioral issues and personal challenges that may affect learning and development. One of the participants shared her idea.

When cases arise, I always turn to our Guidance in charge to ask for recommendations to settle the issue. -IDI-1 (Participant 1, Line 167, Page 4)

Another

participant said...

In our school, I first report the concern to the Child Protection focal person or the Guidance Counselor. -IDI-2 (Participant 2, Line 171, Page 4)

Guidance support provides necessary moves and creates appropriate interventions in facing cases like misconduct, bullying or emotional difficulties. As one participant said...

Sa amin kasi ay pag may insidente kagaya ng misconduct ay hinaharap muna ni guro. Kumg hindi kaya ay sasanguni na kami sa grade level head naming tapos sa guidance counselor- IDI-5 (Participant 5, Line 183, Page 4) ("In our school, when there is an incident such as misconduct, the teacher handles it first. If the teacher cannot manage it, we consult our grade level head and then refer the matter to the guidance counselor.") IDI-5 (Participant 5, Line 183, Page 4)

Working together strengthens collaboration, improves partnerships, and promotes a supportive, student-centered school environment. With the help of guidance counselors, the child's safety is ensured and well-taken care of.

Establishing Structured Support Systems for Child Protection

Creating a well-structured support system may lead to a better implementation of a certain policy. It makes the system work well, treated promptly and effectively.

I feel supported because there is a clear system in place teachers, head teachers, and the Guidance Counselor work together in handling cases. -

IDI-2 (Participant 2, Line 192, Page 4)

A clear support system helps the teacher better implement the rules and attain their goal in teaching. As supported by one of the participants.

I can say that there was support given in implementing the policies. I can collaborate with colleagues well and they helped me address difficult situations especially concerning students' behavior. -IDI-

4 (Participant 4, Line 199, Page 4)

Working through and addressing difficult situations made it easier because of the sufficient support from the authorities, especially from colleagues. Another participant mentioned...

per grade level so we know who to tap. And it's easier to get support because they are within our faculty rooms.-IDI-1 (Participant 1, Line 188, Page 4)

Hearing this reminds me of how important it is to have a support system at your school. Teachers are guided and can lean on colleagues if they have concerns regarding a specific incident. I felt guided by their responses, especially knowing that they have a supportive authority who can easily be approached with concerns regarding the implementation of the child protection Policy.

Summary of findings

My conversations with my study participants made me realize that, in terms of rules, teachers consistently relied on existing school guidelines and policy provisions when addressing policy-related incidents. Participants emphasized the importance of referring to school policies as a guide for appropriate action and decision-making. In terms of procedures, participants followed established processes in addressing classroom concerns and child protection-related cases. They stressed that reporting protocols, documentation requirements, and referral mechanisms were commonly practiced. In terms of structure, the support system on the premises enabled effective implementation of the child protection policy. Teachers expressed that having designated individuals and a clear chain of coordination contributed positively to policy implementation.

DISCUSSIONS

In this section, I presented the findings of my study, future direction, and implications for practice.

Influences of Rules, Procedures, and Organizational Structure on the Effective

Implementation of the Child Protection Policy in Schools

The study's findings indicate that participants made me realize that, in terms of rules, teachers consistently relied on existing school guidelines and policy provisions when addressing policy-related incidents. Participants emphasized the importance of referring to school policies as a guide for appropriate action and decision-making. In terms of procedures, participants followed established processes in addressing classroom concerns and child protection-related cases. They stressed that reporting protocols, documentation requirements, and referral mechanisms were commonly practiced. In terms of structure, the support system on the premises enabled effective implementation of the child protection policy. Teachers expressed that having designated individuals and a clear chain of coordination contributed positively to policy implementation.

This finding supports the idea that educators view formalized child protection policies as essential tools for classroom management and conflict prevention, emphasizing that following structured procedures and protocols provides a clear framework for handling diverse student groups and ensuring student welfare is handled safely and objectively (Al-Yateem et al., 2024). Additionally, my findings affirm Smith and Robinson (2023), who argued that dedicated support structures within the school premises—such as clear internal roles and localized coordination pathways—allow teachers to efficiently escalate classroom concerns, thereby ensuring that child protection mandates are implemented actively and systematically managed.

In contrast, my findings contradict those of Batsaikhan (2024), who argued that policy implementation is often severely undermined by inconsistent compliance, a lack of practical understanding of reporting protocols, and weak internal coordination. Instead of experiencing a seamless, effective support system and reliable rules, teachers in that high-risk environment reported feeling overwhelmed by excessive workloads and a distinct shortage of functional structural resources, leading to passive policy engagement rather than active referral.

Implication for Practice

School leaders, principals, and policymakers can use this study to make schools much safer by focusing on three simple things: clear rules, easy-to-follow steps, and a strong backup team. Specifically, principals can take these findings and make sure teachers receive regular, hands-on training so they always know exactly how to spot and report child safety issues without any guesswork. Finally, school boards can use this research to fund and establish local support teams—such as bringing in dedicated child protection staff and helping teachers work closely with parents and guidance counselors. This ensures that every day, teachers never feel overwhelmed or alone, and always have a reliable team helping them keep kids safe

Future Directions

Future researchers can build on this study by examining a wider range of schools, grade levels, and locations to understand how different environments shape how child safety rules operate. Moving forward, it would be incredibly helpful to explore aspects this study couldn't fully cover, such as the level of support principals provide, whether teachers feel truly prepared, the quality of their training, and the actual resources and school budget available. By using mix-and-match research methods or tracking teachers' experiences over a longer period, future studies can gather both personal stories and hard data to show what truly helps or hinders keeping children safe.

Modified Paradigm

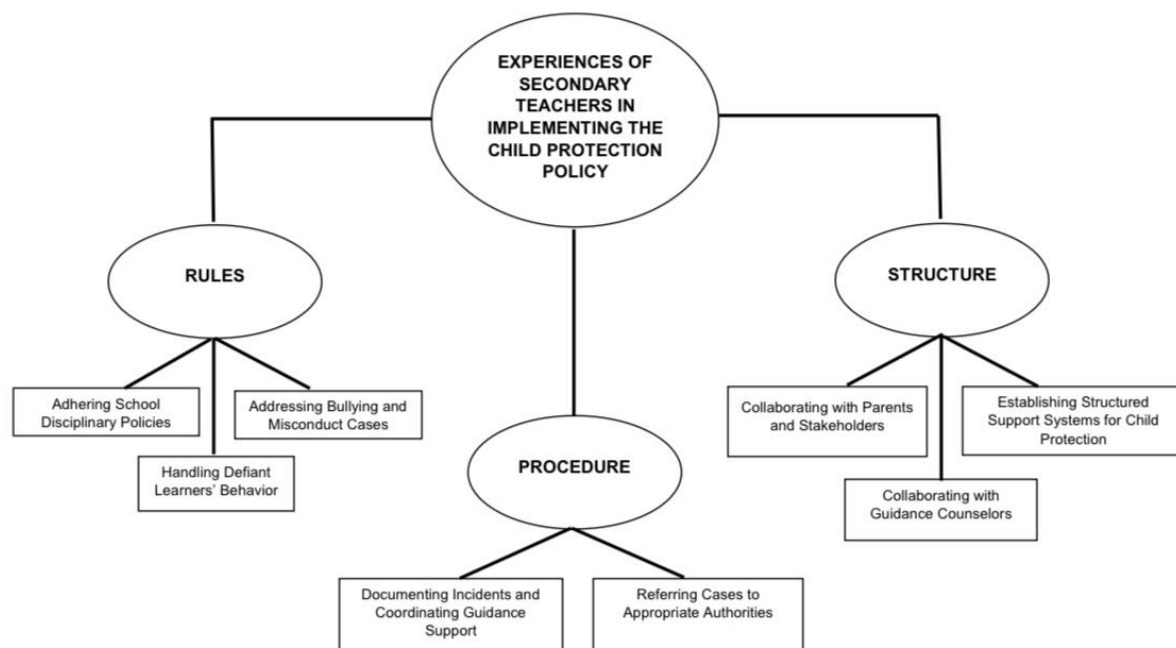


Figure 2. Modified Paradigm

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