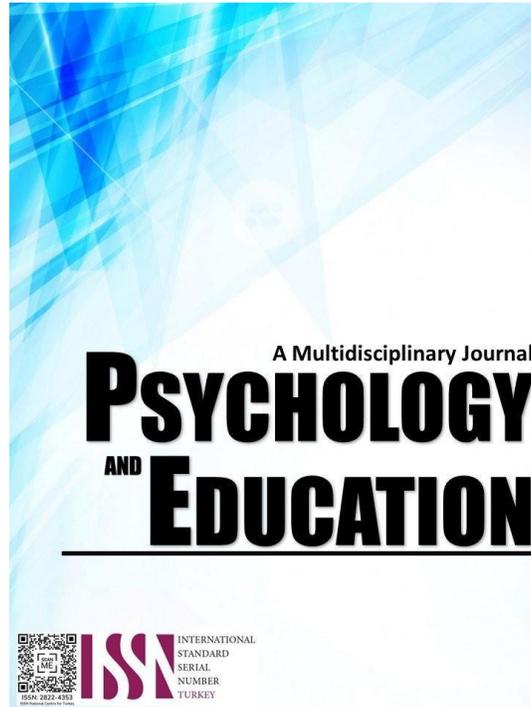


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The Impact of the Integration of Child Protection Policies on Student Well-Being

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Abstract

The study assessed the integration of child protection policies in public schools in Valencia City for 2024-2025, focusing on awareness, implementation effectiveness, responsiveness, training support, collaboration among stakeholders, and its impact on student well-being across several dimensions. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study gathered data from selected schools in the Valencia City Division. Descriptive statistics were used to assess the extent of policy integration and student well-being, while correlation and regression analyses were conducted to examine relationships between variables. The correlation analysis indicated no statistically significant relationship between overall policy integration and student well-being. However, awareness of child protection policies positively correlated with well-being, indicating informed students feel safer. Teacher training had no significant effect, emphasizing the need for active student engagement and stronger community collaboration to achieve better outcomes. These findings suggest that while child protection policies contribute to a structured and safe learning environment, other factors substantially shape student well-being. The study recommends prioritizing student awareness initiatives, enhancing stakeholder collaboration, and exploring holistic approaches to improving student welfare. Future research may consider additional factors influencing student well-being beyond policy implementation.

Keywords: *child protection policies, student well-being, policy awareness, stakeholder collaboration, descriptive-correlational design, educational policy implementation*

Introduction

The effect of child protection policies on student well-being has become a critical area of focus in educational research. Ensuring students' safety and holistic development in educational settings aligns with recognizing that student well-being significantly influences academic success and personal growth. Globally, policies that emphasize inclusivity, emotional security, and protection from harm have demonstrated potential in fostering environments conducive to academic and personal development (UNICEF, 2020). For example, countries that actively integrate child protection frameworks into school systems often report improvements in students' emotional resilience, social behaviors, and classroom engagement (Baginsky et al., 2019). However, while many schools acknowledge the necessity of such policies, their implementation remains inconsistent, often hindered by limited resources, insufficient teacher training, and varying institutional priorities (Treacy & Nohilly, 2020).

Existing research emphasizes the significance of protective educational policies in fostering student well-being. For instance, frameworks designed to create safe, nurturing, and inclusive school environments correlate strongly with positive psychological outcomes and reduced incidences of bullying and neglect (Roffey, 2020). These findings emphasize the importance of embedding child protection measures into the core of school governance. Despite this, gaps remain in understanding how such policies directly influence student well-being, particularly when translated into classroom practices. Studies frequently highlight the need for context-specific research to address unique cultural, social, and pedagogical challenges educators and learners face in diverse settings (Reyes & Brackett, 2021).

The Department of Education (DepEd) introduced the Child Protection Policy to address these challenges in the Philippines. This policy aims to safeguard students from abuse and discrimination while promoting inclusivity and respect for cultural diversity. However, its effect has yet to be thoroughly evaluated, especially regarding its contribution to students' mental health, emotional security, and academic engagement. Reports from various divisions, including the Division of Valencia City, reveal inconsistent policy implementation, often due to teacher training, limited resources, and inadequate monitoring systems (Mag-atas & Carmona, 2023). These shortcomings hinder the policy's potential to transform classrooms into spaces where students feel safe, valued, and engaged.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the integration of child protection policies and their effect on student well-being. Specifically, it investigates how the effective implementation of these policies influences students' emotional, social, and academic experiences. The research focuses on identifying practical strategies that can empower teachers to create nurturing and supportive classroom environments. By analyzing the outcomes of policy-driven interventions, this study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on improving student well-being through systemic approaches.

Ultimately, the research seeks to bridge the gap between policy design and practical application, offering insights into how child protection frameworks can be optimized to benefit students in diverse educational contexts. The findings are expected to inform policymakers, educators, and school administrators on enhancing the effectiveness of such policies, fostering an educational landscape where student well-being is prioritized alongside academic excellence.

Research Questions

This study aimed to assess the extent of integrated child protection policies and their effect on student well-being as perceived by Araling Panlipunan teachers in the Division of Valencia City for the school year 2024-2025. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are child protection policies integrated in the following areas: awareness of policies, implementation effectiveness, responsiveness to incidents, training and support, and Collaboration with stakeholders?
2. What is the level of students' well-being regarding: Joy of learning, School connectedness, Educational purpose, and Academic efficacy?
3. Is there a significant correlation between the integration of child protection policies and student well-being?
4. Is there an integrated child protection policies variable that best predicts specific dimensions of student well-being?

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research framework to investigate the extent of integration of child protection policies. It examined its correlation with student well-being as perceived by Araling Panlipunan teachers in selected schools in Valencia City for the academic year 2024-2025. The descriptive aspect of this research focused on integrating child protection policies by assessing the level of awareness, effectiveness, responsiveness, training, and collaboration. The study assessed student well-being through sub-variables: joy of learning, school connectedness, educational purpose, and academic efficacy. Specifically, this study addressed the first two research questions: the extent to which teachers were aware of the policies, the effectiveness of their implementation, and how responsive teachers were to incidents related to child protection. These aspects were critical for understanding the current state of child protection policies in the educational setting.

In addition to two descriptive components, the study explored the correlations between integrating child protection policies and student well-being. By examining these dimensions, the research provided insights into how the integration of child protection policies influenced classroom interactions and students' overall well-being. This correlation was essential, as it sought to understand the relationship between effective child protection practices and their effect on students' emotional and academic experiences within the classroom environment. Thus, the study comprehensively assessed the current integration of child protection policies alongside the well-being of students to identify any significant correlations among these variables.

Furthermore, predictive analysis was used to find out which component of integrated child protection policies could best predict the components of student well-being.

Respondents

The participants in this study included Araling Panlipunan teachers and students in Grades 7 to 10 from the Division of Valencia City, Bukidnon. The total estimated student population across the 10 districts was 5,085. Table 1 outlines the distribution of Araling Panlipunan teachers and students across these districts. The teacher population in the Division of Valencia City consisted of 113 teachers, with the number of teachers varying by district. The student population was stratified per district to reflect the number of students in each area.

The distribution of respondents is detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Teachers and Students in the Division of Valencia City

<i>District</i>	<i>Population of Araling Panlipunan Teachers</i>	<i>Student Population per District</i>	<i>Student Sample Size</i>
District 1	45	2,025	154
District 2	11	495	38
District 3	11	495	38
District 4	11	495	38
District 5	11	495	38
District 6	6	270	20
District 7	6	270	20
District 8	6	270	20
District 9	3	135	10
District 10	3	135	10
Total	113	5,085	386

For the student respondents, the researcher employed Gay's (2012) stratified random sampling technique, which ensured that the sample was proportionally representative of the different districts based on the student population. The total sample size for students was 386, calculated using Slovin's formula. This stratified sampling method enabled the capture of the diversity of student experiences across the districts, ensuring that the results accurately reflected the broader student population.

In terms of teachers, the study utilized a census approach, where all 113 Araling Panlipunan teachers across all districts were included as the sample. This approach ensured that the study provided a comprehensive view of the teaching practices and experiences of all Araling Panlipunan teachers in the division, avoiding sampling bias.

This methodology ensured that each district's unique characteristics were represented by using a stratified approach for student respondents and a census approach for teacher respondents. It also allowed for a thorough understanding of the practices and challenges that educators across the division faced. This approach aligned with the study's objectives of investigating culturally responsive teaching practices and their effect on student engagement.

Instrument

The research instruments for this study were adapted to ensure their relevance to the context of integrated child protection policies and their effect on student well-being among Araling Panlipunan teachers.

The first instrument was the Integrated Child Protection Policies Questionnaire, adapted from Macatimpag et al. (2020). This tool assessed various dimensions of integrated child protection policies within schools. It comprises five main categories: Awareness of policies, implementation effectiveness, responsiveness to incidents, training and support, and stakeholder collaboration. Each category included positively worded statements measuring teachers' perspectives on these policies.

The Awareness of Policies section evaluated teachers' understanding of child protection policies relevant to their school, their awareness of specific measures implemented, and their confidence in explaining key elements. The Implementation Effectiveness category focused on the practical application of these policies, including staff adherence and resource allocation. The Responsiveness to Incidents section assessed the clarity of reporting processes for abuse, the seriousness with which incidents were addressed, and support systems for affected students. The Training and Support category evaluated the adequacy and relevance of training received by teachers, as well as the availability of resources to enhance understanding. Lastly, the Collaboration with Stakeholders category focused on the engagement of parents and community organizations in promoting child protection initiatives.

The second instrument was the Student Well-Being Questionnaire, adapted from Renshaw and Chenier (2019). This tool examined the aspects of student well-being, explicitly focusing on Joy of Learning, School Connectedness, Educational Purpose, and Academic Efficacy. The Joy of Learning section assessed teachers' perceptions of students' enthusiasm for school, enjoyment of learning, and the promotion of a joyful classroom environment. The School Connectedness category evaluated students' sense of belonging and supportive relationships within the school community. The Educational Purpose section focused on how teachers helped students set clear academic goals and understand the relevance of their lessons. Lastly, the Academic Efficacy category assessed teachers' observations of students' confidence in their academic abilities and the celebration of their achievements.

Procedure

This research followed established protocols and standard operating procedures for conducting studies within the Division of Valencia City. Initially, the researcher sought permission from the superintendents in the Division of Valencia City to ensure that the study aligned with district policies and priorities. Following this, the researcher requested permission from the Araling Panlipunan education supervisor to gain approval specific to the subject area of the study. Subsequently, permission was sought from the district supervisor and the school heads of the institutions where the Araling Panlipunan teachers were employed.

Informed consent for teachers and an assent form for students were fundamental aspects of the data-gathering process. The researcher provided the Araling Panlipunan teachers and students with detailed information regarding the study's objectives, procedures, and the voluntary nature of participation, empowering the teachers to make informed decisions regarding their involvement in the research.

The researcher personally administered and collected the questionnaires to ensure that the process was handled with integrity and respect for each teacher's and student's contributions. All data collected was securely stored in an Excel format on a computer accessible only to the researcher, ensuring confidentiality and protecting the anonymity of all respondents. The researcher then analyzed and interpreted the data, adhering to strict ethical standards throughout the research process to prioritize the rights and welfare of all participants.

Data Analysis

For Statement of the Problem 1, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were used to determine the extent of child protection policy integration regarding awareness, implementation effectiveness, responsiveness to incidents, training and support, and stakeholder collaboration.

For Statement of Problem 2, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were used to assess student well-being across the dimensions of joy of learning, school connectedness, educational purpose, and academic efficacy.

For Statement of the Problem 3, Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the integration of child protection policies and student well-being. Since the teacher and student respondents were not the same individuals, stratified sampling by district was employed, and the mean scores of each variable for teachers were correlated against the



corresponding mean scores of each variable for students at the district level.

For Statement of the Problem 4, multiple regression analysis was utilized to identify which specific dimension of integrated child protection policies best predicts aspects of student well-being. This method allowed for the examination of the relative contribution of each predictor variable while controlling for the influence of other factors, providing insights into the most influential elements of policy integration on student well-being.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are a critical aspect of this study, particularly in ensuring the protection of the rights and privacy of participating teachers and students. To uphold confidentiality, all responses were anonymized. All collected data were securely stored in password-protected digital files and locked physical storage to prevent unauthorized access. The study strictly adhered to the ethical guidelines set by the college's research protocols to ensure compliance with research integrity and ethical standards.

Before data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participating teachers and students. They received detailed information about the study's purpose, procedures, and potential benefits or risks. Participants were informed that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study without facing any negative consequences. Students and their guardians were fully briefed on their rights as participants, including assurances that their responses will remain confidential and used solely for academic purposes.

To further protect participant privacy, all responses were used solely for academic purposes, and findings were reported in aggregate form to prevent the identification of individual participants. For students, special considerations were made to ensure that their involvement does not disrupt their learning environment and that they fully understand the research process in an age-appropriate manner. The study adhered to the ethical standards for research involving minors, including obtaining parental or guardian consent as necessary.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the study's findings on integrating child protection policies and their effect on student well-being as perceived by Araling Panlipunan teachers in the Division of Valencia City for the school year 2024-2025. The results are organized according to the study's objectives, beginning with an assessment of policy integration across key areas, then examining student well-being levels, and concluding with an analysis of the correlation between these two variables. The analysis offers insights into how child protection measures impact students' educational experiences, with implications for policy refinement and targeted school interventions.

The extent of child protection policy integration in terms of awareness of policies, implementation effectiveness, responsiveness to incidents, training and support, and collaboration with stakeholders.

Integrated child protection policies of Araling Panlipunan teachers

Table 2 presents the integration of child protection policies among Araling Panlipunan teachers, focusing on their awareness of these policies.

The overall mean score of 4.11, with a standard deviation of 0.75, indicates that teachers generally agree that they are knowledgeable about child protection policies, signifying effective integration.

Table 2. *Integration of Child Protection Policies of Araling Panlipunan Teachers in Terms of Awareness of Policies*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>	<i>Qualitative Interpretation</i>
I understand the child protection policies relevant to my school.	4.30	0.92	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
I am aware of the specific child protection measures implemented in my school.	4.20	0.91	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
I have received information about changes or updates to child protection policies.	4.04	0.89	Agree	Effective Integration
I feel confident in my knowledge of child protection policies.	4.01	0.92	Agree	Effective Integration
I can explain the key elements of our school's child protection policies to others.	3.98	0.99	Agree	Effective Integration
Overall mean	4.11	0.75	Agree	Effective Integration

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Effective Integration); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Effective Integration); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Integration); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Ineffective Integration); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Ineffective Integration).

The two highest-rated statements, "I understand the child protection policies relevant to my school" and "I am aware of the specific child protection measures implemented in my school", suggest that teachers have a firm grasp of policy-related information within their institution. On the other hand, the two lowest-rated items, "I feel confident in my knowledge of child protection policies" and "I can explain the key elements of our school's child protection policies to others", indicate that while teachers acknowledge their awareness, there is room for improvement in their confidence and ability to articulate these policies effectively.

These findings suggest that although Araling Panlipunan teachers are generally knowledgeable about child protection policies, further efforts are needed to enhance their confidence in discussing and explaining these policies comprehensively. The gap between awareness and confident application suggests that professional development programs should focus on policy dissemination and practical training to enhance teachers' ability to communicate these policies effectively. Schools may consider implementing structured refresher sessions or workshops to reinforce key elements and ensure teachers feel more assured in their role as child protection advocates.

This result is supported by the study of Ramos and Cruz (2018), who found that teacher awareness of child protection policies directly influences classroom management and overall effectiveness in safeguarding students. Similarly, Treacy and Nohilly (2020) emphasise that continuous policy reinforcement through training and clear communication enhances teachers' confidence in implementing child protection measures. In contrast, Villanueva and Mendoza (2020) highlighted challenges such as insufficient training and limited resources, which may hinder the full integration of child protection policies, aligning with the observed need for improved teacher confidence and articulation in the present study.

Table 3 presents the integration of child protection policies among Araling Panlipunan teachers, focusing on the effectiveness of implementation.

Table 3. *Integration of Child Protection Policies of Araling Panlipunan Teachers in Terms of Implementation Effectiveness*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>	<i>Qualitative Interpretation</i>
I observe that the policies are regularly followed by school staff.	4.23	0.80	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
Child protection policies are effectively put into practice in my school.	4.22	0.84	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
Resources are adequately allocated for the implementation of child protection policies.	4.19	0.79	Agree	Effective Integration
I believe that the implementation of these policies positively affects learner safety.	4.19	0.79	Agree	Effective Integration
There are clear procedures in place for addressing child protection issues.	4.08	0.87	Agree	Effective Integration
Overall mean	4.18	0.69	Agree	Effective Integration

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Effective Integration); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Effective Integration); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Integration); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Ineffective Integration); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Ineffective Integration).

The overall mean score of 4.18, with a standard deviation of 0.69, indicates that teachers generally agree that child protection policies are effectively implemented in their schools, reflecting effective integration. The two highest-rated statements, "I observe that the policies are regularly followed by school staff" and "Child protection policies are effectively put into practice in my school", suggest that school personnel consistently adhere to these policies, ensuring a safe learning environment. Meanwhile, the two lowest-rated statements, "There are clear procedures in place for addressing child protection issues" and "Resources are adequately allocated for the implementation of child protection policies", imply that while procedures exist, some concerns regarding clarity and resource allocation may still need attention.

These findings suggest that while teachers acknowledge the implementation of child protection policies as effective, there may be gaps in the availability of resources and procedural clarity. Schools should strengthen policy dissemination and ensure teachers receive continuous training to improve their understanding of protocols. Addressing resource limitations through proper budget allocation and institutional support will further enhance the effectiveness of child protection measures.

This result is supported by the study of Smith and Williams (2021), who emphasised that effective policy implementation depends on leadership support and school climate, which influence teachers' ability to enforce protective measures. Similarly, Harker and McMahon (2023) highlighted that regular assessments allow schools to refine their strategies and address gaps in implementation.

In contrast, Villanueva and Mendoza (2020) noted that challenges such as limited resources and inadequate training hinder the full enforcement of child protection policies, aligning with the observed concerns regarding procedural clarity and resource allocation in this study.

Table 4 presents the integration of child protection policies among Araling Panlipunan teachers, focusing on their responsiveness to incidents.

The overall mean score of 4.17, with a standard deviation of 0.69, suggests that teachers generally perceive the school's responsiveness as effective. The highest-rated statement, "I feel that staff members are trained to respond appropriately to incidents of child abuse or neglect", highlights the confidence in staff preparedness. At the same time, "There is a support system in place for learners who report incidents" suggests that mechanisms are in place to assist affected students.

Conversely, the two lowest-rated statements, "I believe that reported incidents are taken seriously and addressed promptly" and "My school has a clear process for reporting incidents of child abuse or neglect", suggest that while systems are in place, there may be concerns about consistency and procedural clarity.

Table 4. *Integration of Child Protection Policies of Araling Panlipunan Teachers in Terms of Responsiveness to Incidents*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>	<i>Qualitative Interpretation</i>
I feel that staff members are trained to respond appropriately to incidents of child abuse or neglect.	4.27	0.80	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
There is a support system in place for learners who report incidents.	4.19	0.83	Agree	Effective Integration
I have seen improvements in the school's response to incidents over time.	4.16	0.82	Agree	Effective Integration
My school has a clear process for reporting incidents of child abuse or neglect.	4.12	0.91	Agree	Effective Integration
I believe that reported incidents are taken seriously and addressed promptly.	4.10	0.84	Agree	Effective Integration
Overall mean	4.17	0.69	Agree	Effective Integration

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Effective Integration); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Effective Integration); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Integration); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Ineffective Integration); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Ineffective Integration).

These findings underscore the importance of establishing, effectively communicating, and consistently applying reporting mechanisms and response procedures. Schools should strengthen training programs to reinforce teachers' ability to handle incidents and build confidence in the reporting system. Institutional support, combined with collaboration with child protection agencies, can further enhance overall responsiveness to incidents.

This result is supported by the study of Baginsky et al. (2019), which underscores the significance of teacher training in improving responses to child protection concerns. Similarly, Reyes-Bautista et al. (2019) found that well-trained educators are more proactive in addressing incidents, fostering safer learning environments.

However, Cruz-Angeles et al. (2022) highlight the ongoing need for community engagement and external collaboration, suggesting that gaps in procedural clarity may be mitigated through stronger partnerships with relevant stakeholders.

Table 5. *Integration of Child Protection Policies of Araling Panlipunan Teachers in Terms of Training and Support*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>	<i>Qualitative Interpretation</i>
Resources are available to help me better understand child protection policies.	4.33	0.80	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
There are opportunities for ongoing professional development in child protection.	4.19	0.67	Agree	Effective Integration
I feel supported by the school administration in implementing child protection policies.	4.12	0.83	Agree	Effective Integration
The training provided is relevant to my role as an Araling Panlipunan teacher.	4.08	0.81	Agree	Effective Integration
I have received adequate training on child protection measures.	4.04	0.77	Agree	Effective Integration
Overall mean	4.15	0.63	Agree	Effective Integration

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Effective Integration); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Effective Integration); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Integration); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Ineffective Integration); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Ineffective Integration).

The overall mean of 4.15 indicates that teachers generally perceive their training and support systems as effective. The highest-rated statement, "Resources are available to help me better understand child protection policies", reflects the accessibility of learning materials. At the same time, "There are opportunities for ongoing professional development in child protection" highlights the presence of continuous training initiatives. Meanwhile, the two lowest-rated statements, "I have received adequate training on child protection measures" and "The training provided is relevant to my role as an Araling Panlipunan teacher", suggest that while training exists, there may be gaps in its adequacy and contextual relevance.

These findings imply the need for more specialized training that addresses the challenges Araling Panlipunan teachers face in implementing child protection policies. Ensuring that training programs are aligned with subject-specific classroom scenarios may improve teachers' confidence and application of child protection measures. Strengthening administrative support and professional development opportunities could enhance teachers' effectiveness in safeguarding student welfare.

This result is supported by the study of Mustikasari and Rostyaningsih (2020), which emphasises that continuous professional development strengthens teachers' competency in enforcing child protection policies. Similarly, Bunting and McHugh (2018) emphasize that strong administrative support promotes a safer school environment, thereby reinforcing teachers' commitment to policy implementation.

However, Abad-Castro et al. (2019) argue that institutional backing alone is insufficient, stressing the need for training programs tailored to the specific needs of educators, which aligns with the lower ratings on training adequacy and contextual relevance in this study.

Table 6 presents the integration of child protection policies among Araling Panlipunan teachers in terms of collaboration with stakeholders.

Table 6. *Integration of Child Protection Policies of Araling Panlipunan Teachers in Terms of Collaboration with Stakeholders*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>	<i>Qualitative Interpretation</i>
My school actively engages with parents regarding child protection measures.	4.22	0.84	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
There are partnerships with community organizations to promote child protection.	4.22	0.82	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
Feedback from the community is considered when shaping child protection policies.	4.21	0.88	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
I feel that local authorities are involved in supporting child protection initiatives at my school.	4.14	0.79	Agree	Effective Integration
My school encourages collaboration between teachers and parents on child protection issues.	4.08	0.95	Agree	Effective Integration
Overall mean	4.18	0.73	Agree	Effective Integration

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Effective Integration); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Effective Integration); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Integration); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Ineffective Integration); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Ineffective Integration).

The overall mean of 4.18 indicates an effective integration of stakeholder collaboration in child protection initiatives. The highest-rated indicators, with a mean of 4.22, emphasise the school's active engagement with parents and partnerships with community organizations, reflecting strong external support for child protection measures. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicators, involving local authorities' involvement (4.14) and teacher-parent collaboration (4.08), still reflect effective integration but suggest areas where further engagement may be needed.

The results imply that while schools have established strong partnerships with parents and community organizations, further strengthening collaboration with local authorities and fostering direct teacher-parent engagement could enhance child protection efforts. Effective integration in these areas can ensure a more comprehensive and sustainable child protection framework within the school system. Additionally, enhancing local government support may provide schools with additional resources to improve implementation.

This result is supported by the study of Mustikasari and Rostyaningsih (2020), who emphasized that partnerships with local agencies enhance schools' ability to address child protection issues effectively. Similarly, Cruz-Angeles et al. (2022) highlighted that engaging with community stakeholders fosters a more holistic approach, ensuring that child protection measures align with students' needs. Villanueva and Mendoza (2020) further noted that regular dialogue among educators, parents, and local authorities strengthens the implementation of child protection policies, reinforcing the importance of continuous collaboration.

Summary of the integration of child protection policies of Araling Panlipunan teachers

Table 7 presents the overall integration of child protection policies among Araling Panlipunan teachers, examining various dimensions such as responsiveness to incidents, implementation effectiveness, training and support, awareness of policies, and collaboration with stakeholders.

Table 7. *Overall Integration of Child Protection Policies of Araling Panlipunan Teachers*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>	<i>Qualitative Interpretation</i>
Responsiveness to incidents	4.23	0.80	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
Implementation effectiveness	4.22	0.84	Strongly Agree	Very Effective Integration
Training and support	4.19	0.79	Agree	Effective Integration
Awareness of policies	4.11	0.75	Agree	Effective Integration
Collaboration with stakeholders	4.08	0.87	Agree	Effective Integration
Overall Mean	4.19	0.79	Agree	Effective Integration

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Effective Integration); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Effective Integration); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Integration); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Ineffective Integration); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Ineffective Integration).

The overall mean of 4.19 suggests effective integration of child protection policies, with some areas demonstrating Very Effective Integration. The highest-rated aspect, responsiveness to incidents (4.23), indicates that schools prioritise immediate action in addressing child protection concerns. Similarly, the implementation effectiveness score (4.22) reflects strong adherence to child protection measures, ensuring policies are actively enforced.

Training and support received a mean score of 4.19, signifying that while teachers are provided with resources and training, there may still be gaps in continuous capacity-building efforts. Awareness of policies (4.11) suggests that teachers are well-informed about child protection guidelines but may benefit from further reinforcement. The lowest-rated dimension, collaboration with stakeholders (4.08), indicates that while engagement with parents, communities, and local authorities is present, strengthening these partnerships could enhance policy implementation.

While the study presents overall mean scores, further analysis could provide deeper insights by examining subgroup differences, such

as variations between urban and rural schools. Identifying patterns in the data may reveal specific challenges or strengths in particular contexts. Additionally, factors such as school size, teacher experience, and the availability of external support could influence the effectiveness of child protection policy integration, warranting further exploration.

Future research could incorporate qualitative insights from teachers and administrators to gain a more comprehensive understanding. Their perspectives could shed light on contextual challenges, best practices, and areas requiring improvement beyond the quantitative results. A mixed-methods approach would allow for a richer analysis of the integration and implementation of child protection policies in schools.

The findings suggest that while child protection policies are well-integrated, targeted improvements in training and stakeholder collaboration could enhance their effectiveness. Schools should invest in continuous professional development for teachers to reinforce policy awareness and implementation. Additionally, fostering stronger ties with external organizations and local authorities could provide schools with additional resources and support to sustain these initiatives.

This result is supported by the study of World Vision International (2021), which underscores the significance of strong policy implementation and training in enhancing child protection efforts. Similarly, Mustikasari and Rostyaningsih (2020) emphasized that collaboration with community organizations contributes to the sustainability of child protection programs. Furthermore, Villanueva and Mendoza (2020) highlighted the role of continuous teacher training in ensuring that child protection measures remain effective and aligned with evolving challenges.

The level of students' well-being in terms of: Joy of learning, School connectedness, Educational purpose, and Academic efficacy.

Table 8 presents the level of student well-being concerning the joy of learning, as measured by various indicators such as happiness in learning new things, excitement about school, and enjoyment of classroom activities.

Table 8. Student Well-Being in Terms of Joy of Learning

Indicators	Mean	S. D	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
Learning new things makes me happy.	4.45	0.71	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
I look forward to going to school every day.	4.27	0.80	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
The activities in my classroom make learning enjoyable.	4.06	0.90	Agree	Good Well-Being
I feel excited about sharing what I learn in class.	4.02	0.87	Agree	Good Well-Being
I have fun during lessons and activities.	3.99	0.91	Agree	Good Well-Being
Overall mean	4.18	0.55	Agree	Good Well-Being

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Good Well-Being); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Good Well-Being); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Well-Being); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Poor Well-Being); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Poor Well-Being).

The overall mean of 4.18 suggests that students generally experience a good level of joy in learning. The highest-rated statement, "Learning new things makes me happy" (4.45), indicates that students find fulfilment in acquiring new knowledge. Similarly, "I look forward to going to school every day" (4.27) highlights a strong enthusiasm toward attending school.

On the other hand, the lowest-rated indicators, "I have fun during lessons and activities" (3.99) and "I feel excited about sharing what I learn in class" (4.02), still reflect good well-being but suggest that some students may not find all classroom activities equally engaging. These results imply that while students generally find joy in learning, there may be areas where classroom strategies can be improved to enhance their excitement and active participation further. Schools should consider incorporating more interactive and student-centred approaches to sustain engagement and deepen students' positive learning experiences.

This result is supported by the study of Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2019), which emphasises the role of positive emotions in fostering an intrinsic love for learning. Dela Cruz-Malabanan et al. (2024) also highlight that student well-being is strengthened when learning environments cultivate joy and fulfilment, enabling students to develop a deeper appreciation for acquiring knowledge. Likewise, Furlong and Christenson (2019) emphasise that fostering a sense of joy in learning contributes to student engagement and long-term academic success, reinforcing the importance of creating enriching and enjoyable educational experiences.

Table 9 presents student well-being concerning school connectedness, assessing aspects such as participation in school activities, relationships with classmates, and a sense of belonging.

Table 9. Student Well-Being in Terms of School Connectedness

Indicators	Mean	S. D	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
I participate in school activities and events.	4.20	0.92	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
My class feels like a community.	4.19	0.90	Agree	Good Well-Being
I have a good relationship with my classmates.	4.18	0.92	Agree	Good Well-Being
I enjoy working and connecting with my classmates.	4.16	0.90	Agree	Good Well-Being
I feel like I belong in my school.	4.15	0.96	Agree	Good Well-Being
Overall mean	4.19	0.64	Agree	Good Well-Being

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Good Well-Being); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Good Well-Being); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Well-Being); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Poor Well-Being); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Poor Well-Being).

Similarly, Roffey (2020) highlights that strong teacher-student relationships contribute significantly to students' enjoyment of school, creating a more engaging and supportive environment. Moreover, Mag-atas and Carmona (2023) assert that child protection policies are crucial in enhancing student well-being by ensuring that educational spaces remain safe and conducive to learning.

The overall mean of 4.19 indicates that students generally experience good connectedness within their school environment. The highest-rated statement, "I participate in school activities and events" (4.20), suggests that students actively engage in school-related events, contributing to their sense of community. Meanwhile, "My class feels like a community" (4.19) further emphasizes that students perceive their classrooms as inclusive and supportive.

The lowest-rated indicators, "I feel like I belong in my school" (4.15) and "I enjoy working and connecting with my classmates" (4.16), still reflect good well-being but suggest that while students feel connected, some may experience moments of detachment or reduced engagement. These findings underscore the importance of cultivating a more inclusive school environment that fosters students' sense of belonging. Schools should continue implementing programs promoting social interaction and collaboration, ensuring every student feels valued and included.

This result is supported by the study of Wang and Eccles (2019), which emphasizes that strong social support within schools enhances students' sense of belonging, leading to better academic engagement. Similarly, Reyes and Brackett (2021) emphasize the role of emotional intelligence in fostering meaningful relationships, which significantly contributes to students' sense of connectedness within their school communities. Furthermore, Dela Cruz-Malabanan et al. (2024) assert that school environments emphasizing child protection policies contribute to students' overall well-being by reinforcing their emotional security and connection to their school community.

Table 10 presents the level of student well-being in terms of educational purpose, focusing on students' clarity of academic goals, understanding of learning relevance, and future aspirations.

Table 10. *Student Well-Being in Terms of Educational Purpose*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>	<i>Qualitative Interpretation</i>
I have clear goals for my education.	4.49	0.76	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
I understand why the things I learn are important.	4.49	0.71	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
I understand how school will help me in the future.	4.46	0.76	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
I see how lessons relate to my future.	4.37	0.78	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
I set academic goals for myself.	4.34	0.74	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
Overall mean	4.43	0.50	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Good Well-Being); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Good Well-Being); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Well-Being); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Poor Well-Being); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Poor Well-Being).

The overall mean of 4.43 suggests that students strongly agree that their education has a clear purpose, contributing to their exceptional well-being. The highest-rated indicators, "I have clear goals for my education" and "I understand why the things I learn are important" (both at 4.49), highlight that students recognize the significance of their academic journey and its relevance to their future success. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated statements, "I see how lessons relate to my future" (4.37) and "I set academic goals for myself" (4.34), still reflect an exceptional level of well-being. However, they indicate slightly less conviction in personal goal setting.

These results imply that students generally have a strong sense of direction in their education, reinforcing their motivation and engagement in learning. However, while they recognize the importance of education, there is a slight gap in connecting specific lessons to future applications, suggesting the need for more real-world integration in teaching strategies. Schools should strengthen career-oriented discussions and experiential learning opportunities to bridge this gap and enhance students' long-term educational vision.

This result is supported by the study of Furlong and Christenson (2019), which emphasizes that students who find meaning in their education exhibit higher engagement and well-being. Similarly, Bautista-Cabral (2019) highlights that resilience is crucial to academic success, and having a strong sense of educational purpose helps students overcome obstacles. Additionally, Parker and Salmela-Aro (2020) argue that a purposeful education enhances students' mental health and social support networks, further reinforcing the importance of cultivating goal-oriented learning environments.

Table 11 presents student well-being regarding academic efficacy, reflecting students' confidence in their ability to succeed, their attitude toward learning challenges, and the availability of academic support.

Table 11. *Student Well-Being in Terms of Academic Efficacy*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>	<i>Qualitative Interpretation</i>
I feel confident that I can succeed in my studies.	4.26	0.80	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
I believe I can do well in school.	4.25	0.78	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
I have a positive attitude toward challenges in learning.	4.23	0.91	Strongly Agree	Very Good Well-Being
My efforts and achievements in school are recognized.	4.14	0.91	Agree	Good Well-Being
I have access to resources that help me do better in school.	4.13	0.91	Agree	Good Well-Being
Overall mean	4.22	0.57	Agree	Good Well-Being

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Good Well-Being); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Good Well-Being); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Well-Being); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Poor Well-Being); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Poor Well-Being).

The overall mean of 4.22 falls within the "Agree" category, indicating good well-being in terms of academic efficacy. The highest-rated statements, "I feel confident that I can succeed in my studies" (4.26) and "I believe I can do well in school" (4.25), suggest that students generally have a strong sense of self-efficacy. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicators, "My efforts and achievements in school are recognized" (4.14) and "I have access to resources that help me do better in school" (4.13), highlight areas where external validation and support could be improved.

These findings suggest that while students believe in their abilities, their well-being could be further enhanced by increasing recognition of their academic efforts and providing more accessible learning resources. Schools should strengthen feedback mechanisms and ensure students receive adequate academic support to sustain their confidence and motivation. Addressing these areas could help bridge the gap between students' self-efficacy and the external factors influencing their learning experience.

This result is supported by the study of Baker and Wigfield (2022), which asserts that students with higher academic efficacy experience greater emotional well-being and academic success. Similarly, Villanueva et al. (2021) emphasize the crucial role of teacher support in bolstering students' confidence in their academic abilities. Furthermore, Durlak et al. (2018) emphasize that social-emotional interventions enhance academic self-efficacy, reinforcing the importance of supportive school environments in fostering students' overall well-being.

Table 12 presents the overall student well-being, encompassing educational purpose, academic efficacy, school connectedness, and joy of learning. The overall mean of 4.25 falls under the "Strongly Agree" category, indicating that students experience exceptional well-being in their academic environment. Among the sub-variables, educational purpose received the highest mean of 4.43, suggesting that students have a clear sense of direction and motivation in their studies, followed by academic efficacy at 4.22, reflecting confidence in their ability to succeed.

Table 12. Overall Student Well-Being

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S. D</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>	<i>Qualitative Interpretation</i>
Educational purpose	4.43	0.57	4.43	Strongly Agree
Academic efficacy	4.22	0.64	0.57	Strongly Agree
School connectedness	4.19	0.55	0.64	Agree
Joy of learning	4.18	0.44	0.55	Agree
Overall Mean	4.25		0.44	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very Good Well-Being); 3.40–4.19 = Agree (Good Well-Being); 2.60–3.39 = Undecided (Moderate Well-Being); 1.80–2.59 = Disagree (Poor Well-Being); 1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree (Very Poor Well-Being).

School connectedness and joy of learning, with means of 4.19 and 4.18, respectively, fall within the "Agree" category, indicating good well-being. The slightly lower ratings in these aspects suggest that while students generally feel connected to their school community and enjoy learning, there is still room for improvement. Strengthening relationships among students and educators and fostering engaging learning experiences further enhances these dimensions of well-being.

A detailed subgroup analysis comparing urban and rural schools or various socioeconomic groups may offer deeper insights into differences in student well-being. (Asio et al., 2020; Dela Cruz-Malabanan et al., 2024). Research suggests that teacher support (De Leon-Morales, 2021) and family environment (Dela Cruz-Malabanan, 2020) significantly influence school connectedness and academic efficacy.

Additionally, Chiu and Chow (2019) emphasize the importance of peer relationships in promoting student well-being, suggesting that fostering collaborative learning environments can enhance the joy of learning and engagement.

These findings imply that students benefit from a strong sense of purpose and confidence in their academic abilities, positively influencing their well-being. However, the slightly lower scores in school connectedness and joy of learning suggest that interventions to strengthen school relationships and make learning experiences more engaging could further improve their overall well-being. Schools should focus on creating a supportive academic environment that fosters achievement and a sense of belonging.

This result is supported by the study of Furlong and Christenson (2019), who highlight the importance of educational purpose in student engagement and well-being. Similarly, Wang and Eccles (2019) emphasize that academic efficacy is closely linked to students' emotional health and motivation.

Furthermore, Parker and Salmela-Aro (2020) assert that fostering school connectedness and a love for learning contributes to students' mental well-being and long-term academic success. Additionally, studies by Fredricks et al. (2020) and Kern and Friedman (2020) support that students with a strong academic purpose and positive school experiences exhibit higher well-being and resilience in challenging learning environments.

Correlation of integrated child protection policies and student well-being in Araling Panlipunan in the public schools in Valencia City, Bukidnon

Table 13 presents the correlation between integrating child protection policies and student well-being in Araling Panlipunan within public schools in Valencia City, Bukidnon.

Table 13. *Correlation Between the Dependent and Independent Variables*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient</i> ®	<i>P-Value</i>
Integration of child protection policies	0.405	0.246 ^{NS}
Responsiveness to incidents	0.592	0.071 ^{NS}
Implementation effectiveness	0.363	0.303 ^{NS}
Training and support	-0.083	0.820 ^{NS}
Awareness of policies	0.675	0.032*
Collaboration with stakeholders	0.055	0.880 ^{NS}

** $p < 0.01$, NS = Not Significant

The overall correlation coefficient of 0.405, with a p-value of 0.246, indicates a positive but statistically insignificant relationship between the two variables. Among the sub-variables, awareness of policies showed the strongest relationship ($r = 0.675$, $p = 0.032$), suggesting a significant positive connection with student well-being. At the same time, training and support had a negative correlation ($r = -0.083$, $p = 0.820$), indicating no meaningful relationship.

Responsiveness to incidents ($r = 0.592$, $p = 0.071$) and implementation effectiveness ($r = 0.363$, $p = 0.303$) also showed positive relationships. However, it was not statistically significant, implying that while these aspects may contribute to student well-being, their effect is not strong enough to be conclusive. Collaboration with stakeholders ($r = 0.055$, $p = 0.880$) exhibited the weakest correlation, indicating that partnerships with external groups may not directly influence student well-being. These findings suggest that implementing child protection policies does not automatically enhance well-being unless students are fully aware of and engaged with them.

Given the results, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the integration of child protection policies and student well-being is rejected. While the overall relationship was not statistically significant, the awareness of policies variable demonstrated a significant relationship, highlighting its importance in shaping student well-being. Schools may need to enhance policy awareness efforts to maximize the effect of child protection measures on student welfare.

This result is supported by the study of Durlak et al. (2018), which highlights that school interventions promoting student safety must be actively integrated into learning environments to be effective. Similarly, Cruz-Angeles et al. (2019) emphasize that child protection policies alone are insufficient unless students recognize and trust their implementation. Furthermore, Villanueva et al. (2021) assert that school well-being initiatives are most effective when students feel directly involved in the policies designed to protect them.

Potential confounding variables such as socioeconomic status, school climate, and family background may have influenced student well-being. Ramos et al. (2018) highlighted that school climate has a significant impact on both emotional and academic outcomes. The findings align with DepEd's Child Protection Policy, which emphasizes the awareness and active enforcement of child safety measures, and UNICEF's global frameworks that advocate for student participation in protection efforts (UNICEF, 2020; Mag-atas & Carmona, 2023). This underscores the need for schools to implement policies and enhance student engagement and trust in these measures to maximize their impact on well-being (Kelly & Regan, 2022; Limjoco-Macapagal, 2022).

Variables that best predict student well-being in the Public Schools in Valencia City, Bukidnon

Table 14 presents the regression analysis between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 14. *Regression Analysis Between the Independent and Dependent Variables*

<i>Model</i>	<i>Unstandardized Coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>		
(Constant)	2.114	1.184		.266	.410
Integration of child protection policies					
Responsiveness to Incidents	.262	0.971	1.283	2.178	.470
Implementation Effectiveness	0.852	1.108	0.069	.132	.491
Training and support	0.259	3.008	0.523	0.152	.314
Awareness of policies	0.651	0.825	0.587	.459	.012
R = 527 R ² = .489	F = 5.269	P = 0.313			

The results indicate that awareness of policies is the most significant predictor of student well-being among the four dimensions of integrated child protection policies. The positive coefficient suggests that as teachers' awareness of child protection policies increases, students' well-being also improves. This finding underscores the vital role of well-informed educators in creating a safe and supportive school environment.

On the other hand, responsiveness to incidents and implementation effectiveness did not show significant predictive power in the model. In contrast, these factors are essential components of child protection; their lower statistical significance suggests that other underlying mechanisms influence student well-being more directly. Similarly, training and support (Beta = 0.523) demonstrated a weak association with student well-being, implying that while professional development is important, it may not immediately translate into visible improvements in student well-being unless coupled with other institutional factors.

The model's R-value (0.527) indicates a moderate correlation between integrating child protection policies and student well-being. Meanwhile, the R^2 value of 0.489 suggests that the independent variables in the study can explain approximately 48.9% of the variance in student well-being. While this is a reasonable predictive capacity, it also implies that other external factors, such as home environment, peer relationships, or school culture, may significantly contribute to student well-being beyond the scope of child protection policies alone.

The F-value of 5.269 and p-value of 0.313 indicate that while the model explains student well-being, additional predictors may enhance its explanatory power. Future research could explore variables such as parental involvement, school climate, and mental health support to better understand what truly impacts student well-being.

The study's findings underscore the importance of awareness in implementing child protection policies. Teachers who are well-informed about child protection protocols are more likely to create a structured and secure student environment. This highlights the need for continuous professional development focused on increasing policy awareness and ensuring teachers understand how these regulations translate into daily classroom practices.

Additionally, while training and implementation strategies are essential, their lower statistical significance suggests that policies alone are insufficient to drive meaningful improvements in student well-being. This finding suggests that schools should implement policies and regularly monitor and evaluate their impact. Having policies does not guarantee that students feel safe and supported; instead, there must be a strong culture of enforcement and accountability within the school system.

Furthermore, the moderate predictive power of the model suggests that other factors beyond teacher integration of child protection policies contribute to student well-being. This implies a need for a multi-stakeholder approach, where parents, administrators, and the broader community collaborate to ensure that students receive holistic support both inside and outside the classroom. Schools may benefit from integrating socio-emotional learning programs and mental health initiatives alongside child protection policies to enhance the effectiveness of their efforts in improving student outcomes.

The regression equation indicates that for every one-unit increase in implementation effectiveness ($B = 0.852$, $p = .491$), there is a 0.852 increase in integrated child protection policies, suggesting that well-implemented policies significantly enhance student well-being. Similarly, for every one-unit increase in awareness of policies ($B = 0.651$, $p = .012$), integrated child protection policies improve by 0.651, highlighting the importance of teacher knowledge in policy integration. Meanwhile, a one-unit increase in responsiveness to incidents ($B = 0.262$, $p = .470$) results in a 0.262 increase, and a one-unit increase in training and support ($B = 0.259$, $p = .314$) leads to a 0.259 increase, indicating that while these factors contribute, their impact is relatively minor.

The hypothesis is rejected, as awareness of policies significantly predicted student well-being ($p = 0.012$), while other dimensions—implementation effectiveness, responsiveness to incidents, and training and support—did not demonstrate statistically significant predictive power.

The findings of this study align with prior research emphasizing the critical role of teacher awareness in effectively implementing child protection policies (Jones & Brown, 2019; Mag-atas & Carmona, 2023). However, the lack of significance in responsiveness to incidents, training, and support suggests that institutional structures, resource allocation, and enforcement mechanisms may moderate the impact of these policies on student well-being (Villanueva & Mendoza, 2020; Mustikasari & Rostyaningsih, 2020). Furthermore, socioeconomic status and school climate, as highlighted in previous studies, could serve as confounding variables influencing student well-being beyond the direct effects of policy implementation (Ramos et al., 2018; Reyes & Brackett, 2021), reinforcing the need for a holistic, multi-stakeholder approach that integrates teacher awareness with systemic support and mental health initiatives (UNICEF, 2020; Parker & Salmela-Aro, 2020).

Conclusions

The findings of this study highlight the effective integration of child protection policies within public schools in Valencia City, particularly in terms of responsiveness to incidents and policy implementation. Araling Panlipunan teachers perceive these measures as well-established, though stakeholder collaboration and continuous training require further improvement. Despite strong policy integration, its direct effect on student well-being remains inconclusive. It suggests that while these policies create a safe learning environment, other factors contribute more significantly to student welfare. These results emphasize the need for school administrators and teachers to implement policies and actively engage students, parents, and the broader community in fostering a culture of safety and well-being.

While the overall correlation between child protection policy integration and student well-being was not statistically significant, the study reveals that awareness of policies has a meaningful effect on student well-being. This suggests that ensuring students are well-informed about their rights and the protection mechanisms in place fosters a sense of security and trust in the school system. Conversely, teacher training and support did not significantly affect student well-being, indicating that mere policy dissemination among educators is insufficient without deeper student engagement. These findings underscore the importance of integrating policy awareness with proactive initiatives that directly impact students' experiences within the school environment.

The weak correlation between stakeholder collaboration and student well-being further suggests that external partnerships, while

valuable, do not independently enhance student welfare. This underscores the need for a holistic approach that integrates parental involvement, community engagement, and school initiatives to ensure that policies translate into tangible student benefits. The study contributes to global and national child protection efforts, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Strengthening policy enforcement, promoting student engagement, and fostering collaboration among schools, families, and policymakers are crucial steps toward creating a safer and more supportive learning environment for all students.

The findings indicate that awareness of policies is the most significant predictor of student well-being among the dimensions of child protection policies, highlighting the critical role of informed educators in fostering a supportive school environment. Despite a moderate correlation, the overall integration of child protection policies did not significantly predict student well-being, suggesting that while policies establish a foundation for safety, additional factors influence student welfare more directly. The weak predictive power of responsiveness to incidents, implementation effectiveness, and training and support implies that policy presence alone is insufficient without active enforcement and engagement. This highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach, encompassing continuous professional development, student engagement, and broader school-community collaboration, to enhance student well-being.

The findings align with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Social-Ecological Theory, emphasizing that child protection policies require multi-level stakeholder engagement, including teachers, parents, and the community, to create a safe learning environment. Likewise, Positive Psychology Theory (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) emphasizes the importance of policy awareness in promoting student well-being by fostering a sense of security and trust. The weak correlation between stakeholder collaboration and student well-being suggests that external partnerships alone are insufficient, reinforcing the need for a holistic, school-centered approach. These theories collectively support the conclusion that while policy integration lays the foundation for student safety, active engagement and psychological support are essential for enhancing student well-being.

The results of this study offer significant insights for various educational stakeholders to strengthen child protection policies and promote student well-being in public schools in Valencia City.

Education supervisors may consider enhancing professional development initiatives that focus on increasing awareness and implementing effective child protection policies. While policies are effectively integrated, further emphasis on stakeholder collaboration and ongoing teacher training could improve overall effectiveness. Organizing workshops, seminars, or policy refresher courses, conducted by experts in child protection, legal professionals, or Department of Education (DepEd) representatives, would ensure that teachers remain well-equipped to address child protection concerns and communicate these policies effectively to students. Additionally, supervisors could explore community-based partnerships to strengthen external support systems that contribute to student welfare.

For policymakers, revising the DepEd Child Protection Policy to include more straightforward guidelines on stakeholder collaboration is essential to strengthen the role of parents, community organizations, and local government units in child protection efforts. Standardized training programs should be developed to focus on the practical application of policies rather than mere dissemination. Establishing a national monitoring and evaluation system could enhance policy effectiveness, while integrating child protection compliance into school accreditation and performance assessments would ensure better implementation. Increased funding and resource allocation are necessary to provide schools with adequate infrastructure and support services. Finally, nationwide awareness campaigns should be launched to educate students, parents, and educators on child protection rights and reporting mechanisms.

School administrators play a vital role in reinforcing a culture of safety and trust within the school environment. To bridge gaps in stakeholder involvement, they may consider establishing stronger collaboration with parents, local organizations, and child welfare agencies. Moreover, ensuring that child protection policies are implemented and actively communicated to students could enhance their security and well-being. School heads may also initiate periodic policy evaluations and feedback mechanisms, allowing educators, students, and parents to voice their concerns and suggest improvements.

Araling Panlipunan teachers, often at the forefront of policy implementation, may benefit from integrating child protection discussions into their lessons to increase student awareness. Since policy awareness has been found to have a significant impact on well-being, educators should actively engage students in discussions about their rights and the protection mechanisms in place. Teachers may also adopt more student-centered approaches to foster open communication, making students feel safe in reporting concerns or seeking help when necessary. Collaboration with school counselors and child protection officers may also strengthen intervention strategies for at-risk students.

Students play a crucial role in ensuring their safety and well-being by actively participating in child protection initiatives. They are encouraged to familiarize themselves with school policies on child protection, report any concerns to trusted school personnel, and support their peers in fostering a safe and inclusive environment. Student-led organizations may also advocate for better awareness campaigns, peer mentorship programs, and safe spaces within the school where students can freely express their concerns. Students can contribute to a school culture prioritizing safety and well-being by empowering themselves with knowledge and engaging in meaningful conversations.

Future research may explore how child protection policies influence student well-being by expanding to different subjects, grade levels,

and school types to assess consistency across educational settings. Mixed-method approaches, such as interviews and focus groups, may provide deeper insights into students' experiences with policy implementation. Longitudinal studies on the impact of child protection training for teachers could reveal its long-term effects on student well-being. Additionally, examining school climate, peer relationships, and socioeconomic factors may offer a more comprehensive understanding of student welfare and policy effectiveness.

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