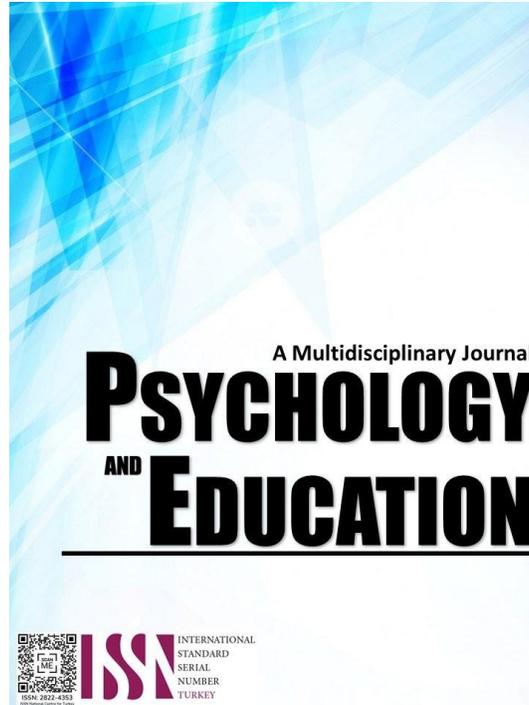


# IMPACT OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY ON THE BEHAVIOR AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 9 STUDENTS



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## Impact of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior and Academic Performance of Grade 9 Students

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### Abstract

The study aimed to determine the extent of impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior and academic performance of Grade 9 students in selected public secondary schools in Tanay District. The respondents of the study were selected Grade 9 students in the targeted schools. Utilizing a researcher-made questionnaire checklist as a tool in gathering the needed data, a descriptive survey research design was employed. It revealed that Child Protection Policy has a high impact on the behavior of Grade 9 students with respect to academic engagement, socio-emotional development, and interpersonal relations as reflected on the composite mean of 3.72 (Often). Additionally, the students have very satisfactory performance as revealed by their average grades. Further, there is no significant relationship between the perceived impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of Grade 9 students and the level of their academic performance. Challenges are often encountered in the implementation of the Child Protection Policy in public secondary schools, with misbehavior among students as the most challenging. It was concluded that the academic performance of students is not significantly related to the perceived impact of CPP on the behavior of students with respect to educational engagement, socio-emotional development, and interpersonal relations. It is recommended that school administrators provide comprehensive and ongoing training for teachers and information sessions for parents to ensure both groups are well-informed on Child Protection Policy.

**Keywords:** *child protection policy, behavior, academic performance, grade 9 student, public secondary schools*

### Introduction

Education is a process of transformation when an individual learns to adapt to changes in their environment. It guides an individual to develop their power to think and to do the right thing. Truly, education provides man's basic knowledge, habits, and skills needed for transformation. Moreover, the main purpose of education is to educate individuals in society, to prepare and qualify them for work, as well as to integrate people into society and teach values and morals. Furthermore, education is the society's main avenue for the development of basic literacy, numeracy, thinking, and work skills that will enable every individual to become a productive, civic-minded, and responsible citizen.

The Department of Education collaborates with different stakeholders for the safety of school children. The safety of each child is the foremost concern of the school. The protection of children in school from abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying, and other forms of abuse is the Child Protection policy. This policy provides special protection to children from all forms of abuse and danger. DepEd recognizes the participatory rights of the child in the formulation and implementation of policies and the involvement of parents.

In public elementary schools, it has been observed that there are many cases of bullying among pupils. A safe and supportive learning environment plays an important role in students' overall well-being and development, influencing not only their academic achievement but also their social and emotional behavior. However, while child protection policies are designed to defend students from harm and provide a secure educational setting, many do not understand how these policies directly influence students' behavior in the classroom and their academic performance.

The researcher believed that a safe environment where students feel protected may enhance their focus, motivation, and engagement in their studies, which is vital for the improvement of academic achievement. On the contrary, a lack of understanding or inadequate implementation of such policies could result in students feeling vulnerable or unsupported, negatively impacting their behavior and performance. Therefore, there is a need to conduct a study on the impact of child protection policies to provide a clear, evidence-based understanding of how these policies influence student outcomes. Such research would benefit teachers by providing insights into policy effectiveness, guiding them in making informed adjustments to better support students' academic and behavioral growth.

Based on the cited observations and experiences, the researcher was prompted to conduct this research so that teachers would be properly guided on how to deal with their students to become more aware of the policy, and they will know their limitations in order to have a harmonious relationship with them. Likewise, students would feel that they are well-loved and cared for in the school. With the implementation of the Child Protection Policy (CPP) the researcher was prompted to determine the impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior and academic performance of grade 9 students.

### Research Questions

The study aimed to determine the extent of impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior and academic performance of Grade 9 students in selected public secondary schools in Tanay District, Schools Division Office of Rizal, during the School Year 2024-2025. Specifically, it sought answers to the following sub-problems:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1 sex;
  - 1.2 sibling position;
  - 1.3 number of children in the family;
  - 1.4 monthly family income;
  - 1.5 parents' educational attainment; and
  - 1.6 parents' occupation?
2. What is the extent of impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of Grade 9 students as perceived by themselves with respect to:
  - 2.1 academic engagement;
  - 2.2 socio-emotional development; and
  - 2.3 interpersonal relations?
3. Is there a significant difference in the extent of impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of Grade 9 students as perceived by themselves, with respect to the mentioned aspects in terms of their profile?
4. What is the level of academic performance of the Grade 9 students as revealed in their average Grades?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of grade 9 students and the level of their academic performance?

## Literature Review

Fine (2021) stated that child protection is keeping children safe from different forms of abuse. Child protection encompasses a range of measures to safeguard children from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect. It involves preventing harm, responding to instances of abuse, and ensuring children's safety and well-being. This includes providing support services, holding perpetrators accountable, and creating systems to identify and address potential risks.

In addition, Mayer et al. (2021) cited that school safety is essential for children in schools to learn and experience a positive developmental outcome. School safety means ensuring everyone feels secure and valued. It encompasses everything from bullying prevention to mental health, physical security, emergency preparedness, and more. Keeping schools safe is a continuous effort that requires teamwork and involves the community and people from diverse backgrounds. It includes preventing problems before they happen, responding appropriately to incidents when they arise, and supporting community members when harm does occur.

Consequently, Freedman (2021) stated that children need to be protected from violence and sexual assault. Still, they cannot monitor their physical contact every moment of their childhoods, so they need to give them the chance to work out the vast area of healthy contact. Some people worry that they cannot trust kids to know the difference between healthy affection and unwanted sexual behavior, but couldn't one tell the difference when they were in grade school?

In a similar note, according to Hernandez (2021), the Child Protection policy stipulates that any form of physical, verbal, mental, and emotional abuse against children, whether by school personnel or their peers, shall be addressed and sanctioned accordingly. Child protection policies ensure students feel safe and protected from harm, including physical, emotional, and psychological abuse, allowing them to focus on learning and social development.

Likewise, Masakela et al. (2024) claimed that child protection is the prevention and response to physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual harassment, and other forms of exploitation and abuse. Policies, programs, and activities to avoid these activities are part of the Child Protection system. The system includes children, families, and communities that deliver quality outcomes for children.

Further, according to Panopio (2020), Child Protection Policy can be effective by creating awareness among school personnel, implementing reliable behavior towards child safety, and valuing all children. It should focus on prevention and promotion by raising consciousness about child rights, teaching skills to protect oneself from abuse, building stronger relationships, and increasing child participation.

Aguilar (2024) assessed the level of awareness of school heads and teachers of the child protection policy, the level of implementation of schools, and significant relationships between variables. The findings revealed that school heads and teachers are highly aware of the child protection policy. No significant relationship exists between the age of the respondents and the level of their awareness. There is a strong positive correlation between the level of understanding and the level of implementation of the child protection policy.

Lastly, the study of Zamora (2021) revealed that school heads strictly implemented the provision of the Child Protection Policy while seeking assistance from various stakeholders to implement strong communication efforts. It was found that an effective CPP implementation may happen if school heads employ child-centered and policy-based decision making, establish positive relationships with stakeholders, and strengthen the school's communication mechanisms. It was recommended that school heads encourage stakeholders to participate in the decision-making and implementation of the policy, build relationships with parents, and launch school initiatives.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The descriptive method of research was applied in the study. According to Calmorin (2020), the descriptive survey method is designed to gather information about the existing conditions. It involves the collection of data in order to test a hypothesis or answer questions concerning the current status of the study. Since the nature of the study consists of the gathering and interpreting of detailed information as a basis to find out the impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of Grade 9 students, this method is deemed necessary. Furthermore, documentary analysis was applied since the average grades of the Grade 9 students were obtained as a basis for their academic performance.

### Respondents

The respondents of the study were selected grade 9 students in public secondary schools in Tanay District. The sample size was determined through Slovin's formula. They were chosen using the simple random sampling technique. This consists of 311 students out of 1464 Grade 9 students.

### Instrument

The study used the questionnaire checklist as the main instrument in gathering the needed data. The questionnaire checklist consists of three parts. Part I dealt with the personal data of the respondents in terms of sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, monthly family income, parents' educational attainment, and parents' occupation. Part II dealt with the extent of impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of the grade 9 students with respect to academic engagement, socio-emotional development, and interpersonal relations. The aspects included are classroom behavior, emotional development, and social interaction. Part III of the questionnaire checklist focused on the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Child Protection Policy in public secondary schools.

### Procedure

In the conduct of the study, the researcher came up with the conceptualization of the research problem. It was followed by reading several research studies. The researcher prepared a questionnaire checklist for validation by different experts. Gathering of the needed information was in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. The researcher secured permission from the concerned authorities. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents. After the administration and retrieval of the questionnaire checklist, data were treated utilizing appropriate statistical tools through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Analysis and interpretation of data followed. A summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations was formulated. The study was also subjected to an anti-plagiarism test.

### Data Analysis

Different statistical tools were used in this study to analyze the gathered data. To determine the profile of the respondents in terms of the selected variables, frequency, percentage, and rank distribution were used. The weighted mean is used to determine the extent of impact of the Child Protection Policy on the behavior of grade 9 students as perceived by themselves with respect to the different aspects. Also, to determine the significant difference in the extent of impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of grade 9 students as perceived by themselves with respect to the different aspects in terms of their profile, one-way analysis of variance was applied.

Moreover, frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were utilized to determine the level of academic performance of the grade 9 students as revealed by their average grades. Likewise, to determine the significant relationship between the perceived extent of impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of grade 9 students and their level of academic performance, correlation analysis was used. Furthermore, the weighted mean was applied to determine the extent of the challenges encountered by the respondents in the implementation of the Child Protection Policy in public secondary schools.

### Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the conduct of this study. Before data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants, and they were clearly informed about the purpose of the research, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity of responses were strictly maintained, and all data were used solely for academic purposes. Permission from concerned authorities was secured, and the study ensured that no physical, psychological, or emotional harm was inflicted on any participant, especially considering the involvement of young learners.

## Results and Discussion

As shown in the table, out of 311 students involved in the study, 54.7% are females and 43.3 % are males. In terms of sibling position, 33.1% are third born, 29.9% are first born, 14.2% are second born, and the rest are fourth born and above. With regard to the number of children in the family, 50.2 % belong to families with 1-3 children, while 26.4 % belong to families with 4-5 children. As to their



monthly family income, the majority of them belong to families with a monthly income of P10,000-P19,999. In terms of parents' educational attainment, most of the parents are college graduates and college undergraduates. In terms of fathers' occupation, 36.3 % are employed locally, and 27.7% are self-employed. For the mothers' occupation, 32.8% are used locally, and 22.5 are homemakers.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables

| Sex                              | frequency | Percentage | Rank |        |       |   |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|------|--------|-------|---|
| Male                             | 141       | 45.3       | 2    |        |       |   |
| Female                           | 170       | 54.7       | 1    |        |       |   |
| Total                            | 311       | 100.0      |      |        |       |   |
| Sibling Position                 |           |            |      |        |       |   |
| First                            | 93        | 29.9       | 2    |        |       |   |
| Second                           | 44        | 14.2       | 4    |        |       |   |
| Third                            | 103       | 33.1       | 1    |        |       |   |
| Fourth and above                 | 71        | 22.8       | 3    |        |       |   |
| Total                            | 311       | 100.0      |      |        |       |   |
| Number of Children in the Family |           |            |      |        |       |   |
| 1 -3                             | 156       | 50.2       | 1    |        |       |   |
| 4 – 5                            | 82        | 26.4       | 2    |        |       |   |
| 6 and above                      | 73        | 23.5       | 3    |        |       |   |
| Total                            | 311       | 100.0      |      |        |       |   |
| Monthly Family Income            |           |            |      |        |       |   |
| Php30,000 and above              | 39        | 12.6       | 3    |        |       |   |
| Php20,000-29,999                 | 38        | 12.2       | 4    |        |       |   |
| Php 10, 000-19,999               | 192       | 61.7       | 1    |        |       |   |
| Below Php 10,000                 | 42        | 13.5       | 2    |        |       |   |
| Total                            | 311       | 100.0      |      |        |       |   |
| Parents' Educational Attainment  | Father    |            |      | Mother |       |   |
|                                  | f         | %          | R    | f      | %     | R |
| College Graduate                 | 93        | 29.9       | 2    | 109    | 35.0  | 1 |
| College Undergraduate            | 109       | 35.0       | 1    | 101    | 32.5  | 2 |
| High School Graduate             | 86        | 27.7       | 3    | 27     | 8.7   | 5 |
| High School Undergraduate        | 17        | 5.5        | 4    | 29     | 9.3   | 4 |
| Elementary Graduate              | 6         | 1.9        | 5    | 45     | 14.5  | 3 |
| Total                            | 311       | 100.0      |      | 311    | 100.0 |   |
| Parents' Occupation              | Father    |            |      | Mother |       |   |
|                                  | f         | %          | R    | f      | %     | R |
| Employed (Local)                 | 113       | 36.3       | 1    | 102    | 32.8  | 1 |
| OFW                              | 28        | 9.0        | 5    | 19     | 6.1   | 5 |
| Self-Employed                    | 86        | 27.7       | 2    | 60     | 19.3  | 3 |
| Entrepreneur                     | 39        | 12.5       | 3    | 49     | 15.8  | 4 |
| Housewife/Househusband           | 35        | 11.3       | 4    | 70     | 22.5  | 2 |
| Others                           | 10        | 3.2        | 6    | 11     | 3.5   | 6 |
| Total                            | 311       | 100.0      |      | 311    | 100.0 |   |

As reflected in the table, with respect to academic engagement, the overall weighted mean obtained is 3.71, interpreted as Often (High Impact). It indicates that the Child Protection Policy has a high impact on the behavior of students with respect to academic engagement. This means that the academic engagement of students is partially influenced by the implementation of the Child Protection Policy.

Table 2. Extent of Impact of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of Grade 9 Students as Perceived by Themselves with Respect to Academic Engagement

| Academic Engagement<br>In the implementation of the Child Protection Policy, I help in ...  | $W\bar{X}$ | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Preventing bullying.   | 3.69       | Often                 |
| 2. Ensuring the dissemination of information on the importance of safety and security protocols in school.                          | 3.89       | Often                 |
| 3. Preventing risks and danger in school.   | 3.19       | Sometimes             |
| 4. Maintaining safe and secure environment inside the school premises.  | 3.65       | Often                 |
| 5. Ensuring a safe and conducive learning environment for every student.  | 4.03       | Often                 |
| 6. Protecting students, educators, and staff from injury, violence, and harm inside the school premises.                            | 3.93       | Often                 |
| 7. Protecting the mental health and general welfare of pupils and personnel.  | 3.31       | Sometimes             |
| 8. Implementing safety and security guidelines and rules in the school.   | 3.84       | Often                 |
| 9. Provide the necessary information and insights for the compliance of the safety and security protocols.                          | 3.93       | Often                 |
| 10. Preventing accidents, injuries, and potential hazards, ensuring the well-being and protection of school children and personnel. | 3.69       | Often                 |
| Overall $W\bar{X}$  | 3.71       | Often (High Impact)   |

The findings imply that Child Protection Policy, when effectively implemented, can positively impact student academic engagement by fostering a safe and supportive learning environment, which in turn allows students to focus on their studies and develop a stronger sense of belonging and well-being. However, poorly implemented policies can create unintended negative consequences, such as overregulation or a lack of focus on other important aspects of student development, potentially hindering academic engagement.

This relates to the statements of Masakela et al. (2024) that Child Protection Policies establish clear guidelines and protocols to prevent and address various forms of harm, including physical, emotional, and psychological abuse. This creates a safe and secure environment where students feel comfortable participating in class and engaging with learning.

Table 3. *Extent of Impact of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of Grade 9 Students as Perceived by Themselves with Respect to Socio-Emotional Development*

| <i>Socio-Emotional Development<br/>In the implementation of the Child Protection Policy, I...</i>  | $\bar{W}\bar{X}$ | <i>Verbal<br/>Interpretation</i> |
|--|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Observe the Code of Conduct for students.   | 3.71             | Often                            |
| 2. Refrain from possessing prohibited articles.  | 3.87             | Often                            |
| 3. Respect and uphold in all matters and procedures affecting students' welfare.                   | 3.29             | Sometimes                        |
| 4. Comply with the school's regulations, as long as they are in harmony with their best interests. | 3.67             | Often                            |
| 5. Refrain from engaging in fights or any aggressive behavior.                                     | 4.04             | Often                            |
| 6. Avoid marking or damaging school property, including books, in any way.                         | 3.89             | Often                            |
| 7. Avoid participating in behavior of other students that is illegal, unsafe, or abusive.          | 3.35             | Sometimes                        |
| 8. Refrain in engaging in discrimination, or leading a group of students to discriminate another.  | 3.90             | Often                            |
| 9. Refuse to participate in prohibited activities.   | 3.90             | Often                            |
| 10. Show increased knowledge about prevention of bullying.   | 3.69             | Often                            |
| Overall $\bar{W}\bar{X}$   | 3.73             | Often (High Impact)              |

The table depicts that with respect to socio-emotional development, the overall weighted mean obtained is 3.73, interpreted as often (High Impact). It indicates that, as perceived by students, the Child Protection Policy has a high impact on their behavior with respect to socio-emotional development. This means that child protection policies play a vital role in fostering a safe and supportive environment that positively impacts students' socio-emotional development. By promoting a sense of security, positive social interactions, and emotional well-being, these policies contribute to students' overall success and well-being.

The findings imply that Child protection policy significantly impacts students' socio-emotional development by fostering a safe and supportive environment that promotes positive social interactions and emotional well-being. This conforms with the statements of Hernandez (2021) that Child protection policy ensures students feel safe and protected from harm, including physical, emotional, and psychological abuse, allowing them to focus on learning and social development. Policies that address bullying and discrimination create a more inclusive environment, encouraging positive interactions and helping students develop empathy and respect for others.

Table 4. *Extent of Impact of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of Grade 9 Students as Perceived by Themselves with Respect to Interpersonal Relations*

| <i>Interpersonal relations<br/>In the implementation of the Child Protection Policy, I ...</i> | $\bar{W}\bar{X}$ | <i>Verbal<br/>Interpretation</i> |
|--|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Maintain accountability and responsibility.   | 3.72             | Often                            |
| 2. Create a focused study routine.   | 3.90             | Often                            |
| 3. Manage time in studying.  | 3.26             | Sometimes                        |
| 4. Work on assignment with ease and accuracy.  | 3.65             | Often                            |
| 5. Follow established deadlines for submission of requirements.                                | 3.99             | Often                            |
| 6. Maintain clear daily goals and improve focus in studying.                                   | 3.88             | Often                            |
| 7. Show flexibility in studying lessons.   | 3.36             | Sometimes                        |
| 8. Avoid last-minute work.   | 3.86             | Often                            |
| 9. Set workable goals in studying.   | 3.91             | Often                            |
| 10. Exhibit enhanced performance, persistence, and creativity.                                 | 3.69             | Often                            |
| Overall $\bar{W}\bar{X}$   | 3.72             | Often (High Impact)              |

The table depicts that with respect to interpersonal relations, the overall weighted mean obtained is 3.72, interpreted as Often (High Impact). It indicates that, as perceived by students, the Child Protection Policy has a high impact on the behavior of pupils with respect to interpersonal relations. Child protection policy, particularly addressing bullying and physical/emotional abuse, can create a school environment where students feel safer and less vulnerable, leading to a reduction in these negative behaviors.

The findings imply that Child protection policy can foster a safer and more positive interpersonal environment for students by reducing violence, bullying, and other forms of harm, while also promoting positive relationships and communication. However, poorly implemented policies or a lack of awareness can lead to unintended negative consequences, such as strained relationships or a climate of fear.

This is connected to Muchai et al. (2021), who claimed that by providing a safe space and clear guidelines, these policies can help

students develop healthy coping mechanisms for managing their emotions, reducing anxiety and stress, and promoting emotional well-being.

Table 5. Result of the F-test in the Significant Difference on the Extent of Impact of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of Grade 9 Students as Perceived by Themselves with Respect to the Different Aspects in Terms of Their Profile

| Aspect                           | F-value | p-value | Ho       | Verbal Interpretation |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|-----------------------|
| Academic Engagement              | 6.986   | 0.009   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Socio-Emotional Development      | 8.325   | 0.004   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Interpersonal Relations          | 4.319   | 0.039   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Sibling Position                 |         |         |          |                       |
| Academic Engagement              | 10.595  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Socio-Emotional Development      | 10.353  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Interpersonal Relations          | 9.270   | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Number of Children in the Family |         |         |          |                       |
| Academic Engagement              | 5.107   | 0.007   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Socio-Emotional Development      | 5.484   | 0.005   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Interpersonal Relations          | 3.885   | 0.022   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Monthly Family Income            |         |         |          |                       |
| Academic Engagement              | 4.038   | 0.008   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Socio-Emotional Development      | 3.692   | 0.012   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Interpersonal Relations          | 4.196   | 0.006   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Father's Educational Attainment  |         |         |          |                       |
| Academic Engagement              | 18.706  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Socio-Emotional Development      | 17.899  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Interpersonal Relations          | 16.199  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Mothers' Educational Attainment  |         |         |          |                       |
| Academic Engagement              | 25.493  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Socio-Emotional Development      | 25.476  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Interpersonal Relations          | 24.547  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Fathers' Occupation              |         |         |          |                       |
| Academic Engagement              | 23.044  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Socio-Emotional Development      | 22.585  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Interpersonal Relations          | 24.801  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Mothers' Occupation              |         |         |          |                       |
| Academic Engagement              | 38.110  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Socio-Emotional Development      | 34.901  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |
| Interpersonal Relations          | 34.038  | 0.000   | Rejected | Significant           |

As depicted in the table, with respect to the different aspects, in terms of the other personal variables of the respondents, the F-test results reveal probability values less than .05. This rejects the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference on the extent of impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of grade 9 students as perceived by themselves with respect to the different aspects in terms of their profile.

Overall, these personal attributes contribute to the variability in students' perceptions because they reflect differences in family environment, upbringing, and social exposure. The findings underscore the importance of considering these demographic and personal factors when implementing and communicating the Child Protection Policy to ensure that it is understood and applied effectively by all students.

These imply that personal attributes of students contribute to the impact of the Child Protection Policy on their behavior. This means that the implementation of the Child Protection Policy has a different effect on the students' behavior when they are grouped according to their sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, monthly family income, parents' educational attainment, and parents' occupation.

This is similar with the findings of the study of Francisco (2020) which revealed that effects of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of pupils with respect to interpersonal discipline-peers and interpersonal discipline-family differ significantly when grouped according to sex and sibling position; however, when grouped according to monthly family income, number of children in the family and parents' education attainment do not differ.

The table below depicts that out of 311 respondents, 99 or 31.8 % got a Very Satisfactory performance, obtaining grades of 85-89. Meanwhile, 95 or 30.6 % have average grades of 80-84, interpreted as satisfactory. Moreover, 81 or 26.0 % have Outstanding performance with average grades of 90 and above. Only 36 or 11.6 % got a Fairly Satisfactory performance. The mean grade of 86.38 showed that the overall performance of students is Very Satisfactory, while the standard deviation of 3.213 indicates that the grades of the students are less dispersed.

Findings revealed that most of the students are performing Very Satisfactory in their academic endeavors. This means that the majority

of the students have developed good study habits, which contributed to the enhancement of their performance.

This implies that students are making their best efforts to have better learning outcomes. Findings further mean that their teachers have provided the necessary instructional methods to help students develop the needed competencies.

This relates to the study of Alda et al. (2024) that Child Protection Policy (CPP) can positively influence student performance by creating a safer and more supportive learning environment, fostering a sense of security that allows students to focus on their studies and well-being.

**Table 6. Level of Academic Performance of the Grade 9 Students as Revealed in Their Average Grades**

| Grades         | Verbal Interpretation    | f         | %    |
|----------------|--------------------------|-----------|------|
| 90 and above   | Outstanding (O)          | 81        | 26.0 |
| 85 - 89        | Very Satisfactory (VS)   | 99        | 31.8 |
| 80 - 84        | Satisfactory (S)         | 95        | 30.6 |
| 75 - 79        | Fairly Satisfactory (FS) | 36        | 11.6 |
| Total          |                          | 311       | 100  |
| Highest Score  |                          | 95        |      |
| Lowest Score   |                          | 77        |      |
| Mean           |                          | 86.38 –VS |      |
| Std. Deviation |                          | 3.213     |      |

As shown in the table, the test of relationship shows probability values greater than .05 in all aspects with a small correlation coefficient. This fails to reject the null hypothesis, stating that there is a significant relationship between the perceived extent of impact of child protection policy on the behavior of grade 9 students and their level of academic performance.

**Table 7. Computed r-Values on Significant Relationship Between the Extent of Impact of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of Grade 9 Students and Their Level of Academic Performance**

| Aspects                     | r-values | p-values | HO       | Verbal Interpretation |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|
| Academic Engagement         | 0.071    | 0.212    | Accepted | Not Significant       |
| Socio-Emotional Development | 0.066    | 0.243    | Accepted | Not Significant       |
| Interpersonal Relations     | 0.033    | 0.567    | Accepted | Not Significant       |

These reveal that the perceived impact of Child Protection Policy is not associated with the students' academic performance. This means that the educational achievement of students is not significantly influenced by the implementation of the Child Protection Policy.

The findings imply that by addressing issues like bullying, harassment, and discrimination, CPPs can improve students' overall well-being, leading to better engagement and motivation in their studies. Implementing child protection policies often involves strategies like positive reinforcement and restorative justice, which can improve student behavior and create a more conducive learning atmosphere.

This relates to the ideas of Fine (2021) that students who feel safe and supported are more likely to trust their teachers and school staff, leading to better communication and a more positive relationship with the school.

**Table 8. Extent of the Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of Child Protection Policy in Public Secondary Schools**

| Challenges Encountered  | $W\bar{X}$ | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Lack of awareness on Child Protection Policy among students and parents. | 3.76       | Often Encountered     |
| 2. Poor cooperation of other government agencies.                           | 3.94       | Often Encountered     |
| 3. Insufficient budget and resources.                                       | 3.32       | Sometimes Encountered |
| 4. Lack of parental support.  | 3.70       | Often Encountered     |
| 5. Misbehavior among students.  | 3.99       | Often Encountered     |
| 6. Lack of discipline among students.                                       | 3.91       | Often Encountered     |
| 7. Lack of cooperation between teachers and parents.                        | 3.36       | Sometimes Encountered |
| 8. Lack of administrative support.  | 3.83       | Often Encountered     |
| 9. Lack of support from the community.                                      | 3.91       | Often Encountered     |
| 10. Insufficient information dissemination.                                 | 3.73       | Often Encountered     |
| Overall $W\bar{X}$  | 3.74       | Often Encountered     |

As reflected in the table, among the challenges encountered in the implementation of Child Protection Policy as perceived by teachers, the overall weighted mean obtained is 3.74, verbally interpreted as " Often Encountered. This reveals that there are varied challenges encountered in the implementation of the Child Protection Policy in public secondary schools. This means that misbehavior among students is most challenging for teachers.

The findings imply that implementing and enforcing Child Protection Policy requires resources (financial, human, and material), which might divert funds from other important educational programs. Inadequate training for teachers and staff on how to implement CPP effectively can lead to inconsistent application of the policy and potential harm to students.

This relates to the findings of Sumiog (2022), which revealed that the challenges in child protection would mediate in the interactive learning environment of learners in this new normal of education. The result showed the importance of intensive child protection to the learners who are protected in this new normal situation of education.

## Conclusions

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

Students' sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, monthly family income, parents' educational attainment, and parents' occupation are influential on the perceived impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of students with respect to academic engagement, socio-emotional development, and interpersonal relations. Academic performance of students is not significantly related to the perceived impact of Child Protection Policy on the behavior of students with respect to educational engagement, socio-emotional development, and interpersonal relations.

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