

Anti – Bullying Policy Impact Multidimensional Development of Learners Among Public Secondary Schools in Tawi – Tawi

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ABSTRACT:

This study was conducted to assess the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy and its impact on the multidimensional development of learners in selected public secondary schools in Tawi-Tawi during the School Year 2019–2020. It utilized a descriptive-quantitative research design involving 200 selected students as respondents. The findings revealed that the respondents were generally aged 17–19 years; predominantly female; Tausug in ethnicity; Muslim in religion; and mostly from families with a monthly income of Php 10,000.00 or below. Low scores in policy implementation indicators reflected the low frequency of bullying incidents rather than inadequate enforcement. Schools reported rare implementation of response protocols because bullying was uncommon; moderate implementation of awareness and prevention activities; and frequent implementation of intervention programs to correct behavior and protect victims. Overall, the Anti-Bullying Policy contributed to a safer school environment, improved student behavior, and supported the psychological, sociological, and emotional development of learners through teacher interventions and parental collaboration.

Keywords: Anti-bullying policy, multidimensional development, school safety, learner well-being, descriptive-quantitative, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines

Introduction

Bullying has been recognized as a serious global concern affecting the emotional, social, and physical well-being of school-age children. It constitutes a complex problem that impacts all students—whether as bullies, victims, or witnesses—and contributes to a climate of interpersonal violence. Bullying takes many forms, including verbal abuse, physical assault, threats, offensive language, humiliation, and, more recently, cyberbullying. It is often difficult to eliminate because behaviors may be

normalized or unrecognized, and appropriate responses are not always consistently applied (Alison, 2016).

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) confirms that bullying remains a reality in public secondary schools. Despite intensified efforts to implement Republic Act No. 10627 or the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013, many incidents continue to be reported. Teachers often face challenges in ensuring that learners understand the various forms of bullying, their consequences, and the available interventions. DepEd Order

No. 55, Series of 2013 mandates all schools to integrate anti-bullying programs into their activities to ensure a safe learning environment (Briones, 2018).

In Mindanao, school administrators note that many forms of bullying go unrecognized. Behaviors such as teasing or making others the subject of jokes are often dismissed as “just fun,” though they qualify as bullying under existing policies. This lack of awareness results in negative emotional experiences for victims, which can hinder their holistic development and lower academic performance (Grodner, 2014).

Bullying is a priority concern for educators, families, and policymakers because its effects can be severe—ranging from anxiety and poor grades to depression and, in extreme cases, suicide. By understanding how bullying manifests in local contexts, schools can design targeted interventions. A proactive approach helps identify at-risk students, implement preventive measures, and improve overall well-being (Bradic, 2014).

This study was motivated by these observations and the researcher’s personal experience in the field. Its findings will guide school administrators and teachers in formulating effective strategies to prevent and address bullying in schools.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the impact of the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy on the multidimensional development of learners in public secondary schools in Tawi-Tawi.

Specifically, it aims to:

1. Determine the extent of Anti-Bullying Policy implementation in terms of: (a) frequency of bullying incidents encountered; (b) strategies and activities conducted; and (c) interventions and response mechanisms applied.

2. Assess the level of multidimensional development of learners along psychological, sociological, and emotional domains.

3. Determine if there is a significant relationship between the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy and the multidimensional development of learners.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a descriptive-quantitative research design. It employed survey questionnaires to gather data. The descriptive component described the status of policy implementation and learner development, while the quantitative component analyzed numerical data to identify patterns and relationships.

This design is appropriate for collecting information regarding attitudes, perceptions, and conditions in educational settings. It allows the researcher to accurately describe the who, what, where, and how of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2013).

Research Locale

The study was conducted in eight selected public secondary schools in the Division of Tawi-Tawi during the School Year 2019–2020. These schools were:

- Batu-Batu National High School (BBNHS)
- Pagasinan National High School (PNHS)
- Sanga-Sanga National High School (SSNHS)
- Boloboc Science High School (BSHS)
- MSU-Preparatory High School (MSU-PREP)
- Tawi-Tawi Regional Agricultural College – Laboratory High School (TRAC-LHS)
- Tawi-Tawi School of Arts and Trade (TTSAT)
- Tawi-Tawi School of Fisheries (TTSF)

Population and Sampling Design

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents by School

School	Total Student Population	Percentage of Total Population	Sample Size
Batu-Batu National High School (BBNHS)	185	14.0%	28
Pagasinan National High School (PNHS)	75	5.5%	11
Sanga-Sanga National High School (SSNHS)	65	5.0%	10
Boloboc Science High School (BSHS)	80	6.0%	12
MSU-Preparatory High School (MSU-PREP)	205	15.5%	31
TRAC – Laboratory High School (TRAC-LHS)	160	12.0%	24
Tawi-Tawi School of Arts and Trade (TTSAT)	310	23.0%	46
Tawi-Tawi School of Fisheries (TTSF)	255	19.0%	38
Total	1,335	100.0%	200

Population and Sampling Design

The total sample size for this study was standardized at 200 respondents, selected from Grade 9 and Grade 10 students officially enrolled for the School Year 2019–2020. A multi-stage sampling method was used, combining stratified random sampling and convenience sampling. Stratification ensured proportional representation from each school, while convenience sampling was used to select available students due to time constraints and limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the guidelines of Gay (1976), for descriptive

research, a sample size of 10–20% of the total population is acceptable. This study used 20% of the population from each school to ensure adequate representation, resulting in the final sample of 200 students.

Research Instrument

A self-constructed questionnaire-checklist was developed with the guidance of the research adviser. It consisted of three parts:

Part I: Demographic profile (age, gender, ethnicity, religion, and monthly family income).

Part II: Assessment of Anti-Bullying Policy implementation, measured using a 5-point Likert scale: 5 = Highly Implemented, 4 = Implemented, 3 = Moderately Implemented, 2 = Less Implemented, 1 = Not Implemented. Note: Lower scores in this section generally indicate that bullying incidents occurred less frequently, rather than indicating a failure to implement the policy.

Part III: Assessment of multidimensional development, measured using a 5-point Likert scale: 5 = Highly Developed, 4 = Developed, 3 =

Moderately Developed, 2 = Less Developed, 1 = Least Developed.

Data Gathering Procedure

A formal request was first submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent of DepEd Tawi-Tawi. After approval was granted, schedules were arranged with school principals and class advisers. The questionnaires were distributed and collected personally by the researcher. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, strict confidentiality of responses was observed, and no personal identifiers were linked to the data.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Respondents

Table 2 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents

Profile Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
16 years old and below	40	20.0%
17 – 19 years old	129	64.5%
20 years old and above	31	15.5%
Total	200	100.0%
Gender		
Male	87	43.5%
Female	113	56.5%
Total	200	100.0%
Ethnicity		
Tausug	121	60.5%
Sama	64	32.0%
Bisaya	15	7.5%
Total	200	100.0%
Religion		

Profile Category	Frequency	Percentage
Islam	185	92.5%
Roman Catholic	11	5.5%
Iglesia ni Cristo	4	2.0%
Total	200	100.0%
Monthly Family Income		
Php 10,000.00 and below	127	63.5%
Php 11,000.00 – Php 15,000.00	33	16.5%
Php 16,000.00 – Php 20,000.00	8	4.0%
Php 21,000.00 – Php 25,000.00	5	2.5%
Php 26,000.00 – Php 30,000.00	12	6.0%
Php 31,000.00 and above	15	7.5%
Total	200	100.0%

Discussion

The majority of respondents were aged 17–19 years old, which corresponds to the typical age range for Grade 9 and 10 students. There were more female students (56.5%) than male students, consistent with national trends showing higher female enrollment in secondary education. Ethnically, most were Tausug (60.5%), followed

by Sama (32.0%), reflecting the demographic composition of Tawi-Tawi. Over 90% identified as Muslim, confirming the province's religious majority. Most families (63.5%) belonged to the low-income bracket, earning Php 10,000.00 or less per month.

Anti-Bullying Policy Implemented

Table 3 Extent of Anti-Bullying Policy Implementation

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Forms of Bullying Encountered	2.12	Rarely Encountered / Implemented
Strategies and Awareness Activities	2.87	Moderately Implemented
Interventions and Response Mechanisms	3.41	Frequently Implemented
Overall Implementation	2.80	Moderately Implemented

Discussion

Important Clarification: Low mean scores in this study do not indicate failure to enforce the policy. Instead, they reflect the low frequency of bullying incidents in the schools. Because cases were rare, schools did not need to apply response protocols frequently. However, awareness activities were conducted moderately, and interventions were

applied consistently whenever incidents did occur. This shows that the policy was in place and ready to be used, contributing to a safe environment that prevented bullying from escalating.

Level of Multidimensional Development of Learners

Table 4 Level of Multidimensional Development

Domain	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Psychological Development	3.62	Developed
Sociological Development	3.58	Developed
Emotional Development	3.65	Developed
Overall Level	3.62	Developed

Discussion

Learners generally showed positive development across all three domains. The safe environment maintained through the Anti-Bullying Policy

allowed students to feel secure, build healthy relationships, and manage their emotions effectively. This finding supports the idea that effective policy implementation promotes holistic growth (Alison, 2016; Bradic, 2014).

Significant Impact of Policy Implementation on Learner Development

Table 5 Correlation Between Policy Implementation and Development

Variables	r-value	P-value	Interpretation
Implementation vs. Psychological Development	0.42	< 0.01	Significant Positive Relationship
Implementation vs. Sociological Development	0.38	< 0.01	Significant Positive Relationship
Implementation vs. Emotional Development	0.45	< 0.01	Significant Positive Relationship

Discussion

There was a moderate but significant positive relationship between how the policy was

implemented and the level of learner development. When schools actively applied preventive strategies and interventions, students

reported better mental health, social skills, and emotional stability. This confirms that the policy serves its purpose not only to stop bullying but also to foster healthy development.

Conclusions

The Anti-Bullying Policy was effectively in place. Lower scores reflected fewer incidents, not weak enforcement. Interventions were applied consistently when needed. Learners demonstrated positive development in psychological, sociological, and emotional aspects. There is a significant positive impact between policy implementation and the multidimensional well-being of students.

Recommendations

To sustain these outcomes, regular awareness campaigns should be continued to keep the

school environment safe. Collaboration between teachers, parents, and community leaders must be maintained to reinforce good behavior. Annual reviews should be conducted to identify new forms of bullying such as cyberbullying and update response plans accordingly. Regular training should also be provided for teachers and guidance counselors on updated intervention techniques.

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