

Effects of Child Protection Policy on the Academic and Behavioral Performance of the Intermediate Learners

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Abstract

This study examined the extent of the effects of the Child Protection Policy on the behavioral and academic performance of intermediate learners in the Binangonan District, Schools Division Office of Rizal, during the School Year 2025–2026. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study involved 199 teachers and 370 intermediate learners selected through Slovin's formula and simple random sampling. Teachers were profiled according to age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position title, length of service, and in-service trainings attended, while learners were described in terms of sex, sibling position, family size, parents' educational attainment, occupation, and monthly family income. Findings revealed that teachers perceived the Child Protection Policy as having a "very much effect" on learners' cognitive, emotional, and social behavior, whereas learners rated its impact as "much effect." A significant difference was found between teachers' and learners' perceptions regarding the policy's behavioral effects. However, no significant difference was observed when grouped according to teachers' sex and educational attainment, and learners' sex, sibling position, family size, father's educational attainment, parents' occupation, and family income. Significant differences emerged when teachers were grouped according to age, length of service, civil status, position title, and in-service trainings, and when learners were grouped according to mother's educational attainment. The learners' academic performance was rated "Satisfactory," with a mean grade of 82.11. Moreover, no significant relationship was found between the perceived effects of the Child Protection Policy on behavior and learners' academic performance. The study concludes that while the policy significantly influences learners' behavior as perceived by both groups, it does not directly correlate with academic achievement. Recommendations include strengthened monitoring mechanisms, professional development, socio-emotional learning integration, and enhanced parent engagement.

Keywords: Child Protection Policy, academic performance, behavioral performance, intermediate learners, cognitive behavior, emotional behavior, social behavior, descriptive research

1. Introduction

Education is a dynamic process through which individuals acquire knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that enable them to become productive members of society. Beyond academic instruction, education nurtures emotional maturity, social competence, and moral responsibility. In the elementary years, particularly at the intermediate level, learners undergo significant cognitive, emotional, and social transitions. These developmental changes heighten the need for a safe, structured, and supportive school environment where children can learn without fear, intimidation, or harm.

The Philippine Constitution (1987), Article XIV, Section 2, mandates the State to establish and maintain a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education responsive to societal needs. Complementing this, Republic Act No. 7610 emphasizes the State's duty to protect children from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation that may hinder their normal development. In operationalizing these mandates, the Department of Education issued DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012, institutionalizing the Child Protection Policy (CPP) to safeguard learners from abuse, violence, bullying, discrimination, and other forms of harm within school premises. These legal foundations affirm that child protection is not peripheral but integral to quality education.

Foreign and local studies consistently highlight the importance of effective child protection implementation. Adewale and Potokri (2023) found that teachers' awareness significantly influences policy recognition and enforcement, recommending systematic training and communication strategies. Holmyard (2025) and Goldman (2025) emphasized that safeguarding practices require contextualized approaches, strong leadership, and consistent monitoring to address risks such as peer abuse and neglect. Similarly, Amédée et al. (2023) demonstrated that exposure to abuse may impair executive functioning, affecting children's cognitive regulation in school.

Local investigations reinforce these findings. Ramos (2024), Alombro et al. (2022), and Antiza and Labitad (2024) reported high levels of teacher awareness and policy implementation but underscored the need for sustained professional development and stakeholder collaboration. Zamora (2021) and Alcala and Cornelia (2025) further revealed that while schools exert effort to implement CPP, contextual challenges and behavioral concerns among learners persist. Notably, most prior studies focused on awareness, implementation levels, or administrative perspectives rather than examining the direct effects of CPP on learners' behavioral domains and academic outcomes simultaneously.

Despite the structured implementation of the Child Protection Policy, the researcher observed emerging behavioral concerns in intermediate classrooms, such as teasing disguised as humor, social exclusion during group activities, minor physical altercations escalating from play, and learners' hesitation to report incidents due to fear or misunderstanding. These situations, though sometimes subtle, appear to influence learners' emotional security, peer relationships, and classroom engagement. While policies exist and awareness levels are reportedly high, there remains limited empirical evidence examining whether and how these protective measures translate into measurable behavioral improvements and academic performance among intermediate learners.

This gap underscores the necessity of investigating the perceived effects of the Child Protection Policy on learners' cognitive, emotional, and social behavior, as well as its relationship to academic achievement. By focusing on intermediate learners and incorporating both teacher and learner perspectives, this study aims to contribute evidence on whether a safeguarded school environment meaningfully enhances behavioral development and academic performance. Ultimately, understanding this relationship is essential in strengthening policy implementation and ensuring that child protection initiatives genuinely fulfill their educational and developmental objectives..

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey research design, using a researcher-made questionnaire-checklist as the primary instrument to collect data on the extent of the Child Protection Policy's effects on the behavioral performance of intermediate learners, specifically in terms of cognitive, emotional, and social behaviors. In addition, documentary analysis was conducted by reviewing the first-quarter average grades of the pupil-respondents to serve as a basis for assessing their academic performance.

2.2 Research Setting

The study was conducted in selected elementary schools under the Schools Division Office of Rizal, including Bilibiran Elementary School, Binangonan Elementary School, Doña Susana Madrigal Elementary School, Lunsad Elementary School, and Tayuman Elementary School. These schools provide complete elementary education, spanning from Kindergarten to Grade Six..

2.3 Respondents

The study considered the total population of teachers and selected learners in the elementary schools of the Binangonan District under the Schools Division Office of Rizal. The first group of respondents consisted of 199 teachers, who were described in terms of age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position title, length of service, and in-service trainings attended. The second group comprised intermediate learners from the same schools, initially totaling 378. Using Slovin's formula, the required sample size was computed, and learners were randomly selected through a simple random sampling technique. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, only 370 learners were able to participate. These learners were described in terms of sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, parents' educational attainment, parents' occupation, and monthly family income.

2.4 Research Instruments

The study employed a researcher-made questionnaire-checklist to gather the necessary data, consisting of two parts. Part I collected the personal and demographic information of respondents, including teachers' age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position title, length of service, and in-service trainings attended, as well as intermediate learners' sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, parents' educational attainment, occupation, and monthly family income. Part II assessed the extent of the Child Protection Policy's effects on learners' behavioral performance in cognitive, emotional, and social domains, comprising 30 items rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (Never/Least Effect) to 5 (Always/Very Much Effect). Additionally, the first-quarter average grades of learners were obtained to measure academic performance, interpreted using a five-point scale from "Outstanding" to "Did Not Meet Expectations." The instrument underwent content validation through consultation with experts in education and research, including the thesis adviser, professorial lecturers, a statistician, school principals, a guidance counselor, and the dean of the Graduate Studies Program, whose recommendations were incorporated into the final instrument.

2.5 Data Collection

The study was conducted following the Gantt Chart of Activities, covering all steps from the formulation of the research problem to the submission of the final hardbound manuscript. The researcher first sought validation of the questionnaire-checklist, followed by securing permission from the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent to conduct the study. Data were collected from respondents through Google Forms, in compliance with the Data Privacy Act. Retrieved data were encoded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Based on the results, the researcher formulated the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Following the oral defense, the manuscript was revised to incorporate feedback from the examination committee, after which the final copies were reproduced, book-bound, and submitted to the Office of the Graduate Studies Program and other relevant offices.

2.6 Data Analysis

For the analysis and interpretation of data, various statistical tools were employed. Frequency, percentage, and rank distribution were used to describe the profiles of the two groups of respondents. The weighted mean was applied to determine the extent of the Child Protection Policy's effects on the behavioral performance of intermediate learners across cognitive, emotional, and social domains. Independent t-tests were used to examine significant differences between the perceptions of the two groups, while one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) assessed differences in perceptions based on respondents' profiles. The mean and standard deviation were used to determine learners' academic performance based on first-quarter average grades, and correlation analysis was conducted to identify significant relationships between the perceived effects of the Child Protection Policy and learners' academic performance.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

The study ensured the protection of the rights and welfare of all respondents. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity of all information provided were strictly maintained, and data were used solely for research purposes. The researcher ensured that the respondents were treated with respect and that no harm, whether physical, emotional, or psychological, would result from their participation in the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Profile of the Teacher- Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables

Table 1.1. presents the profile of the 199 teacher respondents in terms of selected variables. Most teachers were aged 41–50 years (37.2%) and predominantly female (68.8%). The majority were married (83.9%) and held a Master's degree (57.3%), while few were Bachelor's degree holders (3.0%). Regarding position title, most were Teacher III (68.3%) and had served for 15–19 years (52.3%). In terms of in-service trainings, most attended school-level programs (51.8%), with only 3.0% participating at the international level..

. Table 1.1: *Profile of the Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables*

Profile Variable	f	%	Rank
Age			
51 years old and above	49	24.6	3
41–50 years old	74	37.2	1
31–40 years old	55	27.6	2
21–30 years old	21	10.6	4
Sex			
Male	62	31.2	2
Female	137	68.8	1
Civil Status			
Single	32	16.1	2
Married	167	83.9	1
Educational Attainment			
Master's Degree with Doctorate Units	50	25.1	2
Master's Degree	114	57.3	1
Bachelor's Degree with MA Units	29	14.6	3
Bachelor's Degree	6	3.0	4
Position Title			
Master Teacher I	8	4.0	4
Teacher III	136	68.3	1
Teacher II	44	22.1	2

Teacher I	11	5.5	3
Length of Service			
25 years and above	9	4.5	5
20–24 years	41	20.6	2
15–19 years	104	52.3	1
10–14 years	24	12.1	3
5–9 years	3	1.5	6
4 years and below	18	9.0	4
In-Service Trainings Attended			
International	6	3.0	5
National	21	10.6	4
Division	39	19.6	2
District	30	15.1	3
School	103	51.8	1

Table 1.2. below shows the profile of the 370 intermediate learner respondents. Female learners comprised 60.0%, while males accounted for 40.0%. First-born children were the largest group (42.7%), and most learners came from families with three children (37.0%). Regarding parents' educational attainment, most fathers (77.0%) and mothers (54.3%) were college undergraduates, while few were high school undergraduates. In terms of occupation, most fathers (50.8%) and mothers (31.6%) were private employees. Lastly, most families earned between Php 30,000.00 and Php 39,999.00 monthly (43.2%), with only 4.1% earning Php 50,000.00 and above. Overall, the data indicate a predominance of middle-aged, experienced female teachers and learners from middle-income families with moderate family sizes.

. Table 1.2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Intermediate Learner Respondents in Terms of Selected Variables

Profile Variable	f	%	Rank
Sex			
Male	148	40.0	2
Female	222	60.0	1
Sibling Position			
First	158	42.7	1
Second	155	41.9	2
Third	35	9.5	3
Fourth	9	2.4	4
Fifth	5	1.4	5
Sixth	6	1.6	6
Seventh	2	0.5	7
Number of Children in Family			
1	76	20.5	3
2	133	35.9	2
3	137	37.0	1
4 and above	24	6.5	4
Parents' Educational Attainment			
Father			
College Graduate	26	7.0	3
College Undergraduate	285	77.0	1
High School Graduate	57	15.4	2
High School Undergraduate	2	0.5	4
Mother			
College Graduate	158	42.7	2
College Undergraduate	201	54.3	1
High School Graduate	10	2.7	3
High School Undergraduate	1	0.3	4
Parents' Occupation			
Father			
Government Employee	38	10.3	4
Private Employee	188	50.8	1

Self-Employed	70	18.9	2
Unemployed	17	4.6	5
Others	57	15.4	3
Mother			
Government Employee	37	10.0	5
Private Employee	117	31.6	1
Self-Employed	90	24.3	2
Unemployed	74	20.0	3
Others	52	14.1	4
Monthly Family Income			
Php 50,000 and above	15	4.1	5
Php 40,000–49,999	94	25.4	2
Php 30,000–39,999	160	43.2	1
Php 20,000–29,999	83	22.4	3
Php 19,999 and below	18	4.9	4

3.2. Extent of Effects of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of Intermediate Learners as Perceived by the Two Groups of Respondents

As shown in Table 2, teacher respondents rated the overall effect of the Child Protection Policy on learners' behavior at a composite weighted mean of 4.52, interpreted as Always (Very Much Effect), while learner respondents rated it at 4.37, interpreted as Often (Much Effect). Among teachers, Social Behavior ranked highest ($\bar{W} = 4.54$), followed by Emotional Behavior ($\bar{W} = 4.52$) and Cognitive Behavior ($\bar{W} = 4.49$). For learners, Cognitive Behavior ranked first ($\bar{W} = 4.40$), followed by Social Behavior ($\bar{W} = 4.39$) and Emotional Behavior ($\bar{W} = 4.33$), all interpreted as Often (Much Effect). These results indicate that both teachers and learners perceive the Child Protection Policy as positively impacting learners' cognitive, emotional, and social development, though with differing emphasis. Teachers, observing the classroom as a whole, recognize stronger effects on social and emotional behaviors, noting improvements in cooperation, respect, and positive interactions. Learners, reflecting on personal experiences, recognize benefits in cognitive and learning processes but may still face challenges in emotional adjustment and social skills. Overall, the findings suggest that the policy fosters a supportive school environment that promotes holistic development. This aligns with the study of Ramos (2024), which found that teachers possessed a strong understanding of the Child Protection Policy, particularly regarding institutional guidelines, children's rights, and the roles of key stakeholders.

Table 2: *Extent of Effects of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of Intermediate Learners as Perceived by Teachers and Learners*

Aspects	Teachers $\bar{W}$	VI	Rank	Learners $\bar{W}$	VI	Rank
Cognitive Behavior	4.49	Often (Much Effect)	3	4.40	Often (Much Effect)	1
Emotional Behavior	4.52	Always (Very Much Effect)	2	4.33	Often (Much Effect)	3
Social Behavior	4.54	Always (Very Much Effect)	1	4.39	Often (Much Effect)	2
Composite	4.52	Always (Very Much Effect)	—	4.37	Often (Much Effect)	—

3.3. Significant Difference Between the Perceptions of the Two Groups of Respondents on the Extent of Effects of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of Intermediate Learners

As reflected in Table 8, the p-values for all aspects of behavior are below the 0.05 level of significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates a significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and learners regarding the effects of the Child Protection Policy on cognitive, emotional, and social behaviors. While both groups recognize the positive influence of the policy, teachers emphasize its role in fostering discipline, emotional stability, and social cooperation, whereas learners highlight feeling safe, respected, and motivated to behave appropriately. These findings suggest that the Child Protection Policy effectively creates a safe and supportive school environment that promotes academic, emotional, and social growth. The shared understanding between teachers and learners reflects that the policy not only protects learners from harm but also nurtures confidence, cooperation, and a sense of belonging. This aligns with the study of Alombro (2022), which concluded that child protection policies provide assurance of safety and security for students by establishing guidelines and protocols to prevent and address various forms of abuse, including physical, emotional, and psychological, thereby fostering an environment conducive to learning and personal development.

Table 3: Result of t-test on the Significant Difference Between the Perceptions of Teachers and Learners on the Extent of Effects of Child Protection Policy

Aspects	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Ho	Verbal Interpretation
Cognitive Behavior	Teachers	199	4.488	0.223	3.245	0.001	Rejected	Significant
	Learners	370	4.397	0.361				
Emotional Behavior	Teachers	199	4.523	0.220	6.463	0.000	Rejected	Significant
	Learners	370	4.334	0.379				
Social Behavior	Teachers	199	4.536	0.207	5.330	0.000	Rejected	Significant
	Learners	370	4.396	0.339				

3.4. Significant Difference Between the Perceptions of Teacher Respondents on the Extent of Effects of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of Intermediate Learners in Terms of Their Profile

As shown in Table 4, teacher perceptions of the Child Protection Policy's effects vary depending on certain profile variables. For sex and educational attainment, p-values exceeded 0.05, indicating no significant differences in perceptions across these groups. However, significant differences were observed for age and length of service (emotional behavior), civil status (cognitive and social behavior), position title (cognitive behavior), and in-service trainings attended (cognitive and emotional behavior), with p-values below 0.05. This suggests that male and female teachers, as well as teachers with different educational levels, generally share similar views on the policy's influence on learner behavior. Differences emerge, however, when teachers are grouped by age, length of service, civil status, position, or participation in trainings, likely reflecting variations in professional experience, exposure to child protection programs, responsibilities, and personal perspectives. More experienced teachers or those who attended relevant trainings are more attuned to changes in learners' emotional or cognitive behavior, while differences in civil status or position may influence interactions with learners and perceptions of behavior. These findings are consistent with Antiza and Labidad (2024), who reported that teacher characteristics significantly affect school responsiveness to Child Protection Policy, with teaching position influencing disciplinary actions and monitoring, teaching experience affecting discipline and evaluation, and attendance in seminars or trainings significantly related to differences in school responsiveness across all domains.

Table 4: Result of F-Test on the Significant Difference in Teacher Perceptions of the Effects of Child Protection Policy on Learners' Behavior by Profile

Aspects / Profile	F-value	p-value	Ho	Verbal Interpretation
Age				
Cognitive Behavior	2.002	0.115	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	5.995	0.001	Rejected	Significant
Social Behavior	0.143	0.934	Accepted	Not Significant
Sex				
Cognitive Behavior	1.563	0.212	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	0.556	0.575	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	0.172	0.842	Accepted	Not Significant
Civil Status				
Cognitive Behavior	3.962	0.048	Rejected	Significant
Emotional Behavior	1.466	0.227	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	5.799	0.017	Rejected	Significant
Educational Attainment				
Cognitive Behavior	0.224	0.879	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	1.806	0.147	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	0.592	0.621	Accepted	Not Significant
Position Title				
Cognitive Behavior	5.126	0.002	Rejected	Significant
Emotional Behavior	2.590	0.054	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	0.175	0.913	Accepted	Not Significant
Length of Service				
Cognitive Behavior	1.536	0.180	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	5.069	0.000	Rejected	Significant
Social Behavior	1.989	0.082	Accepted	Not Significant
In-Service Trainings Attended				
Cognitive Behavior	4.695	0.001	Rejected	Significant
Emotional Behavior	9.740	0.000	Rejected	Significant
Social Behavior	1.818	0.127	Accepted	Not Significant

3.5. Significant Difference Between the Perceptions of Intermediate Learners on the Extent of Effects of Child Protection Policy on Their Behavior in Terms of Their Profile

As reflected in Table 5, the perceptions of learners on the effects of the Child Protection Policy generally do not differ significantly based on sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, father's educational attainment, parents' occupation, or monthly family income. However, a significant difference exists with respect to social behavior when learners are grouped according to their mother's educational attainment ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that learners, regardless of most family background factors, share similar perceptions of the policy, highlighting its fairness and inclusivity. The influence of a mother's education on social behavior suggests that mothers with higher educational attainment may reinforce at home the principles of respect, cooperation, and discipline emphasized by the policy, supporting positive social development both in school and at home. These findings are consistent with Amédée et al. (2023), who recommend that programs designed to enhance executive functioning be implemented in both home and school settings to ensure consistent development of social and cognitive skills across environments.

Table 5: Result of F-Test on the Significant Difference in Learner Perceptions of the Effects of Child Protection Policy on Behavior by Profile

Aspects / Profile	F-value	p-value	Ho	Verbal Interpretation
Sex				
Cognitive Behavior	0.506	0.478	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	0.050	0.823	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	0.394	0.531	Accepted	Not Significant
Sibling Position				
Cognitive Behavior	0.145	0.990	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	1.284	0.264	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	1.265	0.273	Accepted	Not Significant
Number of Children in the Family				
Cognitive Behavior	1.995	0.114	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	2.022	0.110	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	1.006	0.390	Accepted	Not Significant
Father's Educational Attainment				
Cognitive Behavior	0.796	0.496	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	0.091	0.965	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	0.660	0.577	Accepted	Not Significant
Mother's Educational Attainment				
Cognitive Behavior	2.392	0.068	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	0.487	0.691	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	3.364	0.019	Rejected	Significant
Father's Occupation				
Cognitive Behavior	1.903	0.109	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	0.351	0.843	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	1.853	0.118	Accepted	Not Significant
Mother's Occupation				
Cognitive Behavior	1.674	0.155	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	0.375	0.826	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	0.466	0.761	Accepted	Not Significant
Monthly Family Income				
Cognitive Behavior	0.480	0.750	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	1.739	0.141	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	2.034	0.089	Accepted	Not Significant

3.6. Level of Academic Performance of the Intermediate Learners as Revealed by Their Average Grades in the First Quarter

The table shows that the majority of intermediate learners (91%) scored between 80–84, corresponding to a Satisfactory level. Eight percent (8%) of learners achieved grades between 85–89, interpreted as Very Satisfactory, while only 1% scored 75–79, corresponding to Fairly Satisfactory. No learner attained an Outstanding grade (90 and above) or scored below 75 (Did Not Meet Expectations). The mean grade of 82.11, with a standard deviation of 1.66, indicates that learners' academic performance was consistent and clustered closely around the average. These findings suggest that the learners generally meet expected performance standards, although only a small proportion exceeds them. The uniformity in grades indicates minimal variation in achievement among learners. While overall performance is satisfactory, there remains room for improvement. Teachers may enhance learning outcomes through differentiated instruction, enrichment activities, motivation strategies, and targeted academic support. Strengthening teaching methods and learner engagement can help raise performance from Satisfactory to Very Satisfactory or Outstanding levels. This aligns with Adewale and Potokri (2023), who emphasized that addressing learners' behavioral and emotional challenges and strengthening policy awareness are key to sustaining and improving academic performance..

Table 6: *Level of Academic Performance of Intermediate Learners Based on First Quarter Grades*

Grade	Verbal Interpretation	f	%
90 and above	Outstanding	0	0
85–89	Very Satisfactory	28	8
80–84	Satisfactory	338	91
75–79	Fairly Satisfactory	4	1
Below 75	Did Not Meet Expectations	0	0
Total		370	100

3.7. Significant Relationship Between the Perceived Extent of Effects of Child Protection Policy on the Behavior of the Intermediate Learners and Their Academic Performance

The table shows that the computed p-values for cognitive, emotional, and social behavior are all greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating no significant relationship between the perceived effects of Child Protection Policy on learners' behavior and their academic performance. This suggests that while the policy is effective in fostering positive cognitive, emotional, and social behaviors, these improvements do not directly translate to higher academic grades. Academic performance may be influenced by other factors, including teaching strategies, learning materials, study habits, and home environment, which may overshadow the behavioral effects of the policy. The findings imply that although the policy creates a safe and supportive learning environment, its impact on academic achievement is indirect. It establishes a foundation for effective learning by promoting discipline, positive attitudes, and social-emotional growth, but enhancing academic outcomes may require complementary interventions such as individualized support, enrichment activities, and learner motivation strategies. This contrasts with Walsh et al. (2023), who reported that children who experience maltreatment are more likely to have learning difficulties, lower grades, grade retention, and assignment to special education classes, highlighting the complex relationship between behavior, protection policies, and academic performance.

Table 7: *Computed r-Values on the Relationship Between Perceived Extent of Effects of Child Protection Policy on Learners' Behavior and Academic Performance*

Aspects	r-value	p-value	Ho	Verbal Interpretation
Cognitive Behavior	0.084	0.106	Accepted	Not Significant
Emotional Behavior	0.027	0.611	Accepted	Not Significant
Social Behavior	0.028	0.595	Accepted	Not Significant

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concludes that teachers and learners perceive the effects of the Child Protection Policy on the behavior of intermediate learners differently across cognitive, emotional, and social domains. While certain teacher characteristics, such as age and length of service, and the mother's educational attainment among learners influence perceptions, other

factors like teachers' sex and educational attainment, as well as learners' sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, father's educational attainment, parents' occupation, and monthly family income, do not significantly affect these perceptions. Additionally, the policy does not show a direct correlation with the learners' academic performance. Overall, the findings suggest that while the policy positively supports learners' behavioral development, its impact is perceived differently depending on personal and professional factors.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that school administrators implement monitoring and assessment tools to evaluate policy application and perceptions regularly. Open communication channels and professional support for teachers can ensure consistent policy enforcement, while Child Protection Committees should continue raising awareness and monitoring implementation. Teachers are encouraged to receive targeted training, integrate socio-emotional learning in daily lessons, and actively engage parents to reinforce protection and discipline at home and school. Finally, similar studies exploring other variables are encouraged to further understand and enhance the effectiveness of child protection initiatives.

Compliance with ethical standards

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