CREATING A CHILD-FRIENDLY ZONE: CORRELATES OF EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT TO ENHANCE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (SHS) STUDENTS' SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

The major concern of the study was to determine the correlates of the effective child-friendly environment on the students' school achievement. Likewise, the subjective views of the respondents served as inputs on how a classroom can promote a child-friendly environment, thus produce positive learning. The study made use of the mixed-method quanti-quali research design to investigate both the subjective and objective views of the respondents with regard to effective child-friendly environment. Specifically, the study answered the following questions: (1) How may the classroom environment be described as a child-friendly zone in terms of the students-teachers' relationship; availability of learning materials; school facilities; and quality of learning? (2) What is the level of school achievement of students from GNVHS in terms of the GPA in all academics and specialized subjects? (3) Do the correlates of a child-friendly environment exert significant relationships to students' school achievement? In addition (4) what are the implications of this study on the present level of implementation of the child-friendly school system under DepEd Memorandum No. 13, s. 2016? For the qualitative questions, (5) what is a child-friendly classroom as perceived by the respondents? (6) Why is a child-friendly classroom important to improve students' school achievement? In addition (7) what makes the classroom a child-friendly zone inside the school? The respondents were 155 Senior High School students' grades 11 and 12 and selected SHS teachers. Findings showed that majority of the respondents favored that the school offered them a child-friendly environment or a child-friendly zone pertaining to their classroom environment served as the main reason why they have good grades in their academic and specialized subjects. The computed Pearson Correlation revealed p-value less than the alpha set at 0.05 level of significant yielded positive relationship among factors that serve as correlate of effective child-friendly environment.

Keywords: Child-friendly Zone, Classroom Environment, SHS Students' School Achievement

Creating a Child-Friendly Zone: Correlates of Effective Classroom Environment to Enhance

Senior High School (SHS) Students' School Achievement

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Context and Rationale

A classroom is a place where every learner has the freedom to feel secure and well-

protected. It is also a place inside the school where they feel they are still in their homes.

However, there are cases where classrooms become fearful places for students who feel

threatened and degraded by so many reasons, these include less freedom to express themselves,

more undermining activities like being a victim of bullying when other classmates find

themselves bore and unhappy, and less time to listen and be understood by their teachers and

fellow classmates who happened to be preoccupied with their own personal choices of activities,

and becoming less sensitive to the needs of other learners or co-learners.

A classroom scenario mirrors learner's everyday life challenges, it is where a child

happens to develop his/ her personality as either a mature or a happy-go-lucky person. The

freedom to be a person with self-determined attitude can be developed when places where

growing adolescents usually spend most of their developing years, like the classrooms are said

by the experts to be the most influential environment (Hamre and Pianta, 2011).

According to the HURIGHTS Osaka, "The Practice Aspects of Learning Human Rights", Part II,

posted on hre-asiapacific@hrea.org listserv on 5 July 2004, a child-friendly classroom reflects

the initiative of the school good practices that promote cooperation of community (students,

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teachers, parents, and school administration) working together in support of children education and development.

Solomon et al (2001) believed that teachers can promote a positive classroom environment by arranging their classrooms for movement and active learning; interact one-on-one with each child at least once a day; communicate high expectations for the performance of all students; give praise and encouragement; communicate affection for and closeness with students through verbal and nonverbal means; give children responsibility for taking care of things in the classroom; and treat all students equally and fairly.

Furthermore, the student-to-teacher communication observed to become less between teachers and students reported to value much by students (Ultralab, 2004). This means that such interactions and communications are important for them to make them feel appreciated and cared, in the study conducted by Buckley et al (2004), it revealed that communication is essential to establish the harmonious and unifying working environment among learners and significant people in the school.

Making classroom a homely place inside the school would allow a developing learner to become more familiar and, thus creative in doing his/her unique task as learner, this implies that teachers must learn to be like surrogate parents to their learners where the intention is not only to teach but to offer love and sense of belongingness to students whose life environment have been so emptied and less of love and support from parents who are unaware of their roles, and parents

who are nowhere to be found because of some personal and domestic issues, thus children are

left to live a life of their choice whether to be miserable or happy.

Having a miserable life, a learner will stop dreaming and will find himself/ herself less of

a working individual where his/ her only focus is to feel the "feeling of emptiness" and later on

will lead to self-pity and self-degrading attitude, on the other hand a learner who decides to live a

life of dreams and happiness where he/she does everything to become successful both in his/ her

relationships with others and his/her studies as well, nonetheless are also suffering from the same

dilemma of an emptied life and life of full of hates and pains.

Many successful people in their various fields of chosen endeavors shared their

testimonies of how they struggled much because of emptiness due to so many factors which

include their early life formation where schools occupied the "big part." They all agreed that

school is the place where all the patching up must be done for learners to become well-rounded

and have so-called holistic development.

Most psychologists and clinical counselors also do believed that life is full of challenges

both have healthy and detrimental effects to a developing person which is very much dependent

on how he/she perceived the challenging situations to be healthy or painful, where on this part

guidance from mature adults (like teachers/ parents) are expected to be very important to lessen

the role confusion and minimize the development of identity crises among growing adolescents.

School can be called "a child-friendly school" when it becomes more than just a place for formal

learning.

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In compliance with DepEd Memorandum no. 192, series of 2005. Child-Friendly School System, a school can serve to be a child-friendly when it recognizes and accepts the range of rights of children, and not just their right to be educated. These rights include the rights to be healthy, to be given opportunities for play and leisure, to be protective from harm and abuse, to express their views freely, and to participate in decision-making according to their evolving capacities while upholding the rights, the child friendly school still in the mind of the child the responsibilities that go with the rights.

In support, the Department of Education through its various mandates and policy guidelines ensure the safety and protection of the students in their respective school premises through DepEd orders developed and created to support the implementation of a child-friendly school, these include the DepEd Order No. 15, S. 2016 - Child Friendly School System Assessment Checklist, DepEd Order No 55. S 2013 - School Anti- Bullying Policies, and DepEd Order No. 40, S. 2012 – Child Protection Policy.

Among these equal rights responsibilities include; the rights to respects the rights of others, respect diversity, practice equality, and resolve differences without resorting to violence. A child-friendly school takes the lead in shaping a learning environment that enables children to learn as much as their intellectual faculties could take. It is a kind of environment that allows them to grow healthy equips them with knowledge and skills that they can use throughout life, and enables them to become responsible and productive members of their community and society (DepEd Memorandum no. 192, series of 2005).

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In general, a child-friendly school centers on the needs of the child where people in the

school working together with the best interest in minds about the well-being of the students, and

it is evident in all its learning activities, the child-friendly school is ordered… is unified and

individuality is expressed. The classroom, in particular, is the only place, "a zone" inside the

school where the students must find the comfort of their homes and start to dream again, be

whole, and live a life of healthy developing individuals toward becoming the mature and

productive members of the society, and this is it compliance with the Department of Education

Memorandum No. 13, s. 2016 in relation to how a school can be said a "child-friendly."

Review of Related Literature

Correlates of a Child Friendly Classroom

A classroom serves as the home of the students inside the school this is also the only

place where students spent most of their school days. This means that the classroom has been

part and witness of how every student manages to achieve school success and starts to journey on

achieving a quality life.

Teachers in general, are the significant people who had been part of the life development

of each student. They also serve as the parents of the students while they are inside the

classroom, more so, they are journeying with their students to finish every step of their school

academic ladder until reaching the highest level of their grade performance and reaching its

completion.

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The important role of teachers in supporting student' development in areas beyond their core academic skills had long been recognized through various theories of learning and teaching. Pianta and Hamre (2009) described the equally important roles of teachers as providers of emotional supports and organizational techniques that are essentials to students. They posit that, by providing "emotional support and a predictable, consistent, and safe environment" (p. 113), teachers can help students become more self-reliant, motivated to learn, and willing to take risks. And through modeling strong organizational and management structures, teachers can help build their students' own ability to self-regulate. According to Lampert (2014), the content-specific views of teaching also highlight the relevance of teacher behaviors that develop students' attitudes and behaviors much better than the way they impacted the test scores of their students which provide more emphasis on the development of their critical thinking and problem solving within the realm of authentic tasks.

A substantial body of evidence showed that student learning is multidimensional, with many factors beyond their core academic knowledge as important contributors to both short- and long-term success. Psychologists find that emotion and personality influence the quality of ones thinking and how much a child learns in school (Duckworth, Quinn, & Tsukayama, 2012). Thus how they taught to interact with others which were developed through their active and harmonious relationship with their teachers they became confident people capable to have the abilities and capabilities to express themselves and understand others in return.

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Researches to date focused predominantly on how teachers affect students' achievement on tests despite evidence that a broad range of attitudes and behaviors are equally important to their long-term success. In one study conducted by Blazar and Kraft (2017) found that upper-elementary teachers have large effects on self-reported measures of students' self-efficacy in math, and happiness and behavior in class.

Moreover, the students' attitudes and behaviors best predicted by the teaching practices as well as by the teachers' emotional support and classroom organization. However, it also observed that teachers who were good at improving students' test scores were not equally good at improving the attitudes and behaviors of the same students.

Several studies documented the significant predictive values of classroom management on child self-control, emotional stability, persistence, and motivation on health (Borghans, Duckworth, Heckman, & Ter Weel, 2008; Chetty et al., 2011; Moffitt et. al., 2011). This implies that a school becomes friendly when it provides classroom management measure that best suit individuality of their students.

Another worthy factor to consider that best developed a child-friendly classroom is the high-quality teachers whose passion for teaching extended outside of the classroom that would raise the score performance of their student, and thus, they can provide quality learnings to their students. At the same time, their abilities to provide an emotionally supportive environment that contribute to students' social and emotional development, manage classroom behaviors, deliver

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accurate content, and support critical thinking are all positive predictors of their good academic standing in the school (Cohen, 2011; Pianta & Hamre, 2009).

Moreover, when it comes to teachers' relationships with their students Blazar, Braslow, Charalambous, & Hill, 2015; Hamre et al., 2013) described that through classroom observations wherein the unique domains of teaching practice have been highlighted. These domains include the teachers' interaction with students, classroom organization, and emphasis on critical thinking under certain content areas, which further aimed to support the students' development.

Chetty Friedman, & Rockoff (2014); Hanushek & Rivkin (2010) found in their studies that teachers' contributions to students outcomes called to as "teacher effects" varied in terms of their abilities to impact students in terms of social support and emotional development. Furthermore, their studies provide finding that teachers' overall skill in the classroom not provided with students' outcomes alone through their test scores.

Hafen et al., (2015); Hamre et al., (2013) showed in their study through factor analyses the other aspects of teachers' instructions, teachers' social and emotional interactions with students, their ability to organize and manage the classroom environment, as well their instructional supports in the delivery of lesson contents provided to a great extent to students' school achievement.

In another study conducted by Ruzek et al. (2015) found that small but meaningful teacher effects on students' motivation. For Kraft and Grace (2016) found teacher effects on students' self-reported measures of grit, growth mindset and effort in class ranging between 0.14

and 0.17 Standard Deviation. This implies that teachers alone could be a significant factor in students learning development.

Further, the extent of teachers influences on the improve test scores and students' outcomes found to have a varying relationship with students' achievement. There were four reviewed studies described produced weak relationships between teacher effects on students' academic performance and effects on other outcome measures. Compared to a correlation of 0.42 between teacher effects on Math versus reading achievement. Another Jennings and DiPrete (2010) found correlations of 0.15 between teacher effects on students' social and behavioral outcomes and effects on either Math or reading achievement.

More so, Kraft and Grace (2016) also found correlations between teacher effects on achievement outcomes and multiple social-emotional competencies were non-existent and never greater than 0.23. Similarly, Gershenson (2016) and Jackson (2012) found weak or null relationships between teacher effects on students' academic performance and effects on observed schools behaviors. However, correlations from two other studies were larger. Ruzek et al. (2015) estimated a correlation of 0.50 between teacher effects on achievement and effects on students' motivation in math class. This means that teachers' effects on their students vary to a certain extent, but still it manages to promote little to moderate significant correlations to the students' school achievement in general.

Likewise, Mihaly, McCaffrey, Staiger, and Lockwood (2013) found a correlation of 0.57 between middle school teacher effects on students' self-reported effort and effects on math test

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scores. This would mean that variation of teachers' impact on their students' academic outcomes expected based on teachers' level of commitment and abilities to offer extended moral and social supports to their students.

Theoretical/ Conceptual Framework of the Study

The study anchored on the theory of Social Cognitive developed by Bandura in 1960s cited by Lamorte (2016). This theory posited that learning occurs in a social context with the dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment, and behavior. The theory placed emphasis on social influences of external and internal social reinforcement.

In this theory, it clearly described that an individual acquire and maintain the behavior in connection with the social environment wherein the individual performs his/her behavior. It makes use of the important roles of a person's past experiences reinforces the person's expectations and expectancies that within this frame the person is able to shape his/ her life with options whether to engage in specific behaviors and the reasons why a person should engage in the particular behavior.

In relation to the study, the positive learning environment encourages the so-called "child-friendly school zone." This predict the students to commit themselves to make use of equally positive behaviors, which is very useful to promote quality and effective learning, thus any learning environment with people who are promoting a healthy relationship will serve as contributors of healthy learning environment to its learners.

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From the study, the researcher advocates a learning environment which promotes positive and healthy feeling and homely place provide feeling of security and protection to each learner, thus a learner who finds himself/ herself happy and well-protected would most likely to choose a behavior that will make him/her happy, and these behaviors also lead to productive and quality learning.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study. From the conceptual framework, it clearly depicts the connection between and among variables in the study. In the study, two types of research designs were used in combination or the most popularly known as the "mixed-method research design", "Quanti" and "Quali" research, this research method is the personal choice of the researcher because it is useful to describe and understand both the origin and causes of a particular construct or concept under study. In support, Creswell (2018) reported that mixed-methods usually used to find the origin and nature of particular knowledge to develop a bigger view and pattern to describe the basis and validity of particular knowledge.

In the study, there were two types of variables used. The independent variables represented by the correlates of effective classroom environment that would promote and develop the so-called "Child-friendly zone" personally coined by the researcher to describe the classroom environment level of compliance to the existing guidelines and mandates that promotes the existence of the child-friendly school. Part of it is the descriptions of the varying levels of relationships between students and teachers' relationships, availability of learning

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materials, classroom facilities, and quality learning as well found as effective correlates of a classroom environment conducive to promote positive learning.

The other variables utilized in the study are the dependent variables presented by the school achievement of the SHS students in terms of their classroom performance and recognition/ rewards received from participations to various schools' events and competition school-based, district, division, regional, and national levels.

In this study, the intention of the researcher was to enhance the school achievement of the SHS students through promoting a child-friendly zone, which described to characterize of a classroom- learning environment that complies with the standards guidelines and policy implementation essential to enhance students' learning. Utilizing mixed-method model the study looked into the origin and causes of the various correlates that promote a positive learning environment.

Furthermore, the quantitative data tested using the stated null hypothesis of with no relationship set at 0.05 alpha level of significance using the Pearson Correlations. The qualitative data gathered using the focus-grouped discussion approach (FGD) were analyzed using various categories that served as the basis to identify the common patterns and themes described the individual views of the key informant (selected respondents) about the important roles of a child-friendly zone to promote healthy learning environment among learners improving their learning performance.

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Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables   *Dependent Variables*

C H I L D F R I E D L Y Z O N E	Students and Teachers' Relationships
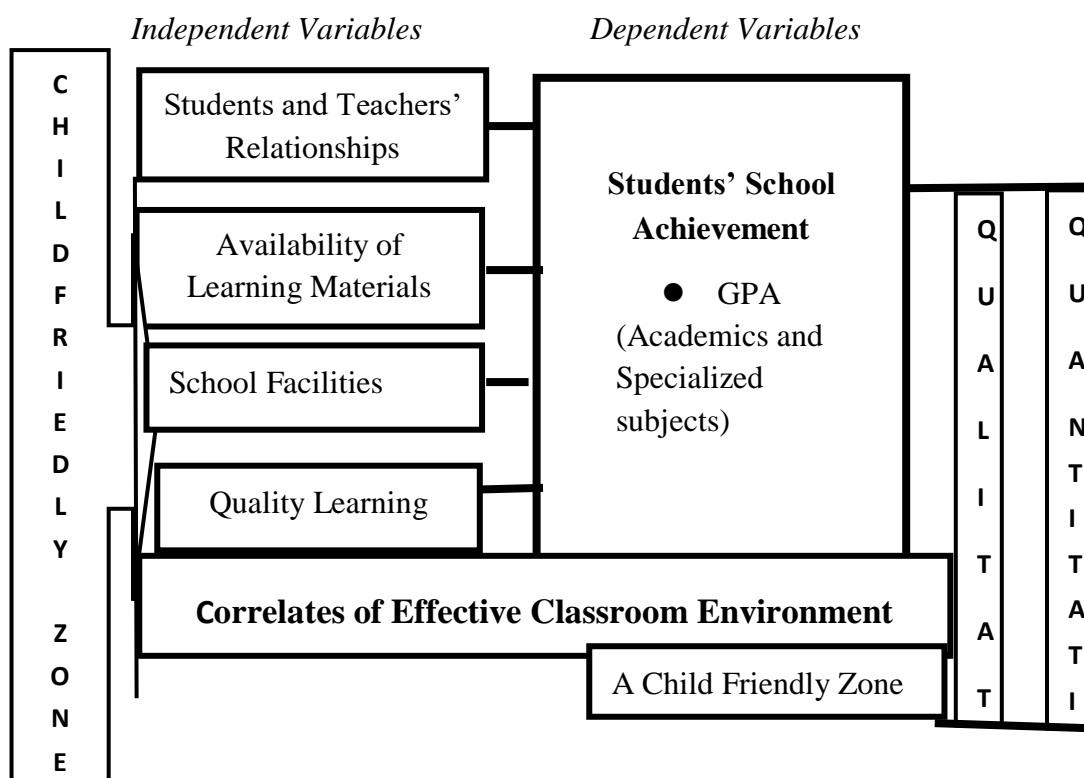
Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study

The straight lines connecting one variable (IVs) to the other variables (DVs) signify the intention of the researcher to describe the existing relationships between the variables with the assumption that the more the IV developed the more it would promote positive changes on the DV.

The aim of the researcher is to identify a bi-directional flow of relationship between and among the said correlates of a child-friendly environment to the students' achievement.

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The assumption is that the more the IVs used positively and/ or interchangeably-

the more it can promote a positive learning environment. Hence, creating an evident

school-based approach that is "child-friendly."

Research Questions

The major concern of the study was to determine the correlates of the effective child-

friendly environment on the students' school achievement. Likewise, the subjective views of the

respondents served as inputs on how a classroom can promote a child-friendly environment, thus

produce positive learning.

Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

A. Quantitative Questions:

1. How may the classroom environment be described as a child-friendly zone in terms of the

   following:

   1.1 students-teachers' relationship;

   1.2 availability of learning materials;

   1.3 school facilities; and

   1.4 quality of learning?

2. What is the level of school achievement of students from GNVHS in terms of the GPA in

   all academics and specialized subjects?

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3. Do the correlates of a child-friendly environment exert significant relationships to

    students' school achievement?

4. What are the implications of this study on the present level of implementation of the

    child-friendly school system under DepEd Memorandum No. 13, s. 2016?

B. Qualitative Questions:

5. What is a child-friendly classroom as perceived by the respondents?

6. Why is a child-friendly classroom important to improve students' school achievement?

7. What makes the classroom a child-friendly zone inside the school?

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

"The correlates of effective classroom environment do not exert significant relationship

to students' school achievement."

Significance of the Study

The study looked into the correlates of effective classroom environment among the Senior

High School students that would lead to the development of a child-friendly classroom, thus this

study is presumed beneficial to the following groups:

SHS Students. The findings of this study would help to understand the students'

situations inside the classroom, and with this, they can be properly guided as to their specific

concerns and issues that would help them to have the right direction and focus more on their

studies rather than on their issues and concerns that would, in turn, make them vulnerable to

school failures.

      Teachers. The study would serve as evidence where students individuality as a unique

learner would be highlighted, thus they can be able to make use of any teaching strategies that

they think would be better to each of their students.

      School Principal. The study can be used as a basis from which the needs of the students

can be best attended. At the same time, the findings from this study would be useful as baseline

data where the appropriate program can be developed to lessen the difficulty of the students in

their classroom environment.

      DepEd Officials and School Division Supervisors. The findings from this study can be

used to further monitor and evaluate the performance of the students as individual learners

following the set standards and policy guidelines where the focus is directed on how the

classroom environment can be maximized to enhance the learning skills of the students.

      Future Researchers. The findings from this study could serve as a starting point where

other scholarly articles and researches could promote an effective and healthy classroom

environment by looking into the individual differences of the learners.

Scope and Limitations

      The study assessed the factors that correlate to the effectiveness of the classroom

environment that would lead to increase students' learning.

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This would include the SHS students who experienced to have a classroom environment that they presume effective for them to achieve a high level of school performance. No other variables were included in the study aside from the variables identified to be the correlates of a child-friendly classroom environment. The study covered the school year 2018-2019.

Method

Type of Research

The study utilized the combined research design or the mixed-method research design (quanti-quali research) to highlight both the quantitative factors that would lead to the identification of the effective classroom environment as well as the subjective views (quali) of students about "what, when, and why learning" environment can become an effective classroom environment for them where they can fully experience and live the life that they want. Thus, enjoying its benefits of becoming creative and well-developed students.

Particularly, the parallel form or the concurrent mixed-method designs in which two types of data collected and analyzed. The two types of data collected independently at the same time wherein the research designed with to relatively independent phases, such as one with qualitative questions, and data collection and analysis techniques, which called the parallel mixed-method design.

According to Creswell (2014), this research method was useful for this type of study to ensure that each of the variable included in the study observed under its natural setting, the mixed-method research method is helpful to understand both the objective and the subjective

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views of people who were the direct recipients, and the target of the study. Through this research

design, both the qualitative and quantitative features in the design, data collection, and analysis

of the specific study considered.

Besides, this research method was helpful to uncover views of people who have

experienced the scenarios under study to determine the origin of a specific phenomenon. In this

action research (AR), the importance of creating a child-friendly zone is essential to develop a

classroom environment that promotes positive learning among its learners.

Furthermore, the correlates to child-friendly environment, such as the learning

environment created by students-teachers' positive relationships during classroom learning; the

availability of the learning materials; the classroom facilities in terms physical facilities,

ventilation; safety measures in terms of calamities; and disaster, as well as the quality of learning

provided by the teachers served as the independent variables.

While, the child-friendly environment based on the grade performance of the students in

selected subjects, the recognition/ awards received from various contests and competitions they

joined, and the level of satisfaction of the students in terms of how happy, secured and safe they

were in their learning environment served as outputs data for the dependent variables.

Respondents

The respondents of the study were the 155 randomly selected students out of the total

population of 304 Senior High School students from the academics and technical vocational

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strands, such as HUMSS, GAS, and TVL at Guiguinto National Vocational High School of the

Schools Division of Bulacan for the quanti part of the study.

Likewise, 34 teachers out of the 62 teachers from the different strands served as

respondents of study both for the quantitative and qualitative part of the study and selected key

informants from the same sample size using the earlier stated inclusion criteria. Table 1 presents

the respondents of the study.

Table 1

The Respondents of the Study

Respondents	Sample	Population	Percentage (Sample over Population)
Students			
HUMSS	34	63	55%
GAS	23	43	55%
TVL	64	166	55%
Teachers	34	62	55%
Total	**155**	**304**	

As shown in Table 1, most of the respondents are students from the Technical-Vocational

and Livelihood (TVL) strand with 64 students out of 166 students representing the 55% of the

population. Followed by 34 (55%) students from the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS)

strand out of 63 total number of students enrolled in HUMSS grade 12, and only 23 (55%)

students are from General Academic Strand (GAS) 12 strand with total population of 43 students

while the teachers-respondents included 34 teachers out of 62 total number of teachers in the

SHS identified to have teaching loads in Grade 12 strands.

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Sampling Method

The study made use of the simple random sampling approach. It is a type of probability sampling technique that allows each of the element of the population to have an equal and independent chance of being chosen as respondents of the study (Niewswiadomy, 2008).

For the selection process, the researcher used a random table where all the names of the grade 12 students currently enrolled in GAS, HUMSS, and Technical-Vocational Livelihood (TVL) Strands at the Guiguinto National Vocational High School were included. The table of the random numbers was entered at an arbitrary or random starting point.

The selection of the respondents were done by closing the eyes of the researcher and blindly point to a number in the table until the target number of 167 sample size which is the more than 50 % of the total population was reached out of the 304 students total population targeted on the study while the same procedure was used to get the number of teachers-respondents. However, there were only 155 survey questionnaires that were retrieved due to unavoidable circumstances, like students' non-compliance with the content of the survey forms, absenteeism (due to domestic issues), sickness, etc.

On the contrary, the researcher opted not to make use of the normality test by advocating the latest view of Ghamesi (2012), that with large enough sample sizes (> 30 or 40), the violation of the normality assumption would not cause major problems. This would mean that the use of parametric procedures even when the data are not normally distributed are allowed. With samples size of more than hundreds of observations, the distribution of the data can be ignored.

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According to the central limit theorem cited in Ghamesi (2012). It is evident-based that if the sample data approximately normal then the sampling distribution too would be normal in larger samples.

As part of the process, the initial number of the students were changed to adapt to the nonparametric sampling method to accumulate the source of data for the qualitative part of the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to get the subjective views of the respondents about how they see and interpret subjectively their learning environment as child-friendly thus serve as factors that promote a positive learning environment.

Using the purposive/judgmental sampling approach the researcher used set inclusion criteria to choose whose among the target participants best fit to serve the purpose of the study. For the inclusion criteria, to wit: the respondents were SHS students who experienced both staying in them a healthy and not so healthy classroom environment on the basis of the initial interview done for selection purposes. The students-respondents are bonafide students of Guiguinto National Vocational High School (GNVHS) from their Grade 7 to Grade 12 levels. The students characterized as the low to high performing students in their respective classes. While the inclusion criteria for teachers, these include teachers who were between the ages of 30-50 years old, teaching at GNVHS for more than 3 years and more, LET passers, and occupying regular/permanent position in the public school either as transferred from other schools or have started their teaching careers from the said target school.

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Meanwhile, for the qualitative data, the researcher made use of the purposive/ judgmental

sampling approach that would suit the need of the researcher who would be the appropriate

respondents for the study. Following the concurrent approach, the qualitative questions were

used to gather data using the interview guide questions of the purposively selected respondents

of the study.

Sources of Data

In the study, it made use of available hard data such as the general weighted average

(GWA) of the students for quarterly performance, recorded winning and award received.

Documentary analysis also considered, and data source taken from the leading databases used as

support for the validity of the data used.

Instruments

The sources of two types. Part one was the used of an adopted survey questionnaire from

the SIP Annex on Effective Teaching and Learning in a Child-Friendly School System Training

Module (2002) measuring the extent of child friendly environment created by teachers inside the

classroom as perceived by them (both the students and the teachers) while some of the items are

taken from the various DepEd orders developed and created to support the implementation of a

child-friendly school, these include the DepEd Order No. 15, S. 2016 - Child Friendly School

System Assessment Checklist, DepEd Order No 55. S 2013 - School Anti- Bullying Policies, and

DepEd Order No. 40, S. 2012 – Child Protection Policy.

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A separate survey for teachers and students were used in the study. The teachers' version of the survey instrument measuring the extent of the implementation of a child-friendly classroom environment was composed of 45-item answerable by a 5-point Likert scale where "5" as the highest and "1" as the lowest possible rating.

While the students' version used was the 30-item survey instruments using the same rating scale of a 5-point Likert scale where "5" as the highest and "1" as the lowest rating. These teachers and students' versions of survey instruments served as part 1 and 2 of the survey instruments used in the study.

For part three and four include the interview guide questions that as a source of data for the qualitative part of the study. The interview guide questions were composed of the semi-structured open-ended questions covering the subjective views of teachers about how they see an environment as child-friendly that they created inside the classroom while carrying their tasks as teachers and students. Using the focus-grouped discussion approach or FGD the students and teachers were placed in a group to discuss with the researcher how they see their classroom as a child-friendly zone inside the school.

Moreover, to ensure that the objective views of the respondents matched with that of the expected child-friendly environment providing them with an environment free from any form of child abuse, the study adopted the Department Order no. 40, series of 2012. These are composed of the guidelines and policies that ensured the students well-protected and secured while inside their respective learning environment.

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Other factors that said to correlates as proven by various studies that provide clear views

of these factors significant relationships to develop child friendly classroom environment, were

the demographic profile of both the teachers and the students, as well as the physical components

of the schools like the school facilities and classroom in terms of the safety measures provided in

the building where the classrooms are built and the proper ventilation and access of the students

for safety during times of disasters and emergencies. Meanwhile, for the students' academic

achievement the source of data used was the quarterly general weighted average (GWA) of

combined subjects they took for the semester.

Data Collection Procedure

For the data gathering mode, the researcher prepared a request letter to the school

principal asking approval for the conduct of research study and later on an endorsement to

qualify the research for Basic Education Research Funding (BERF). The researcher tried and did

her very best to comply with the requirements as supported by the SGOD – Research Office of

the Division of Bulacan as one of the approved DepEd funded research.

Upon approval of the proposed research, the researcher asked the assistance of the

Assistant Principals for academics as well as the school group heads per strand. The collection of

data included two phases. Phase one was the used of the survey instruments answered by the

students and teachers administered individually/ by group and through online. For phase two, the

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interview guide questions using focus-grouped discussion (FGD) approach used to get the data

for the qualitative part of the study.

Further, the data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using empirical statistics,

particularly, Pearson Correlations. While data for the qualitative part was analyzed through

transcription of data clustering and categorizing, where the intention into identifying the

emerging responses of the respondents as key informants served as the basis through which

patterns and themes developed that provide depths of the objective views of the respondents'

responses taken into accounts their subjective views.

Ethical Considerations

As expected, in any good research it is essential to adhere to ethical standards. In the

study, proper guidelines were followed in terms of the research format. In doing the formatting

and approved standards for quality research the researcher adheres to the reformulated research

agenda: call for research proposal stipulated in the Regional Memorandum no. 59, series of 2017

amending DepEd Order No. 16, s.2017; RA no.48, series 2016 - References:

DepEd OrderNo. 43,s. 2O15; and DepEd OrderNo. 4, s. 2016. Likewise, APA format

was used in the technical part of the research writing. The research papers also complied to the

standards set by the Division to meet existing guidelines and format for quality research.

Meanwhile, for the confidentiality issues of the data and the results found in this study, the researcher secure that all the information discovered in this study would be taken with the utmost confidentiality.

Further, ethical issues in terms of intellectual property, the researcher would provide an attachment which proved that the study was done to improve teaching and learning process in the classroom, identify appropriate classroom management practices best suited for all time of learners, as well as creating a child-friendly zone inside the classroom. As a technical researcher, the information used in the study, concepts, and ideas were properly cited to honor and recognize the sources and authors.

More so, informed consents and waivers secured first by the researcher before the start of the data gathering. However, as part of the data processing phase, students who were randomly selected are no longer minor or below 18 years of age. Hence, informed consents from parents and guardians no longer sought.

Data Analysis

In this study, the check of normality was not executed since the number of representing respondents are more than 100. In support, Ghasemi (2012), reported that with "large enough sample sizes (> 30 or 40), the violation of the normality assumption should not cause major problems" pp. 1-2. This would also imply that parametric procedures used when the data are not normally distributed. Several samples consisting of hundreds of observations. Although true

normality considered a myth, what is important is to look for serious deviation from normality.

Hence, in this study, since no serious deviation was initially observed by the researcher no test of

normality was considered but instead advocated and complied with the latest view of Ghasemi

(2012).

Further, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship at the 0.05 level of significance

tested to determine the directional flow of relationship between the identified factors that

determine the correlates of a child-friendly classroom environment. Survey questionnaires used

as the primary data gathering tool in the study to get the quantitative data, this included the

adapted instrument developed to assess the relationship of learning environment tailor-fit to

students' school achievement.

Meanwhile, the data gathered in this study were processed and presented using the

following statistical treatment:

1. The quantitative data gathered in this study were described using frequency counts,

weighted means, and standard deviation. The objective views of the respondents about how they

perceived that the classroom environment produces a child-friendly zone was quantitatively

interpreted as follows:

Scale	Range	Interpretation	Transposed to Descriptive Equivalent
5	4.5 – 5.00	Highly Evident	Excellent
4	3.5 – 4.49	Very Much Evident	Very Satisfactory
3	2.5 – 3.49	Evident	Good
2	1.5 – 2.49	A Little Bit Evident	Satisfactory
1	1.0 – 1.49	Not Evident	Poor

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The grade performance of the students as offshoots of a child-friendly environment was described using the DepEd grading system for K-12 program presented as follows:

Grade Performance – Scale	Descriptive Equivalent
90 – 100	Outstanding
85 – 89	Very Satisfactory
80 – 84	Satisfactory
75 – 79	Fairly Satisfactory
Below 75	Did Not Meet Expectations

2. While to determine the predictive values of the identified factors to correlate to the development of a child-friendly environment Pearson Correlations utilized. The results of the accumulated weighted means from their responses using the survey questionnaire of the students as respondents used as the IV and the academic achievement (GPA) of the students as the DV to know the level of significant relationship (correlates) using SPSS.

3. The qualitative data accumulated in the study using the focused-group discussion (FGD) method described through well-developed themes and patterns derived from the transcription of the respondent's subjective views on how they experienced and observed that their learning environment such as their classroom could become a child-friendly zone worthy to promote positive students' learning performance.

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Results and Discussion

The study looked into the correlates of a child-friendly environment to improve the students' academic achievement. The study made use of the mixed-method approach to describe the objectives and the subjective views of the selected respondents on how they experienced and perceived that their classroom environment is a child-friendly. The quantitative and qualitative data gathered in the study are well-presented using tables and texts following appropriate format for objective designed using descriptive-correlational method and phenomenological approach to present the subjective views of the respondents about a child-friendly environment.

Quantitative Results

A school is considered a "child-friendly school" when it can provide and comply with the standard sets by the Department of Education following the stated guidelines and policies stipulated under DepEd Order No. 15, S. 2016 - Child-Friendly School System Assessment Checklist, DepEd Order No 55. S 2013 - School Anti- Bullying Policies, and DepEd Order No. 40, S. 2012 – Child Protection Policy.

These are the Department of Education standards set for schools to comply with the so-called "child-friendly school." This would mean that school should provide a school environment, which is free from any form of malpractices and bullying. The child-friendly school policy guidelines provide a clear picture and actions on how a certain school could achieve 'a child-friendly" environment through full compliance with the mandates and guidelines provided therein.

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School Compliance in Terms of Students-Teachers' Relationships

Table 2 shows the results of the study in terms of the quality of content in the specialized subjects as evaluated by their subject teachers.

Looking at Table 2, it directly addresses the school compliance for the goal of achieving child-friendly environment in terms of students-teachers' positive relationship. As evident in Table 2 majority of the respondents or out of 155 perceived that the school is capable to comply with the said standards (4.48-VS).

The school managed to promote camaraderie and unity among its students through the efforts of their classroom teachers with computed highest weighted mean value of 4.56 interpreted as excellent, the same observation made in terms of the compliance of the school to show genuine concern to the student with teachers who are friendly, and easy to get along with.

The students-respondents also agreed that their teachers are always there for them to give helping hands when they are in trouble and with some domestic issues to attend to with a computed mean score of 4.52 interpreted as excellent. At the same time, the school becomes like a home for much of the students, as they described their teachers who are providing them with extra time and attention even outside of their school premises with the highest computed mean score of 4.54 interpreted as excellent. The overall weighted mean value of 4.48 interpreted as very satisfactory provides a glimpse of how the students and teachers perceived that their school is capable to provide a child-friendly environment for exerting extra efforts to provide them with their cognitive needs.

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Table 2

School Compliance in Terms of Students-Teachers' Relationships

ITEM	Frequency/ Scale						Mean	Interpretation
Goal 1: Students-Teachers' Positive Relationship – *your teachers…*	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**		
are friendly and easy to be with.	0	0	10	61	84	155	4.48	Very Satisfactory
show genuine concern to their students.	0	0	20	36	99	155	4.51	Excellent
provide harmonious relationship with other students.	0	0	0	79	76	155	4.49	Very Satisfactory
promote camaraderie and unity among and between students.	0	0	21	38	96	155	4.56	Excellent
use positive feedback and provide guidance to their students.	0	0	25	36	94	155	4.48	Very Satisfactory
provide enough time to their students when needed even outside the classroom premises.	0	0	20	31	104	155	4.54	Excellent
show honesty and sincerity in expressing concern and sympathy to students.	0	0	25	36	94	155	4.45	Very Satisfactory
always ready to provide helping hands when needed by the students.	0	0	8	59	88	155	4.52	Excellent
serve as surrogate parents while inside the classroom.	0	0	20	45	90	155	4.45	Very Satisfactory
promote cooperative working relationship between and among students.	0	0	0	105	50	155	4.32	Very Satisfactory
						Average	**4.48**	**Very Satisfactory**

Further analysis of the results would suggest that the students and teachers valued

positive relationships achieved when they do not create a wall that would make them distant to

their students. Consequently, the students are also very particular to attention provided to them

by their teachers and they make sure that they reciprocated it with the sense of valuing and

appreciation that they can genuinely express to their teachers.

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In support, Ruzek et al. (2015) found in their study that even the small but meaningful teacher effects on students' motivation could produce amazing positive changes to the learners' attitude about their learning development. Thus, the learning environment became child friendly for all types of students.

School Compliance in Terms of Availability of Learning Materials

The Department of Education is responsive to the needs of the learners when it comes to learning materials. However, in practice, most of the schools are having a hard time to meet both ends to provide the 1:1 ratio of textbooks and other instructional materials needed by teachers to deliver their lessons effectively.

Table 3 provided a general view of students and teachers concerning have they observed that that school could comply with the set standard for the availability of learning materials. The overall weighted mean of 4.33 interpreted as very satisfactory could also provide a glimpse how the teachers and students accepted that although limited when it comes to learning materials coming from the Department of Education, the school in particular and all its supportive teachers are doing their very best to provide their students with an effective instructional learning materials.

This shown with the highest computed mean values of 4.53 interpreted as excellent for the abilities and passion of the teachers to provide improvised learning materials as validated by their students. In addition, the least computed mean value of 4.12 interpreted as very satisfactory

described that there are enough learning materials to meet the holistic development of the students as perceived by the respondents.

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Table 3

School Compliance in Terms of Availability of Learning Materials

ITEM	F						Mean	Interpretation
Goal 2:Availability of Learning Materials	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	Total		
There is 1:1 ratio between number of textbooks and students.	37	98	20	0	0	155	4.11	Very Satisfactory
The teachers are able to provide improvised learning materials.	99	38	18	0	0	155	4.53	Excellent
The school administrators provide enough learning materials to support classroom learning.	68	87	0	0	0	155	4.44	Very Satisfactory
The teachers have enough teaching materials to motivate students to learn better.	64	47	42	2	0	155	4.47	Very Satisfactory
There are enough learning materials to meet the holistic development of the students.	94	36	25	0	0	155	4.12	Very Satisfactory
Average							**4.33**	**Very Satisfactory**

In connection with this, it is worthy to note that students are performing well because the

school with its personnel and teachers are capable to provide the learning materials they need to

perform better in class. Having enough learning materials would make any classroom

environment child-friendly for the students.

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Thus, the school complied with very satisfactory performance when it comes to meeting its goals for promoting child-friendly classroom to their students using improvised learning materials. Under the child-friendly school policy guidelines, it clearly stipulated that teachers are personally responsible for the meaningful development of their students' learning (DepEd Order No. 15, S. 2016 - Child Friendly School System Assessment Checklist).

School Compliance in terms of School Facilities

Under the school manual for facilities and equipment, a school should comply first on the basic tenet to secure a permit to operate any additional program. About this, the Guiguinto National High School (GNVHS) granted with the permission to operate the SHS department with different course/ strands offering, this would mean that GNVHS has also managed to comply with the set standards and guidelines when it comes to school facilities and equipment readiness.

In practice, the school has its various facilities and laboratories to cater for SHS strands as a vocational school. The school facilities and laboratory equipment are just enough to provide the students with their needs to learn basic and advance knowledge in their chosen tracks/ strands of specialization with teachers/ and mentors who are knowledgeable and trained for each of the strand (specialized strand). Table 4 describes the level of school compliance as perceived and observed by their students and teachers.

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As shown in Table 4 with the overall computed weighted mean value of 4.34 interpreted

as very satisfactory, the school is capable to comply with the standards and guidelines for school

facilities for SHS academic and specialized strands.

Table 4

School Compliance in Terms of School Facilities

ITEM	Frequency						Mean	Interpretation
Goal 3: Classroom Facilities (Guarantee Safe and Protective Spaces for students), *the school's classrooms ...*	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**		
have proper ventilation and lighting and enough space for 45-50 students.	0	0	19	63	19	155	4.35	Very Satisfactory
desks and other furniture are sized to your age. In the case of shared desks, each learner has enough space to do seatwork.	0	0	18	60	18	155	4.38	Very Satisfactory
layout and furniture allow you to interact and do group work.	0	0	31	80	31	155	4.08	Very Satisfactory
have a bulletin board or a corner that displays helpful learning materials such as posters, illustrations, newspapers, and magazine clippings, and your own works as students.	0	0	7	84	7	155	4.52	Excellent
are regularly maintained and kept clean.	0	0	25	36	25	155	4.37	Very Satisfactory
Average							**4.34**	**Very Satisfactory**

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This observed on the utilization of bulletin board displayed with helpful learning

materials, such as; posters, illustrations, newspapers, magazine clippings, and students works

with the highest computed mean score of 4.52-interpreted as excellent while proper ventilation

and lighting and enough space for 45-50 students with the least computed weighted mean value

of 4.35 interpreted as very satisfactory. This would mean that the school complies to the

standards set to operate the SHS program when it comes to school facilities with a compliance

level of very satisfactory.

At the same time, the result is suggestive that because of the capability of the school to

comply with the standards set for school facilities, the school becomes a child-friendly for the

learners where they can exercise their right to learn under a virtual environment with simulation

facilities for them to practice their field of interest. With the same view, Lampert (2014) posits

that content-specific view through providing the basic elements of quality learning coincide with

well-stimulated learning environment with school facilities that offer simple but facilities

readiness would be enough to harness the creativity and motivation of the students to learn and

be positive with the impact of their learning environment to their learning development.

School Compliance in terms of Providing Quality Learning

The Department of Education (DepEd) goals and standards for school performance are

based on the quality of learning outputs produced by the students regardless of their grade levels.

In the Senior High School Department. The School Principals with the support and assistance of

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his Assistance Principals in the Academics provided regular monitoring schemes and activities

that would ensure that the students are receiving quality learning from their teachers from

various strands.

Most of the time, the school administrators provided orientation activities and meeting

that would equip teachers with their roles and responsibilities as professional and committed

teachers/ mentors to their students. Table 5 provides the data gathered as evidence for the

successful implementation of the schools' compliance in terms of providing quality learning for

its students.

As shown in Table 5, most of the students and teachers are aware of the importance and

the negative effects of using harsh discipline. The same reason why they believed that use of

non-threatening styles of disciplines are better as well as providing positive feedback, this is

shown with the mean score of 4.52 –excellent to 4.54 – interpreted as excellent where the

students also agreed that their teachers are capable to provide with such kind of positive

discipline that they need.

The students also agreed that their teachers are capable to use the types of discipline they

like across strands with an obtained highest mean score value of 4.55 interpreted as excellent.

This means that students believed that one of the good characteristics of their classroom

environment is the presence of their teachers who are versatile to variation of classroom

discipline applicable to almost all types of students.

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Table 5

School Compliance in Terms of Providing Quality Learning

ITEM	Frequency						Mean	Interpretation
D. Goal 4: Effective Classroom Instruction –*your teacher…*	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**		
uses non-threatening styles or discipline.	0	0	6	62	87	155	4.52	Excellent
complies to the policy against discrimination with regard to gender, cultural origin, social status, religious belief, and others.	0	0	24	32	99	155	4.48	Very Satisfactory
make use of positive feedback to encourage students learning.	0	0	0	71	84	155	4.54	Excellent
is sensitive to the individuality of the students when it comes to learning instructions.	0	0	11	48	96	155	4.43	Very Satisfactory
has the ability to integrate various discipline in the lesson.	0	0	19	38	98	155	4.55	Excellent
has the ability to comply with the required classroom hours.	0	0	30	36	89	155	4.38	Very Satisfactory
has the mastery of the subject matter he/she is teaching.	0	0	19	38	98	155	4.51	Excellent
has the competencies to teach highly specialized subjects, like in TVL-Home Economics, Industrial Education, Cookery.	0	0	5	60	90	155	4.55	Excellent
manages the classroom environment effectively using constructive criticism and positive reinforcement,.	0	0	20	44	91	155	4.46	Very Satisfactory
is able to deliver the lesson well and good.	0	0	0	73	82	155	4.53	Excellent
						Average	**4.49**	**Very Satisfactory**

However, the students also observed that despite the intention of their teachers to provide quality learning for them, they are also instances that they missed classes to give way for the demand of their papers work evident with the least computed mean value of 4.38 interpreted as very satisfactory. This would mean that students and teachers are capable to provide a clear view of how they see their roles and other responsibilities and they make sure that these other roles would not be reason enough for them to consider that their teachers and their classroom environment are not providing them the opportunities to learn more.

In general, the overall computed weighted mean value of 4.49 interpreted as very satisfactory provide a clear understanding that the students with their teachers are amenable to the fact that they are with a school complying very satisfactory to excellent performance when it comes to providing quality learning for its students in the SHS department.

Students' Academic Achievement

In a child-friendly classroom, students observed to have freedom of their personal views and understanding about their unique needs. Table 6 presents the students' GPA in their academic and specialized subjects. It is worthy to note in the data gathered most of the randomly selected students are performing well in their class. Majority of them in the academic strands (GAS and HUMSS) are performing from very satisfactory to outstanding performance with GPA of 85%-89% (VS) and 90%-100% (O).

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Almost the same scenarios or classroom learning observed from students coming from the TVL strand where out of 64 total number of respondents 57 of them obtained very satisfactory performance of 85% to 89% and 5 of them got outstanding performance with GPA ranging from 90% - 100%.

However, the two students from the TVL Strand received a satisfactory rating of 80%-84%. This would mean that variation in the academic achievement of the students based on how the students perceived their learning experiences as also satisfactory.

Table 6

Students' GPA in Academic and Specialized Subjects

Subjects	Academic Performance					No. of Respondents
	Did Not Meet Expectations (Below 75%)	Fairly Satisfactory (75%-79%)	Satisfactory (80%-84%)	Very Satisfactory (85%-89%)	Outstanding (90%-100%)	
Academics	0	0	0	38	19	57
Specialized	0	0	2	57	5	64
					Total	**121**

Analysis of the results would mean that students' academic achievement varied to a certain extent, where factors like the child-friendly environment accounted for. In support, the Department of Education through its various mandates, policies, and guidelines are always responsive to the needs of these learners.

In support, Charalambous, & Hill (2015); Hamre et al., (2013) described that through classroom observations wherein the unique domains of teaching practice has been highlighted. These domains include the teachers' interaction with students, classroom organization, and

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emphasis on critical thinking under certain content areas aimed to support the students'

development. Hence, promoting positive learning outputs among students such as good

academic standing in their respective classes.

Students' Awards and Recognitions Received

An effective school characterized on a "child-friendly environment" expected to produce

quality of students who are capable to compete and to join contests from various levels. In the

SHS department, the SHS students are also joining and winning contests of their choices as

assisted by advisers and coaches. Table 7 shows the awards and winnings received by the

students from various strands.

Table 7

Students' Awards and Recognition Received

Strands	Students' Awards and Recognition Received					Winning and Award Received
	With Honors and High Honors	Winning Extra-Curricular Activities	Athletic Competitions	Academic Contest (English and Filipino)	Others (School events and competitions: intramural, poster making contest, quiz bee, etc.	
HUMSS	34	4	16	2	17	73
GAS	18	0	0	0	3	21
TVL- HE	9	12	11	3	5	40
					Total	**134**

As shown in Table 7 most of the awards and recognition received by students coming

from the Humanities and Social Sciences strand (HUMS) with 73 total number of overall awards

and winning received. Followed by TVL students garnered 40 awards and recognitions from

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various categories both in academic and in extracurricular activities. Least awards and

recognitions received by the GAS students with 21 awards and recognitions for the current

school year. It is also worthy to note, from the results that most of the awards received by the

students are academic like with honors and with high honors.

Further analysis of the results would suggest that most of the students are aware of the

importance of receiving awards and recognition aside from having high grades in their academic

classes. Some of them are also capable to excel in other extra-curricular activities.

This can be possible because the students taught by teachers who valued the relevance

of time management and passion to do things better than what is just expected. And with this

view, it can be deduced that having a child-friendly environment, the students managed to

explore their passions, skills, and talents and make use of these to achieve and exercise their

rights to become high performing learners.

The child-friendly environment mirrors the so-called "learning development" where each

of the child experience and crave for when they are provided with privileges to better their

performance through practice and hard work. At the same time, mentoring them with a positive

attitude towards success would make them develop and acquire painstaking efforts worthy for

them to achieve their goals in life.

Psychologists find emotion and personality influenced the quality of one's thinking and

how much a child learns in school in a child-friendly environment (Duckworth, Quinn, &

Tsukayama, 2012). This would mean that to achieve the positive results whether a learning

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environment is becoming friendly or not is through students who managed to achieve and

become successful in their goals and interest in life where passion and internal motivation have

been the main contributors of their success.

Correlates of a Child-Friendly Environment and Students' School Achievement

The reviewed literature and other studies provided strong support to the positive

relationship of factors like school facilities, students-teachers' positive relationship, instructional

materials and quality learning which characterized mostly the school with the child-friendly

environment to students' success in their academic performance.

Under the mandates of the Department of Education, this expected when the school

provided evidence of full compliance with the policy guidelines stipulated for creating a child-

friendly school. Table 8 provides the correlation results between the factors contributing to the

child-friendly school and its relationship to students' academic achievement.

Table 8

Correlation between Child-Friendly School and Students' Academic Achievement

Child-Friendly Schools Variables	r	Correlation	Significance
1. Students-teachers' positive relationship	0.879	Positive	P<0.05
2. Availability of learning materials	0.812	Positive	P<0.05
3. School facilities	0.786	Positive	P<0.05
4. Quality learning	0.912	Positive	P<0.05
Total	**0.84725**	**Positive**	**P<0.05**

Note: respondents=121/ 155 – students with no complete grades in their academic and specialized subjects were excluded.

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All the above correlations found to be significant at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The above results also revealed factors like students-teachers' positive relationship, availability of learning materials school facilities, and quality learning correlated positively to students' academic achievement. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship was not confirmed, it is evident that the variables found characteristics of a child-friendly school are contributing factors to the bi-directional relationship between a child-friendly school and students' academic achievement.

These results are in agreement with the findings obtained in the studies conducted by Kraft and Grace (2016) that strong relationship existed between teachers' social emotional competencies and students' academic achievement. Likewise, Ruzek et al (2015) found that small but meaningful teacher effects on students' motivation.

The Policy Implications of the Study in Accordance to the Implementation of the child-friendly school system under the DepEd Memorandum No. 13, s. 2016

The Department of Education as the sole responsible government agency to provide future leaders with the right training and attitude towards lifetime work and goals has never stopped to become responsive to the growing needs of the developing learners, which vary from one generation to the other.

The generation z, which characterized much of the learners under the 21st-century education expecting much from the Department. They believed that they deserve to have the

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opportunities that suited them to become better individuals, skilled workers, professionals in the future. The creation of the child-friendly school is not anymore new under the newly implemented K-12 Education program. The recipients are those learners who promised to give the best quality education ever.

However, in practice, it would not be easy for the Department of Education to carry out its plan for creating any schools to be child-friendly which is the main reason is to cater to even the littlest needs of each learner. Under the child-friendly school policy guidelines, it crafted basis requirement how any schools can be child-friendly, as expected a child-friendly school can be better than any other schools which are competent to provide each learner the "best learning environment" ever.

Several studies have been documented which showed the significant predictive values of classroom management on child self-control, emotional stability, persistence, and motivation on health (Borghans, Duckworth, Heckman, & Ter Weel, 2008; Chetty et al., 2011; Moffitt et. al., 2011). This implies that a school becomes friendly when it provides classroom management measures best suited to the unique individuality of their students.

More so, a child-friendly classroom is characterized by high-quality teachers whose passion for teaching extended outside of the classroom would raise the score performance of their student, thus, they can provide quality learnings to their students, they have the abilities to provide emotionally supportive environment that contribute to students' social and emotional development, manage classroom behaviors, deliver accurate content, and support critical thinking

are all positive predictors of their good academic standing in the school (Cohen, 2011; Pianta &

Hamre, 2009).

This would mean through effective delivery and monitoring of any schools' full

compliance to the stated policy guidelines for the mandates of the child-friendly school. A child-

friendly school or termed "a child-friendly zone" inside the school achieved easily and maintained

by most schools, whose school administrators and teachers are more apt for the betterment of their

students' holistic development above anything else.

Qualitative Results

The importance of a child-friendly environment mirrors the amount of learning received

from their loving and caring teachers, whose commitment and passion for teaching is very much

evident with their level of confidence and ability to teach well. In support, Psychologists find that

emotion, personality influence the quality of one is thinking, and how much a child learns in school

(Duckworth, Quinn, & Tsukayama, 2012).

In this study, the relevance of the students' personal subjective views and understanding

their own needs are reflected in Table 10, the qualitative data presented in the table gathered

through interview guide questions using focus-group discussion process or (FGD) and the key

informants group based on the particular characteristics or identity viewed by the researcher as

similar to them.

The responses of the respondents clustered and coded to come up with distinguishing

characteristics or patterns and themes that emerged from the respondents' common responses. As

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shown in Table 10, the majority of the respondents' responses are suggested of a classroom that a child-friendly zone, "is clean, protected and with a relaxing ambiance." For them, an environment is a child-friendly when the teachers are making use of effective teaching strategies where they can be better.

This same view supported by the study conducted by Blazar and Kraft (2017) found that upper-elementary teachers have large effects on self-reported measures of students' self-efficacy in math, and happiness and behavior in class. On the study, it was effective that the students have positive behaviors and attitudes about how they managed to view their classroom. At the same time, they see their teachers as supportive, which are capable to provide emotional support and classroom organization.

Table 10

A Child-Friendly Environment According to the Respondents

Probing Questions and Responses	Code	Patterns and Themes (societal and global themes)
1. What is a child-friendly classroom as perceived by the respondents?	Relaxing and Comfortable	Safe and Protected (Home inside the classroom)
• Clean and the ambiance is relaxing		
• The room is relaxing because of its theme and soothing designs		
• The classroom is safe and I feel protected		
• Effective teaching and learning strategies used by teachers.		
• It is easy for me to study because I feel secured and protected		

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Analysis of the results showed three patterns and themes that emerged from the views of the students and teachers about a child-friendly environment; these characterized by a classroom that represents a "Home" inside the classroom. The security of the classroom served as how the students and teachers perceived that they are safe and well-protected while inside the classrooms.

While the ability of the teachers to provide effective teaching strategies perceived by the respondents as a contributing factor to the quality of a classroom, which represents a child-friendly environment. Pianta and Hamre (2009) believe that the roles of teachers as providers of emotional supports are essentials to students to establish emotional support and to predict a consistent and safe learning environment.

Meanwhile, Table 11 presents the qualitative data gathered on the importance of a child-friendly classroom to improve students' achievement. Most of the respondents perceived that a "child-friendly zone is a classroom that is supportive of their personal needs to learn better and to improve their learning experiences while learning inside the classroom."

As shown in Table 11, there are two themes and patterns, which emerged from the subjective views of the students and teachers that serve as respondents of the study. This includes a societal view that a child-friendly environment is a reflection of a child-friendly zone that usually viewed by the students and teachers as "comfortable and relaxing classroom." This would mean that most of the respondents are comfortable with their present classroom and they believed that their classrooms are effective enough to provide them with an effective learning environment helpful for them to improve their studies.

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At the same time, the teachers also believed that their classroom environment inspired them to become better in their performance and to make use of effective instructional materials helpful for them to ensure that their students are learning a lot from the lesson through effective instructional aids, power-point presentation and the like.

Table 11

Importance of a Child-Friendly Zone (classroom) to Improve Students' Achievement

Probing Questions and Responses	Code	Patterns and Themes (societal and global themes)
2. Why a child friendly classroom is important to improve students' school achievement?		A child-friendly environment is a reflection of a child-friendly zone
• When there are times are stress all around the classrooms because of too much deadlines, a soothing and child-friendly classroom is helpful for student like me to feel comfortable and relax.	A child-friendly zone is helpful for the students to feel relax and comfortable	
• Because teachers are capable to provide/ use interesting classroom lesson using power point presentation.	A child-friendly zone is effective when teachers are using effective teaching materials and strategies	
• Because a positive classroom for me can be a key to earn positivity in life.		
• A positive classroom is important		
• It is supportive		
• A child-friendly zone supports me in my challenges of finishing academic requirements because it provided me with approachable classmates and supportive teachers.		
• The teachers are providing the best quality of education by using power point for us to understand the lesson clearly.		

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Further analysis of the result would show that the respondents viewed a child-friendly environment is present in their respective classrooms. At the same time, they believed that their classroom is good enough to provide them with a comforting feeling and relaxing ambiance. Nevertheless, a child-friendly zone or classroom is helpful to promote their positive outlook in life. In support, Lampert (2014) reported the relevance of a content-specific view coming from both the teachers and the students that would highlight how they viewed their learning environment.

Besides, the attitudes and behaviors both of the students and the teachers are factors that made their classroom environment-friendly for them. These are people valued much of the positivity of life. In reality, what makes a classroom a child-friendly zone inside the classroom? There are common views that classroom characterizes with "safety and good ambiance", is friendly for most students and teachers. This is true because most of them got familiar to it already and they used with the ambiance they have inside the classroom. Duckworth, Quinn, & Tsukayama (2012) posited that the personality of people mostly represent their subjective views about the beauty of what they see and feel.

As shown in Table 12 there are two patterns and themes, which emerged in the study. The first theme "A child-friendly zone is a classroom-based on standard guidelines for safe and well-protected classroom environment" and "a child-friendly zone is useful to promote positive learning experiences among students" this would mean that a child-friendly zone as coined by

the researcher is also known for majority of the respondents as a "child-friendly environment

inside the classroom.

Table 12

A Child-Friendly Zone inside the School

Probing Questions and Responses	Code	Patterns and Themes (societal and global themes)
3. What makes classroom a child-friendly zone inside the school?		A child-friendly zone maintain healthy classroom environment
• With full compliance to the guidelines and policy needed to maintain healthy classroom environment. • Our advisers are assigning group that would maintain the cleanliness of the classroom each day. • Our classroom is well-designed		
• Our classroom makes us feel relaxed because of its colors and beautiful designs. • Our classroom is a child-friendly classroom		
• A child-friendly classroom is designed to promote better learning experience to the students.	A child-friendly zone is a classroom promoting positive learning experiences of students	
• Our classroom is well-ventilated • Our classroom is wide enough to fit 40 students or more with necessary equipment such as furniture and trash bins.		

Most of the respondents' subjective views about a child-friendly zone characterized by classroom that is in full compliance with the Department of Education policy guidelines for a child-friendly environment. The said classroom is also a friendly zone when relaxing and decorated, and able to promote positive learning experiences among students. This would mean that most of the respondents are happy and satisfied with their present classroom environment.

Further analysis of the result would show that a child-friendly zone is a "classroom that is highly positive and promoting a healthy environment to the students", these are classrooms that are well-managed and promoting positive discipline to the students. Several studies have been documented which showed the significant predictive values of classroom management on child self-control, emotional stability, persistence, and motivation on health (Borghans, Duckworth, Heckman, & Ter Weel, 2008; Chetty et al., 2011; Moffitt et. al., 2011). This implies that a school becomes friendly when it provides classroom management measures that best suited the individuality of their student that is favored by most of the respondents of the study.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions are derived:

1. There is a child-friendly environment maintained in public school. This is evident with students and teachers who are positive about how they see the beauty of their learning environment and the quality of the teaching performance of the public school teachers.

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2. A child-friendly zone is a classroom that characterized by a relaxing and comforting learning environment. The positive outlooks of the students developed within environment, which is child-friendly.

Recommendations

In light of the aforementioned findings and conclusions derived from the study, the following recommendation is hereby stated:

1. The Department of Education shall provide monitoring tools as part of the regular evaluation of the school to determine the status of the school in providing a child-friendly environment to its learners.

2. The school administrators enjoined to comply in full with the need to develop and transform their schools to be child-friendly.

3. Parents and significant others are expected to support the roles and commitment of the schools to achieve the highest level of compliance to the mandates of the Department of Education to bring into reality a school-child friendly to all its learners.

4. Teachers and life coaches are encouraged to give their full support and perform their duties and roles to the best way possible to ensure that all students/ learners inside the classroom will have the same homely feeling security and protection all the time.

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Appendices

A. Letter of Request

Creating a Child Friendly Zone: Correlates of Effective Classroom Environment to Enhance Senior High School (SHS) Students' School Achievement

Statement of Informed Consent

I invite you to participate in a research study entitled: "Creating a Child Friendly Zone: Correlates of Effective Classroom Environment to Enhance Senior High School (SHS) Students' School Achievement." This study aims to create a child-friendly classroom environment using correlates of an effective classroom learning conducive to promote enhance level of students' school achievement.

You will be one of the student-participants/ teacher-participants participating in this study by completing the attached RATING SCALE.

1. Your participation in this study will be voluntary as part of completing the final grades in all subjects. However, you will be allowed not to participate if you think this appeal will not be that useful or beneficial for you. Your participation in this study will not be paid and your intention not to be a participant to this study will not oblige you to compensate it another favorable condition or harm you of any type.

2. Answering the given rating scale will require approximately 20 minutes. While the interview guide questions will require to think and be more comprehensively in your response by giving enough time and will not put you under pressure.

3. In terms of the confidentiality of the results and other ethical issues. The researcher will not identify you by name in any report using information obtained from your questionnaires, your confidentiality as participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of data generated by this questionnaire will protect the anonymity of all individuals.

For further information, including a copy of the results of this study, please contact:

Annie S. Rafols (Researcher) Cell phone No. 0906-428-1500

Thank you very much!

NOTE: By completing and submitting this questionnaire, you are indicating that you understand the statements above, and consistent to participate in this study. You may opt not put your name on the questionnaire, your signature acknowledging that you understand the information presented above is not required.

_____

Signature over printed name

Source: Adopted from: http:/www. Pathseminary.org../sites/questionnaire? Template/ Feb., 2014

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Creating a Child Friendly Zone: Correlates of Effective Classroom Environment to Enhance Senior High School (SHS) Students' School Achievement

Dear Student:

  As your teacher, I am writing to invite you to participate as respondent for this research project entitled "Creating a Child Friendly Zone: Correlates of Effective Classroom Environment to Enhance Senior High School (SHS) Students' School Achievement." This study aims to create a child-friendly classroom environment using correlates of an effective classroom learning conducive to promote enhance level of students' school achievement.

  You can rest assured that all the information collected in this survey will be treated in strictest confidentiality and will only be used for research purposes. Writing your name on the rating scale survey form is optional.

  Thank you very much for your assistance in this important endeavor. God bless!

             Sincerely yours,

             ANNIE S. RAFOLS, Ph.D., RGC
                Researcher

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B. Instruments

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ON CHILD-FRIENDLY CLASSROOM

Students' Version

Part 1: Rating Scale for Students

Direction: Using the rating scale give your honest appraisal on the actions done by your teacher/s on a regular basis towards creating a child-friendly classroom. Put a check on the rating scale number that best corresponds your rating.

Rating Scale:

5 – Highly Evident/ Excellent
4 – Very Much Evident/ Very Satisfactory
3 – Evident/ Good
2 – A Little Bit Evident/ Satisfactory
1 – Not Evident/Poor

Indicators	1	2	3	4	5
Goal 1: Students-Teachers Positive Relationship					
Your teachers…					
1. are friendly and easy to be with.					
2. show genuine concern to their students.					
3. provide a harmonious relationship with other students.					
4. promotes camaraderie and unity among and between students.					
5. use positive feedback and provide guidance to their students.					
6. provide enough time to their students when needed even outside the classroom premises.					
7. show honesty and sincerity in expression concern and sympathy to students.					
8. always ready to provide a helping hands when needed by their students.					
9. serve as their surrogate parents while inside the classroom.					
10. promote cooperative working relationship between and among students.					
Goal 2: Availability of Learning Materials					
11. There is 1: 1 ratio between no. of textbooks and students.					
12. The teachers are able to provide improvised learning materials.					

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13. The school administrators provide enough learning materials as to support an effective classroom learning.					
14. The teachers have enough teaching materials to motivate students to learn better.					
15. There is enough learning materials to meet the holistic development of the students.					
Goal 3: Classroom Facilities (Guarantee Safe and Protective Spaces for Children)					
16. Your classrooms have proper ventilation and lighting had enough space for 45-50 students.					
17. Your classrooms desks and other furniture are sized to the age of students. In the case of shared desks, each pupil has enough space to do seatwork.					
18. Your classrooms layout and furniture allow pupils to interact and do group work.					
19. Your classrooms have a bulletin board or a corner that displays helpful learning materials such as posters, illustrations, newspaper and magazine clippings, and your owns works as students.					
20. Your classrooms facilities and premises are regularly maintained and kept clean.					
Goal 4: Effective Classroom Instruction					
Your teacher…					
21. use non- threatening styles or discipline.					
22. complies the policy against discrimination with regard to gender, cultural origin, social status, religious belief and others.					
23. makes use of positive feedback to encourage students learning.					
24. is sensitive to the individuality of the students when it comes to learning instruction.					
25. has the ability to integrate various discipline in the lesson.					
26. has the ability to comply with the require classroom hours.					
27. has the mastery of the subject matter he/she is teaching.					
28. has the competencies to teach highly specialized subjects like in TVL-Home Economics, Industrial Education, Cookery and the like.					
29. manages the classroom environment effectively using constructive criticism and positive reinforcement.					
30. is able to deliver the lesson well and good.					

DepEd Order No. 15, S. 2016 - Child Friendly School System Assessment Checklist, DepEd Order No 55. S 2013 -

School Anti- Bullying Policies, and DepEd Order No. 40, S. 2012 – Child Protection Policy

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SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ON CHILD-FRIENDLY CLASSROOM
Teachers' Version

Part 2: Rating Scale for Teachers
Dear Colleagues:

I would like to ask your cooperation and support by becoming one of the participants in this study, entitled "Creating a Child Friendly Zone: Correlates of Effective Classroom Environment to Enhance Senior High School (SHS) Students' School Achievement" by providing your honest appraisal of the given statement below:

Direction: Using the rating scale give your honest appraisal on the actions done by your teacher/s on a regular basis towards creating a child-friendly classroom. Put a check on the rating scale number that best corresponds your rating.

Rating Scale:

5 – Highly Evident/ Excellent
4 – Very Much Evident/ Very Satisfactory
3 – Evident/ Good
2 – A Little Bit Evident/ Satisfactory
1 – Not Evident/Poor

Indicators	1	2	3	4	5
Goal 1: Students-Teachers Positive Relationship					
As a teacher, I…					
1. am friendly and easy to be with.					
2. show genuine concern to students.					
3. provide harmonious relationships with other students.					
4. promote camaraderie and unity among and between students.					
5. use positive feedback and provide guidance to students.					
6. provide enough time to students when needed even outside the classroom premises.					
7. show honesty and sincerity in expression concern and sympathy to students.					
8. am always ready to provide a helping hands when needed by students.					
9. serve as their surrogate parents while inside the classroom.					
10. promote a cooperative working relationship between and among students.					
11. have the best interest of the students in mind in all its learning activities.					
12. treat all students equally, regardless of gender, social status, cultural origin or religious belief.					

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Goal 2: Availability of Learning Materials					
13. There is a 1: 1 ratio between no. of textbooks and students.					
14. The teachers are able to provide improvised learning materials.					
15. The school administrators provide enough learning materials to support effective classroom learning.					
16. The teachers have enough teaching materials to motivate students to learn better.					
17. There is enough learning materials to meet the holistic development of the students.					
Goal 3: Classroom Facilities (Guarantee Safe and Protective Spaces for Children)					
18. Your classrooms have proper ventilation and lighting had enough space for 45-50 students.					
19. Your classrooms desks and other furniture are sized to the age of students. In the case of shared desks, each pupil has enough space to do seatwork.					
20. Your classrooms layout and furniture allow pupils to interact and do group work.					
21. Your classrooms have a bulletin board or a corner that displays helpful learning materials such as posters, illustrations, newspaper and magazine clippings, and your owns works as students.					
22. Your classrooms facilities and premises are regularly maintained and kept clean.					
As a teacher, I…					
23. guaranty to maintain protective and safe classroom environment by reporting immediate reports to his/her principal in cases that classroom buildings, grounds, and facilities are not safe, clean, healthy, and in sufficient water and sanitary facilities.					
24. provide a caring and protective learning environment to the students.					
25. safeguard and provide security for students in cases of calamity and natural disasters.					
26. help defend and protect students from harm and abuse.					
27. encourage students to care for each other.					
28. have the ability to follow the clear guideline for conduct between students and does not allow bullying inside the classroom					
Goal 4: Promote Quality Learning					
As a teacher, I…					
29. use non- threatening styles or discipline.					

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30. encourage students to learn by doing and by doing good things with others.					
31. am physically fit, adequately paid, and highly motivated.					
32. am qualified to teach and continue to become better teachers					
33. comply with the policy against discrimination with regard to gender, cultural origin, social status, religious belief and others.					
34. employ teaching methods that are suited to the students' age, abilities, and ways of learning encourages children to think and decide for themselves, ask questions, and express their opinions					
35. make use of positive feedback to encourage students learning.					
36. am sensitive to the individuality of the students when it comes to learning instruction.					
37. have the ability to integrate various discipline in the lesson.					
38. have the ability to comply with the require classroom hours.					
39. have the mastery of the subject matter he/she is teaching.					
40. have the competencies to teach highly specialized subjects like in TVL-Home Economics, Industrial Education, Cookery and the like.					
41. manage the classroom environment effectively using constructive criticism and positive reinforcement.					
42. am able to deliver the lesson well and good.					
43. encourage students to express their feelings through the arts, music, drawing, drama, and other forms.					
44. consult parents and invites their opinions regarding school policies and activities.					
45. collaborate with parents to encourage their children to practice at home what they are learning in school.					

DepEd Order No. 15, S. 2016 - Child Friendly School System Assessment Checklist, DepEd Order No 55. S 2013 - School Anti- Bullying Policies, and DepEd Order No. 40, S. 2012 – Child Protection Policy

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS
Focus Group Discussion Sessions

Part 3: Interview Guide Questions for Students

<u>Direction:</u> The following questions will be asked to the target key informant during the FGD session with the researcher.

A. **What is a child-friendly classroom as perceived by the respondents?**
    1. How do you describe a child-friendly classroom?
    2. Do you think that your classroom is child-friendly, if "yes", or "no", why do you say so?
    3. Do you feel happy, protected, and secured while inside the classroom?
    4. Do you believe that your teachers are capable to provide you the quality of learning in terms of effective teaching strategies and learning materials?
    5. Why do you think a child-friendly classroom is important to you to become successful in your study?

B. **Why a child-friendly classroom is important to improve students' school achievement?**
    1. Do you think that your school is supportive of your learning development?
    2. Can you cite examples about the importance of a child-friendly zone that support you in your challenges of finishing your academic requirements?
    3. Do you believe that your teachers are doing their very best to provide quality education? Why do you say so? Cite some examples.
    4. In your own opinion, do you think a positive classroom learning is the most important contributor to help you become successful in your education?
    5. Do you think that your classroom and your classmates are factors that influenced you most to become a better student?

C. **What makes a classroom a child-friendly zone inside the school?**
    1. Do you think that your teachers have full compliance with the guidelines and policy needed to maintain healthy classroom environment?
    2. In one sentence or two, can you please describe your classroom? Is your classroom characterized by the so-called "child-friendly zone."?

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INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
Focus Group Discussion Sessions

Part 4: Interview Guide Questions for Teachers

Direction: The following questions will be asked to the target key informant during the FGD session with the researcher

A. **What is a child-friendly classroom as perceived by the respondents?**
1. Do you think your classroom promotes a "child-friendly zone."? Why do you say so?
2. What makes you believe that you can provide a healthy classroom environment to your students?
3. Are your school administrators supportive of your roles to provide quality learning to your students?
4. In your opinion, why do you think full compliance to the DepEd guidelines when it comes to promoting healthy classroom environment will ensure holistic development of the students?
5. Do you believe that by keeping yourself abreast with the changes, and improving your teaching competencies make you an advocate of a "child-friendly school environment"?

B. **Why a child-friendly classroom is important to improve students' school achievement?**
1. Do you believe that by keeping your classroom healthy and conducive to learning it will surely provide an enhance performance of your students? Why?
2. Are you in favor that healthy environment empowered student to become mature and independent learner in the classroom?
3. In your own opinion, what are the reasons why students are motivated to study in an environment where love and harmony is existing?
4. Do you believe that you can be an advocate of a child-friendly environment? Why?
5. Are you in favor that a child-friendly environment is the major contributing factor in the educational development of your students?

C. **What makes a classroom a child-friendly zone inside the school?**
1. Do you know what a child-friendly school is? Explain your answer.
2. What makes you think that a child friendly zone, where order of peace and protection fully observed would make the students feel happy and satisfied, thus promoting school achievement?

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