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Examining and Addressing Bullying in DepEd Dipolog Schools

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Abstract

Any severe or persistent use of written, verbal, or electronic expression, physical act or gesture, or any combination of these, directed at another student in such a way as to actually cause or induce in the latter a reasonable fear of bodily or emotional harm or damage to his property is referred to as bullying. It is reprehensible and should not be countenanced, especially in the school setting. The passage of the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 (RA 10627), as implemented in DepEd by DO 55, s. 2013, aims to protect the learners against these acts. The goal of this study is to determine if there is a significant difference in the number of bullying cases for School Year 2018-2019 in the schools that are situated in the rural barangays of Dipolog City and the schools that are located in the urban barangays thereof, and if there's a significant difference in the number of male and female learners that are being bullied. The hypotheses were examined by comparing the percentage of cases of bullying as reflected in the School Youth Formation Profile Form. Of the 47 elementary and secondary schools in the Schools Division of Dipolog City, 31 schools are located in the urban barangays of Dipolog City and 16 schools are in the rural barangays. Among the 31 schools in the urban barangays, seven (7) schools reported cases of bullying, and among the 16 schools in the rural barangays, four (4) reported cases of bullying. The study found no significant difference in the percentage of bullying cases in schools located in urban and rural barangays. Similarly, there is no significant difference in the number of bullying cases as to sex. Regardless, the researchers have recommended innovation, intervention, and strategies to combat school bullying.

Keywords: *Bullying; Rural Barangays; Urban Barangays*

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Context and Rationale

Bullying is defined as any severe or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the actual effect of causing or placing the latter in a reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or damage to his property; this is known as Republic Act (RA) No. 10627, or the Act Requiring All Elementary and Secondary Schools to Adopt Policies to Prevent and Address the Acts of Bullying in Their Institutions (Short title: "Anti-Bullying Act of 2013"). Bullying affects other students by making the school atmosphere unfriendly, violating their rights, and seriously and significantly interfering with their education or the smooth operation of the school.

In various studies, bullying happens everywhere in the world, even in nations with very different cultures. Girls are more likely to bully other girls indirectly and inadvertently. Boys will bully other boys as well as girls, and their bullying is typically straightforward. Bullying is more common among boys than it is among girls, and it frequently happens in groups.

Bullying is an act that is reprehensible and should not be countenanced, more so in the school setting. The Department of Education, through the Schools Division of Dipolog City, must take the necessary steps to adopt anti-bullying policies to prohibit acts of bullying and establish clear procedures and guidelines for reporting and responding promptly to and investigating reports of acts of bullying.

This research is conceptualized to determine if there is a significant difference in the number of bullying cases for School Year 2018-2019 in the schools that are situated in the rural barangays of Dipolog City and the schools that are situated in the urban barangays thereof, and if there's a significant difference in the number of male and female learners that are being bullied.

As stated in NEDA (National Economic Development Authority) Regional Development Plan, Dipolog City is a coastal component city and the provincial capital of the province of Zamboanga del Norte. The Philippine Standard Geographic Code (PSGC) lists 21 barangays in Dipolog City as of 31 March 2022. Six (6) barangays are classified as rural, while 15 are urban. Rural barangays include Cogon, Diwan, Lugdungan, San Jose, Sangkol, and Sinaman; while urban barangays are the following: Dicayas, Galas, Gulayon, Minaog, Olingan, Estaka (Pob.), Biasong (Pob.), Barra (Pob.), Central (Pob.), Miputak (Pob.), Punta, Sta. Filomena, Sicayab, Turno, and Sta. Isabel.

For School Year (SY) 2018-2019, the Schools Division of Dipolog City comprises 47 schools. 15 schools are in the rural barangays of Dipolog City, and 32 schools are in the urban barangays.

The result of this work will benefit the following:

The Program Implementers of the Schools Division of Dipolog City. Consistent with Section 3(h), Paragraph 3 of RA No. 10627, which provides that the Department of Education (DepEd) must incorporate into its training courses, programs, and other initiatives that give school administrators, teachers, and other staff members a chance to advance their knowledge and abilities in stopping bullying and handling its effects. The results of this research may help determine which geographical areas within the purview of the Division to focus on preventing bullying or responding to any incident thereon.

The Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Person of the Schools Division of Dipolog City. This research will determine whether victims of bullying in the schools are males or females, which may be helpful in the GAD Focal Person in crafting programs and policies relative to such issues.

School Heads in the Schools Division of Dipolog City. This research will determine whether instances of bullying occur more in schools located in the urban or rural barangays of Dipolog City. Guidelines for implementing and supervising policies will be provided to the school principal or any other individual with similar responsibilities in such institutions and appropriate actions meant to combat bullying.

Law Enforcement Agencies. Law enforcement agencies shall be notified if the principal of the school thinks that criminal charges could be pursued against perpetrators of bullying; hence, this research will apprise them whether to take intensive actions in the urban or rural barangays and for male or female learners.

Innovation, Intervention, and Strategy

Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases. The researchers, in coordination with the Research Unit of the Planning and Research Section, have included in the PPMP-SEF (Project Procurement Management Plan-Special Education Fund) a budget/amount of Php 143,925 for the production and printing of a Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases of which this research and all child protection (anti-bullying) research will be the source material.

There is as yet no exhaustive and comprehensive guidebook of such nature in DepEd Dipolog, and this will be a very good reference material.

Information Dissemination: User-friendly leaflets. Official issuance of the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Act in the Department of Education is through DO 55, s. 2013 thru the DepEd website, deped.gov.ph. However, access to this information is not that widespread and known even among teachers, much less so to the other stockholders: parents, and most especially students.

To fill in the gap, the researchers feel it necessary to amp up the information dissemination in the form of making user-friendly leaflets as an innovation, intervention, and strategy. This material has been partially distributed and is to be continuously distributed to DepEd stakeholders in various activities.

Action Research Questions

This study aimed to compare the number of bullying cases in schools that are located in the urban and rural barangays of Dipolog City, and the number of male and female learners in the Schools Division of Dipolog City that are being bullied. In this study, the researcher intended to answer the following questions:

1. What is the prevalence of bullying cases in the following schools:
 - 1.1. Those located in the urban barangays of Dipolog City; and
 - 1.2. Those located in the rural barangays of Dipolog City?
2. What is the prevalence of bullying cases between the following:
 - 2.1. Male learners; and
 - 2.2. Female learners?
3. Is there a significant difference between the number of bullying cases in schools that are located in the urban barangays of Dipolog City and those that are located in the rural barangays thereof?
4. Is there a significant difference between the number of male learners that are being bullied as compared to their female counterparts?
5. What innovation/s, intervention/s, and/or strategies can be introduced to address the cases of bullying in DepEd Dipolog schools.

Null Hypotheses. The researcher who sought to compare the number of bullying cases in urban and rural schools in the Schools Division of Dipolog City made the following assumptions:

1. There is no significant difference in the number of bullying cases in schools that are located in the urban barangays of Dipolog City and in schools that are located in the rural barangays thereof; and
2. There is no significant difference in the number of male learners that are being bullied as compared to their female counterparts.

Action Research Methods

Research Design

Descriptive-comparative research design involves comparing different groups or variables to identify patterns, differences, or relationships. This design would be particularly suitable in the study aimed at comparing the number of bullying cases in urban and rural barangays of Dipolog City, as well as the number of male and female learners being bullied in the Schools Division of Dipolog City.

The researchers collected data on the number of reported bullying cases from schools located in urban and rural barangays of Dipolog City. This data would provide a baseline understanding of the prevalence of bullying in each setting. The researchers analyzed the data to compare the number of bullying cases between urban and rural schools. Additionally, the researchers collected data on the number of male and female learners being bullied in the Schools Division of Dipolog City. This data would allow for a comparison of bullying rates between genders.

Participants and Other Sources of Data Information

The researchers considered the number of bullying cases for School Year 2018-2019 as reflected in the School Youth Formation Profile Form School Year 2019-2020. Of the 47 elementary and secondary schools in the Schools Division of Dipolog City, seven (7) schools that are in the urban barangays and four (4) schools that are in the rural barangays reported cases of bullying, where the victims therein comprise of 35 males and 19 females.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers data-mined the number of bullying cases for School Year 2018-2019 from the Youth Formation Section. The number of bullying cases was then determined if they were occurring in schools in the urban or rural barangays of Dipolog City based on the classification by the Philippine Statistics Authority and whether the ones being bullied were male or female learners.

The following presents the barangays in the City of Dipolog as shown in the Philippine Standard Geographic Code of the Philippine Statistics Authority. As of December 21, 2022, there are 21 barangays in the City of Dipolog, 15 classified as urban, and six (6) rural.

	Barangay	Urban/Rural
1	Barra	Urban
2	Biasong	Urban
3	Central	Urban
4	Cogon	Rural
5	Dicayas	Urban
6	Diwan	Rural
7	Estaka	Urban

8	Galas	Urban
9	Gulayon	Urban
10	Lugdungan	Rural
11	Minaog	Urban
12	Miputak	Urban
13	Olingan	Urban
14	Punta	Urban
15	San Jose	Rural
16	Sangkol	Rural
17	Sicayab	Urban
18	Sinaman	Rural
19	Sta. Isabel	Urban
20	Sta. Filomena	Urban
21	Turno	Urban

Ethical Issues. The researchers made sure that the information gathered from the office concerned was used solely for the conduct of the study.

Data Analysis

The frequency and percentage distribution table were used to determine the profile of the victims of bullying.

Mann-Whitney U-Test was used to test the difference in the number of cases of bullying in schools when grouped as to the location of the school, whether in the urban or rural barangay of Dipolog City and when the number of victims of bullying is grouped according to sex.

Results and Discussion

The tables below present the details of the data which were gathered and interpreted to provide answers to the research questions.

The Profile of Subjects. Table 1 depicts the subjects' frequency and percentage in the urban barangays of Dipolog City. Of the 31 schools located in the urban barangays, seven (7) schools reported cases of bullying for SY 2018-2019. These are AQUMATSHS with 1.67% of bullying case, Barra ES with 0.42%, Galas NHS with 0.16%, Sicayab ES with 1.30%, Sicayab NHS with 0.59%, St. John ES with 0.31%, and ZNNHS with 0.12% of bullying case.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Bullying Cases in Schools Located in the Urban Barangays of Dipolog City.

	School	Barangay	Male	Female	Total	Total Population	%
1	Alberto Q. Ubay Memorial Agro-Tech Science High School (AQUMATSHS)	Olingan	4	4	8	481	1.67%
2	Barra Elementary School	Barra	1	1	2	483	0.42%
3	Biasong Elementary School	Biasong	0	0	0	151	0
4	Dicayas Elementary School	Dicayas	0	0	0	171	0
5	Dipolog City National High School	Barra	0	0	0	1,273	0
6	Dipolog Pilot Demonstration School	Central	0	0	0	2,070	0
7	Estaka Central School	Estaka	0	0	0	1,991	0
8	Galas Elementary School	Galas	0	0	0	2,016	0
9	Galas National High School	Galas	3	1	4	2,486	0.16%
10	Gulayon Integrated School	Gulayon	0	0	0	1,113	0

11	Laoy Olingan Elementary School	Olingan	0	0	0	379	0
12	Magsaysay Elementary School	Sta. Filomena	0	0	0	247	0
13	Minaog Elementary School	Minaog	0	0	0	429	0
14	Miputak East Central School	Miputak	0	0	0	1,147	0
15	Miputak National High School	Miputak	0	0	0	804	0
16	Olingan Elementary School	Olingan	0	0	0	304	0
17	Olingan South Elementary School	Olingan	0	0	0	384	0
18	Punta Central School	Punta	0	0	0	530	0
19	Punta National High School	Punta	0	0	0	1,700	0
20	Sicayab Elementary School	Sicayab	9	3	12	926	1.30%
21	Sicayab National High School	Sicayab	4	2	6	1,009	0.59%
22	Special Education Center	Central	0	0	0	237	0
23	St. John Elementary School	Dicayas	0	1	1	319	0.31%
24	Sta. Filomena Integrated School	Sta. Filomena	0	0	0	944	0
25	Sta. Cruz Elementary School	Olingan	0	0	0	656	0
26	Sta. Isabel Elementary School	Sta. Isabel	0	0	0	481	0
27	Sto. Niño Elementary School	Minaog	0	0	0	156	0
28	Tubod Integrated School	Galas	0	0	0	458	0
29	Turno Elementary School	Turno	0	0	0	771	0
30	Upper Dicayas Integrated School	Dicayas	0	0	0	481	0
31	Zamboanga del Norte National High School (ZNNHS)	Estaka	4	3	7	5,937	0.12%

Table 2 shows the subjects' frequency and percentage in the rural barangays of Dipolog City. Of the 16 schools located in the rural barangays, four (4) schools reported cases of bullying for SY 2018-2019. These schools are Cogon ES with 0.89% of bullying cases, Guinsangaan ES with 2.27%, Pamansalan ES with 0.75%, and Pamansalan ETHS with 2.75% of bullying cases.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Bullying Cases in Schools Located in the Rural Barangays of Dipolog City

	School	Barangay	Male	Female	Total	Total Population	%
1	Cayasan Elementary School	Diwan	0	0	0	102	0
2	Cogon Elementary School	Cogon	1	2	3	338	0.89%
3	Cogon National High School	Cogon	0	0	0	809	0
4	Diwan Elementary School	Diwan	0	0	0	153	0
5	Guinsangaan Elementary School	Diwan	2	0	2	88	2.27%
6	Kepiyanan Elementary School	Diwan	0	0	0	10	0
7	Linabo Elementary School	Lugdungan	0	0	0	53	0
8	Linay Elementary School	Diwan	0	0	0	25	0
9	Lugdungan Elementary School	Lugdungan	0	0	0	202	0
10	Pamansalan Elementary School	Diwan	1	0	1	134	0.75%
11	Pamansalan Eco-Tech High School	Diwan	6	2	8	291	2.75%
12	San Jose Elementary School	San Jose	0	0	0	114	0
13	San Alfonso Elementary School	Sangkol	0	0	0	120	0
14	Sangkol Elementary School	Sangkol	0	0	0	247	0
15	Sinaman Integrated School	Sinaman	0	0	0	437	0
16	Virginia Elementary School	Diwan	0	0	0	65	0

Mean and Standard Deviation of Variables

Table 3 presents the Mean and Standard Deviation of cases of bullying in urban barangays for male and female learners. For male learners, the mean is 0.806452, and the standard deviation is 1.957934; meanwhile, for female learners, the mean is 0.483871, and the standard deviation is 1.043288.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Cases of Bullying in Urban Barangays

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	0.806452	1.957934
Female	0.483871	1.043288

Table 4 presents the Mean and Standard Deviation of cases of bullying in rural barangays for male and female learners. For male learners, the mean is 0.62500, and the standard deviation is 1.49478259; meanwhile, for female learners, the mean is 0.25000, and the standard deviation is 0.66143783.

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Cases of Bullying in Rural Barangays

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	0.62500	1.49478259
Female	0.25000	0.66143783

Table 5 presents the difference in the percentage of bullying cases in schools that are located in urban and rural barangays. The table indicates the variables, Z-Value, P-Value, Interpretation, and Decision on H_0 .

Table 5: The Difference in the Percentage of Bullying Cases in Schools that are Located in the Urban and Rural Barangays

Variables	Z-Value	P-Value	Interpretation	Decision on H_0
Difference in the Percentage of Bullying Cases in Schools that are Located in the Urban and Rural Barangays	-1.45999	0.1443	Not Significant	Do Not Reject

The Z-value for the difference in the percentage of bullying cases in schools as to location produced a P-value of 0.1443, greater than the 0.05 significance level. This means that there is no significant difference in the percentage of bullying cases in schools located in urban and rural barangays.

The result was consistent with the study of McCaskill (2013, 1), that there was no significant difference in the prevalence of bullying at urban and rural schools, but inconsistent with the study of Cabrera, Larrañaga, and Yubero (2022, 1-15), which showed that bullying perpetration is more frequent in schools in urban areas.

Table 6: The Percentage of Bullying Cases in Schools as to Sex

Variables	Z-Value	P-Value	Interpretation	Decision on H_0
Difference in the Percentage of Bullying Cases Between Male and Female Learners	1.43626	0.14986	Not Significant	Do Not Reject

Table 6 presents the difference in the percentage of bullying cases in schools between male and female learners. The table denotes the variables, Z-Value, P-Value, Interpretation, and Decision on H_0 .

The Z-Value for the difference in the percentage of bullying cases in schools as to sex produced a P-Value of 0.14986, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there is no significant difference in the percentage of bullying cases in schools as to sex.

The result was consistent with the study of Crapanzano et al. (2011, 677), that bullying occurred to be very similar in boys and girls but inconsistent with the study of Pereira et al. (2004, 241), which revealed that an increased risk was found for males.

There is no significant difference in the number of bullying cases in schools that are located in the urban and rural barangays of Dipolog City. Similarly, there is no significant difference in the number of male and female learners who are being bullied in the Schools Division of Dipolog City. It can be supposed that bullying can occur anywhere, regardless of barangay classification, so bullying can occur to both sexes.

Conclusion and Recommendations

There is no significant difference in the number of bullying cases in schools that are located in the urban and rural barangays of Dipolog City. Similarly, there is no significant difference in the number of male and female learners who are being bullied in the Schools Division of Dipolog City. It can be supposed that bullying can occur anywhere, regardless of barangay classification, so that bullying can occur to both sexes.

The researchers, based on the results, recommend the following:

1. Conduct a yearly study and come up with data on the prevalence of bullying in urban and rural schools and between males and females.
2. Check the cases of bullying in schools that reported such cases and implement appropriate action.
3. Produce and publish a Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases.
4. Vigorously disseminate the leaflets on the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013/DO 55, s. 2013.

Action Plan

The research results will be disseminated to the teaching and non-teaching personnel of the Schools Division of Dipolog City, mainly the concerned focal persons and school heads during convocations and conferences. Electronic means, such as, but not limited to, group chats, shall also be utilized to publicize the results. These primary avenues shall be employed to convey reflections on the research results and recommend future actions beneficial to the personnel of the Schools Division of Dipolog City. The present study ensures that these findings will be used for decision-making and policy formulation in the Schools Division of Dipolog City.

Activity	Objectives	Strategies	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Resources	Success Indicator
Information Dissemination: User-friendly pamphlets						
Information Dissemination	To inform and disseminate the results of the action research to the school administrators and teachers in all grade levels.	Inform the school administrators and teachers with regard to the results of the action research during various activities.	Researcher Administrators Teachers	May-December. 2023	Completed AR Leaflets	Distribution of pamphlets in schools and in various activities
Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases						
Production and publication of <i>Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases</i>	To produce a <i>Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases</i> , and ultimately to make it available to school principals and child protection committees in all DepEd Dipolog schools	Allocate a budget in the SEF (Special Education Fund)-Research	SEPS-Research Schools Division Superintendent	Jan-December 2023	SEF Budget	Signed and Approved SEF-Research PPMP for Printing and Publication
		Collate all child protection researches and draft <i>Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases</i>	Researchers	November-December 2023		Collation of all child protection research and draft of <i>Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases</i>
		<i>Print Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases</i>	SEPS-Planning and Research	December 2023-January 2024		Printed copy of <i>Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases</i>
		Publish a copy of <i>Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases</i>	Researchers SEPS-Planning and Research	February 2024		Published and distributed copies of <i>Guidebook on Handling Bullying Cases</i>

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