



**Toward a Child-Friendly Education Environment
A Baseline Study on Violence Against Children in Public Schools**

Plan Philippines – February 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	3
I. Introduction.....	5
A. Background Of The Study.....	5
B. Research Description.....	7
II. Review Of Related Literature.....	10
III. Research Methodology.....	23
A. Data Gathering Technique.....	23
B. Research Process.....	23
C. Profile Of The Research Participants.....	25
IV. Findings Of The Study.....	26
A. Violence Against Children -- Definitions And Perceptions From Children And From Adults.....	26
B. Forms Of Violence Experienced By Children In School.....	27
C. Vac In Schools And People Involved.....	37
D. Violence As Part Of Discipline.....	41
E. Violence Against Children In Other Settings.....	45
F. Effects Of Violence On Children.....	47
G. Factors Behind Violence Against Children In School.....	48
H. Institutional Interventions Addressing Vac In School.....	50
I. Respondents' Recommendations.....	51
VI. Synthesis.....	54
A. Violence As An Everyday Experience.....	54
B. Violence As A Function Of Power.....	54
C. Perceptions On Discipline And Violence.....	55
D. The Role Of Adults.....	56
E. Child Participation.....	57
F. Policy And Program Implications – Recommendations For Further Action.....	57
References.....	59
Appendices.....	63

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLAN Philippines commissioned the Philippine School of Social Work (PSSW) of the Philippine Women's University to undertake a study on violence against children (VAC) in public schools in areas covered by PLAN programs.

The study aims to contribute to the growing literature on VAC in schools in the country by exploring its dimensions and mapping out in broad strokes its definition from the points of view of children and of adult stakeholders.

Specifically, the objectives are as follows:

- (a) To describe the issue of VAC in schools from the points of view of children, parents, the school management and its personnel (teaching or non-teaching) in the selected research sites.
- (b) To identify factors that support or deter violence against children in schools in the selected research sites.
- (c) To recommend policy and program interventions to address VAC in schools, towards making schools more child-friendly.

A total of 2,442 children from 58 public schools in Masbate, Northern Samar and the Camotes Islands in Cebu participated in the study. Additionally, adult stakeholders such as parents and other community representatives, school personnel and guidance counselors were also involved.

Key findings were as follows:

- 1. At least 5 out of 10 children in Grades 1-3, 7 out of 10 in Grades 4-6, and 6 out of 10 in high school have experienced some kind of violence in school.**
- 2. Verbal abuse is the most prevalent form of violence experienced by children in all school levels. This includes being ridiculed and teased, being shouted at and being cursed or spoken to with harsh words.**
- 3. Children's peers, more than the adults, are the perpetrators of violence in schools.**
- 4. Male children are more likely to experience physical violence than female children.**
- 5. Physical and verbal forms of violence are accepted by the children as part of discipline and seen as appropriate when inflicted within certain parameters.**
- 6. Children generally prefer a more positive form of discipline such as being talked to and corrected or guided/counseled in response to offenses or violations made in school.**

7. Experiences of violence usually result in low self-esteem, fear, anger and helplessness among children.
8. Family background and personal circumstances, influence of peers and media, lack of awareness about children's rights, fear, inability of authority figures to respond to cases, and lack of policies are some of the factors cited as contributing to incidences of violence in schools.
9. Children and adults recommend awareness raising and capacity building activities for parents, teachers and children, clear policies, and collaborative measures that involve all stakeholders including community leaders as measures to address VAC in schools.

Given the above the research puts forward the following recommendations:

1. Advocate for stronger involvement of the Department of Education in developing and standardizing child protection policies and mechanisms for schools must be facilitated.
2. Concretize the collaboration of different stakeholders for the protection of children by establishing clear, functioning mechanisms for VAC case reporting and processing as well as for school monitoring.
3. Provide adequate information to local government officials, other community leaders, school officials, teachers, parents and children on relevant laws relating to child abuse and child protection. Capacity building must also be provided across the different stakeholder groups, so that they could facilitate the processing of VAC cases and ensure justice for children.
4. Enact local legislation at the barangay and the municipal levels, which would further help protect children from possible abuses and various forms of violence.
5. Step up and concretize programs promoting children's rights in schools and in the communities through campaigns addressing specific forms of violence against children in schools.
6. Promote alternatives to corporal punishment by documenting and disseminating cases demonstrating the merits of positive approaches to discipline, and facilitating discussions with both adults and children in the schools and the broader communities.
7. Undertake more in-depth studies on VAC in schools.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The United Nations World Report on Violence Against Children (2006) is a landmark document in the advocacy for children's human rights. Specifically, it discussed VAC in the settings where children are most at risk: in the home and family, in schools, in workplaces, in care and justice institutions, and in communities. Specific to violence in education settings, the Report identified the occurrence of physical and psychological punishment; gender-based violence and discrimination; bullying, fighting, physical assault and gangs; homicide and serious physical injury; and weapons in school as violations of children's human rights, regardless of the number of cases or frequency these were experienced by children in schools.

The UN World Report forwarded its core message that “No violence against children is *justifiable*. All violence against children is *preventable*” (italics supplied). The Report also recommended creating information systems, including establishing baseline data, on VAC in schools. This recommendation is particularly significant in the light of the dearth of data on such in the country.¹ These data would be critical in developing policies and programs to address violence in schools systematically.

The past two decades saw gains in increasing awareness and building knowledge about violence against children in this country. A total of 21 national legislations were passed relating to protection of children's rights and welfare during this period. Most of these pertain to child abuse in general, with two of these enacted legislations citing specific forms of violence against children in schools. The Anti-Sexual Harassment Law (1996) penalizes various forms of sexual violence specifically in the work place including the educational environment, while the Anti-Hazing Law (1995) addresses the violent initiation rites of school-based fraternities, sororities and similar organizations.

Indeed, the school is one setting where violence against children occurs. The extent and magnitude however are largely unknown. There are many non-government organizations assisting children who are victims of violence and abuses but the systematic collation of data is weak. Available data at national level is usually limited only to reported cases from the Legal Department of the Department of Education, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the PGH Child Protection Unit, and the Philippine National Police.

¹ This data gap was recognized by the Philippine Government in its Response to the UN VAC Study Questionnaire.

The Third and Fourth Periodic Report of the Philippine Government to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2007) mentioned the following statistics:

- An estimated 500 to 800 cases of child abuse were committed by teachers each year according to the Child Adolescent Psychiatrists of the Philippines Inc. (CAPPI). In 2006, a CAPPI survey also revealed that 50 per cent of the perpetrators of child abuse in schools were teachers, while a small number involved janitors, bus drivers, and other school personnel.
- The UP-Philippine General Hospital (UP-PGH) Child Protection Unit documentation likewise identified teachers as perpetrators in five per cent of physical abuse and three percent of the sexual abuse cases it handled.

These numbers represent only a small fraction of the actual cases of violence against children in schools. It has been recognized that many more cases remain unreported due to lack of awareness on child rights in the community, lack of access to reporting and referral systems, or simply, due to fear.

The Department of Education regulatory policies at the level of professional organizations deem inflicting violence against children in schools as unethical among teachers.

A teacher shall not inflict *corporal punishment* on offending learner nor make deductions from their scholastic rating as a punishment for acts which are clearly not manifestations of poor scholarship (Article VIII, Section 2, The Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers 1998) (italics supplied)

Further the more recent DepEd Service Manual (2000) prohibits corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure (Unit IV, Chapter 3 on School Discipline):

- 1.1.1. School officials and teachers shall have the right to impose appropriate and reasonable disciplinary measures in case of minor offenses or infractions of good discipline. However no cruel physically harmful punishment shall be imposed or applied against any pupil or student.

The Manual further defines and describes corporal punishment and stipulates penalty for violations, as follows:

Suspension / Expulsion – The use of corporal punishment by teachers (slapping, jerking or pushing pupils / students about), imposing manual work or degrading tasks as penalty, meting out cruel or unusual punishments of any nature, holding up a pupil / student to unnecessary ridicules, the use of epithets and expressions intending to destroy the pupils / student's self-respect and the permanent confiscation of personal property of pupils.

Civil society groups engaged in building the capacities of schools to address child abuse also surfaced cases of violence done to children in schools. For instance, the Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse (CPTCSA) reported 45 cases of sexual and physical violence from 1997 to 1998 in the schools where they were piloting a Personal Safety Curriculum. Six of these were sexual violence cases involving a teacher: five of the victims were male students aged 10-13 years old, while the female victim was 16 years old.²

² Yacat and Ong 2001; see also UP PST CIDS and Save the Children UK 2003.

Researches on child discipline in the school setting give more insights on the context of violence against children in schools. Noteworthy in this regard are studies on corporal punishment in families and schools undertaken by Save the Children-Sweden in the Asia-Pacific region³, and the study done by PLAN Philippines⁴ that looked into the children's and adults' concepts of child discipline vis-à-vis child abuse.

Both studies revealed community acceptance of corporal punishment and harsh reprimands as part of discipline, and such acceptance was identified as a sustaining factor for violence against children in schools.

In November 2007, PLAN Philippines commissioned the Philippine School of Social Work (PSSW) of the Philippine Women's University to undertake a study on violence against children (VAC) in public schools in areas covered by PLAN programs. Entitled, "Toward a Child-Friendly Education Environment: A Baseline Study on Violence Against Children in Public Schools", the research is in line with PLAN's global campaign on *Learn Without Fear*. This campaign envisions "a world where children can go to a school in safety and expect quality learning experience without fear of threats of violence."

B. Research Description

1. Research Problem and Objectives

This research on violence against children in public schools does not only relate to the PLAN global campaign on Learn Without Fear, but also serves as a follow-through undertaking to the United Nations *World Report on Violence Against Children* at the national level. The study aims to contribute to the growing literature on VAC in schools in the country by exploring its dimensions and mapping out in broad strokes its definition from the points of view of children and of adult stakeholders.

Specifically, the objectives are as follows:

- (d) To describe the issue of VAC in schools from the points of view of children, parents, the school management and its personnel (teaching or non-teaching) in the selected research sites.
- (e) To identify factors that support or deter violence against children in schools in the selected research sites.
- (f) To recommend policy and program interventions to address VAC in schools, towards making schools more child-friendly.

³ Save the Children Sweden (2006). Results of Comparative Research on the Physical and Emotional Punishment of Children in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

⁴ Plan, 2006. Understanding Child Discipline and Child Abuse in the Filipino Context: Comparing Perspectives of Parents, Children, Professionals and Community Leaders.

There are six questions that the study seeks to answer:

1. What specific acts of teachers, other students, and non-teaching personnel and adult stakeholders consider as violence against children or abusive to children?
2. What are the considerations when categorizing or labeling a certain act as violent or abusive?
3. What are the effects of violence and abuse to children who experience them?
4. What factors hinder or sustain incidents of violence and abuse against children in schools?
5. To what extent does the available system of action in school respond to and prevent violence against children?
6. In what aspects can the school environment be improved towards protecting children and making them safer in schools?

2. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The research confines itself to the following parameters

- *Geographical scope:* PLAN National Office identified the research sites for this study: Masbate, Northern Samar and the Camotes Islands in Cebu.
- *Public schools:* Only public schools were included in the sampling. A total of 58 schools participated in the study. Ten elementary and ten secondary schools were randomly identified each from Masbate and Camotes Islands. In Northern Samar, ten elementary schools and eight secondary schools were randomly selected; two of the eight secondary schools were not covered by PLAN.
- *Children:* School children below 18 years old were identified to participate in the study. They were broadly grouped by grade levels i.e., Grades 1-3, Grades 4-6 and high school. A total of 2,442 children participated in the surveys. 102 participants to focus group discussions (FGDs) and 332 interview respondents were identified from this pool of children.

It should also be noted that the study followed the age norms for each of these grade levels. As such, respondents from Grades 1-3 were aged 6-10 years old; Grades 4-6 included only children aged 9-13 years old; and high school student-participants were limited to those in the 12-17 year-old age range.⁵

⁵ See also the Research Protocol for other details regarding selection of participants; the profile of research participants is also available on page 12 of this report.

- *Adult participants:* In each of the provinces, three FGDs were convened with adult stakeholders, with the following participant totals: a) 29 parents and other community representatives; b) 71 school personnel; and c) 11 guidance counselors. Interviews were conducted with 20 school heads (principals or officers-in-charge) and 11 guidance counselors. Guidance counselor in this study meant either the guidance counselor (with plantilla item) or the teacher-cum-guidance counselor.

- *Documentation of the interviews and FGDs.* The research sites entailed data gathering that depended a great deal on the field researchers' knowledge of the local dialect. Interviews were done in the dialect, but all documentation was done in English. As for the survey forms, responses from the children were mostly written in Pilipino rather than in their dialect.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Violence Against Children Defined

Violence against children (VAC) is not a new concept, however new the term may be in the country which is more familiar with “child abuse”. Indeed these two terms have been used interchangeably in most Philippine literature which shows no clear distinctions between them. Essentially, definitions of both highlighted the forms of violence can take (physical, psychological, sexual), the manner it was experienced (direct or indirect, threatened or actual) and its effects (physical and emotional).

Violence against children, however, is more comprehensive defined as any act that violates children’s rights, particularly their right to physical and mental health, security and bodily integrity. The World Report on Violence Against Children⁶ expounded on violence as a reality in many children’s lives. Although no specific definition was forwarded by the Report, it considered key international and regional human rights standards and non-binding instruments in articulating State obligations to protect children against “all forms of physical, mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment and exploitation,... including sexual abuse...” (CRC, Article 19). These included the:

- Universal Declaration on Human Rights
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Convention on Civil and Political Rights
- Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- International Criminal, Humanitarian, Refugee and Labor Laws

Furthermore, it also forwarded that violence occurs in various settings where children are found, and where discrimination on the basis of gender, social status and ethnicity, among others, exist.

With regard to violence schools, the World Report defined the following forms of violence as experienced by children worldwide:⁷

- *Physical and psychological punishment* (e.g. corporal punishment) Any act in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. The Report also includes non-physical forms of cruel and degrading punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens or scares, or ridicules children as violence.

⁶ Pinheiro (2006: 31-39)

⁷ Pinheiro (2006: 116-128)

- *Discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence.* Gender-based violence stems from gender inequality, stereotypes and socially imposed roles. Sexual harassment, which often targets girls, may be motivated by the desire to punish or humiliate because of their sex and sexuality, or by sexual interest and bravado, to intimidate, humiliate and diminish girls
- *Bullying.* This is distinguished from other forms of violence because it represent a patter of behavior rather than an isolated event
- *Fighting, physical assault and gangs.* Fighting generally involves conflict involving two or more people where it is not easy to make distinctions between perpetrators and victims. Physical assault as in the case of an attack by one person on another driven by inflamed feelings of anger or jealousy. Gangs are more distinguished from the usual peers groups because of formal structures and rituals
- *Homicide and Weapons in school*

B. Violence and Gender

The Global Report on VAC also noted in some countries that there are implicit and explicit policies in schools on corporal punishments related to gender. Boys can be beaten on buttocks while girls can be beaten on the backs of their calves and palms of their hands. Boys may be punished for their failure to perform in an athletic feat and girls may be punished for rowdy and unladylike behavior. In the said report, boys experience more physical punishments than girls, while girls experience more sexual abuse than boys. In religious schools however, the victims of sexual abuse are mostly boys.

A similar trend was noted in the Save the Children study on corporal punishment in South Asia. (2002, as cited in Save the Children Sweden 2006b) While boys are more hit as a punishment than girls, girls experience verbal abuse (which is closely associated with emotional abuse) than boys. Increasing their chores is another common punishment for girls.

Campbell (cited in Hatty, 2000) argues that there are gender differences how men and women view aggression and violence. Men view aggressive or violent acts as a means to assert or maintain control over others. Men's violent acts are attempts to affirm a positive self-concept, enhance self-esteem or reclaim interpersonal power. Women, on the other hand, view aggressive or violent acts as a failure of self-control, an expression of overwhelming anger and frustration which often lead to guilt and self-recrimination. Similarly, it was noted that more female children than male children tend to justify their experience of corporal punishment (Save the Children 2006b) by saying it "changed them for the better" or that "they deserved it", although they were also more likely to complain that the punishment was "unfair, unjust or plain stupid". Boys on the other hand react to punishment with feelings of anger.

C. Philippine Definition of Violence Against Children

In the Philippines, children's human rights are recognized and protected by law. The enactment in 1991 of Republic Act 7610, or more commonly known as the Anti-Child Abuse Law, laid down the basic definitions of what constitutes abuse of children as well as penalties for such. The law mandates for children to be protected from "all forms of abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation and discrimination and other conditions prejudicial to their development" (Sec.2). Section 3b of RA 7610 defines child abuse as "the maltreatment, whether habitual or not, of the child which includes any of the following:

- 1) psychological and physical abuse, neglect, cruelty, sexual abuse and emotional maltreatment;
- 2) any act by deeds or words which debases, degrades or demeans the intrinsic worth and dignity of a child as human being;
- 3) unreasonable deprivation of his basic needs for survival, such as food and shelter; or
- 4) failure to immediately give medical treatment to an injured child resulting in serious impairment of his growth and development or in his permanent incapacity or death."

Legal definition included not only acts of commission and omission which harm the child, but also situations that are perceived to harm the child. Sexual abuse was further specified to include as well child prostitution and trafficking.

Through the years, other laws and policies were also forwarded to protect children from abuse or violence. There are now laws against child trafficking,⁸ engaging children in hazardous work,⁹ and incarceration in jails and prisons of juvenile offenders,¹⁰ among others. Crimes involving child victims were also more harshly penalized such as in the anti-rape law.¹¹

Specific to VAC in schools, sexual harassment¹² and hazing¹³ in educational settings are also penalized. Corporal punishment in schools is also prohibited in professional regulatory policies and guidelines from the Department of Education. The Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers (1998) explicitly states that:

⁸Republic Act 9208, or An Act to Institute Policies to Eliminate Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, Establishing the Necessary Institutional Mechanisms for the Protection and Support of Trafficked Persons, Providing Penalties for its Violation and for Other Purposes

⁹ Republic Act 9231 or An Act Providing for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Affording Stronger Protection for the Working Child, Amending for this Purpose Republic Act no. 7610, as Amended, Otherwise Known as the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act

¹⁰ Republic Act 9344 or An Act Establishing a Comprehensive Juvenile Justice and Welfare System, Creating the Juvenile Justice Council under the Department of Justice, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes

¹¹ Republic Act 8353 or An Act Expanding the Definition of the Crime of Rape, Reclassifying the same as a Crime Against Persons, Amending for this Purpose Act No. 3815, as Amended, Otherwise Known as the Revised Penal Code, and for Other Purposes

¹² Republic Act 7877, or An Act Declaring Sexual Harassment Unlawful in the Employment, Education or Training Environment and for Other Purposes

¹³ Republic Act 8049 or An Act Regulating Hazing and Other Forms of Initiation Rites in Fraternities, Sororities and Other Organizations and Providing Penalties Therefor

A teacher shall not inflict *corporal punishment* on offending learner nor make deductions from their scholastic rating as a punishment for acts which are clearly not manifestations of poor scholarship (Article VIII, Section 2) (italics supplied)

Still on corporal punishment, the Department of Education policy also prohibits this as a disciplinary measure¹⁴

- 1.1.2. School officials and teachers shall have the right to impose appropriate and reasonable disciplinary measures in case of minor offenses or infractions of good discipline. However no cruel physically harmful punishment shall be imposed or applied against any pupil or student.
- 1.1.3. Suspension / Expulsion – The use of corporal punishment by teachers (slapping, jerking or pushing pupils / students about), imposing manual work or degrading tasks as penalty, meting out cruel or unusual punishments of any natural, holding up a pupil / student to unnecessary ridicules the use of epithets and expressions intending to destroy the pupils / student's self-respect and the permanent confiscation of personal property of pupils / students are forbidden.

It is notable that the range of acts specified by the DepEd as corporal punishment approximates the categories of corporal punishment forwarded by Save the Children-Sweden namely, physical punishment, verbal attacks and humiliation

Table 2-1: Regional Categories of Punishment According to Children¹⁵

Category	This includes
<i>1. Physical punishment</i>	
Direct Assault (hitting)	in the form of blows to any part of a children's body, such as beating, hitting, slapping or lashing with or without the use of an instrument such as a cane, stick or belt
Other Direct Assault	on the child's body such as pinching, pulling ears or hair, twisting joints, cutting or shaving hair, cutting or piercing skin, carrying or dragging children against her or his will
Indirect Assault	on the child's body through using adult power, authority or threats to force a child to perform physically painful or damaging tasks such as holding a weight or weights for an extended period, kneeling on stones, standing or sitting in a contorted position
Deliberate neglect	of a child's physical needs, where this is intended as punishment
Use of external substances	such as burning or freezing materials, water, smoke (including from smoldering peppers), excrement or urine, to inflict pain, fear, disgust or loss of dignity
Use of hazardous tasks	task as punishment or for the purpose of discipline, including those that are beyond a child's strength or bring him or her into contact with dangerous or unhygienic substances; such tasks include sweeping or digging in the hot sun, using bleach or insecticides, unprotected cleaning of toilets
Confinement	Including being shut in a confined space, tied up, or forced to remain in one place for an extended period of time
Any act according to children	Any act for the purpose of punishment or discipline which children themselves define as corporal punishment in the context of their own language and culture
Witness	of any violent form of conflict resolution
Threat of physical punishment	of physical punishment*

¹⁴ Unit IV, Chapter 3 on School Discipline, Department of Education Service Manual (2000), as cited in Save the Children-Sweden (2006a)

¹⁵ From Save the Children (2006b)

Category	This includes
2. <i>Verbal Attack</i>	Verbal assaults, threats, ridicule and denigration
3. <i>Humiliation</i>	Ridicule/denigration intended to reduce a child's confidence, self-esteem and dignity Being made to look or feel foolish in front of one's peers, being told one is "no good"

However, Save the Children-Sweden also notes that the DepEd definition also qualifies, thus limits, physical punishment to those which is "cruel, or physically painful"¹⁶

D. Violence in Schools

Yet despite these policies, cases of VAC in schools persist. In the combined Third and Fourth Periodic report of the Philippine Government to the CRC Committee, it cited the following statistics on VAC in schools:

- **An estimated 500 to 800 cases of child abuse were committed by teachers each year according to the Child Adolescent Psychiatrists of the Philippines Inc. In 2006, a CAPPI survey also revealed that 50 per cent of the perpetrators child abuse in schools were teachers, while a small number involved janitors, bus drivers and other school personnel**
- **The UP - Philippine General Hospital (UP-PGH) Child Protection Unit likewise accounted five per cent of physical abuse cases it handled to teachers, as well as three percent of the sexual abuse cases.**

However, these figures represent only the reported cases and often those which involved serious physical and psychological harm on children. Other more subtle, but nevertheless still violent, forms of child abuse are rarely reflected in these reports.

This bias for extreme, dramatic or unusual cases of child abuse was noted in the literature of child abuse in general. This focus on the extreme and dramatic cases is a gap in the discourse on children's experiences of violence. Specifically, Protacio-Marcelino et al. (2001) noted that studies on "child abuse" often meant studies on "children in especially difficult circumstances" or CEDC. With CEDC as the framework, extreme cases of victimization became the focus. These included the situations of street children, child laborers, prostituted children and children in conflict areas. The implicit message in this conceptualization was that abuse does not happen in "normal" situations.

Likewise, a review of literature on corporal punishment in Asia and the Pacific by Save the Children-Sweden also revealed that the discourse on child abuse tended to concentrate on the pathological than the normal.¹⁷ Corporal punishment, no matter how severe, is normal when

¹⁶ Save the Children-Sweden (2005a: 45)

¹⁷ Save the Children-Sweden (2005a: 97)

done in the name of discipline because “[n]ormal parents cannot be abusive; they have a duty to punish their children, in private by administering ‘loving smacks’ and ‘reasonable chastisement’.”

Thus, although anecdotal data and “cases studies” on child abuse in schools are found in Philippine literature on child protection, these cannot be taken as conclusive of children’s realities in school. Studies which included discussions of schools as setting of violence acknowledged that there have been very few studies on VAC in schools.¹⁸

A study by Yacat and Ong (2001) referred to child abuse in schools as a “silenced phenomenon” that could be rooted in the masking of corporal punishment as discipline, and the non-reporting of even extreme cases of child abuse such as sexual assault. In both cases, the lack of awareness of children and adults alike on children’s human rights was the main factor. Adult-child hierarchies and dependence of children on adults were also identified. The high premium on a child’s completion of formal education vis-à-vis the community’s high regard for teachers also explain the reluctance to report abuse in schools.

1. Corporal Punishment

In the recent years however, more knowledge has been generated on the more hidden forms of violence in schools. The series of regional studies and documentation by Save the Children-Sweden on corporal punishment, for instance, enhanced the understanding on punishment under the guise of child discipline. A cross-country study by Save the Children Sweden¹⁹ also found out that direct and indirect forms corporal punishment is widely used in the countries where the research was conducted, including the Philippines. Children in the study also indicated that they experienced this mostly in their homes and schools.

Similarly, their review of laws, attitudes and practices on discipline and punishment in the Asia-Pacific showed that parents and teachers connive in ensuring corporal punishment is justified.²⁰ Children also justified physical violence using the same reasons as adults. The study noted that this was not surprising since the stated intent of corporal punishment is to teach them – and one of the things it teaches was violence is justified. There was also some evidence that children who are punished more harshly in their families are more likely to become victims of corporal punishment in schools.²¹

The study of Dela Cruz et al. (2001) is insightful on how corporal punishment is perceived by Filipino children vis-à-vis adults. A key finding in the study was that many ways that parents use for disciplining were considered abusive by their children. These included:

- Spanking (“*Pagpalo sa anak*”). According to the children, this becomes abusive when the child faints because of the pain (“*hinimatay sa sakit*”); when they are spanked without reason (“*pag pinalo nang walang kasalanan*”); when they could die from the spanking

¹⁸ Protacio-Marcelino et al., (2000); Protacio et al., (2001); Yacat & Ong, (2001); CWC, (2005)

¹⁹ Save the Children-Sweden (2005a)

²⁰ Save the Children-Sweden (2005b: 47)

²¹ Ibid.

(“*maaaring ikamatay*”); when beatings are too much (“*sobra ang pagpalo*”) and when spanking hurts the child (“*sinasaktan ang bata*”)

- Being beaten up or mauled (“*Pagbubog sa bata*”). The children offered explicit descriptions of what they consider as *pagbubog*: When parents uses a stick or wood, belt, bat or broom to beat the child (“*kapag gumamit ng dos po dos, sinturon, batuta o walis tingting*”), incessant beatings (“*hindi paghintong ng palo*”), slaps on the face (“*sampal*”), punching (“*sinuntok*”), and being burned by a flat iron (“*pinapaso ng plantsa*”).
- Being scolded or punished when a child did nothing wrong (“*Napagalitan / naparusahan ng walang kasalanan*”). There were situations when the parents hurt the children without the latter knowing or understanding what they did wrong.
- Humiliating the child in public (“*Ipinahiya ang bata sa publiko*”) Parents should not scold or berate their children in public. Some children however disagreed and said that they would prefer to be scolded even in public than beaten up.
- Being shouted and cursed at (“*Sinisigawan at minumura ng ‘putang ina’*”). The children said this hurt them most especially when they were berated for small mistakes.

On the other hand, parents saw “abuse” as a deviation from the usual, although what this “usual” meant is not clear. “Reasonable” was also used as a criteria but this seems more relative rather than standard among the adults i.e., what may be reasonable to one person may not be so to another.

Similarly, participants in study by PLAN Philippines stated the following criteria to differentiate child abuse from child discipline of child and adult research participants (2006):

The first criterion is whether or not the child experiences humiliation. Without feelings of humiliation, when the child is able to understand the motives behind the action as disciplining it is not considered as abusive. However, when the child feels shamed and humiliated, especially in public, the act is considered as abusive. Another feeling that may be aroused by abuse in a child is the feeling of rebelliousness.

The second criterion is relatedness of the disciplinary act to the offense. Harsher punishment is permissible when the offense committed by the child is graver. If a child is punished heavily over a small misdemeanor, beating with a stick when the child makes an honest mistake, for example, it is considered abusive.

The third criterion used to differentiate abusive and disciplining act is the impulsiveness of the authority figure. Impulsive acts, especially those that are driven by anger that may not be caused by the child’s action, such as having pent-up anger released only through punishing the child, are considered as abusive. Repeated punishment is also considered abusive.

The last criterion is inflicting of physical injury. Physical injuries ranging from marks, bruises, welts to other injuries that could lead to permanent damage or even life threatening are indicators

of abusive act and not disciplinary act. Severe injury is unacceptable and is a definite sign of abuse.

Apart from the four criteria mentioned, the age of the child and the type of offense committed are two factors considered in the acceptability of a disciplinary act. There are fewer acts considered acceptable as disciplining measures to younger children. Although alarmingly, shaking the child is considered acceptable for young children. However, with older children more “disciplinary” acts, which are usually more violent, are permissible to children and adult. Harsher punishment is deemed appropriate for graver offense and lighter punishment is acceptable for minor misdemeanor.

The PLAN study included as research participants children, parents, teachers and community advocates, and covered three rural areas.

Moreover, the study revealed that adults have an adequate understanding of the purpose of discipline (i.e., to teach children good values), however only a superficial understanding of children’s rights as indicated in the use of corporal punishment. Other findings of the study related to this are:

- Beating was deemed as an acceptable form of discipline, along with counseling; hanging, burning or scalding were considered the most unacceptable and abusive forms.
- Both children and adults regardless of gender consider severe forms of punishment as acceptable if the behavior of the child is considered deserving of it
- "Ideal" disciplinary acts in response to various offenses were a combination of verbal and physical behavior. Parents and teachers were likely to suggest counseling or scolding the child

The gendered perception of children on discipline and abuse was also explored in the study. More female children than male children found verbal forms of violence unacceptable as a form of discipline. Also related to gender and violence, the study noted that people were ambivalent with regard to homosexuality as an offense for which children may be punished.

Specific to school discipline, Tan’s study of five elementary schools in Pangasinan (1982), noted that corporal punishment was viewed as a negative form of sanction to ensure pupil’s conformity to certain patterns of behavior. The teacher is the punishing agent and the pupils receive the punishment. Forms of punishment used by teachers can be broadly categorized as physical, social and verbal. Beating with the use of stick is the most common form of corporal punishment. Taking away privileges and deducting grades are two common forms of social punishment. Scolding and reprimanding are two common forms of verbal punishment.

The reasons given by the teachers why they punish the students are reformatory, deterrent or retributive in nature. Teachers perceived that corporal punishment: deters the child from doing the same thing, leads to the development of self-discipline; is a form of social control among

children. They also recognized that punishment must be commensurate to the offense made. Otherwise, when done excessively, children would distance themselves from the teacher.

It was further found that teachers of younger pupils punish more and uses corporal punishment than any other group. Teachers of older pupils use scolding and grades deduction more. However, the younger children have more positive attitude of punishment compared to the older children. Boys are more tolerant of punishment compared to girls. Teachers teaching the sixth grade are more aware of the following aspect of punishment than the teachers teaching the third grade: 1) when the punishment is given inconsistent, it becomes ineffective and causes more disruptive behavior; and 2) punishment must not be given in anger.

Both higher and lower grade teachers in Tan's study are convinced that:

- 1) The teacher should be firm in making decisions.
- 2) Penalties should not hurt the child and should be given if it will contribute to maintenance of order.
- 3) The teacher should be consistent in giving punishments.
- 4) Objective investigation should be conducted before making judgment who the guilty party is before giving punishment.
- 5) Punishment should be given immediately.
- 6) Moral consequences should be emphasized.
- 7) Pupils should be warned of the consequences of their actions.
- 8) Explanation should be given as to how the degree of punishment matches the degree of offense made
- 9) Punishment of misbehaviors deters other students from doing the same.
- 10) Too much freedom in the classroom means that the teacher is not in control.

An ethnographic study of an urban high school (Palcon 1992), although not focused on discipline and punishment of children, also shed light on how discipline is enforced in schools. Verbal attacks on children were frequently noted as a means of controlling the classroom. This includes shouting and cursing at students, insults, humiliating by using derogatory labels (“*walang utak*” or no brains, “*malandi*” or flirt). Green jokes were also employed by some male teachers to “catch the attention of sleepy students”. There was no mention whether some students found these jokes offensive.

In addition to verbal methods, teachers disciplined their students by lowering their grades (or threatening students that they would do so), and imposing fines.

2. Bullying

The review of literature noted that there was even scarcer studies on violence perpetrated by children on their peers. This may be related to the possible perception of children themselves that bullying and fighting among children is part of school culture.²²

²² UN World Report on Violence Against Children , citing a study of Kenyan students on the “Memories of Childhood Violence” (2006: 26)

Bullying is a sub-category of aggressive behavior but a particularly vicious kind of aggression because it is directed, often repeatedly, towards a particular victim who may be outnumbered, younger, less strong or simply less psychologically confident (Smith and Morita 1999). Bullying may be through physical or verbal means, however, the most common forms are verbal.²³ It is also gendered in that boys often experience physical means of bullying, while more girls have reported experiencing more indirect and relational means. Similarly, children who do not conform to gender roles and expectations, including gay and lesbian students, are also vulnerable to bullying.²⁴

However, the World Report on Violence Against Children noted that bullying is just beginning to emerge as an issue in the Philippines, although this has been already been extensively studied in other countries. There is very little known about bullying in the Philippines. Villaroman-Bautista's reflections (2007), submitted to the CWC after conducting a series of roundtable discussions on bullying presents initial ideas on the topic.

Bullying was generally defined a form of violence defined as repeated and systematic harassment and attacks on others. It can be perpetrated by individuals or groups. Group bullying is often done by organizations or fraternities popular in schools and can harass students outside the school premises. Bullying takes many forms and can include may different behaviors, such as: verbal threatening, forcefully taking of lunch money, and threatening with a weapon. Filipino terms associated with bullying include: "*pang-aasar o pang-iinis* (incessant teasing), *pagiging astig* (tough), *pananakit* (hurting others)".

Children in elementary and secondary schools also have a broad definition of bullying which includes "positive" and "negative" bullying. On the one hand, bullying was deemed as a normal part of school life particularly acts of bullying involving pranks and jokes witnessed by other students and resulting to laughing fits. The bully and the bullied may also laugh at their exchange. This type of "bullying" is considered positive and normal. Bullying becomes negative when the bully insensitively oversteps the comfort zone of the bullied and continues with the pranks even though the latter is already upset. Physically hurting, shaming, and getting money and favors from bullied are also considered negative forms of bullying.

3. Gangs and Fraternities

Palcon's ethnographic study of the dynamics in an urban high school provides detail and insights to the formation of gangs in schools. He observed that children who do not excel academically or ignored or belittled by their teachers "engage in group formation and articulation of group identity":²⁵

For example, some students join as members of "Tropang Alega Gang", "Ten Pick-up Boys", "The Dyesebels" and fraternities like the AKRHO, SRB and Tau Gamma. As part of the articulation of group identity, group members share homework, raise funds to help members in need, and help fellow members in times of trouble (as respondents say, when their members are "inaapi" or helpless).

²³ Ibid, (p.123).

²⁴ Smith and Morita (1999: 1)

²⁵ Palcon (1992: 274)

Violence is often part of a gang's identity when it becomes involved in rumbles as an assertion of their superiority over other groups. However, this has also resulted to some members dropping out of school because of fear of retaliation from rival gangs. Moreover, gang and fraternity members use drugs, drink, gamble, extort money from other children and cut class in the name of *pakisama sa barkada* (conformity to the group).

It is noted in colloquial usage, the terms gangs and fraternities were used interchangeably by children in Palcon's study. Hazing is a characteristic of both groups. Republic Act 8049 or the Anti-Hazing law defines hazing as:

is an initiation rite or practice as a prerequisite for admission into membership in a fraternity, sorority or organization by placing the recruit, neophyte or applicant in some embarrassing or humiliating situations such as forcing him to do menial, silly, foolish and other similar tasks or activities or otherwise subjecting him to physical or psychological suffering or injury.

The term "organization" shall include any club or the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, Philippine Military Academy, or officer and cadet corps of the Citizen's Military Training and Citizen's Army Training. (Section 1)

Apart from physical violence, sexual assault in initiation rites is also penalized. However, this law can only be enforced in formal groups recognized by school authorities. Groups described by Palcon in his study fall outside of this definition, thus violence remains unchecked in their initiation rites.

A relevant point in the definition of hazing for high school children however is the inclusion of the Citizen's Army Training. Again, in Palcon's study of an urban high school, he described COCC (Cadet Officers Candidate Course) recruits being made to undergo initiation rituals such as cleaning the campus, guarding the gate, cleaning the toilets and offices, washing the car of the commandant. They also suffered physical punishment from their superiors who are senior high school students. In an interview with some initiates, the recruits said they felt exploited because according to them, they cannot complain, following the military rule "Obey first before you complain". Palcon also noted that children endure these hardships for a year. The following year when they are already officer, they would do the same to their subordinates.²⁶

4. Sexual Violence in Schools

While sexual abuse of children has long been part of studies and national statistics on child abuse, information on its incidence in schools are not always available because data is not often segregated by settings. With regard its prevalence, one can only surmise from the specific inclusion of educational settings in the Anti-Sexual Harassment Law that it is common, and children as students are particularly vulnerable to this form of violence. Sexual harassment in educational settings is defined as follows (Section 3 (b)):

In an education or training environment, sexual harassment is committed

- (1) Against one who is under the care, custody or supervision of the offender

²⁶ Palcon (1992: 173-174)

- (2) Against one whose education, training, apprenticeship or tutorship is entrusted to the offender
- (3) When the sexual favor is made a condition to the giving of a passing grade or the granting of honors and scholarships, or payment of a stipend, allowance or other benefits
- (4) When the sexual advances result in intimidating hostile or offensive environment for the student, trainee or apprentice

The above definition does not cover sexual harassment among children.

In addition to the sexual harassment law, there are also laws protecting children against molestation and rape.

E. The Child-Friendly School System

Based on the studies reviewed, it is clear that institutionalization of change through policies had met formidable barriers in the social norms that influence people's perceptions and attitudes on violence against children. Thus, several programs which integrated capability building with values change have been implemented in schools to address this stumbling block.²⁷

The Child Friendly School System (CFSS) program of the Department of Education in partnership with UNICEF is one example. Launched in 1999, the program aims to make all schools in the country "child-friendly". Schools are considered as child-friendly if they exhibit at least five traits:²⁸

- It is non-discriminatory, gender sensitive and inclusive. Gender, social status, cultural origin or religious beliefs are not hindrances for the children to learn.
- It is effective, which is exhibited by a child-centered curriculum, when the quality learning objectives are met, and when children are active participants in the schools' activities.
- It is a healthy place for children. A school is characterized as healthy place if the buildings, facilities and grounds are clean and safe for the children, and also if there are immunization programs and other healthy services available.
- It cares and protects all children.
- It involves families and other institutions in the community by enlisting their support for projects and activities that are beneficial to the school children.

A self-assessment guide book has been published by the Department of Education and United Nations Children's Fund for the schools where the specific indicators for each feature of a child-friendly school are clearly specified. The indicators for guaranteeing safe and protective spaces

²⁷ See for instance, Balananon, Puzon and Camacho (2002) on the piloting of the Personal Safety Curriculum by the Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse in partnership with Save the Children-UK and the Department of Education.

²⁸ UNICEF and the Department of Education (1999)

for children (Goal 3) are listed below:²⁹

1. Schools have proper ventilation and lighting and enough space for 45-50 pupils
2. Classroom desks and other furniture are sized to the age of pupils. In the case of shared desks, each pupil has enough space to do seatwork.
3. Classroom's layout and furniture allow pupils to interact and do group work
4. Class rooms have bulletin board or a corner that displays helpful learning materials such as posters, illustrations, newspaper and magazine clippings, and pupils' own works
5. Classrooms, facilities and premises are regularly maintained and kept clean
6. School has a library for reading and for study.
7. School has facilities and equipment for recreation and sports
8. School has sufficient lawn space and vegetation
9. School has duly assigned personnel in charge of securing its premises, its properties and those of its pupils and teachers
10. School coordinates with the barangay and local authorities to ensure the safety and protection of pupils
11. School has a policy against discrimination with regard to gender, cultural origin, social status, religious belief, and others.
12. School has a program for children with special needs
13. Teachers use non-threatening styles of discipline

These indicators can be broadly categorized those concerning the physical spaces for children (including class structure and available facilities) and children's welfare within the schools.

In general, CFSS program seemed to be effective with regard to maintaining a child-friendly environment, where the children are concerned. Significant findings of an evaluation study on the pilot elementary schools revealed that:³⁰

- Children are generally happy in schools, and only a negligible percentage across all grade levels said that they are sad or angry with their schools.
- However, it was noted that among Grades 1 students "fear of teachers" was ranked highest as a reason for being absent
- Children also have rated their teachers positively, and only a small percentage (2 per cent) say that their teachers plays favorites
- Almost all children think that their school is child-friendly (92 per cent)

In the self-assessment on the CFSS goals, the overall score of pilot schools showed that Goal 3 received the third lowest rank (47.11 per cent). However it was also noted that the schools in general are trying to comprehensively address all the seven CFSS goals.³¹

²⁹ There are seven CFSS goals. These are: Encourage children's participation in school and community (Goal 1); Enhance children's health and well-being (Goal 2); Encourage enrollment and completion (Goal 4); Ensure children's high academic achievement and success (Goal 5); Raise teacher morale and motivation (Goal 6); and Mobilize community support for education (Goal 7).

³⁰ Doronila (2005: 28-29)

³¹ Doronila (2005: 79)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY³²

A. Data Gathering Technique

Two types of self-administered questionnaires were developed to generate baseline data on the incidence of violence against children in schools: one for the Grades 1-3 respondents, and another for the Grade 4 to high school respondents. Both questionnaires had two parts. The first part was designed to identify the acts of violence that children may have experienced in school, and the corresponding perpetrator of these acts. The second part was meant to generate the perceptions of children by asking what they think as appropriate responses to the different situations presented.

The main differences between the two questionnaires were the length (there were more items in the questionnaire for older children) and its presentation (the questionnaire for Grades 1-3 relied mostly on illustrations and figures rather than words).

Moreover, the questionnaire for the older children was time specific. Children in Grades 4-6 group were asked to check only those acts that they experienced within their Grades 4-6 years; and for the high school children to check only those that they have experienced during their years in high school.

Interviews and FGDs with children as well as with identified school personnel and parents in the community provided more information and insights on different acts of violence inflicted on children and on the context of violence in schools. The field researchers were provided with Interview and FGD guides to facilitate data collection.

B. Research Process

1. Preparatory Phase

Coordination for the study was done at several levels: the Department of Education (DepEd) at the national level to endorse the study to the concerned DepEd Divisions, and at the Division Offices to facilitate access to schools selected for the study. In these activities, the research team was assisted by the PLAN program units in Masbate, Northern Samar and Camotes Islands.

³² See also Research Protocol (provided as a separate document).

The PLAN program units also organized local research teams for the data gathering activities, i.e. the surveys, interviews and focus group discussions. The PLAN Technical Officers for Learning (TOLs) in the areas acted as the team leader of these teams. A two-day research orientation and training was also conducted prior to the data gathering.

Per recommendation of the researchers in Camotes Islands, the questionnaire used for the children in this area was translated in Cebuano. Questionnaires in Masbate and Northern Samar were in Filipino.

2. Data Gathering

Data gathering began in mid-February 2008. Difficulties encountered in the field work mostly concerned travel to remote schools and weather conditions. Although there was resistance observed on the part of some school administrators and teachers with regard to topic of the research, the data gathering activities were accommodated by the schools and community. This could be attributed to the good relations established between PLAN program units and the communities, as well as PLAN's positive image as a child-focused organization.

Children's reactions to the research activities were generally positive. It was also noted however that some of the children were initially apprehensive in participating in the surveys. The same was also observed in the FGDs when children were asked about their experience of violence from their adults in school. The children were however reassured when the researchers told them that their answers would be kept confidential and they would not be named in the report.

3. Validation

Validation of research data was conducted with the local research teams and concerned PLAN staff in May (Masbate) and June (Camotes Islands and Northern Samar). Their clarification of certain data and other feedback were considered in the drafting of the research report.

4. Analysis of Data

Data gathered and validated were consolidated, tabulated and analyzed for quantitative trends. Percentages (rather than absolute numbers) representing incidence rates were used for a more meaningful analysis of the magnitude or prevalence of the different forms of VAC.

Moreover qualitative information provided by the research participants was utilized to provide evidentiary support to the quantitative data. Related literature was also looked into for references to help explain or clarify findings. All findings, including the resulting recommendations, were then synthesized.

C. Profile of the Research Participants

1. Child Participants

A total of 2,442 children participated in the study from the three provinces: 50.20% belonged to the elementary level; while 49.79% comprised the high school children. Elementary school children respondents were further grouped into two categories: Grades 1-3 (N=614) and Grades 4-6 (N=612) levels, getting almost equal representation. The Grades 1-3 children were given a different questionnaire appropriate to their lower age level.

The female respondents (51.82%) slightly outnumbered their male counterparts (48.15%).

Table 2: Research Participants, Children

Area	Total Respondents	Female	%	Male	%	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-6	High School
Camotes Island	870	448	18.34	422	17.28	203	203	464
Masbate	812	419	17.15	393	16.09	206	205	401
Northern Samar	760	399	16.33	361	14.78	205	204	351
Total	2442	1266	51.82	1176	48.15	614	612	1216

There were a total of 434 children who consented to be interviewed and to participate in the FGDs, all of whom were drawn from the 2442 sampling population.

Table 3: Children in FGDs and Interviews

Area	Interviews	FGDs	Total
Camotes Island	101	34	135
Northern Samar	122	28	150
Masbate	109	40	149
Total	332	102	434

2. Adult Participants

Three focus group discussions with adult stakeholders were conducted per area: with school personnel, with guidance counselors, and with parents in the community. Interviews were also conducted with school principals, teachers and guidance counselors.

Table 4: Adults Involved in the Study

Area	FGDs		Interviews (principals / OICs)	Interviews (guidance counselors)	Total
	School personnel	Parents / Community Reps			
Camotes Island	12	7	8	8	28
Northern Samar	14	13	4	2	33

	FGDs				
Masbate	16	9	8	1	25
Total	71	29	20	11	86

IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

A. Violence Against Children -- Definitions and Perceptions from Children and from Adults

Participants in the study cited varying ways of understanding what violence and violence against children mean. At the broadest sense, children defined violence as a “wrongdoing,” and as “*pag-aalis ng karapatan*” (“taking away one’s rights”); and violence against children as “*pang-aabuso sa karapatan ng bata*” (“abusing a child’s rights”).

Both children and adults associated the terminologies with pain or hurt, as they referred to “act that hurts somebody’ feelings,” “inflicting pain to pupils physically, mentally and emotionally,” “cursing, inflicting pain, spanking and shaming a person,” and “corporal punishment by the teachers using hurtful words.”

Children also equated violence with abuse, defining VAC as “abuse of one’s weaknesses,” “physical abuse,” and “abuse to children either physical, mental or emotional.”

As for those children who could not straightforwardly provide definitions of violence and VAC, they instead attempted to define the terminologies by citing examples. Most commonly referred to were cursing, speaking harsh words, spanking and humiliating.

Some definitions given by children pointed to the consequences of VAC. The simplest and most direct effect cited was in the definition of violence as “acts that disturb other pupils’ concentration with their studies.” More profound impacts of violence were also cited, however. For instance, one child defined violence as “things that will not help children grow positively.” Another stated that violence is “*nakakababa ng pagkatao*” (“lowers a person’s sense of self”).

Meanwhile, there were adults who gave definitions that manifested their impressions on the actual experience of being inflicted with violence. Such definitions included statements like, “*isang hindi kanais-nais na karanasan*” (“an objectionable experience”), cited by school personnel; and “punishment that is beyond one’s capacity to bear,” cited by parents.

Lastly, adults provided various views regarding when an act could or could not be considered violence. One stated, for instance, that “an act may be considered violent if somebody is hurt and someone complained,” while another opined that violence involves “imposing punishment upon children that is not commensurate to the offense.” For one guidance counselor, it is not violence “when somebody hurts the pupils but it’s a warning only.”

B. Forms of Violence Experienced by Children in School

More than two dozen forms of VAC in school were reported by the children who took part in the study, as summarized in Table 5. These are categorized into psychological and verbal, physical, sexual and other experiences considered as violence.

1. Psychological and Verbal Violence

According to the World Report on Violence Against Children, psychological violence, which includes verbal violence, is the kind of violence that is inflicted upon a person through insults, name-calling, ignoring, isolation, rejection, threats, emotional indifference and belittlement, among others – that can be detrimental to a child’s psychological development and well-being.³³

Overall, psychological/verbal violence was the form of violence most commonly experienced by the children who participated in the study, particularly being ridiculed, teased, humiliated or degraded (*pinagtawanan, tinukso, kinutya, minaliit*) which was cited by the majority (64.17%). The incidence was highest among Grades 4-6 children (70.59%) and, to a lesser extent, experienced by 66.28% of the children from High School and 53.58% of the Grades 1-3 children. The nature of the teasing differed from child to child, from being called *ampon* (“adopted”) everyday by classmates to being laughed at for not being able to read well.

Being cursed, shouted at or spoken to using harsh language had the second highest incidence across all grade/year level categories, experienced by 55.77% of all the children who participated in the research. Again, children from Grades 4-6 indicated the highest incidence at 64.54%. One child shared,

“Sinabihan ako ng teacher ko na, ‘anong klaseng utak meron ka?’ at naiyak ako” (“My teacher told me, ‘What kind of brain do you have?’ and I cried”).

Specific to cursing, this form of verbal violence was cited as commonly inflicted by both peers and teachers. Both “*pagmumura ng guro sa estudyante*” (“teachers cursing the students”) and “*pagmumura ng classmates*” (“being cursed by classmates”) were experiences shared by many of the children during interviews and focus group discussions.

For some children, verbal violence is a daily experience that they live with. As one child related,

“Kapag nasa paaralan ako ay may naghibintay sa akin na minumura ako, tinutkso at sinasabihan ng masasakit na salita ng aking mga kaklase.”

³³ Pinheiro (2006: 61)

("When I am in school, there are people waiting for me, to curse me and to tease/ridicule me, and my classmates say hurtful things to me.")

A distinct finding was the children's view of being ignored or not spoken to as a form of psychological/verbal violence. This experience cited by 40.38% of all the children who took part in this research reiterates a finding from the 2006 study by PLAN, which also found "no communication" as a form of violence against children. This is so because being ignored or not spoken to is seen as a form of rejection that affects the self esteem of the child.

Another form of verbal violence reported by a significant proportion of respondents from Grades 4-6 (41.99%) was being threatened with bodily harm or with harm against someone close to the child. The same form of violence was experienced by only 22% of High School students.

Across 5 of the 6 categories of psychological/verbal violence cited in the study, Grades 4-6 students seemed to be inflicted with more acts of violence compared to the children from the other grade/year levels.

2. Physical Violence

Still according to the aforementioned World Report, physical violence is the intentional use of physical force against a child that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity.³⁴

The most commonly cited form of physical violence among all the children interviewed was pinching (38.78%), an act experienced by more high school students (43.01%) and, to a lesser extent although still a significant proportion, by children in the lower grade levels (37.42% of Grades 4-6 children and 31.42% of Grades 1-3 children).

Being punched was also cited to occur often, especially among children from Grades 4-6 (53.76%), and to a lesser degree, among 30.92% of children from high school. Punching usually arose from quarrels between peers, but sometimes it was inflicted by bullies or, on rare occasions, by teachers themselves.

Another frequent form of violence reported by a third of all children across all grade/year levels in school is having things—books, notebooks, chalk, eraser—thrown at them.

An interesting observation in Table 5 is the data on spanking which reveals that it is experienced by 1 out of 3 children in Grades 1-3, with a lower incidence among Grades 4-6 children (1 out of 4 children) and lowest among high school children (1 out of 6 children). Spanking of children from the lower grade levels is usually inflicted by the teachers, but going up the grade ladder, the act is inflicted more by peers and classmates rather than by teachers or other school personnel. One child expressed his sentiment,

³⁴ Pinheiro (2006: 52)

“Naranasan kong pinalo ng guro dahil hindi marunong bumasa. Sa inyong palagay dapat bang paluin ang isang estudyante kapag hindi marunong at dapat turuan?” (“I experienced being spanked by my teacher because I could not read. Do you think it’s right to spank a student who is not knowledgeable and is in need of teaching?”)

Other interesting observations from the table: being made to squat is inflicted more on children from Grades 1-3 (34.04%); having their hair pulled is experienced by more children from Grades 4-6 (25.65%); and being made to stand in the sun is reserved more for the High School students as a form of punishment (13.8%).

Other forms of more severe acts of physical violence cited by the children especially those in Grades 4-6 included being kicked (*tinadyakan*), being choked (*sinakal*) and being hit at the nape/head area or having the head banged (*binatukan/inuntog ang ulo*). For some, the experience can be a combination of different forms of physical violence. One child shared,

“Minsan pag ma-late kami at hindi maka-attend sa flag ceremony, ang aming principal ay pinalilinya kami at kinukurot at binabatukan kami sa ulo.” (“Sometimes when we are late and unable to attend the flag ceremony, our principal lines us up, and pinches and hits our heads.”)

3. Sexual Violence

As cited in an earlier section, gender-based violence stems from gender inequality, stereotypes and socially imposed roles. Sexual violence, including sexual harassment towards girls may be motivated by the desire to punish or humiliate girls because of their sex or sexuality, or by sexual interest and bravado.³⁵

Among the surveyed children from Grades 4-6 and from high school, 35.50% reported having been spoken to in a sexually offensive/suggested manner. This includes having teachers court or express attraction to students.

Across all age ranges, a total of 12.82% of the children also cited having been touched inappropriately. While most offenses of this nature were done by peers, there were also distinct reports in which gay teachers inappropriately touched or even molested their male students.

4. Other Experiences Considered as Forms of Violence

This study additionally considered other unpleasant experiences in school cited by children, for the possibility of exploring nuances of violence within these such as bullying or intimidation, abuse of authority, manipulation and exploitation.

³⁵ Pinheiro (2006: 118)

Apart from psychological/verbal, physical and sexual violence, the children also cited being made to do other people's school work (reported by 25.90% of high school children) and being made to do things not related to school work (cited by 15.15% of all Grades 4-6 and high school children), including serving as school security guard and even serving as the teachers' domestic helpers after school hours.

Moreover, 9.87% of all the children who took part in the study reported being forced to give objects or money, most commonly in the form of school contributions or payments for school projects. Many of these children complained that they were punished physically, ordered to go home, or disallowed from coming to class or taking an exam when they could not give the payments imposed by their teachers. Shared one child,

“Kapag may mga payment kami, kapag hindi kami nakapagbigay noong araw na yon pinapaawi kami para kumuha ng pambayad, pero kung wala kaming pera, hindi kami papapasukin.” (“When we have payments due and we are unable to give it on the due date, we are asked to go home to get money, and if we do not have any, we are not allowed to come to class.”)

Below are the tables consolidating the children's responses on VAC experiences in school.³⁶

Table 5.1: Forms Psychological/Verbal Violence Experienced by Children in School

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)	%	Grades 4-6 (n=612)	%	High School (n=1216)	%	Total	%
Ridiculed, teased, humiliated, degraded (<i>pinagtawanan, tinukso, kinutya, minaliit</i>)	329	53.58	432	70.59	806	66.28	1567	64.17
Cursed, had bad words spoken, shouted at (<i>minura. sinabihan ng masasakit na salita, sinigawan</i>)	248	40.39	395	64.54	719	59.13	1362	55.77
Deliberately ignored or not spoken to (<i>sadyang hindi kinausap o pinansin</i>)	118	19.22	299	48.86	569	46.79	986	40.38
Humiliated, degraded (<i>kinutya, minaliit</i>)	---	---	242	39.54	511	42.02	753*	41.19
Threatened with physical violence (<i>binantaan na sasaktan</i>)	---	---	257	41.99	274	22.53	531*	29.05
Threatened to hurt people close to the child (<i>binantaan na sasaktan ang taong malapit sa iyo</i>)	---	---	151	24.67	154	12.66	305*	16.68

³⁶ Notes on the tables:

Dashes (--) mean this item was not included in the survey for the particular respondent group

* Frequency of responses from Grades 4-6 and high school was divided by the sum of total population of these survey groups

** Frequency of responses was divided by the Grades1-3 survey population

Table 5.2: Forms Physical Violence Experienced by Children in School

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)	%	Grades 4-6 (n=612)	%	High School (n=1216)	%	Total	%
Pinched (<i>kinurot</i>)	195	31.76	229	37.42	523	43.01	947	38.78
Had things thrown at him/ her (<i>binato ng kahit anong bagay</i>)	185	30.13	194	31.70	353	29.03	732	29.98
Punched (<i>sinuntok</i>)	---	---	329	53.76	376	30.92	705*	28.87
Slapped (<i>sinampa</i>)	74	12.05	125	20.42	254	20.89	453	18.55
Spanked or hit using hands or an object (<i>pinalo</i>)	184	29.97	145	23.69	195	16.04	524	21.46
Whipped / hit by a belt (<i>sininturon</i>)	42	6.84	---	---	---	---	42**	1.72
Had their hair pulled (<i>sinabunutan</i>)	---	---	157	25.65	203	16.69	360*	19.69
Made to stand under the sun (<i>binilad sa araw</i>)	45	7.33	66	10.78	226	18.59	337	13.80
Made to squat (pina-squat)	209	34.04	---	---	---	---	209**	34.04
Kicked (<i>tinadyakan</i>)	153	24.92	178	29.08	220	18.09	551	22.56
Choked (<i>sinaka</i>)	---	---	79	12.91	94	7.73	173*	9.46
Mauled (<i>binugbog</i>)	---	---	78	12.75	59	4.85	137*	7.49
Had his/ her head banged (<i>inuntog ang ulo</i>), hit at the nape or head area (<i>binatukan</i>)	149	24.27	55	8.99	61	5.02	265	10.85
Locked in a room or enclosed space (<i>kinulong</i>)	41	6.68	25	4.08	37	3.04	103	4.22

Table 5.3: Forms Sexual Violence Experienced by Children in School

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)	%	Grades 4-6 (n=612)	%	High School (n=1216)	%	Total	%
Spoken to in a sexually offensive / suggestive manner (<i>ginamitan ng malalaswang salita</i>)	---	---	194	31.70	455	37.42	649*	35.50
Touched inappropriately (<i>hinamas, hinipuan</i>)	79	12.87	74	12.09	160	13.16	313	12.82
Kissed (<i>hinalikan ng hindi gusto</i>)	32	5.21	38	6.21	96	7.89	166	6.80
Made to undress (<i>pinaghubad ng damit</i>)	---	---	11	1.80	19	1.56	30*	1.64
Forced to have sex (<i>pinilit na makipag sex</i>)	---	---	6	0.98	13	1.07	19*	1.04

Table 5.4: Other Experiences in School Considered as Violence

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)	%	Grades 4-6 (n=612)	%	High School (n=1216)	%	Total	%
Made to do heavy tasks (<i>pinagawa ng mabigat na gawain</i>)	29	4.72	---	---	---	---	29**	4.72
Made to do other people's school work (<i>pinagawa ng takdang aralin ng ibang tao</i>)	---	---	83	13.56	315	25.90	398*	21.77
Made to do things not related to school work (<i>pinagawa ng isang bagay na walang kinalaman sa aralin</i>)	---	---	97	15.85	180	14.80	277*	15.15
Forced to give any object or money (<i>pinilit na magbigay ng kahit anong bagay o pera</i>)	59	9.61	75	12.25	107	8.80	241	9.87
Barred from joining school activities (<i>hinarangan o pinagbawalan na sumali sa aktibidad sa eskwelahan</i>)	---	---	58	9.48	84	6.91	142*	7.77
Other experiences	34	5.54	66	10.78	27	2.22	127	5.20

▪ *Gender and Violence in Schools*

Global data gathered by the World Report on Violence Against Children manifest that gender plays a key role, as girls and boys are at different risk for different kinds of violence. For instance, boys appear to be at greater risk of physical violence than girls, while girls face greater risk of neglect and sexual violence.³⁷ The study moreover found that whether perpetrated by adults or children, almost all violence in schools reflects a 'hidden curriculum' that promotes gender inequality and stereotyping. For example, boys taunt each other about their lack of masculinity and harass girls with verbal and physical gestures that are sexual in nature.³⁸

In this study, both female and male children experienced vulnerability to verbal, physical and sexual violence in schools. However, the frequency and gravity of experiences varied between females and males, depending on grade level and type of abuse. Specific to psychological/verbal and physical violence, gender stereotyping is manifested by the infliction of more psychological/verbal violence on females and the higher incidence of physical violence among males.

³⁷ Pinheiro (2006: 12-13)

³⁸ Pinheiro (2006: 112)

➤ Psychological/Verbal Violence and Gender

Verbal abuse was experienced by both male and female children. Moreover for both males and females, the form of psychological/verbal violence with the highest incidence rates was being ridiculed, teased, humiliated and degraded, experienced by 55.27% to 71.34% of girls and 51.83% to 69.84% of boys across the different grade/year levels.

Across all grade/year levels more female children reported a higher incidence of being ridiculed, teased, humiliated and degraded; being cursed or spoken to with harsh words; being deliberately not spoken to or ignored; and being touched inappropriately. Most notably, girls from Grades 1-3 experienced being ignored or not spoken to 9.02% more than their male counterparts; among Grades 4-6 children the girls experienced it 13.03% more; and among High School children, 9.19% more.

The only forms of verbal violence experienced more by male than female children were personal threats and threats to hurt people close to them.

It can therefore be concluded that generally, psychological/verbal abuse is inflicted more on female children than male children.

Table 6.1: Children's Experience of Psychological/Verbal Violence in School by Gender

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3		Grades 4-6		High School	
	Female (n=313) %	Male (n=301) %	Female (n=307) %	Male (n=305) %	Female (n=646) %	Male (n=570) %
Ridiculed, teased, humiliated, degraded (<i>pinagtawanan, tinukso, kinutya, minalit</i>)	55.27	51.83	71.34	69.84	66.41	66.14
Cursed, had bad words spoken, shouted at (<i>minura, sinabihan ng masasakit na salita, sinigawan</i>)	---	---	68.40	60.66	59.60	58.60
Deliberately ignored or not spoken to (<i>sadyang hindi kinausap o pinansin</i>)	23.64	14.62	55.37	42.30	51.39	41.58
Threatened (<i>binantaan na sasaktan</i>)	---	---	39.09	44.92	21.98	23.16
Threatened to hurt people close to the child (<i>binantaan na sasaktan ang taong malapit sa iyo</i>)	---	---	20.20	29.18	10.99	14.56

➤ Physical Violence and Gender

The trend with psychological/verbal violence is reversed with physical violence. Across all grade/year levels, all but one form of physical violence were experienced more by male students

than female students. The single, minor exception was slapping, which was experienced more by females than males from Grades 1-3 (but with a mere 0.18% difference).

The differences are particularly high for punching and kicking, which were experienced 11.19% to 15.71% more by males than females across all the grade/year levels. Such differences in these particular forms of physical violence can be attributed to incidences of physical fights and bullying among boys.

Across all grade/year levels, however, male and female children identified the same forms of physical violence with the highest rate of incidence. In Grades 1-3, the most commonly experienced form was being made to squat, cited by 38.87% of boys and 29.39% of girls; in Grades 4-6 it was punching, which was reported by 45.93% of girls and 61.64% of boys. Lastly among High School students, the most commonly cited form also by both boys and girls was being pinched, reported by 36.69% of the female students and 50.18% of the males.

Table 6.2: Children's Experience of Physical Violence in School by Gender

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3		Grades 4-6		High School	
	Female (n=313) %	Male (n=301) %	Female (n=307) %	Male (n=305) %	Female (n=646) %	Male (n=570) %
Pinched (<i>kinurot</i>)	27.80	35.88	29.97	44.92	36.69	50.18
Had things thrown at him/ her (<i>binatong kahit anong bagay</i>)	26.20	34.22	25.73	37.70	24.61	34.04
Punched (<i>sinuntok</i>)	---	---	45.93	61.64	24.61	38.07
Slapped (<i>sinampal</i>)	12.14	11.96	19.87	20.98	17.65	24.56
Spanked or hit using hands or an object (<i>pinalo</i>)	23.64	36.54	16.29	31.15	13.47	18.95
Had their hair pulled (<i>sinabunutan</i>)	---	---	28.34	22.95	16.10	17.37
Whipped / hit by a belt (<i>sininturon</i>)	4.15	9.63				
Made to stand under the sun (<i>binilad sa araw</i>)	7.03	7.64	7.82	13.77	15.17	22.46
Kicked (<i>tinadyakan</i>)	18.21	31.89	21.50	36.72	12.85	24.04
Choked (<i>sinaka</i>)	---	---	8.14	17.70	5.57	10.18
Mauled (<i>binugbog</i>)	---	---	6.51	19.02	1.70	8.42
Had his/ her head banged or hit at the nape/head area (<i>inuntog ang ulo o binatukan</i>)	20.13	28.57	4.56	13.44	3.56	6.67
Made to squat (<i>pina-squat</i>)	29.39	38.87				
Locked in a room or enclosed space (<i>kinulong</i>)	5.75	7.64	4.56	3.61	1.70	4.56

➤ Sexual Violence and Gender

There were five items under the sexual violence category in the survey. These included being spoken to in a sexually offensive manner, (*ginamitan ng malalalawang salita*), touched inappropriately (*chancing, binamas, hinipuan*), receiving unwanted kisses (*binalikan ng hindi gusto*), made to undress (*pinaghubad ng damit*), and forced to have sex (*pinilit na makipag sex*).

Table 6.3 below indicates that both a third of the male and female children reported being at the receiving end of verbal sexual violence, with the high school students indicating a higher incidence than Grades 4-6 children.

Male children had slightly more experiences of being spoken to in a sexually offensive/suggestive manner, while female children cited more instances of being touched inappropriately. On one hand, females from Grades 4-6 and high school also reported more experiences of receiving unwanted kisses; on the other hand Grades 1-3 male children were inflicted with such violence more often than their female peers.

The children’s description or response to “being made to undress” included acts that were necessarily not related to sexual advances. Examples include lifting the skirt of a girl as a joke and having a boy remove a piece of clothing (shirt or pants) as a form of punishment by shaming; in the latter case, being made to undress becomes a gendered punishment as there were no accounts of the same being done to girls.

“Being forced to have sex” is another item in the survey that children interpreted broadly. Rape is an extreme form of violence against children, and cases of rape of students by school peers, teachers or other adults in school are not unheard of. In this survey, the item “forced to have sex” referred not only to consummated rape, but experiences of attempted rape as well. However, upon validating the responses on this item, it was found that the children were referring more to *the physical coercion or the emotional pressure to have sex*. It was mostly the latter that was often referred to when the children responded to this item. Survey responses also showed a low incidence of children being pressured to engage in sex by their school peers or teachers and other adults in school.

Table 6.3: Children’s Experience of Sexual Violence in School by Gender

Children’s Experiences	Grades 1-3		Grades 4-6		High School	
	Female (n=313) %	Male (n=301) %	Female (n=307) %	Male (n=305) %	Female (n=646) %	Male (n=570) %
Spoken to in a sexually offensive / suggestive manner (<i>ginamitan ng malalaswang salita</i>)	---	---	31.27	32.13	36.84	38.07
Touched inappropriately (<i>hinamas, hinipuan</i>)	14.70	10.96	12.38	11.80	13.62	12.63
Kissed (<i>hinalikan ng hindi gusto</i>)	3.83	6.64	7.49	4.92	8.82	6.84
Made to undress (<i>pinaghubad ng damit</i>)	---	---	0.65	2.95	0.62	2.63
Forced to have sex (<i>pinilit na makipag sex</i>)	---	---	0.65	1.31	0.31	1.93

➤ Other Experiences and Gender

Lastly, among other experiences reported by the children, the most notable observation was the high percentage of female high school students (almost one out of three girls, and with a 7.15%

higher incidence than among boys) being made to do other people's school work. This suggests a probable manifestation of abuse of the stereotype of females as more diligent pupils than males.

Meanwhile the stereotyping of males as being more capable of physically demanding work is manifested in the more common experience of boys than girls of being made to do things not related to school work. These "things" include acting as security guard and doing manual work in the school grounds.

Table 6.4: Other Experiences in School Considered as Violence, By Gender

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3		Grades 4-6		High School	
	Female (n=313) %	Male (n=301) %	Female (n=307) %	Male (n=305) %	Female (n=646) %	Male (n=570) %
Made to do other people's school work (<i>pinagawa ng takdang aralin ng ibang tao</i>)			12.05	15.08	29.26	22.11
Made to do things not related to school work (<i>pinagawa ng isang bagay na walang kinalaman sa aralin</i>)			12.70	19.02	12.69	17.19
Forced to give any object or money (<i>pinilit na magbigay ng kahit anong bagay o pera</i>)	8.63	10.63	12.70	11.80	7.28	10.53
Barred from joining school activities (<i>hinarangan o pinagbawalan na sumali sa aktibidad sa eskwelahan</i>)			8.79	10.16	5.11	8.95
Other experiences	7.03	3.99	11.40	10.16	13.93	12.28

▪ ***Positive Approaches Experienced by Children***

The table below, meanwhile, shows an interesting trend. A great majority of Grades 1-3 children (71%) reported that their teachers or peers talked to them in private when they misbehaved. This experience was shared by the higher grade levels to a lesser extent but the numbers still comprised more than half of the Grades 4-6 (58.17%) and High School (56.31%) responses.

Table 7: Positive Approach Experienced by Children

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)	%	Grades 4-6 (n=612)	%	High School (n=1216)	%
Approached or talked to privately (<i>kinausap pag may ginawang hindi maganda</i>)	436	71.01	356	58.17	686	56.41

The above approach was generally appreciated by the children, who expressed that they preferred to be talked to in private whenever they misbehaved, committed an offense, or performed poorly in class.

C. VAC in Schools and People Involved

Children identified both their peers and the adults in school as the persons who committed acts of violence against them. “Adults in school” referred largely to teachers; however children also cited principals, canteen workers, school guards and drivers as having inflicted some forms of violence against them.

Table 8.1: Psychological/Verbal Violence Committed by Children’s Peers and by Personnel of the School

Children’s Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)			Grades 4-6 (n=612)			High School (n=1216)		
	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %
Ridiculed, teased, humiliated, degraded (<i>pinagtawanan, tinukso, kinutya, minaliti</i>)	49.67	3.58	0.65	66.99	4.58	0.16	64.72	5.51	
Cursed, had bad words spoken, shouted at (<i>minura, sinabihan ng masasakit na salita, sinigawan</i>)	24.43	16.94	0.33	57.19	12.25		53.87	14.72	
Deliberately ignored or not spoken to (<i>sadyang hindi kinausap o pinansin</i>)	17.75	0.98	0.49	47.06	2.94	0.33	44.41	4.69	
Threatened (<i>binantaan na sasaktan</i>)	---	---	---	38.40	4.58		20.56	2.80	0.08
Threatened to hurt people close to the child (<i>binantaan na sasaktan ang taong malapit sa iyo</i>)	---	---	---	20.26	4.58	0.16	9.95	3.04	0.33

Table 8.2: Physical Violence Committed by Children's Peers and by Personnel of the School

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)			Grades 4-6 (n=612)			High School (n=1216)		
	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %
Pinched (<i>kinurot</i>)	13.52	18.57	1.30	27.78	18.95		37.17	8.80	
Had things thrown at him/ her (<i>binato ng kahit anong bagay</i>)	23.62	5.54	0.98	22.88	9.31	0.33	25.00	5.84	
Punched (<i>sinuntok</i>)	---	---	---	51.96	1.14	0.98	30.02	1.15	
Slapped (<i>sinampal</i>)	8.47	3.09	0.49	17.48	3.10		19.98	0.41	0.16
Spanked or hit using hands or an object (<i>pinalo</i>)	11.73	16.45	2.12	12.42	12.75	0.33	11.43	5.26	0.41
Had their hair pulled (<i>sinabunutan</i>)	---	---	---	24.02	1.31	0.33	15.54	1.07	0.25
Whipped / hit by a belt (<i>sininturon</i>)	2.28	3.42	1.14	---	---	---	---	---	---
Made to stand under the sun (<i>binilad sa araw</i>)	1.95	4.89	0.49	1.47	9.31	0.16	1.64	17.60	
Kicked (<i>tinadyakan</i>)	21.99	1.47	1.47	27.61	1.31	0.33	17.43	0.41	0.33
Choked (<i>sinaka</i>)	---	---	---	12.42	0.82	0.16	7.24	0.66	
Mauled (<i>binugbog</i>)	---	---	---	11.44	1.47	0.16	4.03	1.23	
Had his/ her head banged or hit at the nape/head area (<i>inuntog ang ulo o binatukan</i>)	20.36	3.58	0.65	7.19	1.80	0.65	4.11	0.74	0.16
Locked in a room or enclosed space (<i>kinulong</i>)	3.91	2.12	0.65	1.63	3.27		1.07	2.06	0.08

Table 8.3: Sexual Violence Committed by Children's Peers and by Personnel of the School

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)			Grades 4-6 (n=612)			High School (n=1216)		
	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %
Spoken to in a sexually offensive / suggestive manner (<i>ginamitan ng malalawang salita</i>)	---	---	---	29.41	2.12	0.65	34.70	4.93	
Touched inappropriately (<i>hinamas, hinipuan</i>)	10.75	0.98	1.14	11.11	1.31	0.16	11.84	1.32	0.16

Kissed (<i>hinalikan ng hindi gusto</i>)	4.56	0.49	0.16	5.39	0.65	0.33	7.07	0.90	
Made to undress (<i>pinaghubad ng damit</i>)	---	---	---	0.98	0.16	0.65	0.82	0.41	0.33
Forced to have sex (<i>pinilit na makipag sex</i>)	---	---	---	0.33	0.49	0.49	0.74	0.41	

Table 8.4: Other Experiences Inflicted by Children's Peers and by Personnel of the School

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)			Grades 4-6 (n=612)			High School (n=1216)		
	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %	Peers %	Adults %	Not Identified %
Made to do other people's school work (<i>pinagawa ng takdang aralin ng ibang tao</i>)	---	---	---	9.31	4.08	0.33	22.70	4.36	0.16
Made to do things not related to school work (<i>pinagawa ng isang bagay na walang kinalaman sa aralin</i>)	---	---	---	7.84	8.99	0.33	6.33	9.70	
Forced to give any object or money (<i>pinilit na magbigay ng kahit anong bagay o pera</i>)	8.47	0.98	0.16	10.13	1.96	0.33	7.24	2.14	
Barred from joining school activities (<i>hinarangan o pinagbawalan na sumali sa aktibidad sa eskwelahan</i>)	---	---	---	6.05	4.58		4.93	1.73	0.33
Other experiences	4.07	1.63		4.90	5.23	4.08	6.25	6.99	0.08

1. Violence Inflicted by Peers

The peers referred to in this study are the children's classmates and schoolmates. The World Study on Violence Against Children found that all over the world, forms of violence perpetrated by children against their peers include bullying, sexual and gender-based violence, schoolyard fighting, gang violence, and assault with weapons.³⁹

As shown in Tables 8.1 to 8.4, this research found that ridicule or teasing by peers was the most common experience of violence in schools cited by children across the three age ranges (49.67% of Grades 1-3 children, 66.99% of Grades 4-6 children and 64.72% of high school children). Such verbal violence was often related to a child's inability to read or to give correct answers during class recitation, but was also occasionally brought upon by specific circumstances of children such as being gay, being poor and suspicions of being an adopted child.

³⁹ Pinheiro (2006: 116)

This was followed by being cursed or spoken to with harsh words also by peers. Children expressed a sense of helplessness, especially when their teachers failed to stop their peers' infliction of verbal violence against them. As shared by one child,

"Lagi na lang ako pinaiyak ng kaklase ko. Hindi sila nagbabago kahit sinabihan na ng guro namin." ("My classmates always made me cry. They don't change even when my teacher already scolded them.")

Moreover Grades 4-6 and high school children reported that humiliation/degradation, threats and even being deliberately ignored were commonly inflicted by peers, with each of these forms of verbal violence having been experienced by at least 20% to more than 40% of the respondents in this age range.

Children cited that verbal violence inflicted by peers also included gossip. *"Paggawa ng istorya na hindi totoo"* ("Fabricating false stories") was how children put it.

Physical and sexual forms violence were also inflicted most by peers across all the age ranges, particularly having things thrown at the children, being pinched, being kicked and, for those children from Grades 4-6 and high school, being punched and being spoken to in a sexually offensive/suggestive manner especially *"pambabastos ng babae"* ("girls being disrespected"). Surprisingly, even Grades 1-3 children admitted to being touched inappropriately (*"hinimas"* -- 10.75%) or receiving unwanted kisses from their peers (4.56%).

Children's comments suggest that some of the violence experienced from peers stems not only from common quarrels, but from the phenomenon of bullying. *"Kinakaya-kaya"* which can be loosely translated as "being overpowered and pushed around" was a sentiment expressed by some of the children when probed on their experiences of being punched, having their money forcibly taken by peers and being insulted and laughed at. Such experiences were associated with a sense of *"minamaliit ang pagkatao"* ("being belittled as a person").

There were, moreover, unusual forms of violence inflicted by peers, such as stealing classmates' school supplies and selling them to the same children for a ransom price.

▪ Violence Inflicted by School Personnel

The World Study revealed that forms of violence commonly perpetrated by teachers and other school staff, with or without the overt or tacit approval of education ministries and other authorities that oversee schools include corporal punishment and other cruel and humiliating forms of punishment or treatment, sexual and gender-based violence, and bullying.⁴⁰

In this study, being shouted at by teachers was the most common form of violence inflicted by school personnel on high school children, cited by 20.56% of the respondents from this age

⁴⁰ Pinheiro (2006: 116)

range. This was followed by being made to stand under the sun and being cursed or spoken to with harsh words.

Among the younger children, however, pinching was the most commonly cited form of violence perpetrated by adults. 18.57% of Grades 1-3 children and 18.95% of Grades 4-6 children experienced pinching, including pinching of the ear (“pagkurot sa tainga.”). Closely following this were being shouted at, being cursed or spoken to with harsh words, and being spanked using hands or objects.

Some forms of verbal violence were also inflicted by adults in the absence of children concerned; for example, when a child was absent, a teacher said,

“Patay na ba si Princess kaya hindi nakapasok?” (“Is Princess absent because she’s dead?”)

There were, moreover, instances in which adults used more than one form of violence concurrently.

“Kapag hindi kami naglilinis, pinipingot at binabato kami ng walis ni ma’am.” (“If we don’t do our cleaning errands, our teacher pinches our ears and throws the broom at us.”)

There were also unusual forms of physical violence inflicted by teachers. One child expressed his despondency:

“Sana hindi na n’ya kami patamblingin habang hawak n’ya ang tenga namin kasi masakit.” (“We wish our teacher would stop making us do somersaults while she’s holding our ear, because that hurts.”)

Another child shared that he walked home without slippers because his teacher took them, so by the time he got home he had numerous cuts and lesions on his feet.

The above findings therefore validate the World Study on Violence Against Children revealing various forms of violence inflicted both by children’s peers (mostly different types of bullying and gender-based violence), and by school personnel (mostly corporal punishment in the guise of discipline).

D. Violence as Part of Discipline

1. Corporal Punishment

The Committee on the Rights of the Child defines ‘corporal’ or ‘physical’ punishment as any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Corporal punishment and other forms of cruel or degrading

punishment used by school heads and teachers, were frequently surfaced throughout the conduct of the World Study on Violence Against Children.⁴¹

In the Philippines, the National Strategic Framework for Action to End Violence Against Children cites that the definition of corporal punishment must not be limited to harmful physical punishment but should necessarily include emotional and humiliating or degrading punishment.

While being talked to by adults or peers in private in response to misdemeanor was experienced by 60.52% of the children who took part in this study, various forms of violence as part of discipline were found to be common. Examples of actual experiences of corporal punishment shared by the children were:

- *“Pinahiya kung di makasagot ng tama sa tanong”* (“Embarrassed in front of others when unable to give the correct answer to a question”)
- *“Pinagpatrabaho kapag walang takdang aralin, pinagsabihan ng masasakit na salita”* (“Made to do manual work when an assignment was not done, spoken to with hurtful words”)
- Made to “sit in the air”
- *“Pinapalo ng stick ang kamay, kinurot”* (“Hit on the hand with a stick, pinched”)
- *“Ibinilad sa araw dahil may ginawang hindi maganda”* (“Made to stand in the sun because of bad behavior”)
- *“Pinagsabihan ng bobo”* (“Called stupid”)
- *“Pinalo ng teachers”* (“Spanked by teachers”)
- *“Pagpalo ng teacher sa kamay pag walang assignment”* (“Spanked on the hand by the teacher when coming to class with no assignment”)
- *“Pagkurot sa tainga, pambabato ng eraser”* (“Pinching of the ear, having an eraser thrown at them”)
- *“Pagpapatanggal ng damo kapag na-late sa klase”* (“Being made to pull grass/weeds for coming to class late”)
- *“Pagkakaroon ng mga punishment na di makatarungan tulad ng pagpapahakot ng buhangin kapag late”* (“Given unjust punishment like hauling sand when tardy in coming to school”)
- *“Imposed na policy ng principal na sa bawat isang minutong mabuli sa klase ang estudyante ay may kapalit na isang bato at iipunin at dadalhin sa katapusan ng school year.”* (“The principal imposed a policy that for every minute that one is tardy in coming to class, one piece of rock will be gathered, and all the rocks accumulated will be carried by the student at the end of the school year.”)

There were also isolated instances reported, such as that of a teacher who punched a student’s abdomen after the child was caught eating papaya fruit in the school garden. The child’s parents chose not to complain because they felt they were helpless because of their poverty.

⁴¹ Pinheiro (2006: 116-117)

Children expressed disapproval over most of the forms of corporal punishment that they encountered. Below are some of the resulting emotions expressed by children who experienced different forms of corporal punishment:

- *“Nakakahiya sa mga kaklase ko”* (“It’s embarrassing among my classmates”)
- *“Nawawalan ng pag-galang ang mga bata sa mga nakakatanda”* (“Children lose their respect for the adults”)
- *“Nagrebeldel sa teacher”* (“We rebel against the teacher”)
- *“Nawawalan ng ganang pumasok sa school”* (“Losing interest in going to school”)
- *“Nagiging matigas ang ulo at minsan gumaganti na”* (“Becoming headstrong and sometimes becoming inclined to fight back”)
- *“Nasasaktan, nahibiya na pumasok sa school at merong humibinto na talaga sa pag-aaral”* (“Hurt, ashamed to go to school, some to the point of totally dropping out of school”)
- *“Bumaba ang tingin sa sarili”* (“Starting to look down on oneself”)
- *“Natakot sa teacher”* (“Became frightened of the teacher”)

2. Views on “Acceptable” Punishment

While the children respondents generally preferred that they be talked to in private whenever they needed reprimand, they also expressed acceptance and approval of some forms of corporal punishment for a child’s misbehavior or violation of rules. Such “acceptable” forms of punishment include pinching or hitting the child. For what could be considered as petty crimes such as stealing, the common response was *“kulong”* or to imprison the culprit.

It is interesting to note that going up the grade/year levels, corporal punishment was cited to be less and less acceptable, and talking in private or undergoing counseling and even paying fines was more and more preferred by the children. Only the children from Grades 1-3 felt that being shouted at or cursed were acceptable as punishment. Such differences may be attributed to a growing sense of shame and self-consciousness as children got older, causing them to prefer to be dealt with privately and not be subjected to verbal or physical punishment in front of their peers.

That the children from Grades 4-6 and high school saw “paying fines” as an acceptable form of penalty is ironic, considering punishment or school tasks involving money were actually cited by children to be among the things they disliked the most in school. Paying fines for violations is common in most schools in lieu of physical or other forms of abuse.

A notable response to misdemeanors considered as appropriate by Grades 4-6 children was *“bayaan lang”* or letting the child be. This kind of response is indicative of having a broader sense of tolerance to children’s misbehavior compared with the high school children, who cited

corporal punishment as an acceptable response to misbehavior. When it came to academic failure, however, both Grades 4-6 and high school children cited such tolerance as an appropriate response.

Table 9: Appropriate Responses to Various Situations According to Children

Situation	Perceived Appropriate Response (<i>Ano ang dapat gawin?</i>)		
	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-6	High School
Misbehavior of Children	1. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 2. hitting or pinching the child, or tweaking her/ his ears (<i>palo, kurot, pingot</i>) 3. shouting, cursing, talking to the child in a raised voice (<i>sigaw, mura, taasan ng boses</i>)	1. pay fines (<i>multa</i>) 2. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 3. letting the child be (<i>bayaan lang</i>)	1. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 2. pay fines (<i>multa</i>) 3. hitting or pinching the child, or tweaking her/ his ears (<i>palo, kurot, pingot</i>)
Violating School Regulations	1. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 2. hitting or pinching the child, or tweaking her/ his ears (<i>palo, kurot, pingot</i>) 3. shouting, cursing, talking to the child in a raised voice (<i>sigaw, mura, taasan ng boses</i>)	1. pay fines (<i>multa</i>) 2. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 3. hitting or pinching the child, or tweaking her/ his ears (<i>palo, kurot, pingot</i>)	1. pay fines (<i>multa</i>) 2. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 3. giving extra school work (<i>pagdagdag sa gawain</i>)
Academic Failure	1. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 2. hitting or pinching the child, or tweaking her/ his ears (<i>palo, kurot, pingot</i>) 3. shouting, cursing, talking to the child in a raised voice (<i>sigaw, mura, taasan ng boses</i>)	1. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 2. letting the child be (<i>bayaan lang</i>) 3. hitting or pinching the child, or tweaking her/ his ears (<i>palo, kurot, pingot</i>)	1. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 2. giving extra school work (<i>pagdagdag sa gawain</i>) 3. letting the child be (<i>bayaan lang</i>)
Involvement in Petty Crimes	1. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 2. hitting or pinching the child, or tweaking her/ his ears (<i>palo, kurot, pingot</i>)	1. imprisonment (<i>kulong</i>) 2. hitting or pinching the child, or tweaking her/ his ears (<i>palo, kurot, pingot</i>) 3. talking to the child in	1. talking to the child in private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>) 2. imprisonment (<i>kulong</i>) 3. pay fines (<i>multa</i>)

Situation	Perceived Appropriate Response (<i>Ano ang dapat gawin?</i>)		
	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-6	High School
	3. imprisonment (<i>kulong</i>)	private (<i>kausapin ang bata ng pribado</i>)	

A number of the above responses coincided with findings from the 2006 PLAN study on child discipline in the Philippines, which cited counseling, beating/spanking and withdrawing or reducing school allowance as disciplinary acts that both adults and children considered most acceptable.

E. Violence Against Children in Other Settings

Although the survey was focused on children’s experiences of violence in schools, many children also took it as an opportunity to share with the researchers other experiences of violence and abuse in other settings particularly within their own homes. This sharing was observed in all grade levels in all the three provinces.

Since the children voluntarily reported abuses outside the school setting, it was interesting to compare these forms of violence experienced in school and outside school. In some items, the frequency of cases of violence outside the school setting was even higher than the incidence of violence in schools. Across all grade levels, for instance, pinching and spanking were incidents that were much higher outside the school setting. Moreover among children from Grades 1-3, cases of being pinched (62.21%), spanked (43.49%), whipped (52.12%), hit at the nape or head area (29%), slapped (28.34%), and made to do heavy tasks (16.12%) all occurred more outside the school setting. In addition, a percentage of high school students (6.33%) reported having their heads banged against the wall or against a table or object at home.

The above information seemed to imply that parents or other members of the family used violence in response to the misbehavior of the children. This is corroborated by reports of violence at home that were also written down and described by the children in the survey forms. As one high school student shared,

“Pinapalo ako ng tatay ko, ako ay pinagsasalitaan ng nanay ko, ang mukha ko ay sinubso sa putik ng nanay ko, pinakain ako ng hilaw na bayabas ng kuya ko.” (“My father spansks me, my mother speaks harshly to me and shoved my face in mud, and my brother made me eat unripe guava.”)

The children expressed awareness that violence was not limited to acts done by strangers and other people not related to them, and family members and relatives could also inflict it. The lack of opportunities to discuss their experiences and observations could also be gleaned from the number of reported cases in the survey forms.

This voluntary sharing of experiences of violence at home and community may, to a large extent, be attributed to the high level of awareness of children's rights, a basic program of PLAN in their project areas.

Table 10: Cases of Violence Against Children Inside and Outside of School

Children's Experiences	Grades 1-3 (n=614)		Grades 4-6 (n=612)		High School (n=1216)	
	in School %	Outside School %	in School %	Outside School %	in School %	Outside School %
Psychological/Verbal						
Ridiculed or teased (<i>pinagtawanan o tinukso</i>)	53.58	18.08	70.59	8.82	66.28	13.90
Shouted at (<i>sinigawan</i>) cursed, used harsh hurtful language (<i>minura o sinabihan ng masasakit na salita</i>)	40.39	29.32	64.54	15.03	59.13	21.46
Threatened with physical violence (<i>binantaan na sasaktan</i>)	-- *	--	41.99	10.13	22.53	9.13
Threatened to hurt people close to the child (<i>binantaan na sasaktan ang taong malapit sa iyo</i>)	--	--	24.67	5.72	12.66	6.09
Deliberately ignored or not spoken to (<i>sadyang hindi kinausap o pinansin</i>)	19.22	12.05	48.86	6.54	46.79	14.23
Physical						
Pinched (<i>kinurot</i>)	31.76	62.21	37.42	41.50	43.01	35.69
Had things thrown at him/ her (<i>binato ng kahit anong bagay</i>)	30.13	20.68	31.70	11.27	29.03	13.16
Spanked or hit using hands or an object (<i>pinalo</i>)	29.97	43.49	23.69	55.39	16.04	52.38
Whipped/Hit by a belt (<i>sininturon</i>)	6.84	52.12	--	--	--	--
Hit at the nape or head area (<i>binatukan</i>)	24.27	28.99	--	--	--	--
Had his/ her head banged (<i>inuntog ang ulo</i>),	--	--	8.99	5.07	5.02	6.33
Slapped (<i>sinampal</i>)	12.05	28.34	20.42	14.87	20.89	12.66
Mauled (<i>binugbog</i>)	--	--	12.75	10.13	4.85	6.99
Made to stand under the sun (<i>binilad sa araw</i>)	7.33	7.49	10.78	0.98	18.59	1.15
Locked in a room or enclosed space (<i>kinulong</i>)	6.68	6.03	4.08	2.78	3.04	1.97
Sexual						
Spoken to in a sexually offensive manner (<i>ginamitan ng malalaswang salita</i>)	--	--	31.70	6.86	37.42	13.16
Touched inappropriately (<i>chancing, hinamas, hinipuan</i>)	12.87	1.14	12.09	0.98	13.16	2.80

	Grades 1-3 (n=614)		Grades 4-6 (n=612)		High School (n=1216)	
Kissed (<i>hinalikan ng hindi gusto</i>)	5.21	0.81	6.21	0.33	7.89	1.64
Made to undress (<i>pinaghubad ng damit</i>)	--	--	1.80	0.33	1.56	0.25
Forced to have sex (<i>pinilit na makipag sex</i>)	--	--	0.98	0.00	1.07	0.99
Other Experiences						
Made to do heavy tasks (<i>pinagawa ng mabigat na Gawain</i>)	4.72	16.12	--	--	--	--

F. Effects of Violence on Children

The World Report on Violence Against Children cites health, social and educational impacts of school violence.⁴² These are validated by the effects of violence cited by the children who participated in this study.

Children complained that experiences of violence are “*masakit sa isipan at katawan*” (“hurtful to the mind and the body”). As an effect of violence, students cannot focus on their studies, and are sometimes left behind in class lessons because of the negative distraction. There was even a child who related his inability to sleep well at night after experiencing violence in school. One child, who is always teased by classmates and accused of being adopted, shared her experience:

“Masakit at nakakainis. Hindi ko na naasikaso ang aking pag-aaral dahil sa kakaisip.” (“It’s painful and infuriating. I am unable to attend to my studies because of I think about it too much.”)

Another child, meanwhile, attached a sense of resolve to the ill feelings caused by his classmates’ habit of laughing at him and ridiculing him whenever he made mistakes while reading in class.

“Sumasama ang loob ko...Mas pagbutihin ko pa ang pagbabasa para hindi na ako pagtawanan.” (“My feelings are hurt. I will improve my reading skills so that I would not be laughed at anymore.”)

On the contrary, many children find themselves harboring anger and resentment and a desire to get back at the perpetrators of violence or to inflict pain on other people. Related to these emotions, feelings of rebellion against their teachers and loss of respect toward authority figures were also a common response among children.

These sentiments of the children were actually reflected in their behavior, as observed by school personnel and peers. Children who experienced violence were described as “*nagiging magulo*” (“becoming rowdy”), “becoming violent” and “losing their good manners.” Some children also end up doing to other children the same acts of violence done to them.

⁴² Pinheiro (2006: 128-131)

Experiences of violence also had apparent effects on how children regarded themselves and others. Some of the emotions they shared were:

- *“malungkot, nasaktan at nabihya”* (“sad, hurt and ashamed”)
- *“bumaba ang tingin sa sarili”* (“developed a negative self concept”)
- *“nabihya nang makisalamuba”* (“felt timid/inhibited in interacting with others”)
- *“malungkot, wala nang kaibigan”* (“lonely, lost all friends”)
- *“pinangbibinaan ng loob”* (“diminished self-confidence”)
- *“nawalan ng tiwala sa ibang tao”* (“lost trust in other people”)
- *“naging takot sa mga guro”* (“became frightened of teachers”)
- *“nagtatanim ng galit sa teachers”* (“bears a deep grudge against teachers”)
- *“afraid in reporting to their classes”* (“scared of reporting to class”)
- *“nawalan ng gana na sumali sa mga activities sa school”* (“lost enthusiasm to participate in school activities”)
- *“hindi na gusto lumabas ng bahay”* (“did not want to get out of the house anymore”)

As evidenced above, experiences of violence caused children to develop inhibitions and fears that affected the way they relate with other people, hampered their participation in school and their academic performance, and for some, even resulted in being scared to face the world outside of the home. These effects of violence on the children in turn resulted in absenteeism, with a number of children even dropping out and refusing to re-enroll. One respondent opined that children might carry their negative experiences with them until they grow up.

Violence against children also had effects on the schools and its personnel. Some teachers become the object of parents’ anger, and school officials shared that their reputation could be affected by reports of violence inflicted on students.

On a different level, although children commonly expressed dislike for the widespread practice of forcing students to pay fines as punishment for different kinds of misdemeanors, they manifested an accepting attitude toward it especially if applied in lieu of corporal punishment. Such preference, which was particularly expressed by the older (high school) children, poses risks in terms of fostering unethical mindsets and creating an environment conducive to developing corrupt attitudes and behavior as the children proceed in life and become adult members, and perhaps leaders, of the community.

G. Factors Behind Violence Against Children in School

Respondents cited numerous perceived factors that could have contributed to the incidence of various forms of VAC in schools.

1. Family/Personal Background

Among the major factors cited behind peer-to-peer violence are the family background (“family culture, status and upbringing of the parents”) and the personal circumstances of children. For instance, some children were observed, *“nanakit sa school kasi sinasaktan din sila sa house nila”* (“hurting other children because they are also hurt at home”). Others, meanwhile, were seen as, *“hindi na-disiplina ng magulang,”* (“not disciplined by parents”) and *“magulang kinukunsinti yung mga anak kabiti may ginawang hindi tama”* (“tolerated by parents in spite of wrongdoing”). For some others, there was a perception that the cause is *“kawalan ng pera, kaya nakakapag-isip ng pang-aabuso”* (“lack of money or resources, which make them think of committing abuse.”)

2. Peer Pressure and Media Influence

Influences outside the home were also cited by respondents, particularly peer influence – *“gumagaya ng barkada, friends at mga tao sa paligid”* (“imitating their gang, friends and other people around them”). Many of the respondents also attributed children’s inclination to violence to their exposure to the media.

3. Lack of Awareness, Passive Attitude

Children moreover identified behavior and attributes that encourage or reinforce the infliction of violence. For instance, some felt that *“hindi siguro alam ng iba na naabuso na sila kaya palagi at paulit-ulit na nangyayari”* (“there are children who do not realize that they are already being abused, so it happens to them often and repeatedly”). Also, *“pag hindi pinapatulan ang mga nang-aabuso ay nasasanay na gumawa uli”* (“when the abuse is tolerated or not responded to, the perpetrators get used to repeating the offense.”)

Another set of factors cited by the respondents were related to levels of awareness and perceptions regarding children’s rights. On one hand, there were children who stated that acts of violence were committed by adults because parents and teachers were unaware of the rights of the child. This statement indicates that the children were aware of said rights.

On the other hand, children also made statements referring to violence, particularly corporal punishment, as a result of children’s own shortcomings. Such statements cited the following reasons:

- *“mga pasaway ang students kaya napalo ng teachers”* (“the students were unruly so they were spanked by the teachers”)
- *“pagiging huli sa klase”* (“late in coming to school”)
- *“behavioral problems -- pag-iingay, pang-aaway, walang respeto”* (“being noisy, starting fights, lack of respect”)
- “students’ behavior provoked the teachers”
- “students are not observing the school policy”
- “disobedient students”

The citing of the above reasons seemed to imply perceptions that some forms of violence are deserved, particularly when inflicted to punish apparent offenses and to discipline negative behavior. Such perceptions may reflect a lack of knowledge or internalization of child rights and child protection principles.

4. Abuse of Power Relations

Another notable factor cited for the infliction of violence, particularly with adults as perpetrators, was fear among the children. There were children, for instance, who permitted a teacher's act of molestation because he was scared. Apart from a feeling of general fear because of the power relations between child and adult in authority, children were further intimidated by the fact that their teachers could give them failing marks in class.

5. Inadequate School Policies and Mechanisms

Lastly, loopholes in school policies and shortcomings of people in authority were also cited as contributory factors to the incidences of violence in school. For instance, some respondents complained that there was a "lack of specific rules on discipline for both students and school personnel" and "no proper management" of school officials. The parents also do not get adequately involved in the affairs of the school: "Parents who have lots of complaint on the policy of the schools are not attending the school meetings."

There were also no existing mechanisms for reporting; thus, "*walang ginawang aksyon dahil hindi alam ng mga nakakataas*" ("No action is undertaken because people in authority have no knowledge of what happens"). Moreover, there were students who reported that their school principal had no reaction whatsoever even when cases were brought to his attention. The situation was even worse for some students, who shared how they did not know where to report or to go for help as it was the principal himself who inflicted violence against them.

H. Institutional Interventions Addressing VAC in School

1. Response

Respondents cited a variety of measures by which schools addressed incidences of violence against children. The basic response to peer-to-peer violence is usually the imposition of punishment and the sending of students to the office of the guidance counselor or the principal to be reprimanded. A common intervention, especially when the child's violation is considered serious or the admonishment or punishment given does not effect change in the child's behavior, is calling the attention of an offending child's parents. Teachers would usually meet with the parents to advise them of their child's behavior, or provide reports during parent-teacher-community association meetings.

When the violence is serious, such as when student gangs are formed, school administrators coordinate with barangay officials for assistance. Some acts of violence by children also turned out to be grave (e.g., stabbing a peer), causing school authorities to send the child to jail and call his parents.

2. Prevention

Preventive action is also undertaken by some schools in coordination with local government officials, such as proposing ordinances for the imposition of curfew hours and restrictions on the selling of liquor and cigarettes.

Attempts at preventing adult-inflicted violence, meanwhile, are undertaken in most of the schools covered by the study, particularly in the form of orientation among teachers on the rights of the child. Actual incidences of adult-inflicted violence were responded to in different ways; some principals ignored reports of abuse, while in one school, the response went as far as having a violating teacher demoted.

I. Respondents' Recommendations

1. Preventive Measures

Children and adults alike who have had exposure to the concepts of children's rights recognized the need to intensify awareness raising on these in order to address adequately the issues on VAC in schools. Thus they recommended orientation activities including seminars for students, parents and teachers. They also recommended that Plan Philippines conduct an orientation on the program and services that the organization is implementing.

Adult respondents moreover acknowledged that teachers and parents should work together to discipline their children properly. According to them, "training on effective parenting" would be helpful to parents; the school officials must "give orientation to students and parents on the school policies;" parents must be "involved in the issues and activities taken up in school;" "parents must have a follow-up or monitor their kids in school and motivate them;" and "parents must be considerate to the teachers in assisting the children in school works, inculcation of positive values."

There was also a call for school administrators to develop and implement policies "that will uphold the protection and development of the students." Such policies, according to the respondents, must be developed in consultation with parents and children. One child further recommended,

"Isang grupo ng mga estudyante ay makasali sa mga meeting ng mga guro at principal para maipalimang din sa mga teacher kung ano lang ang mga dapat o nararapat na parusa para sa mga bata sa paraan na hindi sila mahibirapan at masasaktan." ("a group of students can participate in

the meetings of the teachers and the principal so that they could discuss with the teachers what could be appropriate forms of punishment for children that would not be too difficult and painful.”)

In relation to this recommendation, respondents also expressed the need to regulate the actions of teachers. Foremost, “teachers must be oriented on ethical conduct.” Sessions could take the form of “yearly training/seminars on values formation,” “campaign on VAC program especially to parents and teachers,” and “orientation for teachers and students about the rights and responsibilities of children.” According to respondents, “teachers should treat students as their own children by respecting and understanding them as a human being,” and “there should be an open communication between teachers and students.” Expressing how adults could regularly evoke fear among their students, a child also recommended that teachers should not be allowed to come to class with a stick in their hand.

Still as a preventive measure, one recommendation that surfaced was the designation of a counselor in every school.

2. Responding to Incidences of VAC in School

In terms of addressing erring students, several respondents recommended that proper assessment should be done by the school principal or the teacher prior to imposing a punishment.

“Kung ako ay isang principal kung halimbawa may isang estudyanteng nagkasala or na late pakikinggan ko muna ang kanyang rason bago bigyan ng nararapat na punishment.” (If I were a principal, and a student commits an offense or comes to school late, I will first listen to his reasoning before deciding on the appropriate punishment.”)

Other related recommendations included confronting the students, calling the pupil together with the parents to facilitate monitoring, and ensuring that teachers validate information received “before reacting violently.”

Respondents recommended that the Department of Education undertake monitoring of schools. Some respondents favored the suspension or expulsion of students who commit extreme forms of violence, but they said that the children should be subject to due process and the DepEd should closely regulate punishments.

Penalties were also recommended for teachers who violate the rights of their students, including calls to remove offending teachers from their post:

- *“Paalisin ang guro na nagsasalita ng masasakit sa mga estudyante”* (“Terminate teachers who speak hurtful words to students”)
- *“Alisin kaagad ang guro para di-na makita”* (“Remove the teacher right away so the children would no longer see her.”)

- *“Paalisin sa pwesto ang mga guro na di tumutupad sa kanyang tungkulin”* (“Remove from their post those teachers who do not fulfill their responsibilities”)
- *“Para di-na gumawa kailangan isumbong sa DepEd”* (“Report to the DepEd so that the violation would not be repeated.”)

Lastly, some recommendations looked into the broader community and how a non-violent environment may be fostered both inside and outside school, for all children. Among these suggestions were the call for the implementation of the Alternative Learning System to address the education needs of out of school youth; the formation of a multi-stakeholder group to discuss “the betterment of the children in school and community;” establishing close coordination between the school and the barangay people “for children’s protection and peace and order in the community;” and meetings “among teachers, parents, community leaders and barangay officials.”

VI. SYNTHESIS

A. Violence as an Everyday Experience

The study results show that violence is a reality faced by many children in schools on a regular basis. The prevalence of verbal violence, in particular, is notable not only in its magnitude but also in its profound effects on victimized children.

The children's expressed feelings of low self-esteem, shame, fear, helplessness and loneliness as a result of teasing, ridicule, harsh words and shouting from their peers and teachers manifest how verbal violence can, at the very least, be as harmful as physical violence. With children sharing that verbal abuse causes them to lose sleep at night, think lowly of themselves, cry everyday and fear going to school, it is understandable how it can affect a child's sense of personhood so much that it hampers the ability to relate to other people and causes some children to withdraw from school and from the outside world all together.

Still, verbal violence often goes unchecked, as laughing at a classmate who is unable to read well and teasing and calling names are widely seen as regular tendencies that are not as injurious as physical violence.

Even for physical violence, forms such as punching and kicking are only viewed negatively as they relate to peer-to-peer conflicts and to the negative behavior and attitudes of children. In contrast, physical violence inflicted by teachers such as pinching, spanking and hitting on the head are considered acceptable by adults and children alike even when done on a regular basis, as long as they are inflicted for the sake of discipline and at a degree commensurate to a child's wrongdoing.

B. Violence as a Function of Power

Much of the violence cited in the study appears to be intertwined more with issues of power (in terms of either social construct or mandate) rather than aggression. The most commonly cited forms of peer-to-peer violence (teasing, ridicule, harsh words, shouting), for one, seems to be a function of feelings of superiority, and inflicted by children on their fellow children who are perceived to be intellectually inferior, weaker, smaller, or different. Children's power over their peers may be rooted in prevailing ideas of dominance based on socio-economic status, gender, physical build, or ethnicity among others.

As for adult-inflicted violence, the official authority of teachers over children leads to abuses in the guise of discipline. Violence is also seen as an entitlement, with teachers having the right (or entitlement) to inflicting justifiable violence against students who are seen as their subjects. This mindset can still be rooted in: (1) the cultural viewpoint that considers children as not yet fully

developed persons or as beings that are yet to be of equal status with adults; and (2) the social construct that looks at teachers as the authority figures in determining the best means to mold the intellect and the character of children.

Moreover, children are usually caught helpless in the face of verbal, physical, sexual and other forms of violence exacted by teachers, as they recognize the teachers' capacity to manipulate their grades, influence their standing in school and inflict further violence against them. Lastly, with teachers, and principals as the authority figures in the school who are seen to have the power to protect children from harm, the children's powerlessness and helplessness are magnified when these adults themselves become the perpetrators of violence.

Among the observations on some of the children victimized by violence was the development of rebellious attitudes and the tendency to do to other children what was inflicted on them by others. Such manifestations can be related to children's attempts at regaining their sense of control and power after having been made helpless by their own experiences of violence.

C. Perceptions on Discipline and Violence

The study on discipline undertaken by PLAN Philippines in 2006 indicates that in the Philippines, "notions of child discipline centered on teaching good values, molding or shaping children's character and equipping them with a moral sense of right and wrong. The ultimate goal was to develop socially responsible and morally upright individuals." As such, forms of discipline that include corporal punishment are considered acceptable except when:

- the disciplinary act is not commensurate to the offense committed by the child;
- the disciplinary act is used frequently and without any valid reason;
- the disciplinary act is done out of impulsive anger with the purpose of hurting the child;
- the child sustains physical injuries and is in pain;
- the disciplinary act humiliates or degrades the person of the child;
- when vulnerable body parts such as the head are involved; and
- when the disciplinary act is not appropriate to the age, gender and physical and mental state of the child.⁴³

The above findings are affirmed by this study, which also found that adults and children alike deem some forms of violence against children acceptable, if they are exercised in the context of discipline and provided that they are inflicted at a degree commensurate to a child's offense. One guidance counselor even expressed that it is acceptable to hurt a pupil when it is done to serve as a warning.

The children in this current study expressed differing views on acceptable and unacceptable forms of corporal punishment, and the differences corresponded to the age levels of the respondents. For instance, Grades 1-3 children felt it acceptable to be shouted at, cursed and

⁴³Plan, 2006. Understanding Child Discipline and Child Abuse in the Filipino Context: Comparing Perspectives of Parents, Children, Professionals and Community Leaders.

spoken to with harsh words, but such punishment was deemed inappropriate by older children, who preferred paying fines and receiving physical punishment such as being hit or pinched or having their ears tweaked. This could be attributed to children's increasing self-consciousness and emotional volatility as they reach puberty: physical pain and financial burdens are deemed less damaging than verbal abuse, which causes embarrassment, a sense of self-shame and deep psychological and emotional pain. Thus, even when paying fines is an extremely disagreeable punishment, it is still preferable to being shouted at, cursed or spoken to with harsh language.

The general view expressed by respondents about the acceptability of various forms of violence within certain parameters becomes problematic when assessed side by side with the negative effects of VAC on children also identified by the respondents. While establishing that VAC has harmful outcomes, the respondents were in effect also expressing that they were willing to take the risks and to accept the consequences of VAC so long as it could facilitate discipline and character building. Yet, looking closely at the effects of VAC listed in this study, one would grasp that using violence could actually prove counter-productive, as it could result in rebellion and aggression instead of values formation, and could urge obedience not out of an enhanced sense of character but merely out of fear. In fact, violence against children could lead ultimately not to the development of a child, but to a child's diminished sense of self.

It is important to note, then, that across all age ranges, the form of discipline that is seen to be appropriate regardless of a child's offense is simply being approached and talked to in private. This common response could actually indicate a growing awareness that a positive approach to discipline could be sufficient, and could even bear more fruit and apply to the various situations in which a child's character needs molding.

D. The Role of Adults

Participants to the study expressed belief that adults have different roles to play in ensuring that violence against children is addressed in schools. From the recommendations given by both children and adults, parents very clearly play a key role not only in being the primary caregivers and authority figures influencing the values of children, but also as stakeholders in the school who should be very much involved in the development, implementation and monitoring of school policies and programs meant to benefit their children.

Indeed, the partnership between parents and teachers is crucial in ensuring that the well being and the development of children are fostered both in the home and the school. Teachers are definitely given the prime responsibility of caring for the children within the context of the classroom, and as such, are tasked not only to educate the children but to protect them as well. As for school administrators and other school personnel, it is important that they be able to collaborate in proactively creating an environment that is conducive to children's development. The principal/school administrator should take the lead in ensuring that children are cared for, that their needs are addressed and that they are protected from abuse and other harms that may be caused by their surroundings, their peers and their teachers.

Lastly, with the growing recognition of the role of the broader community in the affairs of the school, it is important that community leaders such as the local government officials and other community members be more involved in collaborative efforts relating to education. Such efforts may include initiatives that would promote education among all the children in the community, protect children from exploitation, abuse and other harms inside and outside the school, and facilitate the development of children into productive, upright citizens of the community. These would also include undertakings that would help address root causes of violence such as the promotion of children's rights among all community members, the engagement of various sectors to collaborate in activities that would raise the standards of living of families, and establishing policies, programs and mechanisms to address violence at the community level.

E. Child Participation

At the center of all efforts to eliminate violence against children in schools are the children themselves, who must, at all levels, be meaningfully involved in taking up this issue head on. Basic to this involvement is ensuring that children become conscious of their rights and responsibilities. They must then be supported in their need for platforms to relate their experiences of violence and to discuss their thoughts and feelings about what can and must be done to end violence against children.

Children must also be given the liberty to explore and decide the nature and level of their involvement in the various processes that would be entailed in ending VAC in schools. As evidenced by the recommendations that they gave in this study, children have very vivid ideas and would simply need the guidance and support of adults to find solutions to the problems that they are experiencing first-hand.

F. Policy and Program Implications – Recommendations for Further Action

It is quite apparent that PLAN has made headway in its efforts to promote children's rights in the areas covered by the study, as manifested in the general level of awareness of both children and adults of the importance of children's rights and of how VAC is a violation of these.

Still, much needs to be accomplished particular to protecting children's rights in the context of the school. Even with the advocacy on children's rights it is apparent that violence and various abuses are still prevalent and concrete policies, programs and mechanisms addressing these are still virtually non-existent.

Advocacy for the stronger involvement of the Department of Education in developing child protection policies and mechanisms for schools must be facilitated. Policy development, implementation and monitoring at the Department level would better ensure compliance at the level of schools and would facilitate the establishment of standards beyond those that are applicable only to specific schools and localities. The employment of a guidance counselor in every school would also help ensure that a point person exists for providing counseling and facilitation services to children involved in or victimized by school violence.

The collaboration of different stakeholders for the protection of children can be concretized by establishing clear, functioning mechanisms for VAC case reporting and processing and school monitoring. The school governing council or the PTCA could take the lead in implementing such mechanisms, which should be supported by the DepEd and be participated in by children, parents, school administrators, teachers and community members.

Still in connection with the above, local government officials, other community leaders, school officials, teachers, parents and children must all be adequately educated on relevant laws relating to child abuse and child protection. Activities to facilitate in-depth understanding of violence against children must be conducted. Capacity building must also be provided across the different stakeholder groups, so that they could facilitate the processing of VAC cases and ensure justice for children.

Moreover, programs promoting children's rights in schools and in the communities must be taken to another level and concretized through setting-specific campaigns. Specific, relevant VAC themes could be identified by children and could be the focus of awareness raising and capacity building efforts. Specific to the school setting, such efforts should target both peer-inflicted and adult-inflicted forms of violence, and could include the development of modules for teachers on handling bullying and other violent acts.

The implementation of existing national and local laws on child protection must be monitored closely. Further, the passing into law of existing bills for banning corporal punishment and raising the age of sexual consent must be advocated. Local legislation must also be enacted at the barangay and the municipal levels, which would further help protect children from possible abuses and various forms of violence.

In support of policy advocacy and program development, more in-depth studies on school violence must be undertaken. For instance, alternative, positive approaches to discipline in place of corporal punishment can be promoted by documenting and disseminating cases demonstrating the merits of such, and by facilitating discussions with both adults and children in the schools and the broader communities. The case against corporal punishment can also be built by looking more deeply into its impacts on children.

Likewise, further research on bullying, gender-related violence and other dimensions of peer violence must be conducted in support of developing more concrete and specific interventions applicable to violence in the educational setting.

REFERENCES

Printed Sources

- Balanon, T., Puzon, M., and Camacho A. (2002). Emerging good practices: a documentation of the experiences and learning of Save the children UK's Programme for abused and exploited children. Philippines: Save the Children UK and Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, UP Center for Integrative and Development studies.
- Dela Cruz, T.; Protacio, E.; Balanon, F.; Yacat, J. and Francisco, C. (2000). Trust and power: Child abuse in the eyes of the child and the parent. Philippines: United Nations Children's Fund and Save the Children Fund.
- Durrant, J.E. (2007). Positive Discipline: What it is and How to Do It. Thailand: Keen Publishing Co. Ltd.
- Hatty, S. (2000). Masculinities, violence, and culture. UK: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Obikeze, D. S. (1985). Child maltreatment in non-industrialized countries: A Framework for analysis. Bankowski, Z. and Carballo, M. (eds.). Battered children and child abuse: Proceedings of the XIXth round table conference of Council for International Organization of Medical Sciences (CIOMS), Berne, Switzerland, December 4-6, 1985. Organized jointly by CIOMS and the World Health Organization.
- Plan (2005). Understanding child discipline and child abuse in the Filipino context: Comparing perspectives of parents, children, professionals and community leaders. Makati City, Philippines: Plan.
- Protacio-Marcelino, E., dela Cruz, T., Balanon, F., Camacho, A., and Yacat, J. (2000). Child abuse in the Philippines: An Integrated literature review and annotated bibliography. Quezon City: UP CIDS.
- Save the Children UK. (2006a). Philippine laws related to the discipline and punishment of children. Quezon City, Philippines: Save the Children UK.
- Save the Children Sweden (2006b). Results of Comparative Research on the Physical and Emotional Punishment of Children in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Thailand: Keen Publishing Co. Ltd.

Save the Children Sweden (2005a). Discipline and Punishment of Children: A Rights-Based Review of Laws, Attitudes and Practices in East Asia and the Pacific. Thailand: Keen Publishing Co. Ltd.

Save the Children (2005b). Strategy to Address the Physical Punishment and Emotional Abuse of Children: Proceedings of the International Save the Children Alliance Regional Workshop Thailand: Keen Publishing Co. Ltd.

Save the Children Sweden (2004). How to Research the Physical and Emotional Punishment of Children. Thailand: Keen Publishing Co. Ltd.

UNICEF and the Department of Education (1999). Is your school child-friendly? A self-assessment guide.

Yacat, J. A. and Ong, M. G. (2001). Beyond the home: Child abuse in the church and school. Quezon City: Save the Children (UK) Philippines and UP CIDS PST.

Internet Sources

Council for the Welfare of Children (2005). Violence against children: Philippine report. Feature paper for April 2005. Available at <http://www.childprotection.org.ph>

CRC Committee Concluding Observations to the Second Country Report of the Philippines (2005). Retrieved from: [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CRC.C.15.Add.259.En?OpenDocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CRC.C.15.Add.259.En?OpenDocument)

DSWD Data on Child Abuse Cases (2006). Retrieved from: <http://www.dswd.gov.ph/download.php?catid=4>

Felix, M. L. E.; Ingente, R. DP. (2003). Protecting Women and Children: A Handbook on Community Based Response to Violence Center for Reproductive Health, Leadership and Development, Inc. Featured paper Child Protection Org for July 2003. Retrieved from <http://www.childprotection.org.ph/monthlyfeatures/jul2k3a.doc>

Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment Against Children, Human Rights Watch, International Federation of Social Workers, International Save the Children Alliance, International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, International School Psychology Association, OMCT/World Organization Against Torture, World Vision International. Retrieved from <http://www.crin.org/violence/search/closeup.asp?infoID=10478> September 21, 2006.

Nacional Statistical Coordination Board Data on 2000 Philippine Population. Retrieved from: http://www.nscb.gov.ph/secstat/d_popn.asp

Perry, B. D. (2002). The Vortex of violence: How children adapt and survive in a violent world. The Child Trauma Academy. Retrieved from http://www.childtrauma.org/ctamaterials/Vortex_02_V2.pdf

Pinheiro, P. S. (2006). World report on violence against children. Independent Expert for the United Nations Secretary-General's Study on violence against children. Retrieved <http://www.violencestudy.org/a553>.

Philippine Information agency website Retrieved from
<http://www.pia.gov.ph/default.asp?m=12&fi=p051122.htm&no=2> January 14, 2007.

Protacio-Marcelino, E., de la Cruz, M. T., Balanon, F. A.G., Camacho, A.Z.V., &Yacat, J. (2000). Child Abuse in the Philippines: An Integrated Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography. Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines. Retrieved from
<http://www.childprotection.org.ph/monthlyfeatures/archives/archive01.html>

Philippine Government Response to the Questionnaire for the UN Violence Against Children Study. Retrieved from: www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/CRC/docs/study/responses/Philippines.pdf

Rights of the child note by Secretary-General. UN General assembly the August 29, 2006 sixty first session. Retrieved from: <http://violencestudy.org/IMG/pdf/English-2-2.pdf>

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment No. 1 and 8. Retrieved from:
<http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu2/6/crc/doc/comment.htm>

Terre des Hommes-Germany; Terre des Hommes Netherlands; Asia ACTs Against Child Trafficking. (2005.) Violence against children: The Philippine experience. Featured paper Child Protection Org for September 2005. Retrieved from
<http://www.childprotection.org.ph/monthlyfeatures/oct2k5b.doc>

Third and Fourth Periodic Report of the Philippine Government to the Committee on the Rights of Children (September 2007). Retrieved from:
<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/CRC.C.PHL.4.pdf>

Unpublished Materials

Doronila M.L.C. (2005) Towards the institutionalization of the Child-Friendly School System: Development of the CFSS Monitoring and Evaluation System (CFSS M&E) for Public Elementary Schools.

Special Committee for the Protection of Children (December, 2006). Building a protective and caring environment for Filipino children. Padre Faura, Manila: Department of Justice.

Tan, F. L. (1982). Punishment: A Form of social control among Pangasinan Rural School children. Unpublished dissertation. Quezon City: University of the Philippines System, Department of Professional Education.

Villaroman-Bautista, V. (February 26, 2007) Post roundtable reflections on bullying held in three public schools from September to October, 2006.

Others

Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers, Professional Regulatory Commission, Resolution No 435, Series of 1997

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

DepEd Memorandum No. 297 s. 2006. Prohibitions against acts constituting violations of R.A. 7610

DepEd Memorandum No. 42 s.2007. Training of trainers on the CFSS (Child Friendly School System) modeling process

Republic Act 9208, or An Act to Institute Policies to Eliminate Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, Establishing the Necessary Institutional Mechanisms for the Protection and Support of Trafficked Persons, Providing Penalties for its Violation and for Other Purposes

Republic Act 9231 or An Act Providing for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Affording Stronger Protection for the Working Child, Amending for this Purpose Republic Act no. 7610, as Amended, Otherwise Known as the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act

Republic Act 9344 or An Act Establishing a Comprehensive Juvenile Justice and Welfare System, Creating the Juvenile Justice Council under the Department of Justice, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes

Republic Act 8353 or An Act Expanding the Definition of the Crime of Rape, Reclassifying the same as a Crime Against Persons, Amending for this Purpose Act No. 3815, as Amended, Otherwise Known as the Revised Penal Code, and for Other Purposes

Presidential Decree Number 603. The Child and youth welfare code.

CWC (n.d.). Primer on Child 21: Philippine national strategic framework for plan development for children 2000-2025. Quezon City, Philippines: Council for the Welfare of Children.

APPENDICES

A. Project Team

Project Director : Dr. Nenita Cura, Dean, Philippine School of Social Work

Research Coordinator : Nancy Endrinal Parreño, RSW, MSW

Research Assistants :

Area Researchers :

B. Research Protocol

⌘ Research Questions

There are six questions which the research seeks to answer:

1. What specific acts of teachers, other students, and non-teaching personnel do school children and adult stakeholders consider as violent / abusive or disciplining?
2. What are the considerations when differentiating disciplinary from violent and abusive acts?
3. What factors hinder or sustain incidences of violence and abuse against children in schools?
4. What are the effects of violence and abuse to students who experience them?
5. To what extent does the available system of action in school respond to and prevent abuse and violence against children?
6. In what aspects can school environments of the school be improved towards eliminating violence against children?

These questions will also serve as the guide questions in the focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

Researchers are encouraged to reformulate or translate these questions in such a way that it would be more understood by the FGD participants or interviewees, regardless of their ages. The table below provides illustrates this point in the context of key informant interviews:

Interview Question	Division Superintendent	PTCA President / Community advocate	Child who experienced VAC in school
1. What specific acts of teachers, other students, and non-teaching personnel do school children and adult stakeholders consider as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the common complaints received by your office regarding the treatment of children in schools? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the common cases that you know or have heard of regarding the treatment of children in schools? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What for you should be the right way to treat children in schools?

violent or abusive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How about cases of children complaining about other children? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How about cases of children complaining about other children? 	
2. What are the considerations when categorizing or labeling a certain act as violent or abusive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What makes an act violent? Are there special considerations when it is a child that is directly affected by this act? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What makes _____ (an act considered violent by the informant) violent? How about _____ (other forms of VAC not considered violent by the informant)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What makes _____ (an act considered violent by the informant) wrong? Is there any instance or situation where _____ could be considered right or a proper treatment of children?
3. What are the effects of violence and abuse to students who experience them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the effects of violence and abuse to students who experience them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the effects of violence and abuse to students who experience them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you feel when _____ (form of violence) was done to you? What do you feel about it now (if it happened sometime ago and has stopped)?
4. What factors hinder or sustain incidents of violence and abuse against children in schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you think VAC in schools happen? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you think VAC in schools happen? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there other children who have the same experience as you? What did they think about their experience? Why do you think violence like that happen in school? Do you think other children who did not have the same experience, feel the same way?
5. To what extent does the available system of action in school respond to and prevent violence against children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child wants to report such incidents, what should s/he do? Do you have specific programs or policies to guide your office in addressing VAC? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child wants to report such incidents, what should s/he do? Do you have specific programs or policies to addressing VAC in schools? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did you tell anyone what happened to you? If yes, what did they do? If no, why not? Do you know of children who reported their experience? What happened after?
6. In what aspects can school environments of the school be improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What should be done to address VAC ins schools? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What should be done to address VAC ins schools? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you think VAC in schools is a problem?

towards protecting children / making children safe in schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who should be involved and how? ▪ What role do you see would your office play in this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who should be involved and how? ▪ What role do you see would your group / organization play in this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do you think would be a solution to this problem? ▪ Who should act on it and how?
--	---	---	---

In this connection, it may be more helpful for the researchers to be more conscious of the question objectives during the data gathering rather than the research questions per se i.e.:

Research Question	Question Objective
1. What specific acts of teachers, other students, and non-teaching personnel do school children and adult stakeholders consider as violent or abusive?	Identify forms of violence against children in schools
2. What are the considerations when categorizing or labeling a certain act as violent or abusive?	Define violence; what is violence for them?
3. What are the effects of violence and abuse to students who experience them?	Identify effects of violence in schools to children
4. What factors hinder or sustain incidents of violence and abuse against children in schools?	Identify factors that foster and hinder a safe and protective environment for children in schools
5. To what extent does the available system of action in school respond to and prevent violence against children?	Identify school actions against violence – actual and perceived
6. In what aspects can school environments of the school be improved towards protecting children / making children safe in schools?	Recommendations from participants

⌘ Survey of School Children

OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey seeks to provide quantitative data on the incidents and forms of violence experienced by school children. There are two versions of the survey questionnaire: one is for the very young school children, grades three (six to 10 years old); and the second is for children grades 6 and high school children (ages 11 to 17).

All the questionnaires are designed and worded in such a way that it does not impose on children the judgment that certain acts are violent and abusive.

Survey Tool for Grade 1-3 Students (Questionnaire 1)

The questionnaire is divided into two parts: the first one tackling the forms of violence that may have been experienced by the children and the perpetrators of the violence. The second part lists down several common situations in schools wherein, or for which, the children often punished or disciplined. The survey respondent chooses what s/he thinks is the appropriate consequence for the child in the situation. (See Appendices for the Survey Tool)

Survey Tool for Grade 4-6, and High School Students (Questionnaire 2)

The first two parts of this questionnaire is similar to the Grades 1-3 questionnaire, albeit has more items to be answered.

The third and fourth parts of the survey are open-ended questions which may or may not be answered by the child. These two questions was included mainly as a “sweep” of concerns related to violence against children in schools which may not have been covered, or covered adequately, by the first two parts. (See Appendices for the Survey Tool)

Venue of Survey

The survey will be conducted in the selected schools in each of the research sites. The schools were randomly selected by the PWU research team from the masterlist of schools provided by

the PLAN International and/or the masterlist of public schools available at the Department of Education website (www.deped.gov.ph).

There are 20 schools selected in each area to be venues for the research. Of this number, 10 are elementary schools, and 10 are secondary schools.

Ideally, these schools have been visited by the assigned PWU area coordinator or the local research team leader prior to the survey to brief the principal (or the officer-in-charge or guidance counselor, in the absence of the principal) about the study and data gathering activities.

Target Respondents to the Survey

Age : School children ages 6-17 are targeted for the survey. The age range for the respondents per questionnaire is as follows:

- Questionnaire 1 (Grades 3): nine to 11 years old
- Questionnaire 2 (Grades 6): 11 to 13 years old
- Questionnaire 2 (High School): 12 to below 18 years old

It is important that the age respondent to the questionnaires fall within the given range.

Number of respondents to the survey : A total of 800 respondents per area is targeted for the study. Ideally, this means 40 children will take part in the survey per school. However, if for whatever reason this number cannot be met in a particular school (for instance, the school has a very small population), additional respondents may be drawn from the other schools

Identification of respondents to the survey : Respondents to the survey will be identified from the masterlist of students which were obtained during the ocular visits conducted by the PWU area coordinators or the local research team leaders. These lists should contain the name, age, gender and section of the students.

If the lists of students are not available, the researchers may request the principal to assist them in identifying the respondents. There should be equal representation of girl and boy children in the sample per school. Other considerations are the representation of all class sections in the specific grade or year level.

Who can administer the survey?

Since the study is focused on violence against children in the schools, school personnel, whether of the school where the surveys are being conducted or from other nearby schools may not be the appropriate people to administer the survey. Their presence in the survey rooms is also discouraged as previous experience in conducting the VAC survey has shown that this has affected the response of children.

It is also not advisable for a person connected to the Department of Education to administer the survey as this may give an impression that the selected school is being evaluated. The DepEd personnel, for instance, the CFSS coordinator or district supervisors, may assist in facilitating coordination with the schools but should not be directly involved in data gathering activities.

It is important to highlight in the orientations with schools and research participants themselves that the main goal of the study is to have baseline information of the prevalence of VAC in schools, and the attitudes and perceptions of children and adults of it.

Apart from the above considerations, anybody can administer the survey provided that they have attended an orientation on the survey tool, and that they have signed an agreement that they will keep the information gathered from the survey confidential.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SURVEY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN

Preparation

1. The area coordinator / research team leader coordinates with the school principal days before the actual data collection to explain the research and the process, get the masterlist of students, explore possible venues within the school where the survey could be conducted.
2. The researcher, however, should not yet say whom the chosen participants are and to show a sample of the questionnaires except on the day of the data collection.
3. On the day of data gathering, the researcher requests assistance from the principal / person-in-charge in preparing a room as a survey venue. If there is no room available, alternatives are school stage, library, audio-visual room, and canteen, as long as it provides a secure environment with no distractions.
4. The researcher gathers the participants into the selected space. In the elementary school, the survey for grade 3 and grade 6 respondents should be conducted separately, whether at separate times, or simultaneously in separate rooms.
5. Also, the researcher makes sure that no school employee is around the survey area to ensure confidentiality of the activity.

 It is recommended to conduct the survey during the homeroom or vacant period of the students so as not to take them away from their classes. Ask permission from the principal if the survey will be conducted during or beyond the regular school hours of the child.

Data Collection

1. The researcher ensures that all of the participants are inside the area. He/She checks (a) if the questionnaire matches the grade or year level of the respondents, and (b) the children's age fall within the prescribed range for the questionnaire.
2. The researcher explains to the students that the questionnaire will measure the child-friendliness of the school. He/She describes that in order to do this, the students will answer the questionnaire.
3. He/She emphasizes that all the items should be answered honestly. He/She also clarifies that participation in the survey is voluntary and that the children can withdraw from answering without any negative consequences (e.g. reprimand from teachers, lower grades).

4. The researcher guarantees that their answers will be confidential and that only the results in collated form will be seen by their schools. He/she asks if there are any questions from the children. If there are none, he/she asks them to sign a consent form.
5. There are five items in the informed consent form which are answerable by “yes” (smiley face) or “no” (straight face). These are the following:
 - (a) That I agree to participate in the survey
 - (b) That I agree to participate in the FGDs
 - (c) That I agree to be interviewed
 - (d) That my responses can be used by the Philippine Women’s University for its report
 - (e) That I understand that only my responses, and not name, will be used in the report
6. Emphasize that children can say no in any of the items in the informed consent form.
7. The children who indicate a “no” response to the first item (a) in the informed consent form are thanked, and the researcher looks for a substitute respondent in the list

 Children who answered “yes” to item (a) should ideally answer “yes” to item (d). If the child answers “no” to item (d), clarify further what is meant by this item. Often children who answer “no” need to be reassured that their responses will be kept confidential, and that their names will not appear in the research report

8. After the participants agree to take part in the study, the researcher asks them to write down the name of their school (*paaralan*), their grade or year level (*antas*), and put an X mark on their gender (*kasarian*) whether male (*lalaki*) or female (*babae*). For very young children who may not be able to write the full name of their school, it is the researcher who will fill these blanks after the session.

 Children in the elementary grades may need help in answering the survey forms i.e. writing down their names, the name of their schools, and following instructions. Be sensitive and take time in assisting them.

9. There should be no blank answers in the consent form, and in the profile of respondent at the top part of the questionnaire.

 It is strongly encouraged that two researchers conduct the surveys for elementary school children. One researcher will facilitate the survey, while the other will go around and check the forms of each child.

10. The researcher directs the children’s attention to the first part of the questionnaire, and reads and explains the instructions. He/She explains that the vertical column on the left contains items describing different situations in school; and the second horizontal column on top lists possible persons who could have done the actions described in the listed situations. He/She writes an X on the board showing how an answer should look like, and writes “school nurse”

under the "iba pa" section as an example. He/She emphasizes that the children should put an X on all the answers that apply for each item. He/She inquires if the students understand the instruction. If not, he/she asks which part they don't understand and explains further. (See annex for illustrated pointers in administering the survey)

11. If the participants understand the instructions, the researcher will ask them to proceed in answering the first section of the questionnaire. He/She informs them that they can take as long as they need in accomplishing the section. He/She takes note how long the participants take answering in minutes.
12. When the children are through, the researcher repeats the same process for each section of the questionnaire. It is important that he/she directs the participants' attention to the section before reading and explaining the instructions thoroughly. Then, he/she writes an example on the board on how a question might be answered. Next, he/she asks if there are any questions and explains further if needed. Finally, he/she gives the signal to the students to answer the questionnaire. He/She takes note how long it takes to answer each section.
13. The researcher collects the questionnaire when the students are done answering it. He/She thanks them for their participation by giving them a token. He/She, also gives them the contact details of the team in case they want to inquire or talk further about the research topic. He/She allows the participants to go back to their classes or to go home.

Post – Survey

1. The researcher reviews each questionnaire if all the items have been answered. He/She keeps it in an envelope, labels it, and seals it to keep confidentiality. He/She turns this over to the team leader.
2. A questionnaire is considered *complete* if all the items in the questionnaires are answered. A questionnaire is considered *valid* if the profile of the respondent (age and school attended) corresponds to the survey questionnaire s/he answered. An important feature of validity is also the untampering of responses by anyone, including the researcher. If the child wishes to change her/his answer after the questionnaire was submitted, this should be noted down by the researcher.
3. Only *complete* and *valid questionnaires* will be considered in the research.

Coding and Documentation of Surveys

1. The coding of questionnaires will be done after the survey for each school is completed. This will be done by the researchers who conducted the survey in the particular school.
2. The code shall be written by the researchers on both the informed consent form and the questionnaire.

3. The coding key is as follows:

Area	Code
Masbate	MS
Northern Samar	NS
Camotes Island	CI
Type of School	
Elementary	01
High School	02
School Code	(to be assigned by PWU)
Respondent's Code	(to be assigned by the researcher)

4. Each researcher should write down their observations and insights about the research process.
5. Documentation of survey sessions should take note of the following details (see annex for the format):

- (a) Name of researchers administering the survey (including the documentor)
- (b) Date and time of survey
- (c) School surveyed
- (d) Venue (e.g. classroom, library, canteen)
- (e) Number of children answering the survey
- (f) Number of children who did not join / complete the survey
- (g) Verbal and non-verbal responses of children to the survey (including the questions they asked about the survey)
- (h) Other observations during the survey period



Regarding the research process, remember to document what worked, what didn't work and what worked best in your approaches to children.

6. Survey results will be encoded in the computer format provided by PWU. Encoding of the survey results may or may not be done by the local research team.
7. Photo documentation of the surveys is recommended, however, this should be done only with the expressed agreement of the children.

General Guidelines

The study is a Child-Focused Research and will ensure that it answers to the best interest of the child. It makes certain that no rights of the child will be violated before, during, and as a result of

the study. It shall strictly observe the following guidelines in all stages of the research, including data collection.

1. Safety and Security

No child must be harmed and every child must be protected in the study. During the data collection, it is important that the researcher obtains a secure space for answering the questionnaire. He/She must make certain that no one who could be a possible threat is around the vicinity; these might include teachers, principals, and other employees of the school. The researcher should ask them politely to leave the premises.

2. Confidentiality

The researcher assures the participants that the completed questionnaires will not be seen by anyone except the research team.

- only the child will be allowed to see his/her answered questionnaire;
- the parent or guardian of the child will only be allowed to see the completed survey only after it has been reviewed by the research team;
- only the province-level data from the survey will be made available to the schools and the local government units requesting them
- a sample questionnaire should only be seen by the principal on the day of the data collection. No other school employee is allowed to see the sample questionnaire.
- data collectors shall sign an agreement that they will keep confidential the results of the survey

3. Crisis Detection

When an abusive situation for children is discovered by data collectors, or when a participant confides that he/she is experiencing abuse, the researcher shall immediately inform the PLAN area office and the PWU research team to determine an appropriate intervention in the case.

⌘ Focus Group Discussions

OVERVIEW OF THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

There will be seven FGDs conducted per area, with four FGDs conducted with children participants and three for adult stakeholders

- FGD 1 (for grades 3)
- FGD 2 (for grades 6)
- FGD 3 (for female HS)
- FGD 4 (for male HS)
- FGD 5 (for parents and community advocates)
- FGD 6 (for teaching and non-teaching personnel)
- FGD 7 (for guidance counselors)

The FGDs should be at least two hours (particularly for young children) but not more than three hours. In terms of FGD design, there are basically three categories: (1) for elementary school children; (2) for high school children; and (3) for adult stakeholders

The FGD Discussion Guide is presented in a matrix with three columns below. In the first column are the FGD questions, which are also the research questions. Basically, the FGD explores six topics:

1. Forms of violence against children (VAC) in public schools
2. Definitions of VAC
3. Factors that sustain or prevent VAC in public schools
4. Effects of VAC on children
5. Current responses to (VAC) in public schools
6. Recommendations

Since discussions, even in controlled settings such as in FGDs, are largely influenced by the culture of the people, much room is given to the facilitator to adapt and pose the FGD questions in a manner that will encourage participants to share their knowledge and opinions, and develop rapport between her/him and the participants, and among participants. The following may help in this regard:

- using local language and idiomatic expressions
- building on common experiences (local news, an episode from a popular TV show)
- highlighting shared values (e.g. concern for children's welfare)

Using positive language rather than the negative may also encourage the participants to be more active in the discussion. For example:

Facilitator: We want to know what makes children happy in school

In this case, the use of the words ‘violence’, ‘abuse’ and even ‘discipline’ should be minimal. A suggestion is to start with a positive observation and let the participants cite an ‘exception to the rule’. For instance:

Facilitator: The children here seem to be studious. I bet all the teachers here have an easy time teaching.
Participant: Well, most of the time, but...

The second column in the FGD Guide shows the specific data that should be generated by asking the FGD questions which will be helpful when probing responses to the main questions.

The third column provides examples of expected answers to the questions which may serve as a check to the facilitator if s/he is on track with the data gathering.

FGD Question	Data Need	Sample of Expected Answers
1. What specific acts of teachers, other students, and non-teaching personnel do school children and adult stakeholders consider as violent or abusive?	Forms of violence against children in the schools: - physical or corporal - psychological - sexual whether actually experienced, or threatened with, or witnessed by the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talking, glaring, tapping the hand lightly, pinching, etc. ▪ Public humiliation, collecting fines, extra work, etc. ▪ The punishment is just if it corresponds to the severity of offense (e.g. spanking for going to classroom drunk), unjust if there is no offense committed. ▪ Hitting the hand is violent. Slapping the face is abusive.
2. What are the considerations when categorizing or labeling a certain act as violent or abusive?	Children's and adults' perception / definition of violence against children <i>by adults?</i> Children's and adults' perception / definition violence against children <i>by children?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ age of a child ▪ severity of offense ▪ perceived motive of the punisher ▪ type of punishment ▪ contingency of response to offense ▪ frequency of offense ▪ an explanation is given or not when the act was done
3. What are the effects of violence and abuse to students who experience them?	Effects of violence to children for instance, - physically - psychologically / mentally whether they are the direct recipient of violence or they have witnessed it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bruises, wounds, cuts, loss / gain of weight ▪ Likelihood of absenteeism and dropout. ▪ Low academic performance. ▪ Low self-esteem. ▪ Loss of respect and trust

	Coping mechanisms of children who experience / witness VAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hyper-vigilance (afraid to go to school, carries deadly weapons such as knives, brass knuckles, etc) ▪ Bullies other children
4. What factors hinder or sustain incidents of violence and abuse against children in schools?	Factors that can prevent or perpetuate violence and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Harsh punishment for offenders, swift action of schools ▪ No consequence, silence of victims, unconcerned people in authority
5. To what extent does the available system of action in school respond to and prevent violence against children?	Identify the existing system of action in schools and judge its effectiveness i.e., what is in the policies of the school / LGU / Department of Education alongside what is actually being implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each school has a guidance counselor ▪ There is a local ordinance re: curfew of minors ▪ Tanods patrol school areas after classes
6. In what aspects can school environments of the school be improved towards protecting children / making children safe in schools?	Identify areas of improvement with regard to protecting children from violence in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers should be sensitive to signs of child abuse ▪ Engage children in sports ▪ Inform children of their rights and teach them ways to exercise them.

Selection of FGD venues

The FGDs will be in the schools which were covered by the survey, or in the communities where these schools are based. FGDs will be conducted only after the survey in the particular school or community is completed.

Schools or communities which have had cases of violence against school children happening in their area should be considered in the selection of FGD venues.

Selection of FGD participants

In general, there shall be a minimum of five but not more than 10 participants per FGD. The selection of participants (as well as the school/community venues) should be purposive rather than random.

For children : Only the children who joined the survey, and those who checked item #2 in their consent forms, will be regarded as possible participants to the FGDs. Other considerations in the selection of child participants are the following:

- Age: the age range of the FGD participants shall follow the one used for the survey i.e.
 - FGD 1 (for grades 3): 8-10 years old
 - FGD 2 (for grades 6): 11-13 years old
 - FGD 3 (for HS females): 12-17 years old
 - FGD 4 (for HS males): 12-17 years old

- Gender: for FGDs with elementary school children, there should be an equal number of girl and boy children.
- Experience of violence: the children should have indicated experiencing a form of violence against children in school.
- Children who have experienced sexual violence should not be included in the FGDs unless the facilitator is competent to handle such cases (e.g. a social worker or a child psychologist). It is critical and highly emphasized that the research shall uphold the best interest of the child at all times.

For adults : The participants should be from the same community where the survey was conducted. With regard to the FGD with guidance counselors, the researchers may also ask the assistance of the school division CFSS coordinator in convening guidance counselors from ten schools included in the survey

Who can facilitate the FGDs?

Since the study is focused on violence against children in the schools, school personnel, whether of the school where the FGDs are being conducted or from other nearby schools may not be the appropriate people to become facilitators for the research. It would not also be advisable for a person connected to the Department of Education to facilitate FGDs as this may give an impression that the selected school is being evaluated.

It is important to highlight in the orientations with schools and research participants themselves that the main goal of the study is to have baseline information of the prevalence of VAC in schools, and the attitudes and perceptions of children and adults of it.

It is suggested that social workers or child psychologists be the facilitators of the FGDs as these are professionals familiar with dealing with strong emotions which may arise during the discussions, particularly if the participants have traumatic experiences in schools.

All facilitators and documenters should attend the orientation on the FGD tool, and sign an agreement that they will keep information gathered from the FGD confidential.

GUIDELINES FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH CHILDREN

Preparation

1. The researcher shall review the survey answers of the children in the school / community selected for the FGD.
2. Based on the responses, the researchers should be able to identify the children who would be invited to the FGDs. A backup list of participants should also be made in case the child changes her/his mind about joining the FGDs (as indicated in her/his consent form)
3. On the day of the FGD, the researcher prepares a room for the participants where the activity will be conducted. If a room is not available, alternatives are the library, audio-visual room, as long as it provides a secure environment with no distractions.
4. The researcher gathers the participants into the selected space. Also, the researcher makes sure that no school employee is present to ensure confidentiality.

 All FGDs with children shall be conducted in their schools and during school hours. It is recommended that the FGDs be conducted during the children's homeroom and vacant periods. Ask permission from the school principal if FGDs will be conducted during class periods or beyond school hours.

Data Collection

1. The researcher ensures that all of the participants are the ones selected for the FGD.
2. The researcher explains to the students that the process of the FGD: its objectives, its process, and what the participants could expect from it. The documentation (particularly tape recording and photographs) should also be mentioned, emphasizing as well its purpose.
3. The researcher guarantees that their answers will be confidential and that only the results in collated form will be seen by their schools. He/she asks if there are any questions from the children.
4. The children should be specifically asked if they want to join the FGD.
5. The children who did not wish to participate are thanked. Unless the group is composed of less than five members, the FGD can go on without looking for substitute participants.

FGDs with elementary school children

 The procedure below is a recommendation. The research team may innovate or entirely change the FGD flow to suit the particular characteristics of the group convened

6. FGDs with elementary school children will be initiated by an art session. Children will be asked to illustrate two ideas: “*Mga tao sa paaralan na gusto ko*” and “*Mga tao sa paaralan na hindi ko gusto*”. The art session should not exceed one hour.
7. The children will present and describe their drawings to the group. Children shall be gently reminded to listen to the presentation and save their comments and questions after everybody is through with their presentations.
8. The facilitator shall maintain a child-friendly FGD atmosphere at all times. A child shall not be forced to present his/her drawing if he/she does not want to. The art presentation shall also not be made condition for the child’s participation in the FGD.
9. The facilitator uses the stories, comments and questions from the artwork presentation as take-off point for discussion.
10. Documentation will be in the form of tape recording, photographs and note-taking. Questions, comments and non-verbal communication of the children should be particularly noted in the written documentation.
11. The necessity of documentation should also be explained to the children. The researchers should be sensitive if the children are uncomfortable with the tape recorder or the camera. Their discomfort should be processed with them. Taking photographs and tape recording should be stopped if the child / children is not comfortable with it. In this case, the researchers notes will be the main form of documentation for that session.
12. The researcher thanks the children for their participation. He/She, also gives them the contact details of the team in case they want to inquire or talk further about the research topic. He/She allows the participants to go back to their classes or to go home.
13. Children may request if they may keep their drawings. If the documenter is using a digital camera, a good picture of the artwork should be taken before the artwork is given to the child. If the documenter is using a manual camera, s/he should explain to the child that the team will be borrowing his/her artwork for a while, and that these will be returned to them after a specified time.

FGDs with high school children

 The procedure below is a recommendation. The research team may innovate or entirely change the FGD flow to suit the particular characteristics of the group convened

14. FGDs with high school student shall follow the same process as above, however, the art session will be done in groups rather than individually. The participants shall be divided into two groups according to year level i.e. first and second year students in one group, and third and fourth year students in another group.

FGD Documentation

1. Both the FGD facilitator and documenter shall write their researchers notes. These shall be submitted to the team leader along with the artwork and transcription of the taped proceedings. Regarding the latter, these should be translated either in Tagalog or English if the FGD was conducted in the local language.
2. Documentation of survey sessions should take note of the following details:
 - (a) Name of FGD facilitator and documentor
 - (b) Date and time of FGD
 - (c) School / community where FGD was held
 - (d) Specific FGD venue (e.g. classroom, library, canteen)
 - (e) Name and number of participants in the FGD
 - (f) Number of children who were identified to be part of the FGD but did not join
 - (g) Verbal and non-verbal responses of children to the FGD process
 - (h) Other observations during the FGD

 Regarding the research process, remember to document what worked, what didn't work and what worked best in your approaches to children.

3. The research team leader shall check if all the above documents were submitted before turning them over to the PWU research team.

General Guidelines

The study is a Child-Focused Research and will ensure that it answers to the best interest of the child. It makes certain that no rights of the child will be violated before, during, and as a result of the study. It shall strictly observe the following guidelines in all stages of the research, including data collection.

- Safety and Security

No child must be harmed and every child must be protected in the study. During the data collection, it is important that the researcher obtains a secure space for the FGD. He/She must make certain that no one who could be a possible threat is around the vicinity; these might

include teachers, principals, and other employees of the school. The researcher should ask them politely to leave the premises.

The necessity of documentation should also be explained to the children. The researchers should be sensitive if the children are uncomfortable with the tape recorder or the camera. Their discomfort should be processed with them. Taking photographs and tape recording should be stopped if the child / children is not comfortable with it. In this case, the researchers notes will be the main form of documentation for that session.

- Confidentiality

The value of confidentiality shall be explained at the beginning of the session and emphasized all throughout the session. On the part of the researchers, they should also explain to the children

- Crisis Detection

When an abusive situation for children is discovered by data collectors, or when a participant confides that he/she is experiencing abuse, the data collector shall immediately inform the team leader and the PWU research team to determine intervention in the case.

GUIDELINES FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH ADULT STAKEHOLDERS

Sampling

A. Parents and community advocates

1. Research teams will select the adult participants to the FGDs, taking note of the following:
 - a. Equal representation of parents (5) and community advocates (5)
 - b. Equal representation of male and female parents and community advocates
 - c. Parents representatives may be drawn from the officers of the PTCA of schools already contacted for the research
 - d. Community advocates may include local social workers and NGO brgy. officials and personnel (e.g. barangay tanod) and grassroots organizations representatives

 While PLAN is a stakeholder in the community, especially with regard to children's welfare, its direct involvement in the research implementation is reason why it is inhibited to participate in the FGDs.

2. Research teams shall submit the list of FGD participants to the PWU research team prior to the FGDs

B. School personnel

1. The participants to this group will be drawn from the schools already contacted for the survey and FGDs. The PWU research team will determine the participants in this group through random sampling, and in consultation with the team leaders.
2. The possible participants to the FGD are principals, teachers, teachers, security guard, janitor, canteen worker, (visiting) school doctor, dentist or nurse

C. Guidance Counselors

1. The 10 guidance counselors will be selected from the schools contacted for the survey to be the FGD participants.
2. The research team may ask assistance from the schools division CFSS coordinator on convening the FGD with guidance counselors

Preparation

1. The team leader selects the venue for the FGDs from the schools already contacted for other data gathering activities. S/he coordinates with the school principal before the FGD to explain the FGD and its process, and explore possible venues within the school where the FGDs could be conducted.
2. The researcher should orient the principal or school administrator on the objectives, logistical needs, and process of the FGD.
3. On the day of data gathering, the researcher prepares a room for the participants where the FGD will be conducted
4. The researcher gathers the participants into the selected space.

Data Collection

1. The researcher ensures that all of the participants are the ones selected for the FGD
2. The researcher explains to the participants the process of the FGD: its objectives, its process, and what could they expect from it. The documentation (tape recording and photographs) should also be mentioned, emphasizing as well its purpose.
3. The researcher guarantees that their answers will be confidential. He/she asks if there are any questions from the participants.
4. It is assumed that the people's attendance to the FGD indicates their interest in the activity.
5. A short case study or a news clipping may be given to the participants to read. This case study or article will be the take-off point for the discussion.

Post – FGD

1. Both the FGD facilitator and documenter shall write down researchers notes. These shall be submitted to the team leader. These should be translated either in Tagalog or English if the FGD was conducted in the local language.
2. Documentation of survey sessions should take note of the following details:
 - (a) Name of researchers facilitating and documenting the FGD
 - (b) Date and time of FGD
 - (c) School / community where FGD was held
 - (d) Specific FGD venue (e.g. classroom, library, canteen)
 - (e) Name and number of participants in the FGD
 - (f) Verbal and non-verbal responses of participants to the FGD process
 - (g) Other observations during the FGD

 Regarding the research process, remember to document what worked, what didn't work and what worked best in your approaches to children.

3. The research team leader shall check if all the above documents were submitted before turning them over to the PWU research team.

General Guidelines

The research at all times shall be conscious of the ethical considerations in the process. (See general guidelines of informed consent, confidentiality and child protection in appendices)

⌘ Key Informant Interviews

The PWU identified the following people as key informants in the area regarding the issue of VAC in schools:

- Division Schools Superintendents
- Principals
- Guidance counselors
- Children who experienced VAC in school, whether perpetrated by an adult or another child

The key informant interviews (KIIs) will use the same questions as the FGDs. The matrix below presents these questions again alongside the data needs and sample responses.

Interview Question	Data Need	Sample of Expected Answers
1. What specific acts of teachers, other students, and non-teaching personnel do school children and adult stakeholders consider as violent or abusive?	Forms of violence against children in the schools: - physical or corporal - psychological - sexual whether actually experienced, or threatened with, or witnessed by the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talking, glaring, tapping the hand lightly, pinching, etc. ▪ Public humiliation, collecting fines, extra work, etc. ▪ The punishment is just if it corresponds to the severity of offense (e.g. spanking for going to classroom drunk), unjust if there is no offense committed. ▪ Hitting the hand is violent. Slapping the face is abusive.
2. What are the considerations when categorizing or labeling a certain act as violent or abusive?	Children's and adults' perception / definition of violence against children <i>by adults</i> ? Children's and adults' perception / definition violence against children <i>by children</i> ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ age of a child ▪ severity of offense ▪ perceived motive of the punisher ▪ type of punishment ▪ contingency of response to offense ▪ frequency of offense ▪ an explanation is given or not when the act was done
3. What are the effects of violence and abuse to students who experience them?	Effects of violence to children for instance, - physically - psychologically / mentally whether they are the direct recipient of violence or they have witnessed it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bruises, wounds, cuts, loss / gain of weight ▪ Likelihood of absenteeism and dropout. ▪ Low academic performance. ▪ Low self-esteem. ▪ Loss of respect and trust

	Coping mechanisms of children who experience / witness VAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hyper-vigilance (afraid to go to school, carries deadly weapons such as knives, brass knuckles, etc) ▪ Bullies other children
4. What factors hinder or sustain incidents of violence and abuse against children in schools?	Factors that can prevent or perpetuate violence and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Harsh punishment for offenders, swift action of schools ▪ No consequence, silence of victims, unconcerned people in authority
5. To what extent does the available system of action in school respond to and prevent violence against children?	Identify the existing system of action in schools and judge its effectiveness i.e., what is in the policies of the school / LGU / Department of Education alongside what is actually being implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each school has a guidance counselor ▪ There is a local ordinance re: curfew of minors ▪ Tanods patrol school areas after classes
6. In what aspects can school environments of the school be improved towards protecting children / making children safe in schools?	Identify areas of improvement with regard to protecting children from violence in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers should be sensitive to signs of child abuse ▪ Engage children in sports ▪ Inform children of their rights and teach them ways to exercise them.

While all these questions have to be asked, the phrasing of the interview questions may vary from one key informant to another. For instance, a division superintendent may provide good data on the programs and policies against VAC in the area, while a school child may be a good informant on the perceptions of her/his peers on violence.

The table below illustrates this point:

Interview Question	Division Superintendent	PTCA President / Community advocate	Child survivor of VAC
1. What specific acts of teachers, other students, and non-teaching personnel do school children and adult stakeholders consider as violent or abusive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the common complaints received by your office regarding the treatment of children in schools? ▪ How about cases of children complaining about other children? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the common cases that you know or have heard of regarding the treatment of children in schools? ▪ How about cases of children complaining about other children? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What for you should be the right way to treat children in schools?
2. What are the considerations when categorizing or labeling a certain act as violent or abusive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What makes an act violent? ▪ Are there special considerations when it is a child that is directly affected by this act? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What makes _____ (an act considered violent by the informant) violent? ▪ How about _____ (other forms of VAC not considered violent by the informant)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What makes _____ (an act considered violent by the informant) wrong? ▪ Is there any instance or situation where _____ could be considered right or a proper treatment of children?
3. What are the effects of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the effects of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the effects of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What did you feel

violence and abuse to students who experience them?	violence and abuse to students who experience them?	violence and abuse to students who experience them?	when _____ (form of violence) was done to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you feel about it now (if it happened sometime ago and has stopped)?
4. What factors hinder or sustain incidents of violence and abuse against children in schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you think VAC in schools happen? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you think VAC in schools happen? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there other children who have the same experience as you? What did they think about their experience? Why do you think violence like that happen in school? Do you think other children who did not have the same experience, feel the same way?
5. To what extent does the available system of action in school respond to and prevent violence against children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child wants to report such incidents, what should s/he do? Do you have specific programs or policies to guide your office in addressing VAC? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child wants to report such incidents, what should s/he do? Do you have specific programs or policies to addressing VAC in schools? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did you tell anyone what happened to you? If yes, what did they do? If no, why not? Do you know of children who reported their experience? What happened after?
6. In what aspects can school environments of the school be improved towards protecting children / making children safe in schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What should be done to address VAC ins schools? Who should be involved and how? What role do you see would your office play in this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What should be done to address VAC ins schools? Who should be involved and how? What role do you see would your group / organization play in this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you think VAC in schools is a problem? What do you think would be a solution to this problem? Who should act on it and how?

Number of Interviewees

The matrix below summarizes the number of interviewees, and possible interviewers per area:

Interviewees	Target Number of Interviewees	Interviewer
Division superintendent	1	Local research team leader
Principals	10	Local research team leader
Guidance counselors	10	Local research team leader
Children	100	Local research team

Child Interviewees

Child interviewees will be drawn from the children who participated in the survey and who checked item # 3 in the informed consent form. The researcher should review the children's answers to the survey prior to the interview.

Documentation

Documentation of interviews should take note of the following details:

- Name of interviewer
- Date and time of interview
- School / community where interview was held
- Name of interviewee and position (e.g. student, principal, teacher, parent)
- Responses to the questions
- Other observations during the interview

 Regarding the research process, remember to document what worked, what didn't work and what worked best in your approaches to children.

C. List of Participating Schools

Area	Elementary School	Secondary School
Camotes Island	1. Montserrat 2. Lanao 3. San Jose Elementary 4. Adela 5. Cagcagan 6. Unidos 7. Santa Cruz 8. Union 9. Puertobello 10. Daan Secante	1. Pilar NHS 2. Lanao 3. Luciano NHS 4. ZosimoFabroa NHS 5. Santiago NHS 6. Consuelo NHS 7. Union NHS 8. Puertobello NHS 9. Puertobello NHS Extension 10. San Jose NHS
Masbate	1. Alas ES 2. Bangad ES 3. Bigaa ES 4. Buri ES 5. Calasuchi ES 6. Locso-an ES 7. Madbad ES 8. Pinas ES 9. Salvacion ES 10. Tonga ES	1. Balud HS 2. Cleofe Arce HS 3. Pedro Sese Memorial HS 4. Serafin C. Rosero Memorial HS 5. Milagros HS 6. Palanas NAHS 7. Rondina Atendido HS 8. V. Casas HS 9. V. Sabrido 10. Villa Hermosa
Samar	Cervantes ES Polangi ES Getigo ES Poblacion ES Dapdap ES San Isidro ES Opong ES Irawahan ES Balnasan ES Coroconog ES	1. Cervantes NHS 2. Polangi NHS 3. Washington NHS 4. Galutan NHS 5. Lope de Vega NHS 6. Las Navas NHS 7. Hibubullao NHS 8. Don Juan Avalon NHS

D. Survey Results

D.1.1. – D.1.3	Forms of VAC and Other Approaches/Responses Experienced by Children in School
D.2.1. – D.2.21	VAC Committed by Peers and School Personnel
D.3.1 – D.3.21	Children’s Experience of Violence in School by Gender
D.4	Children’s Perceived Appropriate Responses to Presented Situations
D.5.1. – D.5.3	VAC in Schools and Outside of Schools