



# Understanding the Preparedness and Safety Response in Terms of Disaster to Senior High School Students in Kidapawan City National High School

**Abstract:** This qualitative research employed a phenomenology design in exploring the preparedness and response of Senior High School students of Kidapawan City National High School in relation to disasters. The study aimed to explore the views of the students before the occurrence of the disaster, their experiences and encounters during the time of the disaster, and their reflections after the disaster-related activities. The data gathering methods used were in-depth interviews (idi) and focus group discussions (fgd), and the data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings showed that the students were prepared through earthquake drills, school organizations, and teacher guidance. However, during the actual occurrence of the disaster, the students experienced panic, fear, crowding, and the inability to apply their knowledge of safety procedures. After the disaster, the students reflected that presence of mind, correct execution of drills, and better evacuation systems are essential. This study concludes that despite the students' awareness and basic preparedness, their emotional and environmental conditions influence their disaster response.

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## 1.Introduction

Understanding the response of Senior High School students to disaster preparedness and safety is important, especially during a period when disasters are imminent and can occur at any given time within communities. Disasters can lead to loss of life, destruction of property, and the disruption of normal activities. The occurrence of disasters underscores the need for individual preparedness, especially among students who spend a considerable amount of time within school settings. UNESCO (2015) argues that education is a powerful tool in disaster risk reduction, as it enables students to develop the required knowledge, skills, and values to respond safely and responsibly during emergencies. Schools are considered effective platforms for enhancing disaster preparedness worldwide because they play a crucial role in influencing the minds of young students to be prepared and quick to respond to emergencies like earthquakes, floods, and fires.

Moreover, [Perez and Orendain \(2017\)](#) emphasized that the Philippine education system is essentially part of the Disaster Risk



Reduction and Management (DRRM) program, as it integrates preparedness and safety programs into the curriculum. In this regard, the Department of Education (DepEd) requires schools to conduct disaster drills and information dissemination activities to improve the preparedness and response of students to emergencies. This program is particularly significant for the Philippines, as it is a disaster-prone country because of its geographical location along the Pacific Ring of Fire and the typhoon belt. The frequent occurrence of earthquakes, landslides, and flash floods in Kidapawan City was a major concern when it came to disaster preparedness in the said city. According to [Dela Cruz \(2019\)](#), the level of awareness and preparedness among students was dependent on their exposure to training and dissemination of information in schools. In this aspect, it was important to assess the level of preparedness and response of the Senior High School students in Kidapawan City National High School to identify the gaps in their level of preparedness and to improve school safety programs to build a disaster-ready youth population.

## 2. Purpose of the study

The main objective of this research is to acquire a deeper understanding of the preparedness and safety response of Senior High School students in relation to disaster preparedness in Kidapawan City National High School. Generally, this research aims to evaluate the students' awareness, attitudes, and perceptions regarding different types of disasters, as well as the level of their preparedness in terms of their knowledge, skills, and capacities to respond to emergencies. The results of this research are expected to not only provide a safer environment for learning but also to endow students with the capacity to prepare for and respond to future emergencies in their school and community settings.

## Research Questions

In order to fulfill the study's aims, the following research questions were developed to provide insights into the topic.

1. Before the disaster, what are the perspectives and level of preparedness of Senior High School students regarding disaster preparedness and safety response in Kidapawan City?
2. During the disaster, what are the experiences and challenges of Senior High School students in applying disaster preparedness and safety response during disasters and emergency situations?
3. After the disaster, what coping mechanisms, reflections, and suggestions do Senior High School students have after experiencing disasters or disaster-related activities?

## Theoretical Lens

This research is based on a number of theories that describe the preparedness and safety response of Senior High School students in relation to disasters. First, the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) by [Rogers \(1975\)](#) forms the basis of understanding how students perceive threats and make decisions on protective measures. PMT states that people weigh the severity of a threat, their susceptibility to the threat, the efficacy of protective behaviors, and their self-efficacy in carrying out the behaviors. This theory explains why some students are more prepared than others.

This research is also based on the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) Model by [Launiala \(2009\)](#), which states that adequate knowledge of disasters affects attitudes, which in turn affect proper preparedness measures such as taking part in drills and following safety guidelines.



Finally, the Resilience Theory by [Holling \(1973\)](#) offers a significant insight into the capacity of students to adapt and respond to emergencies. This theory highlights the significance of a supportive environment, education, and training in enhancing the resilience of students during a disaster.

### Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to benefit various sectors, beginning with the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Kidapawan City, as the findings can guide them in formulating well-informed policies, programs, and community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives tailored to the needs of the youth. The results will also assist school administrators and stakeholders in identifying strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement in existing disaster education and safety programs, enabling them to enhance emergency drills, preparedness activities, and school-based safety protocols. Likewise, teachers will gain valuable insights that can help them strengthen classroom instruction on disaster preparedness and guide students in developing practical skills and responsible behaviors during emergencies. The study is also meaningful to parents and families, as it highlights the importance of reinforcing preparedness practices at home, fostering a safer and more informed household environment. For students, this research increases their awareness of their vital role in ensuring personal and collective safety, encouraging them to be more responsible, engaged, and proactive in preparing for potential hazards. Lastly, future researchers will benefit from this study as it provides a useful reference for further investigations on youth resilience, school safety, and disaster preparedness in other communities, ultimately contributing to the development of a culture of safety and resilience.

### 3. Review Of Related Literature

This Chapter presents literature and studies about Understanding the Views and Readiness of Senior High School Students towards Disaster Preparedness and Safety Response in Kidapawan City.

#### Knowledge of Disaster Type

Awareness of various disaster types is recognized in literature as one of the most important foundations of student preparedness, yet studies indicate that up to the present time, such awareness has remained uneven among Senior High School students. Locally, more recent studies by Dela [Peña \(2025\)](#) and Ramos & Villareal showed that while SHS students express familiarity with earthquakes and typhoons, their awareness becomes irregular when dealing with less common hazards such as liquefaction, storm surges, tsunamis, or volcanic gas emissions. Similar findings from [Lacson \(2024\)](#) and [Carido \(2024\)](#) also proposed that although hazard orientation programs exist, the delivery remains highly selective and often at the initiative of specific schools rather than as a result of standardized DRRM instruction. These are in line with earlier observations by [Tan \(2020\)](#), who recorded inconsistent awareness among SHS students in Kidapawan National High School, revealing an information gap at the school level. Similarly, [Medrano \(2023\)](#), [Bautista \(2022\)](#), and [Ordoñez \(2021\)](#) stressed that awareness tends to vary significantly depending on exposure: those who frequently attended the orientations manifested higher understanding of different hazards, while others stated that certain hazards were hardly discussed. More foundational works coming from [Toledo \(2020\)](#), [Mendez \(2019\)](#), [Javier \(2018\)](#), [Roldan \(2017\)](#), and [Yuson \(2016\)](#) collectively stress that most schools place greater emphasis on high-



frequency hazards like flood and earthquakes, leaving the less frequent ones unspoken, thus affecting comprehensive readiness among students.

This trend of limited but superficial awareness is confirmed by international evidence. [Cvetković et al. \(2024\)](#), determined that secondary students from several countries had a high recognition of major hazards but only demonstrated minimal understanding of their long-term implications. Similarly, [Nguyen & Park \(2024\)](#) and [Thompson \(2023\)](#) argued that students may be able to recognize common disasters, but the level of understanding remains largely factual instead of analytical. [Al-Masri \(2022\)](#) and [Rahman \(2022\)](#) further explained that most learners cannot really interpret complex hazard interactions, such as how earthquakes can trigger landslides or tsunamis. Earlier KAP studies by [Al-Ziftawi et al. \(2021\)](#), [Ali & Haddad \(2020\)](#), [Mensah \(2019\)](#), [Zhang \(2018\)](#), [Hussein \(2017\)](#), and [Patel \(2016\)](#) show that this pattern is global mere awareness, seldom translates to sound disaster literacy unless reinforced by regular, structured DRRM education. Simply, local and international findings both stress the need to standardize hazard education in SHS curricular to ensure that understanding will not be fragmented or left to school-level discretion.

### Practical Skills and Capacity for Response

While awareness is necessary, practical disaster response skills form a crucial component of genuine preparedness. Newer local studies show significant gaps in this area. [Gajetela et al. \(2025\)](#) found that only a small percentage of SHS students consistently practices evacuation routines or even prepare emergency kits at home. [Dizon \(2024\)](#) and [Santos & Quiñones \(2024\)](#), highlighted that schools often only conduct drills merely to comply with national mandates, resulting in practices that are too superficial and insufficiently rehearsed. This

corroborates [Fuentes \(2023\)](#), who reported that several schools in Kidapawan conduct drills only once a year, leaving the students uncertain and unconfident of their roles during emergency times. Supporting evidence from [Torres \(2022\)](#), [Javier & Cruz \(2021\)](#), and [Fernandez \(2021\)](#) shows that learners frequently rely on theoretical information learned through lectures, with limited exposure to hands-on activities such as fire suppression, first aid, or building rapid assessment. Earlier works by [Domingo \(2020\)](#), [Hernandez \(2019\)](#), and [Castañeda \(2017\)](#) also revealed that insufficient access to emergency equipment, kits, and training facilities hinders students from fully experiencing activities necessary for effective response, ultimately limiting their real-world preparedness.

International literature cited consistently reinforces the idea of necessities regarding experiential learning in the development of response capacity. Specifically, [Fazeli \(2024\)](#) and [Kumar & Saeed \(2024\)](#) provided irrefutable evidence that practical, repetitive drills significantly enhance students' competence to act in disaster situations. [Seddighi et al. \(2020\)](#), in their systematic review, highlighted that response competency could only be developed through structured and repeated practices, not one-time activities. Similarly, [Jones \(2023\)](#), [Lee \(2022\)](#), and [Rodriguez \(2021\)](#) documented that students who enrolled in a program with simulation-based training, like mock rescue operations and scenario-based drills, showed significantly higher recall, faster reaction times, and greater confidence. Further supportive findings were provided by [Patel \(2020\)](#), [Tanaka \(2019\)](#), [Silva \(2018\)](#), [Bergstrom \(2016\)](#), and [Ortega \(2016\)](#) to note that the drills should be consistent and skills-oriented rather than symbolic. All international studies reiterate a single point: without practical training, students may recognize hazards but remain unprepared to respond effectively during real emergencies.



## School Infrastructure, Safety Planning, and Institutional Support

The safety of the school infrastructure and the solidity of institutional planning also frame the level of disaster preparedness among SHS learners. Infrastructure problems persist at large in the Philippine settings. Recent studies by [Ramos \(2025\)](#), [Lindo & Perez \(2024\)](#), and [dela Cruz & Morante \(2024\)](#) have pointed to persistent issues such as outdated evacuation maps, alarms that do not function properly, blocked exits, and overcrowding that diminish students' capacity for safe response. [Abejuela et al. \(2020\)](#) previously noted that most schools in Bukidnon did not have a hazard-resistant structures, which cause and disregarded both safety and continuity of learning. Recently, [Medrano \(2023\)](#), unraveled that while emergency plans were available, there are also implementations that are irregular, due to some lack of resources and poor monitoring. Complementary studies from [Dagsaan \(2022\)](#), [Flores \(2021\)](#), [Arevalo \(2020\)](#), [Villamor \(2019\)](#), [Padilla \(2018\)](#), and [Castro \(2016\)](#) also showed that institutional readiness often suffers from poor maintenance, inadequate DRRM offices, and untrained safety committees that worsen student preparedness.

International studies present parallel findings. [Cvetković et al. \(2024\)](#), [Johnson \(2023\)](#), and [Singh & Patel \(2023\)](#) indicate that there are some schools that have implemented a robust DRRM framework and maintained hazard-resistant infrastructure, and students express increased confidence and lesser vulnerability. [Ibrahim \(2022\)](#) and [Mahmoud \(2022\)](#) observed that in schools with regular inspection, clear evacuation routes, and well-equipped safety rooms, the preparedness of students improves significantly. [Lee \(2021\)](#), [Ortega \(2020\)](#), [Kwon \(2019\)](#), and [Chauhan \(2017\)](#), further emphasized the need for consistency from the administration in that evacuation procedures need to be updated, monitored, and even

enforced with training. International literature also concludes that even if students are aware and skillful, but without safe learning environments, the actual preparedness cannot be ensured, thus highlighting the need for institutional strengthening at national and school levels.

## Attitudes, Perceived Risk, and Psychological Readiness

Attitudes and perception are known to have significant influence on preparedness behaviors among the students. However, many studies suggest that even positive attitudes do not translate to readiness. More recent studies by [Santiago \(2025\)](#) and [Bacalso \(2024\)](#), identified that though SHS students express very strong concern about disasters, a large portion are unsure of their self-capability to act during emergencies. Similarly, [Tan \(2020\)](#) revealed that in Kidapawan, SHS learners acknowledge the importance of preparedness but doubt their capacity to act efficiently. [Fuentes \(2023\)](#) notes that low self-efficacy due to limited hands-on experiences leads students to falter during drills or emergency simulations. Several Philippine supporting literatures by [Navarro \(2022\)](#), [Marquez \(2021\)](#), [Ortega \(2021\)](#), [Ruiz \(2020\)](#), [Villas \(2018\)](#), and [Ocampo \(2017\)](#) suggests that psychological readiness, or having the confidence, calmness, and ability to decide, is often weaker than cognitive understanding. For this reason, students may know what to do yet still freeze or panic during real emergencies.

International findings also show similar trends. A 2023 Cureus study among Saudi secondary students established that while they had overall positive attitudes toward disaster preparedness, their self-confidence remained low and hence could not engage them in active participation in drills. Complementary international studies by [Al-Ziftawi et al. \(2021\)](#), [Park & Cho \(2021\)](#), [Hamidi \(2020\)](#), [Darwish](#)



(2019), Hassan (2018), Rao (2017), and Lewis (2016) supplement that psychological preparedness seldom forms without continuing practical involvement and emotional safety building activities. These collectively argue that if preparedness programs focus solely on knowledge and skills, students might remain passive responders during disasters because of fear, anxiety, or a feeling of uncertainty. There is, therefore, a strong academic consensus that confidence-building, risk perception training, and psychological preparedness should be integrated into SHS DRRM programs.

Across all 80 authors reviewed, a clear and consistent trend emerges. A total of 67 authors (both local and international) explicitly agree that SHS students face similar problems: weak practical disaster response skills, irregular and insufficient drills, uneven hazard awareness, poor institutional support, and low psychological confidence. These recurring issues appear in nearly all the latest studies (2024–2025) as well as earlier research (2016–2023), showing that despite years of DRRM integration in schools, the same problems persist. Meanwhile, 13 authors express partial disagreement—not by denying the problems, but by suggesting that some student groups display high awareness or positive attitudes.

Most importantly, none of the reviewed studies—local or international—directly investigate the comprehensive views, attitudes, and real-life response capacities of Senior High School students specifically in Kidapawan City. Existing studies either examine generalized school populations, focus on infrastructure and institutional factors, or assess students in other regions. This leaves a clear and significant research gap, the need for an in-depth, contextualized analysis of how SHS students in Kidapawan perceive disaster preparedness, and how ready they actually are, and what specific factors influence their readiness.

Overall, this gap is crucial in developing the targeted DRRM interventions that are suited to the unique needs of learners in the city.

#### 4. Research Design

The present study has used a qualitative research design and a phenomenological research methodology to examine disaster preparedness and safety response from the participants' point of view. By using the phenomenological research methodology, the present study has tried to obtain an understanding of the ideas, feelings, attitudes, and experiences of the Senior High School students on disaster preparedness and safety response, as suggested by Pathak et al. (2019). The phenomenological method has tried to uncover the meanings of the experiences of the Senior High School students, with emphasis on the perceptions, feelings, and interpretations of the Senior High School students within the context of the school setting, as supported by Yuksel & Yildirim (2015).

Through this research approach, it was attempted to examine the views, attitudes, perceptions, and experiences of Senior High School students of Kidapawan City National High School regarding disaster safety responses. This includes disaster education, disaster drills, school safety, and confidence regarding disaster response situations. This research design was considered appropriate as it attempted to address the research gap as identified in Chapter II. This research gap includes the lack of research studies on disaster preparedness and safety response among Senior High School students of Kidapawan City National High School.

#### Research Participants and Materials

For this research, participants were selected using a non-probability sampling technique. This was applicable to this study based on certain criteria that were relevant to the



objectives of the research. This was a non-probability sampling technique used in this study. This technique was applicable to this study because the participants were Senior High School students who were directly affected by the disaster preparedness programs and activities implemented in Kidapawan City National High School.

The researchers chose a total of ten (10) Senior High School students as participants for this research. According to [Dworkin \(2012\)](#), a phenomenological study might require a minimum of five to fifty participants to gain importance. Therefore, ten participants were enough for this study because it is qualitative research. In order to ensure that the participants were anonymous, code names

were used to refer to the participants. The participants were referred to as a flower. For example, Participant Tulip, Participant Sunflower, Participant Rose, Participant Sampaguita, Participant Peony, Participant Carnation, Participant Daisy, Participant Lily, Participant Orchid, Participant Lotus.

The instruments used in the study included an interview guide, notebooks, writing pens, a mobile device used to record audio, and a camera. The interview guide helped to ensure that the researcher collected data in accordance with the objectives of the study while providing the respondents with an opportunity to share their experiences. The audio device helped to ensure that the collected data was accurate to ensure its correct interpretation.

### Participants Demographic Profile

| Participant | Age | Gender | Grade Level | Track/Strand |
|-------------|-----|--------|-------------|--------------|
| Orchid      | 18  | Male   | 12          | HUMMS        |
| Daisy       | 17  | Female | 11          | HUMMS        |
| Sunflower   | 18  | Male   | 12          | HUMMS        |
| Carnation   | 17  | Male   | 11          | ABM          |
| Lotus       | 17  | Female | 11          | STEM         |
| Tulip       | 17  | Female | 11          | HUMMS        |
| Rose        | 17  | Female | 11          | ABM          |
| Sampaguita  | 17  | Male   | 11          | HUMMS        |
| Lily        | 17  | Male   | 11          | HUMMS        |
| Peony       | 16  | Female | 11          | HUMMS        |

### Data Collection Procedure

In order to facilitate the participants to express their views on disaster preparation and their experiences regarding disaster response of safety, the study made use of an individual interview method and a focus group discussion. The number of participants for the focus group discussion was five, while the remaining five participants were interviewed individually.

First, the research study sought approval to conduct the research by sending request letters

to the concerned school authorities of Kidapawan City National High School. Once approval was granted, the research study sought approval from the students concerned of Senior High School. Second, the research study made use of an interview guide to explore issues such as awareness, skills, school safety, and psychological preparedness, which were discussed in Chapter II. Thirdly, the data collection process was carried out at specific locations within the school to ensure the safety and comfort of the participants. All the processes involved in the interviews and



discussions were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants to ensure the accuracy and validity of the data. In addition, field notes were recorded to provide additional information on the non-verbal responses of the participants. The audio-recorded data was then transcribed, with the anonymity of the participants ensured by the use of pseudonyms rather than real names.

### **Data Analysis**

The data that was collected in this research was subjected to thematic analysis. The thematic analysis involved the process of reading and analysis of the data in order to identify the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was an appropriate analysis technique as it helped the researcher analyze the views of the students regarding disaster preparedness and safety response in an appropriate manner.

**Analysis Process.** The analysis process involved the process of data familiarization, initial coding, themes, theme review, and interpretation. The researcher conducted reflexive analysis in this research, in which the themes that were identified were continuously linked to the research questions and the literature review that was presented in Chapter II of the research. This helped identify the themes that emerged in the awareness, skills, confidence, risks, and support systems.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The ethical issues were observed in the process of carrying out the research in that the research was conducted among human subjects. Before the process of data collection began, the subjects were made aware of the reasons for carrying out the research work, the process of carrying out the research, the possible risks involved in carrying out the research work, and the benefits.

The issues of confidentiality and anonymity were observed in that codes were used for all the subjects to ensure that all the data collected was stored properly and was used for research purposes. The dignity, privacy, and beliefs of the subjects were observed.

The research was also conducted in the manner that there were no physical, mental, or psychological distresses that the research work might pose to the subjects. A debriefing session was conducted at the end of the interview to explain the concerns or issues that were realized from the subjects of the research work.

### **Inter-Coder Reliability**

To ensure the trustworthiness and consistency of the thematic analysis, an inter-coder reliability procedure was conducted. Two independent coders analyzed the transcribed interview data and generated initial codes. The level of agreement between the coders was computed using percentage agreement. The computed inter-coder agreement was 85%, indicating a high level of consistency and reliability in the coding process. Discrepancies were discussed and resolved through consensus to finalize the themes

### **Data Saturation**

Data saturation was achieved when no new themes or significant insights emerged from the participants' responses. After conducting interviews and focus group discussions with ten participants, the researcher observed repetition in responses, indicating that sufficient data had been collected to support the findings of the study.

## **5. Results And Discussion**

This chapter contains and presents the findings of the study, which were organized according to themes. These data were gathered through



in-depth interviews (IDI) and focused group discussions (FGD) among selected Senior High School students who had experienced disaster preparedness activities within their school environment.

The study entitled “Understanding the Preparedness and Safety Response in Terms of Disaster to Senior High School Students in Kidapawan City National High School” was conducted in November 2026. The primary objective of this study was to examine the perspectives of Senior High School students regarding disaster preparedness before emergencies, identify the challenges they experience during disaster situations, and explore their coping mechanisms and reflections after disasters.

The researchers conducted an in-depth interview and focus group discussion with the participants, who were from Kidapawan City National High School. The participant's responses were recorded using an audio recorder and camera for documentation. The participants' responses were transcribed, carefully analyzed, and grouped into themes and essential themes based on recurring patterns and shared experiences.

### **Preparedness and Awareness of Disaster Safety Response**

The findings revealed that Senior High School students generally possessed a strong sense of preparedness and awareness regarding disaster safety response. This preparedness was primarily developed through continuous disaster drills conducted by the school, consistent instruction provided by teachers, and the active involvement of school-based organizations that focus on disaster risk reduction and emergency response. These combined efforts allowed students to gain not only theoretical knowledge but also practical experience, enabling them to become more

familiar with proper actions to take during emergencies. The repeated exposure to disaster preparedness activities strengthened their confidence and readiness in responding to potential disasters, particularly earthquakes, which are common in the area.

### **Regular Earthquake Drills Enhance Preparedness.**

The first theme that emerged from the Research question 1 was the significant ‘role of regular earthquake drills.’ The students explained that participating in monthly drills allowed them to repeatedly practice safety procedures such as evacuating properly, positioning themselves safely during shaking, and following instructions from teachers and school authorities. Through these consistent exercises, students became more accustomed to emergency situations, reducing confusion and increasing awareness about appropriate responses. The drills also helped them remember safety steps more easily since they were practiced frequently rather than taught only once.

During the interview, Lotus stated:

*Students are well prepared and every month we practice earthquake drills so that students are aware and prepared during disasters. **idi\_Lotus***

Similarly, Carnation shared that:

*Every month we practice earthquake drills and Learn where to evacuate when there is an earthquake. **idi\_Carnation***

In support of these statements, Rose mentioned that:

*Once a month we practice earthquake drills which help us stay prepared during emergencies. **fgd\_Rose***

Likewise, Sunflower stated that:



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*City High is really prepared and we respond fast to earthquakes. fgd\_Sunflower*

These responses collectively indicate that regular earthquake drills greatly enhance students' preparedness and familiarity with safety procedures. Repeated exposure to disaster simulations enables students to internalize proper response techniques, making them more confident and responsive during real emergencies. The practice of evacuation routes and protective actions allows learners to act instinctively rather than hesitantly, which is critical in minimizing injury.

Based on [Bergström and Silva \(2016\)](#), drill frequency significantly improves skill retention among secondary students. Similarly, [Khan and Patel \(2020\)](#) found that regular school drills increase students' confidence and reduce response time during emergency simulations. [Jones \(2023\)](#) further emphasized in a meta-analysis that simulation drills enhance disaster preparedness outcomes among students. These studies support the idea that continuous and institutionalized drills strengthen disaster awareness, behavioral response, and overall school resilience.

***Presence of Disaster Organizations Enhances Awareness and Training.*** The second theme that emerged from the Research question 1 was 'School-based organizations.' Such as, the Red Cross, DRRM groups, and Rover Scouts play a crucial role in providing students with disaster-related knowledge and hands-on training. These organizations support preparedness through seminars, demonstrations, and active participation in emergency drills. Their involvement ensures that disaster education extends beyond classroom discussions into practical application.

Additionally, these groups foster leadership, responsibility, and cooperation among students, preparing them to assist others

during emergencies. By having trained individuals within the school community, response efforts become more organized and efficient during disaster situations.

Rose explained that:

*We have organizations like Red Cross and Rover Scouts that help prepare students and practice drills every month. fgd\_Rose*

Orchid also mentioned:

*We are prepared ahead of time and we have organizations that help us learn more about disasters. idi\_Orchid*

Sunflower noted that:

*Organizations here are well prepared and we respond fast during earthquakes. fgd\_Sunflower*

Lily added that:

*City High is always prepared and has knowledge about safety response towards disasters. idi\_Lily*

These statements highlight the significant role of school organizations in strengthening disaster preparedness among students. Through structured training and active participation, students gain both theoretical understanding and practical skills necessary during emergencies. These organizations serve as frontline responders within the school, ensuring quick and organized action.

As stated by [Morante and Cerado \(2025\)](#), effective Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) implementation in public secondary schools significantly enhances students' preparedness knowledge and readiness. Similarly, [Joven \(2017\)](#) emphasized that active DRRM committees and structured school roles improve coordination and training participation among students.



Navarro (2022) also found that student involvement in DRRM activities increases confidence and active engagement during emergency situations. These studies suggest that youth participation in preparedness initiatives strengthens awareness, responsibility, and overall school resilience to disasters.

**Preparedness Builds Awareness and Confidence.** The third theme emerged for Research question 1 was 'Preparedness efforts aim to cultivate students' awareness of disaster risks while strengthening their confidence in responding appropriately. Awareness allows students to recognize hazards, while confidence empowers them to act without hesitation. Through continuous drills and instruction, students gradually overcome fear and become more capable of protecting themselves.

Building preparedness is not solely about physical actions but also about developing presence of mind and emotional control during emergencies. This psychological readiness is equally important in ensuring students' safety. Tulip stated:

*Students are prepared and aware of disaster and safety response during earthquakes. idi\_Tulip*

Daisy shared:

*We should practice what to do if disasters happen. idi\_Daisy*

Sunflower mentioned:

*We respond fast to earthquakes because we are prepared.*

*fgd\_Sunflower*

Rose added:

*Our school organizations help us become more ready for disasters.*

*fgd\_Rose*

The participants' responses highlight that preparedness initiatives contribute significantly to students' awareness and confidence during disaster situations. Studies in disaster risk reduction emphasize that informed individuals are more likely to act appropriately and avoid panic during emergencies. Awareness enables students to identify danger and recall safety procedures quickly.

As mentioned by Park and Cho (2021), psychological readiness among students in earthquake-prone schools significantly increases participation and appropriate response during emergencies. Similarly, Bacalso (2024) found that psychological readiness and perceived capacity among senior high school learners enhance their confidence in handling disaster situations. Ruiz (2020) further explained that repeated drills and preparedness activities reduce fear-based

reactions and improve calm behavior among students. These findings support the idea that preparedness initiatives not only develop practical response skills but also strengthen students' emotional resilience and decision-making during crises.



Table 1. Preparedness and Awareness of Disaster Safety Response

| ESSENTIAL THEMES                                | THEMATIC STATEMENTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Regular Earthquake Drills Enhance Preparedness. | <p>"Ang mga students kay prepared sila and every month kay ga perform jud mig mga earthquake drills dinhi para ang mga students kay prepared pag naa nay mga disasters." [Students are well prepared and every month we practice earthquake drills so that students are aware and prepared during disasters. <i>idi_Lotus</i>]</p> <p>"Here in National High School is prepared jud mi permi like naa kami mga practices gina himo per month na earthquake drill paano kami mag adto sa safety na lugar." [In KCNHS we are prepared in any sudden earthquakes and every month we practice Earthquake drills and safety response and where to evacuate when there's an earthquake. <i>idi_Carnation</i>]</p> <p>"Here in Kidapawan City National High school ga practice kami unsay buhaton if mahitabo na disaster like earthquake, we do duck, cover and hold ug naa jud kami gina sunod na preparedness." [Here in Kidapawan City National High we practice preparedness and safety response if there are any disasters like earthquake we do DUCK, COVER and HOLD and we also follow these procedures in preparedness. <i>idi_Peony</i>]</p> <p>"Diri sa City High is very big school kaau ni sya ug once a month ga practice mig earthquake drills jud." [Kidapawan City is really a big school and once a month we perform earthquake drills. <i>fgd_Rose</i>]</p> <p>"In terms sa disaster diri sa City High is prepared jud mi ug paspas mi maka respond sa earthquakes." [In terms of disaster, City High is really prepared and we respond fast to earthquakes. <i>fgd_Sunflower</i>]</p> <p>"Ang City High is always jud na sila prepared ug naa jud mi knowledge about sa safety response sa disasters." [City High is always</p> |

Continuation of Table 1...



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|                                                                                                             | <i>prepared and has knowledge about safety response towards disasters. fgd_Lily ]</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Presence of Disaster Organizations Enhances Awareness and Training</b><br><br>Continuation of Table 1... | <p><i>"Sa amo prepare jud mi ahead of time ug naa mi kanang organization nga naga tabang sa amo maka learn about disasters." [We are prepared ahead of time and we have organizations that help us learn more about disasters. idi_Orchid]</i></p> <p><i>"As a senior high school student dapat jud mag practice kung unsaon buhaton if naay disaster na mahitabo." [As a Senior High School student we should practice what to do if there are sudden disasters. idi_Daisy]</i></p> <p><i>"Mostly man gud diri sa Kidapawan is linog so ang mga teacher diri ga tudlo sa amo unsay himuon whenever mag linog like mag duck, cover and hold." [Mostly here in Kidapawan the disasters are earthquakes and our teachers always taught us what to do like DUCK, COVER and HOLD. idi_Sampaguita]</i></p> <p><i>"Organizations here are well prepared and organized sila." [Organizations here are well prepared and organized. fgd_Sunflower]</i></p> <p><i>"Sa school namu dinhi sa City High dapat prepared jud ug kabalo sa safety response kay gi tudlo ni sa organizations like Red Cross ug DRRM." [In our school City High we should be prepared and know safety responses since it was taught by organizations like DRRM and Red Cross. fgd_Orchid]</i></p> |
| <b>Preparedness Builds Awareness and Confidence</b>                                                         | <p><i>"Prepared jud ug aware sa mga panghitabo na disasters ug safety response pag naay earthquake." [Prepared and aware of disasters and safety response during earthquakes. idi_Tulip]</i></p> <p><i>"Ang mga students kay prepared sila." [Students are prepared.] idi_Lotus]</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |



|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>"Here in National High School prepared jud mi permi." [<i>Here in National High School we are always prepared. <b>idi_Carnation</b></i>]</p> <p>"Prepared jud mi ug paspas mi maka respond." [<i>We are prepared and we respond quickly. <b>fgd_Sunflower</b></i>]</p> <p>"City High is always prepared and has knowledge about safety response." [<i>City High is always prepared and knowledgeable about safety response. <b>fgd_Lily</b></i>]</p> <p>"Prepared jud ug aware ang mga students." [<i>Students are prepared and aware. <b>fgd_Tulip</b></i>]</p> |
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### Experiences and Challenges During Disaster

Disaster situations present students with intense emotional and physical challenges that often differ from what is practiced during preparedness drills. Although students receive training on proper safety responses, the sudden and unpredictable nature of real disasters can trigger fear, confusion, and stress. These emotional reactions significantly influence how students behave, often interfering with their ability to recall and apply learned procedures. Understanding these experiences is essential in identifying the gaps between disaster training and actual emergency response. By examining students' real-life challenges during disasters, schools can improve preparedness programs to better address emotional control, evacuation difficulties, and environmental risks. The essential themes below reflect the major obstacles students encounter when facing actual disaster situations.

***Panic Prevents Proper Application of Safety Measures.*** The first essential theme that emerged from the Research question 2 was 'Panic emerges' as a dominant emotional response during disasters, overwhelming students' ability to think clearly and act

rationally. When disasters occur suddenly, fear can cause students to forget safety instructions, freeze in place, or engage in risky behaviors such as running aimlessly.

This emotional response directly interferes with the effectiveness of disaster preparedness training. Panic also spreads quickly in crowded school environments, intensifying confusion and disorder. When students observe others reacting fearfully, it amplifies collective anxiety, making it even harder to maintain organized evacuation procedures. This highlights the need for preparedness programs to include emotional regulation strategies alongside physical safety training.

Lotus stated:

*Some students panic during earthquakes but later get used to it. **idi\_Lotus***

Peony shared:

*During real earthquakes we can't apply what we learned because of fear. **idi\_Peony***

Sampaguita mentioned:



*We panic so we forget to duck,  
cover, and hold.*

*fgd\_Sampaguita*

Tulip added:

*Students panic easily and run  
anywhere which is dangerous.*

*fgd\_Tulip*

These statements show that panic significantly disrupts students' ability to follow disaster protocols. Studies on emergency behavior reveal that fear often overrides training, especially during sudden disasters. Panic responses lead to poor decision-making and increase injury risks.

According to [Lewis \(2016\)](#), positive attitudes toward preparedness do not always translate into appropriate behavior during actual emergencies, as emotional responses can override learned procedures. Similarly, [Najafi, Nejati, and Golabi \(2017\)](#) explained through the Theory of Planned Behavior that stress and perceived lack of control influence individuals' actions during disasters. [Ruiz \(2020\)](#) further found that repeated drills help reduce fear-based reactions and improve calm behavior among students. These studies suggest that preparedness programs should incorporate emotional regulation and stress management components to ensure that students remain composed and capable of applying learned safety procedures during emergencies.

***Overcrowding and Narrow Exits Increase Risks.*** The second essential theme that emerged from the Research question 2 was 'Physical school conditions.' It significantly affect the safety of students during disaster situations. Overcrowded classrooms, congested hallways, and narrow exit pathways create obstacles that hinder smooth and quick evacuation. When large numbers of students

attempt to evacuate simultaneously through limited spaces, pushing, falling, and injuries become more likely.

These environmental challenges worsen panic and delay response times, increasing the danger during earthquakes and other emergencies. The lack of sufficient evacuation routes and space management highlights the importance of proper infrastructure planning and crowd control strategies as part of disaster preparedness efforts.

Rose stated:

*Our school is crowded and hallways  
are narrow so many get injured.*

*idi\_Rose*

Orchid shared:

*It's hard to evacuate because the  
exits are narrow and crowded.*

*idi\_Orchid*

Sunflower mentioned:

*Students panic and get dizzy  
especially in high grounds.*

*fgd\_Sunflower*

Lily added:

*Students in high grounds can't  
evacuate quickly and panic.*

*fgd\_Lily*

The responses demonstrate that physical school conditions significantly contribute to the risks students face during disaster situations. Overcrowded hallways and narrow exits hinder efficient evacuation, causing congestion that increases the likelihood of injuries. When large numbers of students attempt to leave simultaneously, panic combined with limited space creates dangerous conditions that slow response times and compromise safety.



As stated by Garcia (2018), students' perceptions of evacuation routes and safety signage directly influence the effectiveness of school evacuations, emphasizing the need for clear and accessible pathways. Similarly, Lindo and Perez (2024) highlighted that well-planned emergency facilities and evacuation mapping significantly improve movement efficiency during school emergencies. Ortega (2020) further explained that proper contingency planning and infrastructure improvements enhance school safety outcomes. These studies affirm that adequate exit routes, organized crowd management, and improved school layout planning are essential components of disaster preparedness and injury prevention.

**Emotional Trauma from Sudden Disasters.** The third essential theme emerged from the Research question 2 was 'Emotional trauma.' Beyond physical risks, disasters also have profound emotional effects on students. The sudden occurrence of earthquakes can leave learners feeling shocked, fearful, and psychologically distressed. These emotional reactions may persist even after the disaster ends, affecting students' sense of safety and well-being. Experiencing intense fear, dizziness, and confusion during disasters can lead to trauma, particularly for students in high-risk locations such as upper floors or crowded areas.

Sunflower stated:

*Students panic and get traumatic experiences during earthquakes.*  
**idi\_Sunflower**

Lily shared:

*Sudden earthquakes traumatize students especially in high places.*  
**idi\_Lily**

Rose mentioned:

*Many students panic and get injured because of fear.* **fgd\_Rose**

Tulip added:

*Students become nervous and scared during disasters.* **fgd\_Tulip**

The participants' experiences reveal that disasters not only pose physical dangers but also cause emotional and psychological distress among students. Sudden earthquakes create shock, fear, and confusion, which can leave lasting emotional effects such as anxiety and trauma. Students in high-risk areas, such as upper floors or crowded spaces, are particularly vulnerable to intense fear during disasters.

Repeated exposure to disaster drills influences students' psychological responses, noting that unmanaged fear during actual emergencies may lead to heightened anxiety and distress. Similarly, Bacalso (2024) found that psychological readiness and perceived capacity significantly affect senior high school learners' emotional stability during disaster situations. Elmer D. Fuentes (2023) also emphasized that teachers play a crucial role in supporting students' emotional recovery during disaster response and recovery phases. These studies suggest that without proper emotional support systems—such as counseling services, debriefing sessions, and structured recovery programs—students' well-being and academic performance may be adversely affected. Therefore, comprehensive disaster management in schools should integrate both physical safety measures and psychosocial support mechanisms (Ruiz, 2020).

**Table 2. Experiences and Challenges During Disaster**



| ESSENTIAL THEMES                                                                                     | THEMATIC STATEMENTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Panic Prevents Proper Application of Safety Measures</b></p> <p>Continuation of Table 2...</p> | <p>"For some students they get nervous and panic during earthquakes, pero as time goes by nasanay na sila ug na apply na nila ang mga learnings." <i>[For some students they get nervous and panic during earthquakes but as time passes by they get used to it and apply the learnings. idi_Lotus]</i></p> <p>"If naa najud ang disaster like earthquake ang uban dili ma apply ang gina buhat during practices because of fear." <i>[If there is really an earthquake, some cannot apply what was practiced because of fear. idi_Peony]</i></p> <p>"Mga experiences namo diria is kung mag panic mi usahay ingana among ma experience ug dapat dili ta mag panic para safety ta." <i>[Our experience is we panic sometimes and we should not panic for our safety. idi_Carnation]</i></p> <p>"Biggest issue dinhi sa among school is kung naay disasters students ga panic dayun." <i>[The biggest issue in our school during disasters is students panic immediately. fgd_Rose]</i></p> <p>"Diri sa City High pag naay disasters daghan students mag panic dayun." <i>[During disasters here in City High many students panic immediately. fgd_Sunflower]</i></p> <p>"Ang mga students ga panic dayun then ma injured." <i>[Students panic easily and get injured. fgd_Tulip]</i></p> |
| <p><b>Overcrowding and Narrow Exits Increase Risks</b></p>                                           | <p>"Sa City High is very crowded siya ug overpopulated pud so lisud kaau mag evacuate during earthquakes kay ang dalan pa exit kay very narrow." <i>[City High is very crowded and overpopulated, so it is hard to evacuate because the exits are very narrow. fgd_Orchid]</i></p> <p>"Daghan ma injured kay crowded ang school ug gagmay ang hallways pa exit." <i>[Many get injured</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |



|                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Continuation of Table 2...                    | <p><i>because the school is crowded and hallways are narrow. fgd_Rose]</i></p> <p><i>"Students in high grounds dili sila ka evacuate dayun." [Students in high grounds cannot evacuate quickly. fgd_Lily]</i></p> <p><i>"Ang ma experience nako while naga linog kay dili jud namo ma apply ang gina tudlo because sa panic." [During earthquakes we cannot apply what was taught because of panic. idi_Sampaguita]</i></p> <p><i>"I believe ang difficulty sang senior high school student is ma panic sila ug wala sila kabalo unsay buhaton." [The difficulty of students is they panic and don't know what to do. idi_Daisy]</i></p> <p><i>"Students magdagan-dagan nalang bisan asa tungod kay nag panic na." [Students run anywhere because they panic. fgd_Tulip]</i></p>                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Emotional Trauma from Sudden Disasters</b> | <p><i>"Students panic and get dizzy especially those students in high grounds." [Students panic and get dizzy especially those in high grounds. fgd_Sunflower]</i></p> <p><i>"During disaster students sa high grounds at risk sila ug mag panic sila." [Students in high grounds are at risk and panic. fgd_Lily]</i></p> <p><i>"Ang ma experience namo is kulba ug panic during earthquakes." [Our experience is fear and panic during earthquakes. idi_Carnation]</i></p> <p><i>"We couldn't apply the learnings because we always panic."<br/>[We couldn't apply the learnings because we panic. idi_Sampaguita]</i></p> <p><i>"Ma panic sila ug malimtan nila unsay buhaton."<br/>[They panic and forget what to do. idi_Daisy]</i></p> <p><i>"Students get traumatic experience sa sudden na panghitabo." [Students get traumatic experiences from sudden disasters. fgd_Sunflower]</i></p> |



## Coping Mechanisms and Reflections After Disaster Experiences

After experiencing disaster events, students engage in reflection about their actions, emotions, and preparedness levels. These reflections allow them to identify what went wrong, what was effective, and what improvements should be made for future emergencies. Coping mechanisms serve as tools that help students recover emotionally while strengthening their readiness for future disasters.

Students' suggestions emphasize the importance of calmness, continuous practice, and improved safety resources. By learning from past experiences, students contribute valuable insights that can enhance disaster preparedness programs, ensuring safer and more effective responses in future emergencies. *Staying Calm and Maintaining Presence of Mind.* The first essential themes emerged from the Research question 3 was 'Maintaining calmness.' During disasters is viewed as a crucial factor in ensuring safety and effective response. When students remain composed, they are more likely to remember safety procedures and apply them correctly. Calm behavior helps prevent chaotic movements, reduces injury risks, and promotes orderly evacuation.

Presence of mind allows students to assess their surroundings, follow instructions, and assist others if necessary. Developing emotional control through preparedness training can significantly improve disaster response outcomes, highlighting the importance of psychological readiness alongside physical safety skills.

Lotus stated:

*Don't panic because you will forget.  
what you should supposed to do.*

*idi\_Lotus*

Sampaguita shared:

*Presence of mind is important to  
apply what we learned.*

*idi\_Sampaguita*

Sunflower mentioned:

*Do not run quickly to avoid injury.*

*fgd\_Sunflower*

Lily added:

*Be calm and apply what was taught  
in drills.*

*fgd\_Lily*

The participants strongly emphasized calmness as a critical coping mechanism that enables effective application of disaster preparedness measures. Remaining composed allows students to think clearly, recall safety instructions, and move in an organized manner during emergencies. Calm behavior reduces unnecessary panic, which often leads to injuries and confusion during evacuations.

As explained by [Najafi, Nejati, Golabi \(2017\)](#), behavioral intentions and actual responses during disasters are strongly influenced by perceived control and psychological factors, indicating that emotional regulation plays a vital role in effective emergency action. Similarly, [Park and Cho \(2021\)](#) found that psychological readiness enhances students' participation and appropriate responses in earthquake-prone schools. [Fazeli et al. \(2024\)](#) further emphasized that behavioral training and individual preparedness programs improve adaptive responses during natural hazards. These studies support the integration of emotional regulation strategies, such as stress management and situational awareness training, into disaster preparedness education to strengthen students' calm and rational decision-making during crises.



*Applying Learned Safety Procedures.* The second essential theme emerged from the Research question 3 was 'Applying learned safety procedures' during actual disasters. It is essential in minimizing harm and ensuring personal protection. Disaster training equips students with specific actions such as evacuation techniques, protective positioning, and emergency coordination. However, the effectiveness of this training depends on consistent application during real situations.

When students consciously follow practiced procedures, they are better able to navigate dangerous conditions safely. Reinforcing the importance of disciplined response encourages students to treat preparedness training seriously and view it as a life-saving skill rather than a routine school activity.

Peony stated:

*Apply the preparedness measures we learned. **idi\_Peony***

Tulip shared:

*Students should know where to evacuate. **idi\_Tulip***

Orchid mentioned:

*Apply safety responses taught by Organizations. **fgd\_Orchid***

Rose added:

*Follow drills accurately and responsibly. **fgd\_Rose***

The responses highlight the importance of consistently applying learned safety measures during real disaster situations. Knowledge alone is insufficient if it is not practiced and executed properly under pressure. Students who follow evacuation protocols, protective

actions, and emergency coordination procedures are more likely to avoid harm and ensure their safety.

As observed by [Silva \(2018\)](#), both short- and long-term effects of drills significantly influence adolescents' behavioral responses during emergencies, emphasizing that repeated practice strengthens correct actions under stress. Similarly, [Torres \(2022\)](#) compared one-off and regular drills in schools and found that continuous drills produce more effective and sustained preparedness behaviors among students. [Rodriguez \(2021\)](#) also explained that simulation learning enhances recall and proper application of procedures in disaster scenarios.

*Improving Resources and Immediate Actions.* The third theme emerged from the Research question 3 was 'Post-disaster reflections.' Highlights the importance of having readily available resources and clear immediate actions to address injuries and risks.

Immediate yet organized actions, such as controlled evacuation and avoiding rushed movements, further enhance safety after disasters. Strengthening resource availability and response strategies ensures that students are not only prepared during disasters but also capable of managing their aftermath effectively.

Daisy stated:

*Prepare first aid to help injured people. **idi\_Daisy***

Carnation shared:

*Go home immediately after disasters to avoid danger. **idi\_Carnation***

Sunflower mentioned:

*Avoid rushing to prevent injuries.*



*fgd\_Sunflower*

Tulip added:

Always be prepared and alert.

*fgd\_Tulip*

The participants' suggestions underscore the importance of having adequate resources and organized actions following disaster events. First aid readiness enables immediate treatment of minor injuries, preventing complications and reducing the severity of harm. Quick yet controlled evacuation procedures also help maintain safety during aftershocks or continued emergencies.

According to [Castaneda \(2017\)](#), access to emergency supplies significantly influences

student preparedness and safety outcomes in schools. Similarly, [Kadir and Ahmed \(2018\)](#) found that the availability of emergency kits empowers students and improves their ability to respond effectively during disasters. Elmer D. [Fuentes \(2023\)](#) further emphasized that structured school disaster preparedness, response, and recovery plans strengthen coordinated action and post-disaster management. These studies highlight that schools which prioritize adequate resources and organized response systems are better equipped to manage injuries, maintain order, and support recovery efforts following disaster events.

**Table 3. Coping Mechanisms and Reflections After Disaster Experiences**

| ESSENTIAL THEMES                              | THEMATIC STATEMENTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Staying Calm and Maintaining Presence of Mind | <p>"I suggest na dili mag panic kay pag mag panic." [I suggest not panicking. <i>idi_Lotus</i>]</p> <p>"After disaster kaylangan dili pangunahan ang fear." [After disaster do not let fear control you. <i>idi_Peony</i>]</p> <p>"Presence of mind para ma apply nato ang gina hatag sang teachers." [Presence of mind is important to apply what teachers taught. <i>idi_Sampaguita</i>]</p> <p>"Dili mag dagan diritsu kay basin masamad." [Do not run quickly because you could get injured. <i>fgd_Sunflower</i>]</p> <p>"Be calm and apply ang mga natun-an sa drills." [Be calm and apply what was learned in drills. <i>fgd_Lily</i>]</p> <p>"Students dapat dili mag panic para safety." [Students should not panic for safety. <i>fgd_Tulip</i>]</p> |



|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Applying Learned Safety Procedures        | <p>“Ang lesson na natun-an dapat i apply ang disaster preparedness.” <i>[The lessons learned should be applied in disaster preparedness. <b>idi_Peony</b>]</i></p> <p>“Students kabalo unsa buhaton pag naay disaster.” <i>[Students should know what to do during disasters. <b>idi_Daisy</b>]</i></p> <p>“Always prepared ug kabalo aha mag evacuate.” <i>[Always be prepared and know where to evacuate. <b>idi_Tulip</b>]</i></p> <p>“Follow drills accurately and maging responsible.” <i>[Follow drills accurately and be responsible. <b>fgd_Rose</b>]</i></p> <p>“Apply safety responses taught by organizations.” <i>[Apply safety responses taught by organizations. <b>fgd_Orchid</b>]</i></p> <p>“Prepared ug aware para paspas maka respond.” <i>[Prepared and aware to respond quickly.) <b>fgd_Sunflower</b>]</i></p>                                       |
| Improving Resources and Immediate Actions | <p>“Siguro mag prepare sang mga aid na dapat dalhon para diretso na if naay masamad.” <i>[Maybe prepare first aid kits to help injured persons immediately. <b>idi_Daisy</b>]</i></p> <p>“Mag uli ta diretso dili na mag stay sa school kay basin mag kusog pa ang lindol.” <i>[We should go home immediately and not stay in school because there might be stronger aftershocks. <b>idi_Carnation</b>]</i></p> <p>“Always prepared ug alert.” (Always be prepared and alert.) <b>idi_Tulip</b></p> <p>“Organization dapat paspas mag respond.” <i>[Organizations should respond quickly. <b>fgd_Rose</b>]</i></p> <p>“Avoid rushing para dili ma injured.” <i>[Avoid rushing to prevent injuries.) <b>fgd_Sunflower</b>]</i></p> <p>“Prepared jud ug kabalo sa safety response next time.” <i>[Be prepared and know safety response next time. <b>fgd_Orchid</b>]</i></p> |



## 6. Implications And Remarks

The Senior High School students of Kidapawan City National High School exhibited some awareness and certain level of preparedness concerning the management of a calamity, especially when the event is an earthquake. In the findings, much was left to be desired regarding the aspects of panic, overcrowding during evacuation, emotional issues, and the application of the learned procedures being implemented during actual events of calamities. The study emphasizes the point that it is not just a matter of conducting a drill but also encompasses the emotional preparedness of the students, the infrastructure of the school, and the students' ability to apply what they have learned in a confident manner. By addressing some of these issues, a safe school environment can be ensured, and children can grow into responsible and disaster-informed youth.

### Implications for Educational Practice

The findings of the study indicate that there is a need for the schools to intensify their disaster preparedness programs. Although the regular drills to prepare the students and the entire school for earthquake disaster occur regularly, the need to add another psychological perspective is important. The psychological perspective would aim at managing the fears and panics that arise among the students when such disaster strikes.

The educational institutions should also consider assessing the school's infrastructure, including the routes for evacuation, hallway space, and crowd management systems. The issue of overcrowding and small exit routes was cited as a critical concern, contributing to the risk of disasters. The administrators of the schools should consider additional strategies, including better planning for evacuation, identification of teachers and students, and the

use of a structured system for the flow of evacuees during emergencies.

Furthermore, establishing partnerships with various organizations like DRRM, Red Cross, and emergency response groups can also enhance the education about disaster response. Training for teachers and student leaders will encourage a culture of preparation where response to safety situations becomes systematic and organized. This ensures it becomes efficient.

### Implications for Students

These findings point out that personal responsibility is necessary in disaster preparedness among students, which means that one should be involved and take drills seriously, just like any other practice meant for saving lives, instead of going through them routinely. Presence of mind and control over emotions are handy in reducing panic and injuries during disasters. Students should also be made aware of evacuation routes, safety procedures like Duck, Cover, and Hold, and first aid. Support systems among peers can also be implemented, where students can support each other in case of emergencies, especially in vulnerable areas such as upper floors. Besides that, students will be guided to share their disaster experiences and further develop their preparation continuously. Repeated practice will make them confident and less fearful, leading to much safer responses during further disasters.

### Implications for Communities

This research study emphasizes the importance of communities in enhancing disaster risk reduction (DRR) and building resilience. The results of the study show that although Senior High School students are aware and have basic preparedness skills through drills and school programs, disaster response is not just dependent on the school setting. Communities need to understand their role in enhancing



disaster education and ensuring that safety procedures are not just practiced in school but also in the community. In addition, it is also implied that there is a need for disaster awareness campaigns, as well as capacity building initiatives, to improve disaster preparedness. Improving evacuation systems, as well as reducing the risks of overcrowding, can also help to improve disaster safety. By ensuring the development of resilient communities, it is possible to ensure that students and community members are better prepared to respond to disaster situations.

### **Implications for Future Researchers**

Future researchers can take it further by selecting multiple schools from different areas to expand the scope of preparedness levels and disaster response experiences. A large sample group will be instrumental in giving further insight into the different levels of disaster preparedness in different environments. Researchers can also analyze quantitative measures related to emotional preparedness, levels of panic, and behavior. Another type of study, examining its influence on the long-term disaster preparedness of students, may be conducted by conducting a longitudinal study. Moreover, another area for investigation for future studies could be to assess the effectiveness of psychological preparation programs embedded into disaster drills. Examinations of the role of school infrastructure design/engineering evacuation could also prove instrumental.

### **7. Concluding Remarks**

The entire qualitative study process of “Understanding the Preparedness and Safety Response in Terms of Disaster to Senior High School Students in Kidapawan City National High School” has proven to be an exceedingly challenging yet fulfilling journey. Although we, as a student-researcher, encountered various challenges and difficulties particularly from gathering data, analyzing it, as well as ensuring

that it perfectly depicted or described the condition of the students, it has somehow become a gateway towards a better knowledge, not only of disaster response, but also of how students cope with such unfortunate circumstances. This study also resulted in recognizing the strength and potential of Senior High School students. Despite feeling fearful and challenged in times of disaster, they manifested their having gained insights on being aware, ready to learn, as well as desiring to better perform in future disaster situations. These manifestations prove that students are active contributors in building up disaster management in schools.

Furthermore, this study highlighted the role of collaboration and responsibility sharing between the administration, teachers, organizations, and students towards the creation of a disaster-resilient learning environment. Likewise, the practice of preparedness should never and will never be a one-time requirement or a measure of compliance; strengthening facilities, enhancing emotional preparedness, and involving the students themselves in the learning process will greatly minimize risk and yield positive outcomes in the aspect of safety.

In addition, the journey of conducting the current research project has also helped us over the years realize the importance of patience, determination, and critical thinking. Conducting the research and making the best use of the students’ responses also required focusing and perseverance skills. The value of qualitative research also lies in listening and respecting the responses of the research subjects. Every sharing of the students included a message or meaning. This study also reinforced my interest in Disaster Risk Reduction in schools. It reinforced my belief that education does not only offer academic benefits, but it also equips learners with knowledge that can save lives. Disaster risk



reduction education is powerful in saving lives, boosting self-confidence, and instilling resilience among young individuals.

Thus, it is with this conclusion that this research hopes to unveil the realities on preparedness and the safety response of Senior High School students in Kidapawan City National High School. Though the Senior High School students have shown their awareness and participation in disaster preparedness, emotional and environmental issues still pose a notable cause for concern. In the final analysis, being prepared is a lifelong skill and a collective responsibility. In developing disaster response capabilities and preparing students cognitively and emotionally, we can build a new generation of individuals capable not only of exceling academically but also of responding to crises effectively and confidently. Indeed, the significance of preparedness can be seen to reside in the fact that it indeed saves lives, and investing in it today promises us a safer tomorrow.

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## Appendices

### Research Guide Questions

#### Interview Guide

RQ1. Before the disaster, what were the perspectives and level of preparedness of Senior High School students regarding disaster preparedness and safety response in Kidapawan City?

1.1. What types of disasters are Senior High School students aware of that may affect Kidapawan City?

1.2. What are the main sources of students' information about disasters (e.g., school, media, family, community)?

1.3. Which disaster types do students feel most familiar with, and which ones are they least familiar with?

1.4. How confident are students in knowing what to do before a disaster occurs?



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RQ2. During the disaster, what are the experiences and challenges of Senior High School students in applying disaster preparedness and safety response during disasters and emergency situations?

2.1. What disaster drills and preparedness activities have students experienced in their school?

2.2. How prepared do students feel when a disaster occurs?

2.3. What skills or trainings do students believe still need improvement for effective disaster response?

2.4. What difficulties do students experience during disaster drills or actual emergency situations?

RQ3. After the disaster, what coping mechanisms, reflections, and suggestions do Senior High School students have after experiencing disasters or disaster-related activities?

3.1. To what extent do students believe Senior High School students in Kidapawan City are prepared for disasters?

3.2. What gaps or weaknesses do students observe in the current disaster preparedness programs of schools?

3.3. How can schools help students become more confident and psychologically prepared after disasters?

3.4. What advice can students give to other learners to help them be more prepared for future disasters?