

Teachers' Preparedness in Teaching Kindergarten in Private Schools in the Division of Meycauayan City, Bulacan

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Abstract: *This study described the teacher preparedness in teaching Kindergarten in private schools in the School Division of City of Meycauayan, Bulacan. The respondents of the study were 50 kindergarten teachers chosen by universal sampling. The researcher used the descriptive method of research. A devised questionnaire was prepared, tested, and validated through a dry run. After the researcher sought permissions, the administration and distribution and retrieval of the questionnaires commenced, after which the results were consolidated, organized, tallied, and tabulated in distribution tables using statistical tools such as frequency, weighted mean and standard deviation. Findings revealed that teachers were very much prepared with their strategic/approaches, instructional materials, classroom environment, social environment, communication skills and recess activities. Therefore, it is concluded that teachers teaching Kindergarten are ready to handle the training and development of children at their tender age, which they carry over when they grow older. On the test of significant difference in preparedness of teachers and the six aspects of decision was to not reject hypothesis, not significant. Respondents are all prepared in teaching Kindergarten as to the six aspects of teacher preparedness in teaching: strategies or approaches, instructional materials, classroom environment, social environment, communication skills of teachers, and recess activities. It is recommended that teachers should be prepared in using cross curriculum teaching.*

Keywords— kindergarten, private schools, teachers' preparedness, teaching in private

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is deemed a very important catalyst that leads to change, our modern-day society considers education as a life-changing agent that provides better opportunities for its members to become more productive and competitive to keep abreast with the fast-paced and ever-changing world. A study stated that educators of the 21st century must have an impressive deal of professional and personal qualities and skills. (Asio & Riego de Dios, 2019). Jimenez (2020) stated that improving certain abilities of students remains to be a challenge among teacher and students. In a fresh perspective, Gadia and Mendoza (2019) showed that employees somewhat agree on the context of professional development in terms of organizational culture. It is in the light of this matter that the researcher considers the timeliness and urgency of conducting a research concerning teachers' preparedness. In particular, Early et al., (2005) showed that pre-kindergarten teachers see children with good social skills and minimal behavior problems. That is why in the kindergarten level, both in the personal and professional aspects need to be developed such that educators can comply and meet the requirements prescribed by the K to 12 Curriculum. This will entail certain organizational considerations on the kindergarten level. Just like what Riego de Dios (2020) showed that there should be a suitable supervisory relationship in the organization.

It is in the grassroots of the educative ladder that the Department of Education programs must build its thrust and focus on the trainings of the pre-school teachers to fortify and strengthen further the foundation of basic education that will lead to the long-term goals of the department to improve

and enhance the quality and standards of both education and its graduates. Fernandez (2017) believed that early childhood education teachers use a variety of techniques for instructing. The used of modified lesson plans, worksheets, and even teacher resources to these pupils is highly encouraged. Hence, the similarities between this learning and what they will experience are seen in the present situation of the education system (Fernandez, 2017). They also know this process is to teach and enforce important skills for the future. Verbal skills, communication skills, and coordination are taught through various techniques. Teachers have used software programs designed for this age group in homes and facilities around the country. Ofoegbuu (2004) pointed-out that teacher motivation is a vital factor for classroom effectiveness. For Berk (2005), it is essential to know the related skills in children, including the ability to focus, think, recognize important words, shows some self-control, and speak to develop and transform them as to 21st century pupils. More so, by raising awareness, providing technology related instructional materials, and engaging in direct action with grassroots organizations, these initiatives and programs may help children to develop the required Kindergarten readiness, and, to prepare the parents for this important period of development the pupils (Berk, 2005).

In line with this, to comply on the ASEAN Education Qualification Framework in upgrading the present education system and to further address the needs of the present 21st century education system, the country implements the K to 12 Basic Education Program. The Enhanced K to 12 Basic Education Program (E-BEP) or what we known as "K to 12 Curriculum" seek to provide for a quality 12-year basic education program that each Filipino is entitled to (DepEd

Discussion Paper, 2010). This is comply and follow the standards of Article XIV, Section 2 (1) of the 1987 Philippine Constitution which states that “the State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society” (Muñoz and Muñoz, 2002). The K to 12 means Kindergarten and the 12 years of elementary and secondary education. In line with this, Kindergarten refers to the 5-year and cohort that takes a standardized Kinder Curriculum. As the content of K to 12 programs, elementary education refers to primary schooling that involves six or seven years of education, while, secondary education refers both junior and senior high school. Further, under the K to 12 programs, the goal is not just to add two years of schooling but more importantly to enhance and elevate the present basic education curriculum. Thus, the goal of the Enhanced K to 12 Basic Education Program (BEP) is to create a functional basic education system that will produce productive, responsible, and globally competitive citizens equipped with the essential competencies and skills for both life-long learning and employability (DepEd Discussion Paper, 2010). The program is designed to enhance the basic education system to full functionality to fulfill the basic learning needs of students. This is in line with the agenda of the present administration of having quality education as a long-term solution to poverty.

Hence, in order to realize these objectives, the researcher focused on this study regarding professional preparedness of teachers, especially those in the pre-school level, specifically the Kindergarten teachers – since they are the ones who provide the rudimentary skills that are fundamentally essential that the young learners need to acquire in order to support the succeeding learning’s in their later years. If the multi-faceted needs of the learners are not sufficiently and substantially met or addressed by the professional requirements or skills of the teachers, there will certainly be a learning gap that could affect both the teaching and learning processes. It is therefore very important to not just anticipate but rather resolve the problems on teacher’s preparedness especially in the Kindergarten level in order to provide the best quality education for the young and absorbent minds of the 21st century learners.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of the study is to determine the preparedness of the teachers in teaching kindergarten K-12 curriculum in the private elementary schools.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the profile of the kindergarten teachers in terms of:
 - a) Years in teaching early childhood education; and
 - b) Trainings attended in teaching early childhood education?

- 2) How may the teachers’ preparedness in teaching kindergarten described in terms of:
 - a) Strategies/ approaches;
 - b) Instructional materials;
 - c) Classroom environment;
 - d) Social environment;
 - e) Communication skills; and
 - f) Recess activities?
- 3) Is there a significant difference in the preparedness of teachers as to the six aspects?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study made use of descriptive design where it attempted to determine the teachers’ preparedness in teaching Kindergarten in private schools in the Schools Division City of Meycauayan, Bulacan. A descriptive research is a systematic investigation that aimed to describe and/ or analyze a characteristic or a phenomenon existing of a certain variable (Prieto, et al., 2017; Hero, 2019).

2.2 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were 50 Kindergarten teachers chosen through universal sampling from the private elementary schools in the City Division of Meycauayan, Bulacan. The respondents must teach in the Kindergarten level and must be a graduate of Bachelor’s degree in elementary education specializing in early childhood education or pre-school education.

2.3 Instrument of the Study

The researcher read books, magazines, published journals, and DepEd Orders regarding Kindergarten Curriculum and surfed the internet to give her an idea how to devise a questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaires pertain the demographic profile of the teachers- respondents as to gender, age, highest educational attainment, several years teaching Kindergarten, and subjects load. On the second part of the survey-questionnaire, it comprises the six aspects of teachers’ preparedness teaching Kindergarten in the K to 12 Curriculum. The sub-contracts under teachers’ preparedness in teaching Kindergarten are: strategies/approaches, instructional materials, social environment, communication skills, and recess activities. For each aspect, five indicators were constructed and contextualized based from the guidelines of the K to12 curriculum. Before administering the questionnaire, three experts in Kindergarten which are Education Program Supervisor, Master Teacher, and English Language Expert was invited to check and validated the self-made questionnaire. All corrections and suggestions of the three expert validators were considered in improving the survey-questionnaire. After which, a test and re-test method was done for its reliability.

2.4 Statistical Analysis

The data collected from the test was tabulated and processed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. To analyze and interpret the data, Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 19 was used. The researcher quantified the demographic profile of the respondents using frequency and percentage, while teachers’ preparedness were quantified using descriptive statistics such as weighted mean procedures. To determine a significant difference between in the preparedness of teachers as to the six aspects, T-test for independent means was used.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The primary aim of the study is to determine the preparedness of the teachers in teaching kindergarten K-12 curriculum in the private elementary schools. Teachers play a vital and significant role in nurturing and honing the future of the youth in this society (Hero, 2019). As the front lines of education sector, it is important to assure the preparedness of teachers in teaching, especially in the Kindergarten level because it is the crucial level of education. At this cause, this paper clearly presents the profile of preparedness of Kindergarten of teachers in teaching Kindergarten. Below shows the result and findings of this study:

Table 1. Profile of Pre-school Teachers in terms of Years in Teaching in Early Childhood Education

Years in Teaching in Early Childhood Education	Frequency	Percentage
1. 20 – 30 years	22	44 %
2. 31-40 years	28	56 %
Total	50	100 %

Table 1.1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of years in teaching early childhood education. It clearly shows that 22 or 44% of the teacher-respondents have 20-30 years of teaching experience. In addition, 28 or 56% of the respondents had 31-40 years of teaching experience. This proves that the respondents who participated in this study are seasoned and had rich experience in their field of specialization.

Table 2. Profile of Pre-school Teachers in terms of Trainings Attended in Teaching Early Childhood Education

Trainings Attended in Teaching Early Childhood Education	Frequency	Percentage
1. Catch-up Education Program	10	20 %
2. Administration of School Readiness Year-end Assessment	14	28 %
3. Implementation of Early childhood Checklist development (ECCD)	26	56 %

Total	50	100 %
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Table 1.2 presents the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of trainings attended in teaching early childhood education. It clearly shows that 10 or 20% of the teacher-respondents attended seminar-workshop on implementation of Kindergarten catch up education program. Moreover, 14 or 28% attended workshop for untrained Kindergarten teachers on the administration of School Readiness Year-End Assessment (SREYA). Lastly, 26 or 52 % of the teacher-respondents attended seminar-workshop on implementation of Early Childhood Checklist development (ECCD). This proves that the teacher-respondents are well-trained and have a strong background in their field of specialization. Parallel to this study includes the study of Asio and Riego de Dios (2018) where they explore the professional and personal attributes of a teacher should possess and the study of Asio and Jimenez (2020) where they showed that respondents agree on the contexts and concepts of professional development.

Table 3. Teachers’ Preparedness in Teaching Kindergarten

Teachers’ Preparedness in Teaching Kindergarten	Average	Interpretation
1. Strategies/Approaches	4.86	Much Prepared
2. Instructional Materials	4.88	Much Prepared
3. Classroom Environment	4.81	Much Prepared
4. Social Environment	4.85	Much Prepared
5. Communication Skills	4.83	Much Prepared
6. Recess Activities	4.84	Much Prepared
General Average	4.85	Much Prepared

Table 3 illuminates the teachers’ preparedness in teaching Kindergarten in private schools in the Schools Division of Meycauayan City, Bulacan. As can be observed from the summary of teachers’ preparedness in teaching Kindergarten average mean in Table 3, it appeared that instructional materials recorded the highest weighted mean of 4.88, interpreted as much prepared, among the six indicators of preparedness in teaching Kindergarten. This implies that pre-school teachers are much prepared and skilled in applying provisions in educational toys, integrate cable television in teaching Kindergarten, can provide sufficient number of books, modules, and learning kits, have enough manipulative materials likes blocks, woods, cubes, and etc, and can contextualize and indigenize toy materials like fresh fruits, vegetables and leaves, etc.. As Hoppe (2007) pointed-out, instructional materials influence the continuing professional development of teachers in several

ways. For Preschool teachers, the materials often provide basic information on content and pedagogy. If the goal is to teach according to standards, the quality of the instructional materials is as important to teachers as it is to students. Because instructional materials influence curricula, they also affect the content of professional development workshops covering the adopted curriculum. Jimenez (2020) also identified the top ten motivating factors that help teachers in developing supplementary learning materials. Because instructional materials influence curricula, they also affect the content of professional development workshops covering the adopted curriculum.

Table 4. Test of Significant Difference between in the Preparedness of Teachers as to the Six Aspects

Preparedness of Teachers as to the Six Aspects			
Computed t-value	Critical t-value	Decision	Interpretation
0.12	2.70	Do not reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant

Table 3 shows the following results first, “Do not reject the null hypothesis”. There is no significant difference between the preparedness of teachers and the six aspects of teaching Kindergarten with overall computed value 0.12 and overall P-value = 0.99 This shows that the preparedness of teachers and the six aspects of teaching in Kindergarten have no significant difference. Hence, hypothesis is accepted. The computed value is 0.12 which is lower than the tabular value of 2.70. This result somewhat agrees with the idea of Asio, Riego de Dios & Lapuz (2019) where there was no significant difference in the professional skill of the teachers when grouped according to demographic profiles.

4. CONCLUSION

In view of all the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

- 1) Majority of the teacher were 31-40 years in service teaching Kindergarten and have a training Implementation of Early Childhood Checklist Development (ECCD).
- 2) Teachers were very much prepared with their strategies/approaches, instructional materials, classroom environment, social environment, communication skills, and recess activities. Therefore, it is concluded that teachers teaching Kindergarten are ready to handle the training and development of children at their tender age which they carry over when they grow older.
- 3) On the test of significant difference in preparedness of teachers and the six aspects decision was to not reject hypothesis, not significant. It is included that

respondents are all prepared in teaching Kindergarten as to the six aspects.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby offered:

- 1) That teachers should be very much prepared in using cross curriculum teaching, provide indigenous toy materials, clean and decorated rooms, and use sociometric.
- 2) That teacher should use body language. They should assist children in eating their snacks. They should be fully equipped with all the needs of early childhood so that they will find life meaningful and fruitful.
- 3) That principal should continue in providing trainings and programs for Kindergarten teachers to be more prepared in teaching Kindergarten level. Thus, the concept of prepared may be include in faculty development programs like in-service trainings and semestral trainings, or even include it in Learning Action Cell Session (LAC Session).
- 4) That future researcher, who may be interested in the same parameter of the study, may undertake similar study utilizing other variables which is not included in the study like teaching styles and preferences, preparedness and performance, satisfaction and commitment and other related variables.

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