Readiness of Kindergarten Learners Using Early Childhood Care and Development Checklist: Basis for A Proposed Interactive Activities

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Abstract — This study dealt with the level of readiness of kindergarten learners using Early Childhood Care and Development Checklist as basis for a propose interactive activities in Umingan District I, Division of Pangasinan II during the S.Y. 2019-2020. In this study, the descriptive-correlation analysis method was applied. It is the most effective way for dealing with the issues identified in this study. The descriptive analysis comprises locating, documenting, evaluating, and interpreting the system's core. The purpose of this study was to examine the kindergarten pupils' profiles and the relationship between their profile characteristics and their preparedness level. The descriptive approach was employed to assess and evaluate the readiness of kindergarten pupils of Umingan District I, Division of Pangasinan II. Inferences, conclusions, and guidelines would be emphasized on the results of the statistical study. The documentary study was used to draw the target of assessing the level of kindergarten learners' readiness using the ECCD checklist.

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following are hereby recommended: (1) The proposed school LAC Session program should be conducted as it aims to improve the craft of teachers in strengthening the self-help skills of kindergarten pupils. (2) There are interactive activities that can be utilized to enhance the readiness of the kindergarten pupils in self-help skills particularly in: (a) Self-feeding, (b) independent dressing and grooming, (c) hygiene and toileting, and (d) helping with daily chores like table setting and picking up toys. (3) Since there is a positive correlation between the level of readiness of kindergarten pupils along cognitive skills and the highest educational attainment, there is a need of strong partnership with the parents in order that they can properly guide their children's development particularly in the readiness skills. (4) Further study should be conducted to determine the level of readiness of kindergarten pupils in a wider scope.

Keywords — Readiness, Kindergarten Learners, Early Childhood Care and Development Checklist, Interactive Activities

Introduction

Recognizing the importance of crucial years has heightened interest and support for infancy education schemes. It accounts for the increased demand for Kindergarten education services, emphasizing the importance of experiences during the earliest years in life. Children's experiences during early childhood influence their later functioning in school and affect them throughout their life.

Developing positive and trusting relationships during the early years of childhood is crucial. These are necessary for cognitive and emotional development, as well as social bonding. Increased physical activity may give motor benefits throughout childhood and adolescence (UNICEF, 2017); early childhood is the most crucial and rapid phase of complete and healthy cognitive development in human life (UNICEF, 2017). (Riethmuller, Jones & Okely, 2009; Fisher et al., 2011). As a result, a better understanding of the role of physical activity in improving motor skills, cognition, and emotional skills in young children is necessary.

The field of early childhood knowledge has changed significantly in recent years, upholding some of the profession's long-held beliefs on good practice and challenging others. Subsequently, the number of early childhood programs grows due to the rising demand for out-of-home child care. It also acknowledges the importance of educational experiences.

Several reports indicate that enrollment in high-quality early education activities has long-term beneficial effects for children from low-income communities, as demonstrated by the extension of Head Start and public school kindergarten. Several decades of studies suggest that high-quality, developmentally relevant early childhood services have short- and long-term impacts on children's cognitive ability.

Pre-school teachers play a vital part in transforming children into responsible people. They instill skills in children during their childhood years that will support them immensely as they reach primary school. As a result, nursery teachers must do everything possible to fulfill the children's needs under their care.

Based on a cursory analysis, many so-called preschoolers that aimed to meet the increasing need for early childhood education appeared to have a diverse variety of curricular programs. This school was more concerned with academics than with the child's needs and overall development.

Furthermore, the school's resource capacity in providing the program is minimal, lowering the quality of early education and making it impossible to fully nurture the young child and prepare him for lifelong learning by engaging and meaningful encounters.

As an outcome, it is critical to assess every child in the class to determine their strengths and weaknesses in various aspects of child development to implement an approach based on a thorough interpretation of the most effective teaching methodology. Infant assessment is an important and growing aspect of high-quality early childhood care.

The premise led to the conduct of this study. The researchers used the Early Childhood Care and Growth Checklist to assess kindergarten pupils' readiness.

Literature Review

There is a link between preschool educators' interactions and academic success, according to Brassard and Boehm (2007). Furthermore, teachers support informal evaluation, citing several benefits. Teachers' opinions and perspectives, as well as their positive attitude about another measure in a young child's education, have an impact on and contribute to their growth.

A more recent study by Pretti-Frontczak, Kowalski and Douglas Brown (2002) focused on the assessment procedures employed by early childhood educators. They choose the games to work in the nursery for newborn testing and education. The researchers investigated the connection between assessment and curricula, as well as the association between educational degrees, curriculum design, and years of experience.

At least three child development evaluation instruments were measured to be used by participants in this study, with one-third believing that at least one systematic assessment was employed instead of an informal evaluation. There were significant differences in the schooling of early childhood instructors and the number of evaluation methods employed. More measuring devices were reported by participants with a greater level of education.

Horton and Bowman (2002) looked into how children were tested in pre-kindergarten settings. The major findings of the survey focused on the expanding usage of developmentally appropriate informal evaluation methods and the growing number of standardized state-mandated assessment frameworks in this method. In practice, the mandate-recommended or widely used informal assessment is used to assess the whole kid and evaluate programs. However, there was no association between the program and appraisal in practice, according to the responses. Finally, researchers discovered that devices are only beneficial if they are linked to the curriculum, complemented with other relevant content, and accompanied by teacher training, program evaluation, and parent communication. As a result, the evaluation becomes a holistic process that complements the overall program.

Brown and Rolfe (2005) looked into how Australian school psychologists evaluate children's progress in universal preschool settings. The first objective was to see if early childhood educators in Australia employed standardized and informal ways to early education evaluation in their programs. The second objective was to determine whether potential school counselors (kids) were aware of the importance of behavioral assessment. The majority of early childhood teachers employed informal rather than formal child development testing as a result of this study.

Students have the option of employing both informal and formal assessment instruments at the same time. Because of time constraints, a lack of funds, a lack of awareness of available

assessment tools, and a dismissive attitude toward formal assessment, early childhood teachers did not employ any standardized evaluation. Many of the participants in the study used checklists as informal evaluation tools. According to their comments, early childhood teachers preferred observation over informal evaluation. Anecdotal evidence, running records, and case sampling were also mentioned as possible explanations. One of the most startling findings of the study is that none of the early childhood teachers mentioned using inventories, reports, or home visits as means of evaluating young children's schooling. Student responders, on the other hand, emphasized checklists, ranking systems, inventories, and observation as part of the informal evaluation. Early childhood instructors ranked "relative ease perceived usefulness" and "completeness of the approach" as the most important factors to consider while employing specific tools, with "understanding of the mechanism," "credibility of the process," and "accessible of the system" earning no votes. Finally, the most vital features of employing assessment in general, according to the respondents, are "identifying children with probable concerns" and "giving a good general perception of children's growth."

Although checklists and categorization systems support the observation, structured tests were selected by one-fifth of the participants. The vast majority of participants agree that this program provides a basis for understanding and implementing assessment in the classroom, that it has become a part of their professional development, and that it can improve their student evaluation. Flowers, Ahlgrim-Delzell, Browder, and Spooner (2005) looked at teacher experience with diverse evaluation systems in five different nations. The report included 983 teachers from five diverse states. Three of the five countries use a portfolio strategy as an alternate evaluation tool. In the remaining two, however, performance-based evaluation and a checklist method are alternative assessment strategies. Most teachers feel that alternate evaluations have a beneficial effect, according to the findings of this study. Several teachers, however, differ on the items used to assess the teaching effects of alternate assessments. In addition, teachers' perspectives on the benefits of various evaluation systems (checklist, portfolio, and performance-based) varied.

According to research conducted by Ohl et.al (2013), excellent fine motor abilities are a prerequisite for kindergarten performance. Fine motor talents refer to the little muscles in the hands and fingers that aid in actions such as picking up objects and gripping a pencil. Cutting and pasting, manipulatives in mathematics, and clapping to learn syllables are all tasks that require fine motor abilities in school.

According to a study conducted by Marr et.al (2003), kindergarten kids spend a large percentage of their school day (46%) doing fine motor activities like eating, coloring, cutting, and writing. Touch has a central role in early physical, cognitive, and emotional development, according to Agasid (2010). Tactile stimulation allows children to explore and discover their sense of touch; as a result, tactile stimulation exposure and assessment play an essential role in children's learning and development. The assessment can support teachers and parents in assisting children in establishing methods to compensate for and benefit from the learning strategy that is being utilized.

However, according to Santos (2012), ECE services use a checklist because they want to evaluate a child's activity over time, and the acquisition of skills checklist often focuses on what has or has not been accomplished. This can be seen as a negative approach because it compares children to a norm and ignores each child's unique characteristics. He went on to say that a checklist makes judgments about activities or learning outside of the learning context, rather than as they occur, and thus fails to capture the entire scope of learning that occurs.

Baliton (2011) emphasized the relevance of teacher knowledge and expertise in assessment. He also detailed the value of assessment in supporting instructors in improving teaching and learning. He came to the conclusion that teachers should be given the skills and information they require to conduct assessments properly.

Teachers, according to Cama (2015), require the knowledge and skills to determine how activities might be combined to promote children's growth and development, as well as how to adjust activities so that they are part of a continuous continuum that responds to children's development. Many learning experiences necessitate teachers' knowledge of topic matter and pedagogy to extend the children's learning.

This study determined the level of readiness of kindergarten pupils of Umingan District I, Pangasinan II Division.

Specifically, it seemed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the kindergarten pupils in terms of:
    a. number of siblings;
    b. monthly family income;
    c. birth order; and
    d. parents' educational attainment

    d.1. father

    d. 2. mother?
2. What is the level of readiness of kindergarten pupils in terms of:
    a. gross motor skills;
    b. fine motor skills;
    c. self-help adaptive;
    d. social/emotional skills;
    e. receptive language;
    f. expressive language; and
    g. cognitive skills?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of readiness of kindergarten pupils across their profile variables?

4. What activities can be proposed to teachers and interactive activities to learners to improve their level of readiness?

Methodology

Research Design

In this study, the descriptive-correlation analysis method was applied. It is the most effective way for dealing with the issues identified in this study. According to Weirsma (2000), the descriptive analysis comprises locating, documenting, evaluating, and interpreting the system's core. The purpose of this study was to examine the kindergarten pupils' profiles and the relationship between their profile characteristics and their preparedness level.

The descriptive approach was employed to assess and evaluate the readiness of kindergarten pupils of Umingan District I, Division of Pangasinan II. Inferences, conclusions, and guidelines would be emphasized on the results of the statistical study.

Population and Locale of the Study

This research is limited to 18 schools in Umingan District I, Pangasinan Division II. For the 2019-2020 academic year, there were 557 kindergarten pupils' in the eighteen (18) classes. This research contains the number of students.

Data Collection Instrument

The documentary study was used to draw the target of assessing the level of kindergarten learners' readiness using the ECCD checklist. In the office of the District Supervisor, by the school record administrator, the researcher took the profile of the parents of the respondents to answer Problem No. 1 and the findings of the level of preparedness of kindergarten learners using the ECCD checklist to answer Problem No. 2.

Data Collection Procedure

Before the data collection procedure, the researcher sought permission from the Dean of the Graduate Studies through an approval letter. Likewise, the researcher requested approval from the District Office of Umigan to conduct the study. After which, a data-gathering procedure was made. With the approval of the District Supervisor, the researcher obtained the data from the administrators of school records of the district. The data contained the results of the ECCD and

the profile of the parents of the learners. The information gathered was kept secret to protect the record's objectivity.

Treatment of Data

The following methodological methods were employed to discuss the study's particular concerns. Frequency counts and percentages were used to assess the kindergarten profile, including the number of siblings, monthly family income, birth order, and parents' educational attainment.

The findings of the level of readiness of kindergarten learners using the ECCD checklist were secured in the office of the District Supervisor by the school record coordinator to assess the level of readiness of kindergarten learners.

The following are the legend of the scaled scores of the level of readiness of the kindergarten learners.

Legend for Scaled Scores:

Range	Scaled Score Interpretation	Transmuted Rating
1-3	Suggest significant delay in overall development	Not Ready
4-6	Suggest slight delay in overall development	Slightly Ready
7-13	Average development	Moderately Ready
14-16	Suggest advance development	Ready
17-19	Suggest highly advance development	Highly Ready

Legend for Standard Scores:

Range	Standard Score Interpretation	Transmuted Rating
69 and below	Suggest significant delay in overall development	Not Ready
70-79	Suggest slight delay in overall development	Slightly Ready
80-119	Average development	Moderately Ready
120-129	Suggest advance development	Ready
130 and above	Suggest highly advance development	Highly Ready

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed to determine whether there was a significant association between the kindergarten learners' profile and their preparation level using the ECCD checklist. The theory was tested at a significance level .05 alpha.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Indicators		Frequency	Percentage
No. of Siblings	1	75	13.46
	2	86	15.44
	3	95	17.06
	4	106	19.03
	5	143	25.67
	6 and above	52	9.34
Monthly Family	Below Php 10,000	245	43.99
	Php 10,001-Php 20,000	188	33.75
	Php 20,0001-Php 30,000	90	16.16
	Above Php 30,000	34	6.10
Birth Order	Eldest	141	25.31
	Middle	284	50.99
	Youngest	132	23.70
Educational	Elementary Graduate	63	11.31
	High School Graduate	98	17.59
	College Undergraduate	197	35.37
	College Graduate	106	19.03
	With MA/MS Units	47	8.44
	MA/MS Graduate	32	5.75
	With Ed.D./Ph.D. Units	11	1.97
	Ed.D./Ph.D. Graduate	3	0.54
Educational	Elementary Graduate	76	13.64
	High School Graduate	92	16.52
	College Undergraduate	174	31.24
	College Graduate	98	17.59
	With MA/MS Units	54	9.69
	MA/MS Graduate	38	6.82
	With Ed.D./Ph.D. Units	17	3.05
	Ed.D./Ph.D. Graduate	8	1.44

Table 1 reveals that when it comes to the number of siblings, 5 has the highest proportion of 25.67 percent. This suggests that most respondents come from extended families, signifying that respondents may have more opportunities to establish contact with family members. This is similar to Howe's (2014) study, which found that having multiple siblings affected early childhood development and used natural results to increase involvement and communication at home.

Meanwhile, the mainstream of participants has a wage rate less than Php 10,000.00, which the Philippine Statistics Authority classifies as "small."

The bulk of respondents are middle children in terms of birth order. Finally, the educational achievement of the kindergarten mothers and fathers indicates that the majority of them are college undergraduates, suggesting that these parents will at the very least help their children's learning and growth.

Table 2: Level of Readiness of the Respondents in Kindergarten Domain Skills

Domains	Average Scaled Scores	Transmuted Rating
Gross Motor	17.20	Highly Ready
Fine Motor	18.12	Highly Ready
Self-Help	12.98	Moderately Ready
Receptive Language	15.97	Ready
Expressive Language	15.62	Ready
Cognitive Language	14.68	Ready
Social Emotional	14.17	Ready
Average Standard Score	**123.14**	**Ready**

The second problem of this study focused on the level of readiness of the respondents in Kindergarten Domain Skills, namely: gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive language, expressive language, cognitive and social-emotional.

Table 2 presents the level of readiness of the respondents along with the kindergarten domain skills.

The respondents obtained an average standard score of 123.14, which corresponds to a transmuted ranking of "Ready," as shown in Table 2. This could be interpreted as a lack of desire in learning on the part of the respondents. Based on the index, the fine motor obtained the highest average scaled score of 18.12, reflecting a transmuted ranking of "Highly Ready" among the indicators. This could mean that the respondents are well-prepared to execute key tasks requiring minor muscle coordination, such as hand, finger, and thumb control. This also implies that responsive pupils can progress to a higher degree of learning orientation and talents, such as composition and manipulation. This study is consistent with the findings of Marr, et al. (2003), who discovered that kindergarten students spend a large percentage of the school day (46%) doing fine motor activities such as eating, drawing, cutting, and writing, among other things.

Self-help skills, on the other hand, had the lowest average scaled score of 12.98, indicating that they are "Moderately Ready." This indicates that the responders are fairly qualified to conduct daily tasks that enable them to participate in life events and achieve independence. It also indicates that the kindergarten pupils' in this sample are most likely relying on their fathers, mothers, or siblings to complete everyday activities, lacking the growth of maturity, which requires a sense of security and the desire to progress, all of which are important for higher levels of learning.

Low self-help skills among preschoolers, according to Extension Alliance for Better Child Care (2019), degrade not only life skills but also foundational skills for academic success. Furthermore, according to Play and Learn (2017), self-help skills are significant for improving emotional and cognitive development in children without the help of the mother or father heeding towards establishing one's trust in later years of schooling and life.

Table 3: Relationship between the profile variables and level of readiness of the respondent pupils

Variables		r-value	p-value	Interpretation
No. of Siblings	Gross Motor	.522	.184	Not Significant
	Fine Motor	-.122	.209	Not Significant
	Self-Help	.462	.178	Not Significant
	Receptive Language	.242	.176	Not Significant
	Expressive Language	.234	.098	Not Significant
	Cognitive	.418	.323	Not Significant
	Social-Emotional	.887	.000	Significant
Monthly Family Income	Gross Motor	.556	.187	Not Significant
	Fine Motor	-.298	.398	Not Significant
	Self-Help	.-.233	.329	Not Significant
	Receptive Language	.209	.489	Not Significant
	Expressive Language	-.392	.323	Not Significant
	Cognitive	.307	.443	Not Significant
	Social-Emotional	.278	.462	Not Significant
Birth Order	Gross Motor	.390	.309	Not Significant
	Fine Motor	.208	.275	Not Significant
	Self-Help	.213	.765	Not Significant
	Receptive Language	-.352	.527	Not Significant
	Expressive Language	.234	.372	Not Significant
	Cognitive	.554	.112	Not Significant
	Social-Emotional	.403	.508	Not Significant
Educ Attain Father	Gross Motor	.-.322	.343	Not Significant
	Fine Motor	.211	.407	Not Significant
	Self-Help	-.292	.356	Not Significant
	Receptive Language	.307	.443	Not Significant
	Expressive Language	.278	.462	Not Significant

	Cognitive	.904	.000	Significant
	Social-Emotional	.-.112	.665	Not Significant
Educ Attain Mother	Gross Motor	.246	.378	Not Significant
	Fine Motor	-.308	.353	Not Significant
	Self-Help	.373	.497	Not Significant
	Receptive Language	.278	.462	Not Significant
	Expressive Language	-223	.567	Not Significant
	Cognitive	.790	.000	Significant
	Social-Emotional	.445	.378	Not Significant

The third problem of this study was to determine the relationship between the profile variables and the level of readiness of the respondent learners.

The level of significance of the relationship between the profile variables and the respondent learners' level of preparation is shown in Table 3 on the next page.

The result indicates that intellectual capacity has an extensive association with the educational achievement of both the respondents' mothers and fathers, as well as vice versa, with a significance of 0.000 measured at the 0.05 stage alpha.

Conclusion

The following conclusions can be derived from the study's findings:

1. The kindergarten learners come from a large family with parents who can at the very least help them with their learning and development, especially in the realm of preparation skills.
2. Kindergarten pupils' training in terms of gross motor and fine motor abilities should be maintained. On the other hand, areas of receptive, expressive, and cognitive speech can be slightly improved to get them incredibly primed.
3. Level of readiness in the cognitive domain of kindergarten learners, as well as their parents' highest educational attainment, are related.

Conclusion

The following recommendations have been made based on the study's results and conclusions:

1. There are interactive exercises that can help kindergarten students prepare for self-help abilities, particularly in the area of nutrition: (a) self-feeding, (b) independent clothing and grooming, (c) hygienic practices and toileting, and (d) assisting with daily duties such as table setup and toy pick-up.

2. The proposed school LAC Session curriculum should be presented because it seeks to develop teachers' craft by improving kindergarten pupils' self-help skills, language skills, and socio-emotional skills.
3. There is a need to have a good relationship with parents to properly guide their children's growth, particularly in cognitive skills, since there is a connection between kindergarten learners' planning, cognitive skills, and the highest academic achievement.
4. There should be more testing tools to use to determine the level of readiness of kindergarten learners.
5. Further studies should be undertaken in a broader scope in a different locale to come up with additional findings that can help in improving the level of readiness of kindergarten learners.

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