

Effectiveness of Math Learning Resource Package to the Numeracy Skills of Kindergarten Pupils

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Abstract —Exposing learners to differentiated learning materials is helpful in achieving success in learning numeracy skills. When these skills are taught with manipulative learning materials, easy understanding of the concept is expected. Thus, the reason of conducting this study which aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of Math learning resource package to the numeracy skills of kindergarten pupils. A quasi-experimental research design employing the pre-test and post-test oral numeracy test from the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) tool for kindergarten is used. Lesson plans in Math were prepared highlighting the utilization of learning resource packages which are tangible and can be manipulated by the pupils. The competencies used in the plan were taken from the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for Math in kindergarten. Simple percentage and t-test of mean difference were the statistical tools used to interpret the result of the study. It was revealed in this study that there is a significant relationship between the pre-test and post-test performances in Math of the kindergarten pupils before and after the utilization of learning resource packages which are tangible and can be manipulated by the pupils. Thus, utilization of Math learning resource packages which are tangible in teaching and learning numeracy skills help in improving the performance of the pupils. Hence, involving the pupils in the teaching-learning process through the provision and utilization of manipulative materials in the learning resource packages is effective in improving Math performance.

Keywords — *Effectiveness, Math Learning Resource Package, Numeracy Skills, Kindergarten Pupils*

I. Introduction

Early math and numeracy skills are crucial for later academic success. This includes math achievement as well as other subjects such as reading (Fuson, Sarama, & Clements, 2015). The learning that takes place during early childhood creates a foundation necessary for future math concepts and possible vocations. Teachers and parents play a crucial role in supporting and teaching these early math concepts. Without a strong foundation and proper teaching strategies and interventions, students will continue to struggle in math through elementary school.

Early math can teach many valuable skills for future math classes, other academic classes, and life in general. In fact, it may be the most powerful predictor of future academic success (Chesloff, 2013). If students have the chance to be exposed to and learn early math skills at a young age, they are more likely to succeed in school. Students who enter Kindergarten low in math skills tend to continue to perform below their peers in later grades (Harris & Petersen, 2019). Math learning and intervention needs to happen before kindergarten. These students, especially at-risk students, need the opportunity to build a strong foundation at a young age. Young students' brains are naturally receptive to logic and math skills which makes the early childhood years the best time to begin teaching early math and numeracy skills (Chesloff, 2013). This solidifies the importance of early childhood education but shows the need for more numeracy opportunities in those environments.

Early math and numeracy are the general understanding of numbers and basic mathematical concepts (Harris & Petersen, 2019; Toll & Van Luit, 2014). These are skills such as counting, comparing, and contrasting, describing shapes and positions and problem solving (Aunio, Heiskari, Van Luit & Vuorio, 2015; Aubrey & Godfrey, 2003; Harris & Petersen, 2019; Ramani & Eason, 2015). Early math and numeracy skills are the building blocks of all future math classes. Without these skills, students will continue to struggle with higher math concepts. Students need to learn how to solve problems, one of the basic early math skills, for all areas of academics and life outside of school. Early math and numeracy also coincide with language and critical thinking development (Toll & Van Luit, 2014; Vilorio, 2014). More and more, students are entering kindergarten with language deficits and unable to think critically. Students need to be directly taught language skills and critical thinking skills and early math is the perfect way to teach those skills.

Teaching math skills in early childhood is important because it is during that time that children are the most open to learning. Early math and numeracy skills build on children's natural curiosity, inquiry, and exploration of the world around them (Chesloff, 2013; Harris & Petersen, 2019). Math at all ages requires curiosity and inquiry. Young students are naturally curious and learn through experiencing their surroundings. They want to know how things work and ask questions about everything. This is what makes early childhood the best time to begin learning early math and numeracy skills. Along with math skills, teaching early math helps to support verbal, spatial and memory skills in young children which are crucial in all areas of life and academics (Jordan et al., 2009). It is important to build the foundation for future math learning early by maximizing skills young students already possess. That is why during this year of the pupils in school, teachers must provide adequate and sustainable manipulative materials ready for the pupils to use. The math learning resource package is important to use in the teaching-learning process.

In mathematics classrooms, it is important to create a rich learning environment that encourages a positive mindset and opens the potential for growth in mathematics teaching and

learning. Using a range of teaching strategies that connect the content, skills and concepts will enhance understanding and engagement and build students' confidence as mathematics learners and thinkers. In the mathematics classroom, students are exposed to opportunities that help them to develop and engage their mathematical thinking, solve problems, and demonstrate their understanding, apply strategies and conceptual understanding in familiar and unfamiliar situations, recognize the relevance of their experiences in the environment through a mathematical lens and use and connect what they are learning to contexts outside the mathematics classroom.

Teachers help students to engage with, explore and make connections between their mathematical knowledge, skills and understandings with other learning areas and the world around them. The use of instructional learning resources helps achieve math goals for the grade. Learning resources are basic requirements that can bring about good academic performance in students. Therefore, the availability of such resources enhances the effectiveness of the schools in boosting the academic performance of their students in the long run.

Math learning resource packages are instructional materials which are manipulative. Include in these are the numeracy station materials like manipulative toys, puzzles, number blocks, number books, number snaps, number call out, number stations, fishing games, number clips, learning activity sheets, workbooks, audio-video lessons and many other. These materials are important in providing support to teachers in teaching numeracy. It is believed that when pupils are involved in teaching and learning by handling manipulative materials, they can easily understand the concept conveyed in the lesson and learning happen. Thus, it is in this premise that the researcher who is at the same time the kindergarten teacher decided to conduct this study to assist teachers in the teaching-learning process. Believing that with the help of these instructional materials, pupils will be able to learn the concepts with retention and understanding and may be able to use this in their day-to-day activity while improving their numeracy performance. A proposed improvement was formulated based on the findings of the study.

It is in the rationale that the researcher who is currently a kindergarten teacher in the above mentioned local, would like to delve worthy research undertaking that will benefit herself, the school she is currently teaching and that of her Graduate Program she is enrolled at.

This study evaluates the effectiveness of Math learning resource package to the numeracy skills of kindergarten pupils in Puerto Bello Elementary School of Merida District, Leyte Division for School Year 2022-2023. The findings of the study were the basis for the proposed improvement plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the pre-test performance of the kindergarten pupils before the utilization of Math learning resource package?
2. What is the post-test performance of the kindergarten pupils after the utilization of Math learning resource package?
3. Is there a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the kindergarten pupils before and after the utilization of Math learning resource packages?
4. What improvement plan can be proposed based on the findings of this study?

II. Methodology

Design. This study employed the quasi-experimental research design utilizing the pre-test and post-test to evaluate the effectiveness of Math learning resource package to the numeracy skills of kindergarten pupils for School Year 2022-2023. Puerto Bello Elementary School, Merida District, Leyte Division is the main locale of the study. The 23 kindergarten pupils enrolled in the said locale for School Year 2022-2023 are the main respondents of the study. The researcher uses the tools prescribed to assess the numeracy performance of the kindergarten pupils which is the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and used as pre-test and post-test before and after the intervention was given. A lesson plan highlighting the utilization of Math learning resource package as instructional materials in teaching the subject was crafted and taught during the data gathering as intervention for the study. Moreover, a learning resource package focused on the 2nd quarter MELC was formulated as an aid in teaching Math. A matrix of activities was crafted to guide the teacher-researcher the flow of her study. This research focused on evaluating the effectiveness of Math learning resource package in teaching numeracy skills of kindergarten pupils through the pre-test and post-test and its significant difference. A Proposed Improvement Plan based on the findings of the study is the output.

Sampling. There are 23 kindergarten pupils involved in this study. The research instruments were administered face-to-face with consent from the Local IATF and strictly following the prescribed Health Protocol during the limited face-to-face classes.

Research Procedure. The researcher prepared the research design and tools utilized in the study. Approval and recommendation from the Panel of Examiner of the Graduate Studies was sought. A letter request to conduct this study was forwarded to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent. Upon approval, permission from the District Supervisor and School Head was secured before the actual gathering of data. Orientation of the participants and administration of the pre-test was done face-to-face after the approval of the permit from the parents of the respondents. After accomplishing the pre-test, intervention was given within four weeks. The

utilization of Math learning resource package in teaching numeracy skills to kindergarten pupils was emphasized in the study. After the four-week intervention, the post-test was administered. Results of the tests were collected. Data were tallied and submitted for statistical treatment. Analysis and Interpretation of Data. Making of Proposed Improvement Plan followed.

Ethical Issues. The researcher properly secured the permission to conduct the study from the authorities through written communication. In the formulation of the intervention materials that was used in the study, the use of offensive, discriminatory or other unacceptable language was avoided. The respondents' names and other personal data were not included in this study to protect their privacy. Participation of the respondents was also voluntary. Orientation was conducted for the respondents with their parents. In the orientation, issues and concerns were addressed and consent to be included in the study were signed. The researcher-maintained objectivity in analyzing and discussing the results. All authors whose works were mentioned in this study were properly quoted and was acknowledge in the reference.

Treatment of Data. The Simple Percentage was employed to evaluate the pre-test and post-test of the kindergarten pupils before and after the utilization of Math learning resource package. **t-Test of Mean Difference** was used to determine the significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the kindergarten pupils in Math.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1
Pre-Test Performance of the Kindergarten Pupils in Math

| Score Range | Description | PRETEST | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|------|
| | | Frequency | % |
| 17-20 | Excellent | 0 | 0 |
| 13-16 | Very Good | 3 | 13 |
| 9-12 | Good | 0 | 0 |
| 5-8 | Fair | 7 | 30 |
| 0-4 | Poor | 13 | 57 |
| Total | | 23 | 100 |
| Weighted Mean | | 4.91 | Fair |

Table 1 presents the pre-test performance of the kindergarten pupils in Math before the utilization of learning resource package. It was revealed on the table that among the 23 kindergarten pupils, 3 or 13% got a score of 13-16 which is interpreted as very good. This means that these pupils have background knowledge on numeracy skills. This implies that these pupils are exposed to numeracy skills at home and the 1st quarter of being in school has helped them in their performance. Moreover, the table also shows that among the 23 kindergarten pupils, 7 or 30%

got the score of 5-8 which is interpreted as fair. This means that these pupils have little understanding about numeracy. This implies that these pupils need intervention and learning resource package to fully understand numeracy skills. Further, the table revealed that among the 23 kindergarten pupils, 13 or 57% got a score of 0-4 which is interpreted as poor. This means that these pupils find difficulty in understanding numeracy skills. They need more activities, hands on materials and focus on learning. Finally, the table shows a weighted mean of 4.91 which is interpreted as fair. This means that these 23 kindergarten pupils need intervention to address fair performance in Math. With this study, it is hoped that through the utilization of Math learning resource package, performance of the kindergarten pupils will improve. As Tata (2013) found out in his study that students' negative attitude towards mathematics, fear of mathematics, inadequate qualified teachers and teaching materials were some of the causes of poor performance in Math. Developing a positive attitude, motivation and proper guidance towards math and provision of relevant teaching materials like the learning resource package could make students perform better in Mathematics. Teaching math skills in early childhood is important because it is during that time that children are the most open to learning. Early math and numeracy skills build on children's natural curiosity, inquiry, and exploration of the world around them (Chesloff, 2013; Harris & Petersen, 2019).

Table 2
Post-Test Performance of the Kindergarten Pupils in Math

| Score Range | Description | POST-TEST | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | Frequency | % |
| 17-20 | Excellent | 10 | 43 |
| 13-16 | Very Good | 5 | 22 |
| 9-12 | Good | 8 | 35 |
| 5-8 | Fair | 0 | 0 |
| 0-4 | Poor | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | 23 | 100 |
| Weighted Mean | | 15.21 | Very Good |

Table 2 presents the post-test performance of the kindergarten pupils after the utilization of learning resource package in Math. It was revealed in the table that among the 23 kindergarten pupils tested, 10 or 43% got a score of 17-20 which is interpreted as excellent. This means that the performance of the kindergarten pupils in Math has increased after the utilization of the learning resource packages in learning numeracy skills. This implies that numeracy skills can be easily learned when pupils are exposed to manipulative materials or tangible materials in learning. Moreover, This table also shows that among the 23 kindergarten pupils, 5 or 22% got a score of 13-16 which is interpreted as very good. This means that after the utilization of learning resource packages in Math, some of the pupils were able to achieve higher learning outcomes. This implies that kindergarten pupils have learned numeracy skills through the manipulation of tangible

materials. Furthermore, this table shows that among the 23 kindergarten pupils, 8 or 35% got the score of 9-12 which is interpreted as good. This means that after the intervention, some of the pupils got almost one half of the number of test items given. This implies that even though of having the face-to-face learning is just a matter of 2 grading periods, there are already numeracy skills that kindergarten pupils learned. Finally, the table shows that after the utilization of learning resource packages in Math particularly on tangible materials, performance of the pupils got an average mean of 15.21 which is interpreted as very good. This means that learning numeracy skills in kindergarten, pupils need manipulative things where they can hold and interact with the materials. This implies that exposing the kindergarten pupils to tangible resources, learning can happen, and performance will increase.

Table 3
Test of Difference Between the Scores in the Pre-Test and Post-Test
of the Kindergarten Pupils in Math

| Aspects | Test Scores | | Computed T | Critical T | Decision | Interpretation |
|----------------------|-------------|-------|------------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| Kindergarten in Math | Pre | 4.91 | 2.891 | 0.892 | Reject Ho | Significant |
| | Post | 15.21 | | | | |

Table 3 presents the test of difference between the scores in the pre-test and post-test of the kindergarten pupils in Math. It was revealed on the table that the computed t of 2.891 is greater than the critical value of t which is 0.892, so null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the kindergarten pupils in Math before and after the utilization of learning resource packages like tangible materials. The pre-test means of 4.91 has increased to 15.21 after giving the intervention. The result shows that leaning resource packages in Math is effective when used in teaching and learning numeracy skills. This implies that when pupils are exposed to manipulative materials and they are involved in teaching and learning, positive learning outcomes will be attained. Young children learn from watching and listening and engaging with the world around them. New skills and understandings can emerge through demonstration, modelling and problem-solving. In early years settings, educators enrich learning activities by using mathematical language that helps children to explore, describe and understand the world around them and builds strong foundations for future learning in mathematics. Evidence shows that the use of high-quality curriculum resources, together with pedagogy that responds to and adapts to the needs of students leads to increased engagement and improved student outcomes.

IV. Conclusion

The study revealed a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the kindergarten pupils before and after the utilization of learning resource package in teaching and learning numeracy skills. The excellent performance shows that involving pupils in the teaching-learning process preferably exposing them to tangible learning resource packages is effective in improving their performance.

V. Recommendations

1. The proposed improvement plan formulated should be utilized.
2. Teachers should utilize the learning resource packages crafted by the researcher for it was proven to be effective.
3. Teachers should learn to craft the learning resource package in Math which can be utilized by them during the development of numeracy skills.
4. Teachers should provide manipulative materials to the pupils in teaching numeracy skills to help them understand the concept correctly and be able to apply the knowledge gained.
5. Teachers must attend training or LAC sessions on the construction of differentiated learning resource package in teaching numeracy skills.
6. School Heads should allocate budget for the procurement of materials to be used in the production of learning resource package in Math.
7. School Heads should spearhead in the crafting of training design and LAC plan for trainings and LAC sessions for the improvement of teaching-learning process of teachers most especially in the improvement of learning resource materials.
8. School Heads should identify possible resource people who can share their expertise in the formulation of learning resource packages.
9. School Heads should provide technical assistance to teachers in terms of teaching numeracy and on the proper conduct of numeracy assessment.
10. School Heads should regularly monitor the teaching-learning process of teachers.
11. School Heads should maximize the time in providing appropriate technical assistance based on the needs of the teachers in teaching numeracy skills.
12. School Heads should submit the crafted learning resource package for quality assurance.
13. School Heads should encourage and provide technical assistance for the crafting of innovations and research based on the intervention provided to improve the performance of the pupils; and

14. Future researchers should replicate this study to include different locales and include different variables aside from the mentioned in this study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

With great indebtedness, I wish to express my sincere appreciation and gratefulness to several individuals who have contributed valuable things for the completion of my thesis.

First and foremost, Praises and Thanks to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for His presence, provision, protection, and preservation.

To Dr. Jasmine B. Misa, my thesis adviser, for the steadfast encouragements, reminders, and for the trust and confidence in my capabilities which provided me the motivation and zeal to pursue this endeavor.

To the members of my Thesis Committee and Panel Examiners headed by Dr. Bryant C. Acar, Chairman and Scribe of the Pre and Oral Examination panel, together with Dr. Annabelle A. Wenceslao and Dr. Elvin H. Wenceslao for the smooth sailing of things behind frails in the laborious toil of my study.

To the Dean of the Graduate Department of Western Leyte College, Dr. Sabina B. Con-ui, for your understanding and consideration in all my requests.

To my DepEd Leyte Division Family headed by Dr. Manuel P. Albano, for allowing me to conduct this study in our school.

To my Puerto Bello Elementary School family, headed by our energetic, eloquent, and warm-hearted School Principal, Mrs. Evelyn S. Matugas, the faculty and staff, parents and pupils for having been instrumental in the realization of this endeavor.

To my loving mother, Ma.Luisa, for your unconditional love, prayers and support extended which inspire me to achieve my educational goal.

And to all the people who believed in me and continue to believe in me, who look up to me as an inspiration, Thank you so much. All of these are offered to all of you. To God be All the glory.

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In the year 2003, she applied as Domestic Helper in Saudi Arabia. After 7 years of working abroad, she went home and applied as teacher in public school in Merida District and luckily hired as volunteer teacher or subsidized kindergarten Teacher. After years of rendering volunteer services, an item was given to her, and she was hired as regular Teacher in the year 2013. She took up Master of Arts in Education major in Supervision and Administration at Western Leyte College of Ormoc City, Inc.

She is teaching for three years as volunteer kindergarten teacher at Puerto Bello Elementary School and Cabaliwan Elementary School in the year 2010-2013. In the year 2013 she was hired in the DepEd and teaching kinder pupils and at the year 2018 teaching grade four and presently is teaching kindergarten pupils at Puerto Bello Elementary School. She also attended series of webinars/seminars and trainings to increase his professional growth as a teacher.