A STUDY ON TEACHERS' SUPPORT ON KINDERGARTEN COMPETENCIES

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the teachers' support on kindergarten competencies. The study utilized the descriptive survey method particularly with the use of descriptive survey and regression analysis approach. The respondents of the study were teachers under Kidapawan City Division. It was revealed that the teachers' support teaching style such as identifying the learning style of the child; instructional materials preparation such as utilizing television and DVD player in teaching songs and sounds of the alphabet; self-help skills training such as teaching and reminding the children to wipe their tables after eating; fine and gross motor skills such as teaching the children how to hold crayons and pencils correctly; and fine and gross motor skills such as teaching the children how to hold crayons and pencils correctly.

While on level of kindergarten competencies, they are very good in terms of gross motor skills such as dancing patterns and joining group movement activities; fine motors such as drawing circle purposely and scribbling vertical and horizontal lines; self-help such as preparing their own food or snack, participating when bathing; receptive language such as pointing to family members when asked to do so; expressive language such as using 5 to 20 recognizable word; and socio-emotional such as identifying feelings in others, and comforting playmates or siblings in distress. Among the teachers' support, teaching style and self-help had a significant relationship on the expressive language, socio-emotional, and fine motor competencies. Additionally, teachers' support was found to have a significant influence on the gross motor and fine motor skills, expressive language, receptive language, and socio-emotional competence of learners.

Keywords: Kindergarten Competencies, Teacher's Support, Trainings/Seminars, Receptive Language, Philippines.

1. INTRODUCTION

Kindergarten is regarded as the initial step in the educational quest of a child in the twenty-first century. Through play, art, dance, music, movement, and engaging with others, a child is anticipated to become socially and emotionally balanced, with confidently mastered fine motor abilities. Most significantly, a child learns how to acquire language and numbers effectively. The study of Libre (2017) discovered that teachers' support had a favorable impact on children's education. Learners tend to succeed better when teachers consistently support their learning and growth, regardless of the learning assignment. They also have superior grades, test scores, and attendance, and they always do their assignments.

Teachers must also improve their ability to motivate students to improve their social, emotional, and cognitive abilities (Flores 2016). Also, they can gain a better understanding on their learners' abilities and interests (Cappelloni, 2011). Based on the findings of this study, there is a need to investigate further the performance of teachers in bringing greater understanding on teachers' support to increase knowledge of kindergarten readiness as a vital requirement for young children's academic achievement. Moreover, this research will assist teachers in giving their all for the sake of future generations. Teachers can provide more support in helping kindergarten students achieve the skills they need.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study was conducted to determine the teachers' support on kindergarten competencies. Specifically, it was to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of teachers' support on the kindergarten competencies such as teaching styles, instructional materials preparation, gross and fine motor development, skills training, and evaluation?

2. What is the level of kindergarten competencies in terms of gross motor development, fine motor development, self-help skills, expressive language, receptive language, and socio-emotional competence?

3. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' support and the kindergarten competencies?

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4. Does the teachers' support significantly influence the kindergarten competencies?

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was anchored on Jean Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development, Theory of Dr. Maria Montessori and Erik Erikson Psychoanalytic Theory of Psychosocial Development. The hypothesis of Jean Piaget is a comprehensive account of human intelligence's nature and development. He felt that infants develop a sense of the world around them, encounter contradictions between what they already know and what they find in their surroundings, and then alter their views accordingly. He stated that cognitive growth is at the heart of the human being, and that language is dependent on cognitive development knowledge. Piaget's ideas are directly used in child-centered classrooms and education. Despite its enormous popularity, Piaget's theory contains significant flaws that he himself recognized: for example, the theory favors clear phases over continuous growth.

The hypothesis implies that age range helps to prevent some teachers from over-scheduling and over-directing kids. The high school years are a period of considerably more intellectual work, much as they are in regular schools, but with a different sort of youngster who has spent years caring for the land and other people, as well as independent research. Freud argues that the underestimated key aspects of human development are self-awareness and self-regulation. Her findings are based on Erik Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development, which identifies eight psychological phases that people go through during their lives.

Erikson's theories were heavily inspired by Sigmund Freud's (1923) theory of personality structure and topography, which Erikson agreed with. Erikson, on the other hand, was an ego psychologist, whereas Freud was an id psychologist. He stressed the significance of culture and society, as well as internal ego conflicts, whereas Freud focused on the battle between the id and the superego. Also, he claims that the ego expands when it successfully resolves social crises. These include building a sense of trust in others, forming a social identity, and assisting the next generation in preparing for the future.

Moreover, personality develops in stages, each one building on the one before it. This is known as the epigenetic principle. This maturation timeline' results in a broad and integrated set of life skills and capabilities that act in tandem inside the self-sufficient individual. Unlike Freud, he was more interested in how children interact with one another and how this affects their sense of self.

4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The model of this study was composed of the independent and dependent variables. The independent variables include the teachers' support on the Kindergarten Competencies in the form of teaching styles, instructional materials and skills training. Kindergarten teachers must examine the physical, social, and instructional design of their routines, as well as the state of children's fundamental abilities, to ensure a successful start in kindergarten. Teachers of preschoolers must also be aware of the abilities and behaviors that will be required of them when they enter kindergarten (Cross, 2010). The dependent variable was the level of Kindergarten Competencies in the form of gross and fine motor skills, self-help, expressive language, receptive language and socio-emotional competence. The arrow from the independent toward the dependent variable indicates their correlation.

Aquino, Mamat, Mustafa, & Che's (2019) study revealed the following learning domains offered in Kindergarten of the National Child Development Centers nationwide. They are as follows: 1) Gross motor (Malaking kalamnan); 2) Fine motor (Pinong Kalamnan); 3) Self-help (Paggabay sa Sarili); 4) Dressing domain; 5) Toilet training domain; 6) Receptive language domain (Kakayahan sa Pandinig); 7) Expressive language domain (Kakayahan sa Pananalita); 8) Cognitive domain (Kakayahan ng Pag-iisip); and 9) Socio-emotional domain (Pansarili at Panlipunang Damdamin).
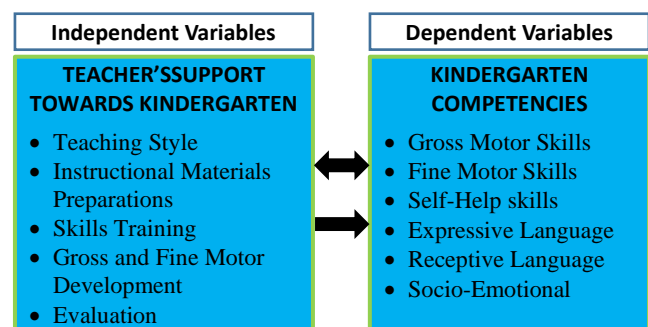

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables
TEACHER'S SUPPORT TOWARDS KINDERGARTEN • Teaching Style • Instructional Materials Preparations • Skills Training • Gross and Fine Motor Development • Evaluation	**KINDERGARTEN COMPETENCIES** • Gross Motor Skills • Fine Motor Skills • Self-Help skills • Expressive Language • Receptive Language • Socio-Emotional

Figure 1 Schematic presentation of the independent and dependent variables of the study

5. METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive survey method (Creswell, 2010) particularly with the use of descriptive-correlative approach in investigating the main objectives of the study and its sub – problems as well as the hypotheses of the study. The descriptive method was used to analyze the statement of the problems while the correlation was used to test the hypotheses of the study.

Data Gathering Methods

The researcher wrote a letter-request, which was noted by her adviser and the Dean of the Graduate School of Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology, as part of the procedures before the actual conduct of data collecting.

After that, the letter was sent to the Schools Division Office for approval of the Schools Division Superintendent of Kidapawan City Division. The researcher was then required to provide copies of the approved letter to the involved public school district supervisors and school heads for their information on the research. Survey questionnaires were then administered to the teachers through home visits, in coordination with the school heads and teachers and barangay leaders and parents. Finally, the researcher personally gathered the questionnaires from the different households for consolidation of data.

6. PARTICIPANTS OF THE STUDY

The respondents of the study were the selected Kinder teachers under Kidapawan City Division. Schools namely Paco ES, Nuangan ES, Isidoro Lonzaga MES, Marciano Mancera MES, Balabag ES, Birada ES, Datu Ambas-Manib IPS, Datu Igwas IP IS, Cayetano A. Javier MES, Lake Agco IS, Meohao ES, Datu Umpan IPS, Puasinda ES, Datu Ongcas IPS, and Sumayahon ES have 1 kinder teacher. Majority of the teacher here were member of the Indigenous People.

While the schools such as Felipe Suerte MES, Pilot CES, Lanao CES, Perez ES, Sayaban ES, Sibug MES, Ginatilan ES, Mua-an ES, and Manongol CES have 2 kinder teachers because they have greater population of kinder learners than the other schools mentioned.

Table 1 Distribution of the respondents of the study

| Name of Schools	Number of Teachers
Balabag ES	1
Birada ES	1
Datu Ambas-Manib IPS	1
Datu Igwas IP IS	1
Cayetano A. Javier MES	1
Ginatilan ES	2
Lake Agco IS	1
Manongol CES	2
Meohao ES	1
Mua-an ES	2
Datu Umpan IPS	1
Perez ES	1
Puasinda ES	1
Sayaban ES	1
Sibug MES	1
Datu Ongcas IPS	1
Sumayahon ES	1
Felipe Suerte MES	2
Kidapawan City Pilot ES	2
Lanao CES	2
Paco ES	1
Nuangan ES	1
Isidoro Lonzaga MES	1
Marciano Mancera MES	1
Total	30

Statistical Tools and Data Analysis

The study used mean, and regression analysis. The mean was used to analyze the teacher's support on kindergarten competencies (Cochran, 1977). The Pearson r Moment Correlation (Pearson, 1886) and regression analysis were used to test the hypothesis of the study (Freedman, 2009).

7.   RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Summary of Results and Discussions

Research Problem No. 1
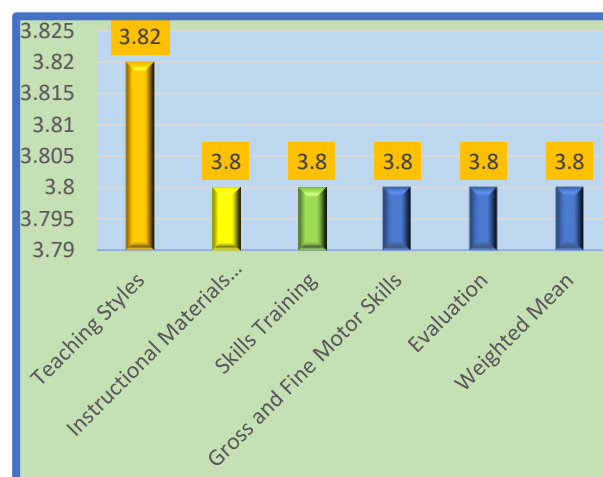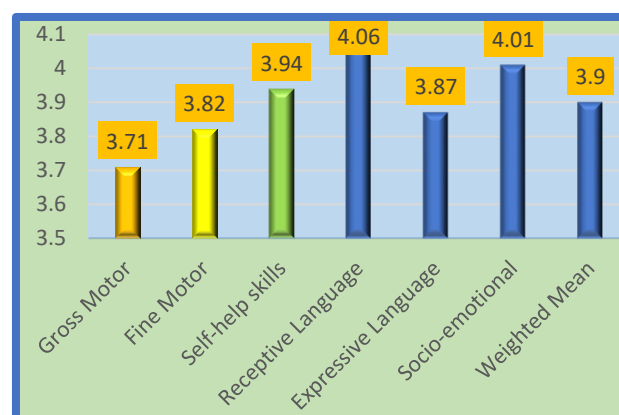

Level	Range	Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Very Supportive
4	3.41 – 4.20	Supportive
3	2.61 – 3.40	Slightly Supportive
2	1.81 – 2.60	Less Supportive
1	1.0 – 1.80	Not Supportive

The extent of teachers' support on the kindergarten competencies such as teaching styles, instructional materials preparation, gross and fine motor development, skills training, and evaluation. To sum up the extent of teachers' support on the kindergarten competencies, teaching styles obtained the highest weighted mean of 3.82 which is described as supportive followed by instructional materials (3.8), skills training (3.8), gross and fine motor skills (3.8), and evaluation (3.8) having the same description as supportive. The teachers' support on the kindergarten competencies obtained a weighted mean of 3.8 described as supportive.

Research Problem No. 2

Level of kindergarten competencies in terms of gross motor development, fine motor development, self-help skills, expressive language, receptive language, and socio-emotional competence. To sum up the level of kindergarten competencies, receptive language obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.06 which is described as very good followed by socio-emotional competence (4.01), self-help skills (3.94), expressive language (3.87), fine motor (3.82), and gross motor (3.71) having the same description as very good. The level of kindergarten competencies obtained a general weighted mean of 3.9 which is described as very good.

Level	Range	Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Excellent
4	3.41 – 4.20	Very good
3	2.61 – 3.40	Good
2	1.81 – 2.60	Fair
1	1.0 – 1.80	Poor

Research Problem No. 3

Table 2 displays the relationship of the teachers' support and kindergarten competencies. On teachers' support in terms of teaching styles, it has a significant relationship only on the expressive language and socio-emotional of learners with a R-value of -0.358* and -0.432*. Self-help training skill on the other hand, was found to have a significant relationship on fine motor skills (R-value of 0.314*). Gross and fine motor skills have a significant relationship on gross motor (R-value of 0.046) and receptive language (R-value of 0.035). However, evaluation and instructional materials preparation showed no significant relationship with kindergarten competencies. The negative correlation between teachers' support on expressive language and socio-emotional learning suggests that, despite kindergarten teachers' high levels of support for expressive language and socio-emotional learning, it cannot be fully accomplished owing to social distancing and restricted interaction due to the pandemic. in addition, the teaching styles has a negative correlation on socio- emotional which means that despite the teaching styles employed, still some of the learners were not able to manifest good socio-emotional skills.

While the positive correlation on teachers' support between self-help training skill, gross and fine motor skills means that despite the distance learning, the kindergarten teachers were still able to find ways to extend their support on developing the self-help skill, gross and fine motor skills of the learners through home visitation and teacher-parent communication. Teachers assist parents in developing these skills so that it could be applied at home. Additionally, the teaching styles has a positive correlation on expressive language which means that through employing different teaching styles, students' expressive language are developed. Archer and Hughes (2011) said teachers' support offers practical strategies, practices, and rules to improve instruction that improves learners' competencies.

Table 2 Relationship of the teachers' support and kindergarten checklist competencies

Teachers' Supports		Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Self-Help	Receptive Language	Expressive Language	Socio- Emotional
Teaching Styles	Pearson r	0.188	0.125	0.048	0.268	-0.358*	-0.432*
	Probability	0.311	0.502	0.798	0.144	0.048	0.015
IMs Prep.	Pearson r	-0.010	0.159	-0.129	0.049	-0.184	-0.170
	Probability	0.956	0.392	0.488	0.792	0.323	0.361
Skills training	Pearson r	-0.282	0.314*	-0.008	-0.213	0.116	0.145
	Probability	0.124	0.050	0.967	0.249	0.533	0.437
Gross & Fine Motor Development	Pearson r	-0.345*	0.087	-0.199	-0.389*	0.092	0.175
	Probability	0.046	0.642	0.284	0.035	0.624	0.345
Evaluation	Pearson r	0.020	-0.030	0.263	0.043	0.005	-0.105
	Probability	0.914	0.872	0.152	0.820	0.981	0.575

Research Problem No. 4

Table 3 Influence of the Teacher's Support on Kindergarten Checklist Competence

Teacher's Support		Kindergarten Checklist Competence					
		Gross Motor Skills	Fine Motor	Self-help Skills	Receptive Language	Expressive Language	Socio-emotional
Teaching style	t-value	0.862	0.967	-0.484	1.315	-2.238	-2.473
	probability	0.397	0.343	0.633	0.201	0.034*	0.021*
Instructional material preparation	t-value	0.233	0.671	-0.618	0.548	-1.350	-1.421
	probability	0.818	0.508	0.542	0.589	0.189	0.168
Skills training	t-value	-1.239	1.518	0.302	-0.861	0.712	0.793
	probability	0.227	0.050*	0.765	0.397	0.483	0.435
Gross and fine motor development	t-value	-1.464	0.218	-1.163	-1.963	0.012	0.448
	probability	0.049*	0.829	0.256	0.042*	0.991	0.658
Evaluation	t-value	-0.188	-0.437	1.403	-0.207	0.689	0.177
	probability	0.852	0.666	0.173	0.838	0.497	0.861

Teachers' Support on Gross Motor Skills

Results reveal that the combined effect of the teachers' support had a significant influence on the level of kindergarten competencies in terms of gross motor, (F = 1.812, Probability = 0.049*). Having a probability value that is significantly lesser than 0.050% level of significance, as shown in Table 13, the hypothesis if the study is rejected. In addition, about 18.12% was accounted by the variation of the gross motor that was contributed by the teachers' support on kindergarten competencies. The remaining 81.88% was attributed by some factors not included in this study. Among the teachers' support on kindergarten competencies in terms of gross motor, gross and fine motor skills (0.049*) are the best predictors. It implies that teachers are showing support the development of gross motor on learners. Moreover, only fine and gross motor skills was significantly influenced by teachers' support, it is the most priority of teacher because these are needed for children to engage in creative activities such as

dance and art. Without teaching first these skills, a teacher cannot proceed to other competencies to be taught.

The implication confirms what Walle (2016) stated that gross motor (physical) skills are those which require whole body movement, and which involve the large (core stabilising) muscles of the body to perform everyday functions, such as standing and walking, running and jumping, and sitting upright at the table.

Teachers' Support on Fine Motor

In Table 3, results reveal that the combined effect of the teachers' support has a significant influence on fine motor (F=1.536, Probability = 0.050*). The hypothesis in this section of the study was rejected because the probability value is significantly lesser than the 0.01 level of significance. In addition, about 15.36% is accounted by the variation of the fine motor was contributed by the teachers' support on kindergarten competencies. The remaining 84.64% was attributed by some factors not included in this study. Furthermore, not one from the factors included in this study showed significant influence. Among the teachers' support included in the study, self-help skills training was found to be the best predictor of teachers' support on fine motor. It implies that teachers' support could influence the fine motor of learners. Moreover, skills training was significantly influenced by teachers' support because through practicing this skill, pupils gain confidence in their ability to try new things and build their self-esteem and pride in their independence which is very important to be guided by the teachers.

The implication conforms to the presentation of Choi (2018) that fine motor skills refer to the coordination between your child's small muscles, like those in their hands, wrists, and fingers in coordination with their eyes. Fine motor skills involve the small muscles of the body that enable such functions as writing, grasping small objects, and fastening clothing.

Teachers' Support on Self – Help Skills

Table 3 reveals that the combined effect of the instructional competence did not show significant influence on the pupils' learning engagement in terms of culture (F= 0.745, Probability = 0.598ns). The hypothesis of the study was accepted because the probability value is significantly greater than 0.050 and 0.010 level of significance.

It implies that teachers show less support on kindergarten competencies in terms of self – help.

Teachers' Support on Receptive Language

The combined effect of teachers' support has a significant influence on receptive language (F = 1.927, Probability = 0.044*). The hypothesis of the study was rejected because the probability value is significantly lesser than the 0.050 level of significance.

In addition, about 17% is accounted by the variation of the receptive language was contributed by the teachers' support on kindergarten competencies. The remaining 83% was attributed by some factors not included in this

study. Furthermore, not one from the factors included in this study showed significant influence.

Among the teachers' support, gross and fine motor skills are considered the best negative predictors of the study. It implies that teachers should deliver clear on receptive language so that young learners (toddlers) could really develop gross and fine motor skills, such as walking, running, hands and fingers synchronization.

Moreover, gross, and fine motor skills was significantly influenced by teachers support on receptive language because in order to learn language a pupil must first learn to develop their gross and fine motor skills.

Libertus and Needham (2014) reported that maturation would lead to general associations between motor and language development that are not limited to specific motor skills.

Teachers' Support on Expressive Language

The result shows that the combined effect of the teachers' support has significant influence on kindergarten competencies in terms of expressive language (F = 2.378, Probability = 0.040*). The hypothesis of the study was rejected because the probability value is significantly lesser than the 0.01 level of significance.

Among the teachers' support, teaching style was considered as the negative best predictor of the study. It implies that teachers' support on teaching style need to sustain an expressive language for learners. This further implies that as a kindergarten teacher, they must enhance learners' expressive language because it is one of the essential kindergarten competences, but they were unable to support the development completely due to distant modular learning. That is why the correlation is negative.

Englemann and Osborn (2019) stated that kindergarten teachers must teach kindergarten children the language skills necessary for the understanding of oral and written language explicitly.

Teachers' Support on Socio – Emotional

Table 3 presents that teachers' support has a significant influence on the kindergarten competencies in terms of socio-emotional (F=2.872, Probability = 0.032*). The hypothesis in this section of the study was rejected because the probability value is significantly lesser than 0.01.

In addition, about 28.72% is accounted by the variation of the socio-emotional was contributed by the teachers' support on kindergarten competencies. The remaining 71.28% was attributed by some factors not included in this study. Furthermore, not one from the factors included in this study showed significant influence.

Among the teachers' support, teaching style is considered as best predictor but negative on kindergarten competencies in terms of socio emotional. It implies that teachers' support in terms of teaching style could highly influence the socio-emotional competency of learners. The negative influence implies that kindergarten teachers were unable to fully assist the learners' socio-emotional development because of modular learning. Moreover, the teachers' teaching style need support on socio-emotional

since children start going to school, their teachers become their parents. The values and discipline taught by them were inculcated to the pupil's mind. The way they teach and care for their pupils directly affects their socio emotional. Heckman, Pinto and Savelyev (2013) stated that teachers can change the socio-emotional status of their learners, or the children they work with, is by teaching them one or more socio-emotional skills directly.

8.   CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study it could be concluded that teachers are supportive in employing teaching styles; preparing instructional materials; self-help skills; gross and fine motor skills; and evaluation of learners. Also, the learners were all competent at gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive, expressive language, and socio-emotional competence.

In addition, teachers' support in terms of teaching styles and self-help were correlated with expressive language, socio-emotional, and fine motor competencies. While teachers' support has influenced gross and fine motor skills, expressive language, receptive language, and socio-emotional competence of learners.

9.   RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

1.   Teachers may consider to exert more effort on their teaching styles and self-help because as to the findings of the study, it has a significant relationship on the expressive language, receptive language, expressive language, self-help, socio-emotional, and fine motor competencies of learners.

2.   The modified framework shows that the teachers should create new teaching strategies, conduct SLAC sessions, and improvised instructional materials to help increase their support on the Kindergarten Competencies in the form of teaching styles, instructional materials and skills training. As a result, the level of kindergarten competencies in the form of gross and fine motor skills, self-help, expressive language, receptive language and socio-emotional competence will be upgraded.

3.   Based on the findings and observed results of the study a proposed intervention program can be used to address the problems encountered by the teachers in improving kindergarten competencies.

Figure 2 Modified Framework of the Study

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