

TEACHERS' PREPARATION IN IMPLEMENTING BLOCKS OF TIME IN KINDERGARTEN

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Abstract -This study determined the teachers' preparation for implementing Blocks of Time in Kindergarten during the school year 2019-2020 as the basis for action plans. It employed the mixed research method through the adapted questionnaire and interview questions based on the Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten education. The respondents were 30 Kindergarten teachers selected using convenience sampling. Gathered quantitative data were treated using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, rank, and Chi-square, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Results indicated that most respondents were female, married, aged 31-35, with 7-9 years of teaching experience, Teacher III at the master level, and trained to handle Kindergarten learners. Furthermore, the level of implementation in the use of Blocks of Time was moderately implemented, while the level of preparedness in terms of instructional practices was very prepared. Furthermore, the relationship between the profile of the respondents and the identified factors in the study was significant. It is concluded that teachers are moderately prepared to implement Blocks of Time in Kindergarten. Hence, it is recommended that the action plans be adopted.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education; blocks of time; mixed method; Cebu; Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines, through its K-12 program, has made Kindergarten Education compulsory in the Basic Education Curriculum, which leads to the crafting of the new Kindergarten Curriculum Framework. (Ocampo & Buenviaje, 2021). The K-12 program is the country's response to SDG target 4.2, which states that young boys and girls shall have access to quality education and prepare them for primary education (Aquino et al., 2017).

In the Kindergarten curriculum, the lesson plan is designed to ensure that all five-year-old learners achieve the standards and competencies expected of them, considering several factors such as diverse backgrounds, prior knowledge, experiences, skills, attitudes, personality traits, and interests (Gestwicki, 2016). As experienced by the researchers, the foremost important factor in crafting the lessons for kindergarten is not the length of the day but the character, assortment, and appropriateness of the learners' learning experiences.

It is noteworthy to emphasize the teachers' role in molding young learners. According to (Moriña, 2022), teachers inspire learners in many ways, especially when they are passionate about teaching. (Thompson & Nguyen, 2021) added that the kindergarten teaching method prepares the learners for formal learning in elementary years. Engaging in kindergarten learning activities will not work without proper planning and organizing. (Manassakis, 2020). In the Kindergarten setting, the



standard classroom measure must be 7m x 9m, with a 1:1 teacher-classroom proportion, and all Kindergarten classrooms must be found on the ground floor (Papadakis et al., 2021) and must be closest to the entry and exit gate for accessibility. There should be standard furniture and equipment with the minimum requirements of 5 tables and 30 chairs. Different corners like Personal Care and Grooming, Language Arts Corner, Sensory Perceptual, Numeracy Corner, Creative Development Corner, Dramatic Play/ Free Play Area, and Work Area or Activity Area should have their learning materials needed. According to (Hamand, 2019), there are various benefits and challenges when dealing with learning corners in education. Fleeer & Li (2023) added that play is essential in the daily routine of preschool education. Moreover, Perez (2022) proposed a guide in the learning space environment for kindergarten classes to help kindergarten teachers and other stakeholders adhere to the basic standards to improve teaching-learning among five-year-old Filipino learners.

During the institutionalization of kindergarten instruction as part of the educational programs in the country, teachers have the lesson program/ educational modules, which are the Blocks of Time. Blocks of Time serve as a guide in their daily activities. It ensures every learner is dynamically and cooperatively involved in all learning experiences blended with a holistic and nipper-centered advance of teaching. It comprises the Arrival time, Meeting time 1, Work period 1, Meeting time 2, Recess, Quiet time, Stories/Rhymes/Poems/Songs, Work period 2, and Dismissal time. (Alvarado & Marciano Radam Lopez, 2020).

As experienced by the researchers, public Kindergarten teachers opt to tap stakeholders to help and provide their needs, basically learning materials or any financial assistance, to meet the required standards in Kindergarten Education and ultimately serve their learners the best learning experience possible. As part of the teaching-learning process, teachers followed the National Kindergarten Curriculum Guide (NKCG), in which there are various activities in literacy and numeracy to prepare every week.) Unfortunately, not all activities in NKCG were met because of the lack of materials, financial support, and time to prepare (Mercader et al., 2021). Given the number of learners handled, it became impossible for teachers to follow the given time allotted in the Blocks of Time.

With the foregoing, this study determined teachers' preparation in implementing Blocks of Time in Kindergarten as the basis for action plans.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study determined the teachers' preparation in implementing Blocks of Time in Kindergarten during the school year 2019-2020. The findings of the study were the basis for action plans.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following queries:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age and gender; civil status; highest educational attainment; years in teaching; teaching rank; and training attended?
2. As perceived by the respondents, what is the level of implementation of the Blocks of Time in Kindergarten?
3. What is the respondents' preparedness level in terms of school instructional practices; and teaching preparation?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the demographic profile of the respondents and the level of implementation of the Blocks of Time in Kindergarten and the respondents' preparedness?
5. What are the issues kindergarten teachers encounter in implementing the Blocks of Time?
- 6.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section covers the research design, respondents, instrument, data gathering procedure, and statistical data treatment.

2.1 Research design



This research utilized the quantitative-qualitative method of research. The quantitative survey research determined the profile of the respondents and teachers' preparation in implementing blocks of time of the three identified public elementary schools in the Division of Cebu City.

Moreover, the interview was utilized to gather data on the problems and concerns of teachers regarding their preparation in implementing blocks of time. This method was accustomed to asking questions to the informants/respondents personally.

2.2 Respondents

The respondents were the 30 Kindergarten teachers from the three identified elementary schools. They are selected as the study's respondents because they are the direct implementer of the blocks of time in the classroom.

2.3 Instrument

The researchers used two types of instruments in data gathering. These were the adapted questionnaire from (Holmes, 2011) and the interview guide.

The study utilized a survey questionnaire to gather the needed data. The researcher administered the questionnaire through Google Forms and conducted a virtual orientation for further instructions. The respondents were given enough time to answer the various questions. The questionnaire responses were gathered after filling out their answers through Google Forms.

The teacher-made questionnaire has three areas. The first area was used to gather information about the profile of the respondents. This information was gathered to determine the gender, age, civil status, highest educational attainment, years in teaching, teaching rank, and pieces of training attended. The second part is the level of implementation of the Blocks of Time in Kindergarten. The third is the respondents' preparedness level in terms of School Instructional Practices and Teaching Preparation. The respondents filled in their answers by providing the data needed for the different questions. Their answers were interpreted based on a numerical scale computed using the needed statistical tool.

Then the interview, the researchers gathered qualitative data using in-depth interviews about the issues and concerns of teachers they have encountered in their preparation for implementing blocks of time.

The validation was done to check and evaluate if some questions or items were not easy to understand and confusing. The validation was done before floating the questionnaires to the respondents. The researcher tried some survey questionnaires for some respondents. This was done to determine whether the respondents understood all the items in the questionnaire.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers secured a written permit from the administrators of the three schools to conduct the study. Once granted the approval, the researchers explained the purpose of the study to the selected respondents and ensured that each of them corresponded to the predefined criteria. They collected the data utilizing a survey questionnaire. After the respondents had taken the survey, the results were tallied, interpreted, and analyzed.

2.5 Statistical Treatment

The researchers used frequency, percentage, weighted mean, rank, chi-square, and thematic analysis. Frequency, percentage, and weighted mean were used to treat the data on the demographic profile of the respondents. Rank was used to determine the training attended by the respondents. Chi-Square was used to test the relationship between the respondents' demographic profile, the level of implementation of the Blocks of Time in Kindergarten, and the respondents' preparedness. Lastly, thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data on the issues encountered by kindergarten teachers in implementing the Blocks of Time.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Profile of the Respondents

This section presents the data on the profile of the respondents.



Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
A. Age [in years]		
26 - 30	9	30.00
31 - 35	10	33.33
36 - 40	5	16.67
More than 40	6	20.00
Mean: 34.40		
StDev: 6.12		
B. Gender		
Female	30	100.00
C. Civil Status		
Married	19	63.33
Single	11	36.67
D. Highest Educational Attainment		
College Graduate	2	6.67
Masters Level	25	83.33
Masters Graduate	3	10.00
E. Years in Teaching		
1 - 3	6	20.00
4 - 6	7	23.33
7 - 9	15	50.00
10 and more	2	6.67
Mean: 6.10		
StDev: 2.28		
F. Rank		
Teacher 1	12	40.00
Teacher 3	18	60.00

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environments have 33.33 percent of ages 31-35 with a frequency of 10 and 36-40 with a frequency of 5 or 16.67 percent. All are females in the area of gender and had a frequency of thirty 30 or 100 percent.

Civil Status. The civil status of the respondents shows that most are married with a frequency of nineteen 19 or 63.33 percent and single with a frequency of 11 or 36.67 percent. Based on the data presented, the respondents were family-oriented and expected to perform parenting effectively to the students as they have been doing in their respective work.

Highest Educational Attainment. The highest educational attainment, most of the respondents had obtained a master's level with the frequency of twenty-five 25 or 83.33 percent. Few are master's degrees and are college graduates.

Years in Teaching. In the years in teaching, it also shows that most of the teachers have 7-9 years of teaching experience with a frequency of 15 or 50.00 percent and ten or more years of teaching experience with a frequency of 2 or 6.67 percent. In the teaching rank, 18 or 60.00 percent is Teacher 3, while 12 or 40.00 percent are Teacher 1.

Training Attended. The table reveals that the teacher respondents who have attended "Midyear In-Service Training [INSET]" got the highest frequency of thirty (30) and were considered for ranking first. While "Educational Technology Training and Association of Fil-Am Teachers" got the lowest frequency of ten (10) and ranked third.



3.2 Level of Implementation in the Use of Blocks of Time

Table 2 presents the respondents' perception on the level of the implementation of the blocks of time in kindergarten.

Table 2 Level of Implementation in the Use of Blocks of Time

(n = 30)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. I applied the time duration of Meeting Time 1.	3.53	Moderately implemented
2. I executed the time duration of Work Period 1.	3.30	Somehow implemented
3. I executed the Meeting Time 2.	3.33	Somehow implemented
4. I supervised the Recess Time within the given time duration.	3.70	Moderately implemented
5. I read stories.	3.17	Somehow implemented
6. I executed the time duration for Work Period 2.	3.37	Somehow implemented
7. I engage my pupils in indoor & outdoor activities.	3.00	Somehow implemented
8. I prepare my students for dismissal.	3.83	Moderately implemented
9. I follow the curriculum guide provided.	3.50	Moderately implemented
10. I prepare my instructional materials before going to school.	3.50	Moderately implemented
Aggregate Mean	3.42	Moderately implemented

Range:

1.00-1.79 Not implemented; 1.80-2.59 Less implemented; 2.60-3.39 Somehow implemented
3.40-4.19 Moderately implemented; 4.20-5.00 Highly implemented

The table shows that the indicator “I prepare my students for dismissal”, got the highest mean of 3.83 (Moderately implemented). While the indicator “I engage my pupils in indoor & outdoor activities”, got the lowest mean of 3.00 somehow implemented.

3.3 Level of Preparedness of the Respondents

Table 3 presents the respondents' preparedness level from the three identified schools in terms of school instructional practices and teaching preparation.

Table 3 Level of Preparedness of the Respondents as to School Instructional Practices

(n = 30)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
A. School Instructional Practices		
1. My school has high expectations.	4.13	Moderately prepared
2. I use a variety of evaluation techniques.	4.17	Moderately prepared
3. I seek to grow professionally.	4.40	Very prepared
4. I give students opportunities to apply and use information in a way that goes beyond memorizing facts.	4.23	Very prepared
5. Teachers understand the school's curricular goals.	4.27	Very prepared
6. My school does a good job with curriculum implementation.	4.33	Very prepared
7. I spend a large amount of time making instructional material rather than teaching content.	4.20	Very prepared
Aggregate Mean	4.25	Very prepared

Range:

1.00-1.79 Never prepared; 1.80-2.59 Less prepared; 2.60-3.39 Somehow prepared.
3.40-4.19 Moderately prepared; 4.20-5.00 Very prepared



The table shows that the indicator "I seek to grow professionally" got the highest mean of 4.40, very prepared. While the indicator "My school has high expectations" got the lowest mean of 4.13 moderately prepared. The data imply that the respondents are very prepared, with an aggregate mean of 4.25 in terms of the Level of Preparedness of the Respondents as to School Instructional Practices. It means that teachers follow the rules when planning instructional materials before beginning the teaching-learning process. They need help to live up to the high demands placed on them. Rest assured, they all put in their best exertion to do what is required of them, comply enlightening, and regard the school educational programs system that has been doled out to them. Guidelines work out to aid students in meeting their learning objectives.

Table 4Level of Preparedness of the Respondents as to Teaching Preparation (n = 30)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
B. Teaching Preparation		
1. Circle Time I teach/ assess my student's ability to apply strategies and skills to comprehend, respond to, interpret, or evaluate texts of increasing length, difficulty, and complexity.	4.50	Very prepared
2. Literacy I teach/assess my students' ability to use word recognition and vocabulary (word meaning) skills to express, communicate, evaluate, or exchange ideas.	4.60	Very prepared
3. Numeracy I teach/assess my students' ability to solve problems involving basic operations using abstract and concrete objects, analyze geometric relationships, use standard units of measurement in mathematical and real-life situations.	4.60	Very prepared
4. Story Telling I teach/assess my students' ability to listen, explain and use skills necessary to conduct scientific inquiry, to develop an understanding and to analyze situations.	4.40	Very prepared
Aggregate Mean	4.53	Very prepared

The table shows that indicators "Literacy-I teach/assess my student's ability to use word recognition and vocabulary (word meaning) skills to express, communicate, evaluate, or exchange ideas" and "Numeracy- I teach/assess my students' ability to solve problems involving basic operations using abstract and concrete objects, analyze geometric relationships, use standard units of measurement in mathematical and real-life situations", got the highest mean of 4.60 Very prepared. While the indicator, "Story Telling - I teach/assess my students' ability to listen, explain and use skills necessary to conduct scientific inquiry, to develop an understanding and to analyze situations" got the lowest mean of 4.40 very prepared.

Table 5Summary of the Level of Preparedness of the Respondents

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
A. School Instructional Practices	4.25	Very prepared
B. Teaching Preparation	4.53	Very prepared
Aggregate Mean	4.39	Very prepared



The table shows that the indicator “Teaching Preparation” got the highest mean of 4.55 Very prepared. While the indicator “School Instructional Practices” got the lowest mean of 4.25, Very prepared.

3.4 Test of Significant Relationship

The study hypothesized that the respondents’ level of implementation in the use of blocks of time has a significant relationship with the profile of the respondents. Also, the study hypothesized that the respondents’ preparedness level has a significant relationship with their profiles. Table 6 presents the results.

Table 6 Relationship Between Profile of the Respondents and the Identified Factors in the study

Variables	Chi-Square	df	Critical Value	Significance	Result
A. Level of Implementation in the Use of Blocks of Time and					
Age	6.133	6	12.592	Not significant	Ho accepted
Civil Status	4.901	2	5.991	Not significant	Ho accepted
Educational Attainment	2.758	4	9.488	Not significant	Ho accepted
Years in Teaching	17.986	6	12.592	Significant	Ho rejected
Rank	1.528	2	5.991	Not significant	Ho accepted
B. Level of Preparedness and					
Age	18.700	6	12.592	Significant	Ho rejected
Civil Status	1.814	2	5.991	Not significant	Ho accepted
Educational Attainment	3.834	4	9.488	Not significant	Ho accepted
Years in Teaching	4.321	6	12.592	Not significant	Ho accepted
Rank	1.970	2	5.991	Not significant	Ho accepted

The table above depicts the relationship between the respondents’ profiles and the identified factors in the study that were determined to significantly impact the respondents’ Blocks of Time Implementation. On the number of years spent teaching in the Implementation of Blocks of Time level, with a Critical Value of 12.592 and a computed value of 17.986. On the age in the level of preparedness with a Critical Value of 12.592 and a computed value of 18.700.

4. DISCUSSION

The data in Table 1 indicates that female respondents dominated the study. Teaching-related work is more attractive to females. This result is supported by the study of (Barry, 2021), which reveals that women’s experiences in the three Asian economies (Japan, China, and India) indicate gender gaps in jobs despite increased educational access for women in the wake of increased economic growth in the last half-century. The persistent gender age gap in each country attests to this, and while higher education appears to help close the gap, highly educated women’s experiences in the three Asian economies (Japan, China, and India) indicate gender gaps in jobs despite increased educational access for women female participation in the labor market is far from universal, validating the weak connection between higher education and jobs.

On the civil status, respondents are mostly married. The study of (Li et al., 2020) reveals that most teachers thought it was necessary to discuss cultural differences and viewpoints in kindergarten; however, some of them put restrictions on their implementation, primarily because they did not think such discussions were suitable for young children.

On the other hand, the data on educational attainment generally imply that professional growth for school personnel is needed and the workplace for a better service to the learners. Stepanova et al. (2018) state that methodological execution is a critical execution pointer of a preschool instructive foundation. According to Toropova et al. (2021), teachers with more exposure to professional development and more efficacious teachers tended to have higher levels of job satisfaction.



Regarding the length of teaching experience, the respondents were already teaching for 7-9 years. According to (Valente et al., 2020), teachers with more experience have been shown to have less ability to perceive and understand emotions, less ability to express and classify emotions, and fewer ability to manage and regulate emotions. Gaines and Barnes (2017) reveal that states of mind and recognitions may move, the populaces of instructors are continuously in flux, and distinguishing proof of ranges requiring professional development ought to be a progressing endeavor.

The data also showed that on the training attended, teachers have attended several pieces of training to gain new skill sets and refresh their knowledge. It focuses on developing learning environments that improve teachers' classroom effectiveness. The study of Hervie and Winful (2018) concluded that every institution's human resource management includes training and growth, and there is a definitive relationship between teachers' success and students' poor performance. Moreover, the study of (Li et al., 2020) uncovers that a work plan and working environment, as well as arrangement and development, are all variables that impact teacher inspiration, and institutions' administration must be mindful of them to preserve a propelled educating workforce.

On the respondents' perception of the level of implementation of the blocks of time in kindergarten, the data imply that the respondents' preparedness level is Very Prepared, with an aggregated mean of 4.39 percent. In surveys of classrooms, Green et al. (2018), the most successful teachers recognized the value of preparation. They started their lessons with a five- to eight-minute study of previously covered content. Any teachers went over vocabulary, formulae, occurrences, or previously taught topics with their students. These teachers advertised extra practice on actualities and aptitudes for review to get to be programmed.

Lastly, results showed that the years of teaching experience of the respondents have a significant relationship with the level of implementation of the blocks of time. In contrast, age has a significant relationship with their level of preparedness. According to Karlberg & Bezzina (2020), the quality of teachers' experience in the initial years is fundamental to developing and applying the knowledge, competencies, beliefs, and attributes acquired during the initial teacher education phase. It helps form a positive attitude to teaching as a career.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study's findings, it is concluded that although the respondents' preparedness level is very prepared for both instructional practices and teaching preparation, their level of implementation in the use of blocks of time is moderately prepared. Further, it is recommended that the action plans be adopted to improve the implementation of the use of blocks of time.

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