

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS' TEACHING PRACTICES ON READING READINESS

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study is to assess the teaching practices on reading readiness of the kindergarten teachers of Bacong District, Dauin District, Valencia District, and Zamboanguita District in the Schools Division of Negros Oriental. The quantitative technique using survey questionnaire was used to determine the respondents' profile, their teaching practices on reading readiness based on the blocks of time, and the level of reading readiness skills of kindergarten pupils based in their school progress report cards. This study found out that the kindergarten teachers are rated "Always Practice" or always demonstrating the prescribed teaching practices on reading readiness based on the blocks of time and the kindergarten pupils are rated "Developing" or sometimes demonstrating the skills in reading readiness needing minimal supervision based on their school progress reports. This study found out that the kindergarten teachers' teaching practices do not associate or correlate to the pupils' level of reading readiness skills. It was concluded that there might be other factors that could affect the reading readiness of the kindergarten pupils. Parent's contribution and pupil's maturity are plausible factors that affect reading readiness of pupils. It was implied that the kindergarten teachers' teaching practices could not be the only factor that could be associated with the level of reading readiness of the kindergarten pupils. Based on the findings and implication derived, an action plan to strengthen teaching practices appropriate to the level of kindergarten pupils should be conducted.

Keywords: kindergarten teachers, teaching practices, reading readiness, kindergarten blocks of time, early childhood education.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is through literacy that one is empowered to interact in his community and realizes his worth, what he can do and eventually make him do things that contribute in the sustainable development of his society" [1].

Globally, six out of ten children and adolescents are not learning a minimum proficiency level in reading. The total – 617 million – includes more than 387 million children of primary school age and 230 million adolescents of lower secondary school age. The figure signals "a learning crisis", which could threaten progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Target 4.6: To ensure that all youths and most adults achieve literacy and numeracy by 2030. The data suggest that one of the common roots of this learning crisis is the issue of education quality and what is happening within the classroom itself, including the teaching practices done by the teachers [2].

Among all the countries in the world, the Philippines owns 98% of literacy rate based on the recent UIS data. Despite the high rate, there is still about 2% of the country's population that covers those who have not developed the ability to read and write. This is something to work on as far as the aim to meet the SGDs is concerned.

Reading readiness is a critical early literacy milestone that must be nurtured in school especially during the child's kindergarten years as it fosters prerequisite literacy functions for the child to be ready to manifest higher reading proficiency. According to UNICEF [3], reading readiness is a process of preparing a child for reading; encouraging the child to read; and engaging that child in reading. However, reading readiness entails the maturation of all the mental, physical, and socio-emotional factors involved in the reading process. In other words, it is a state of development, which prepares the child mentally, physically, and social-emotionally for reading experiences. Notwithstanding the chronological age of the child, the point at which the child's growth and development have brought about proper

maturation of these factors should be the point at which the reading process begins.

In the Philippine Basic Education Curriculum, reading readiness is the focus in kindergarten, which entails the preparation of children to become readers. The Department of Education (DepEd) issues the Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten which states that the Kindergarten Education Program is to provide learners equal opportunities to effectively promote their physical, social, cultural, emotional, and intellectual development, including values formation to ascertain readiness to perform core competencies, including reading readiness, in school. Children's outcomes in terms of Physical Health and Motor Development; Socio-Emotional Development; Language, Literacy, and Communication Development, Mathematics, and Understanding of the Physical and Natural Environment are reflected in the Kindergarten Progress Report, and their reading readiness is nurtured through the Kindergarten Blocks of Time which serves as the classroom program for kindergarten teachers to perform the prescribed, actual teaching practices in the classroom from arrival time to dismissal time.

Pursuant to the Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten Education, kindergarten teachers from all districts, including Bacong District, Dauin District, Valencia District, and Zamboanguita District, of the Schools Division of Negros Oriental have been mandated and are following the Kindergarten Blocks of Time.

As suggested by the abovementioned data of the UNESCO IS, it can also be viewed that the teaching practices of kindergarten teachers is a factor that greatly influences the learning acquisition of skills, specifically the reading readiness of children in school. Thus, the researcher seeks to assess the teaching practices on reading readiness based on the Kindergarten Blocks of Time among the kindergarten teachers of Bacong District, Dauin District, Valencia District, and Zamboanguita District in the Schools Division of Negros Oriental with the aim of designing an appropriate action plan

that would address the needs based on the findings of this study. Specifically, this study will seek to answer the following:

1. What is the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1. educational attainment;
 - 1.2. number of years in teaching kindergarten;
 - 1.3. latest Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) Teaching and Learning Process rating; and
 - 1.4. number of seminars/trainings on early childhood education attended?
2. What is the level of reading readiness skills of the kindergarten pupils in terms of:
 - 2.1. physical health and motor development;
 - 2.2. socio-emotional development;
 - 2.3. language, literacy, and communication;
 - 2.4. mathematics; and
 - 2.5. understanding of the physical and natural environment?
3. What are the teaching practices of the teacher-respondents during the blocks of time as:
 - 3.1. arrival time;
 - 3.2. meeting time 1;
 - 3.3. work period 1;
 - 3.4. meeting time 2;
 - 3.5. supervised recess;
 - 3.6. quiet time;
 - 3.7. story time;
 - 3.8. work period 2;
 - 3.9. indoor/outdoor activities;
 - 3.10. meeting time 3; and
 - 3.11. transition activities?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the level of reading readiness skills of the kindergarten pupils based on the kindergarten progress report and the teaching practices of the teacher-respondents based on the blocks of time?
5. What implication can be derived and action plan can be designed based on the findings of the study?

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The study of the Du Plessis [4] determined the factors affecting the reading readiness of Grade R learners in selected preschools in Gauteng Province. The purpose of the study was to explore factors that affect the reading readiness of Grade R learners as understood by teachers and mothers. The aim of the study was to establish what factors affect the reading readiness of Grade R learners. The primary research question asked what factors Grade R teachers and mothers find affect reading readiness. The secondary research questions asked how Grade R teachers address these factors in the classroom; who the people involved in the learners' reading readiness are; and how they contribute to reading readiness. This study employed a multiple case study approach. Data was collected in six preschools in Johannesburg through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with five Grade R teachers and five mothers of Grade R learners. A focus group discussion with four Grade R teachers was also conducted. The main findings of the study were eight factors affecting the reading readiness of Grade R learners: the learner's individual developmental level; the learner's maturity; the learner's desire to learn to read; the learner's phonological awareness; the learner's need

for play and kinesthetics; the learner's parents' contributions; the learner's socioeconomic living conditions; and reading stories to the learner. The implication is that these findings may improve teaching practice and Grade R curriculum development.

The study of Kini et al. [5] determined whether teachers, on average, improve in their effectiveness as they gain experience in the teaching profession, this brief summarizes the key findings from a critical review of the relevant research. A renewed look at this research is warranted due to advances in research methods and data systems that match student data with individual teachers, which have allowed researchers to more accurately answer this question.

The paper of Akubuilo *et al.* [6] focused on the causes of reading readiness deficiency and ways of improving reading readiness in children. The paper identified factors such as socio-economic background, physical abnormalities, mental imbalance, lack of interest, and unfamiliarity with symbols and teachers' inability to help children as causes of reading readiness deficiency in children. The paper also suggested ways of improving reading readiness and recommended that parents should provide books and stimulating reading environments for their children and helps them cultivate the habit of using their leisure to read for pleasure. It was also recommended among others that teachers must acknowledge the indispensability of reading skills and as such plan an effective programme of reading instruction which should focus on promoting reading culture among children in their schools. This paper may relate to the present study in terms of the premise that the reading readiness skills of children are linked to their physical health and motor development; socio-emotional development; language, literacy, and communication; mathematics; and understanding on the physical and natural environment, which are determinants of their reading readiness skills. The paper also features the teachers' inability to help children as one of the causes of reading readiness deficiency which can be associated to the teaching practices on reading readiness of kindergarten teachers in this study that greatly influence the development of children's reading readiness.

Weiland *et al.* [7] examined the impact of a prekindergarten program that implemented a coaching system and consistent literacy, language, and mathematics curricula on these and other nontargeted, essential components of school readiness, such as executive functioning. Participants included 2,018 four and five - year - old children. Findings indicated that the program had moderate - to - large impacts on children's language, literacy, numeracy and mathematics skills, and small impacts on children's executive functioning and a measure of emotion recognition. Some impacts were considerably larger for some subgroups. For urban public school districts, results inform important programmatic decisions. For policy makers, results confirm that prekindergarten programs can improve educationally vital outcomes for children in meaningful, important ways. This study can be related to the present study in terms of the impact of the kindergarten teachers' teaching practices to the reading readiness acquisition of children. The "coaching system" and the "consistent literacy curricula" mentioned in

the above study can be associated with the teaching practices on reading readiness skills following the kindergarten curriculum and the kindergarten blocks of time, and the consistency of the teaching practices done by the kindergarten teachers to the literacy curriculum standard in terms of cultivating the different literacy domains and the frequency of the teaching practices done in the classroom which are viewed in the context of the present study as the major variables that have great impact on the reading readiness of learners.

The study of Kiuru *et al.* [8] examined the associations between parenting styles, teacher interactional styles, and children's reading and spelling skills. The sample consisted of 864 Finnish-speaking children and their parents (864 mothers, 864 fathers) and teachers (N = 123). Children's risk for reading disabilities and reader status were assessed in kindergarten. Children were also tested on reading and spelling skills in Grades 1 and 2. Parenting styles and teacher interactional styles were measured using parents' and teachers' self-reports in Grade 1. First, the results indicated that both an authoritative parenting style and authoritative teacher interactional style positively predicted children's spelling skill development. Second, authoritative parenting was particularly beneficial for the spelling skill development of children who were at risk for reading disabilities. Third, authoritative teaching promoted spelling skill development particularly among children who were nonreaders in kindergarten but had no risk for reading disabilities. Finally, some evidence was found that authoritative teaching could compensate for the negative impact of nonauthoritative parenting on reading development among kindergarten nonreaders. This study may connect to the present study in terms of how the kindergarten teachers deliver teaching practices on reading readiness in the classroom. It is stated in the above study that the interactional styles of the teacher influence the reading skill development among kindergarten. Thus, it is of great importance to examine teaching styles being a great factor that affects reading development. In the context of the present study, the teaching practices of kindergarten teachers on reading readiness (that will be assessed) in terms of the kindergarten blocks of time (arrival time, meeting time 1, work period 1, meeting time 2, supervised recess, quiet time, story time, work period 2, indoor/outdoor activities, meeting time 3, and transition activities) are viewed to be major factors that influence the reading readiness of learners.

A meta-analysis of the effects of instruction on alphabet outcomes conducted by Piasta *et al.* [9] demonstrated that instructional impacts differed by type of alphabet outcome examined and content of instruction provided. School - based instruction yielded larger effects than home - based instruction; small - group instruction yielded larger effects than individual tutoring programs. This study found minimal evidence of transfer of alphabet instruction to early phonological, reading, or spelling skills. The researcher of this study found out that there is larger effect of school-based instruction and small-group instruction on alphabet outcomes among learners. This may relate to the present study in terms of how kindergarten teachers deliver teaching practices on

developing reading readiness skills through engaging of learners into group activities and individual activities in the school setting which are prescribed to be delivered during the work periods of the kindergarten blocks of time. This may entail how the teacher targets the reading readiness skill competencies and translate them to varied activities wherein learners are engaged.

Majzub *et al.* [10] examined the reading readiness skills among kindergarten children in Pekan Baru, Riau. Aspects of reading readiness examined were (a) vocabulary, (b) auditory, (c) visual discrimination, and (d) mechanical reading. Reading readiness achievement was examined according to the gender, type of kindergarten and parents' educational background. The sample included 450 preschoolers obtained through stratified random sampling. The instrument used to collect data was Reading Readiness Test (RRT). The data was analyzed using ANOVA and T-test. The findings revealed that there was no significant difference in reading readiness according to gender but there were significant differences according to type of kindergarten and parents' educational background. The reading readiness tests results showed children's high abilities on most of test components. The major implication of the study is to implement effective strategies to enhance reading through parent education and teachers' professional development.

Guo *et al.* [11] examined the relations among preschool teachers' self-efficacy (n=67), classroom quality (instructional and emotional support), and children's (n = 328) gains in print awareness and vocabulary knowledge over an academic year in the US. Results indicated that teachers' self-efficacy and classroom quality served as significant and positive predictors of children's gains in print awareness but not vocabulary knowledge. However, results also showed a significant interaction among teachers' self-efficacy, classroom quality, and vocabulary gains: for children of teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy, higher levels of classroom quality (emotional support) were associated with higher vocabulary gains. In relation to the present study, the implication that there is significant interaction among teachers' self-efficacy, classroom quality, and children's gains in print awareness and vocabulary gains may be applied. It can be associated with the relations between the kindergarten teacher's teaching practices on reading readiness and the reading readiness gains of learners. The instructional support may relate to the teacher's teaching practices including the instructional materials that are appropriate to the target reading readiness skills utilized during the blocks of time and how the teacher presents optimum learning opportunities for reading readiness in the classroom. This may also include the efficacy of the teacher in how frequent he/she in the delivery of the different reading readiness teaching practices congruent to the prescribed kindergarten classroom program or the kindergarten blocks of time.

Taylor *et al.* [12] analyzed reading achievement from kindergarten through to fifth grade in mono- and dizygotic twins from a diverse population. The results show that better teachers allow children to fulfill their genetic potential. They studied first and second grade students in Florida from schools representing diverse environments. Comparison of

monozygotic and dizygotic twins, differentiating genetic similarities of 100% and 50%, provided an estimate of genetic variance in reading achievement. Teacher quality was measured by how much reading gain the non-twin classmates achieved. The magnitude of genetic variance associated with twins' oral reading fluency increased as the quality of their teacher increased. In circumstances where the teachers are all excellent, the variability in student reading achievement may appear to be largely due to genetics. However, poor teaching impedes the ability of children to reach their potential. This may relate to the present study in the sense that the reading achievement of children can be affected by the quality of teachers, and this quality includes the teacher's ways of teaching and his/her strategies in utilizing other learning resources. Poor teaching impedes the ability of children to reach their potential. In the context of the present study, this can be stated that poor teaching practices on reading readiness impedes the development reading readiness skills of children, thus will affect their overall reading performance subsequently.

The study Zucker et al. [13] examined the extent to which preschool teachers used literal and inferential questions during classroom-based shared reading. Specific foci included (a) investigating the association among the level of literal or inferential language in the text, teachers' text-related questions, and children's responses using sequential analysis, and (b) examining the relation between teachers' inferential questioning and children's vocabulary outcomes. Participants included 25 preschool teachers and 159 four-year-old children. Teachers videotaped their whole-class shared reading of an informational narrative text. Teachers and children's extratextual talk was analyzed and children completed standardized vocabulary assessments in fall and spring of the academic year. When reading this informational narrative text, teachers posed, on average, slightly more inferential questions than literal questions. Significant sequential associations were observed between the level of teachers' questions and child responses, with inferential questions consistently eliciting inferential child responses. Few characteristics of teachers' questions were associated with children's vocabulary outcomes. Results suggest that preschool teachers can use inferential questioning to encourage children to participate in conversation at complex, inferential levels; informational texts appear to provide a successful context for this inferential discourse. This study can be related to the present study in terms of the utilization of kindergarten teachers of literal and inferential questions especially during story time in the kindergarten blocks of time.

Rust [14] reviewed the available literature on the effectiveness of workshops and reports the findings of a study in to the effectiveness of 33 workshops delivered by the Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development over a four month period. The study used questionnaires at the end of the workshops and four months later, and these were followed up by telephone interviews with a sample of participants. The study demonstrates that workshops can lead to changes in practice, and that these changes are themselves deemed to be successful by those involved. In addition,

where at the end of a workshop, participants report that they are likely to make changes. This can be used as a reasonably accurate predictor of subsequent change. The features of workshops identified in end - of - workshop questionnaires which are linked with likelihood of subsequent change are also reported. This may relate the present study in terms of the number of seminars attended as identified in the profile of the teacher-respondents. The premise of this study that workshops can lead to change in practice may relate to the present study.

Milanowski *et al.* [15] presented the results of an analysis of the relationship between teacher evaluation scores and student achievement on district and state tests in reading, mathematics, and science in a large Midwestern U.S. school district. Within a value-added framework, they correlated the difference between predicted and actual student achievement in science, mathematics, and reading for students in Grades 3 through 8 with teacher evaluation ratings. Small to moderate positive correlation ships were found for most grades in each subject tested. When these correlation ships were combined across grades within subjects, the average correlation ships were .27 for science, .32 for reading, and .43 for mathematics. These results show that scores from a rigorous teacher evaluation system can be substantially related to student achievement and provide criterion-related validity evidence for the use of the performance evaluation scores as the basis for a performance-based pay system or other decisions with consequences for teachers. This may relate to the present study in terms of the performance rating of the kindergarten teachers in their Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) which is identified in the teacher-respondents' profile.

The study of Napiñas [16] determined the zone of the reading readiness development of 25 preschoolers in a public elementary school in Manila. It employed Quasi-Experimental One Group Time Series Design. The time series lasted for four weeks with one reading skill being developed for each week. The first week was focused on letter recognition developing children's visual skill, the second week was on sound recognition developing their auditory skill, the third week was on letter-sound recognition developing their visual-auditory discrimination and the fourth week was on blending the sounds of letters for them to be able to read a Consonant-Vowel-Consonant word pattern. Teacher-made tests which were content validated by preschool master teachers and supervisors were used. The results show that there is a significant difference in the grand pre- and post-tests and in the pre- and post-tests in the time series. It means that there is a significant improvement in the zoning level of reading readiness when scaffolding is utilized. Furthermore, Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development is achieved through scaffolding as children moved from one zone to the next, attaining their potential development from their actual development, thus closing the gap in ZPD. This study may relate to the present study in terms of the guided practices in reading readiness done by the kindergarten teachers in every block of time and how the teacher deliver assistance to children in developing their reading readiness skills in different developmental domains.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is focused on the teaching practices on reading readiness of kindergarten teachers, and the results of this study will benefit the following:

Department of Education (DepEd). The findings of this study would serve as a basis for DepEd officials especially the kindergarten program supervisors to make enhancement programs like trainings and workshops on reading readiness for the kindergarten teachers.

DepEd District Offices. This study would provide awareness to DepEd Districts of Bacong, Dauin, Valencia, and Zamboanguita on the teaching practices of the kindergarten teachers and the needs to be addressed in the field.

District Kindergarten Coordinators. This study would serve as guide for the District Kindergarten Coordinators in making essential action plans and providing technical assistance to kindergarten teachers on teaching reading readiness.

School Administrators. This study would also serve as a guide for school administrators in making initiatives towards enhancing teaching practices on reading readiness.

Kindergarten Teachers. This study would also serve a guide for the kindergarten teachers to make enhancement of their teaching practices.

Kindergarten Pupils. The output of this study would also benefit the kindergarten pupils in terms of the enhanced reading readiness activities given to them.

Parents. The output of this study would serve as the basis for parents' reading follow-up activities done at home.

Future Researchers. This study would serve as an additional reference for future research use.

4. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study is a survey that follows a descriptive method. The objective of this study is to describe the occurrence of the abovementioned variables in the kindergarten teachers for school year 2018-2019 of the 56 elementary schools of Bacong, Dauin, Valencia, and Zamboanguita Districts in the Schools Division of Negros Oriental.

The quantitative technique using survey questionnaire was used to determine the respondents' profile, their teaching practices on reading readiness based on the blocks of time, and the level of reading readiness skills of kindergarten pupils based in their kindergarten progress report. The significant relationship between the kindergarten pupils' level of reading readiness skills and the teacher-respondents' teaching practices on reading readiness was determined.

Research Respondents

The respondents of this study were the 60 kindergarten teachers and 600 kindergarten pupils of the Districts of Bacong, Dauin, Valencia, and Zamboanguita in the Schools Division of Negros Oriental: 14 from Bacong District (including the researcher), 13 from Dauin District, 18 from Valencia District, and 15 from Zamboanguita District and 600 kindergarten pupils. Ten (10) kindergarten pupils' kindergarten progress reports per teacher-respondent were chosen by random sampling and were quantified to determine the kindergarten pupils' level of reading readiness skills.

Research Environment

This study was conducted in the four (4) districts in the 3rd Congressional District of Schools Division of Negros Oriental, namely, Bacong District, Dauin District, Valencia District, and Zamboanguita District. Bacong District is 6.1 kilometers away from Dumaguete City. It is composed of ten (10) elementary schools; namely, Bacong Central School, Nazario Tale Memorial Elementary School, San Miguel Elementary School, Sacsac Elementary School, Isugan Elementary School, Calangag Elementary School, Buntod Elementary School, Fausto M. Sarono Tubod Elementary School, Timbanga Elementary School, and Timbao Elementary School.

Dauin District is 18.8 kilometers away from Dumaguete City and composed of 13 elementary schools, namely, Bulak Elementary School, Apo Elementary School, Magsaysay Elementary School, Mag-aso Elementary School, Tugawe Elementary School, Dauin Central School, Panubtuban Elementary School, Casile Elementary School, Baslay Elementary School, Malongcay Elementary School, Maayongtubig Elementary School, Masaplod Elementary School, and Bagacay Elementary School.

Valencia District is 13.3 kilometers away from the city and composed of 20 elementary schools, namely, Badiang Primary School, Balabag Elementary School, Balili Elementary School, Balugo Elementary School, Bong-ao Elementary School, Bongbong Elementary School, Caidiocan Elementary School, Dobdob Elementary School, Dungga Primary School, Inas Elementary School, Liptong Elementary School, Malabo Elementary School, Malaunay Elementary School, Nasuji Elementary School, Palinpinon Elementary School, Pulangbato Elementary School, Puhagan Elementary School, Sagbang Elementary School, Vicente I. Villa Memorial School, and Valencia Central Elem. School.

Zamboanguita District is 38.1 kilometers away from the city and composed of 13 elementary schools, namely, Maluay Elementary School, Zamboanguita Central Elementary School, Basak Elementary School, Gregorio Elmaga Memorial Elementary School, Nabago Elementary School, Malongcay Elementary School, Calango Elementary School, Mayabon Elementary School, Kaladias Elementary School, Felix M. Tio Memorial Elementary School, Kapandis Elementary School, Salngan Elementary School, and Lotuban Elementary School. The 56 elementary schools of Bacong, Dauin, Valencia, and Zamboanguita Districts will be the focus of this study.

Research Instrument

This study utilized a survey questionnaire that was intended for the kindergarten teachers. The first part was the teacher-respondents' profile in terms of educational attainment, number of years in teaching kindergarten, latest Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) Teaching and Learning Process KRA rating, and number of seminars/trainings on early childhood education attended. The second part was the respondents' teaching practices on reading readiness in terms of arrival time, meeting time 1, work period 1, meeting time 2, supervised recess, story time, work period 2, indoor/outdoor activities, meeting time 3, and transition activities. The 3rd quarter kindergarten progress

reports of the children were used and the descriptive rating of the pupils' performance was quantified to determine the level of kindergarten pupils' reading readiness skills. The significant relationship between the kindergarten pupils' level of reading readiness skills and the kindergarten teachers' teaching practices on reading readiness skills was determined. The implication was derived and an action plan was designed based on the findings of the study.

Data Gathering Procedure

To comprehensively gather the needed data, a permission was sought from the dean of the Graduate School to start the data collection. A master list of the target respondents was obtained from the District Offices of Bacong, Dauin, Valencia, and Zamboanguita counterchecked it with the data from the Schools Division of Negros Oriental Division Planning and Research Office. This contains the list of kindergarten teachers of Bacong, Dauin, Valencia, and Zamboanguita Districts and their personal profiles. The kindergarten progress report were obtained with the permission of the school heads, kindergarten teachers, and parents. Ten (10) kindergarten pupils per teacher-respondent were identified through random sampling and their levels of reading readiness skills were determined from their kindergarten progress report. Prior to the distribution of the questionnaire, an approval letter explaining the purpose and the permission to conduct the study was sought from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Negros Oriental and the Public Schools District Supervisors of Bacong, Dauin, Valencia, and Zamboanguita Districts where the study was conducted. The actual distribution of the questionnaires was as follows: 10 elementary schools of Bacong District, 13 elementary schools of Dauin District, 20 elementary schools of Valencia District, and 13 elementary schools of Zamboanguita District. Collection of the answered questionnaires was made. The respondents were interviewed by the researcher for deeper understanding and justification of the data gathered.

Statistical Treatment of Data

To interpret the data to be collected, the following statistical tools are used: frequency count, percentage, mean, and ranking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.1 Profile of the Teacher-Respondents in terms of Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Units in Doctorate Degree in ECE	2	3.33	5
Master's Degree in Early Childhood/Kindergarten Education	2	3.33	5
Master's Degree in other fields	2	3.33	5
MA Units in Early Childhood/Kindergarten Education	20	33.33	1
MA Units in other fields	7	11.67	4
Baccalaureate Degree in Early Childhood/Kindergarten Education	10	16.67	3
Baccalaureate Degree in other	17	28.33	2

fields

Frequency and percentage are used to answer problem no. 1 in determining the distribution of responses among the respondents in a given category on the respondents' profile. Mean is used to answer problems 1, 2, and 3 in analyzing the deeper meaning of each value which is the main basis of formulating the findings and conclusions.

The Spearman rho is used to determine the significant relationship between the kindergarten pupils' level of reading readiness skills and the teacher-respondents' teaching practices on reading readiness.

Table 1.1 shows the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of their educational attainment. Only 10 (16.67%) respondents have earned baccalaureate degree in Early Childhood/Kindergarten Education; 20 (33.33%) have earned units in master's degree in Early Childhood/Kindergarten Education; 2 (3.33 %) are holders of master's degree in Early Childhood/Kindergarten Education; 2 (3.33 %) have units in doctorate degree in Early Childhood/Kindergarten Education; 7 (11.67 %) have units in master's degree in other fields; 2 (3.33 %) are holders of master's degree in other fields; and 17 (28.33 %) are holders of baccalaureate degree in other fields. However, 26 (43.33 %) kindergarten teachers are not holders of a baccalaureate degree in Early Childhood/Kindergarten Education and 36 (60 %) teachers have not yet pursued graduate studies in teaching early childhood education.

This implies that majority of the teacher-respondents handling kindergarten classes in the field are compliant to the educational qualifications for kindergarten teachers as stipulated in the hiring guidelines in DepEd Order no. 7, s. 2015 and in the Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten Education. Although majority of the teacher-respondents have earned educational qualifications in ECE, this may also imply varying impacts to the overall teaching practices of the teacher-respondents as they also vary in their educational attainment which may influence the reading readiness outcomes of the kindergarten pupils. This is in relation to the premise that there are positive effects of teachers' degree type and experience on student's reading achievement according to Croninger *et al.* [17].

Based on the data presented, it is recommended that those teacher-respondents who have no background in early childhood education should undergo trainings/seminars specialized in ECE content, specifically on teaching practices of reading readiness that are congruent to the kindergarten blocks of time stipulated in the kindergarten curriculum and that are appropriate to the level of their pupils.

Table 1.2. Profile of the Teacher-Respondents in terms of Number of Years in Teaching Kindergarten

Number of Years in Teaching Kindergarten	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
5 years and below	49	81.67	1
5.1-10 years	10	16.67	2
10.1-15 years	1	1.67	3
Total	60	100.00	

Table 1.2 shows the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of the number of years in teaching kindergarten. There are 49 (81.67 %) teacher-respondents who have been teaching in kindergarten for 5 years and below; 10 (16.67 %)

teacher-respondents fall under the bracket of 5.1-10 years of teaching in kindergarten; and only 1 (1.67 %) teacher-respondent falls under the bracket 10.1-15 years of teaching kindergarten. The data denotes that majority of the teacher-respondents are those who have 5 years and below in teaching kindergarten.

This may imply varied teaching experiences among the 60 teacher-respondents based on the number of years in teaching kindergarten, and this can have an impact to the teachers' teaching practices and pupils' reading readiness gain. This is relative to the study of Kini et al. [5] which states that teaching experience is positively associated with student achievement gains throughout a teacher's career. The gains from experience are highest in teachers' initial years, but continue for teachers in the second and often third decades of their careers, and that as teachers gain experience, their students are also more likely to do better on other measures of success.

Table 1.3. Profile of the Teacher-Respondents in terms of Latest Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) Teaching and Learning Process Rating

Latest Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) Teaching and Learning Process Rating	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
3.50-4.49	56	93.33	1
2.50-3.49	4	6.67	2
Total		100.00	

Legends:

Range	Verbal Description
4.50 – 5.00	Role Model
3.50 – 4.49	Consistently Demonstrates
2.50 – 3.49	Most of the Time Demonstrates
1.50 – 2.49	Sometimes Demonstrates
Below – 1.49	Rarely Demonstrates

Table 1.3 shows the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of the latest Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) Teaching and Learning Process rating. The teacher-respondents were classified based on the RPMS range and rating definition. Majority of the teacher-respondents (56; 93.33 %) fall under the range of 3.50-4.49 in their Teaching and Learning Process Rating and only 4 (6.67 %) fall under the range of 2.50-3.49. Hence, the 56 teacher-respondents are classified as "consistently demonstrate" and the 4 teacher-respondents are classified as "most of the time demonstrate" based on the RPMS rating definition.

This also denotes that the 56 teacher-respondents are consistently demonstrating and the 4 respondents are most of the time demonstrating the objectives to prepare daily lesson/daily lesson logs/kindergarten blocks of time; to facilitate learning in the school through functional lesson plans, daily logs/blocks of time, and innovative teaching strategies; to initiate discipline of students including classroom rules, guidelines, and individual and group tasks within the rating period; and to monitor attendance, diversity appreciation, safe, positive and motivating environment, overall physical atmosphere, cleanliness and orderliness of classrooms including proper waste disposal.

The data imply that majority of the teacher-respondents have very satisfactory performance in terms of "Teaching and

Learning Process" based on the adjectival rating of the RPMS, and this can also imply a remarkable impact to the teaching and learning process of reading readiness which can be related to the premise of Milanowski et al. [15] which stated that scores from a rigorous teacher evaluation system can be substantially related to student achievement in content subjects and reading.

Table 1.4. Profile of the Teacher-Respondents in terms of Number of Seminars/Trainings Attended on Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Number of Seminars Attended for the Last 3 Years	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Regional Level	12	5.38	3
Division Level	121	54.26	1
District Level	90	40.36	2
Total		223	100.00

Table 1.4 shows the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of the number of seminars/trainings on early childhood education attended for the last 3 years. It can be noted that there are only 52 teacher-respondents accounted for this variable. The remaining 8 teacher-respondents did not have any trainings/seminars on ECE attended for the past 3 years due to the reason that they are new in the kindergarten teaching position based on the interviews done by the researcher, but according to the teacher-respondents, they were given technical assistance by their school head especially their kindergarten coordinators. A total of 223 seminars/trainings were being attended by the teacher-respondents for the past 3 years: 12 seminars/training in the regional level, 121 in the division level, and 90 in the district level. It can be noted that the teacher-respondents have multiple number of trainings/seminars attended in the regional, division, and district levels. This denotes that a little more than half of the total number of seminars/trainings attended by the teacher-respondents were at the division level.

This implies that all the trainings/seminars on ECE attended by the teacher-respondents are geared towards developing kindergarten children in school which entails the holistic development of the child. This also implies that the teacher-respondents are trained on teaching practices that are in accordance to the kindergarten curriculum including the utilization of the kindergarten blocks of time.

It is interpreted as that most of the teacher-respondents are trained and more likely to perform well in terms of their teaching practices which is in relation to the premise according to Rust [14] that workshops can lead to changes in practice, and that these changes are themselves deemed to be successful by those involved.

Based on the data presented, it is recommended that the 8 teacher-respondents who have no trainings/seminars attended should undergo ECE content-specialized trainings/seminars that is geared specifically towards teaching reading readiness in line with the kindergarten blocks of time and to the level of their pupils.

Table 2.6 shows the summary of kindergarten pupils' level of reading readiness skills based on the Q3 kindergarten progress report (based on the Kindergarten Progress Report, Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten). The results show that the

kindergarten pupils are rated Developing in their level of reading readiness skills in terms of physical health and motor development ($\bar{x} = 2.33$); socio-emotional development ($\bar{x} = 2.18$); language, literacy, and communication ($\bar{x} = 2.00$); mathematics ($\bar{x} = 2.03$); and understanding of the physical and natural environment ($\bar{x} = 2.04$).

Table 2. Summary of Kindergarten Pupils' Level of Reading Readiness Skills based on the Kindergarten Progress Report

Reading Readiness Skills	Mean ± SD	Rating Description
Physical Health and Motor Development	2.33 0.60	Developing
Socio-Emotional Development	2.18 0.64	Developing
Language, Literacy, and Communication	2.00 0.66	Developing
Mathematics	2.03 0.68	Developing
Understanding of the Physical and Natural Environment	2.04 0.62	Developing
Average	2.06 0.66	Developing

Legends:

Range of Means	Rating Description
1.00 – 1.66	Beginning
1.67 – 2.33	Developing
2.34 – 3.00	Consistent

Overall, the summary of data implies that the kindergarten pupils are rated Developing ($\bar{x} = 2.06$) in their level of reading readiness skills based on their progress report. This means that the kindergarten pupils sometimes demonstrate reading readiness skills. Moreover, the data also denote that the kindergarten pupils sometimes participate in doing assigned tasks needing minimal supervision and progress continuously in doing assigned tasks and skills in reading readiness.

It is interpreted that the developing level of the reading readiness skills of the kindergarten pupils is identified based on the levels reflected in each of the five (5) domains. The levels of the five (5) domains, namely physical health and motor development; socio-emotional development; language, literacy, and communication; mathematics; and understanding of the physical and natural environment, showed the same developing levels which can be viewed that there is interrelation among the different domains and overall to the reading readiness. This is in relation to the premise that reading readiness entails the maturation of all the mental, physical, and socio-emotional factors involved in the reading process [3].

Moreover, this is also in relation to the premise according to Du Plessis [4] which identified learner's individual developmental level; the learner's maturity; the learner's desire to learn to read; the learner's phonological awareness; the learner's need for play and kinesthetics; and the learner's socioeconomics living conditions as factors affecting reading readiness among pupils. This is connected to the identified factors such as socio-economic background, physical abnormalities, mental imbalance, lack of interest, and unfamiliarity with symbols as causes of reading readiness deficiency in children according to Akubuilo et al. [6].

This is in association to the Maturational Theory of Arnold Gesell [19] which asserted that the child's development is influenced by intrinsic factors that comprise of the child's genetics, temperament, personality (social), learning styles, as

well as physical and mental growth. the theory of Gesell also features the established normative trends for four areas of growth and development, namely: Motor (Physical), Adaptive (Cognitive/Mental), Language, and Personal-Social behavior. In view of reading readiness, his theory stated that children would be ready to read when they have developed certain prerequisite skills and there is little that teachers and parents can do to hurry the process of cognitive development. In other ways, the theory advocates for teaching reading appropriate to children's developmental maturity---that is when children are mature enough for instruction.

Table 3. Summary of Kindergarten Teachers' Teaching Practices on Reading Readiness during the Kindergarten Blocks of Time

Teaching Practices	Mean SD	Rating Description
Arrival Time	4.56 0.53	Always Practiced
Meeting Time 1	4.39 0.47	Always Practiced
Work Period 1	4.31 0.46	Always Practiced
Meeting Time 2	4.37 0.64	Always Practiced
Supervised Recess	4.60 0.41	Always Practiced
Quite Time	4.38 0.82	Always Practiced
Story Time	4.28 0.54	Always Practiced
Work Period 2	4.52 0.41	Always Practiced
Indoor/Outdoor Activities	4.33 0.62	Always Practiced
Meeting Time 3	4.38 0.57	Always Practiced
Transition Activities	4.11 0.60	Frequently Practiced
Average	4.38 0.76	Always Practiced

Legends:

Range of Means	Rating Description
1.00 – 1.80	Never Practiced
1.81 – 2.60	Seldom Practiced
2.61 – 3.40	Practiced Sometimes
3.41 – 4.20	Frequently Practiced
4.21 – 5.00	Always Practiced

Table 3.12 shows that summary of the kindergarten teachers' teaching practices on reading readiness based on the 11 kindergarten blocks of time (NKTG). The summary of data shows that the teacher-respondents always practice the prescribed teaching practices on reading readiness in arrival time ($\bar{x} = 4.56$), meeting time 1 ($\bar{x} = 4.39$), work period 1 ($\bar{x} = 4.31$), meeting time 2 ($\bar{x} = 4.37$), supervised recess ($\bar{x} = 4.60$), quiet time ($\bar{x} = 4.38$), story time ($\bar{x} = 4.28$), work period 2 ($\bar{x} = 4.52$), indoor/outdoor activities ($\bar{x} = 4.33$), and meeting time 3 ($\bar{x} = 4.38$). However, the summary of data also denotes that the teacher-respondents are frequently practicing the prescribed teaching practices on reading readiness in transition activities ($\bar{x} = 4.11$).

With regard to the "Frequently Practiced" indicator in the blocks of time which is the transition activities, this may due to the reason that teachers may lack resources and knowledge on the delivery of these transition activities. This may relate to the data shown in Tables 1.1 and 1.4 which stated that not all of them have background and trained in ECE. This may

suggest the reinforcement of these frequently practiced transition activities by the kindergarten teachers.

The results imply that the teacher-respondents are 96 % - 100 % doing all the time or daily the prescribed teaching practices that are linked to reading readiness in most of the kindergarten blocks of time. However, this also implies that they are 91% - 95% doing most of the time or four times in a week the prescribed teaching practices during the transition activities which may suggest reinforcement to be done by the teachers as this also covers essential skills for reading readiness. The average mean is 4.38 which means "Always Practiced."

Overall, the result shows that the teacher-respondents are always practicing the prescribed teaching practices on reading readiness skills during the blocks of time. It can be interpreted that they have covered the skills prescribed in the Kindergarten Blocks of Time (Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten) which are the essential skills that are linked to reading readiness skills.

Table 4. Relationship between the Level of Kindergarten Pupils' Reading Readiness Skills and the Kindergarten Teachers' Teaching Practices on Reading Readiness

Variables	ρ	p-value	Degree of Relationship	Decision Rule	Remarks
Kindergarten Pupils' level of reading readiness skills and kindergarten teachers' teaching practices on reading readiness	0.14	0.30	Very weak relationship	Fail to reject H_0	Not significant
Strength of Association					Coefficient, ρ
Very Weak					± 0.00 to ± 0.19
Weak					± 0.20 to ± 0.39
Moderate					± 0.40 to ± 0.59
Strong					± 0.60 to ± 0.79
Very Strong					± 0.80 to ± 1.00

Table 4 presents the relationship between the kindergarten pupils' level of reading readiness skills and the kindergarten teachers' teaching practices on reading readiness. The results show that there is a very weak relationship between the two abovementioned variables as revealed by $\rho = 0.14$. Additionally, it revealed a p-value = 0.30 (value that is greater than $\alpha = 0.05$). Thus, the decision rule is fail to reject H_0 . This means that there is not enough or sufficient evidence to reject the claim that there is no significant relationship between the level of reading readiness skills of the kindergarten pupils based on their kindergarten progress report and the teaching practices of the teacher-respondents based on the blocks of time. The teacher-respondents' teaching practices on reading readiness do not associate or correlate to the kindergarten pupils' level of reading readiness skills. Moreover, this finding implies that this relationship could not be generalized from the sample considered in this study to its entire population. This is only true to the 60 teacher-respondents and 600 kindergarten pupils included in this study and could not be generalized to the whole Department of Education population.

The result denotes that the kindergarten teachers' teaching practices, although always practiced, do not associate or

correlate to the kindergarten pupils' level of reading readiness skills. This finding negates the finding of Akubuilo et al. [6] that states that the inability of teachers to help children learn to read is a cause of reading readiness deficiency.

To substantiate the finding, the researcher conducted face-to-face and phone call interviews with the selected teacher-respondents from the four (4) districts. The researcher asked the selected teacher-respondents on what other plausible factor or factors that may have affected the reading readiness of their pupils despite that they have always practiced the prescribed teaching practices in school as resulted in this study. Commonly, the respondents answered that lack of parental support or follow-up in school and at home. Moreover, some of the teacher-respondents also considered children's maturity a factor. The teacher-respondents expounded that even though they have delivered well the prescribed strategies based on the National Kindergarten Teacher's Guide and on the seminars that they have attended in teaching their pupils in school, if there is no supervision at home and if children are not yet mature enough, then it may have an impact to their development. Thus, pupils possibly will not reach the optimum level of development in their reading readiness.

This is relative to the findings in the study of Du Plessis [4] which identified pupils' individual developmental level, the learners' maturity, the learners' desire to learn to read, and parent's contribution as factors that affect the development of reading readiness. In connection, it was also argued by Lynch [17] that parents have a great role to play in their child's development as far as reading readiness is concerned in terms of their social development. Children's reading might as well reflect the poor reading background as their parents if such parents are illiterate, or have low-level exposure to education or reading culture.

Moreover, this can be answered by the Maturational Theory of Arnold Gesell [19] which states that the concept of reading readiness is associated to the child's developmental stage. Any child, therefore, who was having problems in beginning reading has not yet reached the developmental stage necessary for success in reading. The concept of reading readiness assumed that progress from developmental stages depends on unfolding behavior or spontaneous maturation. The theory therefore suggests that the solution for problems in reading readiness is to delay instruction until the child had the maturity needed to learn to read. This implies that teachers need to employ developmentally appropriate practices to cater the level of children.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn.

1. Not all kindergarten teacher-respondents are specialized in early childhood education (ECE) and not all have attended seminars/trainings in ECE for the past 3 years.
2. The level of reading readiness skills of the kindergarten pupils based on the kindergarten progress report in the 3rd quarter is "Developing."
3. In terms of teaching practices on reading readiness, the teacher-respondents rated "Always Practiced" or they are

doing all the time the prescribed teaching practices that are linked to reading readiness development based on the kindergarten blocks of time.

4. The teaching practices on reading readiness of the kindergarten teacher-respondents when correlated with the kindergarten pupils' level of reading readiness had not provided sufficient evidence to conclude that the teaching practices on reading readiness of the kindergarten teacher-respondents based on the blocks of time associate or correlate to the level of reading readiness of the kindergarten pupils based on the kindergarten progress report.
5. **It can be concluded that there might be other factors that** could affect the reading readiness of the kindergarten pupils. Parent's contribution and pupil's maturity level are plausible factors that could be associated with reading readiness of pupils.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are presented.

1. The teacher-respondents should pursue professional development by taking graduate studies in Early Childhood Education and by attending seminars and trainings specialized in Early Childhood Education. School Heads and kindergarten coordinators should regularly provide technical assistance to kindergarten teachers who have no background in ECE and those who have not yet attended any trainings/seminars on ECE. Teachers should apply learnings gained from the trainings/seminars attended.
2. Pupils should be given more activities and instructions that are developmentally appropriate to their level of reading readiness skills to improve their level of development from "Developing" to "Consistent."
3. Teachers should strengthen input in transition activities and story time teaching practices on reading readiness. They should employ developmentally appropriate activities that would cater the specific level of the kindergarten pupils as reflected in their kindergarten progress report.
4. A similar study should be conducted to find out more on the relationship between teaching practices and level of reading readiness, and to find out other factors that could be associated with reading readiness.
5. An action plan to strengthen teaching practices appropriate to the level of kindergarten pupils is suggested.

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