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Research article

SCHOOL READINESS AMONG KINDERGARTEN LEARNERS: BASIS FOR POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Froselin P. Doctor[*1], *Denmark S. Macalisang*[2]

[1]*Teacher III Department of Education, MAEd Southern Capital Colleges, Philippines*

[2]*Department of Education, Southern Capital Colleges, Philippines*

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ABSTRACT

The ability, knowledge, and mindset that learners need for both academic performance and future learning and life experiences are known as school readiness. To be prepared for school, learners must have developed their physical, cognitive, social, and emotional skills. This descriptive-correlational study was conducted to assess the level of school readiness of the 227 randomly chosen kindergarten learners from 30 public schools in Tudela District, Division of Misamis Occidental. A total of 227 samples were obtained using the sample size calculator to collect data from the respondents using the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Checklist Record. Results revealed that the Self-Help Domain had the highest level of preparedness, while the Receptive Language and Expressive Language Domains had the lowest. Assessment results described that kindergarten as having "overall average development" described as ready to start Grade 1. Thus, the study suggests providing additional support for language development; fostering continued independence; monitoring and tracking progress; and using evidence-based interventions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The early educational environments a child is exposed to have a profound impact on their overall development and learning journey. These initial interactions directly affect how connections are established in the brain. It is essential to the future well-being of children because they lay the groundwork for the information and abilities that influence their learning and behavior in the future. When children first start school, they are at various stages in their development and they bring a wide range of experiences and backgrounds. Young children need to have an excellent first experience with their new school. Classes that cater to the developmental and physical needs of children, as well as those that provide a safe, courteous, and nurturing environment, are optimal for the growth and development of children.

The time that a child spends in kindergarten is of critical importance to his growth and development. It provides children with various educational opportunities, experiences, individual requirements, interests, and capabilities. Thus, it is essential to collaborate with educators and the community to deliver lessons that are interesting and motivating to children. These lessons will help children build self-confidence and lay a solid foundation for their future academic, physical, and social development.

Meanwhile, pre-primary school education in the Philippines had been made compulsory before the start of primary schooling. Together with the Department of Education, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) created policies, guidelines, and standards for local government entities regarding pre-primary education. On the other hand, recent actions and occurrences have highlighted the pressing necessity for young children to finish their preschool education before enrolling in the primary level.

Republic Act No. 8980, commonly known as the Early Childhood Care and Development Act (2000) focused on the value of preschool education and the significance of catering to the needs of young children. It also recognizes that parents are the leading providers of care and education for their children. In addition, Republic Act No. 10157, also known as "The Kindergarten Education Act," posited that kindergarten education is crucial for Filipino children's intellectual and technical growth because it occurs at a critical developmental stage when the young mind's absorptive capacity for learning is at its highest. The kindergarten education curriculum includes a year of preschool instruction for kids at least five (5) years old. This policy ensures that kindergarten teachers' pedagogical approaches, methods, and styles are always aligned with the most recent concerns and tendencies in the educational field.

Meanwhile, Purpura et al., (2013) averred that children's variances in numeracy skills start to emerge even in the preschool years. They better understand the idea of numbers and their relationships by developing their number sense and counting abilities. Giving that, many children have a chance to count, compare, combine, and dismantle numbers that will help them learn more. Thus, Pekdogan & Akgul (2016) asserted that

*Corresponding Author:

Email: froselin.doctor[a]deped.gov.ph (F. P. Doctor)

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children should have their physical, mental, linguistic, social, emotional, and self-care skills evaluated before they begin school. This is to determine a child's school readiness level that enables teachers to counsel children based on their unique needs and traits. Moreover, it also allows teachers to identify children's needs; create plans and strategies; and tailor preparations to meet those needs.

Nevertheless, a significant number of children experienced kindergarten for the first time in an environment that uses strategies suitable for their developmental stage. Many people have never had the chance to engage in number games or use mathematical manipulatives in their education. Because of this, the children in question were at a disadvantage and had a difficult time performing at levels that were regarded as acceptable. Many children entering kindergarten have yet to gain any previous educational experience if the program they attend uses developmentally appropriate methods. They have never been given the chance to use mathematical manipulatives or participate in number games. These children are at a disadvantage due to characteristics associated with their age, which makes it difficult for them to achieve at levels that are deemed to be appropriate (Back, 2019).

In this vein, the researcher assessed the school readiness among kindergarten pupils in Tudela District, Division of Misamis Occidental. The findings of this study served as the basis for framing policy recommendations to improve the teaching-learning process for kindergarten pupils.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the National Early Learning Framework (2001), which integrates the principles of the Kindergarten Curriculum Framework from the objectives of the K–12 Philippine Basic Education.

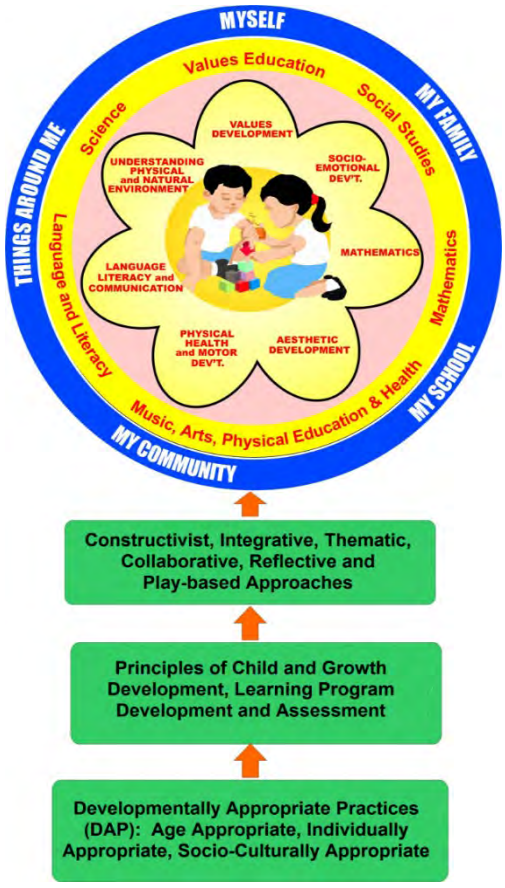

Figure 1. *The Kindergarten Curriculum Framework*

To foster wholesome and reliable interactions in children. A social connection, emotional growth, and cognitive development serves vital. Greater physical activity during childhood and adolescence may aid in the development of motor skills; early childhood is the most crucial and expedient period for the full and healthy development of a person's cognitive abilities. To implement this strategy, each learner in the class must be evaluated to determine their strengths and limits in a range of areas of child development (Ramos, 2021).

As shown in the figure 2, the "school readiness" serves as the independent variable pointing out to the second box the "kindergarten learners" serves as the target respondents of the study. Results of the assessment results on school readiness served as the basis for policy recommendations to improve and enhance school readiness among kindergarten learners.

Figure 2. Conceptual Plan of the Research

3. Methods and Materials

A descriptive correlational survey method of study. This design seeks to characterize the relationship between two or more variables. The study described the variables under investigation, nature, and the relationship between them without any intervention or manipulation by the researcher (Fowler, 2013).

Data were gathered using the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Checklist Record. The tool evaluates the levels of school readiness among kindergarten learners. By completing the ECCD checklist, the researcher determined whether a child was developing typically or whether there was a danger that the child experienced developmental delays. Children between the ages of three and one month and five years were eligible for using the ECCD Checklist Child Record. The Checklist's components are divided into the following seven groups: social-emotional and self-regulation, receptive language, expressive language, self-help, gross motor, and fine motor. Information on kindergarten children from the Department of Education was entered into the child record. Validity testing was not done because the checklist is the product of substantial validation.

4. Discussion of Results

Using the Early Childhood Care Development (ECCD) Checklist Record, the calculated the Mean and Standard Deviation of the learners' school readiness and numeracy skills in terms of the seven (7) domains were revealed.

Table 1 presents the level of school readiness of kindergarten learners in terms of gross motor domain. The indicators listed are observable skills related to the learners' gross motor skills, such as climbing stairs, jumping, and balancing.

The Mean score of the gross motor domain was 1.048, with a Standard Deviation of 0.435. The Mean score indicates that the overall level of school readiness in the gross motor domain was above the expected level of readiness, with a score of 1 indicating that the learners can already perform the skill expected for their age group.

Looking at the individual indicators, the learners scored the highest in Indicator 1, which is the ability to climb onto a bench without support. The learners scored the lowest in Indicator 11, the ability to hop three times using one foot while keeping balance. This implies that kindergarten learners have varying

levels of physical abilities, with some indicators being easier for them to accomplish than others. The learners were able to climb onto a bench without support, indicating that they had some level of coordination and balance. However, they struggled with hopping three times using one foot while keeping balance, suggesting that they may need further development in their motor skills.

This finding is consistent with a study by Robinson et al. (2012), which found that more physically active children had higher scores in academic readiness and cognitive function. The results of this study suggest that promoting and developing gross motor skills in kindergarten learners may contribute to their overall school readiness and academic success.

Table 1

Level of School Readiness Among Kindergarten Learners in Terms of Gross Motor Domain

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1. Without assistance climbs up on a chair or other raised piece of furniture, such as a bed.	1.01	0.0935	Observed
2. Walks backward.	1.08	0.2925	Observed
3. Runs without tripping or falling.	1.02	0.2190	Observed
4. Steps down the stairs, one handheld, two foot on each step.	1.04	0.2947	Observed
5. Walks upstairs with two feet on each step while clinging to a railing.	1.05	0.3717	Observed
6. Without using a railing, ascends steps with alternate feet.	1.07	0.4446	Observed
7. Uses both feet to go downstairs while not grasping a railing.	1.04	0.4766	Observed
8. Moves body parts as directed.	1.04	0.5336	Observed
9. Jumps up.	1.05	0.6060	Observed
10. Throws the ball overhead with direction.	1.06	0.6741	Observed
11. Hops on chosen foot for one to three steps.	1.09	0.7540	Observed
12. Jumps and turns.	1.07	0.8044	Observed
13. Dances patterns/ joins group movement activities.	1.01	0.0935	Observed
Total	**1.048**	**0.435**	**Observed**

Legend: 1:00-1.20 observed; 1:21-2.00 Not observed

Table 2 shows the level of school readiness among kindergarten learners in terms of the fine motor domain. The Mean score for all indicators was 1.093, with a Standard Deviation of 0.395. Among the indicators, the learners scored the highest in being able to use their fingers to pick up toys and food and place them on a flat surface (M=1.00, SD=0.0662). The learners also performed well in being able to use their fingers and thumbs to pinch and pick up small objects (M=1.00, SD=0.0662). On the other hand, the learners scored lowest on the indicators related to drawing, specifically drawing a human figure (M=1.26, SD=0.7140) and drawing a house using different shapes (M=1.33, SD=0.7872), both of which were not observed. These results suggest that the kindergarten learners in the study had good fine motor skills in some areas, but may need further development in others, such as drawing.

One relevant citation that supports the findings of Table 3 is the study by Lopes et al., (2013), which examined the fine motor skills of pre-schoolers aged 4-6 years old. The study used the Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency-Short Form to assess fine motor skills and found that children in the younger age range performed significantly worse in fine motor tasks compared to older children. In addition, some fine motor skills indicators such as drawing human form and drawing houses with different shapes were not observed among the kindergarten learners. Lopes et al. (2013) suggest that younger children may require more time and practice to develop their fine motor skills and that targeted interventions may be necessary to support the development of these skills among preschool-aged children.

Table 2

Level of School Readiness Among Kindergarten Learners in Terms of Fine Motor Domain

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1. Uses all five fingers to place toys or food on a level surface.	1.00	0.0662	Observed
2. Uses the thumb and index finger to pick up items.	1.00	0.0662	Observed
3. Displays a definite hand preference.	1.04	0.2165	Observed
4. Puts little items in and out of containers.	1.03	0.2373	Observed
5. Makes a fist with all of his fingers, holding the crayon (palmar grasp).	1.09	0.3699	Observed
6. Take off the food's wrapper or the container's lid.	1.14	0.4575	Observed
7. Scribbles spontaneously.	1.06	0.4315	Observed
8. Scribbles vertical and horizontal lines.	1.04	0.4680	Observed
9. Draws circle purposely.	1.04	0.5336	Observed
10. Illustrates a human body with the head, eyes, trunk, arms, hands, and fingers.	1.26	0.7140	Not Observed
11. Draws a house using geometric forms.	1.33	0.7872	Not observed
Total	**1.093**	**0.395**	**Observed**

Legend: 1:00-1.20 observed; 1:21-2.00 Not observed

Table 3 presents the level of school readiness among kindergarten learners in terms of the self-help domain. This domain focuses on the ability of the learners to perform tasks that involve taking care of their basic needs independently. The Mean scores for each indicator were calculated, and the results showed that the learners were highly ready in most of the self-help indicators. The mean scores for indicators 1 to 11 were all below 1.5, indicating that the learners were highly capable of feeding themselves, drinking water, and assisting in simple tasks like pouring water and wearing clothes.

Indicators 12 to 27, on the other hand, had Mean scores above 1.5, suggesting that the learners may require more assistance or training in these areas. For instance, the learners were observed to have difficulty in preparing their food (indicator 12) and taking care of personal hygiene (indicator 27). It was also discovered that the learners require more preparation to perform

tasks such as preparing food for his siblings even if he is not told to do so (indicator 13), informing the adult only after he has already urinated (peed) or moved his bowels (poohed) in his underpants (indicator 19), going to the designated place to urinate (pee) or move bowels (pooh) but sometimes still does this in his underpants (indicator 21), and washing face without any assistance (indicator 26).

Overall, the total mean score for the self-help domain was 1.167 with a standard deviation of 0.876, indicating that the majority of the learners were highly ready in this domain. The results of the study provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of kindergarten learners in terms of self-help skills, which can help educators and parents in designing appropriate interventions to support their development in this area.

This finding is consistent with the study by Fung et al., (2019), which found that self-feeding skills, such as using utensils, were positively associated with school readiness in young children. This implies that children who are capable of self-feeding are more likely to be independent and self-sufficient in the classroom, which may lead to better academic performance and social competence.

Table 3

Level of School Readiness among Kindergarten Learners in Terms of Self-Help Domain

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1. Feeds oneself with food by using their fingers (such as bread or biscuits).	1.00	0.0000	Observed
2. Uses fingertip to feed themselves, spilling rice or other food.	1.00	0.0662	Observed
3. Uses spoon to feed themselves with spillage.	1.01	0.1478	Observed
4. Uses fingertips to feed themselves without spilling.	1.21	0.4426	Not Observed
5. Uses a spoon to feed themselves without spilling.	1.25	0.4933	Not Observed
6. Eats at every meal without the need for spoon feeding.	1.07	0.3920	Observed
7. Aids in holding the drinking cup.	1.12	0.4903	Observed
8. Drinks water with spillage.	1.11	0.5353	Observed
9. Drinks water cup unassisted.	1.04	0.5336	Observed
10. Gets to drink on their own.	1.09	0.6305	Observed
11. Pours without spilling from the pitcher.	1.14	0.7173	Observed
12. Makes own food/snack.	1.28	0.8291	Not Observed
13. Cooks meals for younger siblings/ family members when an adult is not present.	1.36	0.9016	Not Observed
14. Engages in participation during dressing (e.g., lifting leg, raising arms).	1.11	0.8842	Observed
15. Pulls down his gartered shorts.	1.10	0.9430	Observed
16. Takes out sando.	1.08	1.0009	Observed
17. Dresses without any help except for buttoning and tying.	1.12	1.0780	Observed
18. Dresses without any help including buttoning and tying.	1.17	1.1566	Observed
19. Only tells the adult after he has already passed his bowels (poohed) or urinated (peed) in his underwear.	1.47	1.2643	Not Observed
20. Notifies the adult that he needs to move his bowels (pooh-pooh) or urinate (pee) in order to be sent to a certain location (such as a comfort room).	1.13	1.2733	Observed
21. Urinates (pees) or moves bowels (poohs) in the appropriate location; however, he occasionally still does so in his underwear.	1.34	1.3784	Not Observed
22. Cleans oneself after having a bowel movement or wipes	1.18	1.4786	Observed
23. Takes part in bathing (e.g., massaging soap on arms).	1.17	1.5400	Observed
24. Without assistance, cleans and dries hands.	1.12	1.5937	Observed
25. Cleanses face on her own.	1.36	1.6958	Not Observed
26. Takes a bath on their own.	1.33	0.7872	Not Observed
Total	**1.167**	**0.876**	**Observed**

Legend: 1:00-1.20 observed; 1:21-2.00 Not observed

Table 4 presents the level of school readiness among kindergarten learners in terms of the receptive language domain. The indicators used in this table are based on the learners' ability to follow directions and understand basic vocabulary. The Mean score for each indicator ranged from 1.00 to 1.03, indicating that the learners had a high level of readiness in this domain. The Standard Deviation (SD) values range from 0.0000 to 0.2877, indicating that there was some variation in the learners' ability to understand and follow directions. This means that they can understand and follow basic directions and vocabulary, which is essential for academic success in the early grades. However, the presence of some variation in the learners' ability to understand and follow directions, as indicated by the standard deviation values, suggests that some learners may need additional support in this area. Therefore, it may be beneficial for educators and parents to provide extra guidance and practice to those who may struggle to ensure that they are adequately prepared for academic success in the early grades.

Indicator 1 shows that all kindergarten learners were able to identify and name at least one family member, which suggests that they had a good understanding of basic vocabulary. Indicator 2 shows that learners were able to identify and name at least five parts of their body when instructed, with a slight variation in scores (SD=0.0935). Indicator 3 shows that learners were able to

identify and name at least five objects or images when instructed, with a slightly higher variation in scores (SD=0.1478). These two indicators (2 and 3) suggest that the learners had a good understanding of vocabulary related to body parts and objects.

Indicator 4 shows that learners were able to follow simple instructions using prepositions such as "under", "on", and "below". The Mean score for this indicator is 1.01, with a moderate level of variation in scores (SD=0.1987). Indicator 5 shows that learners were able to follow two-step instructions using the same prepositions, with a slightly higher Mean score of 1.03 and a higher level of variation in scores (SD=0.2877). These two indicators suggest that the learners had a good understanding of basic prepositions and could follow simple instructions involving these prepositions.

In totality, Table 4 suggests that kindergarten learners had a high level of readiness in the receptive language domain, which is an important foundation for their academic success. The indicators used in this table provided insights into the learners' abilities to follow instructions, understand vocabulary, and use prepositions correctly.

Snowling and Hulme (2011), found that receptive language skills, including the ability to follow instructions and understand prepositions, were strong predictors of later reading comprehension and academic achievement in children. This supports the importance of early identification and intervention for children who may be struggling with receptive language skills, as demonstrated in Table 5.

Table 4

Level of School Readiness Among Kindergarten Learners in Terms of Receptive Language Domain

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1. Points to family members upon being requested.	1.00	0.0000	Observed
2. When asked to point to five body parts, he does so.	1.01	0.0935	Observed
3. When asked to point to five named objects in the photo, he does so.	1.01	0.1478	Observed
4. Obeys single-step directions with basic prepositions (in, on, under, etc.)	1.01	0.1987	Observed
5. Follow instructions in two steps, using basic prepositions.	1.03	0.2877	Observed
Total	**1.01**	**0.145**	**Observed**

Legend: 1:00-1.20 observed; 1:21-2.00 not observed

Table 5 presents the level of school readiness among kindergarten learners in terms of the expressive language domain. The indicators used in this table measured the learners' ability to use language to communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively. The Mean score for each indicator ranged from 1.00 to 1.14, indicating that the learners had a high level of readiness in this domain. The Standard Deviation (SD) values ranged from 0.0662 to 0.5534, suggesting some variation in the learners' ability to express themselves effectively.

Indicator 1 measures the learners' ability to use between 5 and 20 known words, while Indicator 2 assesses their ability to use personal pronouns correctly in speaking. Indicator 3 examines the learners' ability to use verb-noun combinations in sentences, while Indicator 4 looks at their ability to name objects correctly. Indicator 5 evaluates the learners' ability to construct grammatically correct sentences consisting of 2-3 words, and Indicator 6 assesses their ability to ask "what" questions. Indicator 7 measures the learners' ability to ask "who" or "why" questions and Indicator 8 examines their ability to tell a simple story in the correct sequence.

In totality, the results of Table 5 suggest that kindergarten learners had a good level of school readiness in the expressive language domain, which is an essential skill for effective communication in various settings, including school, home, and social situations. The indicators used in this table can help educators and parents assess the learners' language skills and identify areas for improvement to support further their development.

This was supported by the study of Boada, & Januszka (2019) who discussed the importance of language and literacy development in kindergarten readiness and provided evidence supporting the use of language-based assessments in identifying children who may need additional support in this area. It also emphasized the role of parents and educators in promoting language and literacy development in young children. The findings from Table 6 are aligned with the ideas presented in this article, highlighting the importance of assessing and supporting expressive language skills in kindergarten learners.

Table 5

Level of School Readiness among Kindergarten Learners in Terms of Expressive Language Domain

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1. Uses five to twenty words that are known.	1.01	0.0935	Observed
2. Makes use of pronouns (I, me, ako, akin, etc.).	1.00	0.0662	Observed
3. Combines verb and noun phrases in two to three words (e.g. hingi gatas).	1.02	0.1742	Observed
4. Identifies items in pictures.	1.01	0.1987	Observed
5. Uses well-formed, two- to three-word phrases when speaking.	1.03	0.2877	Observed
6. Uses "what" questions in asking.	1.03	0.3374	Observed
7. Uses "who" and "why" questions in asking.	1.10	0.4725	Observed
8. Recalls recent events in the past tense, listing them in chronological sequence.	1.14	0.5534	Observed
Total	**1.01**	**0.145**	**Observed**

Legend: 1:00-1.20 observed; 1:21-2.00 Not observed

Table 6 presents the level of school readiness of kindergarten learners in terms of the cognitive domain. The indicators used to measure cognitive readiness are listed in the table, along with their mean scores and standard deviations. The mean score for all indicators combined is 1.156, with a standard deviation of 0.719.

Based on the table, the learners demonstrated a high level of readiness in most of the indicators. Indicators 1 to 11, 14, 15, and 16 were observed, indicating that the learners had already developed the cognitive skills necessary for these tasks. On the other hand, Indicators 12, 13, 17, 19, to 21 were not observed, suggesting that the learners may still need to develop further in these areas.

The implications of these findings were significant for teachers and policymakers in designing appropriate programs and interventions that will address the cognitive development needs of young learners. The observed indicators can serve as a guide for designing curricula and activities that will enhance the cognitive skills of the learners further. For example, educators can focus on developing the learners' skills in identifying colors, shapes, and forms, as indicated in Indicators 8, 9, and 10. Meanwhile, the non-observed indicators can be a basis for designing interventions that will help learners catch up in areas where they need further development.

Moreover, the high level of readiness in most of the cognitive indicators suggests that the kindergarten education program had been effective in preparing the learners for more advanced learning in the primary grades. This finding can encourage policymakers to continue investing in early childhood education and to further improve the quality of kindergarten programs. It is also essential for educators to recognize that each child has unique developmental needs and that individualized approaches to learning should be adopted to ensure that every learner reaches their full potential.

According to Barnett et al., (2018), school readiness refers to "the skills, knowledge, and behaviors children should possess when they enter kindergarten" (p. 4). The cognitive domain of school readiness includes skills such as problem-solving, memory, and language development. Within the realm of school readiness, the cognitive domain specifically covers competencies such as problem-solving, memory retention, and language development.

Table 6

Level of School Readiness among Kindergarten Learners in Terms of Cognitive Domain

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1. Take note of the direction in which the object fell.	1.00	0.0662	Observed
2. Seek out objects that are partially hidden.	1.01	0.1142	Observed
3. Mimics actions observed moments ago.	1.04	0.2257	Observed
4. Makes an offer for the item but might not let it go.	1.19	0.4244	Observed
5. Look for completely hidden objects.	1.04	0.2947	Observed
6. Exhibits simple "pretend" play.	1.04	0.3552	Observed
7. Exhibits simple "pretend" play.	1.04	0.3552	Observed
8. Matches objects.	1.04	0.4076	Observed
9. Matches 2 to 3 colors.	1.08	0.5080	Observed
10. Matches pictures.	1.06	0.5484	Observed
11. Sorts the items based on shapes.	1.11	0.6417	Observed
12. Classifies items according to two characteristics (e.g., size and color).	1.13	0.7127	Observed
13. Sort the items in size order, smallest to largest.	1.23	0.8133	Not Observed
14. Cites four to six colors.	1.22	0.8680	Not Observed
15. Draws shapes.	1.16	0.9076	Observed
16. When asked, name three plants or animals.	1.09	0.9392	Observed
17. Explains the uses of common household items	1.07	0.9972	Observed
18. Able to put together easy puzzles.	1.33	1.1316	Not Observed
19. Completes a statement to show that they comprehend opposites.	1.45	1.2027	Not Observed
20. Points to the body's left and right sides.	1.35	1.2552	Not Observed
21. Able to describe absurd or incorrect picture content.	1.30	1.3109	Not Observed
22. Connects upper- and lower-case letters.	1.34	1.3779	Not Observed
Total	**1.156**	**0.719**	**Observed**

Legend: 1:00-1.20 observed; 1:21-2.00 Not observed

Table 7 displays that 22 out of 24 indicators were observed among learners during the kindergarten school readiness assessment in terms of the socio-emotional domain; only 2 indicators were not observed.

With a mean of 1.00, Indicator 1 preceded other observable indicators in the socio-emotional domain revealing that learners enjoyed watching the activities of nearby people or animals. Indicator 2 ranked second with a mean of 1.02 which demonstrated that although they may first display a little shyness or concern, students were pleasant with strangers.

Indicators 23 and 24 were among those "not observed" among the majority of learners. The phrase "*responsabling mobantay sa mga manghud ug uban pang miyembro sa pamilya*" appears in indicator 22 while "*Makigduyog o mokooperar sa mga dagko o mga kaduwa nga para mamenusan ang away or di pagakasinabot*" appears in indicator 23. This indicates that the majority of learners were unable to appropriately care for younger siblings or family members and were also unable to work with classmates and adults in a group setting to reduce arguments and conflicts. This suggests that they should work on improving these skills.

The socio-emotional domain of the kindergarten students was observed to have average growth, with an overall mean of 1.118 and a standard deviation of 0.798.

A child's capacity to communicate effectively with adults and other youngsters is a component of their social and emotional development. In that each ability is gained in a largely predictable sequence, social and emotional development are closely related talents (Aquino et al., 2019). It serves as the basis for the interactions and relationships that provide a child's experiences at home, school, and in the greater community context.

Table 7

Level of School Readiness among Kindergarten Learners in Terms of Socio-Emotional Domain

	Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1.	Enjoys observing the actions of animals or humans nearby	1.00	0.0662	Observed
2.	Amiable toward strangers yet show nervousness or anxiety at first.	1.02	0.1316	Observed
3.	Plays by themselves, but prefers to be close to dependable adults or siblings	1.15	0.3733	Observed
4.	laughs loudly when playing	1.01	0.1987	Observed
5.	Engages in peek-a-boo	1.02	0.2728	Observed
6.	Interacts with caregiver/examiner by rolling a ball.	1.02	0.3311	Observed
7.	Hugs and cuddles with toys	1.10	0.4687	Observed
8.	Toys shared with others	1.05	0.5411	Observed
9.	Mimics actions of adults, such as cleaning and cooking	1.07	0.6217	Observed
10.	Recognizes emotions in other people	1.12	0.7104	Observed
11.	Uses welcome gestures from the culture appropriately and without any guidance	1.09	0.7516	Observed
12.	Soothes troubled playmates or siblings	1.10	0.8180	Observed
13.	Perseveres in the face of difficulty or obstruction to his goals	1.19	0.9185	Observed
14.	Assists with household tasks, such as mopping tables and watering plants.	1.12	0.9522	Observed
15.	Curious about the surroundings but aware of when to stop asking adults questions	1.14	1.0244	Observed
16.	Awaits his or her turn	1.08	1.0632	Observed
17.	Asks to use a toy that someone else is using before playing with it	1.10	1.1339	Observed
18.	Tenaciously protects belongings	1.11	1.2025	Observed
19.	Participate fairly in structured group games (e.g., don't cheat to win).	1.10	1.2640	Observed
20.	Able to discuss tough emotions (such as rage, despair, or anxiety) he feels	1.26	1.3663	Observed
21.	Respects a straightforward agreement with caregiver (e.g., he can play outside only after tidying or finishing his room).	1.16	1.4085	Observed
22.	Keeps a close eye on younger siblings and family members	1.56	1.5110	Not Observed
23.	Works cooperatively with peers and adults in group settings to reduce arguments and disputes	1.23	1.5511	Not Observed
	Total	**1.118**	**0.798**	**Observed**

Legend: 1:00-1.20 observed; 1:21-2.00 Not observed

Table 8 provides an overview of the mean scores for each domain of kindergarten school readiness, as well as the overall mean score. The first domain listed is Gross Motor Domain, with a mean score of 1.048 and a standard deviation of 0.435. This indicates that, on average, the kindergarten learners in this study performed well in terms of their gross motor skills. These skills involve the use of larger muscle groups and include activities such as running, jumping, and throwing.

The second domain is the Fine Motor Domain, with a mean score of 1.093 and a standard deviation of 0.395. This domain refers to the development of smaller muscle groups, such as those used for writing, drawing, and manipulating objects. The mean score suggests that, on average, the learners in this study performed well in this domain as well.

The third domain, Self-Help Domain, had the highest mean score of all domains at 1.167, with a standard deviation of 0.876. This domain measures a child's ability to perform tasks independently, such as dressing themselves, using the toilet, and feeding themselves. The high mean score suggests that the kindergarten learners in this study had relatively high levels of self-sufficiency.

The fourth and fifth domains listed are the Receptive Language Domain and the Expressive Language Domain, respectively. Both domains had a mean score of 1.01 and a standard deviation of 0.145. These domains assess a child's ability to understand and use language, with the Receptive Language Domain measuring the child's ability to understand spoken language and the Expressive Language Domain measuring their ability to use language to communicate their thoughts and ideas.

The sixth domain is Cognitive Domain, with a mean score of 1.156 and a standard deviation of 0.719. This domain measures a child's ability to think, reason, and solve problems. The high mean score in this domain suggests that the kindergarten learners in this study had relatively strong cognitive skills.

The seventh and final domain listed is the Socio-Emotional Domain, with a mean score of 1.118 and a standard deviation of 0.798. This domain measures a child's ability to interact with others and regulate their emotions. The mean score in this domain suggests that the kindergarten learners in this study had moderate levels of socio-emotional skills.

According to a study by Adele Diamond and Kathleen Lee (2011), the development of self-regulation skills in young children, particularly in the domains of self-help and socio-emotional development, is strongly linked to school readiness and academic success. They found that children who had strong self-help skills, such as dressing themselves and using the bathroom independently, and who were socially and emotionally competent, were better equipped to handle the demands of school and succeed academically.

Table 8

Overall Mean of Kindergarten's School Readiness

Variable	Mean	SD	Description	Rank
Gross Motor Domain	1.048	0.435	Observed	5
Fine Motor Domain	1.093	0.395	Observed	4
Self-Help Domain	1.167	0.876	Observed	1
Receptive Language Domain	1.011	0.145	Observed	6
Expressive Language Domain	1.011	0.145	Observed	7
Cognitive Domain	1.156	0.719	Observed	2
Socio-Emotional Domain	1.118	0.798	Observed	3
Total	**1.086**	**.501**	**Observed**	-

Legend: 1:00-1.20 observed; 1:21-2.00 Not observed

Table 9 presents the mean score of kindergarten students' school readiness. The mean score is 1.086 with a standard deviation of .501. This means that, on average, the kindergarten students scored slightly above average in their overall development.

The percentage of overall development is 82.32%, indicating that the students were well-prepared for the academic and non-academic aspects of school life. This score is considered high and suggests that the learners had developed a strong foundation in the various domains of school readiness assessed in the study.

It's important to note that the mean score and percentage are based on the observed data in the study and may not be representative of all Kindergarten students in the population. However, the results provided a useful snapshot of the school readiness of the learners involved in the study.

The research findings indicate that the learners displayed a commendable level of readiness for school, which bodes well for their future academic experiences. This is of paramount importance because learners commencing their educational journey with a solid foundation in school readiness tend to thrive both academically and socially over the long term. When we talk about preparedness for school, it means that learners have acquired the necessary skills to excel in a formal educational environment. These skills encompass the ability to comprehend and organize information, along with perceptual and conceptual aptitudes like visual and auditory discrimination, memory retention, and problem-solving capabilities. Schools expect young children to be both physically and intellectually prepared to meet the demands of formal education, enabling them to effectively engage in classroom learning. Additionally, it denotes the point at which a learner can smoothly adapt to a structured teaching program without encountering emotional distress. This adjustment includes interacting with peers and individuals outside their immediate community or family circle (Zyl, 2011).

Table 9

Mean Score of Kindergarten's School Readiness

Variable	Percentage	Mean	SD	Description
Domains	82.32	1.086	.501	Average overall development

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The kindergarten learners in the observed setting had an average level of school preparedness across multiple domains. The learners performed well in the self-help domain, indicating that they had developed independence in activities such as dressing, eating, and grooming. However, their receptive and expressive language domains were identified as the weakest areas, suggesting that further attention may be needed to improve their language skills. Generally, the assessment using the ECCD Checklist demonstrated that the learners were ready to enroll in Grade 1 for the next school year, but there may be room for improvement in certain areas to enhance their educational experience.

The study's conclusions led to the following recommendations being made:

- Provide additional support for language development: As the study revealed that the learners' receptive and expressive language domains were identified as the weakest areas, hence it is recommended to provide additional support for language development. This could include increasing opportunities for learners to engage in activities that promote listening, speaking, and communication skills.
- Foster continued independence: Since the students did well in the self-help area, it's critical to keep promoting and fostering independence in these areas. Giving students the chance to practice self-help skills in a motivating and supportive setting, like grooming and clothing, could be one way to do this.
- Monitor and track progress: In order to spot areas where students can benefit from extra help or intervention, it is advised to keep an eye on and assess their progress across all subject areas. This can guarantee that every learner gets the customized attention required to realize their greatest potential.
- Use evidence-based interventions: Based on the identified areas of weakness, it is recommended to use evidence-based interventions that are effective in improving language skills and other areas of development.

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