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MANIPULATIVE GAMES USED TO ENHANCE THE LEARNING COMPETENCIES OF KINDERGARTEN LEARNERS IN DONSOL EAST I, SCHOOLS DIVISION OF SORSOGON

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ABSTRACT

Playing games is considered critical to children's learning because it is their primary means of expressing ideas, feelings, and beliefs. This study determined the profile of the kindergarten pupils and teachers, identified the kindergarten games used by the kindergarten teachers in teaching to achieve the expected competencies, listed down the problems met by the teachers in using games, and proposed kindergarten self-made games to improve the pupils' competencies further.

This study was pursued using the descriptive survey design through quantitative-qualitative technique. The study revealed that the majority of the kindergarten pupils are in the prescribed age, male, with few siblings, and in the first and second order of birth, with mothers who are younger than their fathers, with a housewife's mother and father engaged in farming. Kindergarten teachers are in their middle adulthood, female, married, in a Teacher III position classification, with units in the master's degree, a few years in service, and have attended seminars in kindergarten. The teachers used manipulative, mastery, mental, and numeracy games in teaching to achieve the competencies expected from the pupils. There are several problems met by the teachers in using games. The researcher prepared self-made kindergarten games to further improve the pupils' mastery of the skills developed along the four categories of games.

KEYWORDS: Playing Games, Kindergarten Learners, Manipulative Games, Numeracy Games, Mastery Games, Mental Games.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Kindergarten children naturally learn through playing games by engaging in and making sense of their world. These opportunities are experiences that are child-directed and teacher-facilitated. When children develop their learning with their teachers and peers, they apply it to their own lives and make meaningful individual discoveries as they progress toward learning goals.

Playing games is considered critical to children's learning. It is considered an integral part of their childhood development since it is their primary implies of expressing their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. It encourages a child's want to explore, discover new things, and create control over their environment, which improves focus and concentration. It also allows them to participate in the flexible and higher-level cognitive processes that are considered fundamental for new-age learners. Learning through diversions can offer assistance increase pupil's participation, cultivate social and enthusiastic learning, and persuade pupils to take risks.

Within the United States of America, one strategy of teaching in the family is through concepts instructed through games, such as Montessori mathematics and perusing proficiency (Prena & Sherry, 2018). In Montessori learning, the main component is children, whereas grown-ups are entrusted with preparing a communicative environment and supporting their need for independence (Nisa, et al., 2019). Montessori instruction points to make children into full-fledged grown-ups, emphasizing children's innate potential (Josephine, 2021). Montessori emphasizes the importance of learning through discovery and self-initiated play. This hands-on approach allows children to develop a deep understanding of concepts by exploring and manipulating materials. This method also encourages students to work at their own pace and find success in their achievements, rather than striving for external approval or rewards (Fundamental, 2023).

In North America, recreations were designed to ensure that the pupils can repeat the cycles within the game setting without becoming bored. On the other hand, pupils are better able to retain knowledge learned through game-based approaches than that encountered through other learning approaches, but that is typically dependent on the domain in address; interdisciplinary points that require skills such as critical thinking, interpersonal communication, and debating are those that are related with the most prominent game-based learning advantage (Kucher, 2021).

In South Africa, children play games with peers or adults, they learn basic abilities to help them grow and be prepared to face and succeed in the daily challenges and demands of life, such as learning and socializing. In playing games, children's moral abilities can be developed when they learn to understand the emotions and feelings of others. They also learn how to deal with emotions such as anger, sadness, and disappointment. Fine and gross motor skills are upheld by play activities such as cutting, pasting, and coloring (fine motor skills) and climbing, running, and skipping (gross motor skills). Play develops intellectual abilities when play activities that support children's critical, imaginative, problem-solving, logical, and analytical thinking skills are carried out. When children play in groups, they learn to communicate, participate, and interact with others, socially and emotionally (Stach & Veldsman, 2021).

Learning through games has many benefits in all aspects of kindergarten pupils' development. For instance, in Malaysia, children were allocated 30 minutes per session, twice a week for attending physical activity class. During this period, children are taught to walk, run, or jump correctly, and to explore the environments and surroundings. Other than that, the traditional games are played by preschool children and their parents. They are way better than playing computer games for promoting physical exercise and social interaction skills among preschool children (Tan & Garry, 2019). In Thailand, traditional games were executed for Early Childhood Education because they have many benefits in all aspects of early childhood improvement including physical-motor, socio-emotional, moral, cognitive, and language development (Sulistyaningtyas & Fauziah, 2018).

The role of play is critical to the learning process in early childhood education settings. Worldwide research shows the advancement of children's learning when engaged in active play. In Turkey, the application of games in education can cultivate eminent improvements in both learning and education outcomes (Kula, 2021). Research in Taiwan shows that learning through games helps pupils explore thorough learning environments and ideas and focus on learning outcomes (Chen et al., 2018).

Within the Philippines, play is critical to the learning process in early childhood education settings. The teachers concur on using play as a tool in teaching literacy concepts. The use of play in their current approach in teaching showed knowledge of play with literacy and development and distinctive kinds of play utilized in their classroom (Omaga & Alieto, 2019). Moreover, kindergarten pupils at this stage ought to be immersed in completely different activities, like games and plays to normally gain the abilities or skills appropriate for their wholesome development, these activities literates and make them prepared for school (Reyes & De Chavez, 2021).

The Department of Education (DepEd) believes that Kindergarten is the transition period from informal to formal education (Grades 1-12), considering that age five (5) is within the critical years in which positive experiences must be supported to discover school readiness. Extensive research has shown that this can be the period of most noteworthy growth and development, during which the brain persistently creates most rapidly and nearly at its fullest. It is also the stage when self-esteem, the vision of the world, and moral foundations are established, and their mind's absorptive capacity for learning is at its most honed. Teachers/parents/caregivers/adults should therefore be guided to facilitate explorations of youthful learners in engaging, creative, and child-centered educational modules that are informative and developmentally appropriate, and directly immerse them in meaningful experiences. The arrangement of varied play-based activities leads them to become emergent literates and helps them to naturally acquire the competencies to develop holistically. They can understand the world by exploring their environment, as they are encouraged to make and find, which eventually leads them to become willing risk-takers and ready to handle formal schoolwork (Republic Act No. 10157).

The curriculum has been projected as a solution for enhancing the quality of basic education in the country. In this context, teachers teaching kindergarten pupils find ways how to improve their instructions. Different strategies were adopted to ensure that quality education was given to the learners. One of these is teaching the kindergarten through games. Learning can be facilitated by

playing a game, which allows learners to grasp nebulous concepts or ideas, gain new perspectives, or experiment with different options or variables.

The researcher who is also a kindergarten teacher observed that the learners learn as they play games. This is indeed a very effective way of teaching because teaching and learning are enriched with a unique strategy that supports the learner's interest in learning. It was in this line of thinking that the researcher decided to propose this study to analyze kindergarten learning through games in Donsol East I, DepEd Division of Sorsogon as the basis of the proposed kindergarten games to further improve the pupils' competencies. Hence, justifies this study.

Objectives of the Study

This study analyzed the impact of playing games on the learning of kindergarten learners in Donsol East I, Schools Division of Sorsogon as the basis of the proposed kindergarten games to further improve the pupils' competencies. More specifically, its specific objectives are:

1. Determine the profile of the kindergarten pupils and teachers in terms of:
 - 1.1 Pupils
 - 1.1.1. Personal background
 - 1.1.2. Family background
 - 1.2 Teachers
 - 1.2.1 Personal background
 - 1.2.2 Professional background
2. Identify the kindergarten games used by the kindergarten teachers in teaching to achieve the competencies expected from the pupils.
3. List down the problems met by the teachers in using games
4. Propose kindergarten self-made games to improve further the pupils' competencies in the Department of Education, Schools Division Office of Sorsogon.

Theoretical Framework

Cognitive Child Development Theory – Theorist Jean Piaget was of the viewpoint that children possess a different way of thinking as compared to adults and he formulated a theory of cognitive development. He was the first theorist to understand that during childhood, a person can grasp the true meaning of the world and life. Whatever the child learns or understands in nursery school. Obtained tends to last his/her lifetime (Cherry, 2012).

Pursuing this study is guided by the Froebel Kindergarten Learning Theory, Play Theory of Vygotsky as cited by Bodrova & Leong (2019), and Drew's (2023) Learning Theory. These are shown in Figure 1.

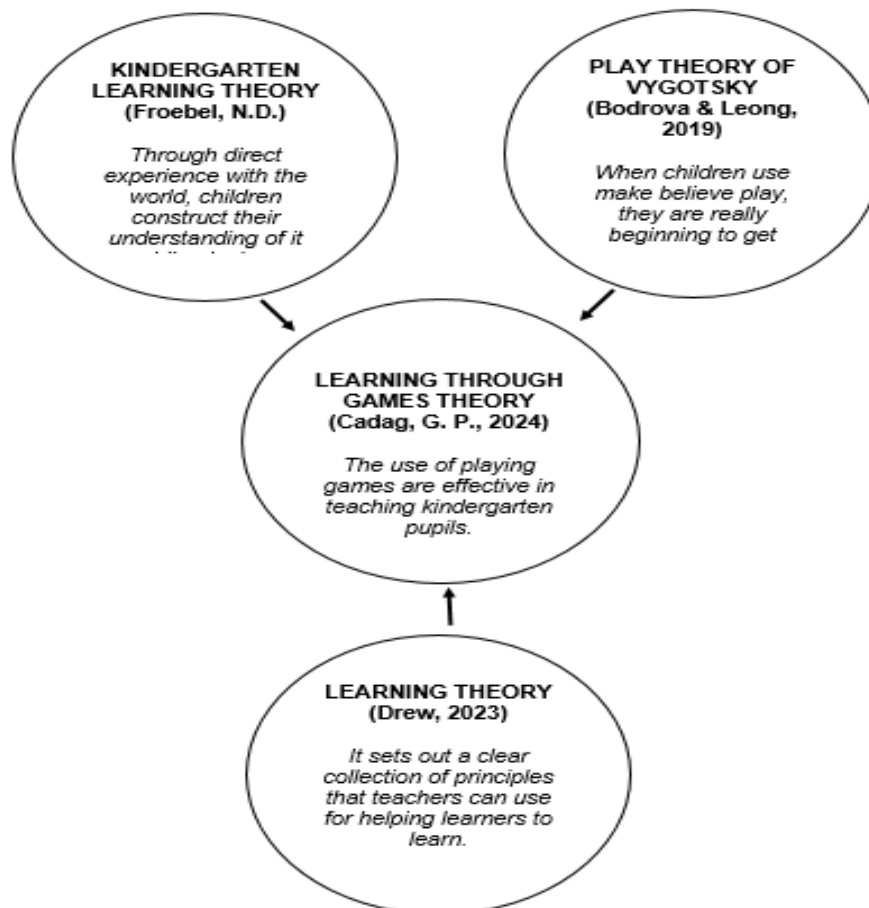


Figure 1. Theoretical Paradigm

Froebel (n.d.) believed that play during childhood is the highest form of self-expression, as it allows children to freely express their innermost thoughts and feelings and children develop their knowledge of the world through direct exposure to that world during play. His ideas on learning through nature and the importance of play have become widespread globally. Play is not idle behavior but a biological imperative to discover how things work. It is a pleasurable activity, but biologically purposeful. Froebel aimed to channel children's natural playful energy into specific activities that would help them better understand their experiences. This study is related to Froebel's Theory which uses kindergarten games as learning activities in teaching kindergarten pupils. Through this method, it determines if they will be able to achieve the most essential learning competencies expected from the pupils. Hence, the parents, teachers, and the Department of Education are helping each other to make quality and effective education for young children.

Lev Vygotsky is one of the most important theorists of children's play. The play that Vygotsky describes in his views focuses on the make-believe type of play/game. This is not what many parents and educators today view as play/game. According to Vygotsky, "imaginary play has three distinct characteristics: the child creates an imaginary situation, takes on and plays roles, and follows a certain set of rules by these roles" (Bodrova & Leong, 2019). When children use make-believe play as Vygotsky describes they are beginning to get creative and use abstract thinking. As applied in this study, learning through games allows the learners to achieve the competencies expected from them. Using games in teaching is essential for kinder learners' development as it

helps them develop and learn while playing. Thus, it is expected that the objectives of the learning outcomes of every lesson were achieved.

Further, Drew's (2023) Learning Theory explains how the learning process happens. It sets out a clear collection of principles that teachers can use to help learners learn. It is a framework that explains how people acquire and retain knowledge. Their methodical explanation of how people process and react to new information is evident. In this study, the kindergarten teachers used games in teaching and learning to achieve the expected competencies for the kindergarten learners. They used games to inspire the learners to learn and participate actively during class discussions. Hence, playing games helps kindergarten pupils receive, process, and retain knowledge by following the instructions of each game.

The above theories guided the researcher in her study. Hence, the researcher theorized that “the use of playing games is effective in teaching kindergarten pupils.” The provision of varied game activities leads them to become emergent literates and numerates and helps them to develop holistically.

Conceptual Paradigm

The research process/flow in the analysis of the impact of playing games in the learning of kindergarten learners in Donsol East I, Schools Division of Sorsogon is shown in Figure 2 which is the conceptual paradigm of the study. The research paradigm shows how the research will take place through the C-I-P-P or the Context- Input-Process-Product model. The context consisted of the Universal Kindergarten Act, Republic Act 10157, competencies expected from the pupils in the kindergarten guide, teacher’s guide, curriculum guide and research both local and foreign in learning through games in the kindergarten.

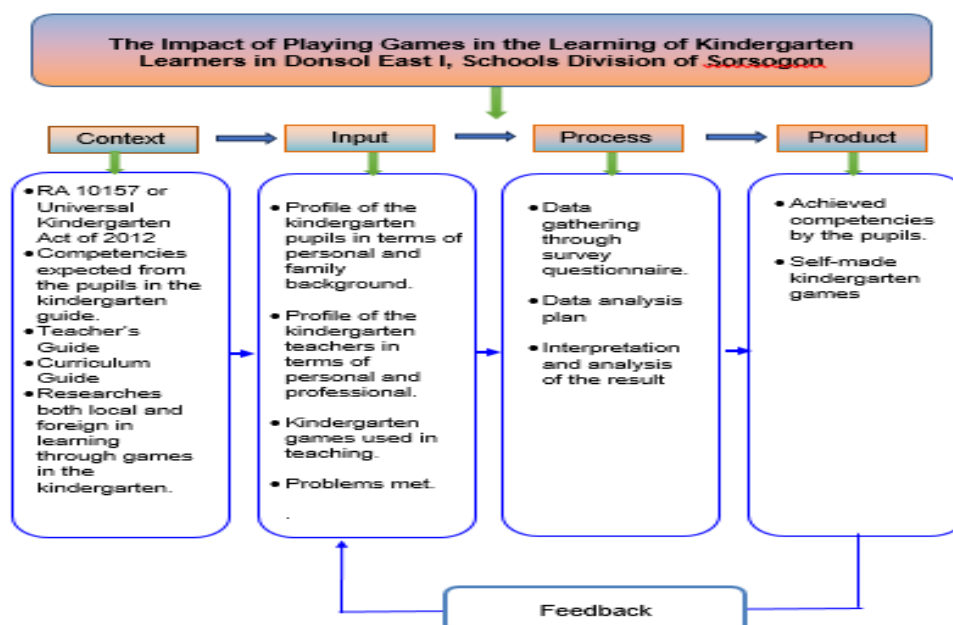


Figure 2. Conceptual Paradigm

Input-Process-Product model. The context consisted of the Universal Kindergarten Act, Republic Act 10157, competencies expected from the pupils in the kindergarten guide, teacher's guide, curriculum guide and research both local and foreign in learning through games in the kindergarten. The **input** consisted of profiles of the kindergarten pupils in terms of personal and family background; profiles of the kindergarten teachers in terms of personal and professional; kindergarten games used in teaching; and problems met. These inputs were needed as variables to come up with the product of the study.

Moreover, the **processes** used were data gathering through survey questionnaires, data analysis plan such as frequency and mean, interpretation and analysis of the result to formulate solutions and generate answers for the research problems presented.

The **product** shows the, achieved competencies by the pupils and teacher-made kindergarten games. The study presented the possible outcome of the research as well as its benefits. It is also based on the findings and recommendations which the researcher made through the result of this study. The product of this study is believed to be useful to the locale of this study and to the whole school's division in general. Hence, the Department of Education is expected to do its best to improve the learning abilities of kindergarten pupils by allocating a budget for the seminars/training of kindergarten teachers in using games in teaching. It leads to competent kindergarten pupils when there is simple, effective, and enjoyable teaching-learning process.

Having this type of teaching-learning process surely motivated the kindergarten pupils to study which will then produce holistically developed kinder learners. These learners will become part of the community with adequate knowledge required at their age. They will contribute to the development of the society where they belong. Developed society of learners ensures betterment of the living conditions and well-being of every individual, who is a part of the society. Thus, it is expected that the learners will become globally competitive. The success of society is linked to the improved competencies/learning abilities of every citizen.

2. METHODOLOGY

The discussion of the research design, research instrument, data gathering procedure and respondents of the study is provided in this section. Likewise, the sampling technique, study site and data analysis plan as basis in the preparation of the manuscript are included.

Research Design

This study used the descriptive quantitative design using documentary analysis to gather quantifiable information that can be used for analysis. This method is used to describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon under study.

"It doesn't provide answers to questions regarding how, when, or why these features appeared." It answers the key attributes of the group or situation under consideration. (Shields & Rangarajan, 2018). As explained by Hassan (2022), descriptive research describes or documents the characteristics, behaviors, attitudes, opinions, or perceptions of a group or population being studied such as the numeracy skills of the kinder learners. It does not attempt to establish cause-and-effect

relationships between variables or make predictions about future outcomes. Instead of concluding, it aims to provide an in-depth and precise depiction of the collected data. This can help in developing hypotheses, recognizing trends, and identifying patterns within the data of the kindergarten games the teachers use in teaching to achieve the competencies expected from the pupils.

Moreover, survey design is a research method where it collects and analyzes data from a group of people (Bhandari, 2023) such as the profile of kindergarten pupils and teachers. The research type provides the opportunity to employ diverse techniques for recruiting participants, gathering data, and utilizing various measurement methods. Thereby, justifies the use of questionnaires, documentary analysis, narrative stories and focus group discussion techniques.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire checklist (Appendix B) consisted of three parts. Part I dealt with the profile of the kindergarten pupils and teachers in terms of personal, family, and professional background. This was gathered through the documents of the teacher-adviser and interview guide to the parents. Part II collects data on the kindergarten games used by the kindergarten teachers in teaching to achieve the competencies expected from the pupils while Part III was on the problems met by the teachers who are using games.

The instrument used was the researcher-made survey questionnaire based on the objectives of the study supported by its related literature and studies. The survey questionnaire was validated by the Education Program Supervisor in Kindergarten and two (2) School Heads in Donsol East I and II. The draft of the survey questionnaire was drawn based on the researchers reading, previous studies published and unpublished thesis relevant to the study.

Data Gathering Procedure

After the presentation, revision, approval, and acceptance of the thesis outline by the Graduate School of Bicol College, the researcher requested permission from the Department of Education to conduct the study (Appendix A). A letter request for the purpose was forwarded to the Schools Division Superintendent, Public Schools District Supervisor, and principal/school head to conduct the study involving the kindergarten teachers and pupils. The schedule for administering the research instrument was drafted and served as a guide in the actual data collection using the questionnaire checklist and other techniques. Actual distribution was conducted during the last quarter.

The researcher had a regular consultation with her adviser and statistician for suggestions and recommendations. Significant observation and experience as regards the actual administration, analysis and interpretation of the findings were recorded. All data gathered was treated with extreme confidentiality. All these activities were done with the guidance of the adviser and/or thesis committee. Data gathered were tallied, analyzed, and interpreted.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents in this study were the kindergarten teachers and kinder pupils from the nine (9) schools in Donsol East I, Division of Sorsogon. The breakdown of respondents is presented in Table A. There are 13 teachers and 337 kindergarten pupils in the nine (9) schools in Donsol East 1 offering kindergarten programs.

Table A
Respondents of the Study

Name of Schools	Kinder Teachers	Kinder Learners	Total
1. Alin ES	1	13	14
2. Baras ES	1	5	6
3. Donsol East CS	4	126	130
4. Gogon ES	1	37	38
5. Mabini ES	1	15	16
6. San Antonio ES	1	16	17
7. San Ramon ES	1	9	10
8. Sevilla ES	1	18	19
9. Ogod ES	2	98	100
OVER-ALL TOTAL	13	337	350

Data Analysis Plan

The data were analyzed and interpreted in the light of the objectives of the study. The researcher used the simple statistical tool using the frequency count and percentage. The frequency and percentage were used to determine the profile of the kindergarten teachers and pupils and the kindergarten games used by the teachers in teaching. The importance of learning through games in selected kindergarten schools of Donsol East was statistically analyzed using the weighted mean.

The following statistics were used:

Simple frequency count. It is the number of times the value occurs in a dataset (Turney, 2022). The responses were plotted and counted by priority as to the responses by items that corresponded to the profile of the kindergarten pupils and teachers. Likewise, kindergarten games are used by teachers in teaching. A copy of the survey instrument was used by the researcher in tallying the responses by item.

Percentage. It is a number, or a ratio stated as a fraction of 100 in mathematics. A percentage is the result of dividing a number by the total and multiplying it by 100. As an outcome, % can be defined as a part per hundred. It is represented by the symbol percent (Shwetha, 2023). It was obtained using the formula:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$$

Where:

P = percent

F = frequency

N = Number of cases

100 = Constant

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The salient findings of the study on analysis of the impact of playing games in the learning of kindergarten learners in Donsol East I, Schools Division of Sorsogon are presented and discussed in this section. The presentation of the discussion was based on the specific objectives mentioned in the earlier section of this study.

The first objective of this study is to determine the profile of kindergarten pupils and teachers. The data for kindergarten pupils were collected through the Department of Education School Form 1 while for the teachers; the survey questionnaire was used to gather the information needed.

Personal Background of Kindergarten Learners. The personal background of kindergarten learners in terms of age, sex, number of siblings and birth order are presented in the figure below. These data were gathered to determine the characteristics of the respondents of this study.

Presented in Figure 3.1. is the age of the kindergarten learners. It appears that 276 or 81.90% of the kindergarten learners are 5 years old, while 18.1% of the class are over age. This could be attributed to the late schooling of children due to poverty, health reasons and the attitude of some parents who are still not aware to the kindergarten policy. The cited entrance age of the kindergarten pupils was also observed in the United States where children typically go to kindergarten at age 5. Each classroom was full of kids who have just turned 5, and some who were about to turn 5 or have just turned 6 (Clever, 2023).

In the 6 years old group there are 50 or 14.84%. Likewise, 7 or 2.08% of the kindergarten learners are 7 years old while the 8 years old and 9 years old, both had a frequency of 2 or 0.59%. Based on the Basic Education Enrollment Policy (DepEd Order No. 3, s. 2018), the result of the study shows the number of learners under the prescribed age (min) and the number of learners whose ages are at the maximum (max) for each grade level. It is good to note that most of the kindergarten learners met the cited age and enrolled on time. They follow the cut-off age for incoming Kindergarten learners implemented by the Department of Education (DepEd). According to DepEd the age qualification for kindergarten learners in both public and private schools should be five years old by June 1 of every calendar year (Hernando-Malipot, 2023).

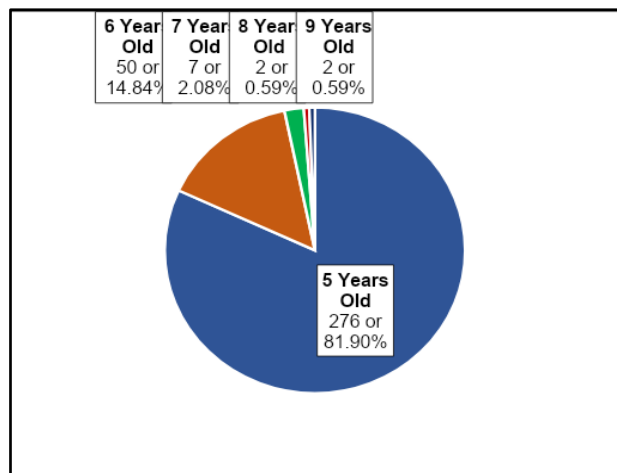


Figure 3.1. Age of Kindergarten Learners

Presented in Figure 3.2 is the sex of the kindergarten learners. It appears that more than half (193 or 57.27%) of the kindergarten learners are male while 144 or 42.73% are female. In the Philippines, the public school promotes gender equality where all the learners are treated equally in the classrooms. Likewise, an equal and respectful relationship among each other was observed. According to Siyez & Beycioglu (2019), gender equality in education means that girls and boys, women and men, have an equal chance to have access to and participate in education and that there are quality, equitable learning opportunities and outcomes. The Department of Education adheres to the important role of education by ensuring equality or nourishing gender inequality in the classroom.

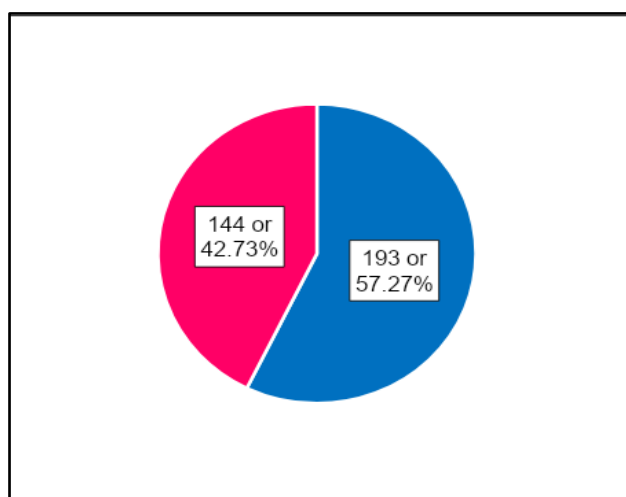


Figure 3.2. Sex of Kindergarten Learners

The number of siblings was also considered in this study. As shown in Figure 3.3, the majority of kindergarten learners (186 or 55.19%) have at least 1-2 siblings, 88 or 26.11% had 3-4 siblings while 41 or 12.17% of the kindergarten learners had 5-6 siblings. Nonetheless, 12 or 3.56% had 7-8 siblings, 9 or 2.67% had 9-10 siblings while only 1 or 0.30% had 11-12 siblings. The findings of the study show that kindergarten learners in Donsol East District I had fewer siblings. In a study conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2020), the average Filipino family still has about 3 children. This is one of the reasons why the economy of the country quickly

rebounded after the pandemic. Other studies found similar results with the present study. For instance, Howe et al., (2023) observed that majority of the children around the world have at least one sibling. According to Parlakian (2019), growing up with siblings helps children develop skills like negotiation and problem-solving. Thus, having siblings gave opportunities for the kindergarten pupils to interact and learn with each other. Their interaction will help them develop their social and emotional skills as they have someone to play with. In Dr. Sidhu's (2019) observation, the power of sibling relationships can be life-changing positively. Maintaining healthy relationships with each other ensures a lifetime and memorable childhood experience.

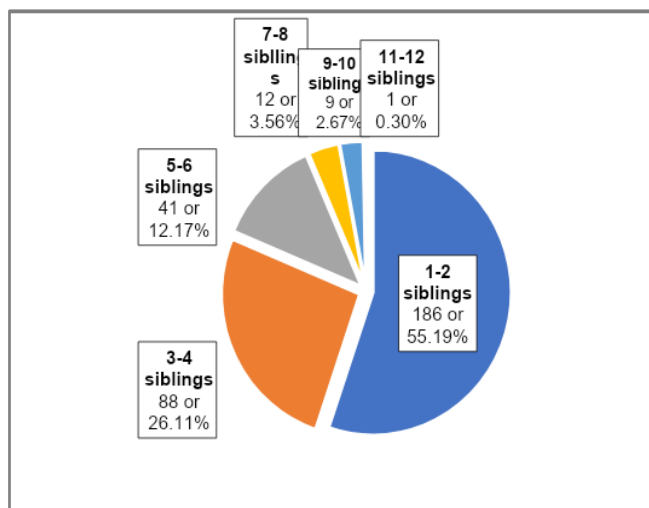


Figure 3.3. Number of Siblings

Furthermore, presented in Figure 3.4 is the birth order of kindergarten learners. Results of the study show that most of the kindergarten learners are 1st - 2nd (205 or 60.83%) in terms of birth order followed by 3rd - 4th birth order with 76 or 22.55% and 5th - 6th birth order with 37 or 10.98%. More so, the 7th - 8th birth order comprises 10 or 2.97% of the kindergarten learners while the 9th - 10th birth order registered a frequency of 8 or 2.37%. However, the highest birth order of 11th - 12th had only 1 or 0.30%. This implies that most of the kindergarten learners are first or second born child.

It is said that the birth order had an impact on the educational experience. In kindergarten, birth order is considered an important factor in understanding the pupils' achievement. In a study conducted by Moshoeshoe (2019), first-born children or sooner in the birth order had higher educational attainment than children born later in the birth order. Song & Wang (2019) discovered that only children had a much higher cognitive advantage over non-firstborn children than over firstborn children because firstborn siblings can benefit from teaching their younger siblings.

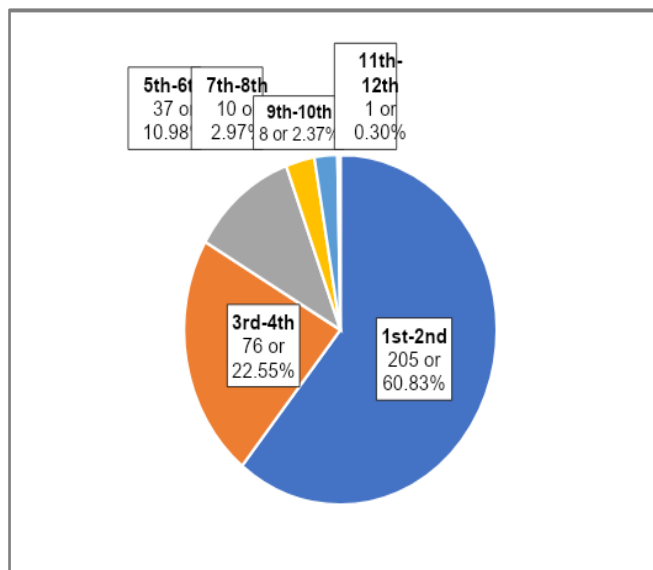


Figure 3.4. Birth Order of Kindergarten Learners

Family Background of Pupils. The family background of the kindergarten pupils was also considered in this study, particularly the age and occupation of the mother and father. The result of the study is presented in Figures 2.1.a and 2.2 Figure 3.5 presents the age of the mother. The figure shows that the majority of the mothers (157 or 46.59%) belong to the 21-30 years old age group followed by the 31-40 years old age group with 136 or 40.36%. A little bit over 10% (41 or 12.17%) belongs to the 41-50 years old age group while the 51-60, below 20 and not applicable age group registered only 1 or 0.30% each. The result of the study shows that the mothers of kindergarten pupils are younger than their fathers. This was corroborated by research by a scientist at Indiana University, which showed that the average age at which people conceived in the past was 26.9 years old. Significantly fathers tend to be older (average 30.7 years) than mothers (average 23.2 years) Anderer, (2023).

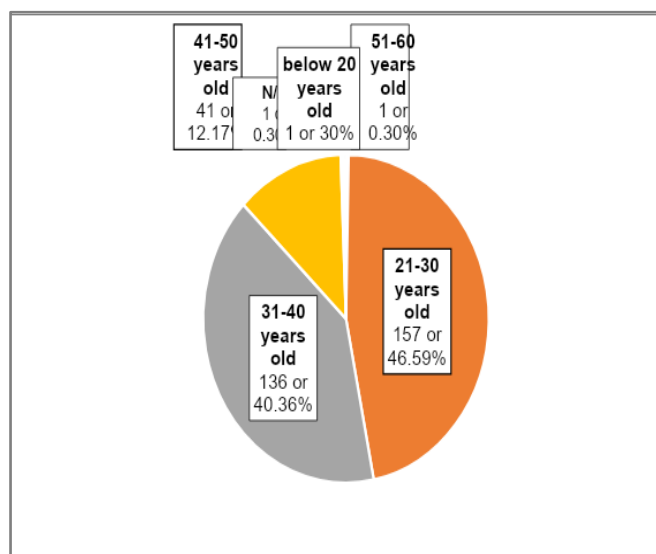


Figure 3.5. Age of Mother

For the age of father, figure 3.6 is presented. As shown in the figure, majority of the fathers (139 or 41.24%) are 31-40 years old at the time of the study followed by the 21-30 years old age group with 116 or 34.42%. It was also noted that less than 20% (59 or 17.51%) were 41-50 years old while the 51-60 years old age group registered only a frequency of 9 or 2.67%. However, 13 or 3.86% noted that it is not applicable in terms of the age of the father since they are the ones who only know the reason. Meanwhile, the highest age of fathers was 71 or above with only 1 or 0.30%. This study implies that the father of the kindergarten pupils is in their early adulthood. This is the time when they already have an occupation, goals in life, intimate relationships and preferably have children. The father at this age becomes more independent and explores different possibilities in their life.

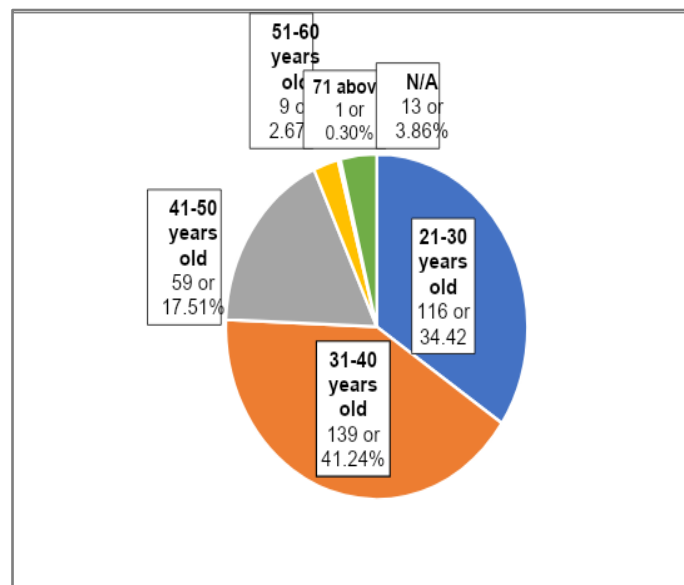


Figure 3.6. Age of Father

For mother's occupation, housewives registered the highest frequency of 293 or 86.94% followed by teachers with 9 or 2.67%, saleslady and government employee, 5 or 1.48%, and housemaid and utility worker, 3 or 0.89%. Likewise, 2 or 0.59% of each comprises the BHW, Food Server, Service Crew and Vendor. Finally, 1 or 0.30% of each was observed on Accountant, Bank Teller, Business-woman, Cashier, Factory Worker, Overseas Filipino Worker, Production Operator, Secretary, and Self-Employed. In the Philippines, women typically stay at home to nurture their family's well-being. They are the ones who take care of their children, prepare food for the family, and tend to do household chores. The result of the study was supported by the article posted in the world economic forum (2019). Accordingly, women in the Philippines often quit work after getting married or having children, particularly during the peak childbearing ages from 25 to 29. The age of the mother also coincides with the previous findings of the study where most of them belonged to the 21-30 age groups.

According to Abarca (2023), the role of a mother stayed at home is hard and cannot be under estimate. They could see how happy they are when they could give them their time to prepare healthy meals and help their children do their homework (Dalhag et al., 2019). However, some still prefer to work to help their husband to increase the monthly income of the family. These may be the reasons why more than 10% of mothers are employed in government and private institutions.

The occupation of father shows that 86 or 25.52% are farmers followed by construction workers (36 or 10.68%), fishermen (32 or 9.50%), laborers (30 or 8.90%), drivers (16 or 4.75%), and vendors (10 or 2.97%). Other occupations of father show that 7 or 2.08% are composed of painters and self-employed, 6 or 1.78% are security guard, tricycle driver, and Overseas Filipino Worker, 5 or 1.48% businessman, 4 or 1.19% are carpenter, salesman, and welder. Moreover, the electrician, food server, helper, seaman, and teacher registered a frequency of 3 or 0.89% while 2 or 0.59% each for Armed Forces, automobile mechanic, chef, factory worker, fish dealer/fish vendor, funeral undertaker/maker, utility, mason operator, and delivery rider.

Due to its terrain, favourable climate condition, and location, most of the people in Donsol, Sorsogon make a living from agriculture and fisheries. According to De Leon (2021), agriculture in the Philippines is the main sector of the economy, ranked as the third largest sector in 2022 after services and manufacturing. Likewise, the Philippines as an archipelago is rich in marine and inland water resources that contributes to the country's fisheries industry (Tantuco, 2021). Hence, this explains further why the top two largest occupations in the locale of the study were farming and fisheries.

Furthermore, 1 or 0.30% each of the occupation was noted for Account Officer, Bagger, Barber, Bartender, Call Center Agent, Caretaker, Computer Technician, Contractual, Crane Operator, Cutter, Gold Panner, Jail Guard, Lineman, Maintenance, Merchandiser, Policeman, Private Employee, Sales Helper, Sales Supervisor, Sari-Sari Store Owner, Service Crew, Sign Maker, Tattooist, and Warehouse Assistant. The cited occupations are a combination of public, private and self-employment. This implies that the father of the kindergarten pupils engaged in different kinds of jobs just to make a living and provide for the necessary needs of their family including the education of their children. In an article written by Siampani (2023), people work to have money and financial security. They work to support their families and themselves.

Profile of Kindergarten Teachers

This study provides the profile of kindergarten teachers in terms of personal and professional background. This information is essential for the interpretation and analysis of the findings of the study.

Personal Background. The personal background of the respondents in terms of age, sex, and civil status are discussed below. This was based on the answers provided by the respondents in the questionnaire checklist.

Figure 3.7 presents the data on the personal background of the kindergarten teachers. As shown in the table, 5 or 38.46% of the kindergarten teachers are from the age group of 31-40 followed by 41-50 and 51-60, both have a frequency of 3 or 23.08%. Likewise, 2 or 15.38% are from the age group of 21-30 and the mean age was 41 years old. This is an indication that kindergarten teachers are in the middle adulthood age. At this age, they are at the peak of their teaching career and with financial stability. Teachers at this age are already experienced and have a mature mindset in their present position.

According to Kekäläinen et al., (2020), there are various responsibilities that the person is faced with during their middle adulthood. They need effective decision-making in every action to prevent any adversities in their life. During this time, kindergarten teachers face different challenges, and they need the necessary support from their peers and superiors to overcome those challenges. This will make them effective teachers which will help them to handle the task assigned to them.

In Steinhardt (2023) statement, teaching takes focus, dedication, and a degree of stamina. What's paramount across classroom settings is meeting the needs of the students. The data clearly show that teachers can continue to work well beyond age 55. Indeed, the wisdom and experience that comes with age is an advantage, not a weakness, for educators.

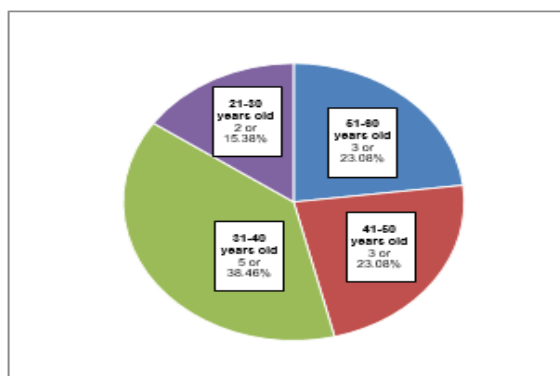


Figure 3.7. Age of Kindergarten Teachers

Whereas, in terms of marital status (Figure 3.8), it shows a huge difference in the distribution with about 12 or 92.31% of the respondents reported that they were married while only 1 or 7.69% is single. This implies that most of the respondents tend to settle down to raise a family and home. This is a good indicator for the teaching in the kindergarten has families and children of their own who makes them take care of their kinder pupils. They have a passion for children, treat their pupils as their children and can understand them well. According to Igbafe et al. (2019), they naturally accept their marital status with anticipation of advancement while simultaneously acquiring experiences on the job. Thus, more teachers are enrolling in graduate school for professional development which they can use for promotion.

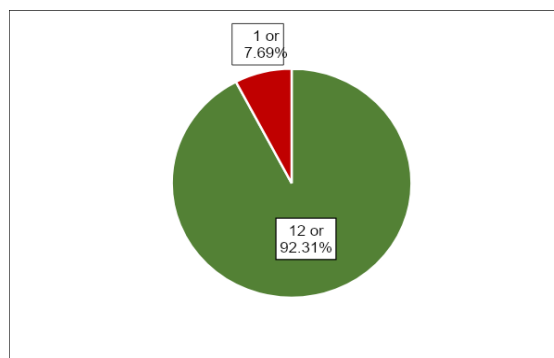


Figure 3.8. Marital Status of Kindergarten Teachers

Professional Background. This study also analyzed the professional background of the kindergarten teachers in terms of position, highest educational attainment and number of years teaching kindergarten.

Figure 3.9 shows the teaching position classification of the kindergarten teachers. The data reveals that the majority of the kindergarten teachers are teacher III (6 or 46.15%) and 1 or 7.69% of them holds a Master Teacher II position. The study implies that promotion is evident to the kindergarten teacher position. In locale of the study, promotion of teachers is much faster because of lot of vacancies that may be filled up. Another is the upgrading of teachers' positions thru the Equivalents Record Form (ERF). Before it takes time to promote the teacher because there is no vacancy for a much higher position. But today, even if the masters' study of a teacher is ongoing, they can be promoted to teacher III. Their career advancement also comes in career stages from Teacher I to Teacher III to Master Teacher I up to Master Teacher IV.

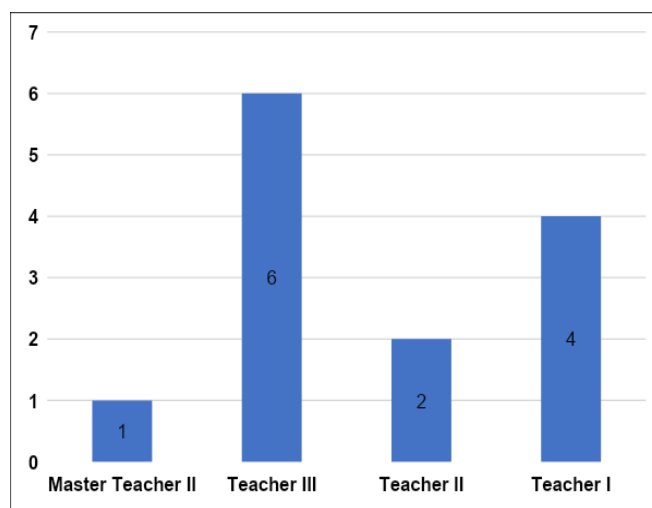


Figure 3.9. Position Classification of Kindergarten Teachers

According to Iñiguez (2022), employees desire a promotion because it's not only impacts their salary but also the level of authority the new title implies. Although promotion brings additional responsibilities, they grab this opportunity for personal, professional and financial growth.

Likewise, presented in Figure 3.10 are the highest education attainments of kindergarten teachers. The data shows that 9 or 69.23% have master's degree units; 2 or 15.38% completed their Bachelor's in Elementary Education; 1 or 7.69% with master's degree and doctoral degree units. The result shows that kindergarten teachers enrolled in master's degrees to acquire knowledge and expertise in their field of teaching. According to Llego (2022), a bachelor's degree doesn't give teachers adequate background to apply theory to practical teaching practices. They also possess little or no intuitive thinking skills acquired with advanced degrees. Whereas a master's degree provides them with advanced knowledge and skills not offered in their bachelor's degree. Thus, they exhibit a level of expertise with advanced education, unlike their counterparts with a bachelor's degree only.

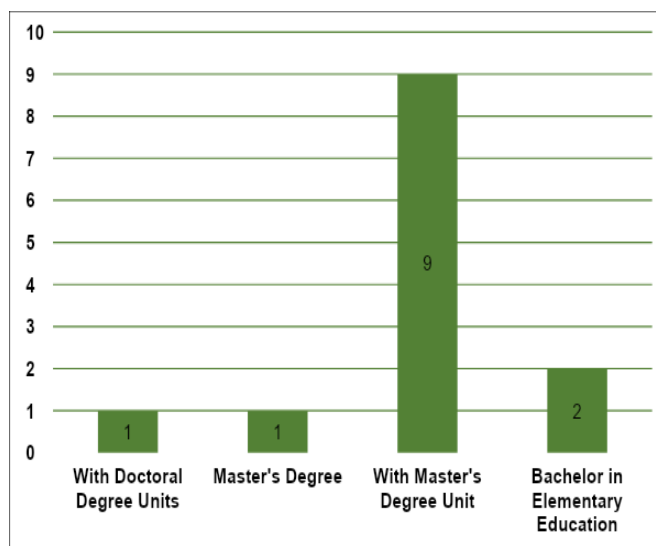


Figure 3.10. Highest Educational Attainment of Kindergarten Teachers

As stated further in Republic Act (RA) No. 4670 or "The Magna Cartha for Public School Teachers" section 4670 recognized that the teaching staff's competence and proficiency are crucial to educational advancement and declared it affirmed as a policy of the State to promote and improve the social and economic status of public school teachers, their terms of employment and career prospects to attract and retain in the teaching profession more individuals with proper qualifications;

Further, as shown in Figure 3.11 the majority of the kindergarten teachers (7 or 53.85%) had taught the kindergarten classes for 7-8 years while only 1 or 7.69% are 1-2 years in the teaching profession. The result shows that the kindergarten teachers are currently establishing their career as classroom teachers. This is an opportune time to take their master's degree in Pre-school education so that they will be fully equipped as kindergarten teachers and in case of promotions to principal they can manage kindergarten classes.

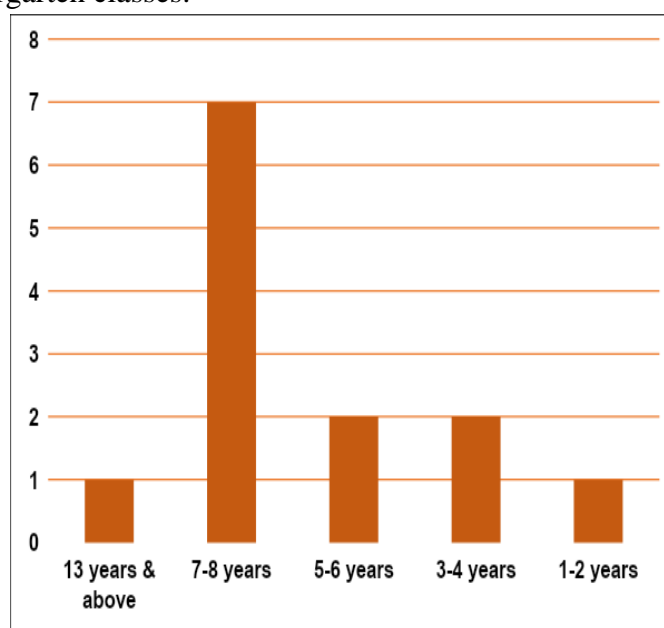


Figure 3.11. Number of Years Teaching Kindergarten

For in-service training attended, the data reveals that only 2 or 15.38% attended the International Seminar Workshop on Early Childhood Education (ECE) while 1 or 7.69% attended the seminar on “Character Building During the Early Years: Innovative Strategies Practiced by Educators Worldwide in Teaching Character Education and Inculcating Correct Values to Young Learners.”

For national training, 3 or 23.08% attended the 5-day “National Webinar on Kindergarten Remote Teaching and Learning Developmentally Appropriate Responses in the Time of COVID-19” while 3 or 23.08% attended the 5-day “National Lecture Workshop on Exemplary Approaches and Strategies in the Kindergarten Classroom.

In terms of Regional Training, only 2 or 15.38% had the chance to attend the 5-day regional training on Adaptation Workshop for Miraya Early Grades Reading Materials. Seminars and training are very important to kindergarten teachers because they are also like a student who keeps on learning. Hence, the Department of Education allotted a budget for teachers’ training because teaching is also lifelong learning; they need to develop their teaching skills.

Nonetheless, 5 or 38.46% attended the 3-day “Division Training Workshop for Kindergarten Teachers on Contextually and Developmentally Appropriate Practices” while 4 or 30.77% attended the 2-day “Division Workshop on the Development of Unified and Contextualized Kindergarten Transition Songs”. Moreover, 1 each of the teacher-respondents attended the 5-days “Division Training Cum Write shop on the Development of Storybooks in Kinder”; “2-day Division Training of Trainers for the Division In-Service Training for Kindergarten Teachers”; 3-days “Division Training on Content and pedagogy Enhancement on Kindergarten” and 3-days “Division Training on Positive Discipline in Everyday Teaching”.

Furthermore, in terms of district training, it is good to note that most of the kindergarten teachers got a chance to attend training relevant to their job. In particular, 10 or 76.92% attended the “1-day District Roll-Out Cum Distribution of Unified and Contextualized Kindergarten Transition Songs”. Likewise, 3 or 23.08% attended the “3-day District LAC Sessions on the Development of Remote and Non-Classroom Learning Materials.” More so, others attended the training on “2-day District Seminar on Enhancing Kindergarten Teachers Teaching Competencies” (2 or 15.38%) and “3-days Training-Workshop on the Development and Creation of Remote and Non-Classroom Learning Materials in Math for Kinder and Grade 1” (1 or 7.69%).

In Juniper Education’s (2022) article, the children never stop learning and the same is just as true for teachers. Seminars and workshops help teachers improve their teaching skills to become more effective in imparting knowledge to the learners. Therefore, they can adapt easily to the diverse needs of the learners.

Most of the training workshops are designed to provide teachers with the latest developments and skills on how to improve their teaching performance in the classroom (News Company, 2020). Gutierrez (2022) reiterated that an in-service program is professional training for the improvement, growth, and development of a teacher. During this time, the participants had the chance to discuss

the nature of their work with his/her co-participants. Therefore, they have the chance to share among peers their experiences and whatever they can be imparted in terms of personal and professional growth. Seminars and workshops are organized both at the district and division levels with the primary aim of imparting information in terms of a particular subject or concept.

2. Kindergarten Games Used by the Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching

Using games in teaching kindergarten pupils is one of the strategies used by kindergarten teachers to encourage the learners to participate actively in the class. Some research has shown that learners easily understand the lesson if they use games. Likewise, they have better memory retention if their teacher teaches using the games relevant to the lesson or subject matter.

This study recorded the games used by kindergarten teachers in teaching. Games were categorized as manipulative, mastery, mental, and numeracy. The different games used by kindergarten teachers in teaching are discussed below.

Table 2.1 presents the manipulative games used by kindergarten teachers in teaching. It appears that all kindergarten teachers used shape-matching games in teaching followed by pattern blocks (f=11) playing alphabet cards (f=10) and ball games (f=9). Incidentally, nuts and bolts play were only used in teaching by only 1 teacher-respondent. The study shows that kindergarten teachers prefer to use similar manipulative games in teaching. These are common games as these were aligned with the competencies and standards for 5-year-old Filipino children. As observed by the respondents, the learners easily understand the instructions of the games and the children are helping each other to finish the task on time.

Table 2.1
Manipulative Games Used by the Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching

	Manipulative Games	Freq.	Rank
1.	Nuts and Bolts Play	1	10
2.	Letter tiles for spelling	4	8
3.	Legos for letter formation	4	8
4.	Dominoes	4	8
5.	Playing Alphabet Dice	5	5.5
6.	Playing Alphabet Cards	10	3
7.	Pattern Blocks	11	2
8.	Shape Matching Game	13	1
9.	Combined Building Blocks Game	5	5.5

10. Ball Games (throwing, catching, kicking, trapping, striking, volleying, bouncing, and ball rolling)	9	4
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Other researchers have similar findings with the present study. For instance, Ramilo et al.,(2022), found that the teachers are using manipulative in the teaching - learning process as these provide many opportunities for children to learn and acquire different skills. For Alnassir (2022), the children actively engage with their lessons if manipulative games were used by the teacher. Children often look at these

Manipulative tools as toys; thus, they are more interested in it compared to a piece of paper and pencil. Moreover, manipulative games can be used from quarter 1 to quarter 4 or in any part of the learning process. These games involved the active learning process as this is one of the hands-on activities that need engagement. If the children were directly involved in this, it would promote learning by doing. Manipulative materials are concrete objects that allow children to explore an idea in an active, hands-on approach. Manipulative can be almost anything -blocks, shapes, spinners or even paper that is cut of folded. Using manipulative is an effective method for children, especially preschool and elementary school students, to model mathematical thinking and generate insight into mathematical phenomena while increasing student interaction and communication about their mathematical thinking (manipulative games for kindergarten - Google Search, 2021).

Presented in Table 2.2 are mastery games used by the kindergarten teachers in teaching. It appears that “Letter Matching Games” were used by all (f=13) kindergarten teachers in teaching followed by “Wooden Block Puzzle” (f=9), “Board Game” and “Head Shoulders, Knees & Toes” both have a frequency of 7 or rank 3.5. In Donsol East District I, the kindergarten teachers use letter-matching games in Teaching to teach the kindergarten pupils about letters. According to Punkoney (2020), this game is one step in teaching preschoolers all about letter recognition that promotes early literacy skills.

Mastery games can be reading mastery games and mathematics mastery games. Aside from the mentioned mastery games used by the kinder teachers, other mastery games for reading include the phonics game, sight-word mastery, and compound word mastery, which can be tried by the teachers in their classes. (*Reading mastery games / TPT.* (2024).

Rank 5.5 with a frequency of 5 was noted on “Red Light, Green Light and “Simon Says”, ” Rubik’s cube” was only used by 1 teacher-respondent while “Chess – The old classic” and “10-piece jigsaw puzzles”, were the games never used by them. In teaching. “Simon Says” is a great way to practice giving and following directions, as that is the basis of the game (Emerge – A Child’s Place, 2019). Likewise, playing this game provides children with the opportunity to develop an important skill, especially when it comes to physical literacy. In recent studies, children who participate in games such as “Simon Says” have been shown to have stronger impulse control, emotional stability, understanding of expectations as well as language, and better reading and writing skills (Timsit, 2020).

Moreover, McIlroy (2023) stressed that the “Red Light, Green Light” game strengthens kids' listening skills and concentration as they must listen carefully for the words “red light” or “green light”. When they hear these words, they may react appropriately with little time to think. Playing this game will help the kindergarten pupils follow instructions and do it appropriately.

It is advisable that those games not yet fully taught like ‘Snake & Ladder’, ‘Rubik’s Cube’ and the ‘10-piece jigsaw puzzle’ can be used by the kinder teachers during their in-service training for practice on how they can be taught. Teachers who know them can share the mechanics of the games they are played.

Table 2.2
Mastery Games Used by the Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching

	Mastery Games	Freq.	Rank
1.	Rubik’s cube	1	8
2.	Snakes & Ladder	3	7
3.	Board Game	7	3.5
4.	Letter Matching Games	13	1
5.	Red Light, Green Light	5	5.5
6.	Simon Says	5	5.5
7.	Chess – The old classic	0	9.5
8.	Head Shoulders Knees & Toes	7	3-5
9.	Wooden Block Puzzle	9	2
10.	10-piece jigsaw puzzles	0	9.5

Table 2.3 shows the mental games used by the kindergarten teachers in teaching. It appears that rank 1.5 (f=12) were shared by games “The Five Senses” and “Spot the difference” followed by “Touch the right color” which is rank 3 with a frequency of 11. Rank 4 with a frequency of 9 is “Animals Matching Game” and rank 5 is “Face Memory Game” which is only used by 3 kindergarten teachers.

The “Five Senses Game” is commonly used by the kindergarten teachers in teaching to recognize the five senses, which is a lesson in science in the higher grades. According to Bharatan (2023), this game helps enhance imagination and creative thinking and develop vital skills. Vollrath (2023) believed that teachers who use the “Five Senses Game” in their teaching help support pupils’ mental health.

Others with a frequency of 1 or rank 8.5 were observed in 3 games. These were “Mapping the neighbourhood”, “Guess the word puzzle”, and “Logic Balls”. However, “Sudoku Puzzles” were

the only mental games never used by kindergarten teachers. In teaching. Impliedly, these games are not popular in the locale of the study that is why the kindergarten teachers rarely used these in teaching because. It might already be a complicated game. But there is a need to try using these games because there might be advanced pupils who can do them only that they were not taught by the teachers because they must be the ones to learn first how to play the game. Word games like “Guessing the word puzzle” may enrich the vocabulary, introduce people to new words, and reinforce the spelling skills of the learners (Metro Creative Connection, 2022). Due to its characteristics, the kindergarten pupils in the locale of the study hardly understand this game because they have not mastered the spelling of the complex words.

Table 2.3
Mental Games Used by the Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching

	Mental Games	Freq.	Rank
1.	Sudoku Puzzles	0	10
2.	The Five Senses	12	1.5
3.	Mapping the neighborhood	1	8.5
4.	Brain teaser puzzles	2	6
5.	Touch the right color	11	3
6.	Spot the difference game	12	1.5
7.	Guess the word puzzle	1	8.5
8.	Animals Matching Game	9	4
9.	Face Memory Game	3	5
10.	Logic Balls	1	8.5

Presented in Table 2.4 are the numeracy games used by kindergarten teachers in teaching. The data shows that Rank 1 with a frequency of 12 is on “Counting Game” followed by “Number Hunt” and “Sort-and-Count Game” with the same frequency of 11. Rank 4 with a frequency of 8 is “Number Matching with Cups” while Rank 5.5 with a frequency of 5 is “Solving puzzles together” and “Masking Tape – Number Line Games for Kids”. The three games that ranked 8 are “Math Pictionary”, Math Bingo” and “Play Dough Stamp and Count “The numeracy game used by only 2 kindergarten teachers is “Timed Tasks – Helping Kids Tell Time”. This must be the most difficult and less used game. The teachers can examine deeper the reasons why only 2 teachers used this game. They can be the ones requested to train the other teachers on how to play the game during their in-service training. This game can enhance farther the mastery of numeracy skills of the pupils. Examine deeper the reasons why only 2 teachers used this game. They can be the ones

requested to train the other teachers on how to play the game during their in-service training. This game can enhance farther the mastery of numeracy skills of the pupils.

The kindergarten teachers used numeracy games in teaching the kindergarten pupils because they believe that it is one of the easiest ways to introduce the new lesson in mathematics which is a difficult subject to master. Likewise, they see to it that the numeracy games are always aligned with the goals and objectives of the lesson. As Reed & Young (2018) point out, achieving this goal can be difficult because, in a game, children may play alone or in groups. They can make their own decisions about the moves they will make, and they can play repeatedly trying out different strategies.

The kindergarten teachers have to teach using these games to enhance the mastery of the mathematics competencies of the kindergarten pupils at an early age to serve as a good foundation for higher mathematics. Mathematical mastery is a teaching and learning approach that aims to help students develop a deep understanding of mathematics rather than the ability to memorize key learning procedures or methods to rote learning. The ultimate objective and target is to have all students (with few exceptions) grasp the fundamental mathematical concepts and skills for their school year or key stage.

Mastery of a mathematical concept means a child can use his/her knowledge of the concept to solve unfamiliar word problems and undertake complex reasoning, using the appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Math mastery is not a quick fix to math learning but a journey that the teacher and pupils go on together, with regular diagnostic assessments to check the pupils understanding and direct instruction to bridge the gaps in learning. Teaching for mastery is how the teacher (crucially with the support of their school) organizes their classroom time and teaching preparation time so that their pupils can go on the journey of mathematics mastery together (Almond, N., 2019).

Table 2.4
Numeracy Games Used by the Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching

	Numeracy Games	Freq.	Rank
1.	Math Pictionary	4	8
2.	Solving puzzles together	5	5.5
3.	Number Hunt	1	2.5
4.	Math Bingo	4	8
5.	Sort-and-Count Game	1	2.5
6.	Counting Game	12	1
7.	Play Dough Stamp and Count	4	8

8.	Number Matching with Cups	8	4
9.	Timed Tasks – Helping Kids Tell Time	2	10
10.	Masking Tape – Number Line Games for Kids	5	5.5

The Impact of Utilization of Kindergarten Play-Based Activities

Using games in teaching kindergarten pupils is one of the strategies used by most kindergarten teachers to motivate and encourage the learners to learn about this, it is important to determine the impact of using games to know the different benefits brought about by using the different games in teaching. Table 2 is prepared to show the impact of the utilization of kindergarten play-based activities. It appears that all the predetermined indicators obtained the total weighted mean rating equivalent to the adjectival description of “high impact”. Incidentally, the three indicators obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.00 was observed as “the learner’s participation increases”, “boosts the learner’s confidence and self-esteem” and “makes the learners learn from doing.” The lowest average weighted mean of 3.77 was observed on the two indicators pertains to “help the learners developed a social relationship” and “boost capability to solve problems.” The study implies that the kindergarten teachers noted the impact of utilizing games in their kindergarten play-based activities. These are some of the objectives of using games in teaching to ensure that kindergarten pupils learn additional knowledge and skills beyond the competencies presented in the games. According to Sager (2023), games in the classroom can help students develop teamwork, turn heads, cultivate respect, and be attentive. This is supported by his observation.

Moreover, game-based activities in the classroom are effective ways to increase the learners’ participation and provide meaningful educational experiences. During the activity, Massman (2023) noted that the learners are engaged in the mechanics of the games, and they are more likely to retain what they have learned. In the locale of the study, some of the respondents said that using games leads them to a deeper understanding of the goals and objectives of the lesson. While playing the games, they are also learning through the process of playing it.

3. Problems Met by the Teachers in Using Games

This study recorded the problems met by the teachers in using games. Findings of the study shown in Table 3.1 present the number 1 problem was “limited budget of the school to buy engaging games for the classroom”. This is due to the limited Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE). Due to large number of enrollment in the public schools, they experience a limited budget for the maintenance and operation of the schools. Sometimes, they tap the assistance of other school stakeholders just to provide the necessary materials needed in the teaching-learning. Others optimize the use of the manipulative materials available in the kindergarten classroom. Ramilo et al. (2022) suggests that there is a need for schools to invest in different manipulative games for use in kindergarten. There are essential tools used by kindergarten teachers to deepen the learners' understanding of the topics/lessons presented in the classroom.

Following this, a few students intentionally interrupted small groups during games. And “the learners do not take care of the materials used in playing games”, both have a frequency of 11. This

can be remedied by setting up standards before, during and after playtime. The next problem or Rank 4 was “designing and developing kindergarten games can be time-consuming, costly, and complex”. This can be remedied by teachers themselves to compile the previous materials they have made and used and add the new ones to their file, properly classified and labelled.

Rank 5.5 of the problems met were “the learners are not staying on task” and “difficult to find suitable games in every competency”, both have a frequency of 7. According to some of the respondents, introducing new numeracy games is not easy. It is time consuming because they need to repeat the instruction and mechanics of the games. Creating and developing educational games is difficult because there are some things that need to be considered. One of these is “who are the end users of the game and their level of thinking”. According to Stankovic (2021), learning games should address the needs of the end user which are the children. They will lose their game if it becomes monotonous, uninteresting or repetitive. Additionally, they will prioritize the quality of the game over its worth.

The least of the problems met by the teacher in using games (f=1) was “games were not always aligned to teaching or learning goals”. This is the least of a problem because all games prepared are aligned to the learning goals and the competencies that have to be developed and mastered. The indicator that “playing games doesn’t replace traditional learning strategies” was never a problem for them. It is good to note that all games used by the kindergarten teachers are aligned with the learning objectives. Likewise, the learners are having fun while playing, hence learning the lesson easily. In a study conducted by Jääskä & Aaltonen (2022), the respondents mentioned that most of the students get inspired when teaching methods are enriched by adding games.

Table 3.1
Problems Met by the Teachers in Using Games

Problems Met	Freq.	
1. The learners are not staying on task.	7	5.5
2. The learners are not putting effort into learning during games.	2	8
3. Some of the learners don’t play the games as intended.	3	7
4. Some of the learners are interrupting/disrupting small groups while playing the games.	11	2.5
5. The learners do not take care of the materials used in playing games.	11	2.5
6. Limited budget of the school to buy engaging games for the classroom.	12	1
7. Designing and developing kindergarten games can be time-consuming, costly, and complex.	10	4
8. Not always aligned to teaching or learning goals	1	9
9. Difficult to find suitable games in every competency.	7	5.5

4. Proposed Kindergarten Self-Prepared Games to Further Improve the Pupils' Competencies.

Based on the findings of this study, self-prepared games to further improve the pupils' competencies were proposed. The games were aligned with the most essential learning competencies for kindergarten and the objectives of this study. Games according to Varaksina & Dyshuk (2023) proved to be a great aid to kids and adults that will help them develop their interpersonal skills, teach empathy, and offer a means for connecting. Likewise, Miles (2022) reiterated that educational games are an effective way to help kindergarten learners build a wide range of skills. Through games, the learners learn to work together and build respect for one another. They also learn to take their turns and listen carefully to the instruction of the game.

The self-prepared games proposed by the study were composed of manipulative, mastery, numeracy, and mental games. Included in these games are the learning competencies, objective, materials, number of players, and the mechanics. The cited games will help the learners strengthen their memory and use their minds to think critically while playing. This is because they need to observe and analyze the situations to win the games. It is hoped that the games prepared by the researcher be implemented in the district.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

- 1.1 Majority of the kindergarten learners are in the prescribed age, male, with few siblings in the first and second order of birth, with mothers who are younger than their fathers, and as housewives and fathers engaged in farming.
- 1.2 The kindergarten teachers are in their middle adulthood, female, married, Teacher III position classification, with units in the Master's degree, few years in service and have attended seminars and workshops on kindergarten.
2. The kindergarten teachers used different kinds of educational games such as manipulative, mastery, mental and numeracy in their teaching.
3. There are several problems met by the teachers in using different kinds of games
4. The researcher prepared sample kindergartens games to augment the existing games used by the Teachers.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the foregoing conclusions, this study recommended that.

1. Other kindergarten teachers should be given a chance to attend the Regional, National and International Trainings to further enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching using the games and other innovative teaching strategies on kindergarten.
2. There is a need to introduce new kindergarten games especially in reading and mathematics.
3. The following studies are recommended for further research
 - a) Performance of kindergarten pupils taught using educational games: An Analysis.

- b) (b) Factors that Affect the Use of Games in Teaching Kindergarten Learners in the other Divisions of Region V.

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