



## PLAY-BASED PROJECTS OF KINDERGARTEN PUPILS TOWARDS THEIR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

<sup>1</sup>JULIUS P. REYES, <sup>2</sup>FAUSTINO I. DE CHAVEZ

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2426-3599>

<sup>1</sup>julius.reyes001@deped.gov.ph, <sup>2</sup>teenodechaves379@gmail.com

<sup>1</sup>Taysan Elementary School Taysan, San Jose, Batangas, Philippines  
District of San Jose, Division of Batangas Province  
<sup>1,2</sup> Batangas State University  
Rizal Avenue, Batangas City, Batangas, Philippines

### ABSTRACT

*The Department of Education strengthens the inclusion of kindergarten in the curriculum since it provides positive experiences that will nurture and ascertain school readiness. Kindergarten pupils at this stage should be immersed with different activities, like games and plays to naturally gain the abilities or skills appropriate for their wholesome development, these activities literates and make them ready for school. This study sought to assess the play-based projects of children towards their holistic development in the District of San Jose, Division of Batangas. Specifically, this looked into the profile of the teacher-respondents and also considered the extent by which teachers used the play-based activities. It also dealt on the extent that play-based activities contributed holistically to development of kindergarten pupils. This study used the descriptive method of study with a researcher-made questionnaire as the main data gathering instrument. Interview was conducted to complement gathered responses. Researcher used frequency, percentage, rank, and weighted mean as statistical tools for data analysis. Twenty-seven kindergarten teachers from different public elementary schools served as the respondents of the study. Findings showed that most of the kindergarten teachers were female, middle-aged, elementary education graduates with pre-school as major. They were relatively new in the profession and had limited attendance to seminars and trainings on kindergarten teaching. Results also revealed play-based activities developed pupils' psychomotor and cognitive skills to some extent while affective development was to a moderate extent. Play-based activities were assessed to contribute moderately to holistic development of pupils, thus signifying that more activities were needed to develop and improve learning of kindergarten pupils. The researcher designed holistic development projects highlighting play-based activities for kindergarten pupils for skills development. It was recommended that a similar study be conducted in other schools on how they managed the play-based activities considering other factors that may affect the kindergarten pupils' holistic development.*

*Keywords: Kindergarten pupils, Kindergarten teachers, holistic development, play-based project*

### INTRODUCTION

Basic education in the elementary level is based on the idea of learning all over life and instituted on UNESCO's four pillars of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century known as the learning to know, the

learning to do, the learning to be and the learning to live together. It provides the school, spearheaded by an empowered school head and educators, the focal point, the base and common denominator of formal education. Greater autonomy and flexibility in curriculum instruction and design are given to every school with pupils as the primary focus, while the curriculum should be



the product of involving all stakeholders since they play a major role in order to improve and cultivate in the education process.

In 2011, the Department of Education (DepEd) distributed copies known as the Kindergarten Education Act through Republic Act No. 10157 to make it enforced and required nationwide. This act emphasized the developmental domains in kindergarten which are expected to be attained. These include physical, socio-emotional, character and values development, and cognitive and aesthetic development, which use multiple intelligences. In addition, with this, all children who are five years old are provided with equal opportunities to experience education that is meant to offer wholesome development and values formation so they are prepared for schooling.

Holecko (2020) emphasized the developing stability and balancing skills for kindergarten pupils are essential. These skills are kinds of motor skills including balancing where children are developed to sustain different body positions by modifying them, without dropping. In here, they use muscle strong point and body consciousness for them to achieve balance and hold it while moving around, or even staying still. The stability skills are very essential and suitable for various physical activities that give a chance for them to master their muscle strength and coordination.

According to Erden (2010), curriculum change alone is not sufficient for delivering quality education rather there must be good implementers of those established curriculum. Teachers and the school head who conduct and execute all the academic information into reliable classroom setting whenever there is an application of innovative curriculum should be able to use the curriculum productively.

On the other hand, Young (2014) cited that the classroom environment and classroom setting are teaching resources that need to emphasize. Classroom environments are extremely important for pupils and for teachers. Transforming a school environment especially the classroom, must be conducive to learning. Stressing the availability of physical space, getting the pupils actively participate in developing a mutual environment and maintaining a positive classroom climate and

culture are very essential for kindergarten pupils because these shape productive pupils to become more effective individuals.

Rogers et al. (2009) cited that parental involvement played significant roles in the progress of learning of children and its importance for pupils' development, which gives opportunities for them to be successful individuals. They also added that the collaborative efforts of parental involvement for their children's personal characteristics bring achievements.

As experienced by the researcher and other teachers, difficulties are encountered in terms of preparing the activities. Though there is a curriculum guide, still teachers are challenged in its application. Problems like lack of materials, lack of training among kindergarten teachers, and lessons from the curriculum are not so familiar to teachers, and the choice of teaching methods and techniques to be utilized. Since in this level of schooling, activities appropriate for kindergarten pupils should be connected in the teaching learning process. Play-based activities may be one of the major springboards for children to learn. In spite of this, teachers fail to realize their importance and value to school children. Being a kindergarten teacher, the researcher wants to determine the extent of use of play-based activities in kindergarten classes with the end view of proposing holistic development projects for kindergarten pupils.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to assess the play-based activities of children as the basis for proposing holistic development projects. Specifically, this sought to answer the following objectives: to what extent do teachers manifest the use of play-based activities relative to holistic development; to what extent the play-based activities contribute to the holistic development of children; to determine the constraints met by teachers in conducting play-based learning activities; and to propose play-based projects towards holistic development of kindergarten pupils.



**METHODOLOGY**

This study applied the descriptive research design to find out and determine the extent of activities about play-based activities for kindergarten pupils. The instrument used in gathering data was a questionnaire prepared by the researcher to collect relevant and first-hand information from key informants. With the permission approved by all school heads and District Supervisor, the questionnaires distributed were retrieved based on the agreement of the researcher and the respondents concerned. The subjects of the study were 27 kindergarten teachers from 16 various public elementary schools in San Jose District in the Division of Batangas Province. They comprised all the teacher’s teaching kindergarten. Therefore, no sampling technique was used. To consider the gathered responses, this study used descriptive statistical tools such as frequency and percentage, ranking and weighted mean.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**1. Extent of Manifestation of Children’s Use of Play-Based Learning Activities**

Play-based learning tasks used in the kindergarten level refer to the use of teaching strategies/ techniques, or actions done by the pupils in the different domains or development. These activities were important because children engage actively with others in a continuous play and give responsibilities in achieving goals towards holistic development.

**1.1 Cognitive development.** Cognitive development refers to how learners think, discover and figure things out. This is the growth of information, abilities, problem solving and outlooks, which support learners to think about and understand the world around them. Furthermore, it is said that brain development is part of cognitive development. Table 1 presents the activities of the kindergarten pupils used by the teacher-respondents from kindergarten in terms of cognitive development.

It can be noted that teachers used activities of organizing things according to size manifested to a moderate extent and had a weighted mean of 2.78. This activity was done by teachers to make kindergarten pupils figure out concepts, and relationships, and become interested in symbols. Nowadays, one way for teachers to engage pupils’ thinking skills is through observation that promotes aspects of cognition. However, this activity was done to a moderate extent only possibly because the pupils already had the skill of arranging from biggest to smallest or vice-versa.

**Table 1**  
*Play- Based Learning Activities in Terms of Cognitive Development*

Items	WM	VI
1. Organizing things according to size	2.78	ME
2. Naming primary colors	2.63	ME
3. Exhibiting imaginary play	2.59	ME
4. Naming at least 3 animals, 3 colors, or 3 vegetables when asked	2.59	ME
5. Matching upper- and lower-case letters	2.52	ME
6. Watching at direction of falling object	2.48	SE
7. Classifying things based on form or appearance	2.48	SE
8. Recognizing the general time at which daily happenings occur (e.g he might say, "I eat breakfast at 7 o'clock in the morning")	2.41	SE
9. Sticking with a task or activity until it's complete	2.33	SE
10. Using the senses to look into surroundings	2.26	SE
11. Demonstrating an understanding of opposites by completing a statement	2.22	SE
12. Imitating behavior just seen a few minutes earlier	2.04	SE
13. Identifying silly or wrong with pictures	1.85	SE
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.40</b>	<b>SE</b>

Using the senses to look into surroundings, demonstrating an understanding of opposites by completing a statement, imitating behavior just seen few minutes earlier, and identifying silly or wrong with pictures acquired weighted means of 1.85- 2.26, indicating used to some extent.



It can be gleaned that most of the items on teacher-respondents on extent of use of play-based learning activities in terms of cognitive development were assessed as manifested to some extent and had a composite mean of 2.40. This suggests that teachers should prepare different cognitive skills so that children benefit from activities that promote their active learning. In addition, results show that play in cognitive development of children is essential. The aforementioned play-based activities need to be performed to improve and enhance cognitive development of children.

**1.1 Psychomotor development.** This contains skills that characterize activities which were primarily movement-oriented. In kindergarten teaching, it emphasized children placed on movement component such in play as means of socialization that require performance as an integration of related familiarity and attitudes. This is also highlighting the coordination of different motor skills wherein the kindergarten pupils continue to learn and grow.

**Table 2**  
*Play- Based Learning Activities in terms of Psychomotor Development*

Items	WM	VI
1. Holding crayon with all the fingers of his hand making a fist (I.e., palmar grasp	2.63	ME
2. Walking down stairs, 2 feet on each step, with one hand hold	2.59	ME
3. Jumping and turning	2.56	ME
4. Putting small objects in/out of containers	2.56	ME
5. Climbing on chair and elevated piece of furniture like a chair without asking help	2.52	ME
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.47</b>	<b>SE</b>

Data from the table show that the activity holding crayon with all the fingers of the pupils' hand making a fist was done to a moderate extent with 2.63 weighted mean. This implies that pupils' fine motor skills to do things with the small muscles in their hands were on track. These skills, along with hand and arm strength and hand-eye

coordination, develop the psychomotor aspect of each child. Walking down stairs, two-feet on each step with one hand was done to a moderate extent and had a weighted mean of 2.59. Gross motor skills are the abilities needed to regulate the large muscles and build up strength of the body by walking, climbing, jumping and skipping of children. Kindergarten pupils must need a lot of time to practice the different movements that is how they learn and grow.

Meanwhile, putting small objects in/out of containers, and moving body part as directed were assessed as manifested to a moderate extent and had same weighted value of 2.56. This supports the idea of Holecko which stated that to enhance and develop the skills essential to support whole body gross, motor skills, help the child to achieve balance and coordination as well as strength and endurance, attention and alertness, and children must be able to sustain many body positions by adjusting them, without falling.

Making pupils climb on chair and elevated piece of furniture like a chair without asking help and walking along and jumping over a low object such as line, string or balance beam had a weighted mean of 2.52 and done to a moderate extent. Kindergarten services are ideally placed to foster the development of good physical activity habits of young learners early in life and to encourage them to engage in regular physical activity with play-based. This supports the idea in the K-12 Curriculum Guide of 2012 of Department of Education which stated that the benchmark of kindergarten pupils is the child have enough stamina to involve and participate in day-to-day activities and shows coordination of body actions.

From the results, it can be deduced that physical activity throughout the school day most especially to the kindergarten children, is necessary to energize themselves and to be able to maintain focus on their play learning. The involvement of movement of children, whether it is small or big group positively affects their cognitive and physical developments.

It can be gleaned that most of the items on teacher-respondents on the extent of use of play-based learning activities in terms of psychomotor development were assessed as





manifested to some extent and had a composite mean of 2.40. This means that there were many activities needed to improve and enhance for kindergarten pupils' need to be energetic to encourage their healthy growth. Children who emphasize a healthy living lifestyle at their young age level will bring them benefits for the rest of their lives.

**1.3 Affective development.** Affective development concerns the emergence of the emotional dimensions of children that relates from their experiences, recognition and expression a range of emotions while they demonstrate and amply respond to emotional cues in among children as part of their socialization and interaction. Children who possess affective development have the ability to recognize and appreciate other's feelings and to use the language of emotions and expressions. Table 3 shows the affective development of the kindergarten pupils according to the teacher-respondents from kindergarten.

Laughing or squealing aloud in play was considered to a moderate extent, as reflected in the weighted mean of 2.85. Laughing of kindergarten pupils indicates that there were corresponding sounds and movements in their bodies when they experience happiness. They have fun and do different ways so that other children join in.

**Table 3**  
*Play- Based Learning Activities in Terms of Affective Development*

Items	WM	VI
1. Laughing or squealing aloud in play	2.85	ME
2. Playing systematized group games equally	2.78	ME
3. Showing about different emotions he experiences	2.63	ME
4. Using cultural gestures of greeting without much prompting (e.g., mano, bless, kiss, etc.)	2.48	SE
5. Demonstrating respect for elders using terms like "po" and "opo"	2.44	SE
6. Recognizing and respecting similarities and differences in people, language, culture	2.33	SE
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.48</b>	<b>SE</b>

Showing about different emotional experience was assessed to a moderate extent and had a weighted mean of 2.63. Teachers share and teach children to be familiar with when they have a specific emotion. The first step in coping with a feeling was to identify it, and teachers will help their kindergarten pupils to recognize and identify emotions by discussing them when it happens. Learning to understand with classmates' feeling and respond appropriately to another is an essential skill for building harmonious relationships in the classroom.

Using cultural movements and gestures of greeting was done to some extent, as reflected in the weighted mean of 2.48. In Filipino culture, the practices of using body language and hand gestures are very common as part of the day-to-day communication. Teachers teaching in kindergarten cultivate it in order for children to familiarize with these common gestures because it fosters respect for the elders and this can be preserved for the next generations.

Based on the findings, the kindergarten teachers assessed that the play-based learning activities in terms of affective development had a weighted mean of 2.48 and manifested to some extent. From this, it can be inferred that teachers should give activities that will engage in and support kindergarten pupils' understanding of emotional and social interactions. Stimulating the affective dimension of learning to use play-based activities is vital for children's education. Affective learning helps children to draw meaning out of life experiences.

**2. Contribution of Play- Based Activities to the Holistic Development of Kindergarten Pupils**

Play is one of the main factors in which kindergarten pupils learn socialization and develop their skills holistically. It gives a chance to establish and build self-confidence by providing kindergarten pupils a sense of their abilities and create a sense of goodness about themselves. This will be considered an integral part of children's early years' foundation stage and embrace their learning experiences. Kindergarten pupils can enhance, improve, and develop skills using play-based



activities. Aside from that, it can also increase kindergarten pupils' emotional, language, and social skills. Table 4 explains the contribution of play-based learning activities of the pupils according to the respondents.

**Table 4**  
*Contribution of Play- Based Activities to the Holistic Development of Kindergarten Pupils*

Items	WM	VI
1. Acquaint other playmates to learn how to create and maintain the value of friendship	3.07	ME
2. Encourage to enhance the different multiple intelligences among pupils	2.63	ME
3. Engage actively with one another in a sustained play, and share responsibilities to attain goals	2.63	ME
4. Contribute in the sense that a child feels in control of their world, which leads them to mastery and leadership	2.29	SE
5. `Diverse learning activities that may be enhanced with technologies for learning areas	2.22	SE
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>ME</b>

Play- based activities were assessed to enhance the different multiple intelligences among pupils to a moderate extent, as reflected by the weighted mean of 2.63. As such, pupils were asked to sing, draw, act, and do other activities which showcase their talents. Multiple intelligences have strong implications for children's learning and development. This result is aligned to Republic Act No. 10157 known as Universal Kindergarten Act, which emphasized the developmental domains in kindergarten which are expected to be attained. These include physical, socio-emotional, character and values development, and cognitive and aesthetic development which use multiple intelligences.

Based on the findings, the composite mean in the assessment of kindergarten teachers as regard the contribution of play-based activities towards holistic development was 2.59 indicating these were to a moderate extent. This signifies that there are more activities that teachers need to enhance and promote to strengthen the benefits that should be derived from play-based activities so that the goal of holistic development of the child,

the physical, emotional, and cognitive developments may be realized.

### 3. Constraints Met by Kindergarten Teachers relative to Play- based Learning Activities

In Kindergarten, abilities and skills among pupils are very significant because they highlight the innate talents, involvement of parents in their continual growth for meaningful educational experiences. It is true that teaching some children who can read and write while others cannot is one of the problems in this level of development. Emotional skills of children will also vary, so kindergarten teachers may have to understand some children throwing tantrums in class and hitting other children. Table 5 shows the constraints met by teachers relative to play-based learning activities.

It can be noted that respondents' assessment of some activities in teaching kindergarten was not appropriate for their development levels. This had a weighted mean of 3.04 and met to a moderate extent. Age-appropriate activity means that the activities for kindergarten pupils suited to their ages, who can learn best through concrete activities that they can direct. Developmental needs mean the needs of a child at a given stage of development.

**Table 5**  
*Constraints Met by Kindergarten Teachers relative to Play- Based Learning Activities*

Items	WM	VI
1. Some activities in teaching kindergarten are not appropriate for their development levels	3.04	ME
2. Has difficulty in translating the standard set by National Kindergarten Curriculum Guide	2.89	ME
3. Long span of time for preparing pupils for class, and the introduction of appropriate activities	2.89	ME
4. Lack of understanding of parents toward the pupils' activity	2.52	ME
5. Poor classroom environment setting	1.85	SE
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.53</b>	<b>ME</b>



Difficulty in translating the standard set by kindergarten curriculum acquired a weighted mean of 2.89 and met to a moderate extent. Good curriculum is considered as one of the foundations of educational system. It assists the teachers to provide the quality education to learners. As viewed by Erden, curriculum change alone is not sufficient for delivering quality education rather there must be good implementers of those established curriculum. Teachers and the school head are the ones who conduct and execute all the academic information into reliable classroom setting.

Lack of parents' follow up on the activities set in school and lack of understanding of parents toward the pupils' activity obtained 2.52 and met as moderate extent. Having parental support can be paralyzing when parents are not following through with their responsibilities at home. Parents are the most powerful link because they are there throughout the child's life while the presence of teachers is not constant. Learning does not end in the classroom, yet most parents are at a loss when it comes to supporting their children's intellectual development. This statement supports the work of Rogers et al. stating that the parental involvement is important for the development of the pupils which, later on, will open doors for opportunities for them to be successful individuals.

On the other hand, it can be gleaned from the table that poor classroom environment setting was met to some extent and garnered the lowest weighted mean among constraints met by kindergarten teachers relative to play-based learning activities. From this result, it can perhaps be assumed that kindergarten rooms were pleasant and conducive to kindergarten learning. This statement supports the idea of Young, stating that building a positive and conducive classroom setting is very essential for kindergarten pupils. It produces more productive pupils to become more effective individuals.

To sum up, kindergarten teachers assessed the constraints that they met relative to the play-based activities were to a moderate extent, as shown by the composite mean of 2.53. This shows that although there were many concerns among kindergarten teachers which they experienced in dealing and improving learning, these were open

for creating a positive learning environment which is essential for success in the classroom improvement.

#### 4. Holistic Development Projects Highlighting Play-based Activities

Holistic development projects were the output of this study. These activities were designed to improve and enhance pupils' abilities and seek to address the physical, emotional, relational, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of children to develop holistically.

### CONCLUSIONS

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

1. Kindergarten teachers need to improve and enhance their play-based activities for pupils.
2. Play-based activities can contribute to the pupils' holistic development to a moderate extent.
3. There are some constraints in conducting play-based activities.
4. The set of activities designed by the researcher to manage play-based learning activities of kindergarten pupils may enrich and develop the pupils' holistic development skills and other competencies related to learning.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings and conclusions of the research, the following recommendations are recommended:

1. That set of activities proposed by the researcher may be considered by the kindergarten teachers for the holistic development of pupils.
2. Teachers may be encouraged to attend seminars to acquire new skills and innovation in teaching kindergarten pupils that may improve their creative qualities.
3. That a similar study may be conducted using other respondents from different



districts in the Division of Batangas to determine the use of play-based learning activities, and their impact to pupils' learning.

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**AUTHORS' PROFILE**



**Julius P. Reyes**, is a former Kindergarten teacher from Taysan Elementary School, San Jose District, Division of Batangas Province. His enthusiasm and enjoyment to teach in the kindergarten level have been recognized as he awarded as first place in story telling in Filipino and second place in ballroom dancing categories as a coach in the 2014 Kindergarten Festival of Talents- District Level.



**Faustino I. de Chavez, Ed. D.**, received degrees at the Batangas State University including Bachelor of Science in Industrial Education in 1976, Master of Arts in Industrial Education in 1985 and Doctor of Education in 2002. His teaching experienced started from 1976-78 as Elementary School Teacher, Secondary School Teacher from 1978-80, College Professor in College Teacher Education in 1980-2013 and Guest Lecturer in Graduate School from 2013 to present.

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