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Kindergarten Education: Compliance, Effectiveness and Practices

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Abstract

Kindergarten Education is a critical component of early childhood education, where children learn essential skills and behaviors that prepare them for lifelong learning. The study assessed the compliance, effectiveness, and practices of schools in implementing Kindergarten Education, focusing on how well educational standards are met and the impact of these practices on the overall learning experience for young children. This employed a mixed method approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods. This involved 102 Kindergarten teachers and 60 school administrators from the Division of Roxas City. Data were collected through a researcher-made questionnaire, checklist and interviews with the teachers and administrators. Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient were the statistical tools used to analyze and interpret the gathered data. The findings revealed that the extent of compliance in Kindergarten Education across curriculum, instruction, assessment, learning spaces, and teacher qualifications was very high. The curriculum received the highest mean. The lowest mean was in teacher qualification. Furthermore, it confirmed a very high compliance level across all key areas, as evaluated by teachers. The curriculum had the highest mean, followed by instruction, then assessment. The extent of effectiveness of Kindergarten Education was classified as very high. The standard deviations for administrators and teachers indicated a consensus on Kindergarten Education's effectiveness. The extent of practices in implementing Kindergarten Education for both school administrators and teachers was very high. The standard deviations for administrators and teachers inferred a strong consensus on the effectiveness of these practices. There were relationships among compliance, effectiveness, and practices, showing statistically significant correlations. The strongest correlation existed between effectiveness and compliance. There was a moderate correlation between effectiveness and practices. The relationship between practices and compliance showed the importance of robust educational practices in meeting regulatory standards. Overall, the study highlighted the successful implementation of Kindergarten Education in Roxas City, while identifying areas for improvement, such as teacher professional development and mentoring initiatives.

Keywords: Compliance, Effectiveness, Kindergarten education, Curriculum, Assessment, and Learning spaces.

1. Introduction

Kindergarten Education is a critical component of early childhood education, where children learn essential skills and behaviors that prepare them for

lifelong learning. It is an opportunity for children to explore their interests, develop their social and emotional skills, and engage in play-based learning (Rezpour, 2023; Wati *et al.*, 2024). According to

Harini *et al.* (2023), compliance in kindergarten education refers to following curriculum standards, teacher credentials, classroom environment criteria, and child development benchmarks.

Many educational policies mandate specific teaching methodologies, student-teacher ratios, and assessment protocols to ensure that children receive high-quality education (Jenkins & Walker, 2021). Non-compliance with these regulations may lead to inadequate learning experiences, which can negatively impact children's preparedness for higher levels of education. Ensuring compliance helps maintain uniformity in the quality of education provided to young learners and mitigates disparities among schools in different socioeconomic contexts (Janius & Amdan, 2024). Compliance, according to Wati *et al.* (2024), refers to the extent to which schools adhere to policies, guidelines, and legal mandates set by educational authorities for Kindergarten Education. Furthermore, Yüceliyigit and Toker, (2021) opined that compliance also includes government monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure continuous improvement in Kindergarten Education implementation.

Correspondingly, effectiveness in Kindergarten Education is assessed through various indicators such as student learning outcomes, classroom engagement, and teacher performance (Daunic *et al.*, 2021). Schools that implement structured yet flexible learning experiences tend to produce better cognitive and socio-emotional development among young learners (Adewusi *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, effective Kindergarten programs are those that incorporate play-based learning, individualized instruction, and culturally responsive teaching strategies, which enhance children's learning experiences (Yang *et al.*, 2022). Effectiveness pertains to the degree to which these implementations achieve the intended learning outcomes, including cognitive, social, and emotional development (Korosidou *et al.*, 2021). Practices encompass the strategies, methodologies, and approaches employed by educators to facilitate meaningful learning experiences for young children (Gibbs, 2021).

Under the terms of the Kindergarten Education Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10157) and the K-12 law

(Republic Act No. 10533) on the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013," Kindergarten Education offers all 5-year-old Filipino children equal access to mandatory and compulsory Kindergarten Education that effectively stimulates their physical, social, cognitive, and emotional skills and helps them form their values in order to adequately prepare them for Grade 1. "Kindergarten Education shall be understood in the Act to mean 1 year of preparatory education for children at least 5 years old as a prerequisite for Grade 1," according to Section 3c of Republic Act 10157 of 2012, which is incorporated in item III 6A of DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2016: DepEd Order No. 20 item #2 and the Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten Education, s. 2018. Kindergarten education seeks to use developmentally and culturally appropriate techniques to make education responsive to the needs, conditions, and diversity of students, schools, and communities.

But as times change, creative methods of teaching kindergarten that take into account the latest developments and industry best practices are required. This study looked at some of the newest developments and best practices in kindergarten education, such as innovative curricula, teaching methods, and technological advancements. The basis for children's future intellectual, social, and emotional success is laid throughout kindergarten education. High-quality kindergarten education depends on creative thinking, best practices, continual professional development, and assistance for educators and legislators. Kindergarten-aged children can benefit from a variety of approaches and practices, including play-based learning, project-based learning, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics education, family engagement, a child-centered approach, social-emotional learning, technology, integrated curriculum, culturally responsive education, assessment and evaluation, outdoor learning, multilingual education, and community-based learning.

The researcher conducted this study to examine how well schools comply with Kindergarten Education standards, how effective their implementation is in achieving learning outcomes, and what practices are most beneficial in ensuring young learners' holistic development. Given the growing emphasis on early

childhood education as a crucial stage for lifetime education, evaluating whether schools meet the required educational standards, employ effective teaching strategies, and adapt best practices to optimize learning experiences is necessary. This identified gaps in compliance, evaluate the effective-ness of current Kindergarten programs, and document best practices that can be replicated or improved in various educational settings (Banu *et al.*, 2025).

Kindergarten Education presents both opportunities and problems, but resolving these issues can guarantee that pupils have access to high-quality educational programs that set them up for success in life as well as in school. The researcher believed that assessing the implementation of Kindergarten Education among schools in both public and private is essential for developing appropriate interventions and produce technical plans that would help ensure the sustainability of managing schools. The practices would serve as basis for benchmarking activities that would be adapted by other schools in the Division of Roxas City. The study assessed the Kindergarten Education in Roxas City in terms of compliance, effectiveness, and practices. It specifically examined the extent of compliance in areas such as curriculum, instruction, assessment, learning space, environment, and teacher qualifications, as evaluated by school administrators and teachers. It also explored the effectiveness of Kindergarten Education and the implementation of policies and practices. This further investigated the relationships among compliance, effectiveness, and practices.

2. Methodology

This study utilized mixed method which employed explanatory sequential design. This involved the taking of the primary data from the responses of the research participants using the researcher-made questionnaire. To describe the relationships among the levels of compliance, effectiveness, and practices of schools in Kindergarten Education implementation in Roxas City as perceived by school administrators and teachers, a correlational research design was used. However, to obtain the participants' perception of the phenomena, an in-depth interview with semi-structured open-ended questions was used.

The study was conducted in the Division of Roxas City, comprising 57 elementary schools strategically located in the entire city and barangays in Roxas City, Capiz. Forty (40) of which were public elementary schools and 17 were private elementary schools that offer Kindergarten Education.

The participants were selected through purposive sampling, ensuring the data collected reflected the insights of individuals directly responsible for implementing Kindergarten Education policies, instructional strategies, and administrative practices. The inclusion of schools in both private and public provided a comprehensive perspective on the level of compliance, effectiveness, and practices in the implementation of the Kindergarten Education program.

Statistical tools such as frequency, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's *r* were employed for quantitative analysis, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and insights.

3. Results and Discussion

The demographic profile of school administrators in Roxas City showed a majority of female participants and a significant portion aged 46 years and above. Most administrators were married and have attained at least a Master's degree and having Doctoral units. A considerable number have over 21 years of service. Seminar attendance was highest at the division and school levels. Likewise, the Kindergarten teachers' profile highlighted a predominantly female workforce with most teachers aged 36-45 years old. The majority was married and holds at least a Bachelor's degree with master's units. A significant number have less than 10 years of teaching experience. Most teachers have attended division- and school-level seminars. While professional development was evident, broader access to national-level training and advanced education is needed to enhance the implementation of Kindergarten Education.

The extent of compliance in Kindergarten Education across curriculum, instruction, assessment, learning spaces, and teacher qualifications was very high. The curriculum received the highest mean. The lowest

mean was in teacher qualification. Furthermore, it confirmed a very high compliance level across all key areas, as evaluated by teachers. The curriculum had the highest mean, followed by instruction, then assessment. The extent of the effectiveness of Kindergarten Education was classified as very high. The standard deviations for administrators and teachers indicated a consensus on Kindergarten Education's effectiveness.

The result implies that the highest compliance observed in the curriculum category reflects the strong adherence to the standards set by Republic Act No. 10157 and Republic Act No. 10533, highlighting the prioritization of up-to-date and effective curricula to enhance foundational learning outcomes. This demonstrates the commitment of educational institutions and policymakers to align with legislative mandates, ensuring that curricular content meets developmental and educational benchmarks for young learners. However, the slightly lower mean in teacher's educational qualification, while still within the "very high" compliance range, points to an area that could benefit from targeted interventions. The variability in qualifications suggests potential gaps in access to professional development and training programs. Addressing these disparities could further strengthen the competency and preparedness of Kindergarten teachers, thereby enhancing the overall quality of instruction. Moreover, this highlights the need for equitable resource allocation and support systems that enable all educators to meet or exceed the required qualifications, fostering a more consistent and robust early education workforce.

The result conformed to that of Alvarado and Lopez, (2020) that teacher qualification had a critical role in early childhood education outcomes. Furthermore, creating equitable access to training and resources is essential to address disparities among regions. Similarly, Zakaria *et al.* (2023) emphasized that a well-designed curriculum, supported by effective teacher training and assessment practices, promotes holistic child development. The findings were consistent with these observations, reflecting the Philippine government's commitment to providing high quality Kindergarten Education. However, de-

spite these achievements, challenges remain in sustaining compliance. As noted by Shahli *et al.* (2021), variability in teacher preparedness can lead to inconsistencies in instructional quality, particularly in regions with limited access to training. To address this, investment in teacher professional development, such as the MATATAG training mentioned by Participant 5, is crucial. These initiatives not only improve compliance extents but also enhance teacher confidence and efficacy, as supported by the findings of Stankovic-Ramirez and Vittrup, (2023).

The result also showed that schools are successfully aligning instructional materials and pedagogical practices with curriculum standards, as supported by Montiel *et al.* (2021), who stressed that effective curriculum alignment enhances learner outcomes and teacher satisfaction. This finding was also in consistent with that of Cefai *et al.* (2021) that the effectiveness of instruction in Kindergarten heavily relies on teacher flexibility, engagement, and ability to foster a nurturing environment. Teachers' adaptability in employing diverse teaching strategies to cater children's unique needs and learning styles under-scores this high rating. This finding also aligned with the work of Krishnan, (2021) who emphasized that proper assessment tools and training are critical for accurately identifying learners' strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers' active involvement in assessment processes further reinforces compliance with high standards.

This result implies a strong overall commitment to implementing Kindergarten Education in line with national policies and curriculum standards. However, the relatively lower ratings and higher variability in teachers' educational qualifications suggested areas for further improvement, such as expanding access to advanced training and specialization programs for educators.

The result agreed to Cipollone *et al.* (2022) who argued that a well-structured curriculum aligned with national standards ensures consistency in the delivery of key competencies, enabling children to develop foundational skills necessary for academic success. The study emphasized that adherence to such policies results in improved learning outcomes, particularly in

literacy and numeracy, which are essential components of kindergarten education. Mhlongo *et al.* (2023) found that schools implementing curriculum standards consistently reported higher extents of teacher satisfaction and learner achievement. Archer, (2022) noted that the K-12 curriculum's emphasis on developmental appropriateness and active learning strategies has significantly improved children's cognitive and social skills.

The extent of effectiveness of Kindergarten Education was very high, indicating that both school administrators and teachers viewed Kindergarten Education as highly effective. The result implies a robust support for Kindergarten program, which, as highlighted by participants, is essential for the comprehensive development of young learners. This correlated with what Montrose, (2024) asserted that the high effectiveness scores, as these approaches were recognized as essential in early childhood education. Participants also shared that the effectiveness of the Kindergarten Education is based on the age appropriate methods, play-based methods. Through playing they can enjoy and at the same time they are learning.

Furthermore, the role of Kindergarten in fostering children's abilities, talents, and skills aligned with the highlighted significance of a nurturing and stimulating environment. The incorporation of "play" and "differentiated instructions," as highlighted by participants aligned with existing finding of Okada and Gray, (2023) that these practices, the incorporation of play and differentiated instructions, supported diverse learning styles and developmental stages in early childhood. Participants also avowed that the Kindergarten is places where children develop their abilities, talents and skills for their age. Choosing the right Kindergarten is essential to ensure that young children develop a love for learning and feels comfortable in an academic environment.

The result aligned to what Alvarado and Lopez, (2020) argued that effective Kindergarten Education fosters cognitive growth alongside emotional and social development, enabling children to establish foundational literacy and numeracy skills essential for future academic success. Furthermore, participants' observation that attendance in Kindergarten Education

disclosed better proficiency in essential learning domains, which established a direct link between early education and subsequent academic success. The high mean scores in imply that both school administrators and teachers regarded Kindergarten Education as a fundamental component for achieving proficiency in core subjects such as reading, writing, and Mathematics.

The extent of practices in implementing Kindergarten Education for both school administrators and teachers was very high. The standard deviations for administrators and teachers inferred a strong consensus on the effectiveness of these practices. The result also reflected the positive attitudes and alignment towards best practices in early childhood education, which was supported by a variety of research on the topic. The high extent of agreement between school administrators and teachers was consistent with broader trends observed in the literature, where the early childhood education implementation of policies is seen as a collaborative effort requiring the active engagement of all stakeholders. In particular, the shared perception of effectiveness can be attributed to the role of well-established frameworks, such as the K-12 curriculum guidelines and the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) program, which have been widely recognized as essential for ensuring quality Kindergarten Education.

The result aligned with the result of Karra and Alrashdan, (2021) that the early childhood education principles emphasize the importance of nurturing the whole child. Similarly, Khan, (2024) opined that focusing on play-based learning and the development of essential social and emotional skills, teachers create an environment where children are encouraged to learn while developing a love for education. Research backs up this strategy, demonstrating that kindergarten classroom experiences are critical in determining how children develop socially, emotionally, and cognitively.

The result was consistent with the findings of Dike and Out, (2024) who argued that differentiated instruction allows educators to adapt their teaching strategies to support all learners, thereby fostering more inclusive and equitable educational environ-

ments. The emphasis on continuous assessment further supports this, as it enables teachers to monitor student progress and make necessary adjustments to their instruction.

Participants also stressed the significance of adhering to policies related to Kindergarten Education, such as enrollment requirements, age eligibility, and the effective use of curriculum guidelines. The implies the Kindergarten MATATAG curriculum guide is used, which provides clear standards and daily learning activities for teachers, ensures consistency and alignment with national education goals.

The result also supported Zakaria *et al.* (2023) who posited that the positive impact of Kindergarten attendance on future academic success indicates that children who participate in high quality pre-school programs are likely to achieve better academic performance and demonstrate enhanced social behaviors.

One example of how schools are adjusting to the requirements of varied learners is the implementation of the 8-week Kindergarten program for learners who missed the entire 10-month program. This ensures that all learners, regardless of where they come from, have access to high-quality early education. Hughes and Morrison, (2020) contended that in order to meet the requirements of children from a variety of backgrounds and guarantee fair educational opportunities for everyone, flexible learning alternatives in early childhood education are crucial.

Participants further described the implementation of K-12 curriculum guidelines and the mandatory attendance of Kindergarten for 5 year olds, and the use of regular teacher training through the Department of Education. These practices were consistent with the findings of Kvintova *et al.* (2022) who highlighted the significance of professional development for teachers in the early childhood education. Participants also mentioned the use of the "blocks of time" approach, which focuses on developing specific skills in each block of time throughout the school day.

The method mentioned allowed for a structured, yet flexible learning environment, where children are engaged in a variety of activities that foster their

cognitive, social, and emotional development. A research by Whittingham and Hoffman, (2020) supported this approach, suggesting that a well-organized schedule that provides time for both structured and unstructured play is essential for promoting optimal learning outcomes in young children. The blocks of time approach helped create a balanced curriculum that supports the development of foundational skills, such as literacy and numeracy, while also fostering creativity, social skills, and emotional regulation.

The positive perceptions of both groups imply a high extent of satisfaction with the effectiveness of these practices, and the minimal variation in responses suggested that the teachers and the school administrators are equally committed to the success of the Kindergarten education system. This alignment is essential for the effective implementation of educational policies, as it ensures that there is a shared vision and understanding of what constitutes high quality Kindergarten Education.

The result was supported by Margario *et al.* (2022) who stressed the significance of collaboration between the teachers and the school administrators in the early childhood education, as it fosters a cohesive approach to teaching and learning that benefits both educators and students. When the teachers and the school administrators are on the same page, they are better equipped to work together to create a supportive and nurturing environment for young learners. Additionally, the study of Tamblyn *et al.* (2023) also supported the result. They underscored the significance of a collaborative approach in the early childhood education, with findings suggesting that schools with strong administrator-teacher partnerships tend to show higher extents of quality in classroom instruction and child development outcomes. This collaboration fosters a shared vision of education, which is crucial for maintaining consistency in curriculum and policies implementation.

Moreover, the alignment of perceptions between the teachers and the school administrators regarding the effectiveness of Kindergarten programs suggested that both groups were well-versed in the pedagogical strategies and standards necessary for early childhood

education. This aligned with the finding of Bustos-Orosa, (2024) that when school administrators are actively involved in classroom-extent practices, they are better equipped to provide support and resources that are aligned with teachers' needs. This contributes to the overall success of the Kindergarten curriculum, as teachers feel empowered and supported in their instructional roles. The positive ratings reflect the effective partnership between school leadership and teachers, reinforcing the importance of a shared commitment to quality of the early childhood education.

There were relationships among compliance, effectiveness, and practices, showing statistically significant correlations. The strongest correlation existed between effectiveness and compliance. There was a moderate correlation between effectiveness and practices. The relationship between practices and compliance showed the importance of robust educational practices in meeting regulatory standards.

The findings also underlined the key role of the school administrators in shaping the quality of Kindergarten Education through their effectiveness and practices. These significant correlations imply that improving school administrators' effectiveness and the implementation of best practices can lead to higher extents of compliance with educational standards, ultimately enhancing the quality of early childhood education programs. School administrators' effectiveness in fostering compliance can be linked to their ability to integrate leadership frameworks and policies that prioritize student-centered approaches and equitable access to quality education.

4. Conclusion

The compliance of Kindergarten Education in Roxas City is at a very high level across curriculum, instruction, assessment, learning spaces, and teacher qualification. The strong adherence to the Kindergarten Education Act of 2012 and the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 is evident, with the curriculum receiving the highest rating. However, the slightly lower mean for teacher qualifications suggests the need for more professional development opportunities despite overall high compliance. The effectiveness of Kindergarten Education is also classified as very high.

The minimal difference in the ratings reflects a shared perception of strong educational outcomes. The consistency in standard deviations indicates agreement on the program's success in fostering learning and development among young learners. The implementation of Kindergarten Education practices is highly effective, with both the teachers and the school administrators strongly agreeing on its efficiency. The high mean scores and low standard deviations confirm a well-established and consistently applied set of practices, reinforcing the success of the early childhood education strategies. The strong correlation between effectiveness and compliance highlights the school leadership role in maintaining adherence to educational standards. The moderate correlation between effectiveness and practices suggests that well-implemented teaching strategies contribute to positive educational outcomes. The relationship between practices and compliance accentuates the significance of structured and well-executed educational approaches in ensuring regulatory compliance and overall program success.

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6. Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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