

Instructional Management Competence of Kindergarten Teachers

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Abstract — One hundred Kindergarten Teachers (100) randomly selected from the 6th Congressional District of DepEd Pangasinan Division II were respondents in this study during the SY 2024- 2025. The study determined the "extent of instructional management competence (IMC) of the Kindergarten Teachers. The researcher used the descriptive-correlational research method, with a questionnaire checklist, as a data-gathering instrument.

The findings include the following: Most respondent kindergarten teachers belong to the middle-age bracket, are females, have master's degrees, and have attended relevant in-service training at both division and district levels. Most of them are assigned to small-sized schools, obtained a performance rating equivalent to "outstanding," and have "very extensive" IMC ratings. The extent of IMC ratings of the respondents is not significant across the profile variable, except for the variable "age" and "relevant in-service training" in the areas of instruction, namely: "mastery of subject matter" and "teaching skills." Further, the extent of IMC of the Kindergarten Teachers is not correlated with their profile variables, except with the variables "age" and "relevant in-service training."

The conclusions are as follows: The respondents are mature in age, experienced, well-versed in the IMC, and performed outstandingly in their instruction. The profile variables considered in this study did not differentiate the extent of IMC of the respondents across the profile variables, except across the variables "age" and "relevant in-service training." Further, the extent of IMC of the Kindergarten Teachers are associated either "negatively weak" to negatively very weak" level with the variables, "age" and "relevant in-service trainings."

It is strongly recommended that a scholarship grant program be developed and implemented by DepEd to encourage deserving Kindergarten Teachers to enroll and finish their master's degree or doctor's degree, whichever applies. Further studies on IMC at the Kindergarten level will be conducted in accredited graduate institutions, using variables not considered in this study. Furthermore, studies on IMC of teachers in other grade levels will be conducted under the supervision of expert professors in graduate school and funded by the Local School Board.

Keywords — *Instructional Management Competence (IMC), Manifestation of Instructional Management, Kindergarten Teachers*

I. Introduction

Instructional Management Competence involves setting clear rules, expectations, and routines, which help students understand what is allowed and expected, creating a predictable and safe environment. Instructional management competence is not merely about maintaining order in the classroom. It is a multifaceted set of skills and attributes that directly impacts the quality of

teaching, the learning environment, and, ultimately, the success of kindergarten students. Investing in and supporting the development of IMC in kindergarten teachers is essential for creating effective and equitable early childhood education. (Gmpeluso. (2022, June 12).

Kindergarten instructional management entails more than simply controlling a group of young children. Creating a loving, disciplined, and stimulating atmosphere that promotes their development, nurtures a love of learning, and sets them up for future academic success is critical. Effective instructional management equips instructors with the foundation to properly supervise young students and foster a thriving kindergarten community (Richardson S. et al., (2023).

The evolving educational landscape of the 21st century further amplifies the importance of these competencies. The integration of technology, the demand for fostering higher-order thinking skills, and the need for adaptable and innovative teaching approaches require kindergarten teachers to continuously develop their skills beyond traditional methods (Suebsing et al., 2023). Challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, limited resources, and the need to cater to increasingly diverse learning needs underscore the complexities faced by kindergarten teachers today (Botea et al., 2025; IJMRA, n.d.). Therefore, understanding and enhancing the instructional management competence of kindergarten teachers is not merely about maintaining order but about creating dynamic, supportive, and developmentally appropriate learning environments that empower young children for lifelong success.

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the extent of instructional management competence of the kindergarten teachers in DepEd Pangasinan Division II, 6th Congressional District.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following problems:

1. What is the profile of the respondent kindergarten teachers across the following variables:

Teachers' Profile:

- a) age;
- b) sex;
- c) highest educational attainment;
- d) years of service as a kindergarten teacher;
- e) relevant in-service training;
- f) teacher's Rating (IPCRF);

School Profile:

- a) school size;
- b) degree of manifestation; and
- c) school accomplishments/achievements?

2. What is the extent of instructional management competence of the respondent kindergarten teachers in the following areas:

- a) Mastery of subject matter;
- b) Teaching skills;
- c) Classroom management;
- d) Learning outcomes evaluation skills;
- e) Healthy coping strategies- prioritization of activities, relaxation techniques, positive self-talk, and time management?

3. Are there significant mean differences in the extent of the respondent kindergarten teachers' instructional management competence along the key areas in instruction across the profile variables?

4. Are there significant relationships between the extent of the respondent kindergarten teachers' instructional management competence along the key areas in instruction and the profile variables?

5. What intervention plan could be developed and implemented to enhance the instructional management competence of kindergarten teachers?

Literature Review

Several studies, particularly in the Philippines, show that kindergarten teachers have a high level of competency in various domains, including content knowledge, pedagogy, learning environment, curriculum, and evaluation. However, they regularly identify considerable professional growth requirements.

This study, which included 54 kindergarten teachers from the Philippines, discovered that teachers generally have a high level of competency in domains such as content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment and variety of learners, curriculum and planning, and assessment and reporting. However, they expressed a significant need for professional development in topic understanding and pedagogy, as well as the learning environment and learner diversity. The survey also found that teachers with postgraduate qualifications scored much higher in some evaluation

literacy areas. This shows that, while teachers are competent, ongoing professional growth is essential. This study directly examines competencies critical to IMC and identifies areas where teachers require additional support, affecting their capacity to manage and teach effectively. (Gallego, P. L., and Caingcoy, M. E. (2021).

Instructional management is critical in kindergarten because it sets the foundation for a child's positive and successful educational experience. It covers instructors' tactics and processes to provide an orderly, engaging, and supportive learning environment suited to young learners' developmental requirements. Kindergarteners prefer routine and predictability. Effective instructional management establishes clear standards, conventions, and routines that help students feel comfortable and understand what is expected of them. This reduces anxiety and improves emotional well-being, which is crucial for learning (McGibbon, Z., 2025).

The research by Suebsing, Udomsan, and Bunphok (2023) from Thailand provides a focused and highly relevant framework for understanding the instructional management competencies required of Kindergarten Teachers in the 21st century. Their findings, particularly for early childhood educators in Roi Et Province, highlight a forward-thinking approach to preparing teachers for the demands of modern education. The Thai study by Suebsing, Udomsan, and Bunphok (2023) clearly shows what constitutes effective instructional management for 21st-century kindergarten teachers. It moves beyond traditional notions of classroom control to encompass a more dynamic and technologically integrated approach to education.

The Thai study by Suebsing, Udomsan, & Bunphok (2023) offers a comprehensive framework for 21st-century instructional management competencies in kindergarten teachers, emphasizing a commitment to holistic child development through active, engaging, and higher-order thinking-based learning, particularly via creativity, knowledge creation, and experience management. The research also highlights the crucial need for teacher adaptability, driven by the continuous integration of technology and innovation to meet evolving digital demands. Consequently, the framework redefines the kindergarten teacher's role from a mere knowledge dispenser to a facilitator of learning, a designer of rich experiences, and an innovator in pedagogical practice. Despite its Thai origin, the identified competencies possess significant global relevance. They serve as a valuable model for teacher training and professional development programs worldwide, including those in the Philippines, as they align with the universal skills required for educators in the contemporary educational landscape.

In the context of the Philippines, where the DepEd K to 12 curricula also emphasize 21st-century skills, the findings of this Thai study resonate strongly. They can serve as a guide for enhancing the instructional management competencies of Filipino kindergarten teachers.

II. Methodology

Research Design and Strategy

The researcher used the descriptive-correlational research method to determine kindergarten teachers' instructional management competence in the 6th Congressional District of Pangasinan. The ex post facto one-shot case study research design will be used. The ex post facto (after-the-fact) research design analyses how the dependent variables are associated with the independent variables. This design is considered a quasi-experimental study in which the respondents are not randomly assigned but are grouped based on specific characteristic features they share. The ex post facto research design focuses on how events/ actions that have already occurred can predict certain conditions, such as the extent of instructional competence of the respondent-MTs in this study. The measurement/ observation in this study is done in one setting; hence, the design is a one-shot case study design.

Population and Locale of the Study

The primary goal of this study was to determine the extent of instructional management competence of Kindergarten Teachers in the 6th Congressional District. One hundred (100) respondent kindergarten teachers with three (3) years of teaching experience were selected using a convenience sampling technique.

Data Gathering Tools

The Questionnaire-Checklist on “Instructional Management Competence of Kindergarten Teachers” has two parts.

Part I consists of items intended to gather data on the background information of the kindergarten teachers' profiles. This consists of the age, sex, highest educational attainment, years of service as a kindergarten teacher, relevant in-service training, and teacher rating (IPCRF). The school profile includes school size, degree of manifestation, and school accomplishments/achievements.

Part II consists of questions along the key areas: Mastery of the subject area, teaching skills, classroom management, learning outcomes evaluation skills, healthy coping strategies - prioritization of activities, relaxation techniques, positive self-talk, and time management.

The tool, Instructional Management Competence of Kindergarten Teachers, was critiqued by five experts to establish a well-made, valid, and reliable tool. Experts carefully evaluated, refined, and improved the questionnaire checklist. They carefully incorporated feedback and suggestions into the final draft. Once accepted, the questionnaire checklist was considered complete without further delay.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data gathering and collection were done to obtain a sense of accuracy. Formalities were ensured by sending letters to institution authorities for permission to conduct the study. Upon approval, letters were sent to the respondents, including informed consent, a brief copy of the research objectives, and a letter of request to participate. One hundred respondents from the 6th Congressional District of Pangasinan municipalities were given the questionnaire. The questionnaires were sent via email and Google Forms, depending on the availability of the respondents. The researcher ensured that all items were filled out correctly and that no items were missed. The data collected were processed and underwent quality control to avoid inconsistencies. Data encoding was done, and data were treated, checked, and verified by a statistician before undergoing data analysis and interpretation.

III. Results and Discussion

1. Overall, kindergarten teachers demonstrate a "very extensive" instructional management competence (IMC) across all measured areas, indicated by an overall weighted mean (OWM) of 4.799, equivalent to "always" in descriptive rating.
2. A significant difference in IMC was found only in "mastery of subject matter" ($F=3.528$, $p=0.033$). This indicates that age influences the extent of IMC in terms of subject matter mastery. There were no significant mean differences across age groups for all other seven areas of IMC. This means that teachers' IMC is similar regardless of their age for aspects other than subject matter mastery. A t-test could not be used to determine significant mean differences due to the highly skewed distribution of sex in the sample (97 females vs. three males). Any such test would yield biased and irrelevant results. There were no significant mean differences in the extent of IMC across different levels of highest educational attainment. This implies that their overall IMC is similar regardless of whether a teacher holds a BS degree, MA/MS degree, or advanced Ed.D. units. This indicates that "relevant in-service training" significantly differentiates the extent of IMC among kindergarten teachers in these areas, meaning participation in such training leads to varying levels of competence.
3. The study found significant correlations between the extent of IMC and the profile variable age; a significant negative correlation ($r=-0.215$, $p=0.032$) was observed between age and overall IMC.

As teachers' age increases, their IMC decreases slightly. Years in service, a significant positive correlation ($r=0.197$, $p=0.049$) was found between years in service and IMC in "Mastery of Subject Matter." Another significant positive correlation ($r=0.201$, $p=0.049$) was noted between years in service and IMC in "Teaching Skills." These positive

correlations indicate that with more years of teaching experience, kindergarten teachers have better mastery of their subject matter and stronger teaching skills. Conversely, the study found no significant correlation between the extent of IMC and the other profile variables, specifically Highest Educational Attainment and Relevant In-Service Training. This means that while age and years in service play a role in certain aspects of IMC, educational background and participation in in-service training did not show a direct linear relationship with overall IMC in this study.

4. Based on the study's key findings, the researcher developed a plan with specific activities to enhance the instructional management competence of Kindergarten Teachers in the 6th Congressional District, SDO Pangasinan II. Potential funding for these activities would come from the Local School Board and civic-minded sponsors/stakeholders.

IV. Conclusion

The respondent kindergarten Teachers are in their prime middle age, experienced and exceptionally well-versed in instructional management competence (IMC), and are much qualified in their position as Kindergarten Teachers of their respective schools.

The respondent kindergarten Teachers have "pervasive" IMC in all areas; hence, they perform outstandingly in instruction to their pupils. However, the profile variables used in this study could not differentiate the variations in the extent of IMC of the respondent Kindergarten Teachers.

Further, the extent of IMC of the respondent-Kindergarten Teachers is not associated with their profile variables, except for a "negative weak" to "negative very weak" association with the variable, 'age' and 'years of service,' specifically, in the area of "mastery of subject matter" and "teaching skills."

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