

Exploring the implementation of teaching strategies among kindergarten teachers

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ABSTRACT

Exploring the implementation of teaching strategies provides insight into how teachers apply various methods to enhance student learning. It also uncovers the factors that influence the effectiveness of these strategies in achieving educational goals. This study explored the implementation of teaching strategies among kindergarten teachers, the challenges encountered, their impact on learner performance, and proposed improvement plans in schools in Buenavista I and Buenavista II during the School Year 2024–2025. Using a descriptive research design with complete enumeration, data were gathered from 30 kindergarten teachers through a survey assessing lesson objectives, content delivery, instructional methods, learner engagement, and assessment practices. Results revealed that teaching strategies were generally rated as highly implemented across all domains. Learner performance indicated that the majority of pupils demonstrated average slightly advanced development, suggesting a positive link between effective teaching strategies and learning outcomes. Despite these teachers report persistent challenges such as large class size, insufficient instructional materials, limited classroom space, and the need to address diverse learner needs. Notably, nearly all respondents participated in professional development programs, reflecting their strong commitment to improving instructional competencies. The study concludes that consistent and well-supported teaching strategies substantially contribute to learner performance and recommends strengthening professional development, improving resource allocation, and providing greater support for differentiated instruction to enhance teaching effectiveness and sustainability.

Keywords: Teaching strategies, kindergarten education, learner performance, professional development, instructional challenges, early childhood education

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching strategies, which are also referred to as instructional strategies, are approaches employed by educators to present information and involve students, adjusting to different

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elements such as subject matter, grade level, and classroom resources (Moore, 2014). Effective teaching techniques can boost student engagement, critical thinking, and knowledge retention in Asian educational contexts, which will ultimately support well-rounded growth and academic and professional success (Vaghela & Parsana, 2024).

Play-based learning invites young learners to engage alone or collaboratively in imaginative, cooperative, and constructive play (Ali, Constantino, Hussain, & Akhtar, 2018). Through play, children encounter challenges and learn to navigate them alongside peers, building problem-solving abilities, creativity, and critical thinking. Teachers play a pivotal role in this dynamic not as directors but as facilitators who provide materials, guidance, and opportunities for reflection and deeper conversation. By creating supportive and reflective learning environments, teachers nurture exploration, autonomy, and introspection from learners. Research underscores that when teachers establish trust and co-construct the learning process, they can significantly enhance emotional and cognitive engagement (Heilporn, Lakhal, & Bélisle, 2021). Furthermore, qualitative studies across Asian contexts illuminate the impact of cultural relevance in play-based learning. For example, Bautista, Yu, Lee, and Sun (2023) highlight how structural and ideological constraints in Asia frequently limit playful pedagogies, often relegating them to socio-emotional purposes rather than broader domains like scientific thinking or creativity and emphasizing the urgent need for locally situated research to justify including play in educational policies.

Turning to the benefits: play-based strategies substantially boost motivation and engagement in Asian classrooms, enhancing socio-emotional growth and peer collaboration (Alam, 2022). This aligns with findings from Malaysia, where integrating play into early childhood education supports cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, although implementation challenges such as limited educator training and societal emphasis on academic achievement often hinder widespread adoption (Hisham & Suen Ying, 2025).

Play based on local contexts such as natural play materials or culturally resonant themes helps make learning meaningful, particularly in societies that value holistic education. Play alleviates academic pressures, fostering a more enjoyable and effective environment, while also promoting social skills like teamwork and communication. These competencies are highly esteemed in many Asian cultures.

Creating classroom routines further supports this ecosystem by establishing predictable patterns and behavior expectations. Well-structured routines enhance students' sense of security and clarity, increasing focus and engagement. In many Asian classrooms, these routines daily schedules, norms for transitions, and conduct rules strengthen academic performance, discipline, and peer relations (Koh, 2016; Liu, 2018; Tan, 2020; Wang, 2021; Zhang, 2022).

Positive relationships among students and between teachers and students are foundational. Trust and mutual respect form emotional safety and belonging, empowering learners to participate actively, take intellectual risks, and engage deeply with content. Cooperative learning thrives in environments rich with positive connections, leading to improved academic outcomes, reduced anxiety, and stronger mental health (Hattie, 2019; Johnson et al., 2020; Macias et al., 2021; Wang & Eccles, 2019; Zins et al., 2020).

Multisensory instruction, incorporating sight, hearing, touch, movement, and even taste, enriches understanding and knowledge retention, particularly for diverse learners, including those with dyslexia or ADHD. Research shows that such multisensory approaches bolster motivation (Ferreira & Vasconcelos, 2020), conceptual understanding (Nurjanah, 2024), vocabulary, and reading skills (Mathias & von Kriegstein, 2023) and even enhance listening and attitude through storytelling (Gazıoğlu & Karakuş, 2023).

Numerous challenges persist, especially in parts of Asia: outdated pedagogy, insufficient teacher training, lack of resources, and an overemphasis on rote instruction all

contribute to suboptimal learning outcomes (Shah, 2020). Rural schools often face large class sizes and scarce materials. In contrast, European systems such as those in Finland and the Netherlands have prioritized learner-centered education, teacher development, inclusive classrooms, and inquiry-based learning, offering a compelling model for reform (Sahlberg, 2011; Hammond & Collins, 2013).

Globally, teaching quality and instructional creativity are also undermined by the stressors that educators face, such as diverse classes and severe workloads (Bezuidenhout, 2015). Persistent reliance on teacher-centered methods often leads to passive learning, with little attention to equity or diverse learner needs (Precious & Feyisetan, 2020; Opertti, Walker, & Zhang, 2014). In multicultural environments such as the Philippines educators must contend with varied linguistic, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Culturally responsive pedagogy, however, has been shown to enhance engagement and teacher-student bonds (Navarro, 2019). Still, many teachers lack training in inclusive, active strategies and face resource constraints, limiting their effectiveness (Dizon, 2020).

Given these global, regional, and local challenges, a clear need emerges: to foster qualified educators equipped with student-centered, culturally responsive, play-based, multisensory, and reflective methodologies. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) affirm that teacher expertise heavily influences student outcomes, especially in resource-limited contexts. Meanwhile, Freeman et al. (2014) demonstrate that active learning dramatically improves achievement compared to lecture-based approaches. Thus, the researcher is interested in assessing the implementation of teaching strategies among kindergarten teachers in the district of Buenavista, Bohol.

Statement of the problem

This research assessed the implementation of teaching strategies among kindergarten teachers of Buenavista I and II District, Buenavista, Bohol for the school year 2024-2025 as a basis for an improvement plan. The study sought to examine teachers' profiles, their perceived extent of use and level of implementation of various teaching strategies, the performance of kindergarten learners, and the challenges encountered in classroom practice in order to generate evidence-based recommendations for instructional enhancement.

1. What is the profile of the kindergarten teacher respondents in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, number of years in teaching, teacher position, and seminars and trainings attended?
2. As perceived by the respondents, what is the extent of use of the implemented teaching strategies in terms of play based learning, establishing routine, building positive relationships, and multisensory instruction?
3. What is the level of implementation of teaching strategies in terms of objectives, content, instructional activities, and evaluation?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of use of teaching strategies and the level of their implementation in terms of objectives, content, instructional activities, and evaluation?
5. What is the performance of kindergarten learners during the school year 2024-2025?
6. What challenges do public kindergarten teachers encounter that affect the implementation of teaching strategies?
7. Based on the findings of the study, what improvement plan may be presented to enhance the implementation of teaching strategies in public kindergarten classrooms?

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the study was designed to provide a comprehensive and systematic examination of the implementation of teaching strategies among kindergarten teachers in Buenavista I and II District, Buenavista, Bohol. A descriptive research design employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches was utilized to capture teachers' perceptions, practices, and experiences related to the teaching learning process. This design was deemed appropriate as the study sought to assess how teachers manage classrooms, engage learners, and apply instructional strategies while also exploring their reflective insights regarding classroom delivery. By combining quantitative measurement with qualitative understanding, the study was able to identify strengths, limitations, and areas for improvement in teaching strategies as perceived by kindergarten teachers.

The research was conducted in the municipality of Buenavista, a coastal town in the northern part of the province of Bohol, which became an independent municipality in 1960 and is presently composed of thirty-five barangays. The locality is divided into Buenavista I and Buenavista II Districts, which collectively serve kindergarten classes in public elementary and primary schools. The research environment includes schools situated in rural areas that are generally accessible through provincial roads, although distance between schools and road conditions pose transportation challenges, particularly during rainy periods. Despite these constraints, schools are supported by school heads and provided with essential instructional materials to facilitate teaching and learning. The study focused on all kindergarten teachers assigned in Buenavista I and II Districts, with a total of thirty teachers participating as respondents. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that all respondents were directly involved in kindergarten instruction and possessed relevant teaching experience within the research locale.

Data were gathered using a structured survey questionnaire adapted from the study titled *Meta Analysis of Proven Effective Teaching Strategies to Increase on Task Behaviors in Preschool Students* by Mandalyn Westphal, with modifications made to align the instrument with the developmental characteristics and instructional context of kindergarten learners. The revised instrument was designed to assess the extent of implementation of teaching strategies such as play based learning, differentiated instruction, classroom management practices, and social emotional support, as well as to identify challenges encountered by teachers in applying these strategies. Prior to its administration, the questionnaire underwent expert validation and pilot testing among a small group of kindergarten teachers to establish clarity, reliability, and content appropriateness. The final version of the instrument consisted of sections that gathered demographic information, measured the level of implementation of teaching strategies in terms of objectives, content, instructional activities, and evaluation, and examined the challenges that affected effective classroom practice. The structure of the instrument allowed for the collection of quantifiable data suitable for statistical analysis while also capturing relevant contextual information.

Prior to data collection, formal approval to conduct the study was obtained from the appropriate school district supervisors and school heads of the participating schools in Buenavista I and II Districts. After permission was granted, the purpose and significance of the study were clearly explained to the teacher respondents to ensure informed participation. Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the research process, including voluntary participation, confidentiality of responses, and respect for the rights and professional roles of the respondents. The questionnaires were distributed to the teachers through their respective school heads and were retrieved upon completion. All collected data were handled with discretion and used solely for academic and research purposes.

The gathered data were systematically organized, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Percentage distribution was used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents, while weighted mean and standard deviation were employed to determine the extent and consistency of teaching strategy implementation. Pearson correlation analysis was utilized to examine the relationship between the extent of use of teaching strategies and relevant performance indicators. A five-point Likert scale was applied to quantify teachers' responses regarding the frequency and level of implementation of teaching strategies, with corresponding verbal and qualitative interpretations used to facilitate meaningful analysis. The results of the statistical treatment were carefully interpreted to generate findings that served as the basis for conclusions and the formulation of an improvement plan aimed at enhancing the implementation of teaching strategies in public kindergarten classrooms.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Results and Discussion section presents and interprets the findings of the study involving 30 kindergarten teachers from Buenavista I and II Districts and 466 kindergarten learners during the School Year 2024-2025. The study employed a descriptive research design using a quantitative approach, with purposive sampling applied to select all kindergarten teachers in the two districts. Data were gathered through a validated survey questionnaire adapted and modified to suit the kindergarten context, while learner performance data were obtained from official school records. Descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation were used to analyze demographic characteristics, perceived extent of use, and level of implementation of teaching strategies, while Pearson product moment correlation was employed to determine the relationship between the extent of use of teaching strategies and their level of implementation. The discussion that follows is grounded strictly on the data gathered and interprets the results directly in relation to the objectives of the study.

The demographic profile of the respondents provides important contextual grounding for understanding the results. All 30 respondents were female, representing 100% of the sample, which reflects the gender distribution commonly observed in early childhood education settings. The age distribution shows that 12 teachers or 40.0% belonged to the 36 to 40 age group, followed by 9 teachers or 30.0% aged 31 to 35, 5 teachers or 16.7% aged 41 to 45, 3 teachers or 10.0% aged 26 to 30, and 1 teacher or 3.3% aged 50 and above. The computed average age of 36.8333 years with a standard deviation of 5.36324 indicates a relatively homogeneous group of mid-career educators. This age profile suggests that most respondents are professionally mature and likely possess substantial classroom experience, which may influence their consistent use and implementation of developmentally appropriate teaching strategies, consistent with the observations of Lee and Chen (2020) regarding the relationship between age, experience, and instructional adaptability.

In terms of educational attainment, the data reveal a strong orientation toward advanced professional preparation. Out of the 30 respondents, 23 teachers or 76.7% had Master's degree units, 4 teachers or 13.3% had completed a Master's degree, 2 teachers or 6.7% held a Doctorate degree, and only 1 teacher or 3.3% had a Bachelor's degree. This distribution underscores a high level of academic engagement among kindergarten teachers and aligns with Darling Hammond's assertion that higher educational qualifications enhance instructional competence and classroom effectiveness. The predominance of teachers pursuing or holding graduate degrees suggests a workforce that is receptive to evidence-based practices and

reflective pedagogy, which is essential in early childhood education where instructional decisions must be sensitive to developmental needs.

Teaching experience further contextualizes the respondents' instructional practices. The data show that 12 teachers or 40.0% had 6 to 10 years of teaching experience, another 12 teachers or 40.0% had 11 to 15 years, 5 teachers or 16.7% had 1 to 5 years, and 1 teacher or 3.3% had 21 years and above. This concentration of teachers within the 6-to-15-year range indicates a strong base of experienced practitioners who have likely developed stable classroom routines and refined instructional strategies. Such experience levels support Darling Hammond's view that teaching expertise deepens with sustained practice, while also aligning with Opfer and Pedder's emphasis on continuous professional learning regardless of tenure.

With respect to position, the majority of respondents held the rank of Teacher III, accounting for 18 teachers or 60.0%, followed by Teacher I with 7 teachers or 23.3%, Teacher II with 4 teachers or 13.3%, and Master Teacher I with 1 teacher or 3.3%. This distribution reflects a workforce largely situated within mid-level professional ranks, consistent with national DepEd trends noted by Paunan (2024). The dominance of Teacher III positions suggests a cohort that has achieved a degree of professional stability, which may support consistent implementation of instructional strategies but may also indicate limited advancement opportunities toward master teacher roles.

Professional development exposure among the respondents reveals both strengths and gaps. All 30 teachers or 100.0% reported attending In Service Training, indicating universal participation in mandated professional development. Participation in Teaching Methodologies and Strategies training was reported by 16 teachers or 53.33%, while Psychological First Aid was attended by 14 teachers or 46.67%, and Classroom Management Training by 12 teachers or 40.0%. Lower participation rates were observed in Comprehensive Sexuality Education with 8 teachers or 26.67%, Higher Order Thinking Skills training with 5 teachers or 16.67%, Lesson Planning Workshops with 5 teachers or 16.67%, Leadership Development Programs with 2 teachers or 6.67%, and other trainings with 1 teacher or 3.33%. This pattern suggests that professional development remains heavily focused on foundational and procedural competencies, while advanced cognitive and leadership-oriented trainings remain underrepresented, echoing Corpuz and Salandanan's observation that teacher training often prioritizes operational needs over higher order instructional innovation.

The perceived extent of use of implemented teaching strategies was examined across four major areas. For play based learning, all indicators were rated Always, with individual means ranging from 4.3333 to 4.7333. The highest mean of 4.7333 with a standard deviation of 0.44978 was recorded for integrating games and playful activities and allowing guided play exploration, while the overall mean was 4.57667 with a standard deviation of 0.546982. This indicates strong and consistent use of play based strategies, supporting Lillard et al.'s findings that play enhances executive function and learning engagement.

For establishing routines, all indicators were likewise rated Always, with the highest mean of 4.8000 and standard deviation of 0.40684 for starting the day with routine activities and giving clear transition instructions. The overall mean of 4.65667 with a standard deviation of 0.533197 reflects a strong consensus on the importance of structured routines. These findings align with DepEd guidelines emphasizing predictable environments to support socio emotional development.

In terms of building positive relationships, the results reveal exceptionally high levels of implementation. Indicators such as creating a supportive environment, encouraging kindness, building trust, and modeling respectful communication all recorded means of 4.8000 with standard deviations of 0.40684, while the overall mean was 4.75666 with a standard deviation of 0.433612. This confirms that relationship building is a central practice among kindergarten

teachers and supports Hamre and Pianta's assertion that teacher learner relationships are foundational to early academic and emotional outcomes.

For multisensory instruction, all indicators again fell under Always, with the highest mean of 4.9333 and standard deviation of 0.25371 for incorporating visual aids. The overall mean of 4.69334 with a standard deviation of 0.480593 underscores the widespread and consistent use of multisensory approaches, consistent with Tomlinson's framework on differentiated instruction and DepEd's inclusive education policies.

The level of implementation of teaching strategies across objectives, content, instructional activities, and evaluation was consistently rated Highly Implemented. Objectives recorded an overall mean of 4.61332 with a standard deviation of 0.539138, content 4.53 with 0.541816, instructional activities 4.61999 with 0.494922, and evaluation 4.57001 with 0.507113. These close mean values indicate balanced attention across all stages of the teaching learning process, reflecting Moore's view that coherence among objectives, instruction, and assessment is essential for instructional effectiveness.

When the extent of use of teaching strategies was correlated with their level of implementation, the results revealed strong positive correlations across all aspects. Objectives yielded a Pearson r of 0.78, content 0.75, instructional activities 0.80, and evaluation 0.77, with an overall average Pearson r of 0.78. All aspects were rated Highly Implemented, with implementation percentages ranging from 90.60% to 92.40%, and an overall implementation percentage of 91.67%. These values indicate a statistically significant and strong relationship, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and confirming that higher perceived use of strategies is associated with higher levels of implementation. This finding reinforces Darling Hammond et al.'s assertion that alignment across instructional components strengthens teaching effectiveness.

Learner performance data from 466 kindergarten learners show that 458 learners or 98.2833% were rated under Average Development, while 8 learners or 1.7167% fell under Suggested Slightly Delay in Overall Development. No learners were categorized under Highly Advanced Development, Slightly Advanced Development, or Significant Delay, all of which recorded 0 frequency and 0%. This distribution indicates a generally satisfactory developmental profile, suggesting that current teaching strategies adequately support age-appropriate learning. However, the absence of learners in advanced categories may indicate limited differentiation or enrichment opportunities, while the presence of a small proportion of slightly delayed learners highlights the need for early intervention, consistent with Doctor and Macalisang's findings on the importance of timely support.

The challenges encountered by kindergarten teachers were rated between Agree and Strongly Agree, with the highest mean of 4.4333 and standard deviation of 0.85836 for non-teaching tasks reducing time for lesson planning, and 4.4333 with 0.67891 for limited classroom space hindering multisensory activities. The overall mean of 4.26333 with a standard deviation of 0.826862 indicates that challenges are strongly felt and systemic in nature. Qualitative responses further revealed difficulties related to large class sizes, limited resources requiring personal financial input, and balancing diverse learner needs. These challenges substantiate Espinosa's assertion that pedagogical effectiveness in early childhood education is deeply influenced by systemic support structures.

In synthesis, the findings demonstrate that kindergarten teachers in Buenavista I and II Districts consistently and highly implement developmentally appropriate teaching strategies across all instructional domains. Strong positive correlations confirm the coherence between perceived use and actual implementation, while learner performance data suggest generally satisfactory developmental outcomes. At the same time, persistent systemic challenges

underscore the need for targeted professional development, administrative support, and resource allocation. Collectively, these results directly address the objectives of the study, contribute empirical evidence to early childhood education research, and logically set the foundation for the subsequent chapter focusing on conclusions, implications, and proposed improvement plans.

CONCLUSION

The present study comprehensively examined the implementation of teaching strategies among public kindergarten teachers and their influence on learner performance, classroom practices, and professional development needs. Drawing from the results and discussion, the findings clearly demonstrate that the teaching force involved in the study is composed entirely of female educators who are largely in the 36 to 40 age group, a stage associated with professional maturity, instructional confidence, and classroom stability. Most teachers possess master's degree units and occupy the Teacher III rank, indicating a workforce with strong academic preparation and substantial teaching credentials. In addition, the majority of respondents have accumulated more than six years of teaching experience, reflecting deep familiarity with early childhood education contexts and sustained engagement with kindergarten instruction.

The results further revealed that learner-centered strategies are consistently and intentionally applied in kindergarten classrooms. Play-based learning emerged as a core instructional practice, with teachers regularly integrating games, guided play, role-playing, and creative activities to promote cognitive, social, and emotional development. Multisensory instruction was also highly practiced, as evidenced by the frequent use of visual aids, tactile materials, music, and movement to address diverse learning styles and enhance learner engagement. Equally important was the strong emphasis on establishing consistent classroom routines and building positive teacher-student relationships, which contributed to safe, structured, and emotionally supportive learning environments. These practices collectively align with developmentally appropriate principles in early childhood education and reinforce the role of intentional instruction in fostering holistic learner growth.

Despite the high level of implementation of effective teaching strategies, the study also identified persistent challenges that constrain instructional practice. Large class sizes, limited classroom space, insufficient instructional materials, and the heavy burden of administrative and non-teaching tasks were consistently reported as significant barriers to fully maximizing learner-centered approaches. These systemic issues limit teachers' capacity to provide individualized attention, sustain interactive activities, and extend play-based and multisensory experiences. Nevertheless, learner performance data indicated that the overwhelming majority of kindergarten learners achieved average developmental levels, affirming that the strategies currently employed are generally effective in supporting age-appropriate development. The presence of a small group of learners with slight developmental delays further highlights the importance of early identification and targeted intervention, while the absence of learners in advanced developmental categories suggests the need for greater enrichment and differentiation opportunities.

A key conclusion of the study is the establishment of a strong positive relationship between the extent of use of teaching strategies and their level of implementation across instructional objectives, content, activities, and evaluation. This finding underscores that intentional, coherent, and well-planned instruction significantly contributes to effective classroom practices and positive learner outcomes. Teachers who consistently align objectives with instructional activities and assessment practices are better positioned to deliver meaningful and responsive early learning experiences. The results affirm that effective

teaching in kindergarten is not dependent on isolated strategies but on the integrated and sustained application of learner-centered approaches supported by professional competence and reflective practice.

In synthesizing the findings, it can be concluded that public kindergarten teachers demonstrate a high level of commitment to implementing developmentally appropriate and learner-centered teaching strategies that promote holistic child development. Their strong educational qualifications, professional experience, and consistent instructional practices contribute to generally positive learner outcomes. However, the full potential of these strategies cannot be realized without addressing systemic constraints related to class size, instructional resources, learning spaces, and administrative workload. To sustain and enhance teaching effectiveness, teachers are encouraged to continue applying play-based and multisensory strategies while engaging in continuous professional development focused on differentiated instruction, classroom management, and reflective practice. School leaders play a critical role in supporting instruction by ensuring adequate materials, improving learning environments, and reducing non-teaching responsibilities. At the policy level, efforts must be directed toward regulating class size, strengthening resource provision, and institutionalizing sustained training and mentoring programs for early childhood educators. Strengthening partnerships with parents and the community is equally essential to reinforce learning beyond the classroom and support school initiatives. Finally, future research is encouraged to pursue broader and longitudinal investigations to examine the long-term impact of teaching strategies on learner development and to explore evidence-based solutions to systemic challenges affecting kindergarten education.

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