



Levels of Preparedness, Extent of Teaching Strategies, and Classroom Management Practices of Kindergarten Teachers in Catanduanes, Philippines

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Abstract

Kindergarten education in the Division of Catanduanes, Philippines continues to face challenges in translating teacher preparedness into effective instructional delivery and classroom management within resource-constrained rural schools. Despite policies promoting developmentally appropriate practices, variations remain in teachers' professional competence and instructional implementation. This study examined kindergarten teachers' preparedness, teaching strategies, and classroom management practices. Specifically, it assessed preparedness in terms of professional knowledge, readiness, and participation in professional development; teaching strategies in terms of learner-centered, hands-on and play-based activities, and use of instructional materials; and classroom management practices in terms of promoting positive behavior, maintaining order, and creating supportive learning environments. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was employed involving 92 kindergarten teachers selected through stratified random sampling. Results showed that teachers were generally prepared ($M = 3.13$), implemented teaching strategies to a very great extent ($M = 3.31$), and demonstrated a very great extent of classroom management practices ($M = 3.48$). Readiness emerged as the highest-rated preparedness dimension, whereas professional knowledge received the lowest rating. Similarly, learner-centered strategies obtained the highest rating among teaching strategies, while the use of instructional materials ranked lowest. Correlation analysis further indicated that teacher preparedness had a significant but weak positive relationship with classroom management ($r = 0.186$, $p = 0.042$), whereas no significant relationships were found between preparedness and teaching strategies, and between teaching strategies and classroom management. The findings highlight the need to strengthen teachers' professional knowledge through targeted professional development. More importantly, the study provides localized empirical evidence from rural Philippine kindergarten classrooms, contributing to the limited body of research on how teacher preparedness supports effective classroom management in early childhood education.

Keywords: kindergarten education, teacher preparedness, teaching strategies, classroom management, descriptive-correlational, Philippines



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INTRODUCTION

Kindergarten education provides the foundation for lifelong learning by fostering children's cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral development during their formative years. At this stage, the quality of learning experiences is largely influenced by teachers' preparedness, the appropriateness of instructional strategies, and the effectiveness of classroom

management practices. Teacher preparedness, encompassing professional knowledge, instructional readiness, and continuous professional development, has consistently been recognized as a key determinant of instructional quality and learner achievement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kraft & Papay, 2016). Likewise, developmentally appropriate learner-centered and play-based instructional strategies, supported by effective classroom

management, create engaging and supportive learning environments that promote holistic child development (Emmer & Sabornie, 2018; Zosh et al., 2017).

Globally, strengthening teacher competence remains a central priority in improving early childhood education systems (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021). Despite these efforts, disparities in teacher preparedness and instructional implementation continue to persist, particularly in rural and geographically isolated communities. In the Philippines, kindergarten teachers are expected to implement standards-based and developmentally appropriate practices consistent with national early childhood education policies. However, limitations in professional development opportunities, instructional resources, and institutional support continue to challenge the consistent delivery of quality instruction (Department of Education [DepEd], 2016; Kraft & Papay, 2016).

Existing studies have independently established that teacher preparedness enhances instructional competence, learner-centered and play-based pedagogies improve children's engagement and developmental outcomes, and effective classroom management promotes positive learning environments (Kraft & Papay, 2016; Zosh et al., 2017; Fisher et al., 2018; Emmer & Sabornie, 2018). However, empirical evidence remains limited on how these three constructs operate collectively within actual kindergarten classroom settings, particularly in rural and resource-constrained schools. Moreover, few Philippine studies have simultaneously examined whether teacher preparedness translates into the effective implementation of instructional strategies and classroom management practices in early childhood education.

The need for localized evidence is particularly evident in geographically isolated island provinces such as Catanduanes, where

kindergarten teachers frequently encounter constraints related to instructional resources, access to professional learning opportunities, and diverse learner needs. Previous local studies have documented contextual challenges affecting educational implementation, including variations in program effectiveness, instructional delivery, school leadership, and technology integration (Cordial, 2025a; Cordial, 2025b). Research conducted in disaster-prone educational settings likewise emphasizes the influence of preparedness and contextual conditions on educational outcomes (Tumala et al., 2026). While these studies provide valuable insights into Philippine educational contexts, evidence focusing specifically on kindergarten teachers' preparedness, instructional practices, and classroom management remains scarce.

In response to these gaps, the present study examined kindergarten teachers' preparedness, teaching strategies, and classroom management practices in Zones 2 and 3 of the Division of Catanduanes. Specifically, it assessed teachers' preparedness in terms of professional knowledge, readiness, and participation in professional development; determined the extent to which learner-centered, play-based, and instructional material-based strategies were implemented; and evaluated classroom management practices in promoting positive behavior, maintaining order, and creating supportive learning environments. The study further investigated the relationships among these variables to determine how teacher preparedness relates to instructional practices and classroom management in kindergarten education.

By generating empirical evidence from a rural and geographically isolated Philippine setting, this study addresses an important gap in the early childhood education literature. Its findings extend existing knowledge by demonstrating how teacher preparedness is associated with instructional practices and classroom management within authentic kindergarten classrooms. The evidence generated may

inform context-responsive professional development initiatives, instructional support programs, and policy interventions aimed at strengthening the quality of kindergarten education, particularly in underserved rural communities.

Statement of the Problem. This study examined the level of preparedness, the extent of teaching strategies, and the classroom management practices of kindergarten teachers in the Division of Catanduanes. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of preparedness of kindergarten teachers in terms of:
 - 1.1 professional knowledge;
 - 1.2 readiness; and
 - 1.3 participation in professional development?
2. What is the extent of use of teaching strategies by kindergarten teachers in terms of:
 - 2.1 learner-centered approach;
 - 2.2 hands-on and play-based activities; and
 - 2.3 use of instructional materials?
3. What is the extent of classroom management practices of kindergarten teachers in terms of:
 - 3.1 managing classroom order;
 - 3.2 promoting positive behavior; and
 - 3.3 creating a supportive learning environment?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the level of preparedness and the extent of use of teaching strategies among kindergarten teachers?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the level of preparedness and the extent of classroom management practices among kindergarten teachers?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of use of teaching strategies and

the extent of classroom management practices among kindergarten teachers?

7. Based on the findings, what action plan can be proposed to strengthen the preparedness, teaching strategies, and classroom management practices of kindergarten teachers in the elementary schools of Zones 2 and 3 in the Division of Catanduanes?

Null Hypotheses. The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at a 0.05 significance level:

Ho₁. There is no significant relationship between the level of preparedness and the extent of use of teaching strategies among kindergarten teachers in the Division of Catanduanes.

Ho₂. There is no significant relationship between the level of preparedness and the extent of classroom management practices among kindergarten teachers in the Division of Catanduanes.

Ho₃. There is no significant relationship between the extent of use of teaching strategies and the extent of classroom management practices among kindergarten teachers in the Division of Catanduanes.

Scope of the Study. This study was conducted in selected public elementary schools in Zones 2 and 3 of the Division of Catanduanes, Philippines, during School Year 2025–2026. It examined kindergarten teachers' preparedness (professional knowledge, readiness, and professional development participation), extent of teaching strategies (learner-centered approach, hands-on and play-based activities, and instructional materials), and extent of classroom management practices (managing classroom order, promoting positive behavior, and creating a supportive learning environment). The study further analyzed the significant relationships among these three variables and proposed an action plan to

strengthen kindergarten teachers' professional practices.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework. The present study is anchored on Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) and Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1972), which collectively provide an analytical foundation for explaining how teacher preparedness influences teaching strategies and classroom management in kindergarten education. Social Cognitive Theory posits that professional behavior results from the reciprocal interaction of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors. Within this study, teacher preparedness reflected in professional knowledge, instructional readiness, and participation in professional development represents the personal competencies that strengthen teachers' self-efficacy and capacity to implement effective classroom practices. This theoretical perspective is particularly relevant to the rural and resource-constrained context of Catanduanes, where variations in instructional resources and professional learning opportunities require teachers to translate their competencies into effective instructional and managerial practices (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kraft & Papay, 2016; Zee & Koomen, 2016).

Constructivist Learning Theory complements this perspective by explaining how teacher preparedness is manifested through developmentally appropriate teaching strategies and classroom management. The theory emphasizes that young children construct knowledge through active engagement, social interaction, and authentic learning experiences, thereby supporting learner-centered instruction, hands-on and play-based activities, and the effective use of instructional materials. It likewise views classroom management as the creation of supportive, organized, and responsive learning environments that facilitate children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. Consequently, Constructivism provides the pedagogical justification for expecting prepared teachers to employ instructional approaches

and classroom management practices that promote meaningful learning, particularly within diverse kindergarten settings (Fisher et al., 2018; OECD, 2019; Zosh et al., 2017).

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework and illustrates the hypothesized directional relationships among the study variables. Guided by Social Cognitive Theory, the model assumes that teacher preparedness positively influences both teaching strategies and classroom management practices, while Constructivist Learning Theory supports the assumption that teaching strategies are positively associated with classroom management through the creation of engaging and developmentally appropriate learning environments. The directional arrows therefore represent the study's theoretical propositions that preparedness serves as the foundational professional resource from which effective instructional strategies and classroom management emerge. By integrating these complementary theories, the framework provides a coherent basis for examining how teacher preparedness is translated into classroom practice and generates localized empirical evidence on kindergarten education within the rural context of the Division of Catanduanes.

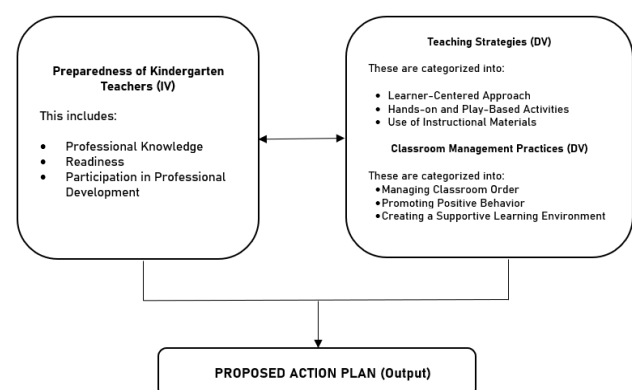


Figure 1
Conceptual Model of the Study

LITERATURE REVIEW

Early childhood education has been widely recognized as a foundational stage in human development, where teacher quality

significantly influences learners' cognitive, social, and emotional outcomes. Contemporary research consistently emphasizes that teacher preparedness, instructional strategies, and classroom management practices are central determinants of effective kindergarten instruction (OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021). However, despite extensive international literature, gaps remain in understanding how these variables interact and work together within localized, resource-constrained contexts such as rural Philippine school divisions.

Teacher Preparedness in Early Childhood Education. Teacher preparedness encompasses professional knowledge, instructional readiness, and engagement in continuous professional development. Recent studies emphasize that teachers with strong pedagogical content knowledge and structured training are more effective in delivering developmentally appropriate instruction (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Furthermore, continuous professional development has been shown to significantly improve instructional quality and adaptability in diverse classroom settings (Kraft & Papay, 2016; OECD, 2019).

Despite these established findings, a critical gap persists in the literature regarding how preparedness is operationalized at the kindergarten level in rural and geographically isolated contexts, particularly in the Philippine setting. Most existing studies focus on general teacher populations or urban school systems, with limited empirical evidence on kindergarten teachers' preparedness in terms of professional knowledge, readiness, and participation in professional development as distinct dimensions. Moreover, there is insufficient localized analysis on how preparedness translates into actual classroom practices in under-resourced divisions such as Catanduanes.

Teaching Strategies in Kindergarten Education. Teaching strategies in early childhood education are largely anchored on learner-

centered, play-based, and experiential learning approaches. Constructivist perspectives emphasize that children learn best through active engagement and interaction with their environment (Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978). Recent empirical studies further affirm that play-based and hands-on learning strategies significantly enhance cognitive development, creativity, and engagement among young learners (Zosh et al., 2017; Fisher et al., 2018). Additionally, learner-centered instruction has been associated with improved academic motivation and meaningful learning experiences (Hattie, 2016).

However, existing literature reveals a notable gap in the contextual application of these strategies in low-resource kindergarten classrooms, particularly in rural public schools. While global studies strongly support play-based and learner-centered approaches, limited evidence exists on how frequently and effectively these strategies are implemented in Philippine kindergarten classrooms, especially in terms of instructional materials utilization and teacher adaptability. Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical studies examining the extent to which teacher preparedness influences the actual use of these strategies in real classroom settings.

Classroom Management Practices in Early Childhood Settings. Effective classroom management is essential in creating structured, safe, and emotionally supportive learning environments. Research highlights that classroom management involves establishing routines, maintaining order, and implementing positive behavioral supports that foster engagement and self-regulation among learners (Emmer & Sabornie, 2018; Sugai & Simonsen, 2017). Additionally, emotionally supportive classroom environments have been linked to improved socio-emotional development and academic readiness in early childhood education (Pianta et al., 2017; Hamre et al., 2013).

Despite these established frameworks, there remains a gap in understanding how classroom

management practices are consistently implemented in kindergarten classrooms within rural Philippine contexts. Most existing studies are conducted in developed or urbanized education systems, where teacher-to-student ratios, resources, and training support differ significantly. There is also limited evidence examining and enhancing the classroom management in terms of managing classroom order, promoting positive behavior, and creating supportive environments and any circumstances as distinct but interrelated dimensions in kindergarten settings.

Relationships Among Preparedness, Teaching Strategies, and Classroom Management. The literature strongly suggests that teacher preparedness is positively associated with effective instructional strategies and classroom management practices. Teachers with higher levels of professional competence are more likely to implement learner-centered approaches and maintain effective classroom environments (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kraft & Papay, 2016). Additionally, teaching strategies and classroom management are interdependent, as structured environments enhance the effectiveness of interactive and play-based learning (Emmer & Sabornie, 2018; Zosh et al., 2017).

However, a key gap exists in the lack of integrated empirical models that simultaneously examine the relationships among preparedness, teaching strategies, and classroom management in kindergarten education. Most prior studies investigate these constructs separately, limiting the understanding of their combined influence on instructional effectiveness. Furthermore, there is limited correlational evidence from Philippine kindergarten contexts that quantifies these relationships using empirical data, particularly in geographically isolated school divisions.

Contextual Research Gap and Study Contribution. Although global and national literature provides substantial insights into early childhood education practices, there is a persistent gap in localized, evidence-based

studies focusing on kindergarten teachers in rural and island provinces such as Catanduanes. Existing research tends to generalize findings from urban or well-resourced contexts, which may not accurately reflect the realities of teachers working in resource-limited environments.

Specifically, there is a lack of studies that: (1) simultaneously assess teacher preparedness, teaching strategies, and classroom management practices; (2) disaggregate these variables into measurable subdimensions; and (3) examine their interrelationships within a single integrated analytical framework.

Addressing these gaps, the present study provides empirical evidence on the level of preparedness, extent of teaching strategies, and classroom management practices among kindergarten teachers in Zones 2 and 3 of the Division of Catanduanes. By employing a correlational approach, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how these variables interact in real classroom contexts, thereby informing targeted interventions, professional development programs, and policy enhancements in early childhood education.

METHODS

Research Design. This study employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to examine kindergarten teachers' preparedness, teaching strategies, and classroom management practices. A descriptive-correlational design systematically quantifies variables to describe current conditions and assess relationships without manipulating them (Bhandari, 2021; Apuke, 2017). Quantitative designs like this are widely used in educational research to objectively measure associations among teacher-related variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data were gathered via structured questionnaires and analyzed using statistical tools such as weighted mean and Pearson's correlation.

Population, Samples and Sampling Technique. The study targeted all 120 Kindergarten teachers from Zones 2 and 3 of the Division of Catanduanes, encompassing the districts of Bagamanoc North, Bagamanoc South, Baras North, Baras South, Bato East, Bato West, Gigmoto, Panganiban, San Miguel North, San Miguel South, Viga East, and Viga West. To determine the required number of respondents, Slovin's formula was applied using a 5% margin of error, yielding a sample size of 92 teachers. Participants were selected through stratified random sampling with proportionate allocation, ensuring that each district was represented according to its share of the total population and minimizing the risk of over- or under-representation. This sampling approach was adopted to enhance representativeness, reduce sampling bias, and improve the precision of statistical estimates across heterogeneous district populations (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Taherdoost, 2022). The resulting sample represented approximately 76.7% of the total population (92 out of 120 teachers), providing substantial population coverage and strengthening the reliability, validity, and generalizability of the study findings within the context of Kindergarten education in the Division of Catanduanes.

Instrumentation. The study utilized a researcher-developed structured questionnaire to assess kindergarten teachers' preparedness, teaching strategies, and classroom management practices. The instrument consisted of three sections focusing on teacher preparedness in performing professional responsibilities, the extent of teaching strategy implementation, and classroom management practices that foster an organized and conducive learning environment. It was developed based on relevant literature, policy frameworks, and contemporary standards in early childhood education to ensure alignment with the study objectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Content validity was established through expert evaluation involving specialists in early childhood education, educational management, and research methodology. The experts

assessed the instrument using established criteria, including content relevance, construct alignment, clarity of language, appropriateness of indicators, and adequacy of item coverage relative to the study objectives. Their recommendations regarding item wording, sequencing, and contextual suitability were systematically incorporated to improve the instrument's clarity, content representativeness, and applicability to the local kindergarten setting. A pilot test involving 30 kindergarten teachers outside the actual sample was subsequently conducted, and reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.849, indicating good internal consistency and acceptable reliability for research use (Taber, 2018). Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale, where higher scores reflected greater preparedness, more extensive use of teaching strategies, and stronger classroom management practices. The complete evaluation and scoring scheme is presented in Table 1, which served as the basis for interpreting the study variables.

Table 1
Evaluation and Scoring of Preparedness, Teaching Strategies, and Classroom Management Practices

Assigned Points	Numerical Range	Preparedness of Kindergarten Teachers	Teaching Strategies	Classroom Management Practices
4	3.25–4.00	Very Much Prepared	To a Very Great Extent	To a Very Great Extent
3	2.50–3.24	Prepared	To a Great Extent	To a Great Extent
2	1.75–2.49	Less Prepared	To a Less Extent	To a Less Extent
1	1.00–1.74	Least Prepared	To a Least Extent	To a Least Extent

Note: All variables were measured using a four-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating greater teacher preparedness, more extensive implementation of teaching strategies, and stronger classroom management practices. The instrument demonstrated good reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.849$), indicating satisfactory internal consistency for research purposes.

Date Source. The primary data for this study were obtained from kindergarten teachers in Zones 2 and 3 of the Division of Catanduanes, who served as the respondents and principal sources of information. Data were collected through a researcher-developed questionnaire designed to measure teachers' preparedness in terms of professional knowledge, readiness, and participation in professional development, as well as their teaching strategies and classroom management practices. The survey-

generated data provided empirical evidence regarding the prevailing instructional and management practices of kindergarten teachers and served as the basis for examining the relationships among the study variables. The utilization of primary quantitative data from practicing educators ensured the collection of context-specific and reliable information, thereby strengthening the validity of the findings and supporting the formulation of an evidence-based action plan (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Cohen et al., 2018).

Data Collection. Data collection followed standard procedures for quantitative descriptive-correlational research to ensure ethical and systematic data acquisition (Fraenkel et al., 2019; Creswell & Creswell, 2031). Prior to implementation, permissions were secured from the Schools Division Superintendent, Public Schools District Supervisors, and school heads, followed by informed consent from the kindergarten teacher-respondents. The researcher personally administered and retrieved the validated questionnaire to ensure a high response rate and accurate completion of data. All collected responses were encoded, checked for completeness, and submitted for statistical analysis. This structured procedure ensured the reliability, validity, and integrity of the dataset for subsequent descriptive and inferential analyses (Cohen et al., 2018; DeVellis, 2017).

Data Analysis. The study employed descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to analyze the data gathered from kindergarten teachers. Weighted mean was used to determine the level of preparedness, extent of teaching strategies, and classroom management practices, while Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was utilized to examine the significant relationships among preparedness, teaching strategies, and classroom management practices. These statistical procedures provided a comprehensive assessment of the variables and their interrelationships among kindergarten teachers in the Division of

Catanduanes (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Field, 2020).

Ethical Considerations. Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study to safeguard the welfare, rights, and privacy of all respondents. Informed consent was obtained from all kindergarten teacher-participants, ensuring voluntary participation and full understanding of the study's purpose and procedures. Necessary approvals and clearances were likewise secured from the appropriate educational authorities prior to data gathering. Compliance with the Data Privacy Act was strictly upheld by ensuring the confidentiality, anonymity, and secure handling of all collected information, which was used solely for academic purposes. Furthermore, the study ensured that no physical, emotional, or psychological harm was imposed on the respondents, and all data were reported with honesty and integrity in accordance with established ethical research standards (Mertens, 2022).

RESULTS

This section presents a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the study findings, organized according to the research questions. It examines the level of preparedness of kindergarten teachers in terms of professional knowledge, readiness, and participation in professional development, as well as their extent of use of teaching strategies and classroom management practices. Further, it investigates the relationships among teacher preparedness, teaching strategies, and classroom management practices to determine their interrelated influence on instructional effectiveness in early childhood education.

Level of Preparedness of Kindergarten Teachers. Table 2 shows that kindergarten teachers were generally prepared overall, with a composite mean of 3.13 (SD = 0.42). Among the three dimensions, readiness obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.38$), interpreted as "Very Much Prepared," indicating that the teachers felt highly capable of meeting the

demands of kindergarten instruction. This was followed by participation in professional development ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.45$) and professional knowledge ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.42$), both interpreted as "Prepared." The relatively low standard deviations suggest consistency in respondents' perceptions, while the scores imply that although the teachers demonstrate satisfactory preparedness, further strengthening of professional knowledge through sustained capacity-building remains necessary.

Table 2
Preparedness of Kindergarten Teachers ($n = 120$)

Dimension	Mean (M)	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Professional Knowledge	2.87	0.42	Prepared	3
Readiness	3.34	0.38	Very Much Prepared	1
Participation in Professional Development	3.17	0.45	Prepared	2
Overall	3.13	0.42	Prepared	—

Extent of Use of Teaching Strategies. Table 3 indicates that kindergarten teachers used teaching strategies to a very great extent overall, with a composite mean of 3.31 ($SD = 0.51$). Among the indicators, learner-centered approach obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.49$), followed by hands-on and play-based activities ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.52$), both interpreted as "To a Very Great Extent." Use of instructional materials ranked lowest ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.54$) and was interpreted as "To a Great Extent." The relatively small standard deviations suggest fairly consistent responses, while the scores imply that kindergarten teachers strongly apply child-centered and experiential strategies, although greater use of instructional materials may still be further enhanced.

Table 3
Extent of Use of Teaching Strategies among Kindergarten Teachers ($n = 120$)

Dimension	Mean (M)	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Learner-Centered Approach	3.41	0.49	To a Very Great Extent	1
Hands-on and Play-Based Activities	3.31	0.52	To a Very Great Extent	2
Use of Instructional Materials	3.22	0.54	To a Great Extent	3
Overall	3.31	0.51	To a Very Great Extent	—

Extent of Classroom Management Practices.

Table 4 reveals that kindergarten teachers demonstrated classroom management practices to a very great extent overall, with a composite mean of 3.48 ($SD = 0.50$). Among the indicators, promoting positive behavior obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 0.47$), followed by maintaining classroom order ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.50$) and creating a supportive learning environment ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.52$), all interpreted as "To a Very Great Extent." The relatively close standard deviations indicate consistent responses among participants, while the results suggest that kindergarten teachers strongly emphasize behavior management, structured classroom order, and supportive learning environments, with slightly stronger focus on reinforcing positive learner behavior.

Table 4
Extent of Classroom Management Practices among Kindergarten Teachers ($n = 120$)

Dimension	Mean (M)	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Promoting Positive Behavior	3.54	0.47	To a Very Great Extent	1
Maintaining Classroom Order	3.47	0.50	To a Very Great Extent	2
Creating a Supportive Learning Environment	3.44	0.52	To a Very Great Extent	3
Overall	3.48	0.50	To a Very Great Extent	—

Relationship Between Teacher Preparedness and Teaching Strategies.

Table 5 shows that there is a very weak positive relationship between kindergarten teachers' preparedness and their extent of use of teaching strategies, as indicated by a Pearson's r value of 0.072 with a corresponding p -value of 0.434, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that preparedness is not significantly related to the extent of use of teaching strategies among kindergarten teachers. This suggests that even if teachers are relatively prepared, this does not necessarily translate into a higher or more frequent use of varied teaching strategies in classroom practice.

Table 5
Relationship between Preparedness and Extent of Use of Teaching Strategies among Kindergarten Teachers

Variables	Pearson's r	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Preparedness and Extent of Use of Teaching Strategies	0.072	.434	Fail to Reject H_0	No Significant Relationship

Relationship Between Teacher Preparedness and Classroom Management Practices. Table 6 indicates a significant positive but weak relationship between kindergarten teachers' preparedness and their classroom management practices, as shown by a Pearson's r value of 0.186 with a p -value of 0.042, which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the study rejected the null hypothesis, suggesting that higher levels of teacher preparedness are associated with better classroom management practices, although the relationship remains weak in magnitude. This implies that while preparedness contributes to effective classroom management, other contextual or professional factors may also play a more substantial role in shaping classroom management outcomes among the teachers.

Table 6
Relationship between Preparedness and Classroom Management Practices among Kindergarten Teachers

Variables	Pearson's r	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Preparedness and Classroom Management Practices	0.186	.042	Reject H_0	Significant Positive Relationship

Table 7
Relationship between Extent of Use of Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management Practices among Kindergarten Teachers

Variables	Pearson's r	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Extent of Use of Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management Practices	0.168	.067	Fail to Reject H_0	No Significant Relationship

Relationship Between Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management Practices. Table 7 reveals a weak positive relationship between kindergarten teachers' extent of use of teaching strategies and their classroom management practices, as indicated by a Pearson's r value of 0.168 with a p -value of 0.067, which is higher than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis,

indicating that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This suggests that the frequent use of varied teaching strategies does not necessarily correspond to more effective classroom management practices among kindergarten teachers, implying that classroom management may be influenced by other pedagogical, behavioral, or contextual factors beyond instructional strategy use alone.

Proposed Kindergarten Teacher Capacity Enhancement Action Plan for Strengthening Preparedness, Instructional Practice, and Classroom Management

Rationale. The findings revealed that kindergarten teachers were generally prepared and demonstrated a very great extent of teaching strategy implementation and classroom management practices. Nevertheless, professional knowledge emerged as the lowest-rated dimension of teacher preparedness, while preparedness did not significantly translate into the implementation of teaching strategies. Conversely, preparedness exhibited a significant positive relationship with classroom management, indicating that strengthening teachers' professional competence may contribute more consistently to effective classroom management practices. These findings underscore the need for targeted, evidence-based professional development interventions that address identified competency gaps while sustaining existing instructional strengths. Accordingly, the proposed action plan aligns each intervention with a specific empirical finding to ensure that professional development initiatives are responsive, measurable, and capable of improving the quality of kindergarten instruction in the Division of Catanduanes.

General Objective. To strengthen kindergarten teachers' preparedness, instructional effectiveness, and classroom management competence through evidence-based and context-responsive professional development interventions.

Table 8

Comprehensive Action Plan Matrix for Strengthening Teacher Preparedness, Instructional Strategies, and Classroom Management in Early Childhood Education: Evidence-Based Interventions, Stakeholder Roles, Resources, and Verification Framework

Key Finding / Priority Area	Objective	Evidence-Based Activities / Interventions	Responsible Stakeholders	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Expected Outcomes / Success Indicators	Means of Verification
Professional knowledge is the lowest dimension of preparedness (M = 2.87).	Strengthen teachers' professional knowledge in early childhood education.	Conduct a professional development series covering child development, early literacy and numeracy, inclusive education, authentic assessment, and developmentally appropriate practices through workshops and learning sessions.	School Head, Kindergarten Coordinator, Master Teachers, Division Education Program Supervisors	Quarterly	Training modules, learning materials, facilitators, venue, budget	Improved professional knowledge, increased post-training assessment results, and enhanced instructional competence.	Attendance records, certificates, pre- and post-test results, training evaluation reports
Overall preparedness is rated only as "Prepared" (M = 3.13).	Enhance overall teacher preparedness through sustained professional support.	Implement structured mentoring, instructional coaching, classroom observation, and Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions with individualized feedback and action planning.	School Head, Master Teachers, Peer Mentors	Monthly	Coaching guides, observation tools, mentoring templates	Improved teacher preparedness, reflective practice, and instructional confidence.	Coaching logs, observation reports, mentoring records, reflection journals
Teaching strategies are implemented to a very great extent (M = 3.31), but instructional materials received the lowest rating (M = 3.22).	Improve the development and utilization of instructional materials.	Conduct workshops on developing localized, contextualized, and low-cost instructional materials, establish a shared learning resource repository, and facilitate collaborative material development.	School Head, Learning Resource Coordinator, Kindergarten Teachers	Semi-annually	Printing materials, ICT resources, recycled materials, lesson exemplars	Increased utilization of contextualized instructional resources and improved instructional delivery.	Portfolio of instructional materials, lesson plans, classroom observation reports
Learner-centered and play-based strategies received the highest ratings.	Sustain exemplary instructional practices.	Institutionalize demonstration teaching, peer learning sessions, instructional showcases, and recognition of exemplary classroom practices to promote knowledge sharing.	School Head, Master Teachers, Kindergarten Teachers	Monthly	Demonstration materials, recognition incentives, documentation tools	Sustained implementation of learner-centered and play-based instruction across schools.	Demonstration reports, classroom observation records, recognition documentation
Classroom management practices were rated very high (M = 3.48), particularly positive behavior promotion (M = 3.54).	Further strengthen positive classroom management practices.	Conduct capability-building activities on positive discipline, classroom routines, socio-emotional learning, and behavior support strategies, complemented by coaching and peer observation.	School Head, Guidance Coordinator, Master Teachers	Quarterly	Training modules, behavior management guides, observation checklists	Enhanced classroom climate, learner engagement, and consistent classroom routines.	Observation reports, behavior monitoring forms, coaching documentation
Preparedness significantly influences classroom management (r = 0.186, p = .042).	Maximize the impact of preparedness on classroom management.	Integrate classroom management competency coaching into professional development plans and monitor teachers' application through follow-up observations and feedback conferences.	School Head, Instructional Coaches, Master Teachers	Continuous	Coaching plans, observation tools, monitoring templates	Stronger alignment between professional preparedness and effective classroom management.	Coaching reports, classroom observation records, progress monitoring reports
No significant relationship exists between preparedness and teaching strategies (r = 0.072, p = .434).	Improve the transfer of professional learning into instructional practice.	Implement lesson study cycles, collaborative lesson planning, classroom-based action reflection, and peer coaching emphasizing the practical application of pedagogical knowledge.	School Head, Department Heads, Kindergarten Teachers	Monthly	Lesson study guides, reflective journals, planning templates	Greater consistency between teacher preparedness and instructional implementation.	Lesson study documentation, reflective journals, observation reports
No significant relationship exists between teaching strategies and classroom management (r = 0.168, p = .067).	Promote the integration of instructional and classroom management practices.	Conduct workshops on integrating behavior expectations, classroom routines, and positive discipline strategies into lesson planning and instructional delivery, followed by classroom monitoring and coaching.	School Head, Master Teachers, Instructional Coaches	Quarterly	Training modules, lesson exemplars, observation tools	Improved integration of instructional strategies and classroom management practices.	Lesson plans, classroom observation reports, learner behavior monitoring records

Specific Objectives

1. Strengthen teachers' professional knowledge in early childhood education through competency-based training modules.
2. Enhance the effective application of learner-centered, play-based, and resource-supported instructional strategies.
3. Sustain and enrich classroom management practices that promote positive behavior, classroom engagement, and supportive learning environments.
4. Institutionalize mentoring, coaching, and professional learning communities to reinforce continuous professional growth.
5. Improve the alignment between teacher preparedness, instructional implementation, and classroom management practices through continuous monitoring and technical assistance.

The present study assessed kindergarten teachers' preparedness, use of teaching strategies, and classroom management practices in Zones 2 and 3 of the Division of Catanduanes, together with the interrelationships among these variables.

Results showed that teachers were generally prepared ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 0.42$), with readiness rated highest ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.38$), followed by participation in professional development ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.45$), and professional knowledge as the lowest ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.42$). This pattern suggests adequate confidence and engagement in professional growth, although gaps persist in specialized pedagogical knowledge, particularly in foundational early childhood competencies.

Viewed through the lens of Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), preparedness strengthens teachers' self-efficacy; however, its influence on classroom practice is likewise mediated by environmental opportunities and institutional support. This finding aligns with

Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) and Kraft and Papay (2016), who emphasize sustained professional learning as central to instructional effectiveness, while also suggesting that the quality and contextual relevance of professional development are critical determinants of its classroom application.

Teachers reported a very great extent of use of teaching strategies ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.51$), with learner-centered approaches ranking highest ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.49$), followed by hands-on/play-based activities ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.52$), and use of instructional materials as lowest ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.54$). These findings reflect strong adherence to constructivist and developmentally appropriate practices consistent with Piaget (1972) and Vygotsky (1978), as well as evidence supporting play-based and experiential learning (Zosh et al., 2017; Fisher et al., 2018). However, the relatively lower use of instructional materials may indicate resource constraints, particularly in rural settings, consistent with Hattie (2016). This finding also reflects the realities of geographically isolated schools, where teachers frequently rely on adaptive pedagogical approaches despite limited instructional resources, thereby demonstrating instructional resilience rather than resource sufficiency. Classroom management practices were also implemented to a very great extent ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.50$), with promoting positive behavior rated highest ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 0.47$), followed by maintaining order ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.50$) and creating a supportive environment ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.52$). These results suggest that teachers maintain structured yet nurturing classrooms, consistent with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (Sugai & Simonsen, 2017) and the emphasis on relational and preventive management approaches (Emmer & Sabornie, 2018).

Correlation analysis indicated a non-significant relationship between preparedness and teaching strategies ($r = 0.072$, $p = .434$), suggesting that preparedness alone does not directly translate into instructional practice within the context. Unlike findings from several international studies reporting stronger

associations between teacher preparedness and instructional quality (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; OECD, 2019), the present study indicates that preparedness may not independently predict instructional practice in rural Philippine schools. This divergence may be explained by contextual conditions, including limited instructional materials, uneven access to specialized professional development, varying school-level support, and the need for teachers to continually adapt instruction to diverse learner needs despite constrained resources.

In contrast, preparedness showed a significant but weak positive relationship with classroom management ($r = 0.186$, $p = .042$), indicating that more prepared teachers tend to demonstrate slightly stronger management practices. Although statistically significant, the modest correlation suggests that classroom management is likewise influenced by learner characteristics, school climate, administrative support, and classroom conditions, consistent with the reciprocal interactions proposed by Social Cognitive Theory. The relationship between teaching strategies and classroom management was also positive but not significant ($r = 0.168$, $p = .067$), implying that effective instructional strategies alone may be insufficient to ensure optimal classroom management without complementary organizational and contextual support. Overall, kindergarten teachers demonstrated satisfactory preparedness and highly effective instructional and classroom management practices. However, the findings underscore that strengthening professional knowledge alone is insufficient unless accompanied by sustained mentoring, improved instructional resources, and supportive school systems that facilitate the translation of teacher competence into classroom practice.

Based on these findings and aligned with the study's objectives, a proposed action plan was formulated to address identified gaps and further enhance kindergarten teaching effectiveness. The action plan emphasizes targeted professional development focusing on

strengthening pedagogical content knowledge in early literacy, numeracy, child development assessment, and inclusive education practices. It also prioritizes sustained mentoring and instructional coaching to support teachers in effectively translating preparedness into classroom-based application of teaching strategies. In addition, the plan includes the development and provision of context-responsive instructional materials to address resource limitations, particularly in geographically isolated and rural schools. Strengthening school leadership support and establishing collaborative learning communities among teachers are also integral components of the plan to ensure continuous professional growth and reflective practice. These interventions directly respond to the empirical findings by addressing both individual competency gaps and the contextual barriers that may constrain instructional implementation. Collectively, these interventions are designed to improve coherence among preparedness, instructional strategies, and classroom management, ultimately enhancing teaching effectiveness and learner outcomes in early childhood education.

In conclusion, kindergarten teachers in the study areas exhibit generally high levels of preparedness, effective use of teaching strategies, and strong classroom management practices. However, the weak and inconsistent relationships among the key variables suggest that teacher effectiveness is shaped not only by individual preparedness but also by contextual and systemic conditions that influence classroom practice. Thus, targeted capacity-building initiatives and system-level support are necessary to optimize teacher effectiveness.

In recommendation, it is advised that education authorities and school leaders implement sustained and structured professional development programs anchored on identified competency gaps, particularly in early childhood pedagogy. Schools should also invest in the provision and development of adequate

instructional materials to support learner-centered and play-based instruction. Furthermore, mentoring and coaching systems should be institutionalized to strengthen the alignment between teacher preparedness and classroom practice. Future research may also explore additional influencing factors such as instructional leadership, school climate, teacher self-efficacy, and resource availability to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the dynamics affecting kindergarten teaching effectiveness, particularly in rural and geographically isolated educational settings.

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