

Problems Encountered by Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching Literacy

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Lee Riza B. Laguerder

Teacher III, Samac Elementary School
<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-0672-0754>

Dr. Lisa C. Cañedo

Master Teacher 1 and GMRC District Coordinator of Manjuyod District 1
<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1800-4660>

Abstract:

Kindergarten teachers' dedication to teaching literacy amidst that challenging profession is a valuable determinant of childhood and lifelong student learning. The key purpose of this study is to find out the problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy in four districts of a large division in Central Philippines for the school year 2024-2025 as the basis for an intervention plan. Descriptive research used a 40-item survey questionnaire to gather data from fifty-three (53) kindergarten teachers and discover their literacy teaching problems. The results revealed that the degree of difficulties encountered by kindergarten teachers in the areas of professional development, instructional materials, classroom management, and parental support was moderate. In addition, there was a significant difference in the degree of problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in the area of parental support compared to their age. The result of this study serves as a basis for kindergarten teachers to improve themselves in the delivery of instruction in the kindergarten program. This calls for education authorities to give more attention to the kindergarten program by providing teachers with training and development programs, which stakeholders should support to overcome the problems faced by kindergarten teachers.

Keywords: Kindergarten teachers, problems encountered, teaching literacy

Introduction:

Nature of the Problem

Children need kindergarten education to establish the groundwork for literacy development (Yasin et al., 2022). In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) considers kindergarten to be the transition stage from informal to formal literacy, recognizing that age five (5) is within the key years in which good experiences must continually be developed to ensure school preparedness (DepEd Order No. 047, s. 2016). Hence, kindergarten teachers must consider the availability and accessibility of appropriate and culturally sensitive materials for learners to encourage them to practice reading and counting to achieve literacy goals regularly (DepEd Order No. 012, s. 2015).

Teaching literacy is one of the problems among kindergarten teachers. It is crucial to develop literacy among children at the foundational stage. Mumpuniarti (2017) stressed that the lack of continuous professional development (CPD) weakens teacher effectiveness in teaching literacy. In addition, having no access to a wide variety of teaching aids and materials is a problem for kindergarten teachers in finding ways of modifying their instructions to fit the diversified needs of their learners (Rajapaksha, 2016). Classroom management problems are the leading concern of novice kindergarten teachers and are the most common cause of teacher attrition within the first five years of teaching. Moreover, parental support is another issue of concern for kindergarten teachers. Most of the parents pass all the responsibilities to teachers. Many parents have no time to guide their child's literacy development.

The researcher experienced the same problems as a kindergarten teacher, particularly in classroom management, professional development, instructional materials, and parental support. Kindergarten teachers have difficulty conducting individualized instruction, and learning is severely affected by the overpopulated classroom. Kindergarten teachers also received less priority for professional development. Moreover, there was inadequate instructional material available. Therefore, by identifying the problems that kindergarten teachers face in the actual teaching and learning process, it would be significant for kindergarten teachers to identify remedies to overcome their difficulties and enhance the effectiveness and productivity of their teaching literacy.

Hence, to realize these objectives, the researcher focused on this study regarding problems encountered by kindergarten teachers since they are the ones who provide the rudimentary skills that are fundamentally essential that the young learners need to acquire to support their learning in their later years.

Current State of Knowledge

Teaching kindergarten presents numerous challenges, from managing short attention spans and creating developmentally appropriate activities to addressing classroom management issues and the lack of instructional materials. Hughes (2019) emphasized the importance of setting clear expectations early to maintain focus and structure. Many kindergarten teachers struggle with teaching literacy, particularly when learners have not received prior exposure at home (Varghese et al., 2016). This highlights the importance of equipping teachers with the necessary training in early literacy instruction. Instructional materials also play a vital role; their absence can hinder student engagement and learning outcomes (Oden, 2021; Smaldino et al., 2015). Poor classroom management further complicates effective teaching, requiring teachers to be adaptable, organized, and strategic (Isuku, 2018; Bakkaloglu & Ergin, 2020).

Professional development is essential to improving teaching effectiveness. Sharma (2018) noted its positive impact on motivation and skill enhancement, while others highlighted barriers such as ineffective trainers, irrelevant content, and scheduling conflicts (Eroglu & Kaya, 2021; Topçuoğlu, 2015). Effective training should focus on pedagogy, content knowledge, and digital competencies (Singha & Sikdar, 2018; Citriadin & Hakim, 2021). Researchers like Frimpong (2023) and Lane et al. (2014) stressed the link between well-trained educators and improved student literacy. Furthermore, active teacher participation in continuous development enhances instructional strategies and supports student achievement (Ajani et al., 2018; Zaidi et al., 2018). Lastly, the lack of parental support remains a major hurdle; learners with involved parents often perform better academically (Archaya, 2017; Shahzad et al., 2020), confirming that a strong home-school partnership is vital to early education success.

Teaching literacy in kindergarten presents several challenges, including the need for developmentally appropriate strategies, effective classroom management, sufficient instructional materials, and strong parental support. Literacy is foundational for academic and life success (Del Rosario, 2021), and teachers must continuously engage in professional development to effectively deliver instruction and assessments (Gavino, 2022; Gallego & Caingoy, 2020). However, barriers such as outdated skills, particularly among older teachers, and limited access to quality materials hamper instructional quality (Cabrera, 2020; Abayan et al., 2021). High-quality instructional materials enhance learning by aligning with objectives and fostering engagement (Mendiola & Estonanto, 2022; Calaluan, 2018). Meanwhile, managing classrooms remains a persistent challenge, as it requires not just academic planning but also behavioral guidance to maintain a positive learning environment (Susulan et al., 2022; Marzano, 2017). Lastly, a lack of parental support—financial, emotional, and academic—can hinder children's learning outcomes, underscoring the need for strong school-home collaboration (Garcia, 2017; Orillosa, 2015; Logaos, 2017).

Kindergarten teachers face numerous challenges in teaching literacy, as highlighted by various studies. Frimpong (2023) identified issues such as large class sizes, limited instructional materials, inadequate training, lack of classroom resources, absence of adult support, and learning disorders. Vural et al. (2021) noted that insufficient hands-on training during pre-service education and a lack of professional competence hinder effective teaching, while teachers also struggle with family, administrative, and policy-related challenges. Similarly, Allehyani (2023) found that although many teachers showed a willingness to improve, low motivation and limited access to professional development were major barriers, underscoring the need for inclusive and teacher-centered training initiatives. Rajapaksha (2016) emphasized teachers' difficulties in utilizing instructional materials due to time constraints, lack of training, and limited integration knowledge, while Alqahtani (2021) reported that low educational qualifications and limited experience hinder creative performance in the classroom. Additionally, Wei et al. (2022) observed that while parental involvement can enhance children's confidence and academic success, this relationship is significantly mediated by children's demographics and characteristics, challenging assumptions about a direct correlation.

Multiple studies have identified a range of problems faced by kindergarten teachers, reflecting both instructional and systemic challenges. Larawan (2023) reported issues such as lack of workbooks, talkative pupils, insufficient classroom materials, salary delays, small classroom spaces, limited parental involvement, and lack of plantilla positions. In Negros Oriental, Velonta (2022) found that teachers struggled significantly with tasks like home learning plans and performance-based assessments, regardless of demographic differences. Similarly, Baldoza (2024) noted high difficulty levels with musical instruments in scheduled blocks of time but found no demographic influence on these challenges. Garibay (2023) highlighted moderate difficulties in activity-based assessments and noted that educational attainment significantly affected experiences in blended learning. Abriol et al. (2022) observed that many kindergarten learners enter school unprepared, lacking basic literacy skills and exhibiting separation anxiety, complicating teachers' efforts to meet learning goals. Lastly, Lucero (2023) revealed that teachers faced difficulties managing behaviors, parental attitudes, and diverse needs but coped through collaboration, stress management, and fostering strong school-home connections.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The present study was anchored to the Theory of Difficulty by Perkins (2007). A strong theory of difficulty identifies learners' characteristic trouble spots for a particular area of instruction and includes some causal analysis of why they occur toward improved teaching and learning. The literature on learning and literacy development offers numerous ways of understanding conceptual difficulties, recognizing problems, inert knowledge, knowledge too

foreign for learners to engage it readily, and tacit knowledge, the partly unconscious nature of which poses learning challenges. In everyday teaching, teachers' responses to recurrent difficulties may fall short. One not-uncommon reaction is blaming the learners' weaknesses and teaching the same way. Another better reaction is to 'teach harder,' lavishing more time and attention on characteristic difficulties without any causal analysis of what makes them problematic. The most effective is to 'teach smarter' based on a causal analysis refined through experience. The construction of informal theories of difficulty is an essential part of teaching.

As applied in the present study, the focus was to determine the problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy and how they can handle the issues. By understanding the problems encountered and recognizing them, she can find a solution for better teaching capability in literacy development so that the kindergarten teacher remains responsible for carrying out their duties and achieving learning objectives and goals.

Objectives

The study aimed to determine the degree of problems encountered in teaching literacy of kindergarten teachers in four districts of a large division in Central Philippines for the school year 2024-2025 as a basis for an intervention plan. Specifically, this sought to answer the following questions: 1) the profile of the respondents according to age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service; 2) kindergarten teachers' problems in teaching literacy in the area of professional development, instructional materials, classroom management, and parental support; and 3) the significant difference in the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

Methodology

This section presents the discussion of the research methodology used, the subjects and respondents of the study, the research instruments used, the validity and reliability of the instruments, the procedure for data gathering, and the statistical tools and procedure for data analysis.

Research Design

The study employed the descriptive research design in determining the degree of problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy in four districts of a large-sized division in Central Philippines for the school year 2024-2025 as a basis for an intervention plan.

Manjunatha (2020) explained that descriptive research involves identifying, describing, or determining the current state of a subject and exploring the reasons or processes behind it. The purpose of explanatory research is to shed light on existing issues or challenges by using a data collection approach that allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the situation than would be achievable without this method. In its essence, it describes various aspects of the phenomenon. In its popular format, descriptive research describes the sample population's characteristics and/or behavior.

The nature of the present study is to determine the conditions of things in their present state and the current problems kindergarten teachers feel in teaching literacy. Therefore, the descriptive research design is suited for this study because it aims to gather information about the present study's characteristics and help make professional judgments.

Study Respondents

The study's respondents were 53 kindergarten teachers in four districts of a large division in Central Philippines. The researcher purposely selected kindergarten teachers as respondents. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where researchers use their discretion to choose individuals from the population to participate in the study. Researchers use purposive sampling to access a particular subset of people, as all survey participants are selected because they fit a specific profile (Ames et al., 2019).

Instruments

The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire. Part 1 focused on the Personal Information, including age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service. Part 2 was the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy. The instrument is divided into four areas, each composed of ten (10) line questions. Each part of the questionnaire required the participants to read the items and mark the preferred option, except for the first part related to their personal information. The problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy in each item were measured using a 5-point Likert scale with five (5) as always, four (4) as often, three (3) as sometimes, two (2) as rarely, and one (1) as almost never. The research instrument was subjected to

validity (4.66-excellent) and reliability (0.952-excellent). All of them were interpreted as worthy and good; respectively.

Data Gathering Procedure

For the smoother conduct of the study, the researcher employed the following procedures. The researcher sent a letter of request for the conduct of the study to the Office of Schools Division Superintendent of Negros Oriental. Upon approval, a separate letter was also sent to the school heads of all component schools, which is attached to the approved letter from the superintendent. After securing the approval for the second request, school heads of every school sent the research instrument to their kindergarten teachers electronically. At the same time, a hard copy will be provided to kindergarten teachers with no internet connection in their area. The researcher also included her contact number and messenger account in the research instrument in case some teachers encountered difficulty answering the instrument.

The data gathered from the respondents' responses was tallied and tabulated using the appropriate statistical tools. The raw data were transformed into numerical code guided by a coding manual. This allowed computer processing, statistical derivations, and tabular presentation. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used to process the encoded data in the computer.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objective No. 1 used the descriptive analytical scheme and frequency and percentage to determine the profile of the respondents according to age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service.

Objective No. 2 used the descriptive analytical scheme and mean to determine the problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy in professional development, instructional materials, classroom management, and parental support.

Objective No. 3 uses the comparative analytical scheme and the Mann-Whitney U test to determine whether there was a significant difference in the degree of problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy when grouped and compared according to the variables.

Ethical Consideration

This research paper strives to minimize the risk of harm to its target respondents by assuring them of the confidentiality of their responses and ensuring their anonymity throughout the entire research process. At the onset, this researcher secures their free, prior informed consent and assures them of their right to withdraw from their research participation if deemed necessary. No personal data compromising the respondents' identity will be collected in adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, specifically on accessing the data both by the researcher and the analyst. The respondents are assured that no information that discloses their identity will be released or published without their consent, except when extremely necessary. All collected materials will be appropriately disposed of by machine shredding or dissolved in water after submitting the study. At the same time, soft copies of the data will be deleted, leaving no chance of future retrieval.

Results and Discussion

This section deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered to carry out the objectives of this study. All these were made possible by following certain appropriate procedures so as to give the exact data and solution to each specific problem.

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Younger (below 34 years old)	25	47.20
	Older (34 years old and above)	28	52.80
Civil Status	Single	17	32.10
	Married	36	67.90

Highest Educational Attainment	Lower (Bachelor's Degree)	30	56.60
	Higher (Masteral/Doctorate Degree)	23	43.40
Length of Service	Shorter (less than 8 years)	24	45.30
	Longer (8 years and above)	29	54.70
Total		53	100.00

As presented in Table 1, 25 or 47.20% are younger respondents (below 34 years old), while 28 or 52.80% are older respondents (34 years old and above). Regarding civil status, 17 or 32.10% of the respondents are single, while 36 or 67.90% are married. For highest educational attainment, 30 or 56.60% of the respondents are bachelor's degree holders, while 23 or 43.40% are master's degree holders. Moreover, for variable length of service, 24 or 45.30% of the respondents had served for less than 8 years, while 29 or 54.70% of the respondents had served for more than 8 years. It implies that older groups contributed more respondents, mostly married, with lower educational qualifications and shorter years in the service. The finding is supported by Baldoza (2024), who stated that most kindergarten teachers were seniors and married. Garibay (2023) revealed that most kindergarten teachers hold bachelor's degrees and have shorter years in the service.

Table 2

Degree of Problems Encountered by Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching Literacy According to Professional Development

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a Kindergarten teacher, I encountered problems due to...</i>		
1. less training on curriculum content and pedagogies in teaching literacy in the kindergarten program.	2.47	Low Degree
2. little training on classroom management and managing learners' behavior.	2.53	Moderate Degree
3. inadequate training in planning and designing lessons on early literacy.	2.45	Low Degree
4. less competent in conducting performance-based assessment and reporting of kindergarten learners' literacy achievement.	2.51	Moderate Degree
5. insufficient training on technology-assisted teaching in literacy.	2.70	Moderate Degree
6. lacking hands-on training in using selected musical instruments in teaching kindergarten.	3.32	Moderate Degree
7. lacking training and workshops in the conduct of various transition activities.	2.77	Moderate Degree
8. no scholarship grants are offered for kindergarten teachers pursuing post-graduate education.	3.60	High Degree
9. fewer seminars were received on employing the kindergarten curricular themes (myself, my family, my school, my community, and things around me).	2.70	Moderate Degree
10. insufficient in-service training was attended to strengthen the learning conditions for early literacy.	2.53	Moderate Degree
Overall Mean	2.76	Moderate Degree

Table 2 presents the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy in professional development. The respondents obtained an overall mean score of 2.76, interpreted as a moderate degree. It shows that most kindergarten teachers encountered temperate problems with the amount of training received.

However, to deepen the analysis, the respondents obtained the lowest mean of 2.45 on item 3, stating inadequate training in planning and designing lessons on early literacy and interpreting it as a low degree. On the other hand, the highest mean score of 3.60 on item 8 stated that no scholarship grants were offered for kindergarten teachers pursuing postgraduate education and interpreted it as a high degree.

The result implies that the government and private institutions offered few scholarship grants to kindergarten teachers. In addition, there were also a few free trainings and seminars related to kindergarten education. With this, most kindergarten teachers finance themselves to pursue postgraduate education and use their own money to pay for the training and workshops offered by private institutions, just earning various certificates related to kindergarten education.

The result relates to that of Sharma (2018), wherein the lack of professional development significantly affects teachers' careers by improving their skills and motivating them to develop their practice and orientation. Significant

barriers to teachers' professional development are financial problems, unsatisfactory performance evaluation, and lack of professional opportunities (Eroğlu & Kaya, 2021).

Table 3

Degree of Problems Encountered by Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching Literacy According to Instructional Materials

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a Kindergarten Teacher, I encounter problems on...</i>		
1. inadequate printed materials for literacy development, such as read-aloud or big books, small books, picture story books, wordless picture books, concept books, board books, etc.	3.17	Moderate Degree
2. lack of multimedia and computer-aided materials such as songs, rhymes, movies on CD or DVD, and interactive educational games.	2.68	Moderate Degree
3. insufficient downloadable teaching materials for literacy in LDRMS or DepEd portal.	2.43	Low Degree
4. no funds and supplies in the construction of teaching and learning materials for literacy.	2.98	Moderate Degree
5. no available technology to support teaching literacy, such as a projector, TV, etc.	2.58	Moderate Degree
6. insufficient instructional materials to be utilized during transition activities.	2.72	Moderate Degree
7. lack of manipulative toys (table blocks, lacing beads, tangrams, counting frames, picture dominoes, jigsaw puzzles, and counters (such as stones, shells, seeds, bottle caps, leaves, and twigs).	3.34	Moderate Degree
8. less support comes from stakeholders in procuring instructional materials in the kindergarten program.	3.00	Moderate Degree
9. lack of activity cards/board games (e.g., cover all and call out games: uppercase letters, lowercase letters, colors, numbers, shapes, connecting games, picking up games, etc.).	2.83	Moderate Degree
10. lack of indigenous instructional materials or locally produced or parent-made toys and play equipment.	3.08	Moderate Degree
Overall Mean	2.88	Moderate Degree

Table 3 shows the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy in instructional materials. The respondents obtained an overall mean score of 2.88, interpreted as a moderate degree. It shows that most kindergarten teachers experienced reasonable problems concerning the availability of instructional materials.

For further investigation, the respondents obtained the lowest mean of 2.43 on item 3, stating insufficient downloadable teaching materials in literacy in LDRMS or the DepEd portal, interpreted as a low degree. On the other hand, the highest mean score of 3.34 on item 7 stated the lack of manipulative toys (table blocks, lacing beads, tangrams, counting frames, picture dominoes, jigsaw puzzles, and counters (such as stones, shells, seeds, bottle caps, leaves, and twigs) and interpreted it as a moderate degree.

The result implies that most respondents experienced problems with a lack of manipulative toys. Most respondents perceived that not all manipulatives are present in kindergarten classrooms. Hence, teachers make improvised materials to achieve the same purpose or rely on donations from generous parents, stakeholders, or outside sources. Manipulatives used by kindergarten teachers are practical tools for teaching and imparting 21st-century skills to young learners. When directly applied and used by the learners, the manipulatives can raise learners' interest level to engage in the lesson. The result relates to Abayan et al. (2021), wherein most teachers experience problems with a lack of appropriate and rich resources of instructional materials, thereby limiting their capacity to provide meaningful learning opportunities. In addition, Mendiola and Estonanto (2022) also expressed that prioritizing the quality of instructional materials is a must since they significantly impact the teaching and learning process.

Table 4

Degree of Problems Encountered by Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching Literacy According to Classroom Management

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a Kindergarten teacher, I encountered problems due to...</i>		
1. less ability to establish classroom rules and enforce appropriate consequences that are meaningful to the kindergarten learners.	2.70	Moderate Degree
2. less efficient in following the blocks of time and routine activities.	2.57	Moderate Degree
3. insufficient time allotted for literacy activities and learning themes.	2.85	Moderate Degree

4. insufficient classroom space when conducting individual and group performance activity assessments.	2.72	Moderate Degree
5. difficulty of the learners to respond when catching their attention during classroom activities.	2.92	Moderate Degree
6. insufficient skills in conducting various transition activities.	2.62	Moderate Degree
7. less ability to implement proactive discipline to learners with undesirable behaviors.	2.60	Moderate Degree
8. difficulty achieving instructional goals because of large class size.	2.79	Moderate Degree
9. the learners who are reluctant to participate in classroom activities.	2.72	Moderate Degree
10. lack resources to maintain the cleanliness and the orderly physical classroom arrangement.	2.53	Moderate Degree
Overall Mean	2.70	Moderate Degree

Table 4 discloses the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy in classroom management. The results disclosed that the respondents obtained an overall mean score of 2.70, interpreted as a moderate degree. This shows that most kindergarten teachers encountered mild problems managing the class and learners' behavior.

Examining the results further, the respondents obtained the lowest mean of 2.53 on item 10, stating the lack of resources in maintaining the cleanliness and the orderly nature of the physical classroom arrangement, interpreted as a moderate degree. On the other hand, the highest mean score of 2.92 on item 5, stating the learners' difficulty in responding when catching their attention during classroom activities, was interpreted as a moderate degree.

The result entails that most respondents' problems were with the difficulty of the learners responding when catching their attention during classroom activities. They have difficulty attracting the attention of some learners; as some of these learners do, they want to do it regardless of what is happening around them. Managing the learners' behaviors takes away a considerable amount of instructional time and consequently drifts away from the teacher's lesson plan for the day.

The finding is supported by that of Bakkaloglu & Ergin (2020). Preschool teachers reported that children exhibited problem behaviors due to the activity itself, characteristics of the child, and transitions. Children may exhibit problem behaviors during transition activities due to inadequate learning skills, processing information, directing attention, perceiving stimuli, lack of social skills, and activities and expectations that are not suitable for the developmental level.

Table 5

Degree of Problems Encountered by Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching Literacy According to Parental Support

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a Kindergarten teacher, I observed that...</i>		
1. parents were not adequately aware of their part and responsibilities in their children's literacy development.	3.40	Moderate Degree
2. absence of supportive parents or guardians to help facilitate literacy activities at home.	3.45	Moderate Degree
3. less provision of parents for their child's educational needs, such as school supplies and materials at home and school.	3.26	Moderate Degree
4. parents find it hard to communicate if important instructions and announcements are related to literacy and school activities.	2.98	Moderate Degree
5. no regular attendance of parents at PTA meetings and essential school activities.	2.98	Moderate Degree
6. lack of parents' support on child's nutrition and health needs.	3.04	Moderate Degree
7. less cooperation with the teachers in monitoring the literacy progress of their children.	3.15	Moderate Degree
8. no parent volunteers to assist teachers in the school literacy activities.	3.43	Moderate Degree
9. less participation in their children's literacy activities in school.	3.17	Moderate Degree
10. lacks encouragement and motivation from the parents for their children's literacy activities.	3.08	Moderate Degree
Overall Mean	3.19	Moderate Degree

Table 5 divulges the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy in parental support. The results were disclosed, and the respondents obtained an overall mean score of 3.19, which was interpreted as a moderate degree. From the result, it is clear that most kindergarten teachers are experiencing problems concerning the parental support shown by the parents to their children.

Analyzing the results further, the respondents obtained the lowest mean of 2.98 on items 4 and 5, stating parents are hard to communicate with if there are important instructions and announcements related to literacy and school activities, and no regular attendance of parents at PTA meetings and important school activities was interpreted as a moderate degree. On the other hand, the highest mean score of 3.45 on item 2, stating the absence of a supportive parent or guardian to help facilitate literacy activities at home, is a moderate degree.

The result implies that most respondents perceived that few supportive parents or guardians were facilitating their children's literacy activities at home. Most parents pass all the responsibilities to the teachers in educating their children. This is because some parents are already worn out from doing housework and work throughout the day, leaving them with less time to devote to their kids' reading activities.

The finding, supported by Lucero (2023), revealed that kindergarten teachers encounter various problems in their teaching practice, including addressing parental support, managing classroom behaviors, managing separation anxiety, creating an optimal learning environment, meeting diverse needs, and enhancing communication with learners. The teachers employed coping strategies such as collaboration, stress management, embracing challenges, creating supportive environments, and building school-home partnerships.

Table 6

Difference in the Degree of Problems Encountered by Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching Literacy According to Professional Development when grouped and compared according to Age, Civil Status, Highest Educational Attainment, and Length of Service

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	25	26.90	347.50	0.964	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	28	27.09				
Civil Status	Single	17	24.38	261.50	0.396		Not Significant
	Married	36	28.24				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	30	23.83	250.00	0.088		Not Significant
	Higher	23	31.13				
Length of Service	Shorter	24	24.88	297.00	0.361		Not Significant
	Longer	29	28.76				

Table 6 presents the comparative analysis of the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy in professional development according to profile variables.

The computed p-values are 0.964, 0.396, 0.088, and 0.361, respectively, all greater than the 0.05 significance level and thus interpreted as insignificant. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the degree of problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy in professional development when compared according to age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service is accepted.

The findings imply that kindergarten teachers have similar problems with professional development opportunities regardless of their background profile. This suggests that the respondents' concerns must also be given priority and prime consideration in crafting a professional development plan in their locale. The problems they encounter are not influenced by demographic backgrounds but by other external factors. The result is supported by Velonta (2022), wherein there was no significant difference in the difficulties encountered by kindergarten teachers when compared according to their profile variables.

Table 7

Difference in the Degree of Problems Encountered by Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching Literacy According to Instructional Materials when grouped and compared according to Age, Civil Status, Highest Educational Attainment, and Length of Service

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	25	29.28	293.00	0.309	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	28	24.96				
Civil Status	Single	17	31.53	229.00	0.142		Not Significant
	Married	36	24.86				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	30	26.55	331.50	0.808		Not Significant
	Higher	23	27.59				
Length of Service	Shorter	24	26.06	325.50	0.687		Not Significant
	Longer	29	27.78				

Table 7 summarizes the comparative analysis of the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy in instructional materials according to profile variables.

The computed p-values are 0.309, 0.142, 0.808, and 0.687, respectively, which are all greater than the 0.05 significance level and thus interpreted as insignificant. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the degree of problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy in instructional materials when compared according to age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service is accepted.

This implies that the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in instructional materials when compared according to age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service do not vary. This is because most kindergarten teachers have experienced the same problem with the availability of instructional materials, particularly manipulative toys. The result is supported by Baldoza (2024), wherein there was no significant difference in the difficulties encountered by kindergarten teachers in conducting transition activities and musical instruments regardless of their profile background.

Table 8

Difference in the Degree of Problems Encountered by Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching Literacy According to Classroom Management when grouped and compared according to Age, Civil Status, Highest Educational Attainment, and Length of Service

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	25	29.38	290.50	0.288	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	28	24.88				
Civil Status	Single	17	32.94	205.00	0.054		Not Significant
	Married	36	24.19				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	30	27.53	329.00	0.774		Not Significant
	Higher	23	26.30				
Length of Service	Shorter	24	24.92	298.00	0.371		Not Significant
	Longer	29	28.72				

Table 8 reveals the comparative analysis of the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in teaching literacy in classroom management according to profile variables.

The computed p-values are 0.288, 0.054, 0.774, and 0.371, respectively, which are all greater than the 0.05 significance level and thus interpreted as insignificant. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the degree of problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy in classroom management is accepted when compared according to age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service.

The result implies that the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounters in classroom management compared to age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service does not vary. Kindergarten teachers met the same problems with the learners' difficulty responding when catching their attention during classroom activities. The result is supported by Garibay (2023), wherein there is no significant difference in the level of difficulties encountered by kindergarten teachers when compared according to their profile variables.

Table 9

Difference in the Degree of Problems Encountered by Kindergarten Teachers in Teaching Literacy According to Parental Support when grouped and compared according to Age, Civil Status, Highest Educational Attainment, and Length of Service

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	25	31.96	226.00	0.026	0.05	Significant
	Older	28	22.57				
Civil Status	Single	17	28.47	281.00	0.632	0.05	Not Significant
	Married	36	26.31				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	30	25.73	307.00	0.493	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	23	28.65				
Length of Service	Shorter	24	27.52	335.50	0.822	0.05	Not Significant
	Longer	29	26.57				

Table 9 analyzes the comparative analysis of kindergarten teachers' problems in teaching literacy in parental support according to profile variables.

The computed p-values for civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service are 0.632, 0.493, and 0.822, respectively, which are all greater than the 0.05 significance level and thus interpreted as insignificant. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the degree of problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy in parental support is accepted when compared according to civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service.

However, for the variable age, the computed p-value is 0.026, which is less than 0.05 level of significance and thus interpreted as significant. Therefore, when grouped and compared according to age, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the degree of problems encountered by kindergarten teachers in teaching literacy in parental support is rejected.

The result implies that the degree of problems kindergarten teachers encounter in parental support when compared to age varies. This is because younger teachers believe parents must follow up on their children's learning activities at home. It helps children establish a connection between what they learn at school and what happens at home. Thus, parents are the primary influence on their children's learning, and their support helps children develop to their full potential. While senior teachers are already used to it, only a few parents and guardians facilitate their children's literacy activities at home. They do not consistently participate in such practices, leaving a gap in their children's literacy development and limited home literacy support. Thus, they ensured that the children learned while at school regardless of whether or not the parents would follow their learnings at home. According to Shahzad et al. (2020), learners exhibited higher academic performance whose parents were more supportive and involved in academic activities than those whose parents were less supportive. Children can learn early; parents are usually their child's first teacher (Kurtulmus, 2016).

Conclusions

The study found that most kindergarten teacher respondents were senior, married, bachelor's degree holders with long years of service. Overall, they moderately experienced problems in teaching literacy across four key areas, including professional development, instructional materials, classroom management, and parental support. Regardless of their demographic profiles, teachers generally shared similar challenges, though a significant difference was noted in the degree of problems related to parental support when grouped by age. The conclusions emphasized the impact of limited training opportunities, a lack of manipulative toys, student behavior issues, and weak parental

involvement. Based on these findings, recommendations included increasing scholarship grants for further studies, ensuring equitable distribution of instructional resources, conducting professional development seminars on classroom management and toy innovation, and enhancing parental engagement through regular meetings and re-orientation programs on effective parenting.

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