

Delivery of Services of Day Care Workers In Sta. Maria, Laguna

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Abstract - This study focused on the determination of the delivery of services of day care workers in the municipality of Sta. Maria, Province of Laguna during the first semester of school year 2012-2013.

Descriptive research was used in this study. Among the key findings were that Day Care Workers with respect to interactional relationship accomplished the functions with outstanding adequacy such as constantly giving feedback and praises on the performance of children, along with workers and parents coordination and cooperation, with verbal interpretation of Always Observe. In terms of instructional quality both group of respondents perceived that day care workers in-charge had adequate abilities and competencies concerning their education and trainings in connection with teaching small children with verbal interpretation of Always Observe. The parents had confidence to the day care workers in-charge of their children aside from regularly consulting the day care workers about their children's progress with verbal interpretation of Always Observe. There were only 871 households who availed of the services of day care centers in which 27 workers were employed and each of them assigned to handle an average of 33 children. Notable along with other findings was the day care workers and parents had the same perception as to the extent of services provided by the Day Care Center with respect to interactional relationship, instructional quality and parental participation. Subsequently the study ensued with these five factual remarks: Children's interactions with parents in the centers were the direct mechanisms through which children learn. The educational qualification and the capability of the day care workers to handle small children were the primary essentials in children's learning. Parents' participation in the day care centers premises brought harmonious relationship between the Day Care Workers and children as well.

The capacity of day care worker with reference to number of pupils affected the qualities of children's learning inside the classroom. Parents and Day Care Workers relationship was the key for children's progression inside the classroom.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education, Day Care Workers, Interactional Relationship, Instructional Quality, Parental Participation

I. INTRODUCTION

Child development is a multi-dimensional process that includes a psychomotor dimension (the ability to move and coordinate bodily movement); a cognitive dimension (the ability to think and reason); an emotional dimension (the ability to feel and build self-confidence); and a social dimension (the ability to establish bonds and relationships to others). These dimensions are interrelated and should be approached in an integrated fashion. As cited by Schneider et al. (2009), all children develop according to a general sequence or schema, but the speed and quality of this process varies from child to child and from culture to culture.

United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defined early childhood as the time from birth to age 8. This is generally divided into two groups: 0-3 and 3-6/8. For UNESCO, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) should be holistic and relevant, involving the development of the whole body. This concept encompasses everything from a child's health, nutrition and hygiene to cognitive skills and social, emotional development.

For these reasons, UNESCO (2007) cited that it is safe to say that "the provision of good-quality early childhood care and support is essential for all children, but particularly important for the poor and vulnerable, to compensate for disadvantage." As an economist, and 2000 Nobel Prize

laureate, James Heckman in UNESCO (2007) observes, investing in early childhood, notably in the most vulnerable for young children "is a rare public policy initiative that promotes fairness and social justice."

At present, many children begin their schooling at early age. Parents believe that children are never too young to learn and thus, should be sent to school. Furthermore, parents tend to be anxious for their children to have a head start over other children in cognitive skills of language and math as well as other basic knowledge and skills. This may probably be one of the reasons why the number of preparatory schools is growing each year.

Pre-school is always a prerogative of parents. In July 26, 2004, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in her State of the Nation's address declared that "We need to start early and we need to maintain the highest educational standards. I ask Congress to legislate an extra year of studies not by adding a fifth year of high school but by standardizing what is taught in the Barangay Day Care Centers." As a result of this proclamation, the National Pre-School Education Program was conceived. The program aims to ensure that all 5-year old children have access to quality pre-school education. Specifically, it aims to expand access and coverage to all five year old children, initially focusing on the poorest and disadvantaged; and upgrading the quality of pre-school

education in order to ensure that children are school ready integrating health and nutrition components (weighing, deworming and supplemental feeding). The program aims to reach all 5-year olds by using existing day care centers and opening new pre-school classes in areas where there are no existing day care centers and public pre-school classes.

The Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Law which was enacted in 2000, recognizes the importance of early childhood and its special needs, affirms parents as primary caregivers and the child's first teachers, and establishes parent effectiveness, seminars and nutrition counselling for pregnant and lactating mothers. The Law states that

“the establishment of a National Coordinating Council for the Welfare of Children which: (a) establishes guidelines, standards, and culturally relevant practices for ECCD programs; (b) develops a national system for the recruitment, training, and accrediting of caregivers; (c) monitors the delivery of ECCD services and the impact on beneficiaries; (d) provides additional resources to poor and disadvantaged communities in order to increase the supply of ECCD programs; and (e) encourages the development of private sector initiatives.

There are two Early Childhood Care and Development Service Delivery modes: Home-based, and Center-based which includes among others day care centers.

Moreover, the Republic Act 6972, the “Barangay Level Total Protection of Children Act”, provides that :

“all local government units shall establish a day-care centre in every village; the institutionalization of the features of the day-care programme that provide for young children’s learning needs aside from their health and psychosocial needs.”

Since the decentralization of basic health and social services in 1990, the local government unit is directly responsible for the management and operation of day-care centers. Pre-schools are required to seek a permit to operate and register with the Department of Education. DECS Order No. 107s, 1989, “Standards for the Operation of Pre-schools (Kindergarten level)”, provides guidelines for the establishment of private pre-schools. The DepEd requires the preparation of a feasibility study by prospective school administrators as an initial step in applying for a permit to operate a pre-school programme. At the national level, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the agency responsible for overall policy and programme development, setting and promoting guidelines and standards, providing technical assistance to the local government units through the regional field offices, monitoring and evaluation.

According to Osborn and Milbank (2007) the three main factors in a successful preparatory school experience are the well-equipped and well-trained teachers, conducive environment and developmentally appropriate tasks. They further explained that these factors can make or break a child

and will dictate how they will perform in school and in life in the future.

Indeed there are big challenges in the ECCD programs of government. The whole Philippine situation is reproduced in each and every barangay throughout the archipelago. Almost 104 million people are living in the Philippines. Compared to the population of other countries, Philippines ranks as the 12th most populated country in the world and China as being the undisputed no. 1. Other demographical information provided by the CIA (based on 2012 estimate) are the following: 34.6% of people in the Philippines is composed of 0 to 14 years old (17,999,279 male and 17,285,040 female); 61.1% of people in the Philippines is composed of 15-64 years old (31,103,967 male and 31,097,203 female); 4.3% are 65 years old and over (1,876,805 male and 2,471,644 female); population growth rate is 1.873% (2012 estimate), which makes the Philippines ranks as the 63rd country with highest population growth rate in the world. But only 0.1% of the education sector budget or around P1.8 billion is invested annually in ECE.

Pursuant to RA 6972, “ An Act Establishing a Day Care Center in Every Barangay”, there has been a continuing increase in the number of Day Care Centers (DCC) nationwide. To date, there is a total of 36,025 DCCs but only 30,420 barangays out of the 41,940 barangays have been covered. This accounts for only 72.5 percent coverage. As to the number of children served, a total of 2,161,500 are being served in the different DCCs which do not include those being operated by private and church-based organizations. This is relatively low due to the inadequacy of available structures to accommodate children needing early childhood stimulation. These data suggest that health, nutrition, education, and protection are the threats facing Filipino children. Philippine government had not been inactive about it. Since 1990, the Philippines has been a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child that recognized the role of the Day Care Program in the holistic development of the child’s well being. Subsequently, in 2000, Republic Act No. 8980 or the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Act was signed into law to underscore the importance of early childhood in the development of the individual. Twenty-two years later after the CRC and twelve years after the ECCD Law, however, the country has not achieved significant gains to improve the quality of day care services in the entire country as corroborated by the above figures.

There have been many other laws and policies geared towards the delivery of quality care and education for young children in the Philippines but why do still have such huge challenges in the day care program?

According to the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), and looking at the devolution of social services, the commitment of local government units through local legislation, program planning, and equity sharing, is critical to the program’s success. The CWC also highlights the need for active participation of parents in the implementation of ECCD programs such as the day care service.

These things show the immense task at hand for both the national and the local government units (LGU) in ensuring that

both the intellectual and social needs of children especially those under five years are provided.

Based from the abovementioned statements, the researcher would like to – first, determine the extent of the services rendered by the care workers in terms of interactional relationship, instructional quality, and parental participation; second, determine the capacity (number of pupils) of the day care centers in providing services to the clientele; and third, know if there is significant difference on the extent of the services rendered by the day care workers and parents with respect to the variables through the implementation of the institutionalized day care centers under national to the local government level.

II. MATERIALS AND METHOD

Research Design

The descriptive method was employed to portray the characteristics of the groups in this study and to determine if their means are different.

Participants of the Study

The study involved twenty-six (26) day care centers with twenty-seven day care workers and out of eight hundred seventy-one (871) parents, 169 were chosen using stratified random sampling in the municipality of Sta. Maria, Laguna accredited by the Department of Education and Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Data Gathering Instrument

The researcher drafted questionnaires, which were presented to his adviser and experts for content and face validation. The assistance of a subject specialist and other professor in the Graduate School was sought. Suggestion and recommendations were integrated to the final draft.

The questionnaire was content-validated by the panel and administered on a test-retest method to selected individuals who were not subject of the study. The procedure was done in order to determine the consistency of the questionnaire.

The table shows that the computed r-values in terms of the performance of day care centers in terms of interactional relationship with 0.988, instructional quality with 0.912 and parental expectations with 0.981 are all interpreted as Highly Reliable. This implies that the researcher-made questionnaire for the groups of respondents is statistically reliable and consistent.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher made a preliminary survey of the actual number of day care centers and the number of workers and parents from each center, after which asked the permission from the municipal mayor and the head of Department of Social Welfare and Development in the municipality. Upon approval of the request, the researcher made letter of requests addressed to the day care workers and parents, then administered the questionnaire-checklist to the respondents personally. The respondents were assured that all data will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Data Analysis

The gathered data were tallied, tabulated, encoded, and analyzed accordingly using the following statistical methods (tools): First, the variables in the extent of delivery of services of day care workers in terms of interactional relationship, instructional quality, and parental participation were measured by the use of weighted mean and standard deviation. Second, the capacity of day care centers in providing services to the clientele was measured by frequency and ratio. Third, t-test was used to test the difference on the perceived extent of services rendered by the day care workers and parents with respect to the variables mentioned.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The succeeding tables present the analyses and interpretations of the data gathered in determining the extent of delivery of services of day care workers in the municipality of Sta. Maria, Laguna.

Table 1. Extent of Services Rendered in terms of Interactional Relationship as Perceived by the Group of Respondents.

INTERACTIONAL RELATIONSHIP Day Care Workers and parents....	Day-Care Workers		Parents	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. are able to give feedback and praise in the children's performance at the center.	4.59	Always Observe	4.46	Always Observe
2. express genuine interest to the program and projects of the center.	4.32	Always Observe	4.25	Always Observe
3. coordinate with each other in terms of problems of their children.	4.33	Always Observe	4.36	Always Observe
4. show support and cooperation in the activities, program and projects of the center.	4.48	Always Observe	4.28	Always Observe
5. coordinate with one another in asking for assistance to the stakeholders such as private organization and local government that could help in the needs of the center and the children	4.15	Often Observe	4.02	Often Observe
6. introduce programs and projects in the class and center that reaches out to the concerns outside the walls of the center.	3.93	Often Observe	3.96	Often Observe
7. encourage active involvement of the community in order to promote camaraderie and support.	4.27	Always Observe	4.20	Often Observe

Table 1 (cont). Extent of Services Rendered in terms of Interactional Relationship as Perceived by the Group of Respondents.

INTERACTIONAL RELATIONSHIP Day Care Workers and parents....	Day-Care Workers		Parents	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
8. encourage the effort of the center in promoting literacy even outside the school.	4.33	Always Observe	4.30	Always Observe
9. promote transparency and equity in public service in terms of running the center.	4.30	Always Observe	4.30	Always Observe
10. coordinate with the community in reaching to a greater number of clients in the efforts at promoting greater literacy and providing opportunities for many to enrol in early child education.	4.30	Always Observe	4.30	Always Observe
Average Weighted Mean*	4.30a	Always Observe	4.24a	Always Observe

*t value = 0.57 df = 194 p value = 0.567 *Average weighted means with the same letter are not significantly different at 0.06*

The data gathered implied that both day care workers and parents were able to give their own personal opinion and express their praises when their children do well in the day care centers which in part is very important in order for the people involved in the early child education to be more aware and encouraged to increase their services because each stakeholder shows their genuine interests with each other in helping the program.

Table 2. Extent of Services Rendered in terms of Instructional Quality as Perceived by the Group of Respondents

INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY The day care worker in charge of the children...	Day-Care Workers		Parents	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. has adequate knowledge and skills in teaching and handling small children.	4.56	Always Observe	4.55	Always Observe
2. has adequate educational background and training to assist and teach small children	4.59	Always Observe	4.46	Always Observe
3. is able to select the methods and strategies appropriate to the needs of the child.	4.30	Always Observe	4.35	Always Observe
4. provides appropriate instructional materials.	4.15	Often Observe	4.24	Always Observe
5. is provided with trainings and seminars about early childhood development.	4.30	Always Observe	4.37	Always Observe
6. uses responsive approach to maintenance and upkeep of center site.	4.30	Always Observe	4.38	Always Observe
7. shows responsibility and prudence in the use of facilities and equipments.	4.41	Always Observe	4.40	Always Observe
8. shows proper use of time in terms of instruction.	4.26	Always Observe	4.33	Always Observe
9. shows continued efforts for professional growth.	4.52	Always Observe	4.44	Always Observe
10. is active in increasing the promotion rates and lowering the morbidity rates of the children.	4.41	Always Observe	4.46	Always Observe
Average Weighted Mean*	4.38a	Always Observe	4.40a	Always Observe

*t value = 0.19 df = 194 p value = 0.853 *Average weighted means with the same letter are not significantly different at 0.02*

The above findings implied that both group of respondents believed that the people in charge of handling the children in day care centers had the adequate abilities and competencies in terms of their education and trainings in connection with the teaching of small children. Furthermore, the results indicated that the day care workers assigned in the centers were well-trained and educated in terms of assisting small children in the early education which is the foundation of a child that could lead to his success in his learning.

Table 3. Extent of Services Rendered in terms of Parental Participation as Perceived by the Group of Respondents

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION Parents or guardian....	Day-Care Workers		Parents	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. allow the day care workers to take full charge/responsibility of their children inside the classroom.	4.52	Always Observe	4.56	Always Observe
2. consult with the day care workers to check the progress of their children.	4.41	Always Observe	4.39	Always Observe
3. show support in the programs and projects of the center	4.44	Always Observe	4.33	Always Observe

Table 3 (cont). Extent of Services Rendered in terms of Parental Participation as Perceived by the Group of Respondents

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION Parents or guardian....	Day-Care Workers		Parents	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
4. show active participation in the activities that involves their children and the center.	4.41	Always Observe	4.28	Always Observe
5. cooperate with the center and the day care workers in cases of problems and discussions concerning their children.	4.33	Always Observe	4.31	Always Observe
6. show active partnership through parents organization in order to promote cooperation and community building within the center.	4.33	Always Observe	4.21	Always Observe
7. support programs and projects in the class and the center.	4.41	Always Observe	4.30	Always Observe
8. show responsiveness and responsibility in discharge of opinions on issues that concern the center and its workers.	4.19	Often Observe	4.18	Often Observe
9. provide proper representation in dealing with the community and with the workers of the center.	4.19	Often Observe	4.24	Always Observe
10. promote participation in programs and project of the center for the benefit of their children.	4.26	Always Observe	4.32	Always Observe
Average Weighted Mean*	4.35a	Always Observe	4.31a	Always Observe

t value = 0.33 df = 194 p value = 0.743

**Average weighted means with the same letter are not significantly different at 0.04*

The results implied that both group of respondents believed that the parents or guardian of the small children who attend in the day care centers are confident enough to leave the care, handling and teaching of their children in the hands of the day care workers assigned. Furthermore, this also implied that parents respect and trust the day care workers assigned to take care of their child.

Table 4. Capacity of the Day Care Workers in Providing Services

Day Care Centers	Number of Day Care Workers	Number of Pupils	Number of Pupils /worker
Urban	7	211	31
Rural Upland (North Side)	6	160	27
Rural Lowland (East Side)	9	300	34
Rural Lowland (West Side)	5	200	40
Total	27	871	33

It implied that there were 871 households availing the services of day care centers in Sta. Maria, Laguna. The municipality's day care centers employed 27 workers and each worker was assigned to handle an average of 33 children. This may not be an ideal set-up considering that two to two and a half hours is allotted each class session.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Children's interactions with parents in the centers were the direct mechanisms through which children learn. The educational qualification and the capability of the day care workers to handle small children were the primary essentials in children's learning. Parents' participation in the day care centers premises brought harmonious relationship between the Day Care Workers and children as well. The capacity of day care worker with reference to number of pupils affected the

qualities of children's learning inside the classroom. Parents and Day Care Workers relationship was the key for children's progression inside the classroom.

It is important that day care workers should identify the progress and needs of their pupils which will enable them to adjust instruction; that parents and day care workers should continue guiding their children, providing support and assistance that will ensure that they will get quality education; that the Department of Education and school administrators continually provide programs and trainings for instructional skills and competencies particularly in early childhood education through new and innovative strategies.

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