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## THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE DIVISION OF ILOILO

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### ABSTRACT

The study was descriptive research conducted to find out the effectiveness of the Early Childhood Development Program of the Department of Education in the Division of Iloilo. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions. (1) What is the profile and performance of the teachers involved in the ECD program? (2) What is the profile of the parents involved in the ECD project/program? (3) To what extent has the Department of Education undertaken the required activities of the ECD program in the Division of Iloilo? (4) How adequate is the support system extended to the implementer of the ECD program in terms of physical and instructional facilities? (5) What is the level of performance of pupils in central and non-central schools involved in the ECD program? (6) Is there a difference in the achievement of pupils in central and non-central schools? (7) what is the level of parents' participation in the ECD program? (8) To what extent is the participation of the LGU in the ECD program? (9) what are the school-based interventions to the ECD program of the Department of Education in the Division of Iloilo? (10) What are the problems encountered in the implementation of the ECD program?

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The subjects covered 3,466 Grade 1 pupils, 84 Grade 1 teachers from central and non-central schools, 3,287 parents, and 350 LGU personnel from MSWD and DOH involved in the program.

Three sets of questionnaires were used in this study: one set each for grade 1 teachers, the parents, and the local government unit personnel. They were constructed and validated, especially for the present study.

The gathered data were tabulated, computed, analyzed, and interpreted. Frequency count, mean, and rank were employed. A significant difference was determined by employing the t-test. The 0.5 level significance was used in the interpretation of the inferential statistics.

The study revealed that the majority of the Grade 1 teachers teaching in the ECD program, both in the central and non-central schools, were occupying Teacher III positions, were baccalaureate degree holders with master units, had attended local, division, and regional seminars, and had outstanding performance ratings. The teachers in the central and non-central schools were more experienced and received higher salaries than teachers in the non-central schools. All the teachers received the same benefits.

The respondents' fathers were mostly farmers, while their mothers were mostly housewives. Most of both parents have attended the high school and college level. The parents' income was generally low, had semi-permanent and temporary houses, had five members in the family, were residing both in the town proper and barangays which were less than a kilometer away from the school, and whose children just walked to school.

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The activities of the ECD program were “fully undertaken” in the central schools but only “undertaken” in the non-central schools. The LGUs have provided the ECD program with very adequate facilities.

The most learned subject was Filipino and the least learned was Mathematics. Pupils’ performance by district was fair. Central school pupils had a better performance than those in the non-central schools. Duncans’ test revealed that the performance of pupils in the second and fourth districts was significantly higher than those in the other districts.

Of the six school-based interventions provided to the ECD program, training of teachers, preschool services, and community child care were very adequately provided, while nutrition supplementation was only moderately provided. Generally, the interventions were adequately provided.

Problems identified in the implementation of the ECD program were insufficiency of funds, lack of textbooks, and lack of proper for Grade I teachers.

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## INTRODUCTION

This decade opens with the State of the World's Children's Report focusing on early childhood. It defines for us the critical need for investing in early childhood care and development because what happens during the very early years of a child's life influences how the rest of his childhood and adolescence unfold. Most brain development happens at a young age, long before many adults even realize what is happening. The brain cells of a new infant proliferate, synapses crackle and the patterns of a lifetime are established. Children develop their abilities to think and speak, learn and reason early in life, and the foundation for values and social behavior as adults is laid down in early childhood (Erikson, 1993).

According to Hill (2001), a child grows and develops not in a vacuum but in a family, a community, a culture and a nation. A child's rights and needs must therefore be holistic and multidimensional through programs that are deeply rooted within families and communities. Strength of families, communities, and social structures can be used for positive child rearing practices and the strong desire of parents to provide the best for their children can blend with what is known about the best environments for optimal child development.

Macarayan (1990) pointed out that family, as the substance of social milieu, is responsive to changes in its environment while also having a will of its own. To relate its function to the function of other parts of our society requires a clear-eyed committed professional. How it functions reverberates in shaping the nature of the society of people whose lives it socializes.

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Furthermore, Bueno (1994) stressed that a society that values the formative and supportive functions performed by family needs a profession that keeps before the public the public the concerns and contributions of family life. According to him, it is the home that carries an enormous task in facilitating the physical, intellectual, moral, emotional, and spiritual upbringing of the child. It is here that the teaching-learning process begins. The parents and the teachers are the two most important components in the educational success of the child in school.

Chavez (1998) further believes that it is through the interlocking efforts of the home, the school, and the community that the child can successfully master his environment, his intellect, and himself. Learning goes better in schools where parents understand what is being taught and how and why children should have the support and encouragement of the community. With them working together, pupils' scholastic achievement of the community. With them working together, pupils' scholastic achievement is enhanced. Cognizant of the situation, the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Program of the Department of Education in the Philippines was purposely conceptualized to help develop the social, motor, and other readiness skills of young learners.

The ECD program refers to child and family-focused services designed to build and improve existing health, nutrition, and early education services for disadvantaged six years old and younger. The curriculum in Grade I under the ECD program includes basic education to develop skills and improve motor condition, mental development, language competency,

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personal development of social and spiritual values and physical health of the children (ECD Primer, 1998).

It is also for this reason that the Department of Education has joined hands with the local government units so that the needs of the children in terms of their physical development, development of personal abilities, ability to handle human relations, development of personal abilities, ability to handle human relations, development of creative and analytical ability, and development of spiritual and social values.

What the children shall become in the future depends on the investment the government pours in during their growing years. This is the principle behind the implementation of the ECD program of the Department of Education.

## METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the place and respondents of the study. It also includes a discussion of the sampling design, research instrument, data-collecting procedure, and statistical tools used in the analysis and interpretation of data.

### Place and Respondents

This study covered all central schools and one non-central school in every municipality of the different districts in the Division of Iloilo. A section in each central and non-central school with the highest population was taken as respondents of the study. The total number of pupil-respondents was 3,466. The study also covered 3,287 parents, 84 Grade 1 teachers

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teaching in the ECD program randomly selected from 42 districts in the Division of Iloilo and

210 LGUs personnel the Rural Health Unit and Municipal Social Welfare and Development.

Table 1 shows the data.

Congressional District	Central School			Non-Central School			LGU MHO/DSWD
	Teachers	Pupils	Parents	Teachers	Pupils	Parents	
First District	7	227	265	7	270	259	35
Second District	8	335	313	8	301	293	40
Third District	9	388	365	9	367	344	45
Fourth District	7	297	282	7	294	264	35
Fifth District	11	481	461	11	456	440	55
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1778</b>	<b>1687</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1688</b>	<b>1600</b>	<b>210</b>

## Sampling Design

The study made use of the purposive sampling. All central school and one non-central school per district was covered. Only one section section in each district were included in the study. Total population of parents and teachers of the sample sections from the central and non-central schools served as respondents of the study. For the LGU, complete enumeration of the personnel of the MHO and MSWD of each municipality was done.

## Validation of the Instruments

The sets of questionnaire were initially checked by the adviser for consistency of the questions ensuring that they jibed with the objectives of the study. After they were checked,

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they were submitted to the members of the dissertation committee for content and face validation. The validated sets were tested to some selected LGU personnel, parents, and teachers teaching ECD program in the District of Pilar, Capiz.

### Data Gathering Procedure

After the instruments were validated, they were reproduced according to the number of respondents in this study. The researcher secured a written permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Iloilo, district supervisors, and principals.

A permit to distribute the questionnaire to LGU personnel was also secured from the local chief executive.

Copies of the sets of survey questionnaire for the teachers and parents were given personally by the researcher, while for the LGU personnel, the copies were distributed with the help of the teacher advisers, principals, and district supervisors. Retrieval of the questionnaire was done after two weeks. The collected data were tabulated, computed, and statistically analyzed.

### Scoring of Responses

A five-point scale was used in scoring the responses using the following guide:

#### For Activities Undertaken of ECD Program

Verbal Interpretation	Score	Scale
Fully Undertaken	5	4.21 - 5.00

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Undertaken	4	3.41 - 4.20
Moderately Undertaken	3	2.61 - 3.40
Slightly Undertaken	2	1.81 - 2.60
Not Undertaken	1	1.00 - 1.80

### For Assistance that LGU Provide to ECD

Verbal Interpretation	Score	Scale
Well Provided	5	4.21 - 5.00
Provided	4	3.41 - 4.20
Moderately Provided	3	2.61 - 3.40
Slightly Provided	2	1.81 - 2.60
Not Provided	1	1.00 - 1.80

### For Adequacy of School Facilities

Verbal Interpretation	Score	Scale
Very Adequate	5	4.21 - 5.00
Adequate	4	3.41 - 4.20
Moderately Adequate	3	2.61 - 3.40
Slightly Adequate	2	1.81 - 2.60
Not Adequate	1	1.00 - 1.80

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### For Participation of LGU in the Implementation of ECD Program

Verbal Interpretation	Score	Scale
Well Provided	5	4.21 - 5.00
Provided	4	3.41 - 4.20
Moderately Provided	3	2.61 - 3.40
Slightly Provided	2	1.81 - 2.60
Not Provided	1	1.00 - 1.80

### For School-Based Interventions to the ECD Program

Verbal Interpretation	Score	Scale
Very Adequate	5	4.21 - 5.00
Adequate	4	3.41 - 4.20
Moderately Adequate	3	2.61 - 3.40
Slightly Adequate	2	1.81 - 2.60
Not Adequate	1	1.00 - 1.80

### For Level of Participation of LGU Personnel in the ECD Program

Verbal Interpretation	Score	Scale
Fully Participated	5	4.21 - 5.00
Participated	4	3.41 - 4.20
Moderately Participated	3	2.61 - 3.40
Slightly Participate	2	1.81 - 2.60

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Not Participated	1	1.00 - 1.80
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### For Parents' Participation in the ECD Program

Verbal Interpretation	Score	Scale
Fully Participated	5	4.21 - 5.00
Participated	4	3.41 - 4.20
Moderately Participated	3	2.61 - 3.40
Slightly Participate	2	1.81 - 2.60
Not Participated	1	1.00 - 1.80

### For Pupils' Academic Performance

Rating	Verbal Interpretation
86 - up	Very Good
81 - 85	Good
75 - 80	Fair

### Data Analysis

The data collected were tallied, computed, and statistically analyzed. Frequency count, mean, and percentage were used in the analysis of the socio-demographic and academic characteristics of the respondents.

Mean was used in determining the extent of implementation of the Early Childhood Development Program. It was also used to find out the level of achievement of the

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program, as well as the level of assistance, and the adequacy facilities and equipment provided to the ECD.

T-test, Duncan’s test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used in determining the academic performance of Grade 1 pupils. Statistical data were encoded in the computer and subjected in the computer and subjected to analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Results were all computed generated.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The main purpose of this study was to find out the effectiveness of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Program of the Department of Education in the Division of Iloilo.

The study covered 3,466 Grade 1 pupils, 84 Grade 1 teachers, in both central and non-central schools, 3287 parents, and 210 LGU personnel from MSWD and DOH.

Three sets of questionnaire were used in this study constructed and validated specially for the present study, the questionnaire for Grade 1 teachers, for the parents, and the local government unit personnel.

The data gathered were tabulated, computed, analyzed, and interpreted. Frequency counts, means and ranks were employed.

The differences in the study were determined by employing the t-test for independent samples.

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The .05 significance was used in the interpretation of the inferential statistics.

## Summary of the Findings

The grade 1 teachers teaching in the ECD Program in both central and non-central schools were occupying Teachers III positions. There were Teacher III positions in the fourth district than in any other of the four districts. Most of the teachers in both types of school were baccalaureate degree holders with master degree units and have attended local, divisions, and regional seminars. Majority of the teachers had an outstanding performance rating. The central school teachers were more experienced and received higher salary than those in non-central schools. The teachers in both types of school received the same benefits.

Majority of the pupils' fathers were farmers while majority of their mothers were housewives. Majority of the fathers had attended college with about one third being college graduates and four of them master's degree. The same is true for the pupils' mothers. About 26% of them were college graduates with five of them were master's degree.

The income of the parents was generally low, 46,64% had temporary homes with 41.49% of them having semi-permanent houses, average household size was five. In the non-central school, the respondents lived in the barangays, but in the central school, they resided in the town proper. Distance from school homes was less than a kilometer and pupils just walk to school.

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The activities of the ECD program were “fully undertaken” in the central schools, but only “undertaken” in the non-central schools. Facilities provided for the ECD program was “very adequate” as indicated by the overall mean of 4.27.

Pupil performance when classified by district was only 80.36 interpreted as “fair”.

Those in the central schools had a mean of 81.36 interpreted as “good”, while those in the non-central schools had only a mean of 78.86 interpreted as: fair: t-test result revealed that pupils performance was significantly higher in the second and fourth districts than those in the first, third, and fifth districts.

The most learned subjects in both central and non-central schools were Filipino and Makabayan with mean of 81.83 and 79.47 and 81.71 and 79,49 respectively.

Parents’ participation in the ECD Program, regardless of district and type of school had a mean of only 3.97 interpreted as “participated” indicating that the extent of their participation was only 80%. On the other hand, LGU participation to the ECD Program had a mean of only 3.53. This indicated that LGU had provided only the basic needs of the recipient schools but they have not fully provided everything required for the efficient implementation of the program.

Of the six interventions provide to the ECD program, training of teachers and attendance to pre-school seminars were very adequately provided. Health care, education for

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teacher, and community childcare, were adequately provided, while nutrition supplementation was only moderately provided.

Generally, regardless of district and type of schools, the provision of interventions was only "adequate". Topping the list of problems met in the ECD implementation were insufficient funds, lack of textbooks, and lack of proper training for teacher.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn:

Grade 1 teachers involved in the ECD program are BS degree holders, some with masters' degree units, occupying a Teacher III positions, attended local, divisions, and regional seminars with outstanding performance. Teachers assigned in the central school are more experienced and have higher salary than teachers in the non-central schools, however, they received the same benefits.

Mothers of Grade 1 pupils are housewives, and college graduates, while the fathers are farmers and have attended college education. They have an income below poverty line with temporary house, and have an average of five members in the family. Pupils enrolled in the central schools reside in the town proper while those enrolled in the non-central schools are living in the barangay at least one kilometer away from their school.

All activities of the ECD program are fully undertaken in the central schools, and only undertaken in the non-central schools.

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The physical and instructional facilities for the ECD program are provided very adequate.

Pupils' performance in the central school is good and fair in the non-central schools.

Pupils' performance differs significantly. Pupils in the central schools perform better than those in the non-central schools. Pupils in the second and fourth districts perform higher than pupils in the first, third, and fifth districts.

The most learned subjects are Filipino and Makabayan, and the least learned are Mathematics and English. Parents have only participated in the implementation of the ECD program.

The LGU has provided the ECD program the basic needs of the schools.

The ECD Program has adequately provided training of teachers and attendance to Pre-school seminars. Generally, the ECD program has only provided adequate interventions.

The problems meet by the implementer of the program are insufficiently funds, lack of textbooks and lack of proper training for teachers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, the researcher offers the following recommendations:

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Teachers involved in the ECD program must be encouraged to take advance education to upgrade their educational quantification, and ultimately they can occupy a higher position once educational qualified and thereby increase their salary.

The ECD Program in the Division of Iloilo has to be sustained and improved its implementation by providing complete and very adequate facilities as required.

Teachers in the ECD program should give more attention to developing the competencies of pupils in Mathematics and English. Strategies should have to be used so that pupil performance in the four subject areas can be improved.

More focus has to be given to the improvement of pupils' performance in the non-central schools.

Parents should be encouraged to give more of their time supporting their children and the ECD program.

A strong linkage with the LGU to get more support.

Interventions like the feeding supplementation program of ECD shall be strengthened.

The school officials shall give more attention to the basic problems identified in the implementation of the ECD program.

Similar studies in other provinces may be conducted to ascertain the findings of the present investigation.

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