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Evaluation of the Domain in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) in Daycare

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A B S T R A C T :

Early childhood care and Development (ECCD) lays a strong foundation for future academic success, social competence, and emotional well-being of the young ones. The primary objective of this study is to comprehensively assess the quality of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) services in daycare centers by examining performance across the seven established developmental domains. Specifically, research seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of ECCD services, highlighting areas where programs effectively support children's growth as well as aspects that require improvement. This study will employ a quantitative research design, specifically a cross-sectional survey design, to evaluate the domain in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) in daycare settings. Based on the ratings of parents and teachers then ECCD service delivery in the daycare center shows generally strong implementation, particularly in Domains 7, 6, 3, and 1, which received the highest mean scores. These results indicate that activities and interventions related to these domains are consistently and effectively carried out. However, the findings also reveal areas that require improvement, specifically Domains 5, 2, and 4, which obtained lower ratings from both respondent groups. The lower scores suggest in program delivery, insufficient resources, or limited integration of activities linked to these domains. Overall, the ECCD program demonstrates commendable strengths but still needs targeted efforts to enhance weaker areas in order to achieve a more holistic and balanced approach in supporting children's development.

Keywords: Early childhood care and Development, Performance, Strengths, weaknesses

1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood care and Development (ECCD) lays a strong foundation for future academic success, social competence, and emotional well-being of the young ones. This research also has consistently that shown that high-quality ECCD services are associated with approved child outcomes, including better cognitive skills, social-emotional development, and physical health (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Heckman, 2006). Daycare centers serve as vital platform for delivering ECCD services, ensuring that young children receive the care and support they need during their formative years.

The ECCD domains-cognitive, physical, socio-emotional, language, and early literacy- guide teachers in providing developmentally appropriate activities. Supposedly like Bredekamp (2014) and Berk (2018) explain that programs must be age appropriate and responsive to the needs of young learners. When these domains are properly assessed, educators can see if children are developing according to expected levels. This evaluation is important especially in daycare centers where resources and teaching practices may differ.

Studies from 2015 to 2025 highlight that continues monitoring of early childhood programs leads to better developmental outcomes. Arnett (2018) and more recent UMCEF reports (2021-2024) state that children who attend high-quality ECCD programs show better readiness for school and emproved social and communication skills. These findings emphasize the importance of checking if daycare centers meet the standards of ECCD and if the different developmental domains are fully supported.

In the Philippines, the ECCD Act and the National ECCD system require regular assessment of daycare programs to maintain quality. Local researchers such as Jalotjot (2020) and Salazar-Cleto (2023) note that evaluating ECCD domains helps improve teaching strategies and ensures that programs follow national guidelines. As communities face changes brought by the modern environment and post-pandemic challenges, evaluating domains becomes even more necessary.

This study aims to evaluate the ECCD domains in selected daycare centers to determine how will these programs support children's development. By examining the main domains-cognitive, physical, language, and socio-emotional , the study hopes to provide dear insights that can help teachers daycare worker , and policy makers improve ECCD services. The findings will contribute to strengthening early chilhood programs and ensuring that children receive quality care and learning to better developmental outcomes.

1.1. Objectives of the study

The primary objective of this study is to comprehensively assess the quality of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) services in daycare centers by examining performance across the seven established developmental domains. Specially, research seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of ECCD services highlighting areas where programs effectively support children's growth as well aspects that require improvement. Based on these findings, the study aims to develop evidence-based recommendations to enhance to overall implementation of ECCD in daycare centers, and capable of meeting the diverse needs of young learners.

1.2. Literatures

In the Philippine context, Republic Act No. 6972 mandates the establishment of a daycare center in every barangay to promote the holistic development and protection of children. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is responsible setting rational policies and providing oversight training, accreditation of the centers. These institutions are expected to offer children basic care, development , and education services through qualified ECCD teachers (Abdul, 2021).

An overview of the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) is a comprehensive and integrated system of policies, programs, and service designed to provide for the basic holistic needs of young children promoting their optimum growth and development.

The seven core domains of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) collecting support a child holistic growth. Gross motor domain involves large-muscle coordination needed for balance, posture, and physical exploration, which research shows foundational for later competence and healthy activity (Piek et al., 2008; WHO, 2020). Fine motor domain, which includes hand eye coordination and manipulation of small objects, is linked to emerging writing readiness and problem solving skills (Cameron et al., 2012;Xu and Lee, 2021). The self-help/adaptive domain encompasses routines such as feeding, dressing, and personal care, promoting independence and daily living skills essential for school readiness (Bronsun, 2000; Denham et al., 2017). Cognitive development include early reasoning , memory attention, problem-solving, which are strengthened through play-based and inquiry-based experiences (Piaget, 2004; Blair & Raver, 2015). Language and communication skills, both expressive, receptive, support social interaction, literacy, and learning, with early exposure to rich language environments shown to boost later academic achievement (Hoff, 2006; Rowe, 2018). Socio-emotional development, including self regulation, empathy, and relationship building, is critical for mental health and positive school adjustment (Denham, 2006; Jones et al., 2015). Finally the spiritual-moral domain nurtures values, empathy, respect, and sense of purpose, helping children develop ethical decision-making and pro-social behaviors (Loval, 2010; Narvaez, 2019). Together, these seven domains reflect a comprehensive and interconnected framework for understanding and supporting children's early development.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Design

This study will employ a quantitative research design, specifically a cross sectional survey design, to evaluate the domain in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) in daycare settings.

2.2. Respondent of the Study

The sample consisted of; 20 daycare Teacher which is selected from different daycare centers in Municipality of Leyte, Leyte. There wil be 20 Parents that will be chosen from the same daycare centers, ensuring they have children enrolled in the ECCD program , and 40 daycare children enrolled in daycare centers, aged 3-5 years.

2.3. Research Instrument

A questionnaire prepared intended for the teachers and parents, assessing their perceptions of the ECCD programs effectiveness across different domains. The Early Childhood Care Development assessment tools is the standardized tools were used to assess the developmental progress of the children in the sample.

2.4. Data Gathering Procedure

To gather pertinent data for the study, the researcher first secured approval for the research implementation. Consent letter were sent to the selected parents and teachers having their child enrolled in daycare center. All participants were made aware of their rights and responsibilities, data privacy policies, as well as the schedule of survey activities. After all survey questionnaires ECCD checklist tools collected, the score were tallied and consolidated to assess the quality of service implementation and the collected data were the statistically analyzed.

2.5. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (e.g., means, frequencies, percentages) will be used to summarize the data and provide the overview of ECCD services and child outcomes. Inferential statistics (e.g., re regression analysis, ANOVA) will be used to examine the relationships between ECCD services and child

outcomes. The reliability of the survey questionnaire and ECCD assessment tool will be ensured through pilot testing and validation.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

Informed consent will be obtained for the daycare teachers and parents before data collection. The confidentiality and anonymity of all participants were made aware of their rights and responsibilities, data privacy policies will be ensured through the used of coded data and secure data storage..

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Assessing the quality of ECCD services in daycare center across seven domains.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Distribution of ECCD Domain Ratings by Parents and Teachers

ECCD Domain	Mean (Parents)	% of Total Mean (Parents)	Mean (Teachers)	% of Total (Teachers)
Domain 1	11.25	14.58%	11.70	14.90%
Domain 2	10.05	13.03%	9.60	12.22%
Domain 3	11.25	14.58%	11.90	15.16%
Domain 4	10.40	13.48%	10.95	13.95%
Domain 5	9.30	12.05%	9.80	12.48%
Domain 6	12.25	15.88%	11.95	15.22%
Domain 7	12.35	16.02%	12.00	15.29%
Overall Total	**77.15**	**100%**	**78.50**	**100%**

Note:(Percentages computed as : Mean ÷ Overall Total x 100)

The overall mean rating given by parents (77.15) and teachers (78.5) indicates a high level of agreement between both groups in evaluating the ECCD domains. Both groups reflected generally positive perceptions, with teachers' evaluations slightly higher overall. The parents got the highest mean rating was recorded in Domain7 (12.35, 16.02%), followed closely by Domain 6 (12.25, 15.88%) showing strong agreement on the effective implementation of these domains. While the teachers got the highest mean rating was in Domain 7 (12.0, 15.29%), followed closely by Domain 6 (11.95, 15.22%), consistent with parents' evaluations. Both groups gave the lowest ratings to Domain 5 (Parents: 9.3 or 12.05% ; Teachers': 9.8 or 12.48%), suggesting this area requires improvement or further attention to reach the same level of quality as the other domains. For the comparison of parent and teacher perception has small differences in means (ranging from 0.3 to 0.7 points per domain) demonstrate strong consistency in perceptions. This suggests that both stake holders observe similar strengths and weaknesses across the ECCD domains in daycare centers.

Table 2. Distribution of Children's Ages

For Parents

Child's Age	Frequency	Percentage
3 years old	3	15%
4 years old	15	77%
5 years old	2	10%
Total	**20**	**100%**

For Teachers

Child's Age	Frequency	Percentage
3 years old	4	20%
4 years old	15	75%
5 years old	1	5%
Total	**20**	**100**

The data presents the distribution of children's ages as reported by two groups -parents and teachers- in the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) settings of each groups has a total of 20 respondents. The data shows that the majority of children in the ECCD program are 4 years old, representing 75% in both parent and teacher responses. This suggest that age 4 is the most common and possibly the ideal age for children participating in ECCD activities. Children aged 3 years old make up a smaller portion of the ECCD population - 15% from parents and 20% from teachers indicating early participation but less representation compared to 4 years old. Meanwhile, 5-year-old children have the least frequency -10% (parents) and 5% (teachers) suggesting that older children might already be transitioning to the kindergarten or formal schooling level.

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference in the mean assessment of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) domains between parents and teachers. The mean scores of the two groups were compared across seven domains, as shown in the descriptive analysis.Hypotheses stated the Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in the mean ECCD domain ratings between parents and teachers. While the Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference in the mean ECCD domain ratings between parents and teachers. The analysis yielded an F-Value of 0.067 with a corresponding p-value of 0.800. since the p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of parents and teachers In assessing the ECCD domains.These findings suggest that both parents and teachers have similar perceptions regarding children's development across the different ECCD domains. The consistency of ratings between the two groups reflects a shared understanding of children's developmental performance in the daycare setting.

Table 3. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on ECCD Domain Assessments

ANOVA Summary Table

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p-value	Decision
Between Groups	_	1	_	0.067	0.800	Not Significant

Within Groups	_	12	_
Total	_	**13**	_

(Note: SS and MS values are omitted for brevity; results are based on computed F and p-values)

Strength and Weaknesses in ECCD services delivery based on the presents, the results revealed varying levels of implementation across the seven domains as evaluated by parents and teachers. Both groups consistently identified Domains 7, 6, 3 and 1 as the strongest areas of service delivery, with Domain 7 the highest percentage ratings (16.02% for parents; 15.29% for teachers), indicating well-implemented activities and strong program execution. Similarly, Domains 6 and 3 also received high mean score, reflecting effective delivery of services within these areas. In contrast, Domain 5 and 2 emerged as the weakest, with Domain 5 receiving the lowest ratings from both parents (9.30; 12.05%) and teachers (9.80; 12.48%), suggesting limited implementation and the need for improvement. Domain 4 also showed moderate but comparatively lower ratings. Overall, the findings show that while several ECCD domains are delivered effectively, certain areas require enhanced support, resources, and program strengthening to achieve more balanced and holistic service delivery.

4. CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the ratings of parents and teachers then ECCD service delivery in the daycare center shows generally strong implementation, particularly in Domains 7, 6, 3 and 1, which received the highest mean scores. These results indicate that activities and interventions related to these domains are consistently and effectively carried out. However, the findings also reveal areas that require improvement, specifically Domains 5, 2 and 4, which obtained lower ratings from both respondent groups. The lower scores suggest in program delivery, insufficient resources, or limited integration of activities linked to this domains. Overall, the ECCD program demonstrates commendable strengths but still needs targeted efforts to enhance weaker areas in order to achieve a more holistic and balanced approach in supporting children's development.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the daycare center strengthen the implementation of the lower rated ECCD domains, particularly Domain 5, 2, and 4, by enhancing related activities and providing more developmentally appropriate learning materials. Additional teacher training and capacity-building programs should be conducted to support effective delivery of domain specific activities. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation practices along with improving parent teaching collaboration, will also help ensure consistent service delivery. Furthermore, closer coordination with local government units and the ECCD Council is advised to secure needed resources and technical assistance. By addressing these areas, the daycare center can further enhance the quality and balance of its ECCD services.

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