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Pedagogical Strategies and Teaching Competencies in Kindergarten Classrooms of Nagtipunan District Public Schools

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Abstract Effective kindergarten instruction requires developmentally appropriate pedagogical practices that address the diverse learning needs of young children. This study examined the pedagogical strategies employed by kindergarten teachers in the Nagtipunan District Public Schools, Quirino. A descriptive survey research design was employed, involving 182 kindergarten teachers. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire supplemented by interviews and documentary analysis and were analyzed using frequency, percentage, and weighted mean. The findings revealed that the objectives of the Kindergarten Program were fully realized (M = 4.36), while teachers demonstrated very skillful essential teaching skills (M = 4.34). Pedagogical practices were rated very effective overall (M = 4.50), with strategies obtaining the highest mean (M = 4.57). Instructional materials were sufficient in terms of adequacy (M = 3.86) and very effective in use (M = 4.44), while evaluative tools (M = 4.48), administrative support (M = 4.26), and supervisory support (M = 4.31) were also rated very effective. Challenges in implementing kindergarten instruction were slightly serious (M = 2.42), whereas interventions were consistently employed (M = 4.49). The findings indicate that kindergarten instruction in the district is supported by strong teacher competencies, effective pedagogical practices, assessment tools, and school support. However, continued improvement in the adequacy of instructional materials and sustained professional development is recommended to further strengthen developmentally appropriate kindergarten instruction.

Keywords: *kindergarten education, pedagogical strategies, teaching skills, instructional materials, early childhood education*

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood and kindergarten education are really important for helping kids develop their cognitive, language, social-emotional, physical, and basic academic skills. It's all about laying the groundwork for lifelong learning (Mardiah et al., 2024; Tuyen & Oanh, 2025). Around the world, teaching methods focus on play-based, child-centered, and inquiry-based learning to boost critical thinking and teamwork. These practices are inclusive and developmentally appropriate, needing strong teacher-student interactions, good teaching materials, ongoing assessments, and supportive environments (Pape-Pedersen, 2021; Wijoyo, 2025). Plus, how well teachers are prepared and their teaching quality really impact how kids progress (Dilek, 2025; Yeni Lestari et al., 2022).

In the Philippines, Republic Act No. 10157 emphasizes holistic development in kindergarten using child-centered and play-based methods (Mardiah et al., 2024). Even though the Department of Education sets curriculum standards, there are still challenges like meeting diverse learner needs, having enough materials, and ensuring continuous professional development (Padilla et al., 2025; Yeni Lestari et al., 2022). Teachers' skills, support from administration, and assessment practices also play a big role in how education is delivered. So, it's crucial to check if these recommended teaching approaches are actually being used in classrooms to meet national educational goals (Mardiah et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023).

In this study, we focus on the Nagtipunan District Public Schools, which offer a unique local setting for examining kindergarten teaching. It is important to examine teaching methods in this setting because local methods and challenges may differ from those on a national or international level. Teachers in the

Nagtipunan District are expected to use teaching practices that fit the developmental needs of young children. This includes essential teaching skills and effective methods, techniques, strategies, and approaches that support overall child development. In addition, using the right teaching materials, evaluation tools, and receiving support from the administration and supervisors are key factors that affect how classrooms operate in this district (Cobanoglu et al., 2023; Tilbe & Xiaosong, 2024). This study highlights important areas for local focus, such as the main goals of the Kindergarten Program as they are put into practice in the district, the range of teaching skills shown by educators, and the different teaching strategies used, such as child-centered and play-based learning. It is also crucial to examine the evaluation tools and support systems available through both administrative and supervisory channels, as these directly affect how well teaching works and how students perform. Teachers face a variety of challenges when using these strategies and often adapt by using different interventions to meet the specific needs of learners in the Nagtipunan context (Engel et al., 2024; Rina et al., 2025).

Existing research points out some great teaching strategies for kindergarten around the world, such as how the curriculum is implemented, using play in teaching, how teachers and students interact, and the resources used for teaching. However, there is not much local research on these aspects in Nagtipunan District Public Schools. This study does not just look at teaching strategies; it also explores teachers' skills and methods, the resources they use, how they evaluate, and the roles of administration and supervision. It even considers the challenges teachers face and the solutions they come up with. This comprehensive approach shows the complex nature of kindergarten teaching in local schools and ties in with the study's research questions (Dilek, 2025; Florescu & Ciolan, 2023). Therefore, there is a need for a specific look at kindergarten teaching in Nagtipunan District to find out what works well and what could be improved. The results can help with teacher development, improve teaching quality, support from administration and supervision, and refine local policies to better fit the district's educational needs (Palojärvi et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aimed to examine the pedagogical strategies employed in kindergarten classrooms of the Nagtipunan District Public Schools, Quirino. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic and professional profile of the kindergarten teacher respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, present position, latest performance rating, years of experience as a kindergarten teacher, and in-service trainings and seminars attended?
2. To what extent are the objectives of the Kindergarten Program realized, and what is the level of essential teaching skills of kindergarten teachers?
3. How effective are the pedagogical practices employed in kindergarten instruction in terms of methods, techniques, strategies, and approaches?
4. How are instructional resources, assessment practices, and school support for kindergarten instruction assessed in terms of adequacy of instructional materials, effectiveness of instructional materials, evaluative tools, administrative support, and supervisory support?
5. To what extent are the challenges encountered in the implementation of kindergarten instruction, and how frequently are interventions employed to address these challenges?

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to examine the pedagogical strategies implemented by kindergarten teachers in the public elementary schools of Nagtipunan District. The descriptive design was considered appropriate because the study sought to describe existing conditions, practices, and experiences without manipulating any of the variables. Specifically, it examined the extent of realization of the objectives of the Kindergarten Program, essential teaching skills, methods,

techniques, strategies, approaches, instructional materials, evaluative tools, administrative and supervisory support, challenges encountered, and interventions employed by kindergarten teachers. A structured questionnaire served as the primary data-gathering instrument, supplemented by interviews and documentary analysis to provide additional information and support the interpretation of the quantitative findings. This approach enabled the researcher to obtain a comprehensive description of kindergarten instructional practices within their actual educational setting.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in public elementary schools in the Nagtipunan District, Municipality of Nagtipunan, Province of Quirino, Cagayan Valley Region (Region II), Philippines. Nagtipunan is the largest municipality in Quirino in terms of land area and consists of 16 barangays (villages). The municipality was selected as the research locale because the study specifically focused on the pedagogical practices of kindergarten teachers serving public elementary schools. Its geographic and community contexts provided an appropriate setting for examining how kindergarten instruction is implemented and how teachers respond to the instructional needs of young learners within the district.

Respondents of the Study

The study's respondents included 182 teachers who manage kindergarten classes in the public elementary schools of Nagtipunan District, Division of Quirino. These teachers were the primary sources of information, as they are directly involved in implementing the Kindergarten Program and have firsthand experience with classroom instruction, teaching strategies, instructional materials, assessment practices, administrative and supervisory support, and challenges encountered in the program's implementation. Including teachers from public elementary schools in the district allowed the researcher to gather information directly from educators responsible for delivering kindergarten instruction.

Data-Gathering Instrument

This study used a structured questionnaire as the primary instrument for gathering the required data. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher based on a review of the literature and studies relevant to kindergarten education and pedagogical practices. It consisted of two major parts. Part I gathered information concerning the respondents' demographic and professional profiles, while Part II assessed the extent of the realization of the general objectives of the Kindergarten Program, essential teaching skills, effectiveness of teaching methods, techniques, strategies, and approaches, adequacy and effectiveness of instructional materials, effectiveness of evaluative tools, administrative and supervisory support, challenges encountered in implementing kindergarten instruction, and interventions employed to address these challenges. The questionnaire was supplemented by interviews to clarify and verify the selected responses provided by the teacher respondents.

Validation and Try-Out of the Questionnaire

Prior to its final administration, the questionnaire underwent a try-out and refinement process to improve item clarity and appropriateness. The initial instrument was administered to selected kindergarten teachers from neighboring municipalities and districts who were not part of the study's actual respondents. The participants were requested to answer the questionnaire and provide comments and suggestions regarding the clarity, relevance, and comprehensibility of its items. Their feedback was considered when revising the instruments. The revised questionnaire was subsequently submitted to the research adviser and the Dean of the Graduate School for further evaluation and recommendations. Necessary revisions were incorporated before the final questionnaire was reproduced and administered to the target respondents in the Nagtipunan District.

Data-Gathering Procedure

Before collecting the data, the researcher secured the necessary permissions from the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent and the school heads of the participating public elementary schools. After approval was obtained, the questionnaires were personally administered to the kindergarten teacher respondents with the assistance of the respective school heads. The purpose of the study and the procedures for completing the questionnaire were communicated to the respondents before data collection. Follow-ups were conducted when necessary to facilitate the retrieval of the questionnaires. In addition to the survey and interviews, documentary analysis was used to examine relevant official documents, memoranda, reports, maps, charts, and other records related to kindergarten instruction. The information obtained from these sources supplemented the questionnaire responses and assisted in interpreting the findings.

Scoring and Interpretation

The questionnaire responses were quantified using a five-point Likert-type scale with numerical weights ranging from 5 to 1. The interpretation assigned to each numerical range depended on the dimensions being measured. Mean scores ranging from 4.21–5.00, 3.41–4.20, 2.61–3.40, 1.81–2.60, and 1.00–1.80 represent progressively lower levels of the measured construct. For the realization of program objectives, the descriptions ranged from *Fully Realized* to *Least Realized*; teaching skills ranged from *Very Skillful* to *Least Skillful*; effectiveness ranged from *Very Effective* to *Least Effective*; adequacy of instructional materials ranged from *Very Sufficient* to *Insufficient*; challenges ranged from *Very Serious* to *Not a Problem*; and interventions ranged from *Always* to *Never*. These scales provided a consistent basis for summarizing and interpreting the respondents' assessments across the different dimensions investigated in the study.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data gathered from the respondents were organized, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate descriptive statistical techniques. Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the demographic and professional profiles of the respondents, including age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, present position, teaching experience, and relevant training or seminars attended. The weighted mean was used to determine the respondents' assessments of the realization of the Kindergarten Program objectives, essential teaching skills, effectiveness of pedagogical methods, techniques, strategies and approaches, instructional materials and evaluative tools, administrative and supervisory support, challenges encountered, and interventions employed. The resulting weighted means were interpreted using the corresponding descriptive categories established for each scale. These statistical procedures were appropriate because the primary purpose of the study was to describe the existing characteristics, practices, and perceptions of kindergarten teachers rather than establish causal relationships.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Demographic and Professional Profile of the Kindergarten Teacher-Respondents (N = 182)

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age (years)	21–25	21	11.53
	26–30	24	13.18
	31–35	25	13.73
	36–40	25	13.73
	41–45	26	14.28
	46–50	23	12.63
	51–55	20	10.98
	56–60	20	10.98
Gender	Male	0	0.00
	Female	182	100.00

Civil Status	Single	16	8.79
	Married	166	91.21
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelors in early childhood education	15	8.24
	BS in Preschool Education	12	6.59
	BS in Family Life and Child Development	11	6.04
	Beed with specialization in Kindergarten/Preschool/ECE	18	9.89
	BEEd, Major in Teaching Early Grades	10	5.49
	BA/BS in allied discipline with at least 18 ECE units	11	6.04
	BEEd, Major in SPED with 18 ECE units	12	6.59
	BSEd with additional Diploma in ECE	11	6.04
	Other degree courses with at least 18 ECE units	20	10.98
	MAEd/MA Graduate	50	27.47
	PhD/EdD Graduate	12	6.59
Present Position	Teacher I	42	23.07
	Teacher II	24	13.18
	Teacher III	93	51.09
	Master Teacher I	11	6.04
	Master Teacher II	12	6.59
Latest Performance Rating	Outstanding	140	76.92
	Very Satisfactory	42	23.07
	Satisfactory	0	0.00
Years as Kindergarten Teacher	1–5 years	25	13.73
	6–10 years	29	15.93
	11–15 years	26	14.28
	16–20 years	37	20.32
	21–25 years	16	8.79
	26–30 years	24	13.18
	31 years and above	25	13.73

Table 1 presents the demographic and professional characteristics of the 182 kindergarten teacher respondents. The respondents were distributed across different age groups, with the largest proportion reporting in the 41–45-year-old group (14.28%). All respondents were female (100%), and the majority were married (91.21%). In terms of educational attainment, the largest group consisted of MAEd/MA graduates (27.47%), indicating that a considerable proportion had pursued graduate education. Regarding academic position, more than half were Teacher III (51.09%), while 76.92% received an Outstanding performance rating. Teaching experience was also varied, although the largest proportion had 16–20 years of experience (20.32%). 1a Overall, the profile indicates a group of kindergarten teachers with substantial professional experience, relatively high educational qualifications, and strong reported performance ratings, providing an experienced respondent base for examining pedagogical practices in the district.

Figure 1. In-Service Trainings/Seminars Attended by Kindergarten Teachers \

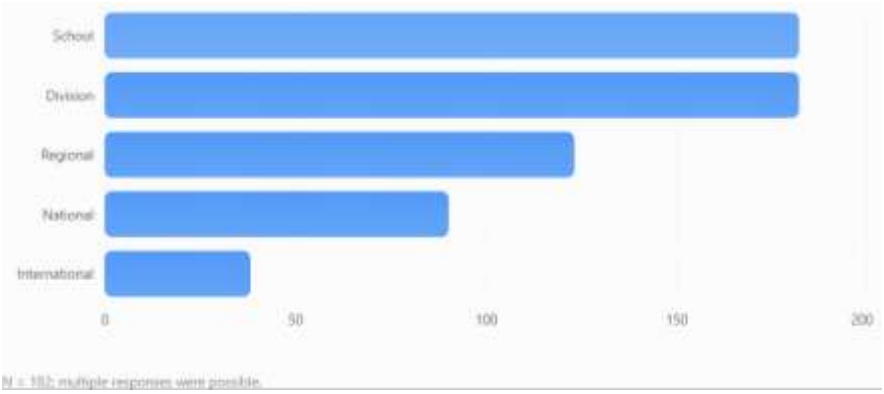

Figure 1 shows the participation of kindergarten teachers in in-service training and seminars at various levels. All 182 respondents attended both school- and division-level training, indicating strong participation in professional development activities that are readily accessible within their local educational settings. Participation decreased at higher levels, with 123 teachers attending regional training, 90 attending national training, and only 38 participating in international training sessions. 1a This pattern suggests that teachers have greater exposure to locally organized professional development opportunities, while participation becomes more limited as the level of training expands. The comparatively low participation in international activities highlights the opportunity to broaden teachers' professional exposure through greater access to higher-level training, conferences and professional learning activities. Since teachers could attend more than one level of training, the frequencies represent multiple responses and should not be interpreted as mutually exclusive categories.

Table 2. Realization of Kindergarten Program Objectives and Essential Teaching Skills

Dimension	Mean	Estimated SD	Interpretation
Realization of Kindergarten Program Objectives	4.36	0.52	Fully Realized
Essential Teaching Skills	4.34	0.49	Very Skillful

Table 2 shows that kindergarten program objectives and essential teaching skills are rated highly, with mean scores of 4.36 and 4.34, indicating fully realized, skillful kindergarten instruction. This suggests that teachers are meeting curricular goals and demonstrating competencies essential for early childhood education. High realization may reflect adherence to structured instructional frameworks and targeted pedagogical programs. Professional development programs provide frameworks such as learning trajectories to guide instructional decisions and enhance children's engagement. However, ongoing support and expanded in-service training are still needed to refine teaching and assessment practices(Koç & Koç, 2023). Regarding essential teaching skills, competencies extend beyond content delivery to classroom management, formative assessment, creativity, and social-emotional development. Effective educators show motivation for professional growth, and participation in competency development programs improves knowledge, skills, and educational outcomes in kindergartens(Florescu & Ciolan, 2023; Yeni Lestari et al., 2022). Innovative strategies such as gamification also increase children's cognitive and social skills, motivation, and engagement while supporting skillful teaching practices(Wijoyo, 2025). Responsive teacher interactions also support social development objectives(Liu & Wang, 2022).

Table 3. Effectiveness of Pedagogical Practices in Kindergarten Instruction

Pedagogical Practice	Mean	Estimated SD	Interpretation
Methods	4.56	0.47	Very Effective

Techniques	4.55	0.49	Very Effective
Strategies	4.57	0.46	Very Effective
Approaches	4.30	0.53	Very Effective
Overall	4.50	0.49	Very Effective

Table 3 indicates that pedagogical practices in kindergarten instruction are perceived as very effective across all measured dimensions—methods (mean = 4.56), techniques (mean = 4.55), strategies (mean = 4.57), and approaches (mean = 4.30)—with an overall mean score of 4.50. This reflects educators' commitment to diverse, developmentally suitable practices tailored to young learners' needs. Research highlights innovative strategies that support this effectiveness. Gamification enhances cognitive and social skills, including problem-solving and attention, while increasing motivation in interactive learning environments(Wijoyo, 2025). Multimedia tools in language education improve vocabulary acquisition, motivation, participation, confidence, and technological proficiency(Ilham et al., 2023). Chess teaching models also enhance logical thinking, memory, and academic performance(Ye, 2025). Despite leadership challenges in balancing policy demands and autonomy, collaborative, constructivist, and culturally responsive approaches remain central to improving pedagogical quality in early education(Jamin et al., 2024; Lund, 2024).

Table 4. Instructional Resources, Assessment, and School Support in Kindergarten Instruction

Dimension	Mean	Estimated SD	Interpretation
Adequacy of Instructional Materials	3.86	0.61	Sufficient
Effectiveness of Instructional Materials	4.44	0.50	Very Effective
Evaluative Tools	4.48	0.47	Very Effective
Administrative Support	4.26	0.55	Very Effective
Supervisory Support	4.31	0.52	Very Effective

Table 4 presents a positive evaluation of instructional resources, assessment tools, and school support, which are essential for effective kindergarten instruction. The adequacy of instructional materials, with a mean score of 3.86 and an estimated standard deviation of 0.61, is considered sufficient, indicating that resources generally meet classroom needs but could better support diverse learning activities in early childhood settings. Their perceived effectiveness is higher (mean = 4.44, SD = 0.50), suggesting that they stimulate learning and engagement, consistent with studies on multimedia and interactive teaching aids (Aloizou et al., 2025; Ilham et al., 2023). Evaluative tools also received a very effective rating (mean = 4.48, SD = 0.47), underscoring their role in monitoring children's progress and guiding pedagogical decisions. Effective assessment helps teachers tailor instruction to individual needs, foster holistic development, and ensure curriculum fidelity (Florescu & Ciolan, 2023; Tuyen & Oanh, 2025). Administrative support, rated very effective (mean = 4.26, SD = 0.55), sustains program quality through resource allocation, professional development, and a positive learning environment (Florescu & Ciolan, 2023). Supervisory support also received a very effective rating (mean = 4.31, SD = 0.52), providing feedback, mentoring, and guidance for improved practice (Florescu & Ciolan, 2023; Ye, 2025) for young learners overall.

Table 5. Challenges Encountered and Interventions Employed in the Implementation of Kindergarten Instruction

Dimension	**Mean**	**Estimated SD**	**Interpretation**
Challenges Encountered	2.42	0.64	Slightly Serious
Interventions Employed	4.49	0.48	Always

The table provides a quantitative overview of kindergarten instruction, highlighting the challenges teachers face and the interventions they use to address these challenges. The mean score for "Challenges Encountered" is 2.42 with a standard deviation of 0.64, suggesting that teachers perceive these

challenges as somewhat serious. These challenges often include limited access to adequate instructional materials, difficulties in integrating technology into classroom activities, and variability in teacher preparedness and professional development opportunities. These issues are consistent with findings from studies where kindergarten teachers encountered challenges in adapting pedagogies to include engineering play practices or digital media integration, reflecting the complexity of aligning instructional methods with modern educational demands (Ramadani et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2023). On the other hand, the mean score for "Interventions Employed" is high at 4.49 with a standard deviation of 0.48, indicating that teachers consistently implement strategies to overcome obstacles in kindergarten education. Interventions range from professional development efforts aimed at enhancing pedagogical skills to the judicious use of technology and digital resources to enrich learning experiences. Teachers also adapt their instructional strategies to support diverse learners, adopt play-based and inquiry-driven approaches, and engage in collaborative teaching practices. Furthermore, virtual kindergarten educators emphasize the effective use of digital tools to document play and learning despite technological challenges (Alotaibi, 2023; Wolak & Kim, 2023). Additionally, studies highlight that ongoing professional development, supportive administrative policies, and adaptive pedagogical frameworks are crucial in enabling teachers to effectively translate interventions into classroom success. The high intervention scores reflect teachers' dedication to overcoming challenges despite systemic and contextual barriers, ultimately contributing positively to the quality of kindergarten instruction and child outcomes (Allehyani, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that kindergarten instruction in the Nagtipunan District Public Schools is characterized by strong teacher competencies and the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate pedagogical practices. Teachers demonstrate the capacity to translate the objectives of the Kindergarten Program into classroom practices through appropriate methods, techniques, strategies, and approaches that respond to young learners' developmental needs. Instructional materials, evaluative tools, and administrative and supervisory support further contribute to creating a supportive environment for effective teaching and learning. However, the adequacy of instructional materials remains an area that requires continued attention to ensure that teachers have sufficient resources to provide varied, engaging, and meaningful learning experiences for their students. Despite the challenges encountered in implementing kindergarten instruction, teachers consistently employ appropriate interventions to address the needs of their classrooms. Overall, the findings emphasize that quality kindergarten instruction depends on the combined contribution of competent teachers, responsive pedagogical practices, adequate learning resources, effective assessment, sustained professional development, and strong school-based support

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it would be beneficial for kindergarten teachers to continue effectively using child-centered, play-based, interactive, and developmentally appropriate pedagogical practices. Additionally, they are encouraged to enhance their teaching competencies through relevant professional-development activities. School heads and education administrators are advised to focus on improving the availability and adequacy of instructional materials, particularly those that support varied and meaningful learning experiences, as material adequacy received a comparatively lower assessment than other dimensions. It is also important to maintain continued administrative and supervisory support through mentoring, classroom observations, constructive feedback, and opportunities for professional development. Given that participation in professional development decreased from local to higher-level training activities, it would be advantageous to provide greater opportunities for regional, national, and international training to broaden teachers' professional exposure. Finally, teachers are encouraged to continue implementing appropriate interventions to address classroom challenges, while school leaders should regularly assess emerging instructional

needs to ensure that kindergarten practices remain responsive to learners' developmental needs and the objectives of the Kindergarten Program.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to kindergarten teachers in public elementary schools in the Nagtipunan District; therefore, the findings reflect the conditions, experiences, and pedagogical practices within this specific educational setting and may not be generalized to kindergarten teachers in other districts, divisions, or school systems. The study primarily employed a descriptive survey design and relied largely on teachers' self-reported responses, which may have been influenced by individual perceptions and response tendencies. Although interviews and documentary analyses were used to supplement the survey data, this study did not directly measure learners' academic, cognitive, social-emotional, or developmental outcomes. Moreover, the descriptive nature of the research does not establish causal relationships between pedagogical practices, instructional resources, school support, and the effectiveness of kindergarten instruction. These limitations should be considered when interpreting and applying these findings.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future studies may expand the investigation to kindergarten teachers from other districts, divisions, or regions to determine whether similar patterns of pedagogical practices, instructional resources, challenges, and support mechanisms are observed across different educational contexts. Researchers may also employ mixed-method, longitudinal, comparative, or experimental designs to obtain a deeper understanding of how specific pedagogical strategies influence young learners' development and their learning outcomes. Further research should examine the relationships between teacher characteristics, professional development, instructional resources, administrative and supervisory support, and the quality of classroom practices. Particular attention may also be given to the adequacy of instructional materials, which received a comparatively lower assessment (M = 3.86), and teachers' access to higher-level professional development opportunities. BN3-0615903 Future investigations may incorporate classroom observations, perspectives of school heads and parents, and direct measures of learner outcomes to provide a more comprehensive assessment of kindergarten instruction.

ETHICS STATEMENT

We ensured that all ethical guidelines for research with human participants were followed in this study. Since our participants were Grade 3 students and thus minors, we obtained informed consent from their parents or legal guardians. We also received assent from the children themselves before they participated. Participation was entirely voluntary, and they were informed that they could opt out at any time without any consequences. We maintained confidentiality and anonymity, using the information solely for research purposes. The questionnaire was administered with instructions that were easy for their age to understand, and we assisted them without influencing their answers, adhering to the data-gathering methods outlined in the study.

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During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Scopus AI as supplementary tools to support language refinement, grammatical editing, clarity, and organization of the text. These tools were used only as aids in the research and writing process and did not replace the authors' scholarly judgment, interpretation, or responsibility. All AI-assisted content was carefully reviewed, verified, and revised by the authors as necessary. The authors take full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, originality, and content of the final published work.