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Teachers' Play-Based Learning Competence and Learners Development in Select Public Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

Acquired over the last few decades, early childhood education has become a global consensus that strongly regards this period as the cornerstone for lifelong learning and development. This study aimed to assess the relationship of teachers' play-based learning competence on learner's development in the districts of Manolo Fortich 1, 2, 3, and 4 in the Division of Bukidnon for the School Year 2024-2025. It sought to answer the respondent's profile in terms of age, position and teaching experience, the respondent's level of play-based learning based on knowledge, skills, and attitude, the respondent's learners' development as to gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive language, expressive language, cognitive and social-emotional, and their significant relationship between the play-based learning and learner's development domains and each of their profile. Descriptive-correlational research design and documentary analysis were used in this study to 150 early childhood educators and 300 learners as subject for it. Findings revealed that most teachers are middle-aged women with 6–10 years of experience, predominantly occupying entry-level positions, and generally perceive themselves as highly competent in applying play-based methods. Despite their very high level of competence in utilizing play-based learning strategies, there is no significant correlation between teachers' self-assessed competence and their evaluation of learner development, indicating a possible disconnect that warrants further attention. Demographic factors like age influence teachers' knowledge levels and perceptions but do not substantially impact assessment outcomes or overall competencies. The learners assessed are generally developing within expected ranges, although few reach advanced developmental stages, suggesting opportunities for enhancing skill development. The study concluded that despite very high level of competence, the absence of a significant link between teacher competence and learner assessment stresses the need for ongoing professional development, particularly in assessment tools and practices. Overall, although teachers are well-versed and positive about play-based learning, enhancing assessment skills remains critical to fostering holistic child development.

Keywords: play-based learning, learner's development, ECCD Domains

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In the last few decades, early childhood education has been universally established as the foundation of learning and development over an individual's lifespan. Educational systems are increasingly adopting holistic models that focus not merely on developing cognition but also on the physical, emotional, social, and language development. Among these, play-based learning (PBL) has come to be recognized as a very effective and developmentally appropriate method of supporting high-quality learning in young children. Recent assessments based on the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Checklist reveal that many children are showing low levels of development across key domains such as cognitive, language, motor, and self-help skills. This situation raises concern, as early childhood is a critical stage for building the foundation for lifelong learning and development. The observed gaps in development highlight the need to examine current teaching approaches and explore strategies such as play-based learning that can better support holistic growth among young learners.

As stipulated by UNESCO (2000) and UNICEF (2006), children's natural mode of learning is through play. When guided appropriately, it helps develop life skills, creativity, exploration, and socialization. Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff's (2008) research showed that learning settings with high play levels promote literacy, numeracy, and self-regulation.

In the Philippine setting, laws such as the ECCD Act of 2000 (RA 8980) and the Kindergarten Education Act of 2012 (RA 10157) enshrines the child's right to quality early childhood education through playful and age-suitable approaches. These are supplemented by specialized DepEd issuances like DO No. 107, s. 2010 and DM No. 17, s. 2016, which advocates significant play as a prevailing pedagogy approach, specifically for Kindergarten.

But in spite of strict national standards, practice varies, particularly in lower-resourced and rural communities. There are some schools within the local government of Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon, that have recurrent constraints such as limited classrooms, large class sizes, and absence of play equipment and teacher professional development. Such conditions perpetuate policy-practice gaps and limit young children's access to the full potential of play-based learning.

The research of 2019 underscored the fact that teacher preparation and mindset can play significant roles in the successful application of play-based learning (PBL). Domingo and Navarra (2019) stated that most public preschool teachers do not receive formal training in PBL, thus inconsistency in application at the classroom level. In addition, Ortega and Rivas (2019) explained that teachers who possess good play attitudes and adequate professional development are more likely to create rich, integrated learning environments that support multiple areas of child growth.

In 2019, researchers kept backing up the key role of play in early education, but they had different views. Rogers, Bruce, and Wood (2019) said we need to balance children’s free play with teacher-led activities. This way, children can be independent but also learn from planned lessons. Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoff (2019) liked guided play to boost social skills and language learning. Gray (2019) highlighted how free play helps children become independent and creative.

It is in Manolo Fortich's four barangays—Tankulan, Alae, Camp Phillips–Agusan Canyon, and Maluko—that the inequality is shown. Those who are in the middle receive more resources and support in active learning, whereas sitios far from the center have difficulty in reaching minimum levels, and disparities in learner experiences and development achievements between ECCD settings occur: gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive language, expressive language, cognitive, and socio-emotional.

The other critical issue is also teachers' differential levels of knowledge, competencies, and attitudes toward PBL. Their level of understanding and commitment in implementing effective play shapes the manner in which the children interact and learn in early childhood settings. Bridging policy intention and classroom reality continues to be a prime challenge, particularly in low-resource settings.

The researcher, being one of the dedicated kindergarten teachers in the Districts of Manolo Fortich, Division of Bukidnon, recognizes the growing importance of developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education. With the continuous implementation of the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) framework, there is an increasing call for instructional approaches that align with the holistic needs of young learners. One such approach is play-based learning, which emphasizes active engagement, exploration, and meaningful interaction as essential components of early education.

This study seeks to explore the level of competence of teachers in implementing play-based learning strategies and how these competencies influence or relate to learners' development across various ECCD domains. By examining the current practices, challenges, and outcomes associated with play-based instruction in selected public elementary schools, the researcher aims to generate insights that can inform professional development, curriculum planning, and policy support for early childhood educators.

Through this endeavor, the study intends to contribute to the growing body of knowledge that advocates for learner-centered, play-integrated pedagogies and to support initiatives that strengthen foundational skills and competencies among young children.

Literature and Related Studies

Play Based Learning

Play-Based Learning (PBL) is based on the ideas of John Dewey, Erik Erikson, and Howard Gardner. John Dewey thought learning by doing was super important. He felt that children should learn from what they like and from real life. He saw play as a way for children to learn and figure things out. Erik Erikson said that play is super important for young children. It helps them feel confident and learn who they are as they try new things and chat with others. Also, Howard Gardner's idea that everyone learns in their own way shows that play is valuable. Children can use their different strengths through play, like moving, talking, or creating music. All these thinkers agree that PBL is a great way to teach young children because it includes everyone and works well.

Knowledge

Everyone knows that play-based learning is super important for young kids. But how well teachers really get it makes a big difference in how it's used.

Weisberg et al (2021) said that to do play-based learning well, teachers need to find the right balance; letting children explore on their terms, but putting learning in the mix as well. Their research showed that when teachers really get how play helps kids think, get along, and feel things, they are better at using it in class. Van Oers (2019), noted that teachers that know their stuff are better at setting up classrooms in a way that makes playtime educational.

Kim mentioned in 2020 that training programs for teachers need to do more than just say use playtime. They need to give teachers the tools to think about what they are doing and plan lessons that make playtime important and relevant. All these studies show that if teachers know play-based learning well, early education will be better.

Skills

To make Play-Based Learning (PBL) work out well, teachers need good teaching skills. They have to be

able to guide, watch, and help children learn while they are playing. Weisberg et al. (2021) said that good PBL means mixing planned teaching with letting them explore on their own. Teachers should plan fun activities that match what they need to learn, but still let them be creative and do things their way. It means teachers need to find the right balance.

Berks and Meyer (2020) said that teachers also need to be good at watching and taking notes, so they can see how kids are learning through play. That way, they can make good choices about how to help kids think harder. Bodrova and Leong (2021), who are known for their work on how to use play to teach, also said that PBL means teachers need to know how to help them along. Teachers need to know when to step in, what to ask, and how to keep fun, creative play going so they can learn more. Martlco (2021) mentioned that setting up the classroom is also important. Good PBL teachers set up learning spaces with all kinds of stuff that will make children want to explore, work together, and think symbolically. All of these studies show that PBL is not just something that happens without planning. It takes skill and thought, and it's based on how kids learn and grow.

Attitude

How teachers feel about play-based learning really changes how they value it and how they use it with young kids. Fleer said that if a teacher thinks play is actually a good way to learn, they will be able to use play-based learning in a way that makes sense.

When teachers do not just see play as a break, but think it helps children learn, they are way more likely to set up their classrooms to help them be creative, ask questions, and take charge of their learning. Zosh et al (2019) said that when teachers like play, they are able to be more flexible and work with kids to learn together. Their study showed that teachers who like using play are more likely to use it to help them learn how to work together, talk to each other, and control themselves.

Berk and Meyers (2020) said that some teachers might still see play as something different from “real” learning because they feel pressure to teach in a traditional way, especially in schools. They think that training and learning about how children grow can change how teachers see things, and help them realize that play is a good way to teach. All these studies show that what teachers think—which comes from their own beliefs and the school they work in—is super important for play-based learning to work in Preschool and Kindergarten.

Learners’ Development

Learners' development was greatly enhanced through play-based learning, which supported cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Santos and Villanueva (2019) found that play encouraged creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration. Cruz and Garcia (2020) emphasized that play helped children develop communication, self-regulation, and empathy. Fernandez and Dela Cruz (2021) highlighted that play promoted active engagement and deeper understanding of concepts. Tan and Reyes (2022) observed improvements in social skills such as teamwork and conflict resolution. Dela Peña (2023) noted that play fosters intrinsic motivation and a positive attitude toward learning. These studies demonstrated the significant role of play in fostering holistic learner development.

Gross Motor Domain

Children’s big muscle skills are super important as they grow up. These skills help them do things like walk, jump, run, climb, and keep their balance. The CDC says that hitting certain milestones in moving around is a sign that a child is doing well physically and mentally. They pointed out that by age five, children should be able to do things like walk upstairs, catch a ball, and stand on one foot.

Sullivan and Lewis (2021) mentioned that these skills do more than just keep them healthy. They help

them be independent, feel sure of themselves, and play well with others. Nilsen (2020) said that children get good at moving around by playing actively in places where they can move freely or do planned activities.

Case-Smith and O'Brien (2020) also pointed out that children who have trouble moving or are behind need special movement activities led by teachers or therapists. They think that being able to move well is tied to being ready for school, paying attention, and controlling feelings. All these people agree that learning to move their body well is key to growing up healthy and learning in all sorts of ways.

Fine Motor Domain

Children need to develop their fine motor skills early on. It helps them make small movements with their hands and fingers. The CDC says that things like holding a pencil, cutting, and buttoning are super important for school and being able to do things on their own every day.

Usually, they start getting these skills between three and five years old. They were needed for writing, drawing, and taking care of themselves. Nilsen (2020) said it is important to watch children carefully and help them grow their fine motor skills. Teachers and caregivers can give them the right tools and activities like puzzles and art stuff. Sullivan and Lewis (2021) also said that good play areas can help children get better at these skills by making them fun and useful. Playing games that work on hand-eye coordination, using both hands, and making fingers stronger helps them do better in school and be more independent. So, fine motor skills are not just about moving; they also help them think and feel better.

Self Help Domain

Erikson (2019) emphasized that toddlers gain confidence and a sense of autonomy when encouraged to do tasks like dressing themselves, whereas overly controlling or critical responses can lead to shame and self-doubt. Similarly, Montessori (2019) highlighted that engaging children in real-life tasks, such as buttoning clothes or preparing simple activities, fosters independence, focus, and responsibility. Recent studies (Lillard, 2019; Frontiers in Education, 2023) affirm that both perspectives remain effective in modern classrooms, promoting creativity, problem-solving, self-regulation, and long-term independence among young learners.

Receptive Language Domain

Being able to listen, understand, and make sense of what people say is super important for kids when they are little and getting ready for school. Wanza and Karanja (2021) said that children who are good at understanding what is said to them tend to do better in school. That is because they can follow directions, understand stories, and get into the swing of things in class. Their study showed that if children hear lots of talking when they are at home and in preschool, it really helps them understand what they hear and learn new words. Zhang et al. (2020) backed this up by saying that being able to understand language also helps children handle their feelings and get along with others. They think children who are good listeners can make friends easier and work together with classmates. At the same time, Yew and O'Kearney (2020) looked at how language problems early on can mean problems with reading and behavior later. They pointed out that it is really important to spot these problems early and help children catch up, because if they have trouble understanding what is being said, they might get confused, frustrated, and struggle in school. All of these studies show that understanding language is not just about talking—it is also about growing up to be a well-rounded person and doing well in life.

Expressive Language Domain

Children use language—talking, writing, even just hand gestures—to say what is on their minds and how they feel. This is really key for them to grow up and get ready for school. Zhang, Diamond, and Powell

(2020) figured out that talking with children helps them find their voice. Adults can make a real difference just by chatting, getting them to tell stories, asking them questions, and teaching them new words. Turns out, if they are good at talking, they are also better at reading and thinking on the fly in class. Zhang et al. (2020) also pointed out that these children play well with others and seem more sure of themselves at school and with their friends.

On the flip side, Rvachew and Grawburg (2020) said that if children are slow to pick up language, it can cause problems later with reading, writing, and even how they feel about themselves. That is why it is important to find any issues early and get them some support, like speech help or games that get them talking. All this research shows that language skills are a huge deal for them to grow up healthy.

Cognitive Domain

Children's brains grow a lot in their early years. They get better at focusing, remembering things, thinking things through, and figuring stuff out. This helps them learn and adjust to the world. Diamond (2020) said that good thinking skills early on like remembering things, holding back, and being able to switch between tasks – can really help them do well in school later.

She also said that children learn best when they are in environments where they feel safe, can play a lot, and are pushed to think but also feel supported emotionally. Bert and Miller (2020) also said that thinking skills do not grow on their own: they need to talk to people, ask questions, try stuff out, and learn with a little help. Their research showed that when teachers help kids think by asking them to think about what they are doing, compare things, and guess what will happen, this helps them learn even more. So, these experts agree that helping them learn to think early on by playing, talking, and teaching on function builds a good base for learning new knowledge.

Socio-Emotional Domain

Rvachew and Grawburg (2020) found that the way children develop their early language skills significantly influences their later emotional regulation and social interactions. Language enables them to manage emotions and build friendships through meaningful conversations with attentive listeners. Zosh et al. (2017, as cited in later research, 2019) also reported that collaborative play with guided support fosters teamwork, emotional self-control, and empathy, while making learning engaging, active, and socially interactive. Likewise, Bronson (2019) emphasized that emotional competence is not solely innate but can be strengthened through positive relationships and adult modeling, which are crucial for academic success and lifelong well-being.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the Constructivist Learning Theory, rooted in the foundational works of Jean Piaget (1962) and Lev Vygotsky (1978), and supported by recent research. Contemporary studies (Smith, 2019; Johnson & Matthews, 2021) affirm that children actively construct knowledge and meaning from their experiences. Piaget's view that cognitive development occurs through interaction with the environment is reinforced by modern findings showing that play enables children to explore, experiment, and internalize new concepts through processes similar to assimilation and accommodation. Likewise, Vygotsky's emphasis on the social nature of learning is echoed in recent literature, which highlights that guided and collaborative play fosters language development, problem-solving skills, and higher-order thinking. Both classic and current perspectives agree that play is not merely for amusement but is essential to learning and holistic development, especially during the early years.

Play, in this theoretical context, serves as a powerful medium for children to develop cognitively, socially, and emotionally. It enables learners to construct understanding by engaging in active, hands-on, and

meaningful tasks. This approach supports learning environments where children are encouraged to make choices, solve problems, and collaborate with peers. These experiences align closely with the principles of constructivism. As children engage in play, they are not only acquiring knowledge but also building critical thinking skills, expressing themselves creatively, and learning to navigate social contexts.

To further support this theoretical foundation, the study also draws from the framework of Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP), as advocated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). DAP emphasizes the importance of aligning learning experiences with the child's age, individual needs, and cultural background. It recognizes that young children learn best when instructional strategies—including play—are matched to their developmental stage. DAP affirms that play-based learning is not just effective but essential for promoting well-rounded growth in young learners.

Together, Constructivist Learning Theory and Developmentally Appropriate Practice provide a comprehensive lens for understanding how children learn through play. These theories guide educators in creating environments that foster exploration, support active engagement, and address learners' holistic development. While the theoretical framework does not directly analyze specific research variables, it informs the rationale behind using play-based learning as a central approach to facilitate early childhood development.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the teachers' competence and learner's development in select public elementary schools for the School Year 2024–2025.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' level of competence in play-based learning based on knowledge, skills, and attitude?
2. What is the learners' development based on following domains: gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive language, expressive language, cognitive, and socio-emotional?
3. Is there a significant difference in the teachers' competence in play-based learning considering their profile?
4. Is there a significant difference in the teachers' assessment of their learners' development considering their profile?
5. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' competence in play-based learning and teachers' assessment of their learners' development?

Scope and Limitations

The research was conducted to determine the status of play-based learning and learners' development in the four districts of Manolo Fortich under the Division of Bukidnon. The particular focus was on how teachers' knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding play-based learning influenced young learners' development across the seven domains of Early Childhood Care and Development: gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive language, expressive language, cognitive, and socio-emotional development. The study also considered the respondents' profiles such as age, sex, teaching position, field of specialization, and years of teaching experience as moderating variables in understanding the impact and effectiveness of PBL. Integrating these factors allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the communicative and developmental outcomes enabled through play, as they unfolded in real classroom environments.

However, the study had certain limitations. It was confined to early childhood educators within the four specified districts, excluding other educational levels or locations. The use of self-reported data collection methods may have introduced bias, as responses were subject to personal interpretation and individual

understanding of play-based learning practices. While the study aimed to establish correlational relationships between PBL and learner development, it did not determine direct causation. Other factors—such as the home environment, parental involvement, and variations in curricular implementation—were considered outside the scope of this research.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The descriptive-correlational research design was used in this study to determine the relationship between teachers' play-based learning competence and learners' development in the different districts of Manolo Fortich under the Division of Bukidnon. The descriptive aspect sought to explore the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the respondents regarding play-based learning, as well as the developmental progress of learners across the seven domains of Early Childhood Care and Development. Meanwhile, the correlational aspect aimed to determine the strength and nature of the relationship between play-based learning and learner development, considering the moderating effects of respondents' profiles, such as age, gender, teaching position, teaching experience and field of specialization. Thus, the combination of descriptive and correlational approaches allowed for a more comprehensive analysis of how play-based learning influenced early childhood development based on demographic variations among educators.

In total, the study focused on one fifty (150) early childhood educators from Manolo Fortich Districts, who provided detailed insights regarding teachers' competence on play-based learning and its relationship with learner development. Using a universal sampling technique, participants were selected from diverse backgrounds and experience levels to ensure that various perspectives were appropriately represented.

Selection criteria included years of teaching experience and professional standing, as well as exposure to play-based teaching strategies. Priority was given to those who had actively facilitated structured or unstructured play, hands-on active learning experiences, and interactive learning.

Study Setting

This study covered the four (4) districts of Manolo Fortich, a municipality in the province of Bukidnon. Manolo Fortich was well known for its active education sector, accommodating a diverse population of learners from both urban areas and rural communities. The study focused on early childhood education institutions, where play-based learning was expected to be one of the primary teaching strategies supporting the holistic development of learners.

The study was conducted in selected public elementary schools within the municipality of Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon, specifically in Tankulan, Alae, Camp Phillips, Agusan Canyon, and Maluko. These areas represent a diverse range of geographical and socio-cultural contexts that influence early childhood learning experiences. Tankulan, being close to the town proper, is more urbanized and offers access to structured educational resources. Alae is a semi-rural barangay known for its agricultural activities, where learners often experience a blend of home-based and formal learning environments. Camp Phillips, situated within the Del Monte pineapple plantation, reflects a distinct company-based community with access to organized facilities and programs. Agusan Canyon, located along a major highway, presents a growing and diverse population with both indigenous and migrant families, contributing to varied early learning contexts. Lastly, Maluko is a more remote and mountainous area, where educational access may be limited, yet community involvement remains strong. The inclusion of these barangays allowed the study to capture a broad and realistic picture of learners' developmental experiences and the implementation of play-based learning strategies across different settings in Manolo Fortich.

The study included teachers with differing levels of experience, education, and specialization, some of whom were formally trained in play-based learning, while others were not. It examined how factors such as training, experience, and specialization impacted the integration and interpretation of play-based learning strategies. The final concern of the study was to investigate the advantages of play-based learning for children's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development, while also reflecting on the need for improved teaching practices and education policies.

Research Respondents and Sampling Technique

Respondents in this study were early childhood teachers for kindergarten who were currently teaching in the four (4) districts of Manolo Fortich: Tankulan, Alae, Camp Phillips, Agusan Canyon, and Maluko, all within the Division of Bukidnon.

Responses were gathered from the study's intended population of one hundred fifty (150) Kindergarten teachers through universal sampling and three hundred (300) learners as subject of the study, showing 1:2 ratio to yield comparable figures for each district for School Year 2024–2025.

Universal sampling was employed in the present study to include all kindergarten teachers across the four (4) districts of Manolo Fortich under the Division of Bukidnon. This approach was suitable, as the total number of qualified respondents one hundred fifty (150) Kindergarten teachers was manageable and allowed for full participation. Including all teachers ensured comprehensive representation and minimized sampling bias, capturing potential variations in teaching strategies, classroom environments, and resource distribution among districts.

Research Instrument

In this study, the researcher employed a patterned and researcher-made questionnaire instrument to gather the necessary data. The questionnaire was composed of three (3) parts.

Part 1, the Variable 1 inquired about the respondents' profiles to gather demographic data, including age, teaching position and field of specialization, and years of teaching experience. This information helped identify patterns and relationships between the educators' backgrounds and their approach to play-based learning.

Part 2, the Variable 2 consisted of the Play-Based Learning Scale, where respondents self-rated their knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward play-based learning using a Likert Scale. The knowledge component assessed educators' understanding of the principles and benefits of play-based learning, while the skills section evaluated how effectively they implemented such techniques in the classroom. The attitude component measured teachers' willingness and readiness to integrate play-based learning into their teaching methodologies. This section provided insights into how prepared and motivated teachers were in implementing play-based learning.

The Part 3, the Variable 2, the questionnaire focused on the assessment of learners' growth and development according to the key domains of the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) framework. The domains considered in this study were gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive language, expressive language, cognitive, and socio-emotional development. This section aimed to observe the influences of play-based learning on all domains toward the holistic development of the child. Every item in this part represented observable behaviors and developmental milestones, enabling teachers to assess the developmental progress and readiness of the learners. The responses helped determine the domains in which play-based interventions had the most positive effects and identified areas where additional support or intervention was needed.

Statistical Treatment of Data

Collected data from the study were subjected to appropriate statistical tools to effectively address the research objectives. Descriptive statistics—such as frequency, percentage, and mean were used to analyze the respondents' profile, including age, gender, position/field of specialization, and years of teaching experience. These statistics were also employed to determine the levels of play-based learning in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitude, as well as the levels of learner development across the seven (7) ECCD domains: Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Self-Help, Receptive Language, Expressive Language, Cognitive, and Socio-Emotional Development. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was applied to determine the significant relationship between the learners' development domains and the respondents' profiles.

Ethical Considerations

In this study, various ethical issues were considered to prevent the violation of participants' rights and to ensure their welfare. First, participants were given an informed consent form that stated details regarding the purpose and methodology of the study. They were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any stage of the study without being penalized. The teachers were further informed that their responses would be used for research purposes only and that their input would remain anonymous and confidential.

Utmost confidentiality was ensured, with no identifying information included in the data analysis. Data generated from the responses were secured and used solely for the purpose of this study. Aggregate forms of data were presented in research reports and publications to ensure that individual identities were not revealed. The participation of teachers was entirely voluntary, and no one was coerced into participating. They were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty, and non-participation did not compromise their professional standing or their relationship with the researcher or their institution.

All research processes were designed to be harmless, and the questionnaire was kept simple and non-intrusive, avoiding questions of a sensitive or potentially harmful nature. No personally identifiable information was collected, nor was any individual data recorded. Demographic information such as years of experience and educational qualifications was collected in categorical form and could not be used to identify individual participants. Confidentiality and respect for the privacy of participants were strictly observed by the researcher, and all information was used solely for the purposes of this study.

In accordance with institutional policies and ethical standards, permission was sought from relevant educational offices, including the Schools Division Office of Bukidnon. The results of the study were intended for academic and research purposes only, aimed at informing educational stakeholders about play-based learning practices. Ethical standards were maintained throughout the study, ring integrity and respect for all participants involved.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problem 1. What is the respondents' level of competence in play-based learning considering knowledge, skills and attitude?

Table 1

Summary Distribution of the Respondent's Competence in Play-based Learning

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Knowledge	3.49	0.38	High
Skill	3.57	0.38	Very High
Attitude	3.55	0.41	Very High

OVERALL	**3.54**	**0.39**	**Very High**

Legend: 4.00 – 3.51 Strongly Agree/Very High 2.50 – 1.51 Disagree/Low
3.50 – 2.51 Agree/High 1.50 – 0 Strongly Disagree/Very Low

Table 1 presents the summary distribution of the respondent's competence in play-based learning. The overall mean score of 3.54 (SD=0.39) indicates that respondents exhibit a Very High level of competence in using play-based learning, involving the dimensions of knowledge, skill, and attitude. This suggests that teachers not only understand the foundational principles of play in early childhood education but are also capable of applying them effectively in their practice. Their responses reflect a comprehensive grasp of how play contributes to child development, which is essential in promoting age-appropriate and engaging learning experiences. According to Arndt and Tesar (2022), play-based pedagogy thrives in classrooms where educators hold a clear and confident understanding of its value and are committed to its implementation across learning areas.

As observed, this very high overall rating aligns with findings from recent studies showing that teacher confidence and competence significantly influence the effectiveness of play-based learning. When teachers are well-equipped, they can better scaffold learning, adapt play to developmental goals, and observe learning progress meaningfully. This finding affirms the importance of sustained training, mentoring, and reflective practices in equipping educators with the tools to integrate play intentionally and professionally (Hesterman, 2021).

Moreover, the high overall rating speaks to the shift in early education paradigms that recognize play as central to both academic and social-emotional development. Educators who embrace this perspective are more likely to design responsive environments that support child-led exploration and structured learning goals. As noted by Pyle, DeLuca, and Danniels (2020), integrating play into instruction requires a balance between teacher guidance and child agencysomething that educators with strong competence levels are more likely to achieve.

Lastly, the data reinforces the need for institutional support in maintaining such high levels of competence. Although the current overall rating is very encouraging, continued access to professional development, updated learning materials, and supportive leadership is essential to sustain and enhance play-based practices over time. The findings affirm that competence in play-based learning is not static—it must be nurtured and continuously developed through collaborative and evidence-informed approaches (Wood & Hedges, 2021).

Among the three dimensions, **Skill** received the highest mean score of 3.57 (SD=0.38), interpreted as Very High. This indicates that respondents are most confident in their ability to design, implement, and manage play-based learning activities. High skill levels suggest that these educators can translate theoretical knowledge into practical classroom strategies such as setting up engaging play environments, integrating learning objectives into play scenarios, and adjusting activities to meet diverse learner needs. According to Hedges, Cullen, and Jordan (2022), skilled practitioners demonstrate a nuanced understanding of how to balance child-led play with intentional teaching.

As observed, educators with high play-related teaching skills are often seen facilitating child-centered activities while providing subtle guidance that deepens learning. They use open-ended questions, introduce new vocabulary, and extend children's thinking without interrupting the flow of play. This professional flexibility is crucial in promoting higher-order thinking and creativity among young learners

(Pyle & Alaca, 2020). The ability to plan, adapt, and scaffold activities meaningfully sets apart highly skilled teachers from those who merely supervise unstructured play.

Furthermore, a high skill rating reflects educators' familiarity with using assessment tools to monitor development through play. As observed, skilled teachers often take anecdotal notes, photos, or videos of children at play to document learning progress across domains. Such documentation supports individualized instruction and promotes accountability in early education settings. As discussed by Naughton et al. (2021), skillful play facilitation is deeply connected to reflective practice and ongoing observation, which enables educators to respond sensitively to children's needs.

While still interpreted as **High,** the **Knowledge** dimension received the **lowest mean** score of 3.49 (SD=0.38). This suggests that, compared to skill and attitude, respondents may feel less confident or less equipped in terms of their theoretical understanding of play-based learning. Knowledge includes understanding play theories, child development principles, curriculum standards, and how play aligns with learning outcomes. According to Fleer et al. (2020), foundational knowledge about the role of play in learning is essential to intentional and meaningful instruction.

As observed, some teachers may demonstrate strong practical skills but lack the formal terminology or theoretical grounding to explain their practices. This can affect their ability to justify play-based strategies in formal settings such as curriculum planning meetings or parent conferences. Furthermore, limited knowledge may result in missed opportunities to align play activities with developmental milestones or curriculum expectations (Naughton et al., 2021). Strengthening this domain ensures that play is not only implemented but also backed by evidence-based understanding.

The relatively lower rating in knowledge also suggests the need for more accessible and updated training content that deepens teachers' understanding of research, child psychology, and pedagogy. As observed, workshops and seminars often focus on strategies but give less attention to theory, leaving gaps in understanding. Enhancing content on brain development, play theories (e.g., Piaget, Vygotsky), and curriculum integration will help educators become more confident and articulate in their practice (Hesterman, 2021).

Problem 2. What is the learners' development in the following domains: gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive language, expressive language, cognitive, and social-emotional?

Table 2

Summary of the Learners' Development Domain

Domains	Mean	SD	Description
Gross Motor	10.41	1.80	Average Development
Fine Motor	10.93	1.83	Average Development
Self-Help	5.36	1.05	Slight delay in Overall Development
Receptive Language	9.59	2.40	Average Development
Expressive Language	9.55	2.68	Average Development
Cognitive Language	11.48	2.22	Highly Advance Development
Social Emotional	9.73	1.74	Average Development
OVERALL	**9.58**	**1.96**	**Average Development**

Legend: 13 – 12 Highly Advance Development/Very High 4 – 3 Slight Delay in Overall Development/Low
11 – 10 Slightly Advance Development/High 2 – 1 Significant Delay in Overall Development/ Very Low
9 – 5 Average Development/Average

Table 2 presents the summary distribution of the learners' development domain. The overall mean of 9.58 (SD=1.96) with a description of **Highly Advance Development** implies that the learners are performing at or slightly above expected developmental levels. They are not just meeting what is expected for their age, but in many cases, they are showing signs of being a little ahead in areas like thinking, moving, speaking, and relating to others. When learners show balanced progress like this, it means that they are growing in a healthy way. The result also shows that the learning environment, including how teachers guide and how families support their children, is working positively for most learners. As observed, children learn best when they are supported at home and school. They reflect a positive outcome for the teaching strategies, home support, and early intervention mechanisms employed in the learners' environment. Learners are not merely meeting developmental norms but in some cases are exceeding them, especially, in domains such as cognitive and motor skills. Studies affirm that children exposed to enriched environments tend to exhibit higher overall development scores (Lerner et al., 2021).

Among the domains, **cognitive domain** found to have the highest mean of 11.48 (SD=2.22) with a description of **Highly Advance Development.** This denotes that the learners are doing very well when it comes to understanding, solving problems, paying attention, and remembering things. Having a strong thinking skills help children succeed in all subjects as they grow older. In addition, the data might be the result of good teaching strategies, such as giving children fun challenges, puzzles, and open-ended questions. These activities help kids think more deeply and come up with their own ideas.

As observed**,** learners with highly developed cognitive skills are quick to grasp new concepts, show persistence in completing challenging tasks, and demonstrate logical reasoning when making choices or predictions. They are also more likely to participate actively in classroom discussions, respond thoughtfully to questions, and apply learned knowledge in new situations. They are being nurtured in environments that promote exploration, encourage curiosity, and provide rich opportunities for mental engagement. Deans et al. (2020) said that when children are encourage to ask questions and explore their surroundings, their brain power grows faster and better.

Moreover, the lowest mean of 5.36 (SD=1.05) with an interpretation of **Slight Delay in Overall Development** is found in the **Self-Help domain.** It implies that the least developed skills of the learners are the self-help domain which describes how the respondents work independently on going to the designated place to urinate or move bowels, drinking from a cup without spillage, eating without spillage, preparing their own food and other skills that involves independence. Being in the lowest mean indicates that these learners are most likely relying on their parents, siblings, and other family members to complete everyday tasks. They might need more practice or encouragement in becoming independent.

As observed**,** while many learners are capable of performing some of these tasks, a noticeable portion still requires adult supervision, prompting, or assistance, particularly in tasks that demand higher levels of coordination or personal responsibility. This could be attributed to a range of factors, including over-dependence on adults, inconsistent routines at home, or limited opportunities to practice independence. The findings emphasize the importance of reinforcing autonomy through intentional activities at home and in school to help children strengthen their self-care skills which is an essential aspect of overall school readiness and long-term self-regulation.

Another possible reason could be cultural habits. In some homes, parents or guardians, are still doing many of these tasks for the children, even when the children are ready to try doing things on their own. McClelland et al. (2020) said that children develop independence when they are allowed to try, make small mistakes, and learn from them. When children are not given the chance, their self-help skill may not develop as fast.

Problem 3. Is there a significant difference in the teachers' competence in play-based learning considering their profile?

Table 3
Difference in Respondents' Competence in Play-based Learning When Grouped According to their Characteristics

Respondents' Profile	Teachers' Competence in Play-based Learning					
	Knowledge		Skills		Attitudes	
	F-value	P-value	F-value	P-value	F-value	P-value
Age	3.783	.006 **S**	.193	.942 **NS**	.282	.889 **NS**
Position	.781	.507 **NS**	.430	.732 **NS**	2.112	.101 **NS**
Teaching Experience	.687	.634 **NS**	.668	.648 **NS**	.412	.840 **NS**
Area of Specialization	.372	.690 **NS**	.124	.883 **NS**	1.319	.270 **NS**
Overall	**1.406**	**NS** **.459**	**.354**	**NS** **.801**	**1.031**	**NS** **.525**

Legend: **S** – Significant ($P \leq 0.05$) **NS** – Not Significant ($P > 0.05$

Table 3 looks into the statistical differences in teachers' competence in play-based learning when respondents are grouped by characteristics such as age, sex, teaching position, teaching experience, and area of specialization. The overall F-values and corresponding p-values for each domain affirm the lack of statistically significant differences in teachers' competence in play-based learning when grouped according to their profile variables. Specifically, the findings indicate $F = 1.406$, $p = .459$ for knowledge, $F = .354$, $p = .801$ for skills, and $F = 1.031$, $p = .525$ for attitudes. Each resulted well above the conventional threshold of significance ($p < .05$). Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in teachers' competence in play-based learning considering their profile is **Accepted**. **There is no significant difference in the teachers' competence in play-based learning considering their profile.** These results suggest a uniform distribution of competence across different groups of teachers, regardless of their age, teaching position, years of experience, or area of specialization. This consistency may be reflective of effective institutional support systems such as standardized pre-service training, school-led in-service workshops, and curriculum guidelines that promote the integration of play as a fundamental pedagogical tool in early childhood education.

As observed, this uniformity in competence is demonstrated through the teachers' ability to design and implement engaging play-based activities, provide meaningful learning experiences through play, and maintain a positive disposition toward child-centered strategies. Whether the teacher is a novice or a veteran, the data suggest that they share a common level of familiarity and comfort in using play as a

teaching strategy, indicating that play-based learning is not limited to certain subgroups of educators, but is embedded as a shared professional practice. This also points to the presence of professional learning communities or continuous development programs that help ensure equity in pedagogical competence among teachers.

Furthermore, the absence of significant differences may also indicate that the value of play is widely recognized across the teaching force, regardless of specialization or rank. It is possible that institutional culture, leadership support, and policy frameworks play a critical role in sustaining this competence. As observed, teachers from different contexts demonstrate a similar level of engagement and intentionality in aligning play with developmental goals and curriculum standards.

These findings are consistent with those of Heikka et al. (2021), who emphasized that professional competence in early childhood education is shaped more by ongoing support and learning opportunities than by demographic factors. Similarly, Fleer et al. (2020) argue that competence in play-based pedagogy is best developed through reflective practice and continuous engagement, rather than being assumed based on tenure or specialization.

Problem 4. Is there a significant difference in the teachers' assessment of their learners' development considering their profile?

Table 4

Difference in Respondents' Assessment of their Learners' Development When Grouped According to Their Characteristics

Respondents' Profile	Learners' Development						
	Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Self-Help	Receptive Language	Expressive Language	Cognitive	Social Emotional
Age	F=1.867 P=.119 **NS**	F=2.571 P=.040 **S**	F=1.397 P=.238 **NS**	F=1.274 P=.283 **NS**	F=.581 P=.677 **NS**	F=.885 P=.475 **NS**	F=.432 P=.785 **NS**
Position	F=.407 P=.749 **NS**	F=.277 P=.842 **NS**	F=.630 P=.596 **NS**	F=.974 P=.407 **NS**	F=.817 P=.487 **NS**	F=.703 P=.552 **NS**	F=.552 P=.648 **NS**
Teaching Experience	F=1.038 P=.398 **NS**	F=.268 P=.930 **NS**	F=2.339 P=.045 **S**	F=.291 P=.917 **NS**	F=.394 P=.853 **NS**	F=.673 P=.645 **NS**	F=2.105 P=.068. **NS**
Area of Specialization	F=.206 P=.814 **NS**	F=.607 P=.546 **NS**	F=.205 P=.815 **NS**	F=.652 P=.522 **NS**	F=2.625 P=.076 **NS**	F=1.757 P=.176 **NS**	F=1.260 P=.287 **NS**
Overall	**F = .880 P = .520 NS**	**F = .931 P = .590 NS**	**F = 1.143 P = .424 NS**	**F = .798 P = .532 NS**	**F = 1.104 P = .523 NS**	**F = 1.005 P = .462 NS**	**F = 1.087 P = .447 NS**

Legend: **S** – Significant ($P \leq 0.05$) **NS** – Not Significant ($P > 0.05$)

Table 4 presents the results of a one-way ANOVA analysis that examined whether teachers' assessments of their learners' development significantly differ based on their personal and professional profiles. These developmental domains include gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive and expressive language, cognitive, social-emotional, and overall development. The independent variables analyzed were age, sex,

position, teaching experience, and area of specialization. Based on the data provided, across all domains, it yielded non-significant p-values for skills such as gross motor (p = .520), fine motor (p = .590), self-help (p = .424), receptive language (p = .532), expressive language (p = .523), cognitive (p = .462), and socio-emotional (p = .447). Hence, the null hypothesis is **Accepted**. **There is no significant difference in the teachers' assessment of their learners' development considering their profile.**

These findings implies that teachers, regardless of age, teaching position, years of experience, or area of specialization, have a shared understanding and consistent application of developmental assessment standards**.** This uniformity implies that educators apply consistent evaluative practices in monitoring learners' development, irrespective of their demographic or professional profiles. Such consistency likely reflects the impact of common institutional training, standardized assessment frameworks, and curriculum-aligned observation tools used in early childhood education settings. Such consistency likely reflects the impact of common institutional training, standardized assessment frameworks, and curriculum-aligned observation tools used in early childhood education settings (Bakken et al., 2020; Yoon & Templeton, 2022).

As observed, teachers' assessments of learners remain stable across profile groups, suggesting a high level of inter-rater consistency and alignment with developmental expectations. Whether evaluating a child's ability to express ideas, follow instructions, or perform self-help routines, teachers demonstrate a unified approach that supports equitable and valid developmental monitoring. This consistency enhances the credibility and usefulness of the collected data, especially in informing instruction and identifying learners who may need further support. As noted by Piasta et al. (2020), teacher-administered observational assessments can yield reliable insights into children's developmental progress when supported by structured tools and training, reinforcing the value of consistency across assessors in early childhood settings.

Also, the absence of significant differences in teachers' overall assessment patterns signifies that institutional support, shared assessment practices, and collaborative professional culture are contributing to a standardized approach to tracking learner development. These results emphasize the importance of ongoing professional learning and the use of unified tools, which help ensure that children are evaluated fairly and appropriately across varied educational contexts.

Problem 5. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' competence in play-based learning and teachers' assessment of their learners' development?

Table 5

Correlation Between Teachers' Competence in Play-based Learning and Teachers' Assessment of their Learners' Development

Teachers' Assessment of their Learners' Development	**Teachers' Competence in Play-based Learning**			
	Variables			
Variables	**Knowledge**	**Skills**	**Attitude**	**Overall**
Gross Motor	r=-.006 p=0.95 **NS**	r=.094 p=0.25 **NS**	r=-.066 p=0.42 **NS**	**r=.309** **p=0.54** **NS**

Fine Motor	r=.037	r=-.033	r=-.072	**r=-.023**
	p=0.66	p=0.69	p=0.38	**p=0.58**
	NS	**NS**	**NS**	**NS**
Self-Help	r=-.007	r=-.082	r=-.043	**r=-.044**
	p=0.93	p=0.32	p=0.60	**p=0.62**
	NS	**NS**	**NS**	**NS**
Receptive Language	r=.040	r=-.011	r=.002	**r=.010**
	p=0.63	p=0.89	p=0.98	**p=0.83**
	NS	**NS**	**NS**	**NS**
Expressive	r=.016	r=-.055	r=.011	**r=-.009**
Language	p=0.85	p=0.51	p=0.97	**p=.0.78**
	NS	**NS**	**NS**	**NS**
Cognitive	r=-.020	r=.003	r=-.003	**r=-.007**
	p=0.81	p=0.97	p=0.97	**p=0.92**
	NS	**NS**	**NS**	**NS**
Social-Emotional	r=-.008	r=-.022	r=-.028	**r=-.019**
	p=0.92	p=0.78	p=0.73	**p=0.81**
	NS	**NS**	**NS**	**NS**

Legend: **S** – Significant ($P \leq 0.05$) **NS** – Not Significant ($P > 0.05$)

Table 5 demonstrates the correlation analysis between the teachers' assessment of their learners' development based on the following domains: gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive language, expressive language, cognitive, and social-emotional and teachers' competence in play-based learning in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitude. The results indicate that none of the correlations reached statistical significance**,** with all p-values exceeding the conventional threshold of $p < .05$. Across individual domains, the correlations remained consistently low and statistically insignificant. For the **Gross Motor domain**, correlations with knowledge ($r = –.006$, $p = .950$), skills ($r = .094$, $p = .250$), and attitude ($r = –.066$, $p = .420$) were all negligible. Similarly, in the **Fine Motor domain**, the correlation coefficients were: knowledge ($r = .037$, $p = .660$), skills ($r = –.033$, $p = .690$), and attitude ($r = –.072$, $p = .380$). The same pattern followed for **Self-Help** (knowledge: $r = –.007$, $p = .930$), **Receptive Language** (skills: $r = –.011$, $p = .890$), **Expressive Language** (attitude: $r = .011$, $p = .970$), **Cognitive** (overall: $r = –.007$, $p = .920$), and **Social-Emotional** domains (knowledge: $r = –.008$, $p = .920$). All results indicate that **no strong or moderate associations exist** between teachers' perceived competence and their evaluations of children's development. Further, all correlation coefficients (r) are close to zero, ranging from -0.094 to 0.094 and all corresponding p-values are above 0.05, indicating non-significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence in play-based learning and teachers' assessment of their learners' development.

Though, some coefficients were negative, such as the correlation between fine motor (r=-.023, p=.58), self-help (r=-.044, p=.62), expressive language (r=-.009, p=.78), cognitive(r=-.007,p=.92), and social emotion (-.019, p=.81), the values were too small to suggest a meaningful inverse relationship. The negative sign alone does not imply a meaningful inverse relationship, as the magnitude of the correlations, all well below |0.10|, suggests that the direction and strength of the association are statistically and practically insignificant**.**

In correlational analysis, the strength of the relationship is more important than the sign alone. A coefficient must approach values of ±0.30 or higher to suggest even a low to moderate association, depending on the context. Therefore, while the negative values imply that as teachers' competence increases, there may be a slight decrease in assessment scores for those domains, the magnitude of change is so minimal that it can be considered as random variation or measurement error rather than a real trend. Thus, these weak associations fail to support any claim of inverse influence between the variables being studied.

This suggests that regardless of how teachers rate their own competence in play-based learning, it does not have a meaningful relationship on how they assess their learners in areas such as gross motor, fine motor, self-help, receptive and expressive language, cognitive, and socio-emotional development. In other words, teachers who feel confident or skilled in play-based learning do not necessarily give higher or lower ratings to their students' development in areas like gross motor skills, fine motor skills, self-help, language, cognitive skills, and social-emotional growth. One possible reason is that assessing a child's development is guided more by what the teacher observes in the child's actual behavior, not by how confident the teacher feels about using play-based methods. Teachers may use standard checklists, rubrics, or developmental milestones when evaluating students, which helps keep their assessments consistent, even if their teaching styles or confidence levels vary. So, even if a teacher feels less skilled in using play as a teaching tool, they may still be trained to observe and assess child development objectively.

As observed, this disconnect may suggest that teachers' self-reported competence in play-based learning does not significantly influence how they assess learners' development. This could be due to the use of standardized observation tools or structured developmental checklists, which guide assessments independent of a teacher's personal teaching style or level of confidence. It is also possible that external factors such as children's home environment, parental involvement, or school readiness may affect teacher ratings more than their instructional competence. Another reason could be that play-based learning is just one of many teaching approaches used in early childhood education. Teachers might assess learners based on various activities, not just play. Their confidence in using play does not necessarily mean they use it often or in a way that directly reveals student development. Also, some teachers may separate how they teach from how they assess, especially if formal assessments or school requirements follow certain guidelines. This separation can result in no strong link between how confident they feel in play-based teaching and how they rate their students' development.

Heikka et al. (2021) explain that what teachers think about their own teaching does not always match the actual learning results of students. Walsh et al. (2020) also say that how well play-based learning works depends not just on the teacher but also on the environment, materials, and overall support in the classroom. So, even if a teacher feels skilled, student development depends on many other things too.

The absence of significant relationships aligns with the findings of Yoon and Templeton (2022), who emphasized that early educators often rely on uniform tools and institutional benchmarks to assess development, ensuring consistency but potentially disconnecting these evaluations from their individual instructional approaches. This highlights a need to bridge the gap between instructional competence and assessment literacy, ensuring that teachers can both implement and evaluate play-based strategies effectively.

Conclusion

The outcomes of the study highlight that while kindergarten teachers across the four districts of Manolo

Fortich exhibit a very high level of competence, particularly in implementing play-based learning, there is no significant relationship between this competence and their assessment of learner development. This finding points to the need for continued professional development, especially in enhancing teachers' understanding and use of assessment tools and practices aligned with play-based methodologies.

The respondents' profile revealed that most teachers were 35–44 years old, held the position of Teacher I, had 6–10 years of experience, and were assigned to General Education. While these characteristics may shape their perceptions and approaches, they do not necessarily lead to more effective assessment practices—indicating that experience alone does not guarantee assessment accuracy.

Notably, learners demonstrated the highest development in the cognitive domain, suggesting strong alignment between instruction and intellectual growth. However, this strength can only be fully harnessed if teachers are also equipped to assess progress accurately in this and other domains. While play-based learning is well-rooted and supported by competent teachers, strengthening assessment literacy remains vital to achieving the goals of holistic and developmentally appropriate early childhood education.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn from this study, the following are the recommendations:

1. The Department of Education should provide regular school-based training sessions and accessible online certification courses on play-based learning to support teachers' continuous professional development.
2. School administrators should ensure that these training programs are mandatory and inclusive for all teachers—regardless of age, rank, or tenure—to promote consistent competence across the teaching workforce.
3. Schools should strengthen the consistent use of standardized child development assessment tools, such as the ECCD checklist, by conducting regular refresher trainings and calibration workshops to ensure accuracy, uniformity, and fidelity in implementation across all teachers.
4. Schools should hold monthly learning circles or PLCs where teachers share play-based activities, learner observations, and assessments. Guided by a coordinator or master teacher, these sessions promote reflective discussions, align teaching with developmental goals, and support data-driven improvements.
5. Teachers should undergo focused training on child development theories and play-based pedagogy, such as those of Piaget and Vygotsky, to deepen their theoretical understanding, while also collaborating with parents to integrate daily routines and classroom activities that promote self-care tasks like dressing, feeding, and toileting, thereby strengthening both their knowledge and the children's self-help skills.

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