

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS' PROFILE AND COMPLIANCE TO QUALITY STANDARDS: INPUT FOR MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE



Norma S. Tumbali, PhD
Pre-K Teacher, Ardmore Elementary School
Prince Georges' County Public Schools, Maryland, USA
norma.tumbali@pgcps.org

Dr. Norma S. Tumbali is an advanced professional certified early childhood educator in the state of Maryland and currently the Pre-K team coordinator at Ardmore Elementary School.

ABSTRACT

Using the descriptive research design, this study investigated the profile of the Child Development Centers (CDCs), their level of compliance to standards set by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as well as the enabling and restraining factors in their operations and management. The respondents were the 26 CDC teachers in Peñablanca, Cagayan with focus group discussion participants coming from the employees/officers of the municipal and regional levels of the DSWD. Results showed that the CDCs of Peñablanca are compliant to the standards despite their meager budget. The success of CDCs in Peñablanca is attributed to the dedication of teachers, strong support from parents, barangay officials, and the community, and effective monitoring and evaluation by social work and development offices. On the other hand, challenges such as limited budget allocation, insufficient modern instructional materials, outdated facilities and equipment, and the absence of permanent teaching positions hinder the optimal functioning and growth of these centers. All of these challenges may be resolved by enacting the municipal ordinance proposed for the enhancement of the CDCs.

Keywords: Child Development Centers, compliance to standards, enabling and restraining factors

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize the importance of quality education, particularly in early childhood development, as a key area for global growth and development. Child Development Centers, also known as Early Childhood Development Centers (ECDCs), play a crucial role in achieving SDG Goal 4, which focuses on inclusive and equitable quality education for all. These centers provide a safe and stimulating environment for young learners, ensuring they are "ready to learn" and paving the way for lifelong learning opportunities. Investing in early childhood development is recognized worldwide as essential for the formation and transformation

of human resource development, contributing to ending poverty, protecting the planet, and fostering peace and prosperity by 2030.

The Philippine government acknowledges the significance of early childhood education in laying a solid foundation for children's future success. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) takes the lead in fostering young learners' learning development through Child Development Centers (formerly known as Day Care Centers). These centers offer a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment, promoting the holistic development of children's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical well-being.

To strengthen early childhood education, the DSWD established guidelines in 2015, aiming to standardize program quality, facilities, and staff qualifications in all child development centers. The guidelines prioritize the safety and well-being of children, including regular inspections to ensure a safe and healthy environment. Implementing these guidelines benefits children, families, and the community by providing access to high-quality early childhood education, fostering academic and social development, and providing parents with peace of mind knowing their children are in a secure and nurturing environment.

Government efforts to improve early childhood education in the Philippines have been implemented through new guidelines, but several studies show gaps in the management and operation of Child Development Centers (CDCs) in the country. Limited accessibility and availability of CDCs have been noted (Nunez, 2019; Santos, 2020), prompting a need for expanding Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) services, particularly in underserved areas (Aguilar et al., 2017).

Notably, the quality of early childhood education and care services in CDCs needs improvement, along with enhancing their compliance with standards (Cruz, 2017; Rivera, 2018). UNICEF and ECCD identify gaps in ECCE services, stressing the need to enhance ECCE practitioners' qualifications, curriculum, and assessment tools for monitoring children's development (UNICEF & ECCD, 2015). Furthermore, the integration of children with special needs in CDCs is lacking (Bautista, 2019; Gutierrez & Rabino, 2018), emphasizing the importance of promoting inclusion and integration of such children in ECCE programs, as highlighted by a study by Philippine Normal University (PNU) (PNU, 2018).

To address gaps in early childhood education in the Philippines, it is essential to provide training for ECCE practitioners in working with young children and developing appropriate assessment tools (PNU, 2018). Moreover, there is a need to enhance government support for ECCE and improve compliance with standards (Chua & Reyes, 2019; Villanueva, 2020), as highlighted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) (ADB, 2016). Significantly, assessments of Day Care Workers (DCWs) reveal limited support and supervision, with low accreditation rates and limited presence of day care centers in official barangays (Bautista, 2019).

Given this context, it is vital to examine the relationship between profile of the CDCs and the level of their compliance on quality standards using the Registration and Granting of Permit and Recognition guidelines. The study is specifically conducted in

Peñablanca, Cagayan, with the aim of uncovering the enabling and restraining factors for their compliance and providing baseline data to inform legislative actions for the efficient management of the CDCs by the Municipal Government of Peñablanca.

Objectives of the Study

This study examined the profile of the CDCs, their level of compliance to standards set by the DSWD as well as the enabling and restraining factors in their operations and management.

Significance of the Study

The study's results will benefit the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) by examining teaching performance, compliance levels, and challenges in Child Development Centers, aiding in program enhancement. The Municipal Social Work and Development Office can use the feedback to capacitate teachers and parents, innovate strategies, and seek new partnerships. Learners will benefit from effective instruction based on their needs, leading to better services and a caring environment.

Teachers will gain insights into their performance and challenges, developing a positive outlook and improving services. Parents will receive valuable information on their children's performance and challenges, strengthening partnerships in supporting their education. The Local Government Unit (LGU) can assess and intervene to address children's learning needs and support early childhood education. The study is also significant for the researcher's contribution and future researchers interested in improving Child Development Centers.

Scope and Delimitation

The study concentrated on investigating the characteristics of the CDCs, their adherence to quality standards, and the factors that facilitate or hinder their effective operation and management. The unit of analysis was 26 CDCs while the level of compliance of the Centers was determined using the 2022 assessment of compliance to quality standards by the DSWD Regional Office. The study was limited to using secondary data obtained from the teachers' reports and external assessments conducted by the DSWD. It was conducted from May to July 2023.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Profile of the CDCs

Child Development Centers (CDCs) are essential facilities providing care and education for young children, with qualified staff, safe environments, age-appropriate curricula, and strong parental involvement (NAEYC, 2021; Child Care Aware of America, 2021). In the Philippines, CDCs have limited facilities but offer safe, clean environments, catering to children aged six months to four years old, with some up to five years old (DepEd, 2017; DSWD, 2019). The curriculum focuses on early childhood education, socialization, and values formation, while daycare workers typically have a

high school diploma and relevant training (DSWD, 2019). Approximately 51,035 operational Day Care Centers serve young children in the country (DepEd, 2021). Budget allocation is primarily managed by local government units, with encouraged allocation of at least 1% of annual budgets for Day Care Centers (DepEd, 2017). Additionally, the DSWD provides financial assistance of Php 10,000 per year to compliant Day Care Centers (DSWD, 2019).).

Compliance of the CDCs to Standards

Recognition of Child Development Centers involves a comprehensive assessment of facilities, staff qualifications, curriculum, and health standards to ensure quality services. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (2019) mentions various forms of recognition, such as certification, licensure, accreditation, or registration, depending on the regulatory body. Recognized centers attract more families and may be eligible for government or organizational support. The DSWD provides technical assistance and financial aid for Day Care Centers, accrediting them based on compliance with ECCD standards (Council for the Welfare of Children, 2016). Accredited centers positively impact child care quality (Burchinal et al., 2002) and lead to better child outcomes (Barnett and Yarosz, 2007). Strict regulatory policies improve child care quality (Whitebook and Bellm, 2017), emphasizing the need for recognition and accreditation (National Research Council's report, 2018; NAEYC's framework, 2020). Accredited preschools demonstrate better classroom practices and qualified teachers (Magsayo & Yape, 2019), while RAND Corporation study found accreditation associated with improved health, safety practices, and teacher-child interactions (Karoly et al., 2018). Accreditation also fosters family involvement and community engagement (NAEYC, 2019), reducing disparities in access to quality early childhood education. Proper implementation is crucial to cater to specific children and communities.

Enabling and Restraining Factors in CDCs Operations and Management

The effective management and operation of Child Development Centers (CDCs) are essential for providing quality early childhood education and care. Several enabling factors contribute to their success. Effective leadership positively influences staff motivation and program quality (Havnes & Kjörholt, 2018; Shore, 2019). Qualified staff and ongoing professional development enhance program quality and child development (Barnett et al., 2017; Bryant & Maxwell, 2015). Adequate resources and funding support quality care and education (Whitebook, 2016; Catiis & Ladores, 2015). Partnerships with families and the community enhance CDC success (Raines et al., 2019).

However, various hindering factors challenge CDC management. Inadequate funding leads to lower quality care and higher staff turnover (Whitebook et al., 2017; Burchinal et al., 2013). High staff turnover negatively impacts care quality (Mathias et al., 2019; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2002). Inadequate staffing ratios hinder care quality (Whitebook et al., 2016). Lack of training and professional development diminishes care quality (Kontos et al., 2014; Whitebook et al., 2016). Low teacher qualifications correlate with lower care quality (Whitebook et al., 2016).

Additionally, insufficient family support diminishes care quality (Ghazvini et al., 2019). These factors collectively contribute to the challenges in managing and operating CDCs.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research employed a descriptive research design to comprehensively explore multiple aspects of CDCs. This approach aimed to analyze the CDCs' profile, their adherence to DSWD standards, and both the factors that support and hinder their operational and managerial effectiveness. By utilizing this design, the study delved into a holistic examination of CDCs, encompassing various dimensions that contribute to their overall functioning and impact.

Locale of the Study

The research was conducted within the four districts housing the 26 CDCs in Peñablanca, Cagayan. According to Peñablanca's Annual Report for 2020, the municipality spans 1,246.23 square kilometers (or 481.17 square miles), accounting for approximately 13.26% of Cagayan's total land area. The population, as determined by the 2020 Census, stood at 50,300 individuals. This population figure constitutes 3.96% of Cagayan province's total population and 1.36% of the overall population of the Cagayan Valley region. These statistics yield a population density of approximately 40 inhabitants per square kilometer or 105 inhabitants per square mile.

Respondents of the Study

Using complete enumeration, the primary respondents of the study were the 26 teachers teaching in the CDCs.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents According to District Location

<i>District Location of Child Development Centers</i>	<i>Number of Teacher Respondents</i>
Southern Areas (Cabbo, Cabasan, Bugatay, Sisim, Bical and Baliuag)	6
Central Areas (Centro, Alimannao, Camasi, Patagueleg, Parabba, and Dodan)	5
Lagum Areas (Mangga, Minanga, Lapi, Buyun, Nabbabbalayan, Naguillattan)	6
Callao Areas (Callao, San Roque, Agugaddan, Nannarian, Quibal and Malibabag)	9
Total	26

In the qualitative segment of the research, a total of 10 teachers and 5 employees/officers from the municipal and regional levels of DSWD engaged in a focus

group discussion. The selection of these participants adhered to specific criteria: (a) their expressed interest or willingness to participate in the FGD; (b) the teacher-participants possessing more than five years of experience in the center since the introduction of recognition and accreditation in 2015; and (c) the DSWD-participants having engagement in the monitoring and assessment of the centers.

Research Instruments

The research predominantly relied on secondary data accessible from the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office. The study employed two primary instruments. Firstly, a researcher-developed survey questionnaire was utilized to gather data on the CDCs profile. Prior to administration, this instrument underwent content and face validation. Secondly, the assessment tool employed by the DSWD to evaluate the Registration and Granting of Permit and Recognition to Child Development Centers/Learning Centers Offering Early Childhood Programs for 0 to 4-Year-Old Filipino Children was employed. Additionally, the FGD interview guide was employed to explore the factors facilitating and hindering the management and operation of the Child Development Centers. This guide aimed to extract detailed descriptions of critical challenges, concerns, as well as key contributors to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the CDCs.

Research Procedure

The researcher obtained necessary permissions from both the DSWD Regional Office and the Municipal Mayor before commencing the study. After receiving these permissions, a consultation was held with the Chief of the Municipal Social Welfare and Development to analyze the outcomes of the CDCs' recognition.

Following the granting of permissions, the researcher convened a meeting with the teachers. During this meeting, the survey questionnaire regarding the Child Development Centers' profile and resources was administered. Subsequently, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted with participants from the teachers and DSWD officials and staff. These discussions were conducted on-site to provide an authentic experience of the centers' environment.

To enhance data validation, particularly concerning the centers' profiles, documentary analysis was employed. This technique aligned with the study's implementation of data triangulation. The entire process, including the survey and FGD, spanned approximately one month for the researcher to complete.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (frequency count and percentage) was used to analyze the profile of the CDCs and their level of compliance to standards using the following scale:

<i>Numerical Value</i>	<i>Descriptive Value</i>
157 – 179	Level 1 (Demonstrated mandatory compliance)
180 – 200	Level 2 (Demonstrated optimal compliance)

201 – 210

Level 3 (Demonstrated highest compliance)

To interpret the different indicators of the various dimensions of CDC standards, the following were used as bases: (1) outstanding level of compliance is within 90% - 100% of the expected score of the indicator; (2) Very satisfactory level of compliance is within 85% - 89% of the expected score of the indicator; and (3) Satisfactory level of compliance is within 75%-84% of the expected score of the indicator.

Lastly, the qualitative data obtained from the FGD and in-depth interviews underwent thematic analysis. This approach followed the procedural stages outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), including becoming acquainted with the data, coding, identifying themes, reviewing and refining themes, defining and labeling themes, and composing the final analysis.

Ethical Considerations

In line with research ethical guidelines, the participants were informed that the study aimed to improve the management of CDCs and potentially inform the creation of a municipal legislative ordinance. Throughout the research process, strict confidentiality and anonymity were maintained for both the data collected from participants and the documents sourced from the MSWD Office. The researcher upheld research ethics by having participants, including those in the FGDs, sign the Free and Prior Informed Consent Form, thereby adhering to proper procedures.

RESULTS

Profile of Child Development Centers

Table 2. Profile of the Child Development Centers

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Frequency (N=26)</i>	<i>Percent (100%)</i>
Location		
Central Area	5	19.23
Callao Area	9	34.62
Lagum Area	6	23.08
Southern Area	6	23.08
Number of Children Served		
20 – 40	16	61.54
41 – 60	5	19.23
61 – 80	3	11.54
81 – above	2	7.69
Mean = 43.92		
Number of Children Served with Physical Disability	5	19.23

Budget for SY 2022-2023		
15,000 – 25,000	16	61.54
25,001 – 35,000	5	19.23
35,001 – 45,000	4	15.38
45,001 – above	1	3.85
Mean = 26,793.58		
Years of Existence		
Less than 20	3	11.54
21 – 30	14	53.85
31 – 40	8	30.77
41 - above	1	3.85
Mean = 28.54		
Type of Structure		
Attached to Barangay Hall	10	38.46
Separate Structure	16	61.54

Table 2 presents that most of the Child Development Centers (CDCs) are located in the Callao Area (9 or 34.62%), and are serving 20-40 children (16 or 61.54%). The mean of the number of children served is 44 and they are served in two-three sessions per day which runs for two hours. Usually, session 1 caters to the three-year old children while the succeeding sessions is a mixture of 4-5 years old. Notably, there were only 3 CDCs which cater to five children with physical disability. These children have physical disabilities ranging from hand and feet deformity, cross-eyed, to low visual impairment (nearsightedness and farsightedness).

In terms of budget, majority of the CDCs have a yearly budget of P 15,000-P25,000 (16 or 61.54%). This budget is used for their daily operations and it does not include their monthly honorarium. The budget of the CDCs comes from the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) of the barangay which implies that barangays with lower IRA provides lower honorarium for their CDC teachers. The mean yearly budget across the CDCs is P26,793.58.

As regards years of existence, majority of the CDCs have existed from 21-30 years (14 or 53.85%) and the mean years of existence is 29. Relative to the type of structure, majority of the CDCs have buildings which are separated from the structure of the barangay hall. In short, they have “stand alone” buildings which ensures a dedicated space for the CDC, to enhance the safety or security of the children and to reduce distractions in the teaching and learning process.

Level Compliance to Standards of the Child Development Centers

Table 3. Level of Compliance to Standards of the Child Development Centers

Dimensions	Expected Score	Actual Score	Interpretation
Health, Nutrition, and Safety	66	61.12	Very Satisfactory
Physical Environment and Safety	34	29.62	Very Satisfactory

Interactions and Relationships Between Staff and Children, Among Children and other Adults	15	14.58	Outstanding
Staff Qualifications, Staff Development and Continuing Education	35	32.77	Outstanding
Curriculum, Instructions and Assessment	29	27.92	Outstanding
Family Involvement and Community Linkages	10	8.50	Very Satisfactory
Leadership, Program Management and Support	21	18.62	Very Satisfactory
Total Score	210	192.81	Very Satisfactory

Table 3 shows that overall, the CDCs have **very satisfactory compliance** (192.81) to all the dimensions of the standards implying that the centers have met level 2 or have demonstrated optimal compliance to the standards set forth by the accreditation and recognition of the DSWD. In short, the centers have successfully met the specific criteria and benchmarks outlined by the accreditation and recognition standards. Specifically, they demonstrated a high level of compliance across all the dimensions. Among the dimensions, they showed outstanding compliance along (a) Staff Qualifications, Staff Development and Continuing Education; and (b) Curriculum, Instructions and Assessment. All the rest of the dimensions have very satisfactory compliance.

Enabling and restraining factors in the management and operation of the Child Development Centers

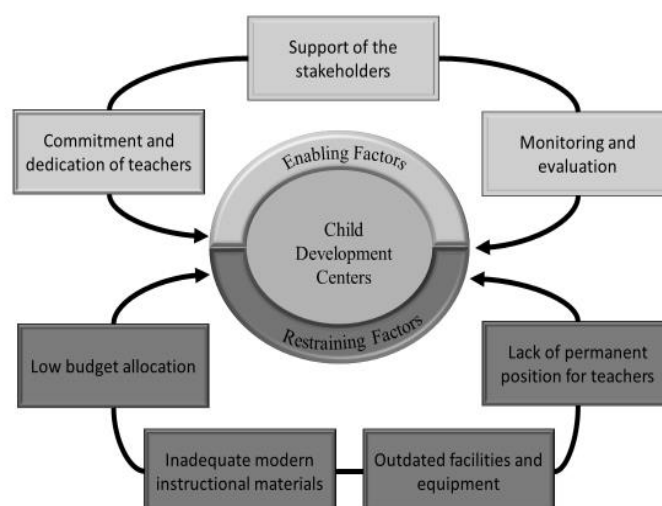


Figure 2. Enabling and restraining factors in the management and operation of the Child Development Center

Results of the FGD reveal that there are several enabling factors which have contributed to the success and effectiveness of the CDCs in Peñablanca. The tree key enabling factors are the (a) commitment and dedication of teachers, (b) the support of parents, barangay officials, and the community, and (c) the monitoring and evaluation conducted by the municipal and regional social work and development offices. These enabling factors are clearly expressed by the FGD participants in the following words: *"The centers work really well because the teachers are very committed and dedicated. Even with scarce resources and meager budget, they always make sure everything runs smoothly."* – DWSD-P2; *"I think our Child Development Center is getting better because parents are helping, and the barangay officials and the whole community are also supporting us."* – Teacher-P4; *"I've seen that our Child Development Center keeps getting better because of the DSWD officials and staff. They come to see how we're doing and assess whether we are following the standards and procedures."* – Teacher-P1

Conversely, several hindering factors impeded the optimal development and functioning of these centers. The participants have identified that the key hindering factor is the low budget allocation which is succinctly expounded by one FGD participant in this thought: *"Our center doesn't have much money for things to buy like new toys, books, and other facilities and equipment. We just depend on what the barangay officials would give us."* – Teacher-P3. Akin to the low budget as a hindering factors is the inadequate modern instructional materials. One FGD participant expressed that: *"Sometimes, we don't have enough supplies and facilities for everyone in our class. Most of the things that we use are outdated but we can't do anything. We just need to continue teaching and make do for what is available resources we have."* – Teacher-P8. Finally, the lack of permanent positions for teachers is a crucial factor to be addressed to help the plight of the CDC teachers. The FGD participants were unanimous in saying that they should also be given permanent position as CDC teachers like those teaching in the Department of Education. Such was vividly expressed by one FGD participant in these words: *"I have been a CDC teacher for 32 years and I dream that we should also be given permanent position in the government. If this happens, our salary and incentives will be fixed and we will not struggle much in our finances. With our very insufficient honorarium, we struggle in providing our daily needs."* – Teacher-P1.

Proposed Municipal Ordinance

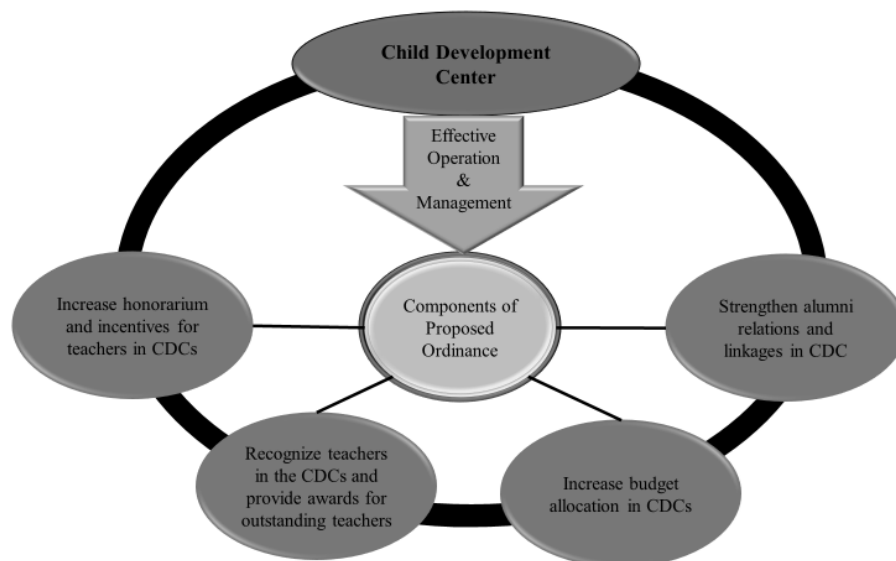


Figure 3. Proposed Municipal Ordinance

The findings of the study have generated valuable insights that are essential in improving the CDCs and the teachers as well. Through this investigation, it has become evident that an ordinance needs to be proposed in the municipality of Penablanca. The purpose of this ordinance is to bridge current disparities and establish an environment that promotes the best possible growth of children, guaranteeing equitable access to high-quality early childhood education for all children in the municipality. Notably, the ordinance has four components (a) Increase Honorarium and Incentives for Teachers in the Child Development Center; (b) Recognize Teachers in the Child Development Center and Providing Awards for Outstanding Performance on Teachers' Day; (c) Increase Budget Allocation for Child Development Centers; and (d) Strengthen Alumni Relations and Linkages in Child Development Center Improvement.

DISCUSSION

The CDCs of Peñablanca Cagayan has meager budget as they are solely dependent on the IRA of each barangay. Such finding is consistent with the study revealing that the Child Development Centers in the Philippines typically have limited facilities due to space and budget constraints (Department of Education, 2017).

The CDCs' overall very satisfactory compliance to all the dimensions of the standards indicates that the centers have met level 2 or have demonstrated optimal compliance to the standards set forth by the accreditation and recognition of the DSWD. The results of the research reaffirm the findings of Ortiz and Paclibar (2019), who discovered that Child Development Center educators in La Union exhibited a strong adherence to the standards established by DSWD. Similar to the current investigation, though, there exist additional aspects that require refinement to achieve full compliance with level 3 accreditation. Despite the CDCs demonstrating highly commendable compliance, the participating teachers openly acknowledge that their centers still lack several enhancements.

There were three dimensions which the CDCs have complied with outstanding rating namely: Staff Qualifications, Staff Development and Continuing Education; Curriculum, Instructions and Assessment; and Interactions and Relationships Between Staff and Children, Among Children and other Adults. The outstanding compliance of the CDCs along *Staff Qualifications, Staff Development and Continuing Education* supports the finding of Aguilar, et al. (2017) that centers with highly trained and experienced teachers are often viewed more favorably by accrediting organizations and regulators. Also, teachers who have completed higher education degrees or specialized training programs are more likely to possess the knowledge and skills necessary to create effective learning experiences for young children (Whitebook, 2019). Meanwhile, the outstanding compliance in terms of *Curriculum, Instructions and Assessment* signifies that the center employs effective instructional practices that support children's learning and engagement. This finding is an affirmation of a study that centers implement a curriculum that is anchored on the National Early Learning Framework (NELF), and is consistent with the Early Learning Development Standards (ELDS) validated for Filipino children.

The foregoing finding negates the studies that there is poor quality of early childhood education and care services in Child Development Centers in the Philippines and that there is a need to improve their compliance level (Cruz, 2017; Rivera, 2018). It also counters the finding that the qualifications of ECCE practitioners and curriculum, as well as the assessment tools for monitoring children's development are needing much improvement (UNICEF & ECCD, 2015).

On the other hand, the outstanding compliance of the CDCs relative to *Interactions and Relationships Between Staff and Children, Among Children and other Adults* is indicative of the centers' ability to cultivate an environment that promotes positive peer relationships and social interactions. Such finding strengthens the study emphasizing the significance of secure attachments between teachers and children for fostering positive interactions and learning outcomes (Bautista, 2019). It also supports the finding that positive relationships characterized by warmth, support, and trust contribute to higher level of compliance and recognition of the CDCs (Baclig & Abaquin, 2019).

Several enabling factors contributed to the success and effectiveness of the CDCs in Peñablanca, Cagayan. The three key enabling factors are the (a) commitment and dedication of teachers, (b) the support of parents, barangay officials, and the community, and (c) the monitoring and evaluation conducted by the municipal and regional social work and development offices.

The commitment and dedication of teachers within the CDCs have been crucial factors that contribute to their effectiveness. Teachers who were passionate about early childhood education created a positive learning environment for children. Such finding is congruent with numerous studies showing that professionalism and commitment among early childhood educators is a key factor in the attainment of the CDCs effectiveness and success (Lewallen & Hunt 2019; Jiang, et al., 2021; Downer, et al. 2011).

On the other hand, the support of parents, barangay officials, and the community was essential for the success of CDCs. Parents and community members played a crucial role in their children's development by actively engaging with the center and participating in their child's education (Kim, E. Y. (2003). Significantly, the monitoring and evaluation conducted by the municipal and regional social work and development offices ensured the quality and effectiveness of CDCs. Regular monitoring visits of accrediting agencies improved the implementation of the center's educational program, infrastructure maintenance, adherence to safety standards, and the overall well-being of children (Cassidy, et al. 2005).

Conversely, several hindering factors impeded the optimal development and functioning of these centers. The participants have identified four key factors namely: (a) low budget allocation, (b) inadequate modern instructional materials, (c) outdated facilities and equipment, and (d) the lack of permanent positions for teachers.

One of the primary hindrances faced by CDCs is the low budget allocation. Inadequate financial resources have limited the centers' ability to provide quality programs, upgraded facilities, and access to high technology materials. Such finding is congruent with the study that reduced funding among CDCs can hinder staff training and access to essential resources (Yoshikawa & Weiland 2019).

Finally, the absence of permanent positions for teachers in CDCs is a significant hindrance to their development. Many teachers in these centers work on a contractual or temporary basis, leading to high turnover rates and reduced continuity in teaching practices. This finding supports the House Bill No. 6883 or the proposed magna carta of daycare workers to safeguard the social and economic well-being of daycare teachers. The proposal emphasizes the necessity for CDC teachers to be provided with sufficient compensation, employment stability, and additional incentives (Magsumbol, 2023).

Given all these challenges, there is a need to provide local ordinance addressing these concerns pending the approval of the foregoing House Bill by the Philippine Congress. The ordinance should increase the budget allocation for the centers for the purpose of providing higher honorarium, sufficient instructional resources, and other related concerns. Enacting this proposed ordinance may promote the optimal growth and development of children and teachers in the CDCs and ensuring that they receive the quality education and support that they rightfully deserve.

CONCLUSION

The CDCs of Peñablanca, Cagayan are compliant to the standards set forth by the DSWD and this is reflected in their smooth operations. Their success is attributed to the dedication of teachers, strong support from parents, barangay officials, and the community, and effective monitoring and evaluation by social work and development offices. On the other hand, challenges such as limited budget allocation, insufficient modern instructional materials, outdated facilities and equipment, and the absence of permanent teaching positions hinder the optimal functioning and growth of these centers.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that continued support and resources be allocated to maintain the compliance of CDCs with DSWD standards. Efforts should be directed towards enhancing budget allocation, providing up-to-date instructional materials, modernizing facilities and equipment, and establishing permanent teaching positions. Additionally, fostering and strengthening the existing commitment of teachers, parents, barangay officials, and the community will further contribute to the success and effectiveness of CDCs. This may be done by approving the proposed municipal ordinance as it aims to address the existing gaps and create an environment that fosters optimal child development, ensuring that every child in Peñablanca has equal access to quality early childhood education.

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