ISSN 2244-6613

HARRIS JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

Volume 3
February 2015

HARRIS MEMORIAL COLLEGE
Taytay, Rizal, Philippines

HARRIS JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

Published and exclusively distributed by
Harris Memorial College, Inc.
G.K. Bunyi St., Brgy. Dolores, Taytay, Rizal
1920 Philippines

Mail: P.O. Box 103 Q. Plaza, Cainta, Rizal 1900
Telephone and Fax Nos.: (632)6582797,
(632) 6582798 Website: www.harris.edu.ph

ISSN 2244-6613

Harris Journal of Education

The *Harris Journal of Education* is a multidisciplinary peer reviewed academic journal of Harris Memorial College. It aims to analyze issues, trends, policies, and practices in education in the Philippines and other countries especially among Christian schools. The journal offers well-documented points of view and practical recommendations on various areas like curriculum, administration, staff development, family-school relationships, equity issues, multicultural education, health education, learning environment, special education, Christian education, early childhood education, and music education. These include reports of empirical research, reviews of research, critique of research, and articles related to the application of research to practice.

The journal is published annually and welcomes papers in English only.

PANEL OF REVIEWERS

Manabu Sumida, Ph.D.
Ehime University, Japan

Greg Tabios Pawilen, Ph.D.
Harris Memorial College

Thelma Rabago-Mingoa, Ph.D.
De La Salle University, Manila

Anselmo D. Lupdag, Ph.D.
Central Luzon State University

Sachiko Kitano, Ph.D.
Kobe University, Japan

Prof. April Hiwatig
Chiba University, Japan

Angelita B. Broncano, Ph.D.
Harris Memorial College

Editor's Note

The inclusion of kindergarten is one of the highlighted features of Philippine Department of Education K-12 Basic Education Curriculum and Harris Journal of Education's third issue is showcasing three academic researches on this area. The first article, Comparing Kindergarten Admission Policies of Ehime University Attached Kindergarten School and the University of the Philippines Integrated School", by Lorina Calingasan, Manabu Sumida, Shoko Fukada and Greg T. Pawilen, described how admission policies reflect the philosophy and goals of the schools. The comparative study was done with the intention that a deeper understanding of the institutions' philosophies and goals will make collaborations between educational institutions from different countries successful. UP Integrated School and Ehime University Attached School were the venues for the study primarily because both are laboratory/attached schools of National/State Universities. The study revealed that differences in the kindergarten admission policies showed the purposes for which the institutions intend to serve.

The second study, "Evaluating the Implementation of a Thematic Kindergarten Curriculum" by Claire Salamat delve into the implementation of a thematic kindergarten curriculum. Using Posner's Model for Curriculum Analysis, the study evaluated how themes are adapted in teaching kindergarten children in a private school. Temporal and Physical factors that affects and posed as challenges in utilizing thematic approach in the development and implementation of kindergarten lessons were discussed. The findings of this study emphasize the need for both kindergarten teachers and school administrators to become aware of the factors that limit or put a constraint on the use of the thematic approach.

Completing this issue is Janice Patria J. Serafica's study, "The Development of Preschool Curriculum of the United Methodist Church in Metropolitan Manila from 1950 – 2000". Her study traced the development of United Methodist Church preschool curriculum to shed light to the curriculum process of schools run by churches in the Philippines. The results revealed that teachers are the key players in the development and implementation of preschool curriculum in church-based schools.

At this point, the editorial board would like to give all glory to our Creator, the Almighty God for providing the opportunity to serve Him and the academic community through this research journal. The board would also like to thank all the contributors and reviewers for sharing their passion for research in the field of education. It is the prevent prayer of the members of the board that more in-depth discussion and worthwhile researches will be featured in the future issues as there are still many issues and problems to be answered and many more to be asked.

Contents

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Manuscripts

Papers should be encoded with double spacing and send to the editors. If this is not possible, three (3) hard copies of the article should be submitted to the journal editorial board of Harris Memorial College at G.K. Bunyi St., Bo. Dolores Taytay Rizal.

Articles submitted to the journal should have not been submitted in any other journal, or have been published elsewhere.

The author(s) name(s) and author's correspondence information, including e-mail address should appear on **page 1**.The title of paper on **page 2.** Each paper requires an abstract of 150 words summarizing the significant coverage and findings on **page 3**. Each abstract should be accompanied by up to 4 keywords. Keywords are not included in the number of words required in the abstract. The font style should be Times New Roman and a font size of 12. All pages of the manuscript must be numbered and use only 8'' x 11'' paper/page size.

Length

Manuscripts should be 2500-5000 words in length plus reference (double spaced).

Final Submissions

Authors should send the final, revised version of their articles in both hard copy (paper) and electronic (CD) forms. It is essential that the hard copy (paper) version exactly matches the material on CD. Please print out the hard copy from the disk you are sending. Submit three (3) printed copies of the final version with the disk to the journal's editorial office.

Table and Figures

Tables must be typed on separate sheets and not included as part of the text. The captions to illustrations should be gathered and typed on a separate sheet. Tables should be numbered by Roman numerals and figures by Arabic numerals. The approximate position of tables and figures should be indicated in the paper. Please supply clear copies of artwork (preferably the originals) for figures in a finished format suitable for reproduction. Figures will not normally be redrawn by the publisher. The author(s) must arrange permission for the reproduction of illustrations and tables within articles. Figures may be sent electronically, preferably in either TIF (tagged image format) or EPS (encapsulated postscript) formats. However, we can also accept PICT or JPEG formats. The publisher will normally reproduce colored figures in black and white. All figures and tables should be mentioned in the text.

Style

Manuscripts submitted should follow the style guidelines included in the publication manual of the American Psychological Associations (6^{th} ed.). This manual is available in bookstores or from the American Psychological Association.

Order Dept. P.O. Box 2710, Hyattsville, MD 20784, U.S.A.

COMPARING KINDERGARTEN ADMISSION POLICIES OF EHIME UNIVERSITY ATTACHED KINDERGARTEN SCHOOLS AND THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES INTEGRATED SCHOOL

Lorina Calingasan
University of the Philippines, Diliman

Manabu Sumida
Ehime University, Japan

Shozo Fukada
Ehime University, Japan

Greg Tabios Pawilen
Harris Memorial College

Abstract

This study describes how admission policies reflect the philosophy and goals of the school. Comparing the admission policies of University of the Philippines Integrated School (UPIS) and Ehime University attached-school (EUAS), the study notes distinct differences in the nature and conduct of admission tests, reflecting the purposes and intentions they serve.

Using documents like policy statements, information handouts, minutes of meetings, and interview with key persons involved in the administration of the admission test from both schools, the study compares the admission policies of UPIS and EUAS in terms of the following- point of entry, age requirement, number of admitted students, content, and conduct of the test. In the context of Japan and Philippine societies, the study discusses how the goal of EUAS to develop "talented" students and the target of UPIS to instill "self-realization" among students are indicated in the admission policies that they implement

Introduction

When the University of the Philippines' (UP) College of Education and Japan's Ehime University signed a memorandum of agreement to become sister universities in 2007, part of the agreement was the student teaching exchange program where Japanese student teachers do practice-teaching among Filipino students at UP Integrated School, the laboratory school of UP College of Education. This created a different set – up where the teaching and learning process happen in the context of two cultures: that of Japanese teachers' and Filipino students'. Such set-up produced a need to understand each other's schools, i.e., the philosophy, goals, and practices of the schools where the practice-teaching is done and where the practice-teachers are from. This study supports such need and looks at the laboratory/attached schools of the two universities- UP College of Education's laboratory school called UP Integrated School (UPIS) and Ehime University-attached school. Specifically, this study compares the admission policies of UPIS and Ehime University-attached school (EUAS), using the following research questions:

1. What admission policy is implemented in University of the Philippines Integrated School (UPIS) and Ehime University-attached school (EUAS) in terms of the following?

    a. point of entry

    b. number of students admitted

    c. age requirement

    d. type of admission test administered

    e. conduct of the admission test

2. How does the admission policy reflect the school's philosophy and goals?

This comparative study does not intend to rate which school's policy is better; rather, it looks at what is useful to the two schools as they gain a better understanding of policies implemented in both. Japanese student-teachers will be oriented on the background of the school and the nature of students they will teach, while Filipino teacher-coordinators will also understand where the student-teachers are coming from in terms of what kind of laboratory school the Japanese student-teachers are acquainted to. Consequently, such mutual understanding will reinforce the sister-relationship between University of the Philippines and Ehime University.

Comparing Preschools/Kindergartens and Societies

Studies on comparative education will always include society as a factor in explaining similarities and/or differences. If for example, school curricula of certain countries are compared, it is fair to juxtapose the nature, demands and expectations of specific societies or governments on schools, when marking the differences and similarities. In the US, the No

Child Left Behind legislation in 1989 led to a "significant increase in testing children in many states," (Garber, 2007) such that preschools are subsequently implementing readiness tests, aside from age as requirement for entry to kindergarten. In Japan, stringent testing would be far from their priority in the context of declining birthrate of 1.25% in 2005, that is, according to Japan Times Online, way below the 2.08% needed to maintain the population (Takashi, 2006). Few babies born in families will only translate in few children entering schools and therefore an oddity to think of admission testing when fewer students are in fact applying for entry.

Ronquillo (1992) compared university-attached preschools in Japan and Philippines using Chiba University-attached preschool and UP College of Home Economics' Child Development Center. She noted the differences by explaining the inherent purpose the preschools seek to serve. She related that Japanese preschools are "society-oriented," and they serve as venue for internalization of values deemed important by society like perseverance, cooperation and conformity. On the other hand, preschools in the Philippines are where "resolvable problems or conflicts are provided for the child to become an adjusted, independent, and self- propelling individual." She added that differences in institutional attachment also made curriculum content in both preschools different. In the Philippines, the child is studied as an individual in the context of his family as the Child Development Center is under the UP College of Home Economics. In Japan, the child is studied as a learner as the Chiba University-attached preschool is under the Faculty of Education.

In another perspective, Pawilen, Sumida and Fukada (2006), when they compared the kindergarten curricula of Japan and Philippines, observed that it seemed imperative for preschools to "reflect the goals and aspirations of society" and "respond to the demands of the changes in society."

Purposes and Content of Preschool/Kindergarten Admission Tests

Kindergarten admission tests or better known as readiness tests are used to assess preparedness (Maxwell and Clifford, 2004), determine if the child has special needs (Ellwein, et.al., 1991) and predict future achievement (Duncan et.al., 2007). These purposes, however, are not as neat as they are enumerated. Debate as to content (what to test) and conduct (how to test), are put forward. The belief that readiness comes with age or maturation, thereby making tests unnecessary, persists. Contention even reaches back to the construct of school readiness which led Carlton and Winsler (1999) to question the pervading belief that it resides solely within the child. They believe that it is a "bidirectional process of both the school and the child flexibly adjusting to each other to ensure success."

Despite all the controversies, Thompson (2002) stressed that the qualities of young children who are ready for school are

1) intellectual skills – can relate printed letters to sounds and words, can use simple number concepts, express themselves clearly,

2) motivational skills – excited about learning, curious and confident in the ability to succeed, convinced that school is important to self and future, and

3) socio-emotional skills – understand other people's feelings and viewpoints, cooperate with adults and peers, exercise emotional and behavioral self-control, and resolve disagreements constructively.

Accordingly, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2009) specifically stated that "readiness expectations should include all areas of children's development and learning such as physical, cognitive, social, and emotional competence as well as positive attitudes toward learning.

Brief History of Kindergarten Admission Policies

A. Of UP Integrated School

For thirty- eight years, UPIS has been using the KAT to screen applicants at Kindergarten (K) entry-point level. Through those years, the number of students admitted at K varied from 210, 150 to 100. Changes in the number of admitted students were mandated by the UP Board of Regents (BOR), the highest policy-making body in the University, and reflected changes in the priorities and thrusts of the University at certain specific periods of time. The following table summarizes these policy changes.

Table 1: Number of admitted students at Kindergarten level

Year	**Number of K students**	**Basis**
1976-1981	*no data available*	
1982	150	Recommendation of the University Committee to Review Academic Programs (CRAP)
1984	210	Institutionalization of the service function of UPIS where 60% of admitted K students should be children of UP employees
1991	150	Implementation of policy of democratized access to the University where lateral

		admission was opened at Grade 7 which entailed reduction of admission at K
2001-present	100	Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) order to state-funded higher education institutions to phase down secondary school population to 500 and elementary school population to 600

No data were available from 1976-1981 except that the student population from Kinder to Grade 10 was 3150.

In 1982, all units in the university were subjected to a program review. As a result, UPIS student population was reduced from 3150 to 1650 and K admission pegged at 150 (Minutes of BOR Meeting, 1982). In 1984, students admitted at K was increased from 150 to 210. This was because the university wanted to institutionalize the service function of UPIS and stipulated that 60% of those admitted at K should be children of UP employees (Minutes of BOR Meeting, 1984). In 1991 following the thrust of "democratization of access to the University," UPIS was allowed to admit an additional 70 students at Grade 7 (Minutes of BOR Meeting, 1991). However, this meant a reduction of admission at K from 210 to 150 students. Finally in 2001, budget constraints forced the University to follow the Commission on Higher Education's order to "phase down school population of laboratory schools" (CHED Memorandum Order, 1996 and 1997; Minutes of BOR Meeting, 2001). Since then only 100 students were admitted to Kindergarten, and 60% of those should be children of UP employees.

A. Of Ehime University-Attached School

When Ehime University-attached kindergarten school was established in 19___, the admission policy has remained the same until the present. Kindergarten classes are in three levels: 3 year old class, 4 year old class and 5 year old class. Admitted students in each year level are as follows:

Class	Number of admitted students	Number of sections	Class size
3 yr. old	20	1	20
4 yr. old	70	2	35
5 yr. old	70	2	35
6 yr. old	120	3	40
12 yr. old	160	4	40

For kindergarten admission, there are two tests administered- upon entry and at age 4. No testing is done at age 5 which means that those admitted at age 4 are automatically admitted to the 5 year-old class. Another admission test is given in elementary or Grade 1 (at age 6 or 7) and 120 students are admitted. Not all the 70 students enrolled in Ehime University attached kindergarten school are admitted to the attached elementary school as only around 60 students are admitted. This represents 50% of the total number of admitted students in Grade 1 or 86% of those coming from the attached kindergarten school.

There is also no automatic admission to junior high school for those coming from the attached elementary school, as only around 80 of the 120 students are admitted to the attached junior high school.

Methodology

Several areas of commonality will justify why EUAS and UPIS are chosen for the study. Ehime University and University of the Philippines are both state/national universities. They are both under the College/Faculty of Education and serve as practicum sites for education students; and the two colleges maintain their laboratory school/attached school from kindergarten to high school. Definitely convenience and accessibility are the basic reasons, consequential to the established sister- relationship between the two universities.

Data for this descriptive study are from document analysis, interview and observation. Since documents from Ehime are in Japanese, all information for EUAS were gathered from the interview with key persons. One of the researchers, being the Chair of the UPIS Admissions Committee for three years and member of the same since 1997 made the response to the interview questions and had it validated by the former chair.

Data gathering schedule were as follows:

December	• Initial interview with the principal of EUAS • Finalization of interview questions
January	• Document analysis of UPIS papers • Preparation of UPIS' written response to interview questions • Interview with former chair of UPIS Admissions Committee to validate response • Sending final interview questions to Japan
March	• Final interview with the principal and assistant principal of EUAS, and the faculty in charge of the student teacher exchange program in Japan • Observation of kindergarten classes in EUAS

Discussion of Results

A. Policy on Numbers

There are basic points of comparison in the admission policy of EUAS and UPIS in terms of numbers- point of entry, age requirement and number of admitted students as follows:

Table 1. Comparing EUAS and UPIS in terms of numbers

	EUAS	**UPIS**
Point of entry	Nursery • 3 year old class • 4 year old class	Kindergarten
Age requirement	3 – 4 years old (for 3 year old class) 4 – 5 years old (for 4 year old class)	5 ½ – 6 ½ years old
Number of admitted students	20 for 3 year-old class	100 (25 per class) • 60 (children of UP employees)

	70 for 4 year-old class (35 per class)	• 40 (children of non-UP employees)

EUAS starts admitting students at ages 3-4 for the three year-old class, and ages 4-5 for the 4 year-old class. Readiness test is administered to both age groups. Twenty (20) students are admitted in the three year-old class, and seventy (70) in the four year-old class. These 4 year-olds will automatically be admitted to the 5 year-old class but they have to pass the next other admission tests in the elementary, junior high school and high school levels.

UPIS starts admitting students at 5 ½ to 6 ½ years old. One hundred (100) students are admitted, 60% of which should be children of UP personnel and 40% be children of those working outside UP. Those admitted were assured automatic admission in elementary (Grade 1-6) and high school (Grade 7-10).

The difference in entry level (3-4 years old for EUAs and 5 ½ - 6 ½ years old for UPIS) and assurance/non-assurance of admission in the succeeding levels (elementary and high school) can be explained by the nature of the curriculum each school maintains. UPIS follows an integrated K-10 curriculum where entry is at kindergarten level and exit (graduation) at Grade 10. There is only one principal for kindergarten, elementary and high school. In contrast, the attached schools of Ehime University- kindergarten, elementary, junior high school and high school are independent of each other, each headed by a principal, and each with its own admission test to administer.

EUAS and UPIS both have readiness tests at kindergarten but the age of entry (3 years old for EUAS and 5 ½-6 ½ years old for UPIS) indicates that initiation of a child to an admission test is relatively younger in EUAS than in UPIS. Administering a test to a three year-old child as a basis for admission to kindergarten school is rather not common in the Philippines as age would be a sufficient requirement for admission. A second admission test as the child turns four is therefore all the more surprising. This more frequent subjection of a child to an admission test will somehow impose pressure on the child as he/she is winnowed in or out of the preferred school. In the case of EUAS however, this pressure is tempered by the fact that the 20 slots for the 3 year-old class and the 70 for 4 year-old class, implies a high probability that those admitted at age 3 would automatically be admitted at 4. Declining birth rates would also mean fewer and fewer will be denied admission and therefore adds to easing out the pressure.

Setting a limit to the number of admitted students implies that both EUAS and UPIS use readiness test to qualify or disqualify a child from entry assuming that there are more seeking for admission. This seems to be the weakness of EUAS and UPIS tests, where children who failed to make it to the cut-off score are disqualified for admission to the school. Both are silent on the other purposes of readiness test, such as remediation and in aid of instruction. Limiting the number of admitted students to mirror an ideal student population of laboratory schools also reinforces the winnowing purpose of readiness tests, thereby justifying their inherent weakness.

In UPIS, the number of students admitted in kindergarten has a specific composition of 60% children of UP personnel and 40% children of those working outside UP. This leads to a heterogeneous group of students possessing a wide range of abilities, for which the UPIS curriculum is intended to serve. Also, as the laboratory school of the College of Education, UPIS has to approximate the realities of a typical school for student-teachers and the 60-40 ratio creates a typical student population where the high, middle and low achieving students are well represented. In EUAS, where the attached kindergarten and elementary schools are the only schools in Ehime prefecture that require entrance examination, a slightly homogeneous group of students constitute the student population.

In UPIS, the 60% mandate of admission favoring children of UP personnel, manifest a service function benefitting UP employees. In EUAS, the number of students admitted at kindergarten, represent members of the community being served by the university where it is located. Like any other university or school in Japan, residents of the community are the main clients of the institution.

B. Policy on Conduct and Content

Both EUAS and UPIS define their tests as readiness tests that measure skills related to school learning tasks. It is assumed that both subscribe to North Central Regional Educational Laboratory's (NCREL,1999) definition of school readiness covering both the concepts of "readiness to learn" and "readiness for school." Readiness to learn means a "level of development at which the child has the capacity to learn specific materials" and readiness for school is about a "specific set of cognitive, linguistic, social, and motor skills that enables a child to assimilate the school's curriculum."

Table 2: Comparing EUAS and UPIS in terms of nature and conduct of admission test

	EUAS	**UPIS**
Nature of test	Readiness test (30 items)	Readiness test (50 items)
Type of test	Interview, observation and structured activities	Written test
Administrator of test	Kindergarten school principal and vice principal, homeroom teachers, and school nurse	Committee of 10 (teachers and guidance counselors)

It is understood that because applicants to UPIS are older than those of EUAS, UPIS test is longer in terms of number of items (50) and mostly of paper and pencil type. EUAS test has a total of 30 items and most are structured activities and require oral responses. Both are given as a group test.

It can be noted that the congruence between age and type of test is reinforced by the evolving purpose of schooling at ages 3 and 5 in Japan and Philippine contexts. For five year-old students entering UPIS, school is the "big school" where academic work begins; thus, the admission test mirrors a formal conduct of an examination where students write their answers on a test booklet. If UPIS admits students at ages 3 or 4, it can be assumed that the nature and conduct of admission test would be different, or would not entirely be a written test. For three year-old students in EUAS, school is a place for socialization, which is why the test does not initiate them to answer written tests or introduce them to test booklets. If EUAS admits students at age 5 or 6, it can be assumed that the conduct of the admission test would be different, or would not entirely be structured activities.

Both EUAS and UPIS also conduct interview as part of the admission test, but they serve different purposes. In EUAS, the interview is in the latter part of the test and the parents are the ones interviewed by the kindergarten principal and vice principal. In UPIS, it is done prior to the written test and conducted individually to students, not to parents. It is done not by the members of the admissions committee but mostly by K-2 and elementary (Grades 3-6) teachers.

Another aspect worth comparing is the composition of the examiners or members of the admissions committee who conduct the test. In EUAS the committee is composed of kindergarten teachers while in UPIS, it is composed of kindergarten, elementary and high school teachers or from the whole UPIS faculty. In EUAS, the school nurse is part of the committee while in UPIS, the guidance counselor is.

C. <u>School philosophy and admission policy</u>

Admission policies are based on a certain principle or philosophy. It is never conceptualized in a vacuum and never implemented without any purpose. A closer look at the philosophy and goals of UPIS and EUAS reveal the kinds of students that both schools envision.

Table 3: Philosophy and goals of EUAS and UPIS

	EUAS	**UPIS**
School philosophy and goals	To develop talented people who will • open the door to the future of humankind, while maintaining the tough spirit of reform and progressiveness • learn from its tradition of developing self-reliant individuals based on a spirit of freedom • be able to express their own views frankly and boldly • acquire abilities to learn, think and take action on their own	To develop individual, self-realization among students. UPIS also seeks to • effect in the students a reorientation of their basic attitudes towards national development • develop basic skills that will enable them, even at this level to contribute to the national effort • involve students actively in school and community development

EUAS intends to develop self-reliance, self-expression and independence among students. The ability to express own views frankly and boldly as a goal among Ehime kindergarteners is rather different from Japan's age-old tradition of group spirit and uniformity. This may be a reaction to criticisms posted at such tradition where self-expression is subdued and individual differences tempered. How this goal is realized in class sessions is yet to be validated through classroom observations which the researchers can still explore. However, it can be noted that the implemented admission test will likely create a student population of slightly homogeneous abilities where interests are not so differentiated and self-expression, to be quite similar.

UPIS focuses on individual skills, attitudes and actions that are geared toward national development while EUAS hones student talents for the future of the world/humankind. It can be deduced that socio-economic realities come into play as Japan through EUAS looks at the future of a larger world society, while the Philippines through UPIS is yet to concern itself with national development.

Also, the goal of EUAS is to develop "talented" students, which runs parallel to their competitive admission policy. UPIS seeks to instill "self-realization" among students independent of their abilities; thus their admission policy does not highlight academic abilities in terms of test scores and admit the top 100 examinees. But it also considers the service function of the school directed towards UP community.

D. Unintended outcome of the admission policy

While only 100 students are admitted to UPIS, a large number of applicants, around 1,500 are drawn to apply. This is because UPIS is a government school with a long tradition of excellence and where school fees are reasonable. Competing for the limited number of slots led parents to send their children to review sessions/classes, with the belief that this increases the probability of passing the test. Children, at their very early age are subjected to a certain level of pressure as parents expect them to pass. There were instances that during the days of testing some children would cry and refuse to take the test, but parents would require them to.

In the case of EUAS, admission tests given in each level- twice in kindergarten (at ages 3 and 4), and in elementary, junior high and high school, exact competition and pressure among students, and among parents. The principal of EU-attached kindergarten school noted that parents of ages 5 and 6 year olds are more interested in their children's grades rather than their mental development, and that most children are enrolled in a "cram school" to ensure that they enter a reputably good school. This obsession to pressure to students to enter a good school is successive where at the onslaught, they are to be good at kindergarten to guarantee admission to a good elementary school, then to a good high school, a good university, and eventually land in a good job.

Another issue that EUAS and UPIS have to think about is how failure is dealt by parents and children, given that both admission tests are vested with disqualifying power. This is more real though in UPIS where only around 9 or 10 per cent of around 1,300 to 1,500 applicants are taken in. Majority who are not admitted do not mean that they all failed the test but rather, they were not able to make it to the cut-off score (the score needed to fill up the 100 slots). Being refused admission to UPIS is regarded as categorical failure though the score may not be statistically failing.

Summary and Conclusion

There are distinct differences in nature and conduct of admission tests in the attached schools of Ehime University and the laboratory school of University of the Philippines, but those differences revealed the purposes for which they intend to serve. Details as to what questions to ask, how many items to ask, who will conduct the test, are policy decisions deliberated according to the philosophy and goals of the school. Likewise, decisions regarding how many students to admit, what age level the school starts to admit, and other requirements for admission are not arrived at whim but they reflect the intentions and the curriculum of the school.

EUAS and UPIS implement admission policies that correspond to their goals and curriculum framework. Details of the implementation are also in agreement with each other, e.g., the nature of the test in terms of level of difficulty, mode and number of test items, are suited to the nature, qualities, and capabilities of the expected examinees.

However, there are also unintended outcomes as the admission policies are implemented, that which exact undue pressure to students as well as to parents. The limited number of students admitted in EUAS and UPIS highlights the winnowing purpose of the tests. Both schools may need to reflect on them vis a vis their views on the nature of the child and of learning. As both use admission test to deny entry to school, further study can be done to know how EUAS and UPIS use test results in instruction, or how children's strengths and weaknesses as revealed by test scores would be validated/enhanced/improved in the course of instruction.

REFERENCES

Carlton, M. P. and Winsler, A. (1999) School readiness: the need for a paradigm shift. *School Psychology Review, 28.* Retrieved from http://www.aea11.k12.ia.us/ec/Docs/Paradigm%20Shift.pdf

Commission on Higher Education Order No.4 series of 1996; and No. 21, series of 1997

Duncan, G. et.al., (2007). School readiness and later achievement. *Developmental Psychology, 43.* Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/journal/releases/dev4361428.pdf

Ellwein, M. C. et.al., (1991). School readiness assessment. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 13.* Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/pss/1164581

Garber, R. F., Timko, G., Bunkley, L. S., Lumpkins, D. & Duckens, C. (2007), School Readiness Assessment: A Review of the Literature, Report, Community Research Partners and Franklin County Department of Jobs and Family Services. Retrieved February 12, 2010, from http://www.communityresearchpartners.org/uploads/publications//School_Readiness_Assessment.pdf

Maxwell, K. and Clifford, M. (2004). School readiness assessment. *Developmental Psychology, 43.* Retrieved from http://www.journal.naeyc.org/btj/200401/Maxwell.pdf

Minutes of the UP Board of Regents' 953rd Meeting, July 29, 1982

Minutes of the UP Board of Regents' 967th Meeting, April 24, 1984

Minutes of the UP Board of Regents' 1037th Meeting, January 31, 1991

Minutes of the UP Board of Regents' 1148th Meeting, February 22, 2001

NAEYC (2009) Position statement on school readiness, Retrieved from http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/Readiness.pdf

NCREL (1999) Critical Issue: Promoting children's readiness to learn, Retrieved from http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/earlycld/ea700.htm

Pawilen, P., Sumida, M, and Fukada, S. (2006). A comparative analysis of the kindergarten curricula of Japan and Philippines. (Unpublished paper). Faculty of Education, Ehime University, Japan

Ronquillo, C. U. (1992). University-attached preschools in Japan and the Philippines: a case study. (Unpublished paper). Faculty of Education, Chiba University, Japan

Takashi, K. (2006, November 9). Low birthrate threatens Japan's future. *The Japan Times Online.* Retrieved from http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nb20061109d1.html

Thompson, R. (2002) The roots of school readiness in social and emotional development. Kaufman Early Childhood Education Exchange. Retrieved from http://botulismla.com/offices/publications/pubs-142/Kaufmann%20Set%20for%20Success.pdf#page=12

Dr. Lorina Calingasan is an Assistant Professor of Social Studies at the University of the Philippines-Diliman.

Dr. Manabu Sumida is an Associate Professor of Science Education at the Faculty of Education of Ehime University, Matsuyama City, Japan.

Prof. Shozo Fukada is a Professor of Early Childhood Education at the Faculty of Education of Ehime University, Matsuyama City, Japan.

Dr. Greg Tabios Pawilen is the Dean for Academic Affairs at Harris Memorial College

EVALUATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A THEMATIC KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM

Clarissa R. Salamat
Academic Head, PNOWA Child Learning Center, Inc.

Abstract

This study evaluated the implementation of the thematic kindergarten curriculum using the frame factors in Posner's model for curriculum analysis. The qualitative-descriptive method was used to gather data about the use of themes in teaching kindergarten children in a private school. The study revealed that temporal and physical factors put a limit to the use of themes in teaching. Specifically, temporal factors like scheduling and class interruptions pose challenges in using the thematic approach. The physical arrangement of classrooms and unutilized materials have also limited the use of themes. The findings of this study emphasize the need for both kindergarten teachers and school administrators to become aware of the factors that limit or put a constraint on the use of the thematic approach. There is also a need especially for the teachers to be trained on the thematic approach to effectively plan and implement themes in the kindergarten classroom.

Introduction

Evaluation is an important aspect in the process of curriculum development since it provides evidence on the nature, direction, and extent of behavioural changes that result from education. In turn, this evidence serves as a guide to any modifications that will be made within the curriculum process (Wheeler, 1967).

There are a variety of ways to evaluate. Many evaluative studies are concerned with measurements. In other cases, the goal of evaluation is to provide data to determine what is happening with a particular program and to find out whether or not it is working (Parlett and Hamilton, 1976). For this study, the latter purpose of evaluation was used in determining what affects or influences the use of themes in teaching kindergarten in a particular private kindergarten school in Metro Manila.

One of the more popular trends happening in early childhood education is the use of the thematic approach in integrating curriculum. Shoemaker (as cited in Fogarty, 1993) defines thematic approach as subordinating subject matter to a theme, allowing the boundaries between disciplines to blur. It is a way of organizing curriculum wherein learning experiences and materials are made to revolve around selected themes or topics of study.

In the Philippines, many early childhood education programs adhere to the use of this approach in teaching children. The Department of Education (DepEd) has even prescribed that the thematic approach be used in teaching kindergarten classes in the public schools (DepEd Order No. 37 s. 2011). Many private schools also use this approach in teaching kindergarten. Thus, this study is very timely especially since as of this time, despite many schools claiming to use the thematic approach, no local researches have been made about the use of this approach in the Philippines.

Posner (2004) considers an official curriculum as meaningless unless it is put into use. In other words, the implementation of a curriculum occurs when a teacher uses it to provide learning experiences for students. However, in doing so, a teacher must take several factors into account. In implementing any curriculum, several factors are consciously or unconsciously taken into account. Posner gave the term “frame factors” to refer to requirements or resources needed to implement a curriculum. Factors such as temporal, physical, political-legal, organizational, personal, economic and cultural considerations can either make the implementation of a curriculum a success or a failure. Posner calls these considerations as “frame factors”, which can be viewed as resources that enable effective teaching to take place. On the other hand, frame factors can also be considered as sources of limitations or difficulties in teaching. In particular, this study focused on the questions that determined the temporal and physical frame factors that affect the use of the thematic approach in teaching kindergarten.

Methodology

This study endeavoured to answer the following questions:

1. What temporal requirements are considered in terms of how much time is being given to lesson planning and actual teaching?
2. What physical requirements are considered in terms of materials, equipment and facilities that are available?

This study employed the qualitative-descriptive method in determining the use of themes in teaching kindergarten children in a private school. The participants of this study were the kindergarten teachers and school administrator, kindergarten students, and parents of the kindergarten students enrolled for the school year 2012 – 2013. Class observations, interviews, focused group discussion, and document analysis were the methods used in gathering data. After data were gathered, these were categorized according to the frame factors. Descriptions involved a detailed rendering of the information gathered about the use of themes in teaching kindergarten children. Interrelationships between the findings and descriptions were analysed. These were used to arrive at interpretations of the data that will be reported to the school board.

Findings of the Study

Research Question 1: What temporal requirements are considered in terms of how much time is being given to lesson planning and actual teaching?

The temporal frame factors generally refer to time. It includes the amount of time needed to cover the content. This is where teachers encounter the dilemma of choosing between coverage and mastery. In particular, three time factors are considered in teaching the curriculum: the quantity of content, the difficulty of the content, and the audience who will learn and master the content. Aside from these, temporal factors will also include the preparation time of teachers, frequency and duration of classes, the time of the day classes are conducted, and even seasonal changes. Tolerance to class interruptions is also considered in this frame factor. Zimmerman and Herr (cited in Brown, 1984) and Ramsey (2001) refer to such interruptions as time wasters. These time wasters lessen the productivity of teacher-student interactions.

Lesson planning and other teacher preparations. Teachers take between 1 to 3 hours to prepare lessons good for one week. Additional time of about 2 to 3 hours is needed to prepare other materials like visual aids, arts and crafts, and other teaching aids. One teacher revealed that planning lessons using themes took longer since she needed time to think about ways of integrating topics and what activities would be appropriate. It was also quite difficult for the three teachers to find a common time to collaborate since two of them also had

teaching loads in grade 1. Planning for themes together meant staying after school, way beyond their official hours of work in a day. Thus, each teacher usually just made plans for the class that she would be teaching.

Typical lesson plans of teachers are shown on Tables 1 and 2. Though the formats are different, both lesson plans included the intent, content, learning materials and evaluation.

Table 1. Sample Lesson Plan in Filipino

INTENT	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS	EVALUATION
A. *makabasa ng mga pantig* B. *makabuo ng mga salita mula sa pantig na ta, te, ti, to, tu* C. *makaguhit ng larawan na nagsisimula sa titik Tt* D. *maisulat ang mga tamang katinig sa mga larawan*	***Katinig Tt*** ***PAGBASA*** **(*Katinig Tt*)**	A. *Panalangin* B. *Awit* C. *Kamustahan: Mga pangyayari na naganap ng Pasko at Bagong Taon* D. *Tula: Tubig ay Buhay* E. *Pag-usapan ang Tula* F. *Kahalagahan ng Tubig* A. *Panalangin* B. *Awit* C. *Balik-Aral* E. *Sagutan ang Gawain*	**aklat* **lapis* **kwaderno* **aklat* **lapis* **kwaderno*	*Sagutan ang Gawain Blg. sa ph.166* *PAGBASA: KatinigTt Story Telling:*

Table 2. Sample Lesson Plan in Math

Subject: Math Date: January 7 – 9, 2013	
I. Intent At the end of the lesson the pupils should be able to: 1. understand the concept of subtraction 2. identify the parts of a subtraction sentence 3. answer subtraction stories and sentences II. Content: Subtraction	D. Class discussion & review E. Board activity Subtract OOØØ 4 – 2 = 2 F. Homework: p. 173 IV. Materials 1. book 2. 5 bottles 3. pencil

III. Learning Activities A. Counting 1 – 10 B. Song: Five Green Bottles C. Game: How many objects left?	4. marker & board V. Evaluation Book activity p. 172

Teaching proper. A theme can last between 2 weeks to one quarter (approximately 9 weeks) depending on the focus. Sometimes, another theme is integrated into the main theme. This happened during the celebration of Nutrition Month in July, *Buwan ng Wika* in August, Reading Month in November, and Christmas in December. For example in November, the main theme was about the community. Since it was also Reading Month, parents who had different professions were invited to read story books to the children and also to say some things about their profession. Table 3 shows a sample lesson plan about the community.

Table 3. Sample Lesson Plan on Community

INTENT	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS	EVALUATION
A. identify our community helpers and tell how they help us B. appreciate the things those helpers do for us C. love and respect our community helpers D. spell some names of our community helpers and of places in a community	**OUR COMMUNITY Things that we can find in Community Places** **COMMUNITY HELPERS** 1. Spiritual Helpers 2. Educational Helpers 3. Food Helpers 4. Health and Cleanliness Helpers	A. Prayer B. Song C. Review D. Presentation: Our Community E. Pictures of things that we can find in Community Places A. Prayer B. Song C. Review D. Pictures of Community Helpers E. How they help us	*Pictures of things that we can find in Community Places *book *pencil *crayons *book *pencil *crayons *story book	Answer the activity p.136-137 **STORY TELLING**: *Ang Kariton* Answer the activity p.141-147 **STORY TELLING**: Goliath

Before these month-long celebrations, faculty meetings took place wherein all the teachers collaborated to come up with ideas of activities and learning experiences related to the theme that can be done in their classes. However, from the start of the third quarter until the present, the meetings had become more focused on academic concerns and other matters. Since the subjects in the morning classes were being taught by different teachers, it was harder for the teachers to plan with themes. Collaboration among the kindergarten teachers became difficult since two of the three kindergarten teachers had teaching loads in grade 1, and their paper works were beginning to pile up. They also needed to make sure that the kindergarten students would be prepared for grade 1. Planning for themes not only took up their time, but also hindered them from finishing the content that they needed to complete by March.

Kindergarten classes in the morning took 3 hours while the afternoon class was conducted for 2 ½ hours. Beginning January of 2013, students in the afternoon session were scheduled in batches of 3 to stay once a week for 30 minutes of reading session in Filipino (*Pagbasa*). For the morning sessions, only students deemed to need more practice were scheduled to stay for the 30-minute reading in Filipino.

In the morning sessions, each subject area was being taught by a different teacher who was given 45 minutes of teaching time each day as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Daily Schedule of Morning Kindergarten Class

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE	TEACHER
FLAG CEREMONY	7:45 – 8:00 AM (M – F)	Teacher A
CIRCLE TIME	8:00 – 8:15 AM (M – F)	Teacher A
READING/WRITING	8:15 – 9:00 AM (M, T, F)	Teacher B
LANGUAGE	8:15 – 9:00 AM (W, Th)	Teacher C
SNACK TIME	9:00 – 9:15 (M – F)	Teacher C
FILIPINO	9:15 – 10:00 AM (M – F)	Teacher C
MATH	10:00 – 10:45 (M, T, W)	Teacher A
VALUES	10:00 – 10:45 (Th)	Teacher A
P.E., MUSIC & ARTS	10:00 – 10:45 (F)	Teacher A
CLEAN-UP/GOODBYE	10:45 – 11:00 AM (M – F)	Teacher A

This arrangement had proven to be challenging for them since each teacher needed to finish her class at the designated time to give way for the next teacher. During these occasions, students who have not finished their assigned tasks were frequently told either of the following,

"*Dalian mo at darating na si Teacher…*"
(Hurry up! Teacher…is coming.)

"*O, hayan na si Teacher ___. Hindi ka pa tapos.*"
(Teacher ___ is here. You're not yet finished.)

One teacher had a frequent tendency to go overtime which gave the next teacher less teaching time.

Table 5 shows the daily schedule of the kindergarten class in the afternoon session. For this class, only one teacher taught all the subject areas.

Table 5. Daily Schedule of Afternoon Kindergarten Class

TIME	MONDAY-TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY	FRIDAY
12:30 – 12:35	FLAG CEREMONY	FLAG CEREMONY	FLAG CEREMONY
12:35 – 12:40	CIRCLE TIME	CIRCLE TIME	CIRCLE TIME
12:40 – 1:20	FILIPINO	VALUES	WRITING
1:20 – 1:30	SNACK TIME	SNACK TIME	SNACK TIME
1:30 – 2:10	MATH	LANGUAGE	PE, MUSIC & ARTS
2:10 – 2:50	READING	SCIENCE	DRILL/REVIEW/ PLAYTIME
2:50 – 3:00	CLEAN-UP & GOODBYE TIME	CLEAN-UP & GOODBYE TIME	CLEAN-UP & GOODBYE TIME

Though each subject is scheduled in 40-minute blocks of time, the teacher said that this was not being strictly followed. She frequently adjusted the schedule to accommodate the areas that needed more focus on. Students in the afternoon class were not rushed but were given time to finish their assigned tasks.

Teachers were frequently observed to be checking textbooks, worksheets, or test papers during classes. Sometimes, materials needed for the day were prepared during class time too – a few minutes before the said activity. Checking and preparation of materials usually happened while the students were doing independent activities or during snack time. During the preparation of the teachers, which averaged 2 hours each work day, majority of the time was allotted to checking.

Interruptions of classes. According to Posner (2004), the temporal frame also takes into consideration the willingness to tolerate interruptions during classes. Interruptions or disruptions were commonly observed during the kindergarten classes. The most frequent cause of disruptions was due to toilet concerns. There was no scheduled toilet time. Students were given the freedom to go to the toilet whenever they needed. Disruptions occurred when a student would ask permission to go to the toilet while the teacher was discussing the lesson for the day. In some instances, a student would call for the teacher's assistance in the toilet. The kindergarten teachers did not have any aide or assistant to help them during classes. During an observation period, classes were held up for 10 minutes as the teacher had to assist

a student in the toilet. The students left in the classroom were not given any activity to do. On another occasion, several students had to go to the toilet. The teacher allowed them to go one at a time and did not start the class until no one else needed to go. More than 10 minutes was spent waiting for everyone to finish. During this waiting period, the teacher asked a student to sing in front of the class.

Disruptions due to misbehaviour of students were also commonly observed. The teacher would stop an activity or a discussion when one student would complain that a classmate was bothering him or her. On one occasion, while the teacher was doing a lecture, a student stood up and went behind the cubbies. Apparently, the teacher did not notice this until another student approached her to report it. She stopped in the middle of her lecture and asked,

"Bakit may isang nawawala? Nasaan na siya?"
(Why is there someone missing? Where is he/she?)

Upon seeing the student, the teacher went over to him to ask why he was hiding there. While she was talking to the student, one by one the other students went to where she was. She only told the students to go back to their seats after resolving the student's concern. Five minutes was spent on this incident.

An observed loss of engaged time was recess or snack time. After assisting students who needed help in getting ready to eat, all three teachers had been frequently observed to sit at their desks and attend to checking seat work, assignments, quizzes or tests. In Reading and Math classes, another common practice was that students would be called one or three at a time to read a set of words or to do a Math exercise on the board. The other students, who were not given any activity to do, were observed in most instances to be talking with each other to the extent that the teacher would often call their attention and request them to keep quiet.

During the school year, disruptions were also caused by storms and heavy rains which suspended classes for the day. Occasionally, on-going classes had to be dismissed early due to power interruptions. In the previous school years, no make-up classes were done for class suspensions. However, awareness of DepEd's mandate that school days should total at least 200 days, make-up classes were required to compensate for the lost time during the present school year. These were scheduled on several Saturdays.

Analysis of the Temporal Frame Factors

The temporal frame looks into the time factors that affect teaching of the kindergarten curriculum with the use of themes. Though teachers spend a considerable amount of time planning their lessons and preparing materials, they all admitted that planning ahead of time made it easier for them to do the actual teaching. NAEYC (2009) recommends that thoughtful planning should be done before implementing the curriculum. Generally, planning lessons with the use of themes involve the following aspects: identifying

the objectives, selecting the theme, planning the learning activities or experiences, selecting the materials to be used, and choosing the assessment or evaluation tools. As can be seen from the lesson plans of the kindergarten teachers, these were being considered, except for the theme which was not apparent in the written plans. When the lesson plans obtained by the researcher during the time of observation were examined, topics in each subject area were not related to each other. In Jacob's continuum of curriculum integration (cited in Jalongo & Isenberg, 2004), such a set-up would fall under Level 1, wherein there is not much integration since topics are taught by subject. The kindergarten teachers admitted that they did not have enough time to talk together about the theme, especially in the latter half of the school year.

Teachers also usually face the dilemma of choosing between finishing all the planned content and teaching until the students have gained mastery. In the morning sessions, it would appear that scheduling has forced the teachers to opt for finishing what was planned for a particular period. This kind of schedule had also made it difficult for them to use themes since they seldom had time to collaborate. Thus, the use of themes was limited to the subject they taught. As a result, each of them just focused on the content that needed to be taught for their subject area. NAEYC (2009) finds the practices of fragmented teaching of discrete objectives and rigid, tightly paced schedules at the K – 3 levels as developmentally inappropriate.

Posner (2004) comments that the total quantity of instructional time allotted indicates the priority of the school. Analysis of the daily schedule of kindergarten classes in this particular private school revealed that more time was being devoted to Math, Filipino, Reading and Language. MAPE and Values were being taught only once a week. This therefore indicates that priority is being given to the domains of cognitive/intellectual development and language development. According to NAEYC (2009), early childhood education should give importance to and foster the development and learning of ALL domains.

Time is a precious resource for teachers (Posner, 2004). Ramsey (2001) would describe time for early childhood educators as a critical resource. According to Ornstein (1990), a considerable amount of time that should be devoted to instruction is actually spent on clerical and housekeeping activities and managerial problems. This seems to be true about the kindergarten teachers in this private school, who spend considerable time doing paper works even while the students were having their recess. Snack time could actually be turned by the teacher into a lively discussion about the theme or topic that was just taught. Independent activities of students could give a chance for the teacher to either note down observations about each child or check the understanding and progress of individual students.

Ramsey (2001) enumerates common classroom interruptions or time wasters for teachers. Frequent interruptions in the kindergarten classes were due to toilet passing time, student misbehaviour, and inclement weather. Posner (2004) implies that the teachers' responses to these time constraints would indicate the tolerance level for such interruptions. For bad weather conditions, the school made adjustments by conducting make-up classes.

For the other causes of interruptions, the kindergarten teachers would appear to willingly tolerate them by being unmindful of the amount of time eaten up. Frequent interruptions slow down productivity in school. Ramsey (2001) further explains that too many interruptions mean teachers have to constantly start over. Even if it is just a few minutes a day, the reality is that adding them up results to a couple of lost days of education each year. In addition, loss of time in teacher-child interaction can affect children and their performance (Zimmerman & Herr, cited in Brown,1984).

In this case, the temporal frame factor that limited the use of themes in teaching kindergarten was the teaching schedule which led to lack of time to collaborate. To compound to this, frequent interruptions occurred during the conduction of classes. The researcher believes that establishing routines and imposing rules in the classroom could control toilet passing time and diminish student misbehaviours. In addition, the time allocated for each subject indicated that priority was being given to the development of the cognitive/intellectual and language domains of kindergarten students, which seemed to contradict with developmentally appropriate practices as recommended by NAEYC (2009) for early childhood education.

Research Question 2: What physical requirements are considered in terms of materials, equipment, and facilities that are available?

Posner (2004) describes the physical frame factors as the physical space in which teachers teach and the materials, which are the most obvious and tangible commodities. They include the natural environment surrounding the school and the built environment of the school. These are either those that cannot be manipulated, or can be manipulated but will involve a certain cost. Physical frame factors also take into consideration the equipment and materials that are used for teaching and learning. Organization of the physical environment can be an effective predictor of program quality because it affects what children can do, determines the way they can carry out their plans, and affects the ways they use the materials (Kostelnik, et al., 2011). In the preschool setting, physical arrangement of the classrooms is also taken into account. Posner (2004) indicates that the physical space in which teachers teach and the materials they used are the most obvious and tangible commodities. An analysis of the physical frame factors would reveal any frustrations encountered in the implementation of the curriculum and the remedies or responses in meeting the requirements of the curriculum.

Going through the checklist of materials available at the private kindergarten school in this study, it would seem that the school has adequate materials to cover four of the developmental domains in the kindergarten curriculum guide of DepEd (Table 6).

Table 6. Materials Available

Cognitive/Intellectual Development	Language Development	Creative & Aesthetic Development	Physical Health, Well-being, Motor Development
counters geometric figures and shapes matching sets number chart peg boards shapes puzzles assorted books on general information blocks building sets	alphabet chart story books pocket charts computer puzzles camera toy animals cooking equipment doctor/nurse equipment doll equipment CD/DVD player CDs or DVDs	CD/DVD player CDs or DVDs brushes and holders chalk collage materials containers crayons glue/paste newspapers assorted paint assorted paper play dough scissors tape rhythm instruments	seesaw slide swing beads and laces linking toys peg boards balls blocks building sets

However, some of these materials were being kept in cabinets and other storage compartments. These were only brought out when the teacher has included them in her plan. A common response when asked about the materials on the checklist was

"Alam ko meron niyan. Nandiyan lang iyan…nakatago."
(I know we have that. It's just here…kept somewhere.)

Other materials like the manipulatives for Math were noticeably untouched since these were still wrapped. When asked about the manipulative, the teachers responded either that they have forgotten about them or that they did not want to use them since the students might lose some of the parts.

According to the teachers and the administrative head, parents are requested to provide materials for their children that are not readily available in school. Examples of such materials are apron and recyclable materials that are usually used for art.

During the observation period, the most frequently used materials by the students were the textbooks, worksheets, and pencils. Review of the school documents revealed that teachers relied heavily on print materials. Creative art materials that were commonly used during art activities were crayons, scissors, glue or paste, and assorted colored paper. Teachers frequently used the whiteboard for writing, especially problems in Math and for displaying visual aids or reading charts.

Two classrooms were being used for kindergarten classes. These were large, having more than enough space for the 15 kindergarten students in each room. Walls of the classrooms were decorated with murals of cartoon characters. A small corkboard was hanged on one side of the classroom. This was used for displaying some of the students' artworks. However, since it was small, the teacher had to put the artworks on top of each other.

The arrangement of tables and chairs in the classrooms was seldom changed. One kindergarten classroom had tables and chairs arranged in rows. In the other kindergarten classroom, tables and chairs were in U-shaped formation. One teacher had tables and chairs moved or rearranged whenever she had storytelling which was usually done once a week. The children were made to sit on a mat during this activity. The only other times that the arrangement was changed were during large group activities and when a student would celebrate his or her birthday.

One room at this private kindergarten school was supposed to be a library. However, as the school year progressed, it also became a storage area. Teachers would just bring the storybooks to their classrooms instead of bringing the children to the library. Sometimes, the library was used for the 30-minute reading sessions in Filipino and for tutorials.

The school has indoor and outdoor play areas. The indoor play area consists of playhouses with a few toys, plastic seesaws, and a slide that landed into a pool of balls. The outdoor area is actually spacious and is sometimes used for school-wide activities like the scouting investiture. A portion of this outdoor space includes a pair of swings. Both indoor and outdoor play areas are frequently used by the children before classes started and after classes while waiting for their parent or guardian to pick them up. The play areas were seldom used during class time.

Aside from the indoor playroom and the library, the school has 6 more rooms – 4 are used as classrooms the whole day, 1 room is only used as a classroom for half the day, and 1 small empty room, which is planned to be turned into a clinic. A large social hall is also located in one part of the school. This is only used for school-wide programs and is being planned to contain more classrooms, an audio-visual room, and a canteen.

Analysis of the Physical Frame Factors

The thematic approach encourages the use of a variety of materials that are developmentally appropriate for the level of the children. In this case, the school has an array of materials that are developmentally appropriate and covers the different domains of development of kindergarten children. However, some of these materials are seldom utilized or underutilized. The teachers' reliance on textbooks and worksheets made them ignore the importance of hands-on activities, self-discovery, and even play (Kostelnik, et al., 2011; NAEYC, 2009). As previously mentioned, the teachers admitted to focusing more on the academics during the third and fourth quarters as a way of preparing the kindergarten students for grade one. Some of the students would also be taking entrance tests in other private schools. The teachers wanted them to be ready for taking standardized tests.

The other existing physical frames of the school indicate that the use of the thematic approach can actually thrive. Aside from the availability of varied materials, classrooms are spacious enough to plan different activities that revolve around a theme. Teachers could consider rearranging their rooms to create learning centres or areas that promote exploration and self-discovery. Creating learning centres in the classrooms can offer choices to children that would address the different developmental levels of the students. At the same time, these can also minimize the difficulties encountered in experiential learning (Kostelnik, et al., 2011), and can possibly also address the interruptions that were described earlier in the temporal frame factors, giving the teacher more opportunity to engage students in active learning. Unutilized spaces in the school like the library, social hall, and the outdoors could also be used as extensions of the classrooms.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that certain temporal and physical factors put a limit to the use of themes in teaching. In particular, temporal factors like scheduling and class interruptions pose challenges in using the thematic approach. In addition, the time allocated for each subject indicated that priority was being given to the development of the cognitive/intellectual and language domains of kindergarten students. This seemed to contradict with developmentally appropriate practices which espouse the development of children in all domains.

The thematic approach encourages hands-on activities and self-discovery of kindergarten students. Accordingly, the physical arrangement of classrooms has limited the chance of the students to explore, investigate and discover. Unutilized or underutilized materials that are available have also minimized the advantages of using themes in the kindergarten classes.

Identifying the factors that limits or puts a constraint on the use of the thematic approach would enable both teachers and administrators to make necessary adjustments and decisions. The end goal of all educational decisions should eventually be for the benefit of the students. Thus, training on and awareness of the thematic approach for school administrators and kindergarten teachers are necessary to effectively plan and implement themes in the kindergarten classroom.

References

Department of Education. (2012). *K to 12 curriculum: kindergarten*. Retrieved 05 September 2012 from http://www.gov.ph/downloads/2012/01jan/kindergarten-curriculum-guide.pdf

Department of Education. (2011). *DepEd order no. 37: policies and guidelines on the implementation of the universal kindergarten education for SY 2011 – 2012*. Retrieved 20 November 2011 from http://www.deped.gov.ph

Gestwicki, C. (2007). *Developmentally appropriate practice: curriculum and development in early education, 3rd edition*. Canada: Thomson Delmar Learning.

Jalongo, M. R. and Isenberg, J. P. (2004). *Exploring your role: A practitioner's introduction to early childhood education, 2nd edition*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

Kellough, R. D. (2003). *A resource guide for teaching: K – 12*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

Kostelnik, M. J., Soderman, A. K. and Whiren, A. P. (2011). *Developmentally appropriate curriculum: best practices in early childhood education*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2009). *Position statement: on developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8*. Retrieved 4 March 2012 from http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSDAP.pdf

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2003). *Position statement on early childhood curriculum, assessment, and program evaluation*. Retrieved 17 March 2012 from http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/CAPEexpand.pdf

Ornstein, A. C. (1990). *Strategies for effective teaching*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc.

Parlett, M. and Hamilton, D. (1976). Evaluation as illumination: a new approach to the study of innovative programs. *Evaluation Studies Review Annual*, Volume 1, pp. 140 – 157.

Pawilen, G. T., Arre, J. P., and Lindo, E. F. (2010). Designing an integrated curriculum for preschool. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 57-76.

Posner, G. J. (2004). *Analyzing the Curriculum, 3rd edition*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Print, M. (1993). *Curriculum development and design*. New South Wales: Allen & Unwin Pty Ltd.

Ramsey, R. D. (2001). *Fiscal fitness for school administrators: how to stretch resources and do even more with less*. California: Corwin Press, Inc. Electronic version retrieved 27 February 2013 from http://books.google.com.ph

Roberts, P. L. and Kellough, R. D. (2011). *A guide for developing interdisciplinary thematic units, 2nd edition*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Shoemaker, B. J. (1993). Education 2000 integrated curriculum. In Fogarty, R. (Ed.), *Integrating the curricula: a collection* (pp. 111 – 120). Washington, D.C.: ERIC Clearinghouse.

Wheeler, D. K. (1967). *Curriculum process*. London: University of London Press Ltd.

Zimmerman, K. and Herr, J. (1984). Time wasters: solutions for teachers and directors. In Brown, J. F. (Ed.), *Administering programs for young children* (pp. 201 – 204). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Claire Rafols Salamat is the current Principal PNOWA (Philippine Navy Officers' Wives Association) Child Learning Center.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN METROPOLITAN MANILA FROM 1950 – 2000

Janice Patria J. Serafica
Harris Memorial College

Abstract

The development of the United Methodist Preschool Curriculum from 1950's to 2000's was traced to contribute knowledge on how church-based preschool curriculum developed and the process by which the past curriculum became the present. Random survey, interviews, and documentary analysis were used to gather data. Results of the study show that there are internal, organizational, and external influences that shaped the curriculum. The philosophy and approaches are eclectic favoring progressivism. Curriculum content from 1950's to 2000 is similar to the present government prescribed content. The instructional resources, strategies, and assessment tools used vary. Curriculum revision is also a teacher's prerogative. The teacher plays a major role in the planning, implementing and evaluation of the curriculum. More so, internal and organizational factors, like the United Methodist Structure, contribute to the curriculum conceptualization and development. While in the implementation and evaluation of the curriculum, external influences, which are parents and government policies, are significant factors. Looking at these influences, curriculum development needs continuous evaluation and revisions to be able to produce a better quality preschool curriculum.

Introduction

This study traces the development of the United Methodist Preschool curriculum through an historical approach that employs Stark and Lattuca's (1997) model, with emphasis on the external, organizational, and internal influences that shaped the development of the curriculum.

In the Philippines, the mushrooming of pre-schools has ushered in a new trend of stiff competition among different schools, prompting the Department of Education to issue DECS Order No. 107, s.1989 which places much emphasis on the responsibility of the school and the teachers in ensuring quality education for young children. The said order emphasizes the responsibility of the teacher to have a class program that will maximize the child's potentials and develop his capacity of learning. However, such order could also have its pitfalls.

Lupdag's (1999) reviewed researches shows that Philippine preschool education lacks a functional curriculum. It was found out that there have been variations in the curricula of various preschools as well as differences in learning competencies. These differences, however minimal, caught the concern of the Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM, 1993) which called for the streamlining of preschool curriculum.

The aim of this study is to describe curriculum development in the United Methodist Preschools, and to contribute knowledge on how a church-based preschool curriculum was developed, and the process by which the past curriculum of the United Methodist Preschool became the present.

The history of early childhood education in the Philippines is not complete without looking into the early childhood educational programs of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines. The United Methodist Church through Harris Memorial Training School in Manila, presently named Harris Memorial College Incorporated, opened up the kindergarten school in the Philippines in 1924 (HMCI, 1953).

Ms. Brigida Garcia Fernando, a graduate of Columbia University Teacher's College pioneered pre-school education by holding classes at Hugh Wilson Hall in Sampaloc, Manila (HMCI, 1970). Drawing from Fernando's example, a number of United Methodist churches in different locations in the Philippines were encouraged to establish their own preschools. These kindergarten schools served as the church's mission program for young Filipino children under its Christian education ministry. As an educational mission program of the church, these kindergarten schools aim to provide the fullest possible development for young children and to respond to the different educational needs of the local community. Suffice it to say, this mission is very important in the advancement of early childhood education in the country. The said schools were administered by church workers who were trained by the church primarily for the purpose of teaching preschool education.

Knowing the crucial role played by the United Methodist Church in the Philippines in early childhood education, it is only imperative to chronicle and trace the historical

underpinnings of these preschools—how it came into being, how it is administered, and look into its preschool curriculum to trace its development.

This is a descriptive study that sought to answer the following questions: 1) How is the curriculum conceptualized? (What internal and external influences shaped the development of the curriculum? Who were involved in the development of the curriculum? 2) How is the curriculum developed? (What are the philosophies, goals and objectives of the curriculum? What is the design of the curriculum plan?) 3) What are the strategies used for implementing the curriculum? 4) What are the methods/tools used in the evaluation of the curriculum? (Is there revision of the curriculum? If yes, how many times was it revised?)

Using a combination of research tools such as surveys, interviews, and documentary analysis, this study explores the curriculum content of the United Methodist Preschool from 1950 to 2000, focusing on the trends, causes and effects that influenced the development of the curriculum's philosophy, goals, core values, content, instruction and evaluation. Eight existing United Methodist preschools within Metro Manila, under the Southwest Metro Manila District of the United Methodist Church were randomly surveyed for this study. One-on-one interviews with faculty members of Harris Memorial College and teachers of The United Methodist Preschools were also conducted to document the oral history of the said preschools. Documentary analysis was done by looking at government policies, and the Curriculum Development Course Descriptions of Harris Memorial College Inc., and United Methodist Church.

This study posits that curriculum development does not work in a vacuum, and as such, curriculum content is shaped by its prevailing context. Thus, internal, external, organizational influences, and philosophy provide the conditions and constraints of the curriculum development. External influences stem from society's demands, as well as the pressure from agents outside the school, such as disciplinary associations, publications, accrediting agencies, and stakeholders that affect curriculum development. Meanwhile, organizational influences include program relationships, program resources, governance, and leadership. Organizational infrastructure, on the other hand, includes the school mission, financial stability, and government arrangements. Internal influences include the teachers' background, educational beliefs, discipline, program mission, and leadership. Stark and Lattuca (1997) asserted that internal influences play a crucial role in curriculum planning because, most often, the actual curriculum planners are mostly composed of faculty members. Finally, the school's philosophy also influences the curriculum content or curricular programs among preschools. These three sets of influences play a role in shaping the educational environment, which, in turn, affects the structure in planning decisions. Consequently, curriculum decisions impact the educational process and outcomes.

Results of the study suggest that internal, organizational, and external influences bore a significant impact in the shaping of the preschool curriculum of the United Methodist Church.

I. Influences in Curriculum Development

A. Internal Influences

The study shows that teacher factors like educational background, church position, teaching experience, and continuing educational programs attended, affect the curriculum development of the United Methodist preschools. The study shows that from the 1950s to 2000s, the preschool teacher was the main person involved in the curriculum development. What is most striking, however, is that most of the teachers graduated from Harris Memorial College, bearing a significant impact on the development of the curriculum of the United Methodist preschools.

In the United Methodist preschools set-up, the teacher is usually the deaconess assigned to a local church. A deaconess is a church worker, commissioned and consecrated by the Annual Conference, and appointed by the Bishop to a particular church as the Preschool teacher and/or Christian Education Director. The appointment is based on the educational background of the deaconess and her capabilities. As a graduate of Harris Memorial College Inc., and consecrated church worker of the church, the appointed deaconess who serves as a preschool teacher in the local church is highly regarded. Thus, most of the United Methodist Church's kindergarten boards rely on the discretion of the preschool teacher on what curriculum to use. Because the teachers are deaconesses, the inclusion of Christian education and Christian teachings in the different preschool curriculum used by different local churches of the United Methodist Church does not come as a surprise. Moreover, since the curriculum is dependent on the teacher, continuing educational programs attended by the teacher, and her teaching experience also impact the way the teacher implements the curriculum.

Another salient finding of the study is the recognition that the United Methodist Preschools do not have a unified curriculum. Since the preschools are autonomously run by the local churches, the preschool teacher is given the freedom to choose her own curriculum.

B. External Influences

Lattuca and Stark (1997) identified several external influences in a curriculum plan that stem from society itself, and its agents like the government, discipline association, market place, and alumni. For the United Methodist Preschools, the parents of preschool children and government policies are the external influences that shaped its curriculum development from the 1950s to 2000s.

1. Parents' Expectations

Social pressures come from parents who expect more from preschool education. The parents' demands influence the preschool teacher to adjust and make changes in her curriculum. To illustrate, the shift from the anecdotal assessment tools, which was predominantly used in the 1950s to the 1970s to the numerical grading system patterned

after elementary education in the 1990s to 2000 was due to the parents' demand. In the interviews conducted, the preschool teachers affirmed that the demands from parents who compare the curriculum of the United Methodist preschools to other curricula prompted them to adopt the commonly used numerical grading system utilized by government preschools. Parents also pressure teachers to give honors in rank form, and expect that the children would be knowledgeable on reading, writing, and arithmetic at the end of the school year; thus, prompting teachers to design their curriculum that would meet the demands of the parents.

2. Government policies

The need of the United Methodist Preschools to be recognized by the government and be given the permit to operate also influenced their curriculum development. Using documentary analysis, the study found out that all United Methodist preschool programs had some modification in the 1990's – 2000's to meet the requirements of DECS Order No. 107 s.1989, the "Standards for the Operation of Pre-schools (Kindergarten level)" and The Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Law , which provides the guidelines for the establishment of private pre-schools.

The objectives and aims of the preschool education: "to develop children in all aspects (physical, social, emotional, and cognitive) so that they will be better prepared to adjust and cope with life situations and the demands of formal schooling; and to maximize the children's potential through a variety of carefully selected and meaningful experiences considering their interests and capabilities" was adapted, and it opened the opportunity for many United Methodist preschool institutions to make changes in their curriculum to prepare children for elementary grades. This means inclusion of academic skills and subjects in the curriculum. In 2000's additional lessons on simple fraction, problem-solving, interpretative expressions, country, seven continents, and basic gymnastics were included.

Yet, looked at broadly, the curriculum content of the United Methodist Preschools from 1950s to 2000 is almost similar to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) prescribed content in 2002. Thus, it is imperative to note that its curriculum content since the 1950s is in consonance with the DSWD standards, way before the agency has required that all preschools adopt the 2002 DSWD curriculum content. Very evident, however, is the inclusion of Christian Education in the curriculum from 1950s to 2000—a unique quality of the United Methodist Preschools, which is a reflection of the influence of the curriculum developer -- the consecrated deaconess -- who also serves as the preschool teacher. It must be noted, however, that the emphasis on Christian education, does not promote United Methodist Heritage or doctrines, but rather general ideas on Christianity. Moreover, the preschool's philosophies, goals, mission, and objectives also influence curriculum content.

C. Organizational Influences

In the case of the United Methodist Preschools, the organizational structure of the United Methodist Church, and the nature of Harris Memorial College's teachings heavily influenced the curriculum development of the said preschools.

1. Organizational Structure of the United Methodist Church

As mentioned earlier, the preschool teacher is given the autonomy to develop and implement her own curriculum. However, the teacher's discretion is also influenced by the organizational structure of the United Methodist Church.

The United Methodist Church is guided by the principles of the Book of Discipline (UMC Book of Discipline, 2004); however, nowhere in the provision is the inclusion of a specific curriculum that should be used by the local churches in running their own preschools. This specific curriculum content is also lacking in the central conference level. While the Philippine Central Conference (PCC) has the Commission on Early Childhood Education, formerly the Commission on Kindergarten Work, which guides the local church preschools under the Board of Education, the commission's task is to solely help local churches put up a preschool by providing guidelines but does not prescribe a specific curriculum to use (CKW Report, 1984). In this sense, local churches run their own preschools autonomously. And since there is no prescribed preschool curriculum to use, the choice of curriculum is dependent on the preschool teacher, with the approval of the Kindergarten Board. Thus, the organizational structure of the United Methodist church only bolsters and reinforces the personal influence of teachers in the development of the curriculum.

2. Harris Memorial College Inc. Teaching

The influence of Harris Memorial College in the development of the curriculum of the United Methodist preschools is so dominant because as mentioned earlier, most of the preschool teachers are graduates of the said institution.

In 1948, Harris Memorial College Inc., made history when it became the first school to receive government recognition to grant the degree of Junior Teacher's Certificates to their graduates of kindergarten education. In 1968, a Bachelor in Kindergarten Education degree was initiated with the Bureau of Private Schools. It was the first recognized course in kindergarten education offered in the Philippines (Mission Ministries-Philippines, 1987, HMCI, 1970).

In the ensuing years, graduating kindergarten majors of Harris Memorial College Inc. are asked to develop their own curriculum as part of their academic requirement to obtain a degree. This is also the practice in the Union Theological Seminary (UTS). Given the privilege and freedom to use a curriculum of their choice, most preschool teachers in the United Methodist Preschools opt to use the curriculum plan they made in their tertiary years to implement in their classroom. As attested by the interviews, the curriculum employed by the teachers in the United Methodist Preschools is highly influenced by the teachings of Harris Memorial College.

D. Philosophy

As a church program, the preschool curriculum of the United Methodist Church is highly influenced by the Christian philosophy of child development and education. Data shows that from 1950s to 2000s, the teachers have adopted eclectic philosophies of progressivisms, particularly, ideas of Froebel, Dewey, and Montessori. Results of the study reveal that in the United Methodist Preschool, the child is at the center of the curriculum. Therefore, most preschools of the United Methodist Church describe their curriculum as a "child-centered curriculum," which is associated with the progressive movement led by John Dewey. The curriculum ascribes with John Dewey's philosophy; as such, books and subject matters are just part of the learning process, and not the ultimate sources of knowledge. The teacher's role is to guide students in their problem-solving and scientific projects. Although the teacher and students plan activities together, the role of the teacher is to help students locate, analyze, interpret and evaluate data to enable the student to formulate his/her own conclusions. In the United Methodist preschools, teachers develop learning units that include various child interests either weekly or monthly.

II. Curriculum Implementation

A. Instructional strategies

The use of guided-play, story-telling and use of various instructional media was dominantly used from the 1950s to 2000. Play-based learning was consistently used in recognition of Dewey's assertion that participation in play activity contributes to children's intellectual and social development. Thus, in this set-up, the teacher serves as a facilitator who encourages social skills by providing opportunities to practice them.

Story telling was also a popular instructional strategy utilized by the teachers of the United Methodist preschools. From 1950-2000, a wide body of literatures and biblical stories were used to teach preschoolers. The stories serve as springboards for organizing units of instruction to implement the integrated curriculum. Teachers also confirm that at times, books or stories serve as the theme of the integrated curriculum.

B. Instructional Resources

The influx of technology bore a significant impact on the instructional resources utilized by the teacher in implementing the curriculum. Across all era, from 1950s to 2000s, books, educational toys, manipulative toys, art kits and visual aids were used as teaching aids. However, study shows that the prevalence of using modern technology in 2000s has ushered a new trend. The use of modern technology like audio-visual materials and computer-aided instructional materials were more prevalent than the use of hand-made materials.

III. Curriculum Evaluation

This study likewise explores the curriculum evaluation utilized by the United Methodist Preschools over the years by looking at the assessment and evaluation tools used by the teachers. The evaluation is divided into two: (1) learners' assessment tools; and (2) evaluation of the school curriculum.

A. Learners' Assessment tools

Written and oral exams, as well as actual observation, were dominantly used by the teacher to assess and gauge the student's learning from the 1950's to 2000. In the 1950's up until the 1970's, anecdotal and portfolio-type of learner's progress were used. The simple test had 20-25 items. The tests used the draw and tell, and show and tell method. There was no standardized grading system. Assessment was done in narrative form. No honors were given at the end of the school year. Rather, awards in different learning areas and behavior were given. Examples were: "Best in Music, Most Diligent, Best in Math, Most Respectful etc." Regular Parent-Teacher conferences where the children's progress was discussed were held. Teachers also scheduled home visitation of pupils. The visit enabled the teacher to understand the child in relation to her environment.

Anecdotal records are widely used in many United Methodist preschools. An *anecdotal record* is a written record, which is usually written in a positive tone, chronicling the child's progress based on milestones particular to that child's social, emotional, physical, aesthetic, and cognitive development. The teacher observes and then records a child's actions and work throughout the day while the activities are occurring. The recording is informal and is typically based on notes or a checklist with space for writing comments. It is done only when appropriate and is not forced; in fact, there may be days between entries. Since the anecdotal report is written in a positive tone, it emphasizes what a child can do, and his or her achievements, rather than on what he or she cannot do. It is useful for reporting a child's progress and achievements during parent-teacher conferences.

However, in the 1990's to 2000's, written examinations for instructional plan assessments became the method widely used by preschool teachers in gauging learner's competence. As mentioned earlier, external influences compelled preschool teachers to use assessment tools similar to formal schooling, like the use of matching type technique in exams; spelling and grammar tests, quarterly examination, oral examination, quizzes, and homework to cater to the demands of the parents who would often compare the curriculum content of the United Methodist Preschool to regular preschools, and the pressure from government agencies to follow the prescribed curriculum content. In an interview with a preschool teacher, she revealed that she only uses the numerical grading system for the preparatory class but not in the kindergarten and nursery class, because numerical report cards are preferred in primary schools. From the 1990's to 2000, learners were assessed using the numerical grade value, as reflected in the student's report card. These numerical grades paved the way for parents to persuade teachers to rank the pupils and give honors/awards at the end of the school year. In an interview with a preschool teacher, the respondent

revealed that the pressure from parents who expect and demand for a numerical grade to determine their child's academic achievement and growth, compelled the preschool teachers to adopt a numerical grading system.

A shift from anecdotal in 1950's to 1970's to numerical grading system in 1990's to 2000's was influenced by government policies and pressure from parents of the pupils. This shift from authentic to traditional assessment brought changes in the teacher's planning and implementation of assessing the learner's progress.

B. School Curriculum Evaluation

Only one out of the eight United Methodist Preschools from 1950's to 2000 surveyed has a school curriculum evaluation and revision. This is again due to the fact that the United Methodist Preschool is yet to have its own school curriculum. As mentioned earlier, the preschool teacher has the discretion to choose what curriculum to use. In the structure of the United Methodist Church, the Kindergarten Board of local churches, which is comprised of lay members, has the right to evaluate the curriculum used in the preschools. However, this right is waived primarily because church leaders, as well as the members of the Kindergarten Board, have a high regard for the preschool teachers who are consecrated Deaconesses, and mostly graduates of Harris Memorial College.

Since the structure of the United Methodist Preschools grants autonomy to the preschool teacher to devise and implement her own curriculum, the teacher then has the prerogative to do revisions as she deems necessary. It is in this way that continuing education programs, as well as workshops and seminars geared toward skill and knowledge enhancement becomes an avenue for preschool teachers to modify their own curriculum. The United Methodist Church provides continuing education programs through the Commission on Early Childhood Education (CECE) and Harris Memorial College Inc. The training aims to give updates on current issues and trends on early childhood education. However, the said training does not impose that teachers modify and revise their curriculum as the decision to change the curriculum is still dependent on the teacher.

Conclusion

The development of the United Methodist Preschool curriculum from 1950's to 2000 has gone through changes brought about by different influences in different time frame. The study shows that the teacher had the primary role in the curriculum development. However, other internal, external and organizational influences also play a role in the development of the curriculum of the United Methodist Preschool. It is imperative to determine how these latent dynamics contributed to the shaping of the curriculum to understand what within the structure of United Methodist Preschool allowed for the condition and constraints of the preschool's curriculum.

In the conceptualization and development of the preschool curriculum, the study shows that the teacher holds the onus of responsibility in the outcome of the curriculum since

the teacher adapts multiple roles as developer, implementer, and evaluator of curriculum. The study shows that in general, these preschool curricula developed by different teachers in different time frames share common standards. Evident in all curricula is the prominence of Christian Education in the curriculum. Most, if not all, teachers of the United Methodist Preschools had their bachelor's degree in kindergarten at Harris Memorial College Inc. Most of them are commissioned and consecrated as Deaconesses of the United Methodist Church and were assigned to teach in different preschools operated by the United Methodist Churches. All of them are exposed to continuing education programs offered by the United Methodist Church and Harris Memorial College Inc. These preschool teachers share common basic education background, share the same faith in the light of the United Methodist ways, and share similar school environment and exposure to training programs. This homogeneity in teacher factors brought unity in the independently developed preschool curriculum of the United Methodist Church. In this trend, the organizational structure of the United Methodist Church and teachings of Harris Memorial College Inc. are contributory factors.

Despite having no agreed standard as uniform curriculum across all United Methodist Church Preschools, these similarities in teachers' background provide the framework that all United Methodist Church Preschool curricula are based from.

Looking at the status and condition of the United Methodist Preschool curriculum from 1950's to 2000, there is a need for a continuous evaluation and revision in the development of the curriculum to be able to produce an enhanced preschool curriculum for the years to come.

REFERENCES

Carton, C and Allen, J. (1993). *Early childhood curriculum*. NY :Macmillan Publishing Co:

Cassidy, S. et al. (Summer 2003). *Childhood education*. 79 (4), 194

_____,(1984). Commission on Kindergarten Work Report.

De Boo, M. (2000).*Early years handbook*. USA: The Curriculum Partnership

Decker, C.A., & Decker, J.R. (1992). *Planning and administering early childhood program*. New York : Macmillan

Dodge, J. (2004*). 25 Quick formative assessments for a differentiated classroom:*

Easy, Low-Prep Assessments That Help You Pinpoint Students' Needs and Reach All Learners USA:Scholastic

_____, (2007). *Strong foundations: early childhood care and education.* Education for all global monitoring report 2007. *Retrieved on March 17, 2010 from* http://unesdoc.unesco.org

Essa, E. (1996*). Introduction to Early Childhood Education Package*

Estolas, J. (1972). P*reschool education in the Philippines.* Manila: Navotas Press

Gamboa, J. Jr. (ed). (2003). *Methodism in the Philippines: a century of faith and vision.* Manila: Philippine Central Conference, The United Methodist Church

Glotthorn, A.(2006).D*eveloping a quality curriculum*.2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication Inc.

Gordon A.& Browne K.W. (1993). *Beginning essentials in early childhood education*. NY: Cengage Learning Inc.

_____, (1953, 1970, 1979, 1987, 1992, 1996, 2006). *Harris Memorial College Catalogue*. Philippines: Harris Memorial College Inc.

Heckman J. (2004).*Evaluating education and training programmes*

Hesch*, R.* (Fall 1999). Culturally relevant teacher education*:* a Canadian inner-city case. *Canadian Journal of Education.* 24 (4), 369

Hurwitz, S. C. (Winter 2002/2003).To be successful--let them play! *Childhood Education* 79 (2), 101

Hutchins, R. (1972).*The conflict in education in a democratic society*

Kwon, Y.I (Fall 2002). Changing Curriculum for Early Childhood Education in England. *Childhood Research and Practice*. 4 (2)

Jackman H.L. (2005). *Early education curriculum: A Child's Connection to the World.* NY: Cengage Learning Inc.

Jordan L.K. (2006). *Integrity across curriculum.* California: Corwin Press:

Jose-Pangan, M. (1976). *Kindergarten education for Philippine school.* Manila: National Book Store

Langley, L. (2009). Creating a curriculum: that fosters scientific thought. *Montessori Life* (3), 32

Latucca L & Stark J. (1997).*Shaping the college curriculum: academic plans in context.* San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Imprint

Lupdag, A D. (1999). *The Filipino preschool child.* Makati City: COGA Pub. House

Makin L. & Whitehead M.R. (2004) *How to develop children's early literacy: carers and educators.* California: Sage Publication Inc.

_____, Mission Ministries-Philippines (1987) *Early childhood education in churches: training manual.* : Quezon City :Mission Ministries Philippines Publication

Miyahara, J & Meyers, C. (2008). Early learning and development standards in east asia and the pacific. *International Journal of Early Childhood.* 40 (2),17

Mori, K. (Mar/Apr 1996). Arts Education. *Policy Review*. 97 (4), 31

Moyer, J. (Spring 2001). The child-centered kindergarten. *Childhood Education.* 77 (3), 161

Nagel, N.G. & Driscoll. A. (2002). *Early childhood education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon

O'Neill. (2006). From Fallacy to Integrity: Dewey's Call for a Philosophy of Experience**.** *Journal of Thought*. 41 (3), 73

Oliva, P (2006). *Developing the curriculum (7th Edition)*

Orstein, A. (1993).*Curriculum: foundations, Principles, and Issues*

Posner, G. J. (1999). A*nalyzing the curriculum.* NY: Mcrgraw-Hill

Riley D. et al. (2003). *Social & Emotional Development: Connecting Science and Practice Early Childhood Settings* 10 Yorkton Court, St. Paul MN: Redleaf Press

Ryan, T. (Winter, 2008).Philosophical Orientation in Pre-Service. *The Journal of Educational Thought*. 4 (3), 247

Sutton, A. (2009). Educating for Ecological Sustainability: Montessori Education Leads the Way. *Montessori Life*. 21 (4),18

Taba, Hilda. (1962). *Curriculum development: theory and practice*

Tanner D. and Tanner L. (1975). *Integrating inquiry across curriculum.* Corwin Press: CA

_____, (2008). The Philippines Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. 98th Regular Session Official Journal.

_____, (2002)The Philippine Revised Manual for Day Care Workers

_____, (2004). The United Methodist Book of the Discipline. Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House

Thurman, L.M. and Debord K.B. (1996). Pre-school planning guide. *National Network for Children care.* Retrieved January 20, 2010 from http:nncc.org

Tyler R.W. (1949). Basic principles of curriculum and instruction. USA:University of Chicago Press

White S. & Coleman M. (2000). *Early childhood education : building a philosophy for teaching.* Saddle River, N.J. : Merrill

Warner, L. & Sower J. (2005). *Educating Young Children from Preschool through Primary Grades, MyLabSchool Edition*

Janice Patria J. Serafica is an Instructor for the Education Department of Harris Memorial College. Currently, she is the Director for Students Affairs and Services of Harris.