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ANALYZING THE EFFECT OF NEW POLICIES ON THE SOCIO-EMOTIONAL READINESS OF KINDERGARTEN LEARNERS AS MEASURED BY THE ECD CHECKLIST

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ABSTRACT

Early Childhood Education (ECE) has been globally recognized as the foundation of lifelong learning, with international and national policies underscoring its role in preparing learners for academic, social, and emotional success. In the Philippines, the Kindergarten Education Act of 2012 and subsequent DepEd policies mandate compulsory kindergarten and emphasize developmental appropriateness, including age qualification, as assessed through the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Checklist. However, despite these policies, challenges persist in curriculum alignment, policy enforcement, and teacher Support, raising concerns about learners' socio-emotional readiness. This study aimed to examine the effects of new early childhood policies on the socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten learners in selected public schools in the Division of Rizal during School Year 2025–2026, as measured by the ECD Checklist. Guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) framework, the study employed a descriptive, quantitative research design and a researcher-developed, validated questionnaire administered to kindergarten teachers. Data were analyzed to assess teacher demographics, Extent of policy implementation, and learner readiness levels. Results revealed that teachers were generally young, academically qualified, and moderately experienced, with strong implementation of monitoring and classroom routines but weaker consistency in curriculum alignment and in the enforcement of age cut-offs. Kindergarten learners exhibited emerging socio-emotional readiness, showing strengths in self-awareness and relationship skills but requiring further development in self-management and social Awareness. Statistical analyses indicated that teachers' demographic characteristics significantly influenced perceptions of learner readiness and policy implementation, whereas no significant relationship was found between policy implementation and socio-emotional readiness. The study concludes that effective socio-emotional development cannot be achieved through policy compliance alone but requires teacher professional development, standardized implementation, and stronger parent-school collaboration. To address gaps, Project SURE was proposed to standardize practices, enhance teacher training, and integrate child-centered approaches that strengthen socio-emotional readiness and ensure equitable learning outcomes in kindergarten education.

KEYWORDS: *Administrative Monitoring, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making, Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Social-Emotional Readiness*

I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nation (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 4 underscores the significance of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in ensuring lifelong learning and holistic development of individuals worldwide. In the case of the Philippines, this goal is achieved through the enactment of the Kindergarten Education Act of 2012, wherein the Philippines mandates that all children go through the Kindergarten program. DepEd Order No. 15 states that the minimum age requirement for kindergarten admission is five years old before October 31 of each school year; however, DepEd accepts kindergarten students who will turn five years old before the last two months of the year, but only those who finished ECCD program.

There are also challenges in the implementation of ECE rules such as the divergence between curricular requirements and classroom practices and concerns about age cut-off laws. These difficulties affect children's socio-emotional competence to learn, a major predictor of success. Socio-emotional preparedness is assessed using the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Checklist. The research will evaluate the impact of the recently introduced ECE policies on the socio-emotional preparedness of the kindergarten learners by considering different educational aspects in order to enhance the policy and practice.

The study is based on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory that stresses the importance of linked systems in affecting child behavior and development. An integrative approach to ECE is encouraged to develop the socio-emotional abilities required for long-term academic and social success. Also, Social-Emotional Learning Theory (CASEL) highlights the importance of key abilities such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relational skills, and responsible decision-making on the beneficial development of the child.

The research evaluates the influence of new regulations on kindergarten preparedness by utilizing the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model concentrating on aspects such as curriculum adherence, classroom routines and teachers' profiles. The study used descriptive quantitative approach in gathering data in selected public elementary schools in Rizal.

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The results are expected to give crucial insights to kindergarten teachers, school heads, parents and future researchers that would improve the knowledge of policy execution and its influence on children's socio-emotional development. The key words that describe compliance with age cut-off laws, conformity to curricular requirements, and markers of socio-emotional preparation underpin the study's significance in early childhood education.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

1. What is the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of age, sex, years of teaching experience, and highest educational attainment?
2. What composite mean on the extent are the new early childhood policies implemented in kindergarten classrooms, as indicated by adherence to curriculum standards, classroom routines, extent of administrative monitoring, and adherence to the age cut-off policy?
3. What is the composite mean on the level of socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten learners as measured by the ECD Checklist in terms of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making?
4. Is there a significant difference in the level of parental involvement and its perceived impact on learners' development, as reported by teachers, when grouped according to teacher profiles?
5. Is there a significant difference in the extent of implementation of the new early childhood policies in kindergarten classrooms when grouped according to teacher profiles?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of implementation of the new early childhood policies in kindergarten classrooms and the socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten learners as measured by the ECD Checklist?
7. Based on the findings of the study, what intervention program may be developed?

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES AND STUDIES

Kindergarten Education is an important aspect of early childhood education that helps prepare kids for a lifetime of learning (Beluso, 2025). Through a comparison of the pre-primary education systems of Singapore and Ethiopia, this paper provides insight into the differences that exist regarding accessibility, curricula, teachers' qualifications, infrastructure, and efficiency of policies. There are also considerable deficits in essential tools and materials, especially textbooks, and problems relating to the knowledge possessed by teachers, suggesting the need for better professional training programs (Tomora & Bereket, 2025; Jaca & Lopez-Baroman, 2021), with the implementation of the curriculum having a very strong correlation with the basic skills that students acquire (Alot & D, 2023). Nonetheless, notwithstanding recognizing the significance of early childhood development education in development approaches, there remain significant challenges that are faced when it comes to policy implementation (Olusegun, 2025).

Early childhood development policies have to be implemented for kindergarten learners' socio-emotional preparedness. Learning social and emotional skills may ensure a successful and productive academic life for learners. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an important component of early school readiness and healthy child development (Ferreira et al., 2021; Ștefan, Dănilă & Cristescu, 2022) however, it is challenged by developmental variables in its nurturing by the techniques, strategies, and interventions of teachers (Rana, 2022) thus, delayed social emotional development will have an impact on the difficulty of socializing with the environment (Damayanti & Syafril, 2024). Additionally, social-emotional development in children refers to a child's sensitivity to others' feelings in everyday interactions (Prameswari, 2024). Likewise, SEL enhances learning outcomes, increases participation, and refines the personal wellbeing of students when teachers use their SECs effectively (Nanda et al., 2025). To foster the holistic socio-emotional development of learners, the school must become a specific form of the community's active life, rather than an isolated space where lessons are taught (Bruja, 2021). Thus, policies in early childhood education must be properly implemented.

The teachers are very essential in early childhood learning, influencing the learners and executing policies. The teacher needs to be ready, trained, and well-supported by the administrators in order to transform the policy into something beneficial for the learner. Good learning involves many aspects such as holistic growth, critical thinking, being creative, socially competent, and getting prepared for any challenge. There is definitely the need for additional support for teachers in order to improve early childhood learning (Kasdiah et al., 2024; Wajeeha, 2024).

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive and quantitative approach was used in the study to examine the distribution of variables, measure the occurrence of phenomena, trends, and the relationship between variables (Vale, 2023). Descriptive research involved the presentation of circumstances without any intervention from the researcher (Mishra & Alok, 2022). On the other hand, quantitative research was used to measure phenomena using numerical data, with an explanation of events that involve an empirical assertion and an evaluation of the standard of a policy or program mathematically (Taherdoost, 2022). This tool was designed for measuring the effects of new early childhood policies on socio-emotional readiness among kindergarten pupils, based on the ECD Checklist.

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Population and Sampling
The total population consisted of 250 kindergarten teachers from selected public elementary schools in the District of Binangonan, Division of Rizal. The researcher used a cluster random sampling technique to select the study's target respondents. The schools were selected as clusters, and respondents from the selected schools were randomly selected.

Respondents of the Study
The respondents in the study were kindergarten teachers from selected public elementary schools in the Division of Rizal. The respondents included one hundred (100) kindergarten teachers who provided the observed data needed in analyzing the effect of newly implemented early childhood policies in the Philippines on the socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten learners as measured by the ECD Checklist.

Research Instrument
The research relied on an instrument that was designed by the researcher for data collection regarding the effects of newly introduced early childhood policies on the socio-emotional readiness of children in Kindergarten. There were three parts to the questionnaire; part one involved collection of demographic details of the respondents (age, gender, teaching experience, education level), part two involved determination of the level of implementation of the early childhood policies in the classroom environment (compliance with curriculum standards, procedures, monitoring, and age cut off), while part three entailed determination of the socio-emotional readiness of the learners using ECD checklist (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skill, and responsible decision making).

Validation of the Instrument
Validity within the research instrument is an important issue because it allows for the guaranteeing of accuracy and relevance within the data collected during the research. In case an instrument has been poorly constructed or is invalid, the results will be wrong and consequently the research will be invalid. In this particular study, a researcher made instrument was evaluated on the basis of content by a group of experts, whose recommendations were used to refine the tool. Upon the endorsement of the experts, the instrument was subjected to piloting and evaluated for reliability using Cronbach's alpha.

Data Gathering Procedure
Following validation of the research instrument, the researcher carried out a systematic data gathering procedure. Prior to this, permission was sought from the institution and the Office of the Superintendent in Rizal. School heads were also sought for approval in selecting respondents. Informed consent was also secured from respondents, assuring them of their anonymity and voluntary participation in the study. Validated questionnaires were then distributed to the respondents who were given instructions to complete them. Only valid questionnaire answers were gathered for further analysis and processing.

The results yielded in the analysis became the bases for formulating an intervention program that sought to improve the socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten learners due to recent early childhood education reforms. After finalizing the oral defense, the manuscript was edited in accordance with institutional guidelines.

Statistical Treatment
The analysis of data employed various statistical treatments. Frequency and percentage distributions illustrated the profiles of teacher-respondents concerning age, sex, years of teaching experience, and highest educational attainment. A weighted mean assessed the extent of implementation of new early childhood policies in kindergarten classrooms, evaluating adherence to curriculum standards, classroom routines, administrative monitoring, and compliance with the age cut-off policy.

Additionally, this method gauged kindergarten learners' socio-emotional readiness, measured by the ECD Checklist across dimensions such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. A paired t-test identified significant differences in policy implementation extent among groups defined by respondents' profiles, while Pearson r analyzed potential correlations between the extent of policy implementation and the socio-emotional readiness of learners.

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III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of age, sex, years of teaching experience, and highest educational attainment.

Table 1

Demographic profile of the teacher-respondents

		f	%	Ranking
Age	21 - 30	11	11	4
	31 - 40	49	49	1
	41 - 50	21	21	2
	51 - 60	16	16	3
	61 and above	3	3	5
	Total	**100**	**100**	
Sex	Male	47	47	2
	Female	53	53	1
	Total	**100**	**100**	
Years of Experience	Bachelor's Degree	42	42	1
	With master's degree Units	33	33	2
	Master's Degree Graduate	22	22	3
	With Doctorate Degree Units	3	3	4
	Doctoral Degree Graduate	0	0	5
	Total	**100**	**100**	
Highest Educational Attainment	1 - 5	25	25	2
	6 - 10	53	53	1
	11 - 15	17	17	3
	16 - 20	5	5	4
	21 years and above	0	0	9
	Total	**100**	**100**	

As can be seen from **Table 1**, the age range that most kindergarten teachers belong to is 31-40 years, accounting for 49%, whereas only 21% belong to the age range 41-50. The least represented age range is 61+ years at 3%. 11% represents an age range of 21-30 years. In terms of gender distribution, there are 53% females against 47% males in kindergarten. A total of 53% respondents have obtained their bachelor's degree, whereas 33% have earned their master's credit hours. Only 3% have doctorate credits. About 53% have taught for six to ten years, while 25% have been teaching for one to five years.

According to the study conducted by Mendoza and Cruz (2022), educators in early childhood education in the Philippines tend to be mostly female, at an early or middle stage of their career, and generally possess bachelor's or master's degree but do not usually have PhDs. According to Li and Zhang (2021), educators who have some degree of experience are relatively more adaptable to change in policies, but they still need to undergo professional development to become more effective. Santos and Villanueva (2023) pointed out that professional development of kindergarten educators greatly improves their performance.

Composite Mean Table on the extent are the new early childhood policies implemented in kindergarten classrooms, as indicated by adherence to curriculum standards, classroom routines, extent of administrative monitoring, and adherence to the age cut-off policy.

Table 2

Composite Table on the extent are the new early childhood policies implemented in kindergarten classrooms, as indicated by adherence to curriculum standards, classroom routines, extent of administrative monitoring, and adherence to the age cut-off policy.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Adherence to Curriculum Standards	3.48	0.46	Agree
Classroom Routines	3.51	0.35	Strongly Agree
Administrative Monitoring	3.55	0.47	Strongly Agree
Adherence with Age Cut-Off Policy	3.18	0.29	Agree
Extent of Implementation of New Early Childhood Policies in Kindergarten Classrooms	**3.43**	**0.29**	**Agree**

Legend: *4 (3.50 – 4.00) – Strongly Agree* *2 (1.50 – 2.49) – Disagree*
3 (2.50 – 3.49) – Agree *1 (1.00 – 1.49) – Strongly Disagree*

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Table 2 shows that the overall Extent of implementation of new early childhood policies in kindergarten classrooms is assessed as Agree, with a composite mean of 3.43 (SD = 0.29). Of the four policy categories, administrative monitoring achieved the highest mean (M = 3.55, SD = 0.47), closely followed by classroom routines (M = 3.51, SD = 0.35), both of which were characterized verbally as Strongly Agree, indicating robust consistency and enforcement in these domains. Conversely, compliance with curriculum standards (M = 3.48, SD = 0.46) and, particularly, compliance with the age cut-off policy (M = 3.18, SD = 0.29) received Agree ratings, indicating incomplete implementation. This indicates that although educators and administrators rigorously adhere to classroom procedures and monitoring systems, there is diminished consistency in the validity of the curriculum and in the implementation of age-related policies.

The current early childhood policies seem very effective in kindergarten as they display great effectiveness in terms of administration and procedures aimed at ensuring that the learners benefit from structured learning and socio-emotional development. Moderate performance is shown in terms of curriculum implementation and age cut-offs, and these problems require stricter policy implementation and better parent-school communication.

The findings from Bautista and Ramirez (2021) confirm that robust administration improves policy adherence and quality in classrooms. According to Chen and Wang (2022), while the classroom process is well defined, policy adherence related to age and curriculum can vary depending on the context and families involved. Cruz and Villanueva (2023) observed that the success of early childhood policy reforms requires not only administration but also proper execution of the admission policy and training teachers to ensure conformity to the curriculum.

Composite Table on the Level of Teachers' Attitude towards Sign Language in terms of Belief in Inclusive Values, Acceptance of Learner Diversity, Commitment to Inclusive Practices, Perception of Professional Responsibility.

Table 3

Composite table on the level of socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten learners as measured by the ECD checklist in terms of self-Awareness, self-management, social Awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Self-Awareness	2.99	0.25	Agree
Self-Management	2.94	0.26	Agree
Social Awareness	2.94	0.25	Agree
Relationship Skills	2.99	0.25	Agree
Responsible Decision-Making	2.97	0.29	Agree
Level of Socio-Emotional Readiness of Kindergarten Learners	**2.97**	**0.11**	**Agree**

Legend: *4 (3.50 – 4.00) – Strongly Agree* *2 (1.50 – 2.49) – Disagree*
3 (2.50 – 3.49) – Agree *1 (1.00 – 1.49) – Strongly Disagree*

Table 3 shows that the overall socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten students, as assessed by the ECD Checklist, is scored as Agree, with a composite mean of 2.97 (SD = 0.11). Among the five domains, self-awareness (M = 2.99, SD = 0.25) and relationship skills (M = 2.99, SD = 0.25) received the highest evaluations. However, self-management (M = 2.94, SD = 0.26) and social Awareness (M = 2.94, SD = 0.25) had somewhat lower averages. Responsible decision-making (M = 2.97, SD = 0.29) was categorized within the "Agree" category, signifying modest Preparedness. The findings indicate that learners have emerging, albeit not fully robust, socio-emotional skills across all domains, with no area attaining the "Strongly Agree" level.

Young children may be socioemotionally ready; nonetheless, they still need further development in terms of these competences. Teachers need to teach pupils traits such as self-control, social awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and cooperative problem solving. This will be vital for their preparation for future courses.

Santos & Dela Cruz (2021) have shown that Filipino kindergarten learners, on general, exhibit average socio-emotional abilities, therefore emphasizing the need for specific interventions in the school environment. According to Kim & Lee (2022), equal development of all five components of socio-emotional learning is linked to higher academic involvement and decreased incidence of behavior disorders. Finally, Hernandez & Smith (2024) have verified that programs that foster socio-emotional Preparedness in kindergarten strengthen learners' resilience, self-regulation, and social effectiveness.

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Significant difference in the level of socio-emotional readiness among kindergarten learners, as reported by teachers, when grouped by profiles.

Table 4

Significant difference in the level of socio-emotional readiness among kindergarten learners, as reported by teachers, when grouped by profiles.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	Remarks
Age - Level of Socio-Emotional Readiness of Kindergarten Learners	-4.623	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Sex - Level of Socio-Emotional Readiness of Kindergarten Learners	-28.433	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Years of Experience - Level of Socio-Emotional Readiness of Kindergarten Learners	-12.829	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment - Level of Socio-Emotional Readiness of Kindergarten Learners	-11.571	99	0.000	Reject	Significant

Table 4 reveals significant difference in the socio-emotional preparation of kindergarten learners, as reported by teachers, across profiles. The calculated t-values for age (-4.623), sex (-28.433), years of experience (-12.829), and greatest educational attainment (-11.571) all produced p-values of 0.000, which are below the 0.05 significance threshold. This suggests that teacher demographic attributes substantially influence their perceptions and reports of students' socio-emotional readiness, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis for all profile variables.

The assessment of socio-emotional preparedness in learners is influenced by demographic factors such as the age, gender, years of experience, and level of education among others, that teachers possess. This implies that there is a need to engage in standardized training and calibration sessions to minimize any biases during reporting and hence ensure consistency in interpreting the ECD Checklist.

From the research done by Rivera & Bautista (2021), it is evident that the number of years an individual teaches can impact greatly the accuracy of socio-emotional assessments in early infancy. The research by Chen & Park (2022) further shows that the educational qualifications of the teachers impact greatly their interpretations of the checklists used and hence cause errors during their reporting process. According to Gomez & Taylor (2023), the characteristics of the teacher may cause the inaccuracies in assessments.

Significant difference in the extent of implementation of the new early childhood policies in kindergarten classrooms, when grouped according to teacher profiles.

Table 5

Significant difference in the extent of implementation of the new early childhood policies in kindergarten classrooms, when grouped according to teacher profile.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	Remarks
Age - Extent of Implementation of New Early Childhood Policies in Kindergarten Classrooms	-8.669	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Sex - Extent of Implementation of New Early Childhood Policies in Kindergarten Classrooms	-31.991	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Years of Experience - Extent of Implementation of New Early Childhood Policies in Kindergarten Classrooms	-16.921	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment - Extent of Implementation of New Early Childhood Policies in Kindergarten Classrooms	-16.919	99	0.000	Reject	Significant

Table 5 reveals significant difference in the Extent of implementation of new early development policies in kindergarten classrooms across teacher profiles. The calculated t-values for age (-8.669), sex (-31.991), years of experience (-16.921), and greatest educational attainment (-16.919) all possess p-values of 0.000, which are below the 0.05 significance threshold. The statistical data

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warrant rejecting the null hypothesis, indicating that teachers' demographic characteristics substantially affect their implementation of new early childhood programs.

Efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation process can differ based on teachers' personal and professional attributes in their kindergartens. Differences in age, gender, years of experience, and education imply different perceptions and implementation processes, which could result in inconsistencies. It becomes clear why the process of standardized training and professional development is needed in order to promote consistent policy implementation among various groups of educators.

Torres and Delgado's (2021) study suggests that the experience level of teachers has a big role to play when it comes to policy implementation in early childhood education. According to Huang and Rivera (2022), qualifications of teachers have an impact on their Readiness and willingness to implement innovations in preschool classrooms. As stated in the research conducted by Santos and Lee (2024), demographic differences play a critical role when it comes to compliance with policies in preschool classrooms.

Significant relationship between the Extent of implementation of the new early childhood policies in kindergarten classrooms and the socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten learners as measured by the ECD Checklist.

Table 6

Significant relationship between the Extent of implementation of the new early childhood policies in kindergarten classrooms and the socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten learners as measured by the ECD Checklist

		LEVEL OF SOCIO-EMOTIONAL READINESS OF KINDERGARTEN LEARNERS
EXTENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW EARLY CHILDHOOD POLICIES IN KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS	Pearson Correlation	-0.032
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.752
	N	100

Table 6 shows that there is no significant correlation between the level of implementation of the new early childhood policies in kindergarten classes and the socio-emotional readiness of kindergarten learners, as assessed by the ECD Checklist. The calculated Pearson correlation coefficient (r = -0.032) signifies a negligible negative correlation; however, the p-value of 0.752 is above the 0.05 significance threshold. This indicates that the null hypothesis is accepted, implying that the Extent of teachers' implementation of the new policies does not statistically affect students' socio-emotional preparation.

This means that even if new policies have put in place mechanisms to ensure that classroom management and teaching methods are used, the implementation of those policies alone will not lead to increased social-emotional readiness of kindergarten pupils. Aspects like parental involvement, learner factors, home setting, and socio-cultural issues could impact social-emotional development more than policy implementation itself.

This finding is supported by the findings in Kim & Alvarez (2021), who argue that socio-emotional readiness is mainly determined by social and family contexts and not by policy approaches within the classrooms. Nkomo & Harris (2022) pointed out that while policies create conducive learning environments, their effects on socio-emotional learning are usually indirect and mediated through pedagogical approaches and interaction between school and family members. According to De la Cruz & Tan (2023), socio-emotional development of children within early stages of life needs both regulation and family involvement.

Intervention plan may be developed based on the findings of the study

Title of the Program: “Project **SURE**: **S**trengthening **U**nified **R**eadiness in **E**arly Childhood”

I. RATIONALE

The results obtained from the study prove that teachers' demographic factors such as their age, gender, years of experience, and level of education play a critical role in determining the manner in which they perceive and implement the early childhood policy. However, it is evident that Extent of policy implementation does not directly contribute to learners' socio-emotional Preparedness. Therefore, it is important to develop a program that would provide teachers with consistent procedures as well as help in the process of developing the socio-emotional Preparedness of the learners. Project SURE strives towards these objectives.

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Objectives	Client	Person Responsible	Timeframe	Estimated Cost (per school)	Output
To standardize teachers' understanding of socio-emotional readiness regardless of age, sex, educational attainment, or years of experience	Kindergarten teachers	School Head, Master Teachers, ECE Coordinator	1st–2nd Quarter (2-days seminar-workshop)	₱15,000	Conduct of orientation/seminar with training modules and reference guides
To strengthen teachers' capacity in implementing new early childhood policies consistently across classrooms	Kindergarten teachers	Division ECE Supervisor, Resource Speakers	Throughout the school year (monthly LAC sessions)	₱10,000	Regular LAC sessions integrating policy updates and best practices
To provide learner-centered socio-emotional development activities beyond policy compliance	Kindergarten learners	Kindergarten Teachers, Guidance Counselor	Year-round (integrated weekly in lesson plans)	₱8,000	Activity-based modules (role-play, storytelling, peer collaboration, SEL games)
To engage parents in supporting learners' socio-emotional development at home	Kindergarten learners & parents	Teachers, PTA Officers	Per quarter (parent orientation & workshops)	₱5,000	Parent training sessions and distributed SEL home guides
To evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and ensure equitable application of new policies	Teachers, learners	School Monitoring Team, Research Coordinator	End of school year	₱7,000	Evaluation reports and policy recommendations

IV. CONCLUSION

The study highlights key aspects of kindergarten education. Most teacher-respondents are early to mid-career, primarily aged 31 to 40, with 6 to 10 years of experience, predominantly female and holding bachelor's degrees. New early childhood policies are generally well-implemented, yet inconsistencies exist in curriculum standards. Kindergarten learners show developing socio-emotional readiness, strong in self-awareness but weaker in self-management and social awareness. Teacher demographics significantly influence perceptions of learners' readiness and the implementation of policies. Importantly, there seems to be no correlation between the implementation of policies and socio-emotional readiness among learners. Project SURE serves as an intervention program, which intends to promote the effectiveness of the policy in order to ensure socio-emotional readiness among students.

The research results indicate that while the teachers at kindergarten level are sufficiently qualified, they require additional professional development and training to be more effective in enhancing socio-emotional readiness among young learners. Policies related to early childhood can be said to have good implementation regarding surveillance but there is need for improvement in terms of curriculum and collaboration between teachers and parents. Kindergarten learners exhibit a growing socio-emotional readiness but further emphasis needs to be laid upon self-regulation and social competence with the help of structured activities. There exists a difference in demographic factors among teachers which impacts evaluations as well as implementation of policies in kindergartens. According to the research, socio-cultural and parental factors are important for children's growth and Project SURE highlights the importance of standardization. Some of the recommendations are given below.

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