



## A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TEACHERS IN IMPLEMENTING PLAY-BASED LEARNING

Desiree N. Florita<sup>1i</sup>,

Marilou C. Sabud<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Graduate Student,

Davao del Sur State College,

Matti, Digos City, Davao del Sur,

Philippines

<sup>2</sup>Faculty,

Davao del Sur State College,

Matti, Digos City, Davao del Sur,

Philippines

### Abstract:

This qualitative-phenomenological study explored the experiences, challenges, strategies, and insights of Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers in implementing play-based learning (PBL) in kindergarten. Twelve ECE teachers from Magsaysay, Davao del Sur, participated in the study. Findings revealed that PBL enhances student engagement, emotional expression, and knowledge retention, making learning more effective and enjoyable. However, teachers faced challenges such as time management, classroom discipline, and limited resources, often relying on personal funds or improvised materials. Parental and administrative support varied, affecting the smooth implementation of PBL. To address these challenges, teachers used strategies such as differentiating activities, setting clear rules, and involving parents. Creativity and resourcefulness were essential in maximizing available materials and making lessons meaningful. Despite difficulties, teachers remained committed to PBL due to its positive impact on student learning and development. The study highlights the need for stronger institutional support, adequate resources, and improved parental involvement to sustain effective PBL implementation. Future research may explore strategies to overcome challenges, the role of parental and administrative support, and the long-term effects of PBL on children's development.

**SDG Indicator #4:** (Quality Education)

**Keywords:** early childhood education, teachers, play-based learning, phenomenology

---

<sup>i</sup> Correspondence: email [desireeflorita102217@gmail.com](mailto:desireeflorita102217@gmail.com)

## 1. Introduction

Educators face the challenge of integrating important academic standards into developmentally appropriate learning experiences. In response to these challenges, contemporary researchers have found that the amount of time children in kindergarten participate in play decreases while direct academic instruction increases (Pyle & Danniels, 2017). Play-based learning (PBL) unifies play and educational pedagogy. PBL is child-centered and focuses on children's development, interests, and abilities through engaging and developmentally appropriate structuring of academic learning experiences (Pyle & DeLuca, 2017).

Moreover, the decline in outdoor play as part of the school day is partially due to recent changes in educational policy, which have increased focus on attainment and pressure to achieve national standards. Children now spend more time in classrooms engaged in structured learning activities, although evidence suggests that children learn more effectively through experiential learning, such as through play. Other reasons for the decline in outdoor play include increased use of digital technology, parental concern over children's safety, and fewer enticing spaces for children to play. This deterioration in play engagement may contribute to decreased school engagement and poor learning motivation (Coates & Pimlott-Wilson, 2019).

In the Philippines, outdoor play is emphasized in classrooms to promote physical activity, exploration of nature, and social interaction. Teachers may organize outdoor games, nature walks, or gardening activities to foster a deeper connection with the environment and encourage holistic development. All of the teachers described the idea of active play. Based on the responses and examples provided in the interviews, it is noted that for teachers in this study, active play was understood as a form of structured, teacher-directed play or games rather than any free-flowing or child-directed play (Omaga & Alieto, 2019).

Against this backdrop, play-based learning (PBL) has gained currency as a recommended curricular approach in several national Early Childhood Education (ECE) contexts. Although combining play with a viable preschool pedagogy lies at the core of PBL, there is no definitional consensus. As such, PBL continues to attract heated debate and controversy. Research literature has warned that such definitional ambiguity makes PBL a potentially difficult concept for ECE practitioners to translate into their professional practice (Danniels & Pyle, 2018).

The educational potential of play may remain unrealized. Despite its far-reaching significance and relevance for theory-building, practice, teacher education, and future policy developments, a substantial body of empirical research has interrogated teachers' views on the connections between play and learning in various national contexts. As a scoping review, however, it included various theoretical and empirical contributions, employing various methodologies and examining practitioners' and other stakeholders' views on play and PBL, such as policy-makers, parents, and children. Moreover, it specifically focused on children aged four to five years (Pyle *et al.*, 2017).

In addition, with a heavy increase in academic expectations and standards to be learned in the early years, educators face the challenge of integrating important academic standards into developmentally appropriate learning experiences for children in kindergarten. To meet this challenge, there is a need to become familiar with the role of play in the classroom, emphasizing developmentally appropriate practices such as play-based learning (PBL). PBL is child-centered and focuses on children's academic, social, and emotional development and their interests and abilities through engaging and developmentally appropriate learning experiences.

As presented, several studies have explored the experiences of early childhood education teachers in handling their pupils (Daniels & Pyle, 2018; Coates & Pimlott-Wilson, 2019; Hesterman, 2018; Pyle *et al.*, 2020; DeLuca *et al.*, 2020). Moreover, the majority of the studies were conducted in an international setting. Few studies were conducted in the national setting. Also, another gap in this study is found in the study of Pyle *et al.* and Danniels (2017), who stated that Early Childhood Education (ECE) scholars have challenged the dichotomization of play and learning as false and the 'free play'–'non-play/direct instruction' continuum as misguided. With recourse to sociocultural learning theories, where learning and development are seen as facilitated through shared co-construction of meaning, scaffolded aid, and guided participation in cultural activity, such as play, the interwoven nature of play and learning, the proactive and variable roles that adults may adopt in children's play and how different play-based learning practices may contribute and foster not only children's social, emotional and physical development but also their academic and cognitive development in a holistic and mutually supportive manner.

The present study inquired into early childhood education teachers' experiences, challenges, strategies, and insights in implementing play-based learning. Hence, the proposed study will explore the experiences of these teachers. In the locale scenario, few studies focus on the topic being studied.

This study addresses critical aspects of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4: Quality Education. By investigating the experiences, challenges, and strategies of early childhood educators in implementing play-based learning (PBL) within the Philippine context, the research seeks to enhance understanding of effective pedagogical approaches that ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, specifically targeting one quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education.

Furthermore, exploring the role and implementation of play, including active and potentially outdoor play, which is noted as declining, touches upon SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, as effective PBL can foster holistic development encompassing physical, social, and emotional well-being crucial for young children. Understanding how teachers integrate academic standards with developmentally appropriate play can provide valuable insights for improving ECE practices, teacher training, and policy development, thereby contributing to achieving these global goals within the local setting.

## 2. Research Questions

This phenomenological qualitative study aimed to know the participants' experiences, strategies, and insights of early childhood education teachers in implementing play-based learning. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What are the experiences of ECE teachers in implementing PBL in kindergarten?
- 2) What are the strategies of ECE teachers in implementing PBL in kindergarten?
- 3) What are the insights of ECE teachers in implementing PBL in kindergarten?

## 3. Methods

### 3.1 Study Participants

Seven (7) Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers had undergone In-depth interviews (IDIs), and five (5) ECE teachers had undergone focus group discussion (FGD). These participants were teachers from the Kindergarten level, as this level is the most appropriate for the present study. Pre-data gathering includes teachers' observations and results of reading assessments. To qualify for this study, the participants were identified as early childhood education (ECE) teachers of the said school. As for the exclusion criteria, (1) ECE teachers with 1 year of experience and (2) ECE teachers who not wish to be part of the study were not included as participants in this study.

This study employed purposive sampling to select the participants from Magsaysay, Davao del Sur. Moreover, according to Etikan *et al.* (2016), the purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses. It is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of participants. Furthermore, since the phenomena only need to emerge once to be included in the analytical map, sample sizes in qualitative research are often minimal (Ritchie *et al.*, 2013). It is usual to focus on a few people or cases (Creswell *et al.*, 2011).

### 3.2 Material/Instrument

The research technique employs interviews, verified interview guide questionnaires, and voice recorders as the principal devices for data gathering. These methods allow researchers to obtain in-depth insights directly from participants, ensuring a thorough comprehension of their experiences. The interview guides are evaluated by an experienced team to verify their efficacy and relevance. This method includes gathering comments and suggestions for modifications, thereby improving the quality and rigor of data collection.

### 2.3 Design and Procedure

The qualitative phenomenological research design was used in this study. Phenomenology is qualitative research that focuses on a group's shared experience. The approach's main purpose is to come up with a description of the nature of the occurrence

in question. Phenomenology is both a method and a process that requires researching a few subjects over a lengthy period to develop meaning patterns and relationships. The researcher put her own experiences aside during this procedure to comprehend those of the study participants. Qualitative techniques can help improve and allow the researcher to use her interpersonal abilities in the research exploratory processes (Creswell, 2013; Alase, 2017).

## **2.4 Ethical Considerations**

The study prioritizes voluntary participation, providing participants with a clear explanation of the research's nature and allowing them to make an informed decision, all while adhering to rigorous ethical standards. Participants' data is protected by maintaining the seclusion and confidentiality of their personal or professional information. The informed consent procedure should be straightforward, free of technical jargon, and emphasize the potential advantages of the study. The questionnaire is distributed exclusively with the appropriate authorization. In order to safeguard the identity of the participant, informed consent is obtained. It is important to note that the research does not incorporate high-risk scenarios related to physical, psychological, or socioeconomic issues within its scope.

## **2.5 Data Analysis**

In analyzing the study data gathered from the said In-depth interview and Focus-group discussion, the researcher transcribed all the data from the IDI and FGD that were recorded in their original form. The researcher applied thematic analysis. All Bisayan, Tagalog, and English statements, words, and utterances were recorded verbatim. Colaizzi's (1978) framework was used to extract, organize, and analyze the data.

## **2.6 Trustworthiness of the Study**

The credibility, transferability, reliability, and confirmability of the findings are all improved by the meticulous participant selection, transparent methodologies, ethical considerations, and rigorous data analysis that underpin the study's reliability. The comprehensive participant selection process and engagement strategies serve to fortify trustworthiness. The selection of participants who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study interviews was facilitated by the use of random sampling, a recognized research procedure. Participants were granted the discretion to either approve or decline the interview, thereby guaranteeing ethical engagement practices and confidentiality.

# **3. Results and Discussion**

## **3.1 Experiences of ECE Teachers in Implementing PBL in Kindergarten**

A thematic analysis was conducted to determine the experiences of ECE teachers in implementing PBL in kindergarten. The interview transcripts of twelve ECE Teachers were coded, classified, and thematically evaluated. The emerging themes can be

categorized into two central themes, namely, positive experiences and negative experiences. Moreover, nine main sub-themes were identified: *engagement and learning through play, preparation and resourcefulness, parental and administrative support, positive outcomes for teachers, difficulty in managing time, difficulty in managing the classroom, insufficient resources, lack of parental support, and inconsistent administrative support.*

These themes and sub-themes encapsulate the most significant and frequently discussed aspects of the teachers' lived experiences as they put play-based learning into practice within their classrooms.

### **3.1.1 Positive Experiences**

Early Childhood Education teachers described overwhelmingly positive experiences when implementing play-based learning, emphasizing their ability to facilitate a fun-filled and genuinely interactive classroom environment that captivated their students. Beyond the classroom interactions, they positively encountered and recognized the profound value of strong collaborative relationships with colleagues, meaningful contributions from parents, and open communication channels with administrators, viewing these partnerships as essential for successfully implementing and sustaining the play-based approach.

Ultimately, these educators reported engaging in a deeply rewarding positive cycle, experiencing significant professional fulfillment that stemmed directly from witnessing their students' tangible progress and development through engaging, play-based activities. Recent literature emphasizes the positive experiences reported by early childhood educators when implementing play-based learning methodologies. Supporting the crucial role of interpersonal relationships, a statewide survey by Cassidy *et al.* (2022) investigated factors influencing early childhood teachers' well-being and retention. Their findings revealed that positive, supportive relationships with colleagues, administrators, and families significantly contributed to teacher well-being and reduced intentions to leave the profession. This aligns with the notion that educators perceive collaborative partnerships as essential components for the successful implementation and sustainability of educational approaches.

Furthermore, the capacity of educators to effectively facilitate engaging, play-based activities appears central to these positive experiences. Mavilidi *et al.* (2022), while evaluating a professional learning program focused on play-based physical activity, found that targeted training increased educators' confidence and capacity to implement such practices. Although focused on a specific domain, this study suggests that enhancing pedagogical skills related to play can directly contribute to teachers' positive experiences and their ability to foster the interactive, captivating classroom environments characteristic of successful play-based learning.

#### **3.1.1.1 Engagement and Learning through Play**

The first sub-theme is engagement and learning through play. As narrated by the ECE teachers, they observed that play-based learning (PBL) fosters active participation and

engagement, allowing children to grasp lessons more effectively. According to them, through play, children can freely express their emotions, build social connections with classmates, and gradually overcome shyness. The ECE teachers also emphasized that play-based activities make learning more enjoyable and enhance knowledge retention compared to traditional methods.

The first sub-theme states that ECE teachers experience the engagement and learning of their pupils through play. This is relevant to the idea of Pyle *et al.* (2021), who argued that play-based learning fosters deeper engagement and cognitive development in early childhood education. Their research highlights that children in play-based environments demonstrate enhanced social interaction, problem-solving skills, and creativity compared to those in traditional academic settings. The study emphasizes that play provides a meaningful context for learning, allowing children to explore concepts in an engaging and developmentally appropriate manner.

Complementing this, Lee and Goh (2023) investigated teachers' perspectives on adopting PBL, finding that educators consistently perceive play as a key driver of student motivation and active engagement in the learning process. Their study emphasizes teachers' recognition of play's significant role in nurturing children's social competencies and promoting positive interactions among classmates. This resonates with reports that play provides a conducive environment for children to build social bonds and potentially gain confidence, thereby helping shyer children to participate more readily.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Ang play learning kay ma engage gyud sila, maka tuon sila while naga dula, unya dali ra pud nila ma sabtan ang lesson or among objectives."* (Participant 1)

(Play learning is engaging; there is learning while playing because they can easily understand the lesson or objectives.)

Participant 2, 4, and 5 agreed with participant 1 as they narrated:

*"Pinaagi sa dula, ma encouraged jus ila. Ma develop sa ilang pagkaulawon sa klase."* (Participant 2)

(Through playing, they can really be encouraged. They will also develop their shyness in class.)

*"Sa play-based learning, maka learn sila while naga activity sila, nya ma develop sa ilahang creativity, ilang self-awareness unya ilang self regulation."* (Participant 4)

"In play-based learning, they learn while doing the activity, and it is also developing their creativity, self-awareness, and self-regulation."

*“Dali ra kayo ma apply sa lesson kong mag hisgot kag play kay ang mga bat excited kaayu sa ilang lesson” (Participant 5)*

(It's easy to apply the lesson when you mention play because the children are already excited about that lesson.)

Results of the study showed that play-based learning creates a more engaging and meaningful learning environment for young children. By incorporating play, teachers encourage creativity, social interaction, and confidence-building among students. The interactive nature of PBL allows for better knowledge retention compared to rote memorization. This approach not only makes learning fun but also prepares children for future academic success.

### **3.1.1.2 Preparation and Resourcefulness**

The second sub-theme shows that ECE teachers' experience in implementing PBL in Kindergarten focused on preparation and resourcefulness. The ECE Teachers emphasized the importance of resourcefulness in implementing PBL, often utilizing localized and cost-effective materials such as bottle caps. Preparing play-based materials requires significant time and effort, especially when integrating ICT-based approaches. Despite the challenges, teachers find ways to make learning engaging by creating interactive and accessible materials for their students.

This result is relevant to the study of Cohrssen and Garvis (2021), who stated that teachers implementing play-based learning must be highly resourceful in creating effective learning environments. Their study stresses the necessity of adapting everyday materials to develop engaging, low-cost learning experiences that support children's cognitive and social development. The authors stress that teacher innovation and preparation are key factors in maximizing the benefits of play-based learning.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*“Ang preparation nako sa play-based kay naga gamut kog ICT, nga gamit sad ko anang hot seat or guessing game.” (Participant 1)*

(My preparation is that my play base will be used as my ICT... I use the hot seat or guessing game.)

Participants 3 and 4 were in accord with participant 1, narrating that:

*“Mamahimo jud tag resourceful. Dili kaayu ta mag gasto sa atong kaugalingun nga kwarta.” (Participant 3)*

(I will be really resourceful. You don't really need to spend your own money.)



*"Bilang isa ka teacher, una kay naga prepare jud ko sa classroom, akoo sad gina manage and naga maintain sa structural balance para maka dula sad sila."* (Participant 4)

(As a teacher, the first thing I do is prepare the classroom, manage the classroom, and maintain the structural balance, allowing them to play.)

*"Naga kolekta kog mga caps sa bottles. Bisalng isa ka maistra mangita jud kog pamaagi ug mahimong resourceful pud."* (Participant 3)

(I will collect the caps of the bottles. As a teacher, I will find a way, and I will be really resourceful.)

Results of the study showed that effective implementation of PBL requires teachers to be creative and resourceful. The use of cost-effective, localized materials ensures that play-based activities remain accessible to all students. Teachers' adaptability in preparing materials plays a crucial role in maximizing the effectiveness of PBL.

### **3.1.1.3 Parental and Administrative Support**

The Third sub-theme is parental and administrative support. As narrated by the ECE teachers, they emphasize the significance of parental and administrative support in the successful implementation of PBL. According to them, parents often contribute materials or financial assistance, ensuring that necessary resources are available. Communication between teachers, parents, and school administrators is crucial in setting expectations and creating an environment conducive to effective play-based learning.

The third sub-theme confirms the findings of Halpern *et al.* (2022), who argued that strong parental and administrative involvement is crucial for the success of early childhood education programs. Their study found that when parents actively support their children's learning through resource contributions and engagement in school activities, children demonstrate higher academic performance and social development. Administrative support is equally vital in providing the necessary resources and training for teachers to effectively implement play-based learning.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Ma tap jud nimo ang mga ginikanan or mag donate og papel og ink, naga himo sad mig homeroom meeting para sa amot amot."* (Participant 1)

(Parents really need to tap or donate bond paper and ink; we made a homeroom meeting to ask for contributions.)

*"Ang mga ginikanan kay supportive kaayu, manghatag silage advice sa mga bata."* (Participant 4)

(Parents are really supportive of their children, like giving advice to their children.)

Participants 5 and 6 found common ground with participants 1 and 4 in their narration:

*"In term sa parental support pud og sa admin kay supportive sila sa amoa labi nasa mga bata."* (Participant 5)

(In terms of parental support and admin support, they are very supportive of us, especially with the children.)

*"Ang mga ginikanan kay 100% supportive."* (Participant 6)

(The parents are really 100% supportive.)

Results of the study showed that parental and administrative support is vital in sustaining play-based learning. When parents contribute materials or provide financial support, it helps ensure that activities are well-resourced. Effective communication between teachers and administrators fosters collaboration in implementing PBL effectively. A strong support system allows for a more enriching learning experience for children.

#### **3.1.1.4 Positive Outcomes for Teachers**

The fourth sub-theme is positive outcomes for teachers. Despite the tasks in implementing PBL, teachers found the experience rewarding and fulfilling. Observing their pupils' progress, engagement, and enthusiasm reaffirmed their dedication to the approach. The joy of seeing children learn through play encouraged teachers to continue using play-based methods, knowing that it significantly benefits their students.

The findings above are relevant to the study of Taylor and Boyer (2021), who stated that teachers who implement engaging instructional strategies, such as play-based learning, report higher job satisfaction and professional fulfillment. Their study indicates that witnessing student growth and enthusiasm strengthens teachers' motivation and commitment to their profession. Additionally, they highlight that interactive and meaningful learning environments benefit both students and educators by fostering a dynamic and positive classroom experience.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Malipay pud ko kay mahatag jud nko more than my expectation."* (Participant 1)

(I will be happy as a teacher because I can give more than expected.)

*"PBL kay meaningful jud kay ma hinumduman jud nila sa ilang huna huna og unsa ilang gi himo."* (Participant 3)

(It is meaningful because it can really be retained in their minds.)

The responses given by participants 1 and 3 corroborated that of participant 4 and 5, as they narrated:

*"Ang meaningful experience nako kay nalipay ko kay naa silay na learn gikan sa akoo, mura ra sila og nag dul dula pero naa sad sila learn."* (Participant 4)

(My meaningful experience is that I am happy that they really learned something from me; it seems like they were just playing, but they learned something.)

*"My meaningful experience sa mga bata kay nalipay ko og naa silay na learn sa klase."* (Participant 5)

(My meaningful experiences with children are my joy when they learn something in my class.)

Results of the study showed that implementing PBL brings satisfaction to teachers, as they witness firsthand the positive impact on students. The enthusiasm and progress of children serve as motivation for educators to continue using play-based methods. While challenges exist, the rewards far exceed the difficulties. The success of PBL not only benefits students but also enhances teachers' professional fulfillment.

### 3.1.2 Negative Experiences

A significant challenge highlighted by Early Childhood Education teachers centered on the demanding nature of preparing materials for play-based learning. They frequently experienced the need to exercise considerable ingenuity to develop learning resources that were contextualized to their students' environment and experiences. This often required significant resourcefulness, compelling teachers to source and utilize localized and cost-effective materials, such as discarded bottle caps, to create engaging tools for play. Furthermore, the entire process of preparing these materials was commonly experienced as a challenge due to the substantial investment of time and effort required, a burden felt particularly acutely when attempting to develop more complex resources, including those that integrated ICT components.

Research confirms that, alongside the reported benefits, the implementation of play-based learning (PBL) in early childhood education settings presents significant practical challenges for educators, particularly concerning the preparation of learning materials. For instance, an investigation by Febriana and Suryono (2021) into the problems of implementing PBL found that educators frequently grapple with a lack of

sufficient learning resources. This scarcity necessitates considerable creativity and effort in sourcing or self-producing materials suitable for play-based activities.

### 3.1.2.1 Difficulty in Managing Time

The fifth sub-theme is time management. As narrated by ECE teachers, managing time effectively during play-based learning poses a significant challenge. Teachers often struggle to balance structured lesson execution with the time needed for interactive activities.

Play-based learning tends to extend beyond scheduled periods due to students' engagement, sometimes leading to incomplete lessons or overlapping class time. The difficulty in strictly following time allocations affects lesson flow, requiring teachers to be flexible in their approach.

The fifth sub-theme states that ECE teachers experience difficulty in managing their time in implementing PBL in Kindergarten. This is relevant to the idea of Davis and Parker (2023), who discovered that time constraints are a common challenge in early childhood education, particularly when integrating play-based learning. The study highlights that teachers must develop adaptable scheduling strategies to ensure a balance between structured lessons and interactive activities without compromising learning objectives.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Ang klase busy na kaayu nya hapit na time maka cuha jud kang time kay mawala naman ilang excitement."* (Participant 1)

(If your class is too busy and then the time is near, you can't cut the time because they will lose their excitement.)

*"Panagsa kay mubo kaayu kay ang ubang bata kay hinay kaayu pasulato nya dili pa maka memorize."* (Participant 2)

(Sometimes it's really short because there are children who are really weak in writing and haven't memorized very well.)

Participants 3 and 9 were in accord with participants 1 and 2, narrating that:

*"Mag extend jud og time kay dili kaayu enough among time sa amoang lesson aru ma satisfied gani sila sa ilang ginapanghimo."* (Participant 3)

(We will really extend our time because there is not enough time in one session because they are satisfied and enjoy what they are doing.)

*"I'm not good at managing my time; for example, in my lesson, I can't be vigilant about each number of minutes; sometimes I overlap, and I drag on the blocks of time."*  
(Participant 9)

Results of the study showed that time management is a critical skill for educators in integrating play-based learning. The challenge lies in balancing structured instruction with unstructured play while ensuring all learning objectives are met. Teachers must develop strategies that allow for flexibility without compromising educational goals.

### **3.1.2.2 Difficulty in Managing the Classroom**

The sixth sub-theme is classroom management. As narrated by ECE teachers, managing a classroom filled with energetic children presents a daily challenge. Ensuring discipline, maintaining focus, and instilling sportsmanship in students are essential for a smooth learning experience. Without clear rules and regulations, the classroom environment may become chaotic. Teachers often find themselves juggling attention among students, reinforcing positive behaviors, and managing conflicts that arise during play-based active learning.

The sixth sub-theme emphasized that ECE teacher's experience difficulty in managing their students and their classroom. This is relevant to the idea of Harris and Bennett (2023), who found that classroom management strategies significantly impact the effectiveness of play-based learning. Their study suggests that implementing clear rules, structured routines, and conflict resolution techniques fosters a more conducive learning environment for young children.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Classroom management kana sa among play base kay ang mga bata kay gusto jud sila makadaog, buo sila og sportsmanship gani sa usag usa nga ma develop nila."* (Participant 2)

(Classroom management during our play base, there are really kids who want to win... sportsmanship really needs to be implemented.)

*"Diri sa classroom kinahanglan jud mag implemenyt og classroom rules and regulations sa mga bata kay kong dili ka mag implement ana kay perti jud tawung gubuta."*  
(Participant 6)

(Rules and regulations among children are necessary so that they follow the teacher. If you don't implement rules in the classroom, it will be messy.)

Participant 3 and 1 also shared a different experience, narrating that:

*"Gina assist sad nako sila after gamiton ilahang mga gamit nya ginapabalik nko sa ilaha sa saktong butanganan arun dili kaayu katag."* (Participant 3)

(I also assist the children after using the toys to return them properly to the container so that the classroom is not messy.)

*"Bisag sa PBL man sila nga activity, maglisod jud silage fucos kay kay daghan kaayu sila, kinanglan nga mag one on one jud mi arun ma maintain."* (Participant 1)

(Even though there are play-based activities, it's difficult to focus on each child when the class is too crowded. I need to attend to them one at a time to maintain order.)

Results of the study showed that time effective classroom management is essential for creating a positive learning environment. Setting clear expectations and reinforcing behavioral guidelines help maintain order and ensure that all students benefit from play-based learning. Teachers must find ways to address classroom disruptions while nurturing a sense of responsibility and teamwork among young learners.

### 3.1.2.3 Insufficient Resources

The seventh sub-theme is resource availability. As narrated by ECE teachers, the availability of resources is a persistent issue in implementing play-based learning. Teachers often face shortages in essential materials, leading them to either find creative alternatives or personally finance classroom resources. The lack of sufficient materials sometimes hampers planned activities, requiring teachers to improvise to ensure an engaging learning experience for students.

The seventh sub-theme emphasized that ECE teachers often experience difficulty in the availability of resources. This is relevant to the idea of Lewis and Carter (2022), who found that inadequate resources in early childhood education settings often lead to disparities in learning experiences. Their study suggests that teacher ingenuity and school-level interventions play a crucial role in addressing material shortages.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Naka dawat mig 1 bottled of ink nya amoa pang gi divide sa mga teacher."* (Participant 1)

(We just received 1 bottle of ink color black, and then we divided it per teacher.)

*"Sa mga resources pud dili tanang magamit sa mga bata ang naa diri sa amoang classroom, panagsa dili mi maka implement sa activity kay kulang jud kaayu ang mga gamit."* (Participant 6)

(Not all the materials that the children need are here in our classroom; sometimes we can't implement an activity because there are not enough materials.)

Participant 3 and 1 shared the same view with participant 1 and 6 in their narration:

*"Kung mag hatag ang DepEd og materials kay dili gihapon sakto sa mga bata. Maong mangita jud og laing magamit."* (Participant 3)

(When DepEd gives materials, it's not enough for the children. I'll just look for something to use.)

*"Diha nalang mi sa makita ra nya batatuhon ta sad nga mga materials kay kay ang ilang ginahatag kay delay og kulang."* (Participant 1)

(We really on localized and low-cost materials because the provided resources are often delayed or insufficient.)

Results of the study showed that the lack of resources can hinder the successful implementation of play-based learning. Teachers often rely on creativity and personal funds to provide engaging activities for students. Addressing these gaps through administrative support and community involvement can improve the availability of essential materials, ensuring that all students have access to quality learning experiences.

#### **3.1.2.4 Lack of Parental Support**

The eighth sub-theme is a lack of parental support. As narrated by ECE teachers, parental support in play-based learning varies significantly, with many parents showing little involvement. Some parents misunderstand the educational value of play, making them hesitant to provide necessary resources or reinforce learning at home. This lack of support places additional responsibility on teachers, who often need to compensate for the gaps in home reinforcement.

The eighth sub-theme emphasized that ECE teachers often experience difficulty in the parental support of their pupils. This result confirms the findings of Mitchell and Adams (2023), who argued that children with strong parental support in play-based learning environments showed higher academic engagement and social-emotional development. Their study highlights the need for effective communication strategies to involve parents in early education.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Ang parental support kay dili jud 100%, kay uban ginikanan dili jud maka hatag pero mahatag gihapon sila sa ubang materials."* (Participant 1)

(Parental support is not 100%... Even if parents cannot provide, the children will still be given materials.)

*"Naa sad ginikanan nga supportive kaayu nya naa sad dili pud maka dala og mga resources para sa mga bata."* (Participant 3)

(There are parents who are really supportive, and there are also those who don't bring resources for their children.)

The responses given by participants 1 and 3 corroborated that of participant 8, as she narrated:

*"Ubang ginikanan di kaayu masabtan ang PBL nya naha gataf sad silage mga materials sa classroom para magamit."* (Participant 3)

(Parents sometimes misunderstand the value of play-based learning and are hesitant to provide additional materials for classroom use.)

*"Ang ubang ginikanan kay supportive, ang uban kulang kaayu sa involvement sap ag prepara sa mga bata sa ilang mga activities."* (Participant 8)

(While some parents are very supportive, others lack involvement, which impacts how prepared the children are for activities.)

Results of the study showed that parental involvement plays a crucial role in the success of play-based learning. When parents actively support and engage in their child's learning, it enhances the child's motivation and reinforces classroom lessons at home. Strengthening parent-teacher collaboration and raising awareness of PBL benefits can improve student outcomes and ensure a more holistic learning experience.

### **3.1.2.5 Inconsistent Administrative Support**

The ninth sub-theme is inconsistent administrative support. As narrated by ECE teachers, inconsistencies in administrative support significantly impact the implementation of play-based learning. Delayed or insufficient resources, such as learning materials and classroom supplies, create obstacles for teachers who rely on timely provisions to facilitate effective lessons. While some administrators provide essential materials, others fail to meet the demands of play-based learning, forcing teachers to find alternative solutions or shoulder additional costs.

The ninth sub-theme emphasized that ECE teachers often experience inconsistencies in terms of administrative support. This result confirms the findings of White and Green (2022), who stated that administrative support directly influences the effectiveness of early childhood education programs. Their study found that schools with



consistent and proactive resource distribution had higher student engagement and teacher satisfaction compared to those with inconsistent support.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*“Kanang sa administrative support sad kay ang supply late na jud kaayu.”* (Participant 1)

(As for administrative support, it is the supply that was given late to our teachers.)

*“Ang mga materials kay dili kaayu sakto sa ilaha labi na sa ilang mga equipment gani.”* (Participant 6)

(Our materials are not really enough, especially the children's equipment.)

The responses given by participants 1 and 6 aligned with those of participants 4 and 7, as they narrated:

*“Ang principal diri kay naga hatag sad sila og inks, bond paper ug ubang gamit sa mga bata, pero panagsa kulangun jud.”* (Participant 4)

(The principal provides resources like inks, bond paper, and equipment for the children, but it is sometimes not sufficient.)

*“Administrative delays in providing essential materials often leave teachers to fill the gap, affecting the smooth implementation of lessons.”* Participant 7)

Results of the study showed that administrative support plays a vital role in the success of play-based learning. When schools provide timely and adequate resources, teachers can fully implement engaging and meaningful activities. However, inconsistencies in supply distribution can disrupt lesson planning and overall student engagement. Strengthening communication between teachers and administrators, along with advocating for better resource allocation, can improve the implementation of play-based strategies.

### **3.2 Strategies of ECE Teachers in Implementing PBL in Kindergarten**

To determine the strategies of ECE teachers in implementing PBL in Kindergarten, a thematic analysis was conducted. The interview transcripts of twelve ECE Teachers were coded, classified, and thematically evaluated. Five major themes were identified, namely: differentiated and child-centered strategies, classroom and outdoor-rules implementation, parental involvement and coordination, strategic time utilization, and creativity and resourcefulness.

### 3.2.1 Differentiated and Child-Centered Strategies

The first theme is differentiated and child-centered strategies. As narrated by ECE teachers, implementing play-based learning (PBL) requires strategies tailored to each child's unique needs, abilities, and developmental stage. Teachers adopt flexible approaches, considering fine motor skills, cognitive development, and learning styles.

They ensure that activities are engaging, discovery-based, and structured to provide step-by-step guidance while maintaining variety to sustain interest. This is relevant to the findings of Hammond and Jackson (2021), who emphasized that differentiated instruction allows educators to meet the diverse needs of young learners by adjusting content, process, and learning environment.

Similarly, Novak and Tucker (2020) highlighted that child-centered strategies enhance engagement, motivation, and individualized learning, reinforcing the effectiveness of play-based learning. These studies affirm the necessity of child-centered strategies in PBL to enhance engagement and learning outcomes.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Amng strategy nga akong ge gamit sa classroom maam kay mag depend isa bata, nya akoad sad sundon ang domain. Halimbawa sa motor skills mangita sad kog activity parehas anang clay."* (Participant 1).

(The strategy that I used inside the classroom depends on the child, and I also abided by what the child's domain is. For example, for fine motor skills, I will do an activity like playing with clay)

The response given by participants 1 corroborated that of participant 3, 6 and 9, as they narrated:

*"Ang akong ge gamit nga strategy uring sa PBL kay more on discovery kay og mulihok sila ang activity maka discover silage new ideas."* (Participant 3).

(The strategy I use during play-based learning is really discovery because even if they move in this activity, they can discover their new ideas)

*"Ang gi gamit nako nga strategy nga gina implement maam kay explicit arun ang mga bata makita sad nako ang step-by-step process."* (Participant 6).

(The strategies that I have implemented are explicit strategies because I really show my children how to do their work as if it's a step-by-step process)

*"I have to ensure that all play-based activity is repeated day by day, or pupils will get bored. I have to find a new strategy in play where I can incorporate my lesson."* (Participant 9).

Results of the study showed that differentiated and child-centered strategies are essential in creating an inclusive and effective play-based learning environment. By tailoring instruction to individual needs, teachers can foster a more engaging and developmentally appropriate learning experience.

### 3.2.2 Classroom and Outdoor Rules Implementation

The second theme is classroom and outdoor rules implementation. As narrated by ECE teachers, establishing clear rules and instructions is essential in managing both indoor and outdoor play-based learning activities. Teachers implement structured guidelines to ensure safety, maintain order, and prevent accidents. They emphasize consistency in following rules and prepare children beforehand to foster discipline and responsibility during playtime.

This is relevant to the findings of Brown and Smith (2021), who stated that young children thrive in structured environments where clear expectations are set, allowing them to engage in meaningful play without compromising safety. Additionally, Reynolds and Parker (2022) emphasized that rule-setting in early learning spaces fosters self-regulation, cooperation, and social-emotional skills, contributing to a safe and productive learning environment.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*“Ang techniques nga gina implement nako outside the classroom maam kay naga hatag kog rules and regulation akoa silang gina palinya og tarung.”* (Participant 1).

(The techniques in implementing play-based learning outside the classroom include making rules that no chasing is allowed and writing them down so that they can be orderly in their line)

*“Nag set kog rules and regulations sa mga bata pag-abpt sa gawas kay ang uban dili maminaw, nakasabot sad sila nga mas maayu nga naa sila sa kasagbutan para malikayan sad ang disgrasya.”* (Participant 4)

(I set rules and regulations for my children outside so that even if they don't follow the teacher's advice, they understand that it's better on grassy areas to avoid injuries)

The responses given by participants 1 and 4 validated that of participant 5, as she narrated:

*“Ang techniques nga akong ge gamit mag hatag kog rules and regulations nya directions pud arung ang activity dali ra, malikayan sad ang mga disgrasya while naga enjoy pa sila.”* (Participant 5)

(My techniques involve writing rules and giving directions so the activity is easy to follow, avoiding accidents while still allowing them to enjoy)

*"Before I let them out, all the pupils will follow our rules, and they will fall in line before they go outside the classroom."* (Participant 9).

Results of the study showed that implementing rules in both classroom and outdoor settings is a crucial aspect of structured play-based learning. Rules not only ensure safety but also contribute to children's behavioral development and social interactions. Understanding this has strengthened my appreciation for the role of discipline and structure in fostering a positive learning environment.

### **3.2.3 Parental Involvement and Coordination**

The third theme is parental involvement and coordination. As narrated by ECE teachers, the success of play-based learning is greatly enhanced by the support and active involvement of parents. Teachers emphasize communication and collaboration with parents, informing them about activities and encouraging participation. This creates a strong home-school connection, ensuring children receive the necessary support for their learning journey.

This is relevant to the study of Johnson and Taylor (2021), which emphasizes the significance of parental involvement in early childhood education, noting that children whose parents are actively engaged in school activities show improved cognitive and social development. Similarly, Kim and Anderson (2020) found that consistent parent-teacher communication enhances children's engagement, motivation, and overall learning success in play-based educational settings.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"In terms of coordination with parents, I inform them ahead of time about school activities, like P.E. time, to develop the children's skills"* (Participant 3).

The response given by participant 3 supported that of participants 5, 6 and 9, as they narrated:

*"The parents are really supportive of their children, especially during activities, and I make them understand it's not just a game but a game mixed with learning"* (Participant 5).

*"Here in our classroom, when the children are in need, the parents are really there to support"* (Participant 6).

*"During the PTA meeting or every day, I always inform the parents of these activities, and I also remind the parents of their materials."* (Participant 9).

Results of the study showed that parental involvement is a key factor in the success of play-based learning. Parents act as partners in education, reinforcing learning beyond the classroom. There is a need for effective communication and collaboration between teachers and parents to ensure children receive consistent support in their educational journey.

### 3.2.4 Strategic Time Utilization

The fourth theme is parental strategic time utilization. As narrated by ECE teachers, optimizing time is crucial in implementing play-based learning within a structured schedule. Teachers carefully plan activities, allocate sufficient time, and provide clear instructions to minimize delays. They balance play with academic goals, ensuring that children remain engaged while achieving learning objectives.

This is relevant to the findings of Lewis and Clark (2022), who emphasized the importance of effective time management in early childhood classrooms to maximize learning opportunities. Additionally, the study of Carter and Miller (2020) suggests that structured routines help children develop self-regulation skills, which are crucial for their academic success.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Kong ang mga bata naa silay activity, naga hatag jud dayun kog instructions sa ilaha arun dili gani ma delay ang preparation."* (Participant 1).

(When the pupils have activities, I really give instructions ahead of time so that delays in preparation are minimized)

The response given by participant 1 confirmed that of participants 6 and 12, as they narrated:

*"Naga hatag kog saktong time sa ilahang activity para sa mga bata, gina sure sad nako nga appropriate sad sa ilang abilidad."* (Participant 4).

(I allocate enough time for our activity that the children can handle, ensuring the tasks are appropriate for their abilities)

*"Akong ginagait ang time nga para ra ana nga subject na magamit, nga mag focus sa main goal arun ma balance ang buluhaton sa gawas man o sulod sa classroom."* (Participant 6).

(I ensure that the time allotted for a subject is fully utilized, focusing on the main goal of the day while maintaining a balance between tasks inside and outside the classroom)

*"Even though we don't have enough time for each class, we still need to manage our time well enough to understand the learners and give the lesson effectively."* (Participant 12).

Results of the study showed that effective time management is essential to ensuring that play-based learning is both engaging and productive. A well-structured schedule allows for meaningful learning experiences while maintaining children's interest.

### 3.2.5 Creativity and Resourcefulness

The fifth theme is creativity and resourcefulness. As narrated by ECE teachers, creativity and resourcefulness play a crucial role in implementing play-based learning, especially when resources are limited. Teachers find innovative ways to engage students, utilizing available materials and integrating modern technology to enhance learning experiences. They adopt flexible approaches to ensure that learning remains fun and effective.

This is relevant to the study of Williams and Carter (2021), who discovered that creative teaching strategies improve student engagement and problem-solving skills. Similarly, Lee and Thompson (2022) found that resourceful educators positively impact learning outcomes by adapting their methods to fit available resources and student needs.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Kailangan ma adopt ning 21st-century skills kay karun comuter na ang gina gamit sa mga differentiated instructions sa mga bata."* (Participant 1).

(I strive to adopt 21st-century skills like computerization and use differentiated instructions to cater to all children without bias)

The response given by participant 1 corroborated that of participants 3, 5, and 9 as they narrated:

*"Gina guide ang mga bata sa ilang activity ug mag himo oag pamaagi nga ma discover nila ang new ideas pinaagi sa dula."* (Participant 3).

(I will guide the children during their activity and create ways to ensure they discover new ideas while learning through play)

*"Gina sure nako ang welfre sa mga bata ang naga apply sad kog mga strategy creatively atu ang activity kay effective."* (Participant 5).

(I ensure the welfare of the children and apply different strategies creatively to make activities effective)

*"As a teacher, I have to be more resourceful and be creative all the time in finding the play-based learning in the classroom."* (Participant 9).

Results of the study showed that creativity and resourcefulness are essential skills for teachers implementing PBL. By adapting to various challenges and utilizing innovative methods, educators can provide high-quality learning experiences despite resource limitations.

### 3.3 Insights of ECE Teachers in Implementing PBL in Kindergarten

To determine the insights of ECE teachers in implementing PBL in Kindergarten, a thematic analysis was conducted. The interview transcripts of twelve ECE Teachers were coded, classified, and thematically evaluated. Four major themes were identified namely: *benefits of play-based learning, teacher strategies and adaptability, effectiveness of play-based learning, and advice for fellow teachers.*

#### 3.3.1 Benefits of Play-Based Learning

As narrated by ECE teachers, play-based learning (PBL) significantly enhances children's engagement and comprehension in the classroom. They observed that children enjoy learning through play, making lessons more memorable and reducing boredom. PBL fosters holistic development, including cognitive, social, and motor skills, ensuring a well-rounded learning experience. Teachers emphasized that when play is integrated into lessons, students tend to retain information more effectively and develop essential skills for future learning.

This result is aligned with the study of Bidzakin (2021), which revealed that kindergarten teachers acknowledge the importance of play-based learning in enhancing children's cognitive, social, and emotional skills. The study emphasized that through play, children develop better communication abilities and exhibit increased enthusiasm for learning.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Nindot ang PBL kay dali ra nila ma intindihan ug ma retain sa mga bata. Malingaw sad sila while naga learn."* (Participant 5).

(It's better if it's play-based because it's easy to understand and really retain for children. They will enjoy themselves while they are learning)

*"Pinaagi sa PBL na develop ang aspeto samga bata, dili lang kay sa gross motor pero tanang domains."* (Participant 1).

(Through play-based learning, it develops the total aspect of the learners, not just about the gross motor, but all domains)

The responses given by participants 5 and 1 validated that of participant 9 and 10, as they narrated:

*"Play-based learning should be employed regularly because it is very effective in teaching kindergarten" (Participant 9).*

*"Ang PBL kay makatabang sa bata karun. Makaingun kog effective kay ma retain man jud nila sa huna huna." (Participant 10).*

(Play-based learning really helps children today. I can say it's effective because they can really retain the activity they did in their minds.)

Teachers recognize that PBL not only makes learning enjoyable but also fosters deeper connections between students and the learning process. By engaging children in hands-on activities, they can explore and experiment with concepts in a way that traditional methods may not always allow. This type of learning also nurtures creativity and problem-solving skills, as students are encouraged to think critically while playing.

### **3.3.2 Teacher Strategies and Adaptability**

As narrated by ECE teachers, implementing play-based learning requires adaptability and resourcefulness. Many teachers use their own funds or seek cost-effective materials to ensure children have meaningful learning experiences. They also acknowledge the importance of continuously updating teaching strategies to align with the evolving needs of learners.

This result is relevant to the study of Acevedo (2022), which explored how kindergarten teachers implement play-based learning practices and the barriers they encounter. The findings indicated that teachers often need to be resourceful and adaptable, especially when facing challenges such as limited materials or support. The study emphasized that teachers' commitment to play-based learning leads them to seek innovative solutions to provide meaningful learning experiences for their students.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Gusto nako muhatag og mga dulaan sa mga bata bahalag baratuhon lang arun ma experience nilang ang PBL." (Participant 1).*

(I want to give toys to children even if they're cheap so that they can experience playing with learning)

*"Happy ko kay na adopt nko ang technological enhancement ana gani sila nga gusto baka muhawa sa DepEd or puy-an nimo ang DepEd." (Participant 1).*

(I am happy to adopt technological enhancement as they say it's either you LEAVE DepEd or you LIVE DepEd)



The response given by participant 1 supported that of participants 9 and 12, as they narrated:

*"If I were to give advice to them, it would be that play-based learning should be one of the approaches utilized in a daily classroom setting" (Participant 9).*

*"All I can say is that you can be flexible and firm in everything you do" (Participant 12).*

Teachers face challenges in acquiring resources for PBL, yet they remain committed to providing quality education through creative and cost-effective means. They understand that adapting to new teaching techniques, including digital tools, enhances student engagement and aligns with modern educational trends. Teachers also stress the importance of being flexible and open-minded in their approaches to address the diverse needs of learners.

### **3.3.3 Effectiveness of Play-Based Learning**

As narrated by ECE teachers, play-based learning is an effective approach that helps sustain children's attention and energy throughout lessons. Since kindergarten learners have short attention spans, integrating play into teaching methods helps minimize distractions and fosters active participation. Teachers highlighted that PBL aligns well with young children's developmental needs, making lessons more interactive, engaging, and easy to understand.

This result confirms the findings of Utami *et al.* (2020), which examined the shift in teachers' pedagogical practices in a play-based program in Indonesia. The research revealed that adopting play-based learning approaches led to more effective teaching practices, resulting in improved student engagement and learning outcomes. The study emphasized that play-based learning aligns with children's natural learning processes, making education more effective and enjoyable.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Makuha ud nimo ang attention sa mga mga bata kong PBL na husgutan."* (Participant 3).

(You can really get the children's attention when it comes to play-based learning)

*"Mubo kaayu ang attention span sa kindergarten less than 20 min lang jud, nakatabang ang PBL."* (Participant 3).

(The attention of kindergarten is less than 20 minutes, so PBL helps keep them engaged)

The responses given by participant 3 validated that of participant 9 and 11, as they narrated:

*"Absolutely yes, play-based learning is an effective way of teaching kindergarten learners"*  
(Participant 9).

*"PBL kay effective kay dali ra sila makasabot pinaagi sa play-based learning."* (Participant 11).

(Play-based learning is effective because they can more easily understand our lesson through play-based learning)

Teachers affirm that PBL helps in maintaining a positive classroom environment where students are actively involved in learning. By incorporating games, role-playing, and hands-on activities, children stay focused and demonstrate improved learning outcomes. Teachers note that this approach supports differentiated learning, allowing students with different learning styles to grasp concepts effectively while promoting teamwork and social interactions.

#### **3.3.4 Advice for Fellow Teachers**

As narrated by ECE teachers, promoting a nurturing and patient approach in the classroom is essential for effective teaching. They emphasize the need for consistency in implementing PBL to maximize its benefits. Encouraging fellow educators to embrace play as a fundamental part of learning helps create a positive and enriching classroom environment. Teachers believe that patience, kindness, and dedication are key to ensuring a meaningful learning experience for young learners.

This result is aligned with the findings of Thompson and Goldsmith (2021), which emphasized the importance of teacher patience and nurturing in early childhood education. Their study found that children thrive in environments where teachers consistently implement play-based learning with kindness and structure.

Below shows the sample responses of the ECE teachers:

*"Dapat kind ka sa mga bata kay mga bata pa intawun na sila."* (Participant 8).

(Be kind to the children because they are my children too.)

*"PBL should be consistently implemented because it yields positive results"*  
(Participant 7).

The responses given by participants 8 and 7 corroborated that of participants 12 and 11, as they narrated:

*"My advice to my co-ECE teacher is to embrace the value of play and be passionate and persistent all the time" (Participant 12).*

*"Kanunay dapat naa kay pasensya og dapat kaind ka sa mga bata. Timan-an kanunay ang rules and regulation sa mga bata unya dapat firm sad ta." (Participant 11).*

(Always be patient and always be kind to the children. Always remember that all the rules and regulations given to children must be firm with passion.)

Teachers encourage their colleagues to maintain an open heart and mind when working with young learners, as patience and kindness play a crucial role in their development. They emphasize that incorporating PBL requires dedication, but the positive impact on children's learning makes the effort worthwhile.

#### 4. Conclusion

First, schools must bolster their support for PBL by providing sufficient materials and comprehensive teacher training. This measure is crucial to alleviate the burden on educators who frequently resort to personal funds or self-created resources. Additionally, administrative support is vital for helping teachers effectively manage instructional time and maintain classroom discipline within a PBL framework.

Second, parental understanding and involvement are fundamental to the success of PBL. Schools should actively educate parents about the benefits of play-based approaches and foster their participation. Consistent communication, potentially through newsletters and dedicated workshops, can cultivate stronger parental support, ensuring reinforcement of learning principles between home and school environments.

Third, the study highlights teacher creativity as essential for overcoming implementation challenges, particularly resource limitations. Schools can cultivate this by promoting collaborative environments where educators share effective, low-cost teaching strategies and resources. Such collaboration can also yield practical solutions for time management and enhance student engagement.

Fourth, play should be fundamentally integrated into the learning process, not treated as a separate or secondary activity. Encouraging patience, flexibility, and pedagogical innovation among educators will cultivate more engaging and effective learning environments conducive to children's holistic development.

Lastly, to further support PBL implementation, future research should investigate effective strategies for addressing persistent challenges like time management, classroom discipline, and resource scarcity. Studies could focus on developing structured yet flexible frameworks that guide teachers in balancing play with academic objectives while maintaining classroom order. Additionally, research into the development and use of low-cost, sustainable materials and teaching aids would offer practical support for educators, especially those in resource-constrained settings.

### Funding Information

No funding involved

### Conflict of Interest Statement

We have no personal, financial, or other interest that could or could be seen to, influence the decisions or actions we are taking or the advice we are giving during our research for this.

### About the Authors

**Desiree N. Florita** is a graduate student of Davao del Sur State College, Mati Digos City, Davao del Sur, Philippines. Her research interests are elementary education and educational management.

**Dr. Marilou C. Sabud** is a faculty member of Davao del Sur State College, Institute of Graduate and Professional Education (IGPE), Mati Digos City, Davao del Sur, Philippines.

### References

- Acevedo, M. (2022). Innovative play-based learning strategies in early childhood education. *Early Childhood Research Journal*, 15(3), 45-60.
- Alase, A. (2017). The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A guide to a good qualitative research approach. *International journal of education and literacy studies*, 5(2), 9-19. Retrieved from <https://journals.aiac.org.au/index.php/IJELS/article/view/3400/0>
- Bidzakin, K. (2021). The impact of play-based learning on kindergarten education. *Journal of Early Learning*, 10(2), 101-118.
- Coates, J. K., & Pimlott-Wilson, H. (2019). Learning while playing: Children's forest school experiences in the UK. *British Educational Research Journal*, 45(1), 21-40. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3491>
- Cohrssen, C., & Garvis, S. (2021). The role of teacher resourcefulness in play-based learning: Adapting materials for effective early childhood education. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 56, 120-134.
- Cresswell, J. (2013). Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE. Retrieved from <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/qualitative-inquiry-and-research-design/book246896>
- Danniels, E., & Pyle, A. (2018). Defining play-based learning. *Encyclopedia on early childhood development*, 1-5. Retrieved from <https://www.child-encyclopedia.com/pdf/expert/play-based-learning/according-experts/defining-play-based-learning>

- Davis, R., & Parker, L. (2023). Time management strategies in early childhood education: Balancing structured and play-based learning. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 62(1), 45-58.
- DeLuca, C., Pyle, A., Valiquette, A., & LaPointe-McEwan, D. (2020). New directions for kindergarten education: Embedding assessment in play-based learning. *The elementary school journal*, 120(3), 455-479. Retrieved from <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/707008?journalCode=esj>
- Halpern, R., Myers, R., & Gadsden, V. (2022). Parental and administrative involvement in early childhood education: Effects on student success. *International Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 48(3), 215-230.
- Harris, T., & Bennett, S. (2023). Classroom management and behavioral strategies in play-based learning environments. *Journal of Early Childhood Education Research*, 15(3), 112-130.
- Johnston, O., Wildy, H., & Shand, J. (2023). Teenagers learn through play too: communicating high expectations through a playful learning approach. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 50(3), 921-940. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13384-022-00534-3>
- Lewis, K., & Carter, J. (2022). Resource challenges in early childhood education: Teacher adaptations and interventions. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 47(2), 78-94.
- Mitchell, P., & Adams, N. (2023). Parental involvement in play-based learning: Impacts on child engagement and development. *Early Learning and Development Journal*, 9(4), 211-225.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *National assessment of educational progress: an overview of NAEP*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED557749>
- Omaga, J. F., & Alieto, E. O. (2019). Teaching Literacy through Play: Perspective from Filipino Early Childhood Teachers. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333994710\\_TEACHING\\_LITERACY\\_THROUGH\\_PLAY\\_PERSPECTIVE\\_FROM\\_FILIPINO\\_EARLY\\_CHILDHOOD\\_TEACHERS](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333994710_TEACHING_LITERACY_THROUGH_PLAY_PERSPECTIVE_FROM_FILIPINO_EARLY_CHILDHOOD_TEACHERS)
- Parker, A. J., Taylor, J., & Rodd, J. M. (2022). Word-meaning priming during silent reading. Retrieved from <https://osf.io/5gxst/resources>
- Pyle, A., & Danniels, E. (2017). A continuum of play-based learning: The role of the teacher in play-based pedagogy and the fear of hijacking play. *Early education and development*, 28(3), 274-289. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2016.1220771>
- Pyle, A., & DeLuca, C. (2017). Assessment in play-based kindergarten classrooms: An empirical study of teacher perspectives and practices. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 110(5), 457-466. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2015.1118005>

- Pyle, A., DeLuca, C., & Danniels, E. (2017). A scoping review of research on play-based pedagogies in kindergarten education. *Review of Education*, 5(3), 311-351. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3097>
- Pyle, A., Pyle, M. A., Prioletta, J., & Alaca, B. (2020). Portrayals of Play-Based Learning: Misalignments among Public Discourse, Classroom Realities, and Research. *American Journal of Play*, 13(1), 53-86. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1304727.pdf>
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C. M., & Ormston, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Sage. Retrieved from <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/qualitative-research-practice/book237434>
- Taylor, M., & Boyer, W. (2021). Job satisfaction and professional fulfillment among teachers implementing play-based learning. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 19(2), 178-195.
- Utami, R., et al. (2020). Transforming pedagogy through play-based learning. *International Journal of Childhood Studies*, 18(4), 23-39.
- Wang, X., & Lam, C. B. (2017). An exploratory case study of an American-style, play-based curriculum in China. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 31(1), 28-39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2016.1243175>
- White, M., & Green, L. (2022). Cognitive and social benefits of play-based learning in preschool settings. *Journal of Child Development and Education*, 10(2), 88-105.

Creative Commons licensing terms

Author(s) will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Education Studies shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflicts of interest, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated into the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).