

## **Curriculum Implementation, Teachers' Competencies and Preferred Teaching Approaches for Kindergarten Gifted Education Program: An Assessment**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study intended to ascertain the condition of Kindergarten gifted education program of Isabela, Philippines. Specifically, it assessed the following: (1) preferred curriculum implementation, (2) teacher's competency, and (3) employment of desired teaching approaches. Purposive sampling was utilized which involved administrators, teachers and parents of gifted and talented preschoolers from public schools with recognized Kindergarten gifted education program. Method of investigation was descriptive survey through data collection procedures such as interview and documentation. Instruments used were questionnaires, checklists, and recordings. Instruments were frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, and rating scale of four-point ranking scheme with equivalent descriptions. Results disclosed that administrators, teachers and parents perceived the implementation level of approved curriculum as "evident". Administrators, teachers and parents recorded an "evident" perception level on teachers' competence in performing their responsibilities. Participants observed the application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches as "evident". However, reading as an instructional approach was gauged as "less evident". It was concluded that the management of Kindergarten gifted education program was somewhat favorable, but teaching approaches still need innovations to suit the growing needs of gifted young learners. Findings imply that participants still regard improvement in preferred curriculum execution, teaching competencies of teachers and their approaches in handling gifted kinder pupils. For recommendation, similar study should be carried out to estimate other Kindergarten gifted education program packages.

**Key words:** Kindergarten gifted education program, Gifted and talented preschoolers, Curriculum implementation, Preferred teaching approaches

### **INTRODUCTION**

Filipinos have deep regard for education because this occupies a central place in Philippine Political, Economic Social and Culture Life. Learning has always been strongly viewed as a pillar of national development and a primary avenue for social and economic mobility. Thus, Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) welcomes the enactment of Republic Act 10157 or the "Kindergarten Education Act", which is the start of a comprehensive reform program in the country's public school system. It is the "K" in K to 12 program, making kindergarten the

first stage of compulsory formal education. It advocates equity in all its programs and services to cater the diverse needs of every Filipino learner.

Among the programs of DepEd, Inclusive and Special Needs education is an integral part in the life of many children today than several years ago. Education is seen as a means of developing oneself, but for the special child, it is a tool of surviving in a world of mostly average people. At present, more people are aware that a kind of service which is geared towards educating children with disabilities and exceptionalities is available. This is due to the untiring commitment of many people who believe that this is the right of every child to have access to equitable and appropriate education. DepEd order no. 99's. 2009, therefore, provides gifted education for preschoolers who are deemed as gifted and talented with quality and relevant educational programs and services.

It is the central object of Philippine Kindergarten gifted education to guarantee the delivery of desired curriculum, deployment of competent teachers and application of recommended teaching and learning strategies. This ensured maximum standard of achievement that complements capabilities, intelligence, and interests of the gifted and talented preschool children. Kindergarten gifted education program or the Head Start program for kindergarten pupils, specifically aimed to make available educational programs that allow the gifted young learners to transcend from their basic skills and advance through their multiple intelligence at the speed and extent suited to their capacities and interests. It is designed to offer learning environments that motivate gifted and talented preschoolers to cultivate creativity, resourcefulness, flexibility, inventiveness, and fluency. Kindergarten gifted education program likewise create opportunities for the discovery and development of exceptional talents among gifted kinder pupils (Department of Education, 2009). School policies and educational programs are set to function as basis for learners, parents and educators in recognizing and giving of assistance to gifted and talented learners in school community. Policy and corresponding school practices are intended to present shareholders the assurance that proper educational resolutions and deliveries particularly the differentiation from the classroom to curriculum levels and even wider scopes, are regarded and offered for learners exhibiting giftedness and talent (Frenchville State School, 2019).

One of the ways that gifted and talented preschoolers can be successful is to arrange for differentiated curriculum. Curriculum implementation must be flexible to permit independent learning; and to jive with unique proficiency levels and learning environments driven by learner's motivation (Hockett, 2009; & Margot & Kettler, 2019). In planning the curriculum, Frenchville State School, North Rockhampton (2019) offers an array of design instruments, administration and instructional strategies, which can be applied for individualized learning. Blend of selected approaches are modified based on learning context such as: (1) modifying the customary learning undertakings; and (2) providing of tiered assignments. In relation to differentiating of usual learning activities, Frenchville State School, North Rockhampton (2019) claims that it is just proper to arrange for a common learning activity for the entire class if this is an open-ended task. Differentiation happens when the teacher applies varied teaching and/or supervising techniques to assist individual learner attain learning outcomes based on his or her own capability. Sometimes, it is appropriate to organize distinct learning task for each learner or small groups of learners to drum up their interests, distinctive prior knowledge or thinking capacities, and learning approaches.

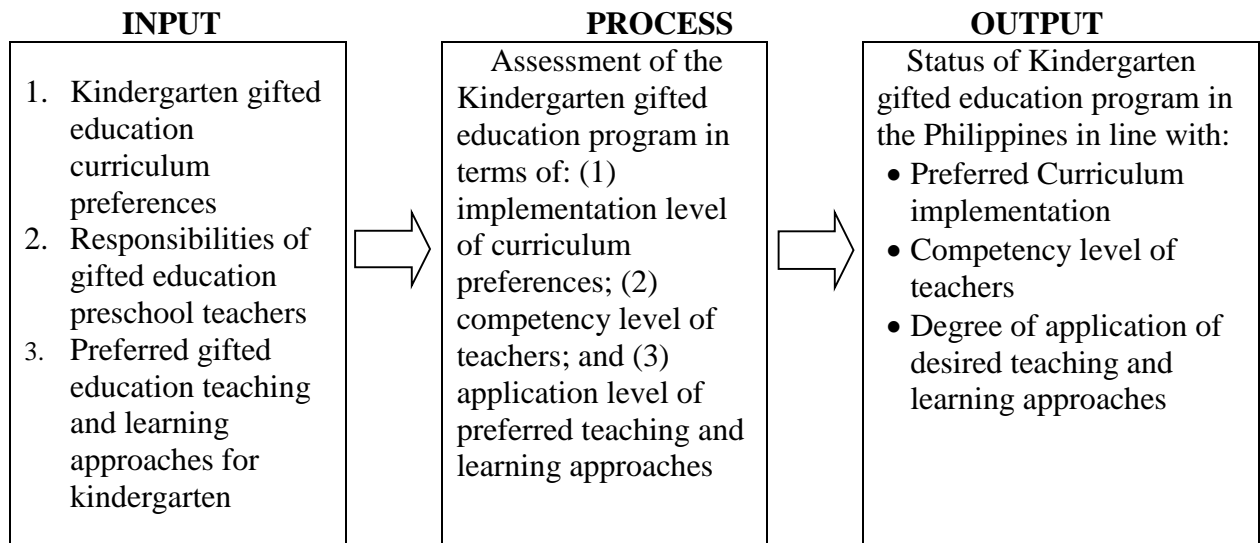
In most learning institutions in the Philippines and in other countries, advisement programs are organized and act as homeroom for learners according to Simpson and Bragg (2013). Advisement curriculum is customized to the nature of gifted learners and arrange lessons on values education, fostering of relationship, academic enhancement and good citizenship. Advisement activities aim to build good relationship between and teacher (adviser) and among young learners. Through advisement, learners obtain the support they need to heighten their achievement in all levels of emotional, social and cognitive development (Simpson, & Bragg, 2013).

The varied characteristics of the gifted and talented child indicate that giftedness is complex and has a multidimensional nature. Handling these children who are projected to exhibit such giftedness and talent, requires teachers' strong commitment, dedication, and remarkable teaching proficiency. It also considers high energy and flexibility as characteristic of the teacher of the gifted. Those successful teachers of the gifted are facilitators of learning. They display gifted behaviors as they perform their professional responsibilities. Therefore, DepEd support teachers through appropriate educational deliverable. These gifted education packages are assumed to augment the required curriculum; hopes to nurture, hone and challenge the multiple intelligence of gifted and talented preschoolers; and to instill in them desirable values (Department Order 99, series of 2009).

Upon acknowledging the progressive nature of giftedness, teachers need to be aware of the implications which are entirely overwhelming and that teaching responsibility also changes. Kindergarten gifted education teachers are entailed to deliver customized education programs for those who already demonstrate giftedness and talent and to promote the talents of learners who are seemly becoming talented (Frenchville State School, North Rockhampton, 2019). Successful Gifted Educational program can become successful through the provision of suitable teaching approaches or strategies for gifted, creative and talented preschoolers. Strategies for teaching gifted & talented students (Kufen, 2019) incorporate independent study, accelerated learning, use of educational technology, and curricular competitions. Digital technologies allow gifted kinder pupils to work together with their peers in their research field of interests, unify their thoughts and exhibit their knowledge. For example, animation devices may cultivate their proficiency in visualizations, while multimedia exhibitions enhance gifted preschool child's ability to retell stories, explain scientific notions through characterization, dialogue with sound effects.

Philippine Kindergarten gifted education program is a well advocated educational program that promotes, supervises and assessed the education of gifted and talented young learners. Stakeholders that include administrators, teachers, field supervisors, parents and government agencies assigned as caregivers of the subjects, need to be guided and be assisted while taking into account appropriate nurturing practices. Parents, too, must be helped to recognize the nature and tendencies of a gifted, creative and talented a child and how to deal him or her, as well (Department Order 99, series of 2009). The perceptions of stakeholders regarding Kindergarten gifted education program in terms of curriculum implementation, employment of teaching and learning approaches, and competency level of teachers as they perform their responsibilities, are essential to the constant improvement and innovative endeavors for Kindergarten gifted education program. Hence, this study was conceived.

## RESEARCH PARADIGM



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of the study presents an input-process-output model. The input covered the Kindergarten gifted education curriculum preferences, responsibilities of gifted education Kinder teachers, and the desired gifted education teaching and learning approaches. The process focused on the assessment of the three aspects of Kindergarten gifted education program namely: implementation of preferred curriculum, competency level of teachers, and application of desired teaching and learning approaches. The output of the study presented the status of the kindergarten gifted education program in relation to preferred Curriculum implementation, competency level of teachers and degree of application of desired teaching and learning approaches

## METHODOLOGY

This study was a quantitative research that applied a descriptive method. Calderon and Gonzales (2004) clarified that a descriptive study makes use of documentation, description, analysis and clarification of current nature and practice of phenomena. As a survey design by nature, the investigation delved in providing quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2013).

Purposive sampling was used in this study, which involved 5 school administrators, 5 teachers and 125 parents of preschoolers under the Kindergarten gifted education program. Research was limited only in public elementary schools with credited SPED Centers with kindergarten gifted education program in Isabela, Philippines because these schools match the requisites for the study. In every school, only 20% of the population of parents were selected as participants. The conditions for the selection of participants were based on the objectives of the study. This study aimed to assess implementation of preferred curriculum, proficiency level of teachers and application of desired teaching approaches for Kindergarten gifted education program. Hence, only the school heads, teachers of Kindergarten gifted education classes and parents of kinder pupils under the program were considered. Parents' insights regarding the efficiency or ineffectiveness in any program area, served as supplementary information for the investigation since parents were actively engaged in all program activities.

Research instruments include checklists with items to indicate perceptions among participants concerning curriculum implementation, teachers' competency and employment of teaching and learning strategies of Kindergarten gifted education program. Questionnaires were also utilized for the interview to substantiate the information that were collected. These were validated by experts before the actual conduct of data collection. Permissions were processed from the 4 School Division Offices of Isabela, Philippines, at the same time, name of schools with Kindergarten gifted education program for preschoolers was also requested.

Data were collected by way of distribution and retrieval of checklists, and conduct of semi-structured interviews. During the process, the participants were asked to rate every item in the checklist that corresponds to their perceptions. Interviews were carried out to validate the data gathered from the checklist. Frequency, percentage, weighted mean and rating scale were used for statistical treatment.

From the checklist, the responses were marked on a four-point ranking technique tailored from Likert Technique of Sum up Rating. Rensis Likert (1932) designed an approach to avoid meticulous and laborious ways of scaling (Krabbe, 2017). In this investigation, the procedure was adjusted to a limit extending from "Very evident", "Evident", "Less evident", and "Not evident".

The rating scale consist of a four-point ranking system interpreted as follows:

<b>Rating Scale</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
4	3.26 - 4.00	Very evident
3	2.51 - 3.25	Evident
2	1.76 - 2.50	Less evident
1	1.00 - 1.75	Not evident

Data were analyzed according to the perception ratings of participants and descriptive interpretations specified for every item in the checklist.

## **RESULTS**

The results pertain to the Kindergarten gifted education program of the Philippines. Findings were presented based from the perception level of administrators, teachers and parents on the Kindergarten gifted education program in terms of: (1) implementation of preferred curriculum; (2) competency of teachers; and (3) employment of preferred teaching and learning approaches.

### **1. Extent of implementation of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum**

#### **Perception of administrators on the implementation level of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum**

As perceived by administrators, the level of employment of preferred curriculum for gifted and talented preschoolers was "evident" with an overall mean of 2.7006 shown in table 1.

The indicators of the curriculum preference for the Kindergarten gifted education were assessed as follows: based from learner's interest with a mean of 2.7000, was described as

“evident”; based from topical contents with a mean of 2.7143, was designated as “evident”; and based from learner’s context with a mean of 2.6875, also depicted as “evident”.

Outcomes show that administrators, to a certain extent, favored how the desired curriculum designs were carried out through academic and non-academic activities. These three types of curriculum constructs are student-centered. Nonetheless, school heads seen that improvement in curriculum implementation is necessitated.

**Table 1**  
 Level of implementation of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum as perceived by administrators

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Based from learner’s interest	2.7000	1.24900	Evident
Based from topical contents	2.7143	1.25085	Evident
Based from learner’s context	2.6875	1.24791	Evident
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>2.7006</b>	<b>1.24906</b>	<b>Evident</b>

### **Perception of teachers on the implementation level of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum**

Table 2 exposes the perceptions of teachers related to the implementation of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum. Teachers conferred an overall mean of 2.7333, which is depicted as “evident”. The indicators are clearly reported in table 2 with their respective means and equivalent descriptions. Curriculum based from learner’s interest was assessed with a mean of 3.3699, which means “evident”; based from topical contents was appraised with a mean of 2.7500, deemed as “evident”; and based from learner’s context was gauged with a mean of 2.7500, also regarded as “evident”. In summation, teachers themselves reflected that to a certain degree, preferred curriculum approaches were applied in their teaching. Nevertheless, teachers understood that there are still other means that they can do to enrich the experiences of the gifted and talented preschoolers to maximize their potentials in any learning environment under the supervision of the school.

**Table 2**  
 Level of implementation of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum as perceived by teachers

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Based from learner’s interest	2.7000	1.19443	Evident
Based from topical contents	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Based from learner’s context	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>2.7333</b>	<b>1.23648</b>	<b>Evident</b>

### **Perception of parents on the implementation level of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum**

Table 3 reveals the perception level of parents pertaining to the application of preferred curriculum for the gifted and talented preschoolers. Parents observed the indicators as “evident” as signified by the overall mean of 3.3560. Parent respondents have given particular ratings to the application of preferred curriculum such as follows: based from learner’s interest with a mean 3.3699, implied as “evident”; based from topical contents with a mean of 3.3817,

signified as “evident”; and based from learner’s context with a mean of 3.3164, indicated as “evident”. The aforementioned outcome of the study assumes that parents manifest a strong trust upon the teachers in the attainment of desired objectives of the Kindergarten gifted education program. Just like the other group of respondents, however, parents acknowledged that curriculum employment techniques are laid open to innovations and enhancements according to the needs of the gifted and talented preschoolers.

**Table 3**  
 Level of implementation of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum as perceived by parents

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Based from learner’s interest	3.3699	.63387	Evident
Based from topical contents	3.3817	.59821	Evident
Based from learner’s context	3.3164	.65470	Evident
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.3560</b>	<b>.58691</b>	<b>Evident</b>

## **2. Perception of administrators, teachers and parents on the competency level of teachers of Kindergarten gifted education program**

Gifted education teachers have voluminous responsibilities as compared with other elementary or secondary teachers. Their duties involved several dedicated undertakings such as: (1) organizing stimulating lessons and assignments so intelligent learners may perform at their capacity level; (2) upgrading and/or discovering advanced techniques in educating gifted and talented preschoolers; (3) developing instructional materials and resources, and arranging with other support/service providers to inspire class time accomplishment; (4) enlightening gifted learners and their parents as regards the breakthroughs and hardships connected with exceptional aptitudes; and (5) motivating learners to cultivate self-control, accountability, productivity, creativity and leadership skills (All Education Schools, 2019). Research at both the national and international level has long advocated that students who are gifted have specific learning needs that require teachers who are trained in gifted education and are more exposed to learners of similar ability (Wormald, 2017).

### **Perception of administrators on the competency level of Kindergarten gifted education teachers**

Table 4 uncovers the level of perceptions of administrators on Kindergarten gifted education teachers’ competencies. Each of the competencies was based on the different roles that Kindergarten teachers perform in the operation of the gifted education program. School heads gave an overall mean of 2.8264, which is interpreted as “evident”.

From the administrators’ view, teacher’s competences were evidently demonstrated as proven by their respective means such as follows: as a nurturer ( $\bar{X}$ =2.7500), as an observer ( $\bar{X}$ =3.2500), designer ( $\bar{X}$ =2.7083), as an implementer ( $\bar{X}$ =2.7500), as a supervisor ( $\bar{X}$ =2.7500), and as a correspondent ( $\bar{X}$ =2.7500). Outcomes of the study substantiated the beliefs of school administrators that teachers are doing their best in performing their duties and responsibilities as Kindergarten gifted education mentors. Findings imply that school administrators appraised the competencies of Kindergarten gifted education teachers as evident. As teachers go through the process, however, their administrators still see the need for them to upgrade themselves to become more effective as they do their functions as Kindergarten gifted education teachers.

**Table 4**  
 Perception of administrators on Kindergarten gifted education teachers' competency level based on their responsibilities

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Teacher as a nurturer	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Teacher as an observer	3.2500	.35355	Evident
Teacher as a designer	2.7083	.94648	Evident
Teacher as an implementer	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Teacher as a supervisor	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Teacher as a correspondent	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
<b>Over all Mean</b>	<b>2.8264</b>	<b>1.01788</b>	<b>Evident</b>

**Perception of teachers on their competency level as Kindergarten gifted education teachers**

Table 5 shows the degree of perceptions of teachers themselves on their competencies as Kindergarten gifted education mentors. They gave an overall assessment of 2.8194, which is conveyed as “evident”. Teachers considered all of their needed proficiency as “evident”. In details, teachers gave a respective mean to each of the specified competency. For teacher as a nurturer, it was given a mean of 3.4375; as an observer, it was conferred with a mean of 3.4590; as a designer, a mean of 3.4727 was noted; as an implementer, a mean of 3.4719 was recorded; as a supervisor, a mean of 3.3828 was documented; and as a correspondent, a mean of 3.4102 was verified. These findings denote that teachers are confident of their own capabilities in handling gifted kinder learners. Nonetheless, teachers expressed openness to new educational innovations and advancements especially in gifted education.

**Table 5**  
 Perception of teachers on their competency level as Kindergarten gifted education teachers

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Teacher as a nurturer	2.6875	1.24791	Evident
Teacher as an observer	3.1875	.55434	Evident
Teacher as a designer	2.8750	.82074	Evident
Teacher as an implementer	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Teacher as a supervisor	2.6667	1.24722	Evident
Teacher as a correspondent	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>2.8194</b>	<b>1.04779</b>	<b>Evident</b>

**Perception of parents on the competency level of Kindergarten gifted education teachers**

Table 6 presents parents' level of perception on the competencies of Kindergarten gifted education teachers. Parents gave an overall rating of 3.4390, which is described as “evident”. From the appraisal of parents, each of the competencies was “evident” during the accomplishment of their tasks and roles in the teaching and learning process. As a nurturer, it was given a mean of 3.4375; as an observer, it was noted with a mean of 3.4590; as a designer, a mean of 3.4727 was recorded; as an implementer, a mean of 3.4719 was observed; as a supervisor, a mean of 3.3828 was documented; and as a correspondent, a mean of 3.4102 was verified. These results denote that parents recognized the evidences of the competencies of Kindergarten teachers as they carry out their roles in gifted education. However, as teachers go



through the teaching processes in gifted education, parents believe that the teachers can still level up in their teaching skills.

**Table 6**  
 Perception of parents on Kindergarten gifted education teachers' competency level

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Teacher as a nurturer	3.4375	.57336	Evident
Teacher as an observer	3.4590	.57317	Evident
Teacher as a designer	3.4727	.56848	Evident
Teacher as an implementer	3.4719	.55486	Evident
Teacher as a supervisor	3.3828	.65754	Evident
Teacher as a correspondent	3.4102	.65938	Evident
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.4390</b>	<b>.54490</b>	<b>Evident</b>

### **3. Application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches**

#### **Perception of administrators on the application level of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches**

Table 7 gleaned the perception level of administrators as regards application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches. They have recorded an overall mean of 2.7439, which is labeled as “evident”. Listed on same table are the different favored strategies with their respective means such as follows: collaborative learning with a mean of 2.6462, considered as “evident”; brainstorming as a technique with a mean of 2.7500, described as “evident”; role playing or simulation with a mean of 2.7500, referred to as “evident”; interactive learning with a mean of 2.6667, expressed as “evident”; semantic webbing with a mean of 2.7500, being described as “evident”; tale telling with a mean of 2.9167, labeled as “evident”; playing games as a strategy with a mean of 2.7500, depicted as “evident”; reading as instructional approach with a mean of 2.4688, described as “less evident” and teaching of writing with a mean of 3.000, expressed as “evident”.

Findings imply that school administrators noticed the engagement of the preferred teaching approaches that promote collaboration instead of competition, develop problem solving skills, and enhance communication abilities. However, administrators noted that the use of reading as an instructional approach was less evident. This result indicates giving more time and undertakings to strengthen the needed skills and attitudes of the clientele through reading.

**Table 7**  
 Perception level of administrators on the application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Collaborative learning	2.6462	1.15764	Evident
Brainstorming as a technique	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Role playing or simulation	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Interactive learning	2.6667	1.15470	Evident
Semantic webbing	2.7500	1.25831	Evident

Tale telling	2.9167	1.34371	Evident
Playing games as a strategy	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Reading as an instructional approach	2.4688	1.30853	Less evident
Teaching of writing	3.000	1.41421	Evident
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.7439</b>	<b>1.23069</b>	<b>Evident</b>

**Perception of teachers on the application level of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches**

Table 8 assembled the perception level of teachers toward application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches. Teachers rated themselves in this area with an overall mean of 2.6986, which is referred to as “evident”. In details, the various techniques preferred in the teaching-learning approaches were rated as follows: collaborative learning with a mean of 2.7143, articulated as “evident”; brainstorming as a technique with a mean of 2.7500, conveyed as “evident”; role playing or simulation with a mean of 2.6667, referred to as “evident”; interactive learning with a mean of 2.6667, inferred as “evident”; semantic webbing with a mean of 2.7500, being taken as “evident”; tale telling with a mean of 2.9167, labeled as “evident”; playing games as a strategy with a mean of 2.7917, connoted as “evident”; reading as an instructional approach with a mean of 2.2813, inferred as “less evident” and teaching of writing with a mean of 2.7500, expressed as “evident”.

Findings suggest that teacher respondents themselves recognize the essentials of upgrading when it comes to schemes in teaching and learning processes of gifted and talented kinder pupils. These desired teaching and learning approaches must bring out the best among the said clientele as they go through the process of growth and development. More applicable approaches in using reading as a technique must be given more attention in as much as it was considered “less evident”.

**Table 8**  
 Perception level of teachers on the application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning strategies

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Collaborative learning	2.7143	1.25085	Evident
Brainstorming as a technique	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Role Playing or simulation	2.6667	1.24722	Evident
Interactive learning	2.6667	1.15470	Evident
Semantic webbing	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
Tale telling	2.9167	1.34371	Evident
Playing games as a strategy	2.7917	1.22758	Evident
Reading as an instructional approach	2.2813	1.10102	Less evident
Teaching of writing	2.7500	1.25831	Evident
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>2.6986</b>	<b>1.19843</b>	<b>Evident</b>

**Perception of parents on the application level of preferred Kindergarten gifted education learning approaches**

Table 9 presents the perception level of parents regarding application of preferred teaching and learning approaches for the Kindergarten gifted education program. Parents rated this area as “evident” with an overall mean of 3.3417. In details, parents appraised the desired Kindergarten

gifted education teaching and learning strategies such as follows: collaborative learning with a mean of 3.3337, considered as “evident”; brainstorming as a technique with a mean of 3.3359, described as “evident”; role playing or simulation with a mean of 3.2813, referred to as “evident”; interactive learning with a mean of 3.3047, expressed as “evident”; semantic webbing with a mean of 3.4063, being described as “evident”; tale telling with a mean of 3.5078, labeled as “evident”; playing games as a strategy with a mean of 3.3047, depicted as “evident”; reading as an instructional approach with a mean of 3.2158, described as “less evident” and teaching of writing with a mean of 3.3854, expressed as “evident”. From the results presented, parents acknowledged the application of required teaching and learning strategies for gifted and talented kinder pupils. Outcomes further imply that parents appreciated the teaching innovations, which Kindergarten gifted education teachers carry out for the advancement of their children. However, they still expect more improvements in line with the utilization of reading as an instructional technique.

**Table 9**  
 Perception level of parents on the application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning strategies

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Collaborative learning	3.3337	.63895	Evident
Brainstorming as a technique	3.3359	.69807	Evident
Role playing or simulation	3.2813	.66330	Evident
Interactive learning	3.3047	.68610	Evident
Semantic webbing	3.4063	.62352	Evident
Tale telling	3.5078	.57044	Evident
Playing games as a strategy	3.3047	.67258	Evident
Reading as an instructional approach	3.2158	.82629	Less evident
Teaching of writing	3.3854	.71411	Evident
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.3417</b>	<b>.56044</b>	<b>Evident</b>

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

The discussion underscored the perception level of administrators, teachers and parents on Philippine Kindergarten gifted education (1) preferred curriculum implementation, (2) competencies of teachers, and (3) desired teaching and learning approaches and the corresponding implications.

### 1. Extent of implementation of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum

The required Kindergarten gifted education curriculum for gifted and talented kinder pupils is established not just to meet the academic needs of qualified kindergarten pupils but also to build in them a well-balanced personality (Department of Education Order No. 99’s. 2009). If the educational system is not able to deliver the suitable education to these types of preschool learners, it may probably cause a lot of problems in terms of mental health, dissatisfaction, boredom, and behavioral issues in school and at home that may be indicated withdrawal and drop-out troubles. These groups of learners have the tendency to regard the curriculum as very easy and may cause disappointments at the lack of consideration to their capability and to anything they are adept to achieve (Wormald, 2017).

### **Level of implementation of preferred Kindergarten gifted education curriculum as perceived by administrators**

Administrators perceived the employment level of desired curriculum for gifted and talented preschoolers as “evident”. These three preferred structures of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum are learner-centered. Results indicate that administrators are somewhat convinced that the Kindergarten gifted education curriculum design was taken into consideration in all classroom undertakings. Nevertheless, school heads still deemed the need to enhance the application of the required curriculum. School leaders are being compelled to abide by the state and district policies in the implementation of the required curriculum. In a similar situation, school heads in other states have sensed that they are being restricted in making use of mandatory instructional materials to serve the standards of the state (Cumming, 2015 and Boscardin, 2005).

Although it was very challenging, school administrator and teachers believed that each learner is important. School heads were not just dedicated to satisfy the needs of their academically weak students; but they were also committed to gratify the necessities of gifted learners as well (Buckner, 2009). Buckner (2009) further attested that it is the curriculum which inspired gifted young learners to apply what they learned to their personal daily life. They learned in an encouraging, learner-centered atmosphere where there was preference and proprietorship. Learning was evident as gifted learners were provided with chances to perform with other gifted pupils through interactions and independent learning. Learners were able to choose the books they read and write on topic of their own interest. At home, parents arrange for home encounters that motivated and broadened their learning (Buckner, 2009).

In the study of Rowley (2002), it was stated that Australia has no National Policy on Gifted Education. It was further noted that every District’s Education department in said country has its distinct gifted education policy and set of practices. Policies, however, encourage the identification of gifted learners and delivery of a customized curriculum that is catered to the learners’ academic and non-academic necessities. Enrichment and differentiation programs offer special strategies such as fast-tracked progression or capability grouping (Rowley, 2002).

In a research being accomplished in United Arab Emirates, educators gave their views on the factors that impede advancement in gifted education. Principals mentioned that the congested curriculum and the tedious school calendar were the leading obstacles in offering curricular activities designed for the gifted. The promotion of suitable time to set for co-curricular activities for the gifted young learners was hardly carried out. This is because the existing curriculum does not present any distinction for diverse talents. No national curriculum differentiation was employed and there were no qualified teachers being assigned to handle gifted learners (Obaidli, 2006).

### **Level of implementation of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum as perceived by teachers**

Teachers perceived the implementation of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum for the gifted and talented preschool children as “evident”. Findings indicate that to a certain extent, teachers believe that they employed the required curriculum models. However, teachers figure out that there are still many methodologies which they may utilized to enhance learning among

gifted and talented preschool learners to make the most out of their potentials in all learning milieus.

In the implementation of Kindergarten gifted education program for the gifted and talented learners, curriculum enrichment is entailed and is expected. In the differentiation of curriculum, several processes are involved. Frenchville State School, North Rockhampton, (2019), presented the first step in Gifted Education curriculum enrichment process, which is the checking of prior knowledge through pretest to ascertain what the learners already learned and are able to perform. The second step is to modify, which is to compact learning and to differentiate or adjusting of the curriculum content, learning activity, learning outcomes and context of learning (Kufen, 2019).

In contrast, teachers encountered difficulty in setting various degree of educational objectives in relation to curriculum and instructional modification based from the giftedness and talent of every learner. Teachers manage to design only one point of educational objective intended for all the learners. This challenge is the most observable during same undertaking for group task (Machů, 2015). Not all teachers prepared available differentiated worksheets or additional tasks for the more competent learners (Obaidli, 2006). The regulation affirms that the gifted and talented learners may only be sufficiently accommodated among schools if the curriculum is inclusive of the pupil's learning requisites and when learners are acknowledged and appropriately ministered by the entire school community (Rowley, 2002). Furthermore, gifted children necessitate extraordinary curricular and non-curricular programs beyond what regular classroom offers. They demand uncommon adaptations and learning opportunities to achieve their full potentials (Alberta Learning, 2004).

### **Level of implementation of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum as perceived by parents**

Parents observed that the implementation level of preferred curriculum models for the gifted and talented preschoolers were "evident". Parents recognized that utilization of Kindergarten gifted education curriculum preferences necessitated improvements based on the ever-increasing needs of gifted and talented preschoolers. In a concluded study, Leonard (2013) noted that parents are involved in monitoring of grades; home-room contact through email or personal; supervision by online platform; and parents' commitment to reinforce school policy at home and motivate their child/children on the vitality of their academic attainment.

In addition, parent participation affects the connection between educators, parents, and students. Irrespective of socioeconomic condition, ethnicity, and source of income, parents maybe dominant in their attitudes and contribution at home, and through their enthusiasm to find ways for the success of their child/children (Sexton, 2016). The moment preschool children cultivate non-constructive views towards learning, they are prone to hold negative outlooks about learning. Therefore, they are susceptible for underachievement and may found a misleading viewpoint of what learning is supposed to be. Due to insensitive ways, parents, too, may be a factor to the unnecessary hassle of preschool learning most especially when they compare or oppose one child against another, thereby forming senseless competition among gifted learners (Turk, 2015).

While teachers are considered second-parents to the gifted kinder pupils, advisement is meant to make personal connection between the gifted and his or her teacher who may not

be so knowledgeable about gifted attributes. Advisement allowed Kindergarten gifted education teachers get acquainted with the gifted on a personal basis. Through advisement, teacher-advisers are able to customize the curriculum for every gifted learner. Advisement program offers the chance for both teacher and learners to tackle undesirable behaviors that may impact social-emotional aspect of gifted natures which most gifted mentors are confronted with. Studies claimed that gifted learners characterized as self-sufficient, demonstrate some negative socio-emotional qualities such as poor self-confidence, perfectionism, hardship in establishing relationship, inefficiency, seclusion, and self-centeredness (Simpson, & Bragg, 2013).

Moreover, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) members promote the advancement of developmentally appropriate programs for kindergarten. Accordingly, accreditation of preschools to meet excellent standards, was undertaken. Parents are made fully aware that accredited preschools are very advantageous to children 0 to 8 years old since they offer quality and excellence in terms of educational standards and policies (Turk, 2015). Parents who were interviewed on what to consider about the preschool curriculum when enrolling their gifted child testified that they trusted the recommendations of friends and the reputation of the school among close associates (Turk, 2015; and Moore & Derman-Sparks, 2003).

In terms of curriculum methods, findings uncovered that the parents and gifted educators believed that a play-based and learner-centered preschool curriculum effectively upgrade early childhood development. Parents deemed that preschool is a mandate, and an academic preschool would prepare gifted children for the educational challenges. They are sure that recognizing letters, alphabet, counting, and writing are necessary requisite abilities for preschoolers (Turk, 2015 & West, 1993). This may signify that parents, time and again, support academic-based curricula or conventional preschools as they put more focus on enhancing scholastic proficiency and achievements. Nevertheless, there are few parents who conveyed appreciation of the modern system of academic integration (Turk, 2015; and Corter & Pelletier, 1995).

Majority of parents being interviewed consented that modern-day preschool curriculum does not suit the mental and psycho-social development needs of preschoolers. The parents' pinions are connected with Boland (2010), Marcon (2002), Saluja et al. (2002), and Sisson (2011) which declared the incompetence of present-day profit-oriented preschool institutions in adapting early childhood learning needs of gifted learners (Turk, 2015). Parent's knowledge of learning institution's curriculum is important in deciding for the preschool or kindergarten education of their gifted children. Hence, parents must be fully aware of the curricular system of the preschool establishment wherein they are to enroll their gifted kids to ensure that their children obtain the best education and learn appropriately based on their level of interests and maximum potentialities (Turk, 2015).

## **2. Perception of administrators, teachers and parents on the competency level of teachers of Kindergarten gifted education program**

Gifted education teachers have voluminous responsibilities as compared with other elementary or secondary teachers. Their duties involved several dedicated undertakings such as: (1) organizing stimulating lessons and assignments to make intelligent learners perform well at their capacity level; (2) upgrading and/or discovering advanced techniques in educating gifted

and talented preschoolers; (3) developing instructional materials and resources, and arranging with other support/service providers to inspire class time accomplishment; (4) enlightening gifted learners and their parents as regards the breakthroughs and hardships connected with exceptional aptitudes; and (5) motivating learners to cultivate self-control, accountability, productivity, creativity and leadership skills (All Education Schools, 2019). Research at both the national and international level has long advocated that the students who are gifted have specific learning needs that require teachers who are trained in gifted education and are more exposed to learners of similar ability (Wormald, 2017).

### **Perception of administrators on Kindergarten gifted education teachers' competency level based on their responsibilities**

School administrators discerned the level of competencies of Kindergarten gifted education teachers as "evident" based on the roles they are assumed to perform. Research findings imply that school heads valued the determination of Kindergarten gifted education teachers in executing their roles. In spite of this, they still recognize the necessity for teachers to advance themselves to be more proficient in performing their responsibilities as Kindergarten gifted education teachers. In a similar condition, gifted education in Australia still requires specialized pre-service and in-service training for teachers to enable them to identify gifted and talented preschoolers and may be able to provide suitable educational needs to individual learners. Based on the findings Rowley (2002), professional development for gifted education teachers was recommended to build their instructional capacities in effectively handling gifted learners and to help them cultivate a more applicable classroom atmosphere (Rowley, 2002).

For professional advancement programs, school districts developed and implement an inclusive in-service training package as additional advocacy to gifted education, thus, they have obtained award for providing more opportunities for teachers and gifted students (Cumming, 2015 & OCPS, 2013). Other studies unveiled some good points among professionally trained teachers of gifted as compared with untrained ones. These include the following: (1) superior teaching skills and sufficient employment of diverse enriching teaching strategies (2) nobler capacities of identifying gifted learners and their needs; more inspiring dispositions toward gifted pupils; (3) swifter progression of learner's performance and attainment of better learning outcomes; (4) great deal with divergent questions during class discussions which tends to cultivate higher order thinking skills (Čotar Konrad & Kukanja Gabrijelčič, 2015; Silverman, 2013; Geake and Gross, 2008; and Rizza & Morison, 2003).

From the interviews with three elementary principals, variety of ways to implement education program for gifted learners transpired as follows: (1) support of gifted accreditation programs, (2) commitment to procure educational resources for teachers, (3) promotion of prospects for professional enhancement, (4) appreciation of teachers' dedication (Cumming, 2015). However, in a concluded investigation on teacher's qualification, it was found out that most teachers were not eligible or competent to handle gifted courses in schools (Obaidli, 2006). Therefore, school administrators uphold their teachers and organization in crediting professional advancement that fosters evolution and improvement of professional practice, and eventually promote vision and goals of the school (Cumming, 2015; Murphy, Elliot, Goldring, & Porter, 2006).

## **Perception of teachers on their competency level as Kindergarten gifted education teachers**

Teachers themselves viewed the degree of their competencies as Kindergarten gifted education mentors as “evident”. These results denote that teachers to a certain degree are self-assured of their own abilities in managing of gifted and talented preschool learners. On the other hand, teachers reflected their desires for educational advancements in gifted education. In a study conducted by Proyalde (2018), it was concluded that high teachers’ competence evaluation could be credited on the educational qualification of the teachers.

Most of the teacher-participants undertaken Special Education (SPED) as their specialization, while a few of them undertook some units in SPED program and finished graduate studies, which intensified their proficiency in gifted education program (Proyalde, 2018). Tobias (2005) cited in her study that teaching profession, which entails expertise, needed to carry out a meritorious commitment of fostering continuing human development and stable improvement.

Research findings claimed that in-service training in gifted education has a vital influence on recognizable instructional abilities. In a factor analysis of the teacher observation form (TOF), the school principal noted several categorizing aspects between qualified teachers, or presently undergoing training, and inexperienced in gifted education. These attributes were as follows: (1) thoroughness in instruction; (2) reinforcement practices; (3) underscore higher order thinking skills; and (4) focus on inventiveness. Outcomes presented that expert and novice teachers handling gifted learners garnered superior scores in all cases than the amateur teachers. Hence, training was imperative (Rowley, 2002).

Research analysis discovered that most of the kinder teachers assessed their qualification in managing gifted as satisfactory. Whereas less than ten percent appraise themselves as very well qualified. However, more than one-third of teacher-participants valued themselves as unsatisfactorily qualified to work with gifted young children. Results likewise disclosed self-efficacy assessment on qualifications of teachers related to various aspects of knowing and working with the gifted. Teachers noted most (yet still moderately) proficient predominantly in the area of inspiring creativity. They considered themselves as inadequately qualified in the areas of distinguishing personal traits of the gifted learners, and special moralistic need of the work with gifted learners (Čotar Konrad, & Kukanja Gabrijelčič, 2015).

As regards source of information, findings presented that teachers commonly seek additional professional literature and other platforms through their own enterprise. Sometimes they search for information the least from their workmates (Čotar Konrad, & Kukanja Gabrijelčič, 2015).

## **Perception of parents on Kindergarten gifted education teachers’ competency level**

Parents assessed the level of competencies of Kindergarten gifted education program teachers as “evident”. Research output signifies that parents, to a certain extent, acknowledge the evidences of the competencies of Kindergarten gifted education teachers in accomplishing their roles. Parents, however, believe that teachers may still intensify their teaching abilities in providing for and in managing the learning experiences of very young gifted learners. In a similar survey, Dozza, (2014) examined the observations of parents on the competence of



teachers in gifted education. Findings underscored the value of teachers' awareness and proficiency to teach with passion. Equally notable are abilities to encourage learners, engage the family, reverse divergences and supervise the classroom efficiently and effectively.

### **3. Application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches**

There have been many strategies noted to be very effective in handling learners who are considered gifted and talented. One of these is fast-tracked learning (Kufen, 2019), which enables gifted learners to perform at a swifter speed or at an advanced grade level. Another is academic competitions which do not only test gifted learner's scholastic capacities but also provide them with opportunities to enhance their social abilities. Kufen (2019) further pointed out that gifted learners can utilize technology to research on one's field of interest. Technology may afford gifted learners the chance to work in partnership with others; synchronize their thoughts and actions together; and to exhibit their knowledge. For very young gifted learners, collaborative learning as a strategy may also benefit them not just on the intellectual aspects but more so on social values. Some of these strategies include brainstorming and cooperative learning. Nevertheless, the principle of individualized instruction put an equal importance in the education of the gifted.

#### **Perception level of administrators on the application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches**

Research findings show that administrators regarded the execution of required Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches as "evident". This research output indicates that school leaders, to some degree, recognized the effort of teachers in utilizing the required teaching approaches that support acquisition of academic and life-long skills among learners. However, administrators recorded that reading as an instructional approach was less evident. This finding implies that school principals recognized the need to enhance teachers' skills in utilizing reading for instruction to enable them to cater the growing capacities of their clientele and to promote positive attitudes as well through reading.

Kufen (2019) cited that management of Davidzon Institute for Talent Development, a charitable institute assisting gifted students, realizes that accelerated education brings about great advantages in line with academics because gifted young learners perform equally as their elder age group. Gifted learners who are accelerated likewise demonstrate superior social skills and better self-confidence as they are able to interact well with their counterparts with corresponding interest and abilities. Therefore, administrators should grasp and distinguish better practices that vouch for successful teaching and learning of gifted learners (Cumming, 2015; Boscardin, 2005). The complication of learning materials and activities must be intensified as gifted learners advance from one grade-level curriculum to the next. Likewise, the gifted child's level of independence, application and use of instructional technologies will be deepened. Supported learning prospects are to be arranged for gifted learners for them to nurture and harness higher order thinking abilities (Cumming, 2015 & CPALMS, 2015). Although majority of the teachers of gifted young children utilize various instructional technologies and strategies, there is no observance of curriculum modification to address unique learning needs (Obaidli, 2006).

## **Perception level of teachers on the application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning strategies**

In the application level of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning approaches, teachers assessed themselves in this aspect as “evident”. This outcome implies that teacher-participants realized the importance of advancing themselves with tailored fashions in teaching and learning processes of gifted and talented preschoolers. More relevant strategies using reading as a teaching approach should be given importance in as much as it was reflected only as “less evident”.

Kufen (2019) asserted that self-managed learning enables the learner to advance into his/her own knowledge and utilize higher-order-thinking skills in organizing concepts and in inferring of information. Independence in learning is also recognized as one of the most useful approaches to modify and customize learning. Acceleration likewise permits gifted learners to accomplish their tasks at quicker speed or at a higher grade level. Some students skip several grade levels or work at a faster speed to finish more than one grade level in a year.

Generally, there is significant differences on the use of methods and techniques in managing the curriculum program for learners with exceptionalities (Proyalde, 2018). Research findings of Omoogun (2009) uncovers that the instructional strategies can extract provisional learning assumptions and may be adjusted with plan subject to accessibility of more learning evidence. Mezieob (2008) assumes that discovery approach encourages active participation among gifted children during the teaching-learning process. Discovery method also empowers the learner to develop effective learning styles such as remembering and/or retrieving of facts, synthesizing, analyzing and evaluating. Jacolbia (2013) accentuated the use of learner-directed methodologies such as group activities in place of outmoded teacher-directed strategies to advance proficiency among gifted learners.

In the study of Machů (2015), it was observed that teachers employed the same sort of instructions in same-age classes, where learners are under comparable maturity level. Thirty-five percent of teacher-participants failed to modify learning activities for group tasks, and pupils with various degree of capabilities are provided with the uniform tasks. While twenty-four percent of teachers applied differentiated instructions, these are intended only for the gifted learners. Interviews done during the investigation of Sahin & Levent (2015) on knowledge and application strategies, teachers presented varied answers. The most popular strategy was using of additional reading material resources. The most unpopular strategy was securing of acknowledgement from the upper classes. Utilizing additional reading material resources, as most prevalent strategy, was least investigated, and this calls the attention of gifted learners educators (Sahin & Levent, 2015; & Özcanar and Bildiren, 2012). On the other hand, Obaidli, (2006) disclosed that teachers organized gifted classes by using several syllabuses for teaching English that is more rigorous. They also provide more advanced computer sessions. Classrooms are furnished with TVs, videos, computers and multimedia technologies, which are arranged for teachers’ instructional use (Obaidli, 2006).

Based from research assumptions, it was discovered that some teachers who underwent training focused on giftedness concerns demonstrated superior degree of instructional modifications (Machů, 2015). Teachers with limited preparation in teaching gifted learners are incapable in accommodating the learning requirements of these types of learners (Sahin & Levent, 2015; Westberg, & Daoust, 2003) and generally do not have adequate

knowledge on better ways to manage gifted learners (Sahin & Levent, 2015; & Winebrenner, 2000). It was concluded that the difficulties which teachers experienced in applying gifted education strategies were as follows: (1) limited knowledge and insufficient of in-service training; (2) congested classes; (3) more than enough workload (4) regulated budget in securing instructional materials and equipment (Sahin & Levent, 2015). Based from two distinct studies, it was ascertained that the teachers serving private institutions consider more than 45 hours of work in a week as the excessive number of hours teaching load. While teachers working in the public schools view 30 hours of service and more entirely in a week as excess of workload (Şahin, 2012 & Şahin, 2013). Therefore, teachers in this study deemed that workload in the public division is excessive (Sahin & Levent, 2015).

### **Perception level of parents on the application of preferred Kindergarten gifted education teaching and learning strategies**

Parents rated the employment of preferred teaching and learning approaches for the Kindergarten gifted education program as “evident”. This result implies that parents appreciate instructional techniques that teachers employ for the development of their children. Nevertheless, parents still anticipate progress in relation to the use of reading as an instructional strategy.

In a similar way, in Namadgi School (2016), families are made fully aware about learning progress and advancement prospects accessible to their gifted child. Namadgi considers managing gifted learners as crucial if stakeholders have to realistically design the prerequisites of suitable education for them. Thus, parents, caregivers and families are urged to: (1) take active participation in off-school activities in which they can be informed of the necessities of children with peculiar giftedness and talents; (2) be responsible for advice to school authorities as regards culturally suitable condition for their child; and (3) if budget warrants, parents may secure service from an educational psychologist for an proper assessment, verification of giftedness and to gain deeper understanding of areas of giftedness and talents (Namadgi School, 2016). Regarding actual knowledge on child development, it was observed that parents do not rely their claims on technical authentications. Often perceived are their actual practice in making decisions and their outlooks pertaining to learning styles of children. Many parents think that children be taught best through ability and exercise, by way of actual experiences, and by means of play (Turk, 2015).

Turk (2015) and Luster & Okagaki, (2005) affirmed that parents typically engage approaches in managing the learning activities of their children base from their personal observations of their children’s learning capacities and hardships. Parents’ choices of school where to enroll their gifted children are likewise influenced by school’s eminence, site, and expenditures. The growing acceptance on learning reading and writing and attraction with standardized assessment, stimulate parents to select for various school curricula. Hence, manners on how Commercial Preschool exhibited the curriculum to parents and the way they realized these, are bases when resolving on the nature of the gifted education curriculum whether be a play-based and a non-play-based curriculum (Turk, 2015).

## CONCLUSION

School administrators, teachers and parents perceived the levels of preferred curriculum employment, competency of teachers, and teaching-learning approaches for Kindergarten gifted education program of the Philippines on the “evident” level. On curriculum implementation, an “evident” degree of perception among the participants indicated that they agree on the approaches of curriculum execution which are viewed as learner-centered. Parents and administrators demonstrated their belief and recognition of teachers’ competence as they carry out their responsibilities and accountabilities in the Kindergarten gifted education program. As regards application of desired teaching and learning strategies, an “evident” level was noted from parent participants. Parents appraised tale telling as a teaching technique “very evident” in its usage. Utilizing of reading as an instructional approach requires attention since parents considered its utilization as “less evident”. Teachers only gauged the employment of teaching and learning approaches on “evident” level. This implies that they acknowledged the importance of instructional innovations to suit levels of interests, intelligence and nature of gifted kinder learners. Administrators documented the application of recommended strategies for Kindergarten gifted education program on “evident” degree. However, they noted that employing reading as instructional approach was less evident, which signifies that teachers must give more attention in developing relevant techniques in using reading as a teaching strategy.

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