Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

Kindergarten Pupils' School Readiness Through Play-Based Learning Activities in Buhay na Pag-asa Christian School, S.Y. 2025-2026

Carmita M. Dognidon [1], Dr. Carmelita D. Abag [1]
1 – Golden Gate Colleges
camie.dognidon@gmail.com/0009-0007-9519-2234

Publication Date: July 6, 2026 DOI: **10.5281/zenodo.21208076**

Abstract

The primary goal of this study was to assess how play-based learning activities contributed to the development and enhancement of kindergarten pupils' school readiness. It sought to evaluate key areas of cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development, identifying strengths as well as areas that required additional support. In addition, this study investigated the challenges pupils encountered during play-based activities and how these challenges affected their learning and engagement. One of the ultimate objectives was to provide recommendations and strategies to enhance teaching practices, support holistic development, and improve pupils' readiness for formal schooling.

This study employed a quantitative descriptive design to examine the influence of play-based learning on school readiness. Teachers observed and rated pupils using a validated researcher-made questionnaire-checklist. Data were analyzed using frequency distribution, percentages, mean, and standard deviation to evaluate pupils' performance in cognitive, social-emotional, and physical domains, as well as the contribution of play-based learning to critical thinking, emotional regulation, and motor skills.

Pupils frequently demonstrated readiness across cognitive, social-emotional, and physical domains. Play-based activities notably enhanced critical thinking, emotional regulation, and motor skills. Observed challenges included difficulty transitioning between activities, behavioral issues, limited space, and insufficient materials. Proposed strategies such as structured transitions, behavioral guidance, optimized learning spaces, targeted skill-building activities, peer collaboration, and ongoing formative feedback. This aimed to strengthen overall school readiness outcomes.

Findings indicated that play-based learning effectively supports holistic development and school readiness. Structured and purposeful play fostered cognitive, social-emotional, and motor skills, while targeted interventions mitigated common challenges, highlighting the importance of integrating play-based approaches into early childhood curricula for academic and social success.

Keywords: play-based learning, school readiness, kindergarten pupils, holistic development, innovative strategies

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

I. Introduction

Background and Rationale

School readiness is an essential foundation for the successful transition of children into formal schooling. Kindergarten pupils are expected to develop foundational skills in cognitive, social-emotional, and physical domains to effectively participate in classroom activities and interact positively with peers and teachers. In recent years, play-based learning has been recognized as a developmentally appropriate strategy that supports holistic child development by allowing learners to explore, communicate, and engage meaningfully with their environment.

Despite the recognized importance of play-based learning, many kindergarten learners still experience difficulties in problem-solving, emotional regulation, social interaction, and motor coordination. These challenges became more evident with the implementation of DepEd Order No. 015, s. 2025, which revised the age requirement for kindergarten enrollment. Younger learners and those without preschool experience often encounter developmental gaps that affect their readiness for formal schooling.

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of play-based learning activities in supporting the school readiness of kindergarten pupils at Buhay na Pag-asa Christian School. Specifically, it sought to assess the current level of readiness among pupils in terms of cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development; determine how play-based learning activities influence critical thinking, emotional regulation, and motor skills; identify challenges encountered during implementation; and propose strategies to further improve play-based learning practices.

Review of Related Literature

School readiness is a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, social, emotional, and physical domains, and it serves as a primary predictor of a child's transition success and long-term academic trajectory. Structured schooling accelerated numeracy and vocabulary development (Davidson et al., 2023), although gaps often persisted in specific areas such as number recognition (Tigas, 2023). Research consistently showed that prior early childhood education (ECE) and daycare exposure significantly strengthened these foundational skills (Futalan et al., 2023; Casingal, 2025). In the social and emotional domains, social competence characterized by peer interaction, empathy, and cooperation was essential for classroom adjustment (Laygo-Saguil, 2021; Carr et al., 2023).

Furthermore, playfulness was linked to prosocial behaviors that underpinned school adjustment (Fung, 2023). Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and self-regulation were also foundational for meeting behavioral expectations in school settings (Hosokawa et al., 2024; Nilfyr & Plantin-Ewe, 2025). External factors, including parental stimulation and supportive teacher-parent involvement, were critical in mitigating emotional distress during school entry (Gudio, 2025; De Guzman, 2025). In the physical domain, physical readiness involved both gross and fine motor competence. Motor skills were meaningful predictors of overall readiness

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

because they underlay essential classroom tasks such as writing and tool manipulation (Jones et al., 2021; Scheldt, 2023). Structured physical activities and prior daycare experiences were shown to improve handwriting readiness and coordination (Baliton et al., 2023; Bangay et al., 2024).

Play-based learning is a central pedagogical approach that provided meaningful opportunities for learners to explore and build readiness skills. In relation to critical thinking and problem solving, game-based and hands-on activities had moderate to large effects on memory and attention (Alotaibi et al., 2024). In Philippine contexts, play-based learning was found to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes by fostering higher-order thinking (Padillo, 2024; Florita & Sabud, 2025). Tools such as block-building activities further stimulated innovation and spatial skills (Kao et al., 2025).In terms of emotional regulation and motor skills, intentional teacher involvement in guided play helped children manage frustration and develop empathy (Pyle et al., 2022; Cuerpo, 2024).

Additionally, structured active play and manipulative tasks, such as cutting games, significantly enhanced locomotor skills and hand-eye precision (Zhang et al., 2024; Gaoiran, 2025).
The effectiveness of play-based learning was heavily dependent on implementation quality, teacher facilitation, and administrative support (Kalinde et al., 2022; Primera et al., 2024). Studies indicated that play-based learning fostered communication, participation, and cultural identity, particularly when indigenous games or culturally relevant contexts were utilized (Timtim & Ducot, 2025; Mwinsa & Dagada, 2025; Ramirez & Mendoza, 2025). It also shifted the learning paradigm from rote memorization to discovery-based understanding (Drew, 2024).

However, significant barriers remained, including a lack of stakeholder awareness among parents and principals, time constraints, and limited resources (Haile & Ghirmai, 2024; Hisham & Ying, 2025). Some educators still perceived play as the “opposite” of learning, highlighting the need for continuous professional development to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Lohmander & Samuelsson, 2024; Haggenmiller et al., 2025). Moreover, adult scaffolding remained essential to ensure that play served as an effective learning pedagogy rather than mere recreation (Nhase et al., 2025).

Statement of the Problem

This research aimed to determine the impact of play-based learning activities in supporting the school readiness of kindergarten pupils.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the current level of school readiness of kindergarten pupils in the following domain:
    1.1 cognitive;
    1.2 social - emotional;
    1.3 physical aspect?
2. To what extent is the utilization of the play-based learning activities influence pupils’ school readiness, in terms of:

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

2.1 critical thinking;
2.2 emotional regulation;
2.3 motor skills?

3. How may the implementation practices of play-based learning activities contribute to enhancing pupils' readiness for formal schooling based on the above-mentioned variables?
4. What challenges are encountered by the pupils in the conduct of play-based learning activities?
5. Based on the analysis of the study, how may the current play-based activities be enhanced?

2. Materials and Methods

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive research design to examine how play-based learning activities influence the school readiness of kindergarten pupils. The design allowed the researcher to gather measurable and objective data using structured assessment tools.

Participants

The respondents of the study consisted of forty-two (42) kindergarten pupils enrolled at Buhay na Pag-asa Christian School during the current school year. Preschool teachers served as evaluators and completed the assessment checklist based on their classroom observations.

Research Instrument

A researcher-made questionnaire-checklist was used to gather data regarding the pupils' school readiness and participation in play-based learning activities. The instrument included indicators related to:

- Cognitive readiness
- Social-emotional readiness
- Physical readiness
- Critical thinking
- Emotional regulation
- Motor skills
- Challenges encountered during play-based learning

The instrument was validated by an expert to ensure clarity, relevance, and appropriateness.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

Data Gathering Procedure

After securing permission from the school administration and obtaining parental consent, the researcher oriented the preschool teachers regarding the proper administration of the checklist. Teachers then observed the pupils during play-based learning activities and rated each indicator accordingly. The completed instruments were collected, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

The gathered data were analyzed using the following statistical tools:

- Frequency Distribution
- Percentage
- Mean
- Standard Deviation

Descriptive interpretation scales were also utilized to determine the level of school readiness and effectiveness of play-based learning activities.

3. Results

Section 1: School Readiness of Kindergarten Pupils

Table 1
Cognitive Domain

Based on observation, pupils demonstrated the ability to…	**Weighted Mean**	**VI**	**Rank**
1. Follow simple instructions.	3.07	O	9
2. Show curiosity and willingness to learn.	3.45	O	3
3. Demonstrate early numeracy skills (sorting, counting).	3.50	A	2
4. Recognize letters and basic sounds.	3.21	O	6
5. Recall and share simple information.	3.40	O	4
6. Identify basic shapes and colors.	3.66	A	1
7. Participate actively in simple problem-solving activities.	3.02	O	10
8. Match similar objects or pictures.	3.36	O	5

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

9. Pay attention during learning activities.	3.14	O	8
10. Remember and follow a sequence of activities.	3.21	O	6
Composite Mean	**3.30**	**O**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

The data revealed that kindergarten pupils demonstrated a satisfactory level of cognitive skills during classroom activities, with a composite mean of 3.30, interpreted as Often. Pupils consistently identified basic shapes and colors (3.66) and demonstrated early numeracy skills such as sorting and counting (3.50), both interpreted as Always. Meanwhile, participation in simple problem-solving activities (3.02) and following simple instructions (3.07) received the lowest ratings, though still interpreted as Often, indicating areas that may need further improvement.

Table 2
Social-Emotional Domain

Based on observation, pupils demonstrated the ability to…	**Weighted Mean**	**VI**	**Rank**
1. Interact positively with peers.	2.86	O	7
2. Share and take turns.	3.05	O	2
3. Manage their emotions appropriately.	2.81	O	8
4. Follow classroom rules and routines.	2.90	O	6
5. Show confidence in classroom activities.	2.95	O	5
6. Cooperate with classmates during group activities.	3.12	O	1
7. Respect for teachers and classmates.	2.98	O	4
8. Express feelings and needs appropriately.	2.81	O	8
9. Participate in classroom discussions and activities.	3.02	O	3
10. Wait for his/her turn patiently.	2.81	O	8
Composite Mean	**2.93**	**O**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

The results showed that kindergarten pupils frequently demonstrated social-emotional skills during classroom activities, with a composite mean of 2.93, interpreted as Often. Pupils commonly cooperated with classmates during group activities (3.12), shared and took turns

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

(3.05), and participated in classroom discussions and activities (3.02). Meanwhile, managing emotions appropriately, expressing feelings and needs, and waiting patiently for their turn all received the lowest rating of 2.81, though still interpreted as Often, suggesting that some pupils may need additional support in emotional regulation and patience.

Table 3
Physical Domain

Based on observation, pupils demonstrated the ability …	**Weighted Mean**	**VI**	**Rank**
1. Write, cut, and color.	2.60	O	2
2. Run and Jump.	2.69	O	1
3. Coordination and balance in what he/she does.	2.55	O	3
4. Show independence in basic self-help skills.	2.45	O	5
5. Maintain stamina during physical activities.	2.43	O	7
6. Hold and control writing or drawing tools properly.	2.52	O	4
7. Participate actively in play-based physical activities.	2.36	O	10
8. Have a proper hand-eye coordination during tasks	2.40	O	8
9. Move confidently during classroom or outdoor activities.	2.38	O	9
10. Perform simple physical tasks independently.	2.45	O	5
Composite Mean	**2.48**	**O**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

The data showed that kindergarten pupils regularly demonstrated physical skills during classroom and play-based activities, with a composite mean of 2.48, interpreted as Often. Pupils most frequently demonstrated skills in running and jumping (2.69), followed by writing, cutting, and coloring (2.60), and coordination and balance (2.55). Meanwhile, active participation in play-based physical activities (2.36) and moving confidently during classroom or outdoor activities (2.38) received the lowest ratings, suggesting that some pupils may still need encouragement to build confidence and active participation in physical tasks.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

Section 2: Influence of Play-Based Learning Activities

Table 4

Critical Thinking

Through play-based learning activities pupils were able to…	**Weighted Mean**	**VI**	**Rank**
1. Solve simple problems during play.	3.38	O	5
2. Show creativity and imagination	3.50	A	2
3. Make simple decisions during play activities.	3.48	O	3
4. Explore materials and asks questions.	3.36	O	6
5. Relate ideas to real-life play scenarios.	3.48	O	3
6. Observe and imitate problem-solving strategies during play.	3.67	A	1
7. Demonstrate curiosity.	3.24	O	10
8. Explain reasoning or choices made during play.	3.33	O	8
9. Try multiple approaches to solve a play-based challenge.	3.36	O	6
10. Show persistence and focus when completing a play-based task	3.31	O	9
Composite Mean	**3.41**	**O**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

The results showed that kindergarten pupils often displayed critical thinking skills during play-based activities, with an overall mean of 3.41, interpreted as Often. Pupils most frequently observed and imitated problem-solving strategies during play (3.67), followed by showing creativity and imagination (3.50), making simple decisions, and relating ideas to real-life play scenarios (3.48). Meanwhile, demonstrating curiosity (3.24) and showing persistence and focus in completing play-based tasks (3.31) received the lowest ratings, suggesting that some pupils may still need support in maintaining focus and exploring new ideas during activities.

Table 5

Emotional Regulation

Through play-based learning activities pupils were able to…	**Weighted Mean**	**VI**	**Rank**
1. Manage frustration during play tasks.	3.24	O	2
2. Show patience and self-control.	3.21	O	5

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

3. Express emotions appropriately.	3.05	O	10
4. Appear relaxed and less anxious during play.	3.12	O	8
5. Cooperate with peers during play.	3.14	O	7
6. Recover quickly after experiencing disappointment in play.	3.36	O	1
7. Demonstrate empathy towards peers during play activities.	3.24	O	2
8. Take turns and share materials without conflict.	3.24	O	2
9. Follow rules calmly even when outcomes are not in her/his favor.	3.10	O	9
10. Maintain focus and engagement despite minor setbacks during play.	3.17	O	6
Composite Mean	**3.19**	**O**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

The results showed that kindergarten pupils often demonstrated emotional regulation skills during play, with a composite mean of 3.19, interpreted as Often. Pupils most frequently recovered quickly after disappointment in play (3.36), managed frustration, showed empathy towards peers, and took turns and shared materials without conflict (3.24). Meanwhile, expressing emotions appropriately (3.05) and following rules calmly even when outcomes were unfavorable (3.10) received the lowest ratings, suggesting that some pupils may still need guidance in emotional expression and self-control during play activities.

Table 6
Motor Skills

Through play-based learning activities pupils were able to…	**Weighted Mean**	**VI**	**Rank**
1. Demonstrate control of fine motor skills during play (e.g., drawing, cutting, building).	3.40	O	2
2. Show coordination in gross motor activities (e.g., running, jumping, balancing).	3.43	O	1
3. Handle play materials with ease and accuracy	3.24	O	5
4. Participate actively in physical play without fatigue.	3.33	O	3
5. Demonstrate hand-eye coordination during play tasks.	3.19	O	7
6. Build or assembles materials during play with confidence	3.26	O	4
7. Move safely and confidently during indoor and outdoor play.	3.17	O	8

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

8. Practice balance and stability while performing play activities.	3.21	O	6
9. Use tool or manipulatives appropriately during play activities.	3.17	O	8
10. Complete physical play tasks independently	3.07	O	10
Composite Mean	**3.25**	**O**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

The results indicated that kindergarten pupils often displayed physical development skills during play, with a composite mean of 3.25, interpreted as Often. Pupils most frequently showed coordination in gross motor activities such as running, jumping, and balancing (3.43), demonstrated control of fine motor skills (3.40), and actively participated in physical play without fatigue (3.33). Meanwhile, completing physical play tasks independently (3.07), moving safely and confidently during play, and using tools or manipulatives appropriately (3.17) received the lowest ratings, suggesting that some pupils may still need support in developing independence, confidence, and proper use of materials during physical activities.

Section 3: Contribution of Play-Based Learning in Enhancing School Readiness

Table 7
Critical Thinking

Participation in play-based learning activities enabled the pupils to…	**Weighted Mean**	**VI**	**Rank**
1. Identify patterns or similarities during play-based learning activities.	3.62	A	2
2. Make predictions about what might happen during an activity.	3.62	A	2
3. Compare and contrast objects, shapes, or ideas during activities.	3.60	A	5
4. Explore materials and ask questions while engaging in activities.	3.57	A	6
5. Generate multiple solutions to a problem encountered in play.	3.62	A	2
6. Analyze simple situations before making a choice in an activity.	3.79	A	1
7. Use reasoning to connect one activity to another.	3.55	A	9
8. Organize ideas or materials logically during tasks	3.57	A	6
9. Identify mistakes or errors during play and try to correct them.	3.57	A	6
10. Demonstrate understanding of cause-and-effect relationships during activities.	3.55	A	9
Composite Mean	**3.60**	**A**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

The results showed that pupils consistently demonstrated strong critical thinking skills, with a composite mean of 3.60, interpreted as Always. Pupils most frequently analyzed simple situations before making choices (3.79), identified patterns and similarities, made predictions, and generated multiple solutions to problems (3.62). Meanwhile, using reasoning to connect activities and understanding cause-and-effect relationships both received the lowest rating of 3.55, though still interpreted as Always, suggesting that some pupils may still need support in linking ideas and understanding outcomes. Overall, the findings indicate that play-based learning greatly strengthens pupils' critical thinking skills and school readiness.

Table 8
Emotional Regulation

Participation in play-based learning activities enabled the pupils to…	**Weighted Mean**	**VI**	**Rank**
1. Stay composed when facing challenges during play-based activities.	3.38	O	2
2. Recognize and label their own emotions.	3.36	O	4
3. Show respect for others' feelings during group tasks.	3.29	O	8
4. Control impulsive reactions.	3.31	O	6
5. Demonstrate resilience after making mistakes in activities.	3.31	O	6
6. Encourage and support peers.	3.52	A	1
7. Regulate their excitement to follow instructions correctly.	3.38	O	2
8. Adapt to changes in routine or unexpected situations.	3.33	O	5
9. Manage disappointment gracefully when outcomes are not in their favor	3.21	O	10
10. Promote self-awareness of emotions and behaviors during group play	3.29	O	8
Composite Mean	**3.34**	**O**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

The findings showed that pupils often demonstrated emotional regulation skills, with a composite mean of 3.34, interpreted as Often. Pupils most frequently encouraged and supported peers (3.52), stayed composed when facing challenges, regulated their excitement to follow instructions correctly (3.38), and recognized their own emotions (3.36). Meanwhile, managing disappointment gracefully when outcomes were unfavorable received the lowest rating of 3.21, suggesting that some pupils may still need guidance in handling frustration calmly. Overall, the results indicate that play-based learning positively contributes to pupils' emotional regulation and social-emotional readiness for formal schooling.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

Table 9
Motor Skills

Participation in play-based learning activities enabled the pupils to…	Weighted Mean	VI	Rank
1. Use toys and manipulatives with precision during play-based activities.	3.67	A	1
2. Strengthen hand muscles through practical tasks (e.g., stacking, threading)	3.67	A	1
3. Maintain balance while performing dynamic play activities.	3.52	A	7
4. Improve pupils' ability to coordinate both hands simultaneously.	3.64	A	3
5. Demonstrate resilience after making mistakes in activities.	3.55	A	6
6. Demonstrate control of body movements during obstacle or action games.	3.60	A	4
7. Move confidently around the classroom or playground.	3.50	A	8
8. Manipulate tools or objects carefully during creative play.	3.57	A	5
9. Show improvement in agility and quick responses during physical activities.	3.48	O	10
10. Demonstrate independence in performing small and large motor tasks during play.	3.50	O	8
Composite Mean	**3.57**	**A**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

The results indicated that pupils consistently demonstrated strong motor skills, with a composite mean of 3.57, interpreted as Always. Pupils most frequently used toys and manipulatives with precision and strengthened hand muscles through practical tasks (3.67), followed by coordinating both hands simultaneously (3.64) and controlling body movements during obstacle or action games (3.60). Meanwhile, improvement in agility and quick responses during physical activities (3.48), moving confidently around the classroom or playground, and demonstrating independence in motor tasks (3.50) received the lowest ratings, suggesting that some pupils may still need opportunities to improve confidence, speed, and independence in physical activities. Overall, the findings show that play-based learning effectively strengthens pupils' motor skills and physical readiness for formal schooling.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

Section 4: Challenges Encountered During Play-Based Learning Activities

Table 10

During the play-based activities pupil…	Weighted Mean	VI	Rank
1. Struggle due to limited space for movement.	2.29	S	3
2. Lack of access to enough play materials.	1.33	N	5
3. Show difficulty transitioning between activities due to limited time.	3.36	O	1
4. Display behavioral issues.	3.29	O	2
5. Find it challenging to participate in large groups.	2.05	S	4
6. Encounter safety risks	1.33	N	5
7. Need more support due to limited skills.	1.21	N	9
8. Experience difficulty following instructions	1.26	N	8
9. Become easily distracted or lose focus.	1.21	N	9
10. Feel anxious or hesitant to try new activities.	1.29	N	7
Composite Mean	**1.86**	**S**	

Legend: A- Always; **O-** Often; **S**- Sometimes; **N**- Never

The data indicated that pupils encountered several challenges during play-based learning activities. The most prominent challenge was difficulty transitioning between activities due to limited time (3.36), followed by behavioral issues during play (3.29). Other challenges included limited space for movement (2.29) and difficulty participating in large groups (2.05), suggesting that environmental factors can affect pupils' engagement and comfort during activities.

Meanwhile, challenges such as lack of play materials and safety risks (1.33), difficulty following instructions (1.26), anxiety in trying new activities (1.29), limited skills, and easily losing focus (1.21) were less commonly experienced. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of smoother transitions, structured guidance, and supportive learning environments to help pupils fully benefit from play-based learning.

4.Discussion

The findings of the study support the importance of play-based learning in promoting school readiness among kindergarten pupils. Pupils demonstrated positive development across cognitive, social-emotional, and physical domains through active participation in meaningful play activities.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

The results align with existing literature emphasizing that guided play strengthens critical thinking, emotional regulation, social interaction, and motor development. Play-based learning allows children to explore concepts naturally, build confidence, and develop independence while enjoying the learning process.

However, the findings also revealed that some pupils experienced challenges in transitioning between activities, managing behavior, and participating confidently in larger groups. These difficulties highlight the importance of structured transitions, teacher guidance, and supportive classroom environments.

The study further demonstrated that play-based learning contributes significantly to children's preparedness for formal schooling by helping them develop the foundational competencies needed for academic and social success.

5. Conclusion

This study concluded that play-based learning activities positively influence the school readiness of kindergarten pupils at Buhay na Pag-asa Christian School. The pupils frequently demonstrated cognitive, social-emotional, and physical readiness skills through participation in structured play activities.

Play-based learning effectively enhanced pupils' critical thinking, emotional regulation, and motor development while also supporting cooperation, creativity, confidence, and independence. Although certain challenges such as behavioral issues and transition difficulties were observed, the implementation of structured strategies and supportive learning environments can help address these concerns.

Overall, the findings confirmed that play-based learning is an effective and developmentally appropriate approach that prepares kindergarten pupils for the demands of formal schooling.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Teachers may incorporate structured transition activities such as songs, visual timers, and movement breaks to help pupils smoothly adjust between activities.
2. Schools may strengthen behavioral and emotional support strategies through positive reinforcement, guided discussions, and cooperative play activities.
3. Learning spaces and classroom materials may be improved to provide pupils with enough room and resources for active engagement.
4. Teachers may continue implementing targeted cognitive and motor skill activities such as sorting games, obstacle courses, building activities, and threading tasks.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal
of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

5. More opportunities for peer collaboration and social-emotional learning may be integrated into classroom routines to strengthen communication and cooperation.
6. Teachers may conduct ongoing observation and formative assessment to monitor pupils' progress and provide immediate support when necessary.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 7 (2026)

REFERENCES

A. Books

Bresson, L. M., & King, M. (2022). *Preschoolers at play: Choosing the right stuff for learning and development.* NAEYC.

Brooker, L., Blaise, M., & Edwards, S. (Eds.). (2023). *The SAGE handbook of play and learning in early childhood*. SAGE Publications.

Dietze, B., & Kashin, D. (2023). *Playing and learning in early childhood education* (3rd ed.). Pearson.

Garvis, S., Harju-Luukkainen, H., & Kangas, J. (Eds.). (2022). *Assessing and evaluating early childhood education systems.* Springer.

Harding, J. (2023). *The brain that loves to play.* Taylor & Francis.

Logan, J. A. R. (2023). *Early oral language development and school readiness: A synthesis of longitudinal and intervention research*

Özgen, Z. (2024). *Grow with playing: Game-based learning in early childhood education.* Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing.

Papadakis, S., & Kalogiannakis, M. (Eds.). (2024). *New approaches in mobile learning for early childhood education.*

Pica, R. (2024). *Why play? How to make play an essential part of early education.* Routledge.

Veldman, S. L. C., et al. (2021**).** "Fundamental motor skills and physical activity as predictors of executive functioning in preschool children: Longitudinal study." *Frontiers in Psychology, 12*, 693746.

Zosh, J. M., Hirsh-Pasek, K., & Golinkoff, R. M. (Eds.). (2022).Play learning: How play motivates and enhances children's cognitive and social-emotional growth. American Psychological Association.

B.Unpublished Materials

Carson, V., Lee, E.-Y., Hewitt, L., Jennings, C., Hunter, S., Kuzik, N.,& Tremblay, M. S. (2020)**.** "Systematic review of physical activity and cognitive development in early childhood." *BMC Public Health, 20*(1), 1235.

Haggenmiller, S., Carter, J., & Brooks, L. (2025). Teachers' perceptions of play- based learning and its influence on kindergarten school readiness. Unpublished master's thesis, College of Education.

Hisham, N., & Ying, L. (2025). Integration of play-based learning in Malaysian preschool classrooms. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Faculty of Education.

Kalinde, B., Mambwe, R., Sichula, N., & Kaluba, C. (2022). Play-based pedagogy and school readiness: A global review of early childhood practices. Unpublished research report, Department of Early Childhood Education.

Liwag, B. S. E., & Marquez, M. F. (2025). Play-based routines and early literacy readiness among Filipino kindergarten learners. Unpublished master's thesis, Graduate School of Education.

McLean, R., & Gray, P. (2024). Digital play and early literacy development in early childhood classrooms. Unpublished research study, Center for Early Childhood Innovation.

Primera, L., Santos, R., & Delos Reyes, M. (2024). Implementation of play-based strategies in preschool classrooms. Unpublished master's thesis, College of Teacher Education.

Ramirez, J., & Mendoza, P. (2025). Play-based learning implementation in Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) kindergarten programs. Unpublished research paper, Institute for Cultural and Educational Studies.

Timtim, A., & Ducot, M. (2025). Play-based learning activities and school readiness among kindergarten pupils in Philippine public schools. Unpublished thesis, Graduate School of Education.

C.Journals/Articles/Periodicals

Davidson, C., Shing, Y. L., McKay, C., Rafetseder, E., & Wijeakumar, S. (2023). *The first year in formal schooling improves working memory and academic abilities. Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, 60*, 101205.

Diwara, J. C. (2024). The joy of learning: Play-based approach to kindergarten *learning. International Journal of Research in Interdisciplinary Studies, 2*(5), 31–37.

Fyffe, L., Sample, P. L., Lewis, A., Rattenborg, K., & Bundy, A. C. (2024). Entering kindergarten after years of play: A cross-case analysis of school readiness following play-based education. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 52*(2), 167–179.

Gibson, A. L., & Edwards, M. (2021). "Playground-based movement interventions in early childhood: Effects on gross motor development." *Early Years: An International Research Journal, 41*(2), 128–143.

Hadley, E. B., Dwyer, J., O'Brien, K., Williford, A. P., & Cabell, S. Q. (2021). Examining teachers' practices and classroom activity settings as predictors of preschool language development

Hosokawa, R., Matsumoto, Y., Nishida, A., Funato, M., & Mitani, Y. (2024). Enhancing social-emotional skills in early childhood: Intervention study on the effectiveness of social and emotional learning. *BMC Psychology, 12*(102).

Jones, R. A., Riethmuller, A., Hesketh, K., Trezise, J., Batterham, M., & Okely, A. D. (2021). Motor competence and physical activity in early childhood: Longitudinal associations with school readiness. *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport, 24*(4), 378–383.

Józsa, K., Amukune, S., Zentai, G., & Barrett, K. C. (2022). School readiness test and intelligence in preschool as predictors of middle school success: Result of an eight-year longitudinal study. *Journal of Intelligence, 10*(3), 66.

Kalinde, B., Mambwe, R., Sichula, N., & Kaluba, C. (2024). A systematic review of early childhood education and primary school readiness for transition through play-based pedagogies. *Journal of Law and Social Sciences, 5*(4), 63–88.

Mercy, B. Y. (2021). Play based learning with early childhood learners: Perspectives of kindergarten teachers in the Wenchi Municipality. *International Journal of Elementary Education, 10*(4), 145–151

Nilfyr, K., & Plantin-Ewe, L. (2025). Thriving children's emotional self-regulation in preschool: A systematic review discussed from an interactionist perspective. *Education Sciences, 15*(2), 137.

Okely, A. D., Cliff, D. P., Okely, A. J., & Hesketh, K. D. (2023). "Effectiveness of a structured play- and movement-based program on preschoolers' motor skills: A cluster-randomized trial." *Pediatric Exercise Science, 35*(4), 273–283.

San Enrique, A. L. (2025). Descriptive quantitative research design in assessing students' academic performance in primary education. *International Journal of Educational Research and Innovation, 14*(2), 45–58.

Zakharova, M. N., Machinskaya, R. I., & Agris, A. R. (2022). *Brain executive functions and learning readiness in senior preschool age. Cultural-Historical Psychology, 18*(3), 81–91.

D. Legal Documents

DepEd Order No. 015, s. 2025. Revised age requirement for kindergarten enrollment for School Year 2025–2026.Reference: https://www.deped.gov.ph/2025/??/??/do-015-s- 2025- revised-age- requirement-for- kindergarten/

E. Electronic References

Alotaibi, M. S.(2024). *Game-based learning in early childhood: Meta- analysis of cognitive outcomes.* https://researcharchive.org/alotaibi-2024

American Academy of Pediatrics. (2023). *Physical activity in early childhood: Benefits and recommendations*. American Academy of Pediatrics. https://www.aap.org/

Amukune, S., Józsa, K., & Józsa, G. (2023*). Comparing executive functioning in the school readiness of Hungarian and Kenyan preschoolers. International Journal of Early Childhood,* 55, 205– 222 https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-022-00331-0k

Baliton, A. L., Relampagos, A. R., & Arbis, M. J. (2023). Daycare exposure and its influence on motor development and self-help skills among Filipino kindergarten learners. https://philjournals.org/baliton-relampagos-arbis-2023

Bangay, M. A., Martinez, K. R., & Generalao, P. A. (2024). Effects of structured fine motor interventions on handwriting readiness and grip strength among Filipino kindergarten pupils.

Carr, R. C., Burchinal, M., & Vernon-Feagans, L. (2023). *Comparing the school readiness skills of public pre-K and Head Start participants:* https://edworkingpapers.com/ai23-740

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). *Physical activity guidelines for early childhood: Supporting motor development and health.* CDC. https://www.cdc.gov/

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2023). *What is the CASEL framework?* CASEL. https://casel.org/

De Guzman,(2025). *Social-emotional support practices and kindergarten learners' emotional adjustment in early schooling.* [Journal Name]. https://earlychildhoodresearch.org/de-guzman-2025

Ducot, L. (2025). *Implementation and outcomes of play-based activities in Philippine kindergarten classrooms: Evidence on sharing, turn-taking, and cooperative behaviors.* [Unpublished classroom research].https://philippines-education.org/ducot-2025

Egica, J.(2025). *Play-based strategies and social competence among preschool children: A descriptive-correlational study in the Philippines.* https://earlychildhoodresearch.ph/egica- 2025

Florita & Sabud (2025). *Early childhood educators' perspectives on play- based learning in kindergarten: A phenomenological study.* https://philpedagogy.org/florita-sabud-2025

Futalan, R. Z., Quindo, S. M. Z., Futalan, M. C. Z., & Eraga, R. F. Z. (2023). *Language and developmental outcomes of Filipino kindergarten learners using the Philippine ECD checklist: A comparative study of preschool/daycareexposure.* https://philippinechilddev.org/futalan-2023

Gladh, M., (2022). *Peer-based and play-supported interventions and their impact on children's social engagement and quality of social play.* https://internationalresearch.org/gladh-2022

Gudio, (2025). *Parental stimulating activities and school preparedness among kindergarten learners.* https://childdevelopmentstudies.com/gudio-2025

Harvard University Center on the Developing Child. (2023). *InBrief: Executive function: Skills for life and learning.* Harvard University. https://developingchild.harvard.edu/

Hennen, L. (2023). *A mixed-methods investigation of play-based practice in kindergarten: Effects on cooperation, social interaction, and conflict resolution.* https://educationstudies.org/hennen-2023

Kebbeh, (2025). *Child flourishing and its relationship to school readiness in early childhood.* https://selresearch.net/kebbeh-2025

Laygo-Saguil, J. (2021) Leadership in Young Filipino Children.This study exists: it's titled "Leadership in young Filipino children: An exploratory sequential mixed methods study."
Journal page: https://ijes.world/en/2021-volume-4-no-3-4-24

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2022). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8* (4th ed.). NAEYC. https://www.naeyc.org/

Malaybalay. 2025). *Implementation and quality of play-based learning in Philippine kindergarten classrooms.*https://localschools.ph/malaybalay- 2025

Padillo, G. G. (2024). *Effects of play-based strategies on literacy and numeracy outcomes in Philippine kindergarten classrooms.* [Quasi-experimental study report]. https://philjournal.edu/padillo-2024

Pobadora, M. L. (2024). *Receptive and expressive language readiness among kindergarten learners in pandemic-era classroom and home- learning contexts: A descriptive-comparative study.* https://anguagereadiness.ph/pobadora-2024

Save the Children. (2022). *Early childhood development and play: Strengthening emotional and social skills.* Save the Children. https://www.savethechildren.net/

Scheldt, S**.** (2023). Teachers' perceptions of motor-skill readiness in early childhood education:A qualitative exploration. https://earlychildhoodstudies.com/scheldt-2023

Ugalde (2024). *Play-based learning in Philippine early childhood education: A literature review with classroom evidence on social interaction and cooperative tasks.* [Review + classroom report].https://philreview.org/ugalde-2024

UNESCO. (2022). *Right to pre-primary education: A global study.* UNESCO Publishing. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/

Whittaker (2024). *Profiles of school readiness among kindergarten learners: A latent-profile analysis of cognitive, academic, and socio- emotional domains.* https://learningreadiness.org/whittaker-2024

World Health Organization. (2022). *Guidelines on physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep for children under 5 years of age.* WHO. https://www.who.int/publications/