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An Investigation of Teachers' Beliefs and Practices Regarding a Quality Preschool Classroom

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Abstract

This research study surveyed preschool teachers and aids at one public PK-5th grade elementary school. The administered survey included questions informed by both the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Additional data collected consisted of classroom observations of current preschool teachers at work during a 25-35-minute time period. The research lasted one month and consisted of multiple components including surveys and observations. The data from the study suggests that preschool teachers and aids possessed a mastery of knowledge surrounding factors important for quality early childhood classrooms. Specifically, the teachers and aids excelled in their physical environment, classroom environment, and instructional supports. The presence of these classroom factors were more evident through utilization of the observation protocol instrument, than with the survey, as these factors were implemented in the classroom. The data within this study suggests that the teachers met the standards outlined within ECERS and CLASS.

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Introduction

Background of the Problem

The research on preschool classrooms is valuable to Elementary Education and Childhood Education degree programs because creating a classroom that promotes and fosters student engagement and growth begins with the environment the teachers create. The factors of classroom environment, classroom opportunity, and physical environment, as well as instructional supports for students correspond to real time teaching and the possibility for future student success.

According to McClelland, Acock, and Morrison (2007), the short-term impacts of skills taught in the beginning of preschool have been shown to predict increased literacy, vocabulary, and math skills by the end of preschool (McClelland et al., 2007; Welsh, Nix, Blair, Bierman, & Nelson, 2010), and math and reading in kindergarten (Blair & Razza, 2007). These studies suggested that a preschool education improves immediate school readiness, as well as impacts long-term school success. Additionally, Vygotsky (1962) claimed that adults play a crucial role in expanding and supporting children's play, especially regarding fostering peer interactions. Stanton-Chapman and Hadden (2011) then cited that in order to be an effective teacher, one has to know what makes students succeed and in order to do that one has to analyze the factors that make a quality preschool classroom. It is then the teacher's role to foster such a classroom through providing instructional supports to students and creating a physical environment that is inviting and age appropriate.

Preschool teachers are charged with an important role, as the early developmental years are critical periods of growth for children (Pekdogan & Akgül, 2018). Teachers can foster academic, cognitive, and physical growth, such as helping to develop fine and gross motor skills,

as well as influence the development of executive functioning (EF) and social emotional (SE) skills (Weiland & Yoshikawa, 2013). Executive functioning encompasses cognitive processes thought to support academic achievement through top down control of attention and behavior (Wenz-Gross, Yoo, Upshur, & Gambino, 2018). Similarly, Shaul and Schwartz (2013) define EF as a variety of cognitive processes involved in controlling and coordinating information, which then assist goal-oriented behavior. Many kindergarten teachers have reported that these social and regulatory behaviors, as well as attention skills, are equally as important as content skills in promoting academic success (Wenz-gross et al., 2018). Thus, having a quality preschool classroom involves the teacher, the instruction, and the environment. When all of these factors are combined, the students are more likely to be successful in the short-term and long-term.

Overall, supporting school readiness in an educational setting, including preschool, helps develop creative thinking skills, which improves self-regulation, academic achievement, communication skills, and peer relationships (Pekdogan & Akgül, 2018). Teachers are constantly learning about best practices through professional development and personal research. By studying the beliefs and practices of preschool teachers, it can be determined how classroom quality correlates to these best practices. In order to be an effective teacher, one needs to be able to identify a quality classroom that enables and fosters student success.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that make a quality preschool classroom and their prevalence. This study evaluated what methods teachers were utilizing to elevate their classroom in regard to their classroom environment, classroom opportunity and physical environment, and instructional supports. Determining the factors of a quality preschool classroom and their prevalence in one public PK-5 grade elementary school classroom helped the

school identify areas in which their classrooms were exceeding. Additionally, it assisted preservice and preschool teachers in identifying ways in which facets of the Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) were most prevalent in their classroom environments.

The results of the survey and classroom observation were significant because quality preschool classrooms help foster academic, cognitive, physical, EF, and, SE growth in young children. It was important to know what factors teachers considered influential to student growth and how they were including these factors in their classrooms.

Literature Review

This literature review focuses on the varying classroom factors that influence student development during typical preschool ages. The purpose of this section is to review literature that highlights the role of preschool teachers. Finally, this literature review informed the content and structure of the survey tool involved in this study.

A study conducted by Stanton-Chapman and Hadden (2011) included an analysis on how preschool teachers could encourage peer interactions, for improving students' SE skills. Play was listed as the most important thing teachers could encourage as, "play allows preschoolers to use creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, motor, cognitive, language, and socioemotional abilities" (Ginsberg, 2007, p.183). Pekdogan and Akgül (2018) also claimed that important school readiness skills were associated with daily life skills and having adequate social communication skills which supports the previous findings.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (2009) stated that there should be positive relationships among children and adults. In addition, NAEYC claimed that teachers should encourage self-worth amongst their students, as well as foster their

ability to contribute as a responsible community member. NAEYC's curriculum standard states that a teacher's well-planned curriculum, a guide to support teachers and administrators, should promote learning and development in social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and language areas (NAEYC, 2009). Finally, the NAEYC (2009) stated that there should be a safe and healthy physical environment for the child, including both an indoor and outdoor component that is organized and properly equipped.

Hatfield and Pianta (2013) claimed that higher scores on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), created by Harms, Clifford, and Cryer in 1980 and revised in 1998, will likely lead to more positive child development outcomes in areas considered important for school readiness and success. The ECERS tool allows for rating a child's developmental outcomes, including language development, personal care, and classroom space. Additionally, Hatfield and Pianta (2013) discussed the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), created by Pianta, LaParo, and Hamre (2008), which focuses on teacher-child interactions, focusing on classroom organization, emotional support, and instructional support. CLASS is based on developmental theory and research which suggest interactions between children and adults are primary mechanisms of their development and learning (Pianta et al., 2008). Hatfield and Pianta (2013) concluded that these components contribute to students' social and academic development.

Reynolds, Temple, Ou, Arteaga, and White (2011) claimed that preschool participants are more likely to experience several positive long-term outcomes than individuals who did not attend preschool, including lower arrest rates, increased high school graduation rates, and higher socioeconomic status. Reynolds et al.'s study indicated that since preschool increases long-term

positive impacts on students, that preschool teachers need to be deliberate in their actions, for creating appropriate classroom environments conducive to these increased outcomes.

Methodology

Setting

This study's on-site research was conducted in one public PK-5 grade elementary school during two months in the Fall of 2019. During the 2019 academic year, the school received Title 1 funding, and had approximately 620 students enrolled. Their preschool classrooms have a maximum capacity of 20 students and each classroom has one teacher and one aid. This study surveyed 6 preschool professionals, compromising of both the teachers and aids, by using factors from CLASS and ECERS which were categorized and put into statement form. The survey was distributed to teachers on October 10, 2019. Teachers and aids had one week to complete the survey. Classroom observations were conducted on October 22, 2019 and October 23, 2019.

Participants

This study involved an evaluation of participating preschool professionals in one public PK-5 grade elementary school. There were four classrooms, each consisting of one teacher and one aid, who were selected to participate. Of the eight professionals, six agreed to participate in this study. One teacher was on maternity leave and one aid declined in participating, as it was her first year working at this school (see Figure 1).

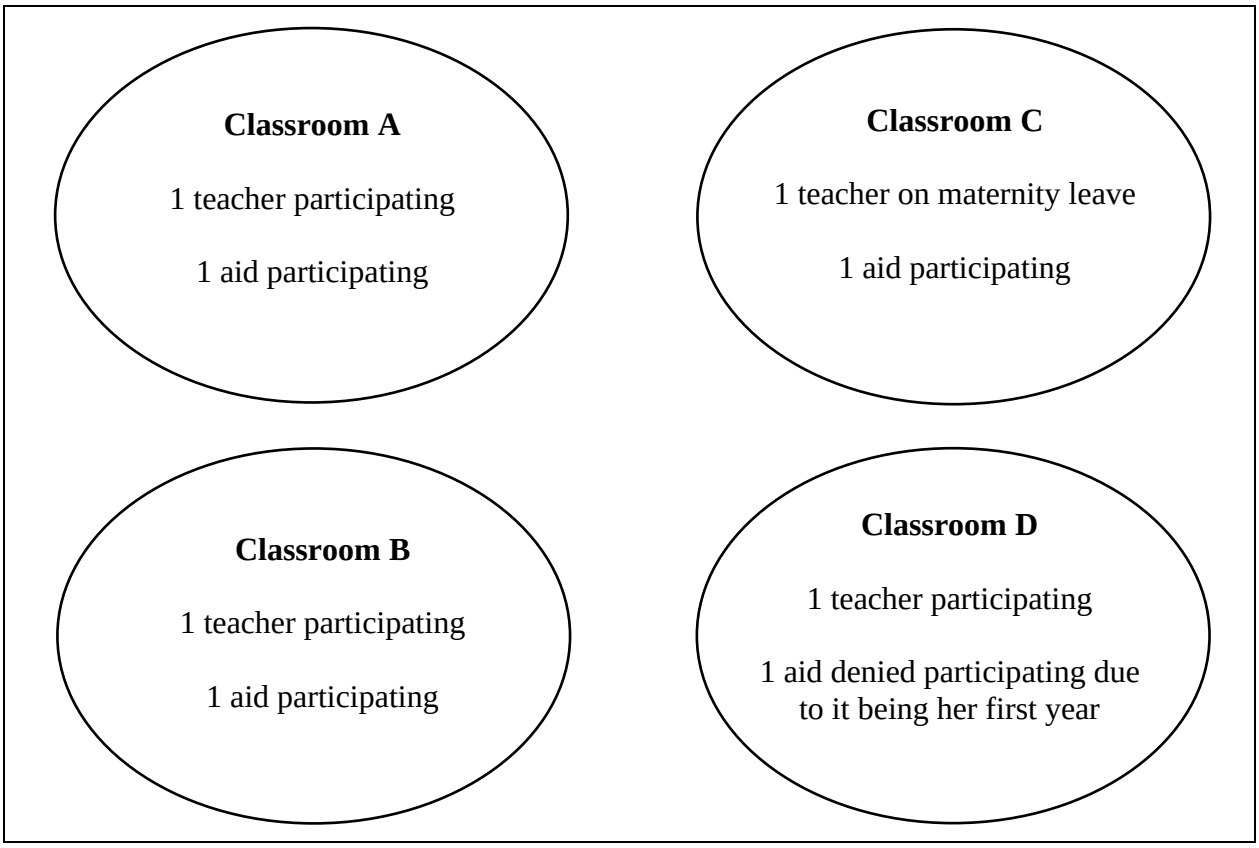


Figure 1. Study Participants from 4 Pre-K Classrooms

Data Collection

Survey. The survey was completed by six preschool professionals the school, utilizing a Google form that allowed for anonymous completion, to protect the identity of each participant. All survey responses were stored on a password protected account. The survey included questions adopted from ECERS and CLASS, focusing on three categories: classroom environment, the instructional supports provided to students, and classroom opportunity, paired with the physical environment. The survey tool (Appendix A) consisted of question responses designed with a 7-point Likert scale. ECERS included questions on the topics of space and furnishings, personal care routines, language reasoning, activities, interaction, program structure,

and parents and staff (Harms et al., 1998). Additionally, CLASS measured features of teacher-child interactions (Pianta et al., 2008).

Observation. Observations were conducted in the four participating preschool classrooms, utilizing the survey as an observation protocol (Appendix B), where the researcher considered the facets of the survey when noting whether evidence of facets existing in each classroom or not. If an element was present from the survey, the researcher placed a check mark by that item on the survey tool, indicating that they had observed this directly. The protocol allowed for a running record method to keep track of student and teacher behaviors, interactions, and language use, as well as recorded evidence of the physical space.

Results

Survey Data

Administration of data. Surveys were sent to teachers and aids on October 10, 2019 and they had one week to complete the survey. After receiving anonymous data from the six participating teachers and aids, the researcher entered the data into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Data analysis were performed utilizing this document. The average for each of the survey questions asked as well as the total average score for the overall categories. The highest score possible was a 7 as the survey utilized a 7 point Likert scale. Within the scale, a 1 was the item not being present in the classroom at all, a 4 was neutral, and a 7 was the item being extremely present in the classroom.

Classroom observations were conducted on October 22, 2019 and October 23, 2019. After collecting data through an observation protocol, the researcher entered the data into a separate tab within the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The data were entered for each classroom using a letter code to represent them. Of the average for each of the survey questions as well as

the total average score for the overall categories, the highest score possible was a 4 as there were 4 classrooms observed. If the researcher spotted the designated item in none of the classrooms, then the item would receive an average of 0. If the item was seen in all of the classrooms, then the item would receive an average of 4.

Survey results. A total of 6 preschool teachers and aids were surveyed. The average score for each question asked under each category is shown in Tables 1, 2, and 3. Category 1 includes 9 questions with each question mean listed above the question. Categories 2 and 3 each had 7 questions with the question mean listed above the question. The total average score for each category of questions is show in Figure 4. Regarding the teacher self-assessment survey, the classroom environment had an average of 6.76 points out of an available 7; the instructional points had an average of 6.5 points, and the physical environment had an average of 6.95 points. The across category average is 6.73 out of an available 7.

Figure 1

Responses from Teacher Self-Assessment Survey

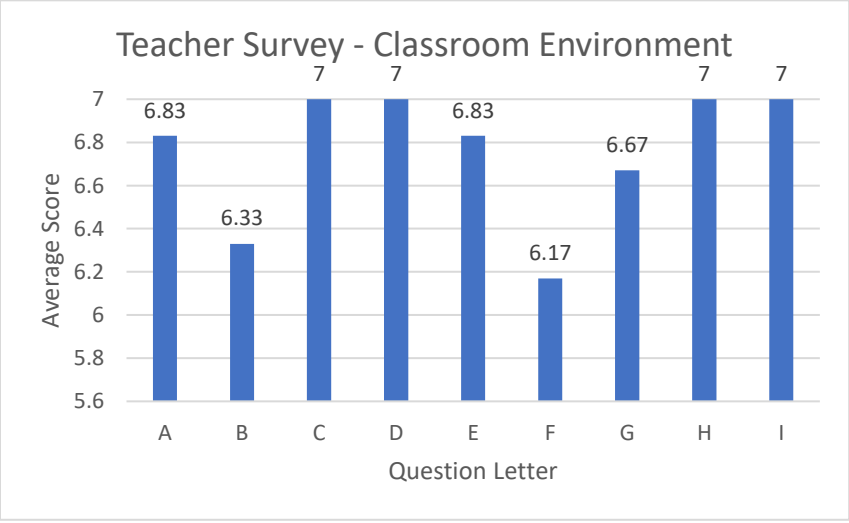


Figure 2

Responses from Teacher Self-Assessment Survey

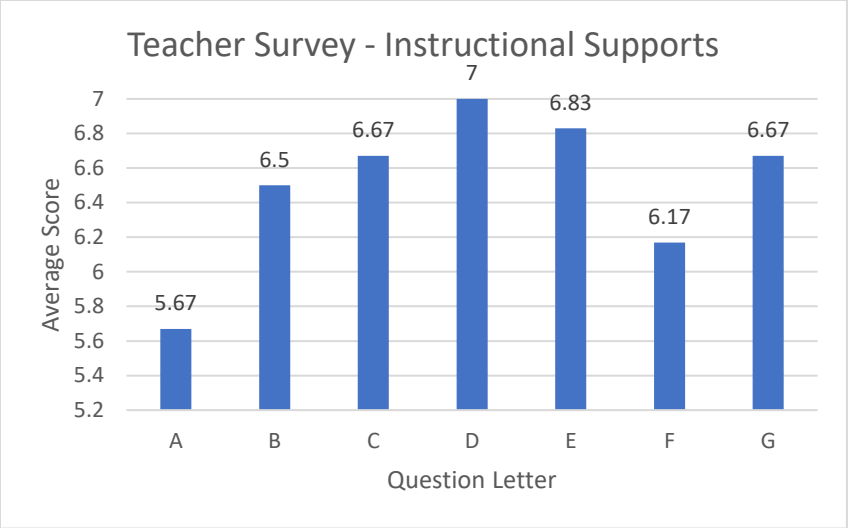


Figure 3

Responses from Teacher Self-Assessment Survey

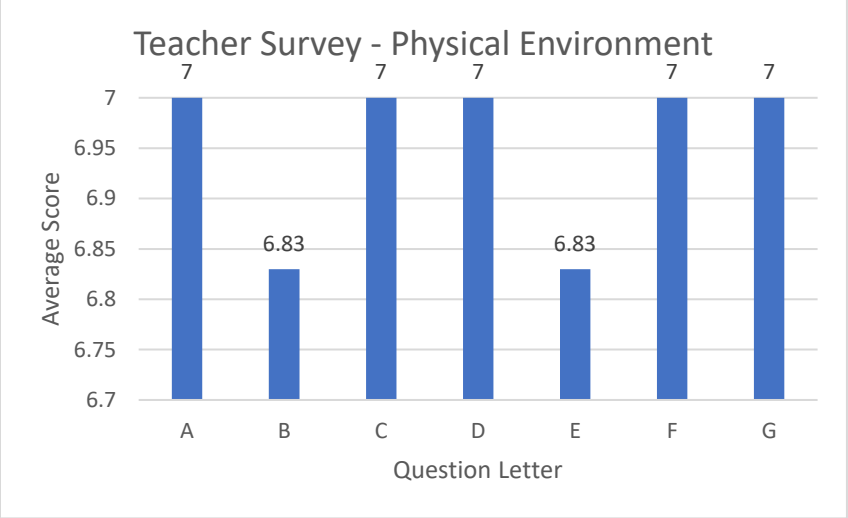
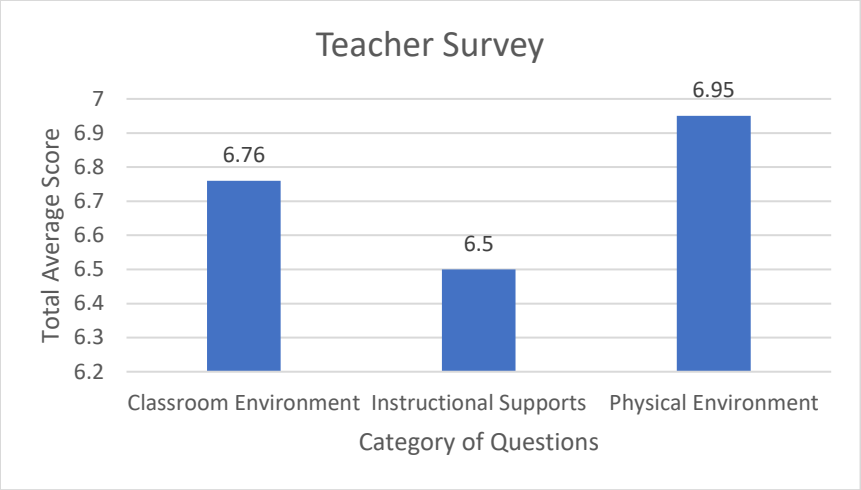


Figure 4

Responses from Teacher Self-Assessment Survey



Classroom observation data. Four classrooms were observed using an observation protocol. The protocol allowed for a running record method to keep track of student and teacher behaviors, interactions, and language use, as well as recorded evidence of the physical space Figures 5, 6, and 7 illustrate the average score for each category of questions. The total average score for each category of questions is shown in Figure 8. Regarding the classroom observation, the classroom environment had an average of 3.44 points out of an available 4; the instructional points had an average of 2.86 points, and the physical environment had an average of 4 points. The across category average is 3.43 out of an available 4.

Figure 5

Responses from Classroom Observation Protocol

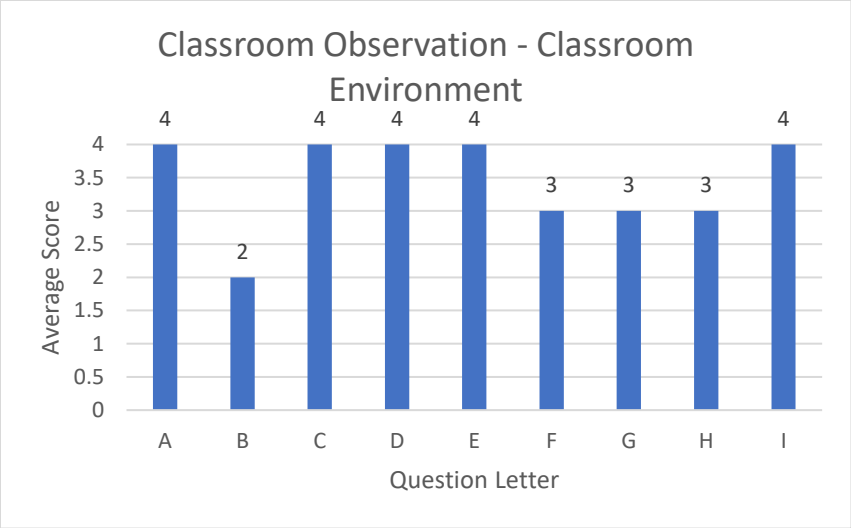


Figure 6

Responses from Classroom Observation Protocol

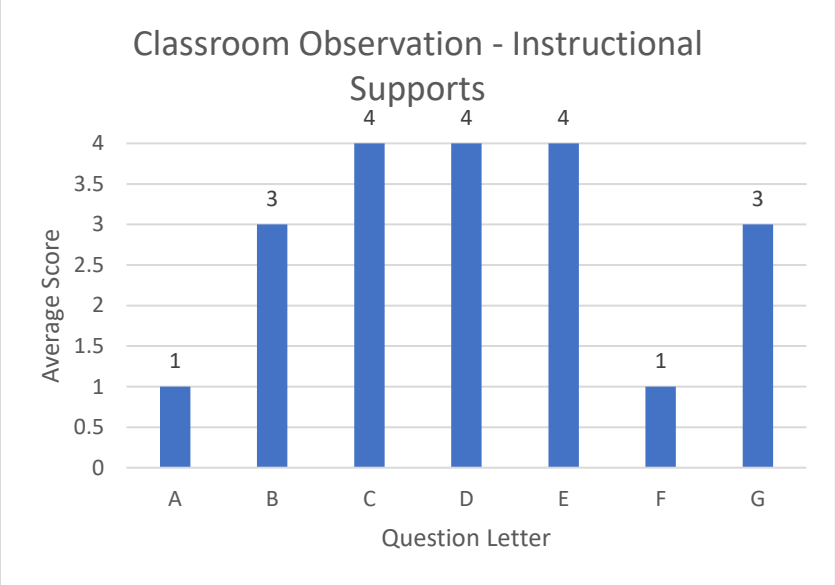


Figure 7

Responses from Classroom Observation Protocol

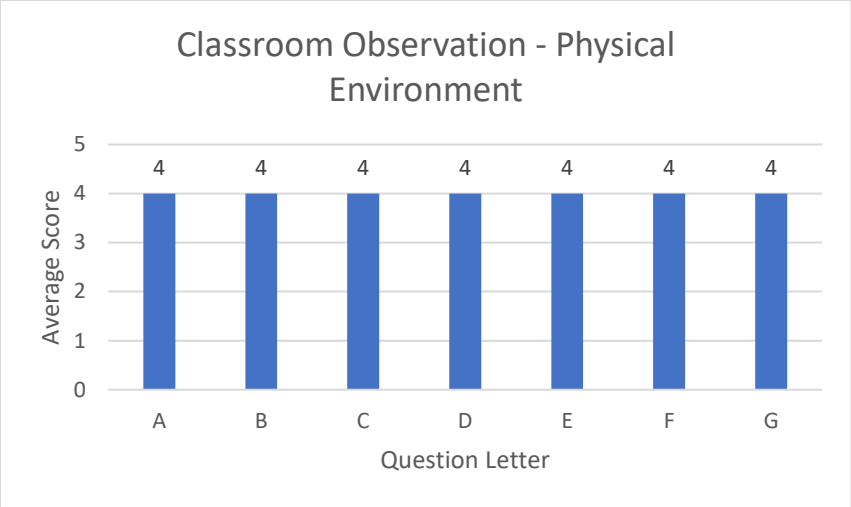
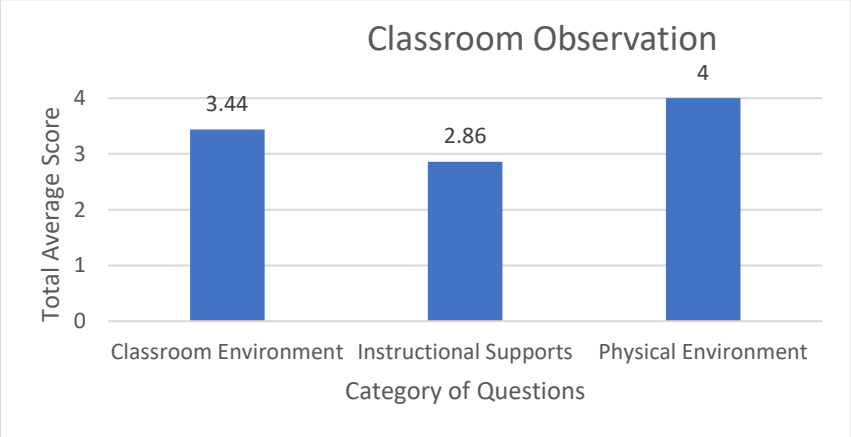


Figure 8

Responses from Classroom Observation Protocol



In addition to the average scores for each category, a description of the events/activity/item that documented the item's presence in the classroom was recorded. Each classroom protocol documented direct quotes from the teachers and aids, as well as direct observations of evidence for categorical elements present within each classroom, including classroom environment, instructional supports, and physical environment. Each category consisted of a list of questions that were based specifically on that category. Table 1 below

documents each category, corresponding individual questions, and the identified evidence from each category. All teachers, aids, and students have been given a pseudonym.

Table 1

Responses from Classroom Observation Protocol

Categories	Evidence
Classroom Environment a) In my classroom, there is an established classroom culture.	All classrooms observed had an established classroom culture. Classroom A, B, C, D – family wall, birthday chart, well wish wall Classroom B, D – the "proud wall" to display student work
Classroom Environment b) In my classroom, there is regard for student perspectives.	Classroom A – "June, can you see that she is playing with blocks too? How would you feel if she moved your blocks?" Classroom B – "If you don't like [when your friend touches you], ask them to please not do that."
Classroom Environment c) In my classroom, peer interaction in encouraged.	All classrooms observed encouraged peer interactions. Classroom A – "Hey May, would you like to play paint with Liam?" Classroom B – "I love you" classroom greeter Classroom C – "You guys can look at the book together." Classroom D – "Let's work together now, like a team."
Classroom Environment d) In my classroom, student and teacher interaction is encouraged.	All classrooms observed encouraged student and teacher interactions. Classroom A – "Where are we going to go? I'll play with you." Classroom B – "Will you read this with me?" Classroom C – "Wow! What did you draw there? Can you tell me?" Classroom D – "Do you have any questions about your blocks? I'll play with you."
Classroom Environment	All classrooms observed demonstrated a variety of behavior management methods.

e) In my classroom, I utilize a variety of behavior management methods.	Classroom A, B, C, D – classroom jobs, redirecting behavior, morning commitments Classroom B – "Your job is something you do to help your friends today." Classroom D – noticing and complimenting desired behaviors, "This table is doing a great job with their inside voices."
Classroom Environment f) In my classroom, respect is established amongst students.	Classroom A – "Can you say, 'please don't hit my blocks?' instead of getting mad at your friend." Classroom B – "I love you" classroom greeter Classroom C – "Jules, you can't play there without moving your nametag." "It's ok, I'll move it for her so we can play."
Classroom Environment g) In my classroom, respect is established between the teacher and students.	Classroom A – "Mrs. Waters, I can't clean up." "That's ok, I saw you trying to help, thank you for trying." Classroom B – "My job is to keep it safe; your job is to help keep it safe." "Good morning Mrs. Cobb, I missed you." Classroom C – "Uh, oh, Ms. Bog, can you help me clean this up please?"
Classroom Environment h) I am sensitive to my student's concerns and emotional needs.	Classroom A – calming corner Classroom B – "When something is bugging you, you can say…" "Colton, remember to take a deep breath, lets breathe together." Classroom C – "I love you, it's ok, as a family we support each other."
Classroom Environment i) I am sensitive to my students' physical needs.	All classrooms observed demonstrated a sensitivity to students' physical needs. Classroom A, B, C, D – bathroom access, low chairs, sensory centers, small play centers
Instructional Supports a) I utilize quality student feedback.	Classroom A – responds to student questioning, asks students to elaborate.
Instructional Supports b) I utilize instructional dialogue.	Classroom A – "Roy, you can be the doctor, ask Lizzy to be the patient." "I'll play patient too, check my eyes." "Where do you get shots?" Classroom B – "Say, 'excuse me' please."

	Classroom D – "Say, 'I was playing here Carson.'" "You need to ask to play. Say, 'can I play after you?'"
Instructional Supports c) I utilize strategies that foster content knowledge.	All classrooms observed utilized strategies that foster content knowledge. Classroom A, B – centers, counting of students at school today Classroom C – counting words, nursery rhymes Classroom D – repeated readings, manipulatives, class charts
Instructional Supports d) I utilize a number of strategies to engage students.	All classrooms observed utilized strategies to engage students. Classroom A, B – learning in centers, repeated readings with new texts for each topic Classroom C – teacher questioning in centers Classroom D – nursery rhymes
Instructional Supports e) I utilize books as a foundational base of instruction.	All classrooms observed utilized books as a foundational base of instruction. Classroom A – books on senses, emotions, and seasons for students to read around the classroom Classroom B – morning reading time in centers and as a whole class Classroom C, D – whole class instruction using books
Instructional Supports f) I provide opportunities that foster analysis and reasoning skills.	Classroom A – Students were building bridges with blocks and driving cars across them. "Why did one [car] make it across but one fell?" "What about [the car's] size? Is it heavy or light?"
Instructional Supports g) I provide opportunities for students to expand vocabulary.	Classroom A – "Ms. Lye is our counselor; a counselor is someone…" Classroom B – "This week, we will be talking about sound. What is sound?" Classroom C – labels on colors and objects around the classroom
Physical Environment a) Students have the opportunity to free play.	All classrooms observed gave students the opportunity to free play.

	Classroom A, B, C, D – centers with blocks, Legos, shaving cream, reading, writing, discovery tables, sensory tables, name trace, coloring, and outside time
Physical Environment b) Students have the opportunity to work on fine and gross motor skills.	All classrooms observed gave students the opportunity to work on fine and gross motor skills. Classroom A, B, C, D – centers and outside time
Physical Environment c) Students have the opportunity to use dramatic play.	All classrooms observed gave students the opportunity to use dramatic play. Classroom A – centers with doctor and patient, construction workers, playhouse, chef, music, and dress-up
Physical Environment d) Students have the opportunity to engage with print and books.	All classrooms observed gave students the opportunity to engage with print and books. Classroom A, B, C, D – library center with older students coming to read to preschool students Classroom C – Entire class lessons utilizing books Classroom D – center where students trace their classmates' names, center where students build their classmates' names using letter cards
Physical Environment e) Students have the opportunity to learn self-regulation techniques.	All classrooms observed gave students the opportunity to learn self-regulation techniques. Classroom A, B – calm corner Classroom A, B, C, D – class jobs Classroom A – what to do or say posters, "What bugs me," "What can I do when something bugs me?" Classroom D – students have the opportunity to move freely in centers by moving their character to that station
Physical Environment f) My classroom is arranged for learning and play.	All classrooms observed were arranged for learning and play. Classroom A, B, C, D – centers, group tables, small group table, rugs, and manipulatives
Physical Environment g) My classroom is arranged to foster peer interactions.	All classrooms observed were arranged to foster peer interactions. Classroom A, B, C, D – group tables, rotating centers, and free choice centers

The classroom observations suggested that the preschool classrooms participating in this study were consistently engaging in the majority of the items listed. Regarding classroom environment, participating teachers and aids focused on classroom culture, various interactions, and focused on meeting the needs of the students. Within this category, the classrooms had birthday posters, classroom jobs, family walls, well wish walls, low chairs and tables, as well as sensory tables and bathroom access. Regarding instructional supports, the teachers, aids, and their classrooms focused on fostering content knowledge, incorporating books and literature, as well as making sure students were engaged. Within this category, these classrooms shared library centers, rotating centers, whole class readings, and nursery rhymes. Regarding physical environment, all classrooms and their teachers and aids met each of the corresponding items. These classrooms engaged in numerous activities, including fine and gross motor skill centers, free centers, dramatic play centers, library time, strategic interactions, and opportunities to self-regulate.

Discussion

This study sought to determine whether the factors that make a quality preschool classroom were prevalent in one PK-5 public school. This study was designed to evaluate how the participating preschool teachers and aids were elevating their classrooms in relation to the three key categories. The data suggests that preschool teachers and aids excelled in their physical environment, then classroom environment, and then in instructional supports according to both the teacher surveys as well as the classroom observations. Determining the presence of these classrooms factors was further enhanced through direct observation, utilizing the observation protocol, rather than relying only on the survey completed by the teachers and aids.

The results of the surveys indicated that teachers and aids felt their skillsets were strongest in the areas of the physical environment, and weakest in terms of instructional supports. This pattern was also identified during classroom observations, substantiating the results. It can be concluded that it is more difficult to measure and determine instructional supports in a classroom as there was less evidence provided in classroom observations. Within this ranking, the overall scores for each category were still high and the participating teachers were demonstrating multiple, if not all, of the items within the categories, both through their behaviors and how they set up their classrooms. These findings connected back to the standards set by CLASS and ECERS and demonstrated how teachers were incorporating these standards into their classroom settings. Regarding the physical environment, the classroom observations presented higher scores than the teacher survey. Regarding the classroom environment and instructional supports, the survey presented higher scores than the classroom observation.

Limitations

There were several limitations for this study. This study was limited due to its small sample of participants. There was only a small number of preschool teachers and aids surveyed and observed. These professionals were all located within one school. More teachers from different schools might have provided more diverse results or stronger evidence of the categories studied. Additionally, there are not many prior studies done that replicate this method and findings.

Another limitation for the study was the survey that was used. Some question items from the survey used could be confusing. For example, question A under instructional supports asked about how well teachers utilized quality student feedback. The question did not explain what this meant, and a lack of explanation or examples could be the reason why the scores were so low.

When writing the survey and thus the observation protocol, examples or definitions of what each question item was asking about could have provided more clarity for both the teachers and the observer. This said, the qualitative data that came from the observation and documenting the evidence was more helpful in this study.

Something that mitigated all these factors included my connection with the school. I was currently an intern at the school and the staff and students were familiar with me and the purpose of my study.

Implications

This findings within this study suggest that the preschool teachers and aids who participated in this study excelled in terms of their physical environment, classroom environment, and in their instructional supports. The data suggested that the presence of these classrooms factors was more effectively measured utilizing the observation protocol than with the survey. This study found that the participating professionals were including these categories and factors into their classrooms consistently. Based on the findings of this study as well as the literature review, it is assumed that the environment created and fostered by these preschool teachers and aids help to foster academic, cognitive, physical, EF and SE growth in their students.

If another study was done on these classroom categories, it is likely that the study would have similar results, showing that the preschool classrooms are meeting these essential standards.

Recommendations

For future studies, there are multiple recommendations. A future study may be more successful if researchers explain and provide examples for each question in each category within the survey. Additionally, researchers may find more developed findings if they were to conduct

multiple observation sessions in the classrooms during different times of the day and over a longer period of time, as they would be able to see a range of activities within the classroom. Additionally, researchers may produce more generalizable findings if they were to survey and observe a larger population across different schools to receive more data.

Summary

This study sought to determine the factors that make a quality preschool classroom and their prevalence. The data suggested that teachers and aids excelled in the categories of physical environment, classroom environment, and instructional supports and that this is overall better seen in the evidence portion of the classroom observation rather than the teacher survey. The limitations that might have impacted this study were provided as well as implications and recommendations of the study for further research.

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Appendix A

Survey Questions

1. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of these statements. Questions will be focused on the classroom environment. (1 being not present at all, 4 being neutral, 7 being extremely present).
    a. In my classroom, there is an established classroom culture.
    b. In my classroom, there is regard for student perspectives.
    c. In my classroom, peer interaction in encouraged.
    d. In my classroom, student and teacher interaction is encouraged.
    e. In my classroom, I utilize a variety of behavior management methods.
    f. In my classroom, respect is established amongst students.
    g. In my classroom, respect is established between the teacher and students.
    h. I am sensitive to my student's concerns and emotional needs.
    i. I am sensitive to my student's physical needs.
2. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of these statements. Questions will be focused on the instructional supports offered to students. (1 being not present at all, 4 being neutral, 7 being extremely present).
    a. I utilize quality student feedback.
    b. I utilize instructional dialogue.
    c. I utilize strategies that foster content knowledge.
    d. I utilize a number of strategies to engage students.
    e. I utilize books as a foundational base of instruction.
    f. I provide opportunities that foster analysis and reasoning skills.

g. I provide opportunities for students to expand vocabulary.

3. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of these statements. Questions will be focused on classroom opportunity and the physical environment. (1 being not present at all, 4 being neutral, 7 being extremely present).
    a. Students have the opportunity to free play.
    b. Students have the opportunity to work on fine and gross motor skills.
    c. Students have the opportunity to use dramatic play.
    d. Students have the opportunity to engage with print and books.
    e. Students have the opportunity to learn self-regulation techniques.
    f. My classroom is arranged for learning and play.
    g. My classroom is arranged to foster peer interactions.

Appendix B

Observation Protocol

An Investigation of Teachers' Beliefs and Practices Regarding a Quality Preschool Classroom

Observer: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____ School: _____

Arrival Time: _____ Exit Time: _____

Check all that you observe. Questions will be focused on the classroom environment.	
a) In my classroom, there is an established classroom culture.	DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS/ACTIVITY
b) In my classroom, there is regard for student perspectives.	
c) In my classroom, peer interaction in encouraged.	
d) In my classroom, student and teacher interaction is encouraged.	
e) In my classroom, I utilize a variety of behavior management methods.	
f) In my classroom, respect is established amongst students.	
g) In my classroom, respect is established between the teacher and students.	
h) I am sensitive to my student's concerns and emotional needs.	
i) I am sensitive to my student's physical needs.	

Check all that you observe. Questions will be focused on the instructional supports offered to students.	
a. I utilize quality student feedback.	DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS/ACTIVITY
b. I utilize instructional dialogue.	
c. I utilize strategies that foster content knowledge.	
d. I utilize a number of strategies to engage students.	
e. I utilize books as a foundational base of instruction.	
f. I provide opportunities that foster analysis and reasoning skills.	
g. I provide opportunities for students to expand vocabulary.	

Check all that you observe. Questions will be focused on classroom opportunity and the physical environment.	
a. Students have the opportunity to free play.	DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS/ACTIVITY
b. Students have the opportunity to work on fine and gross motor skills.	
c. Students have the opportunity to use dramatic play.	
d. Students have the opportunity to engage with print and books.	
e. Students have the opportunity to learn self-regulation techniques.	
f. My classroom is arranged for learning and play.	
g. My classroom is arranged to foster peer interactions.	