



# LIBRENG PAGKAIN AND LEARNING COMPETENCE OF KINDERGARTEN PUPILS AT RISK OF DROPPING

Perlita A. Gargar<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Student, Graduate School, The Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc.

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## ABSTRACT

*This study sought to determine the effect of libreng pagkain on the learning competence of kindergarten learners. This study made use of quasi-experimental research design, which is a non-equivalent control group pretest-posttest design. Non-equivalent design is a good design when the researcher has access to one group for experimentation (Vockel 1983). The researcher opted to use this design because the subjects of the study are intact group of learners. This study was conducted in Matanao National High School, Division of Davao Del Sur. The subjects of this study were the 43 grade nine students – 21 are from section A which comprised the controlled group and 22 are from section B composed the experimental group. The composition of these two sections is heterogeneous therefore pupils of sections A and B have identical range of performance. This study made use of the non-random assignment of subjects where all learners of both sections A and B were involved as subjects of the study. This study revealed that the implementation of libreng pagkain program has increased the learning competence of the kindergarten learners. It also revealed that there is magnitude of difference between the post test scores of the controlled and experimental groups.*

**KEYWORDS:** Libreng Pagkain, learning competence pupils at risk

## INTRODUCTION

Providing all students with a free lunch is not a radical idea. Schools already provide free or reduced lunch to many students, but this process requires applications, deadlines, and bureaucratic work. When parents run up debt on the lunches, schools often have to go through debt collection to notify parents of late fees, adding even more administrative work. Student advocates say giving free lunch as the default would remove the bureaucracy and ensure students don't go hungry. "Lunch-shaming" would stop being an issue and we can be sure that no child goes hungry.

Learning competencies in the kindergarten in school is important because young children are more likely to succeed in academics when they attend school consistently which developed further their skills. It is difficult for teachers and students to build skills and progress if large numbers of students are frequently absent. In addition to falling behind in academics, students who are not in school on a regular basis are more likely to get into trouble with the law and cause problems in their communities. What factors lead to student absenteeism and would the implementation of a program that will motivate students to come to school regularly (Gallagher and Ramirez, 2019).

Currently in England, over two million children live in poverty and there is concern that children from deprived households have poorer-quality diets and experience higher levels of ill health, including increased prevalence of obesity. Successive governments have pledged to reduce child poverty with the intention of tackling the widening gap in health inequalities. A recent review on addressing health inequalities calls for action including to 'give every child the best start in life' (Sahota et al., 2019).

However, the recent downturn in the global economy has heightened concern for the well-being of children from financially disadvantaged families. As a result, the role of school food has assumed an elevated position with the introduction of nutrient-based standards aiming to enhance the nutritional quality of school meals and contribute to an improved diet. Children taking a free school meal (FSM) obtain a higher proportion of their daily energy and nutrient



intakes from their school meal compared with those who pay. Therefore, an improvement in school meal standards would be of particular benefit in terms of health, wellbeing and reducing health inequalities (Bridges & Thompson, 2020).

The major concern in basic education is ensuring that students stay in school until they complete their education. Dropping out is a serious problem because it hinders the individual student to assert education as fundamental human right. Internationally, the individual right to education has been purportedly affirmed in many treaties and conventions as in the 1948 Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1990 World Conference on Education for All (Bridgeland et al., 2006).

There is an across-the-board consensus that the school dropout problem has reached epidemic proportions globally and has become a problem facing the education industry round the world. The most important concept in preventing school dropout or promoting completion is student engagement. There is a great deal of proof that dropping out of school is a process of disengagement from school and the learning that accumulates over the years, often beginning early in elementary school (Arum, 2019).

In the Philippines, problems associated with poverty end up in children dropping out of school: the poor health of a parent, illness or physical disabilities and a lack of adequate medical and financial assistance, the need to help the family economy. Family circumstances (alcoholism, lack of communication between parents and children, uneducated and/or unemployed parents), health of student or parent were the reasons behind the drop out problem as reported by all participating people. In additional, poverty, need to work or help at home, influence of friends who are themselves truants or drop-outs, bullying by peers, unfriendly school environment, negative teacher attitude, lack of motivation or interest of students and inefficient social and communication skills of students are all contributory factors in dropping out of students (Masalta & Mauring, 2020).

In the Division of Davao del Sur, particularly in Glot Towak Elementary School, no study has been conducted to look for libreng pagkain and how it affects the learning competence of kindergarten pupils at risk of dropping. Thus, the researcher finds it appropriate and timely to conduct this study to propose a plan of action on how Glot Towak Elementary School further improve the learning competence of kindergarten pupils at risk of dropping.

The general purpose of this study was to look into the effect of the Libreng Pagkain on the learning competence of kindergarten pupils at Risk of Dropping.

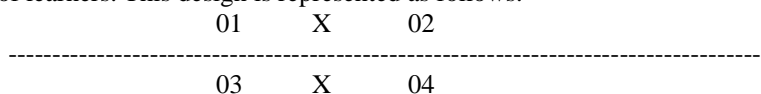
Specifically, this research study aims to answer the following research objectives.

1. What is the pretest score of kindergarten pupils both controlled and experimental groups before the implementation of libreng pagkain?
2. What is the posttest of kindergarten pupils both controlled and experimental groups after the implementation of libreng pagkain?
3. Is there a significant difference of the learning competence of kindergarten pupils between controlled and experimental groups after the implementation of libreng pagkain?
4. What is the magnitude effect of libreng pagkain on the learning competence of kindergarten pupils at risk of dropping?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study makes use of the quasi-experimental research design which is a non-equivalent control group pretest-posttest design. Non-equivalent design is a good design when the researcher has access to one group for experimentation (Vockel 1983). The researcher opted to use this design because the subjects of the study are intact group of learners. This design is represented as follows:





Where:

- 01 – Pretest of the experimental group
- 02 – Posttest of the experimental group
- 03 – Pretest of the controlled group
- 04 – Posttest of the controlled group
- - Non-random assignment of subjects
- X – Treatment applied in the experimental group

**Respondents and Sampling**

This study will be conducted in Glot Towak Elementary School, Division of Davao Del Sur. The subjects of this study will be the 43 kindergarten pupils – 21 are from section A which will be the controlled group and 23 are from section B which will be the experimental group. The composition of these two sections is homogeneous. Both learners from sections A and B have identical grades. This study makes use of the non-random assignment of subjects where all learners of both sections A and B are involved as subjects of the study.

*Distribution of Respondents*

	Subjects	No. of Pupils
1	Section A	21
2	Section B	22
	Total	43

**Research Instruments**

This study will utilize the new normal learning modality. It is a blended learning where teacher gave module at the same meet the learners online but adhering to the protocols of Inter-agency Task Force (IATF). The researcher has to meet the learners online for a follow up session of what has been printed in the module. The pre- and post-performance test consist of a 45 –item test will eventually determine the learning competence of kindergarten pupils at risk of dropping of the research subjects. The pretest will be administered to all subjects prior to the treatment. The pretest will be very helpful to assess the learning competence of kindergarten pupils at risk of dropping. On the hand, post-test will be administered to measure the effect of the treatment.

To determine the learning competence of kindergarten pupils at risk of dropping, the following continuum will be used based on DepEd rating system.

Interval	Scale	Level	Criteria
96 and above	5	Advanced	The student at this level exceeds the core requirements in terms of knowledge, skills, and understandings and, and can transfer them automatically and flexibly through authentic performance tasks.
89 - 95	4	Proficient	The student at this level has developed the fundamental knowledge and skills and core understandings and can transfer them them independently through authentic performance tasks.
82 - 88	3	Approaching Proficiency	The student at this level has developed d the fundamental knowledge and skills and core understandings and, with little guidance from the teacher and/or with some assistance from peers, can transfer these understandings through authentic performance tasks.



75 - 81	2	Developing	The student at this level possesses the minimum knowledge and skills and core understandings but needs help through out the performance of authentic tasks.
Below 75	1	Beginning	The student at this level struggles with his /her understanding; prerequisite and fundamental knowledge and/or skills have not been acquired or developedadequatelyto aid understanding

**Data Gathering Procedure**

At the outset of data gathering procedure, the researcher drafted a letter seeking for permission that this research study be conducted were sent to the Schools Division Superintendent of Davao Del Sur, Dr. Nelson Lopez, CESO VI and the school principal of Glot Towak Elementary School. While letters seeking for permission were delivered to the Schools Division Superintendent and the school principal concerned, the researcher constructed a questionnaire and have it validated by the experts preferably the experts of the study.

After permission has been granted that this study be conducted in Glot Towak Elementary School and after the research questionnaire has been thoroughly examined by the expert validators, the researcher will administer pretest to both controlled and experimental class and eventually commences her experiment. After three weeks of experimentation, the researcher administered posttest to both sections. Scores of the subjects will be submitted to the statistician for statistical computation after which the researcher made analysis and interpretation on the data gathered.

**Data Analysis**

The following statistical tools was used in the analysis and interpretation on the responses in this study.

**Mean** was used to describe the learning competence of kindergarten pupils of at risk of dropping from controlled and experimental groups in pretest and posttest.

**Eta square** was used to measure the magnitude of effect of libreng pagkain on the learning competence of kindergarten pupils at risk of dropping.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter displays the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations drawn out by the researcher after the analysis and interpretation of the findings had been made. This study sought to determine the effect of libreng pagkain on the learning competence of kindergarten learners.

This study made use of quasi-experimental research design, which is a non-equivalent control group pretest-posttest design. Non-equivalent design is a good design when the researcher has access to one group for experimentation (Vockel 1983). The researcher opted to use this design because the subjects of the study are intact group of learners.

This study was conducted in Glot Towak Elementary School, Division of Davao Del Sur. The subjects of this study were the 43 kinder learner – 22 are from morning session which comprised the controlled group and 21 are from afternoon composed the experimental group. The composition of these two sessions is heterogeneous therefore pupils of morning sessions and afternoon session have identical range of performance. This study made use of the non-random assignment of subjects where all learners of both sections morning and afternoon were involved as subjects of the study.

This study revealed that the implementation of libreng pagkain program has increased the learning competence of the kindergarten learners. It also revealed that there is magnitude of difference between the post test scores of the controlled and experimental groups.



### Conclusions

Based on the collective findings on this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

The pre-test scores of the kindergarten learners both the controlled and experimental groups is at the Developing level. The post-test scores of the controlled group are at the Approaching Proficiency level while the post test scores of the experimental group is at the Proficient level.

### Recommendations

In the light of the findings drawn out by the researcher in this study, the following recommendations are offered:

It is recommended that teachers across subject areas and across grade levels should implement the *libreng pagkain* program to increase the learning competence of the learners. Learners learn best if their physical need is addressed. In the same manner learners don't learn if their stomach is empty.

The school heads should lead in the implementation of the *libreng pagkain* so that all learners in school will be motivated to go to school every day hence, their learning will increase as they are able to attend the classes in a day.

For future researchers, it is strongly recommended that a relative study on the implementation of *libreng pagkain* or a customized feeding program will be conducted.

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