

*Improving Kindergarten Readiness by Upskilling Parents Through a Webinar Series  
Entitled “Ready, Steady, Zoom” During the New Normal*

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**Abstract**

The pandemic has forced the Philippines' education system to discontinue face-to-face sessions and adapt to new modes of instruction, but education must continue to advance, and teachers must adapt. Kindergarten preparation has always played a role in how well students do throughout their first week of face-to-face sessions. Other studies indicate that parental participation has an effect on children's learning results. As a result, a series of webinars and training sessions were organized for kindergarten parents and guardians to assist them in preparing themselves and their incoming kindergarten students for online learning. By establishing expectations for the learners, the researcher hopes to motivate them to participate in online classrooms using conferencing platforms, resulting in a high rate of attendance. The study included a total twenty-six persons who consented to participate. They included both the pupil's parents and guardians. They were tasked with the responsibility of applying their experience and abilities to the youngsters in order to assist them in adjusting to the new normal. During the first week of online classes, 56.33 percent of students attended. By week eight, however, it had increased to 97.33 percent. Participants agreed in a Likert assessment that the webinars prepared them and their students for online learning. In general, the researcher discovers that providing training and support to parents or guardians will aid them in preparing and encouraging their children for the new normal, resulting in a higher rate of online class participation.

Keywords: New Normal, Pandemic, Online Classes

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## **Introduction**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2020, the first case of Corona virus was reported in the Philippines. World Health Organization (2020). Months later, classes were suspended, and the suspension was extended until the end school year resulting in closing ceremonies held virtually. As the following academic school year neared, questions on how will learning take place when schools were closed and face to face classes were forbidden? Aside from the global pandemic, Covid 19 also lead to the adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) which lead to the utilization of different learning modalities including online distance learning.

In a recent study by Pe Dangle and Sumaoang (2020), regarding the implementation of Distance Learning in Philippine Secondary Public Schools, one of the challenges that emerged was the parent's lack of capability in academically guiding the pupils. This poses a threat since the parents will be the one of the uniting elements between the pupils and their learning. This is applicable not only for secondary pupils but most especially with young learners. According to Gohl and Thorson (2020), family engagement has an important role in student engagement for positive outcomes in learning. Therefore, if the parents as well as household members are supportive in terms of a pupil's academic activities, there is a probability that the child will succeed in school.

Trautner (2019) "Parents who attended classes and learned effective discipline and parenting techniques, report having children with higher grades, fewer behavior problems, less substance abuse issues, better mental health and greater social competence."

The key purpose of this study is to establish the involvement of the parents to prepare their children for online learning in the new normal. An 8 series webinar was prepared for parents and guardians of kindergarten pupils in Pinagbuhatan Elementary School. Ready, Steady, Zoom is aims to help ready the pupils, have a steady communication with the parents, and consequently *zooming* up the attendance rate and learning of the pupils. After the completion of the webinars, it is highly likely that the students will be prepared for the new normal through the support of their parents, giving them the opportunity to head start on their lessons and have a positive attitude on online classes. If this study succeeds, it may springboard research and solutions for other challenges that is experienced for the online learning modality in the new normal.

## **Ready, Steady, Zoom**

Ready, Steady, Zoom is a series of webinars designed for the parents and guardians of kindergarten pupils in Pinagbuhatan Elementary School which aims to upskill the parents for them to be able to academically guide and encourage their children.

According to a study from the University of the Philippines, Filipino students are generally capable in terms of navigating and using the technology e.g., computers and internet connectivity but are not prepared in terms of learner control and other factors.

Reyes *et. al* (2020) stated in the conclusion of the study that external distractions may result in loss of the learner's productivity and recommended that the pupils sustain a healthy life and work balance through planning and time management. Moreover, household members ought to be informed of the following factors and there must be a conscious effort between

the family to support and guide the learners. Therefore, the researcher devised research to determine if enlisting the parents or guardians for online webinars with topics that would aid them to prepare pupils for online learning.

During the start of classes, an orientation was provided for the parents to inform them of the study, the webinars, and its goal. The webinars took place during Saturdays from October to November. A total of 26 participants agreed to attend the webinars. The webinar topics included Importance of Messenger in this time of Pandemic which highlights the use of Facebook messenger as one of the key means of communication. The parents were taught how to use the apps' different features that could be maximized for learning delivery. The next webinar was Adapting with the new Modes of Learning which gave simple backgrounds on the different learning modalities that will be used; and providing pointers for the parents on how to prepare for them. The next set of webinars were entitled Educational Webinars at Home and Use of Indigenous Materials at Home for Learning. During face-to-face classes, it is imperative for the teachers to provide different games, activities, and instructional materials to promote learning for the children but then, since the parents will act as the facilitators of learning at home, they should be able to come up with the same activities and resources that will help nurture their own children and those two webinars would help them. While the episode Making Kids Ready for Remote Learning did not just provide tips for the parents, but since the online classes already started there was sharing of challenges that were encountered as well as the other participants sharing plausible results that they did with their children. After the series of webinars, the parents are expected to apply the knowledge that they acquired.

The actual dates of implementation are shown on table A.

**Table A.**

<b>Webinar Topics</b>	<b>Date of Implementation</b>
Importance of FB Messenger in This Time of Pandemic	October 10, 2020
Adapting with the New Modes of Learning	October 17, 2020
Educational Games at Home	October 24, 2020
Distant Learning: reading at Home	October 31, 2020
Use of Indigenous Materials at Home for Learning	November 7, 2020
Everyday Parenting: The ABC of Child Rearing	November 14, 2020
Roles of Parents in Developing Children's Interest in Reading	November 21, 2020
Making Kids Ready for Remote Learning	November 28, 2020

According to Trautner (2019) Parenting programs that offer guidance and support to make parenting easier, and enjoyable can reinforce the child’s abilities to succeed. Therefore, since assistance was provided for parents and guardians early on, the anxiety of the learners was addressed, which resulted in progress of the number of days that they attended classes.

### Conclusion

The improvement of the pupil’s readiness and attitude towards online classes would be determined should the pupils attendance rate increase. The data gathered through the SF-2 forms would be presented through utilization of visual graphical representation. According to Verdinelli and Scagnoli (2013) the use of visual representation of data heightens the reader’s analysis as well as comprehension of data and highlights a research’s data presentation and assessment.

The Likert Scale for the parents’ responses was designed in which 5 was strongly agree, 4 agree, 3 is neutral, 2 is disagree while 1 represents strong disagreement. The first part of the questionnaire is dedicated to the respondents demographics, age and gender while the second part is regarding the parents’ evaluation of the webinars and if their expectations were met.

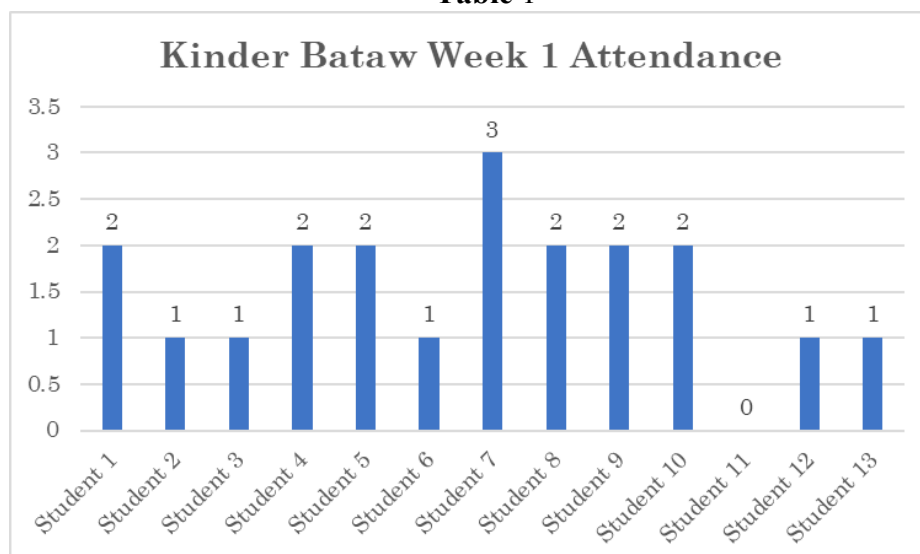
The Likert scale would determine if majority of the parents agree that the RSZ webinar series helped them guide and prepare their children for online learning.

### *Kindergarten Readiness in the New Normal*

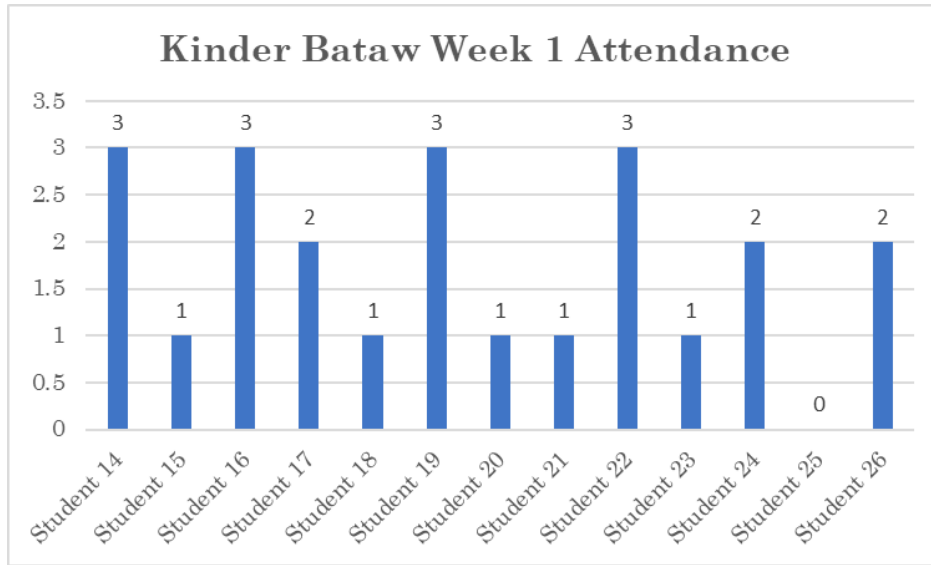
The new normal way of schooling has posed a lot of challenges for young pupils. Young children have to stay in front of computers or other available gadgets and navigate through the school’s chosen online platform to unmute and mute themselves during online classes Reilly (2020).

During the first week, the pupils were struggling during classes. Their attendance rate was at a low level, as seen on table 1 and 1.1, based on a 3-day online conference class for week 1, only 5 out of 26 pupils were able to attend thrice which is only 19.230 % while, 9 were able to join twice which is 34.615 % and 38.461% were only able to attend once.

**Table 1**

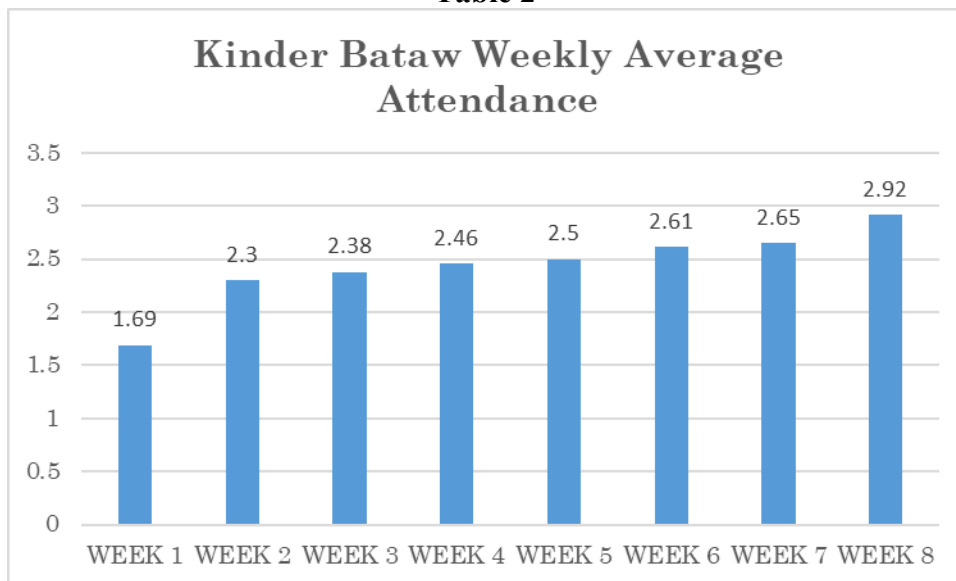


**Table 1.1**



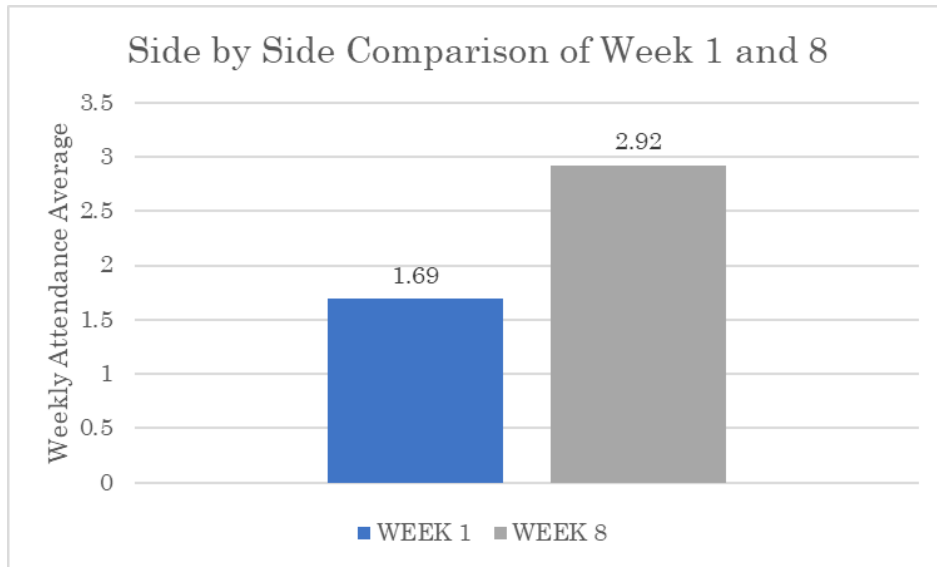
After the 1<sup>st</sup> webinar, there was an increase of the pupils weekly average attendance. From 1.63 out of 3 days which was 56.33% it had a 30.57% increase the following week. Out of 3 days, they closed in on their average at 2.3 as seen in table 2.

**Table 2**



Looking closely on Kinder Bataw's weekly average attendance from table 2, it had a steady increase in the span of 2 months. Comparing week 1 and week 8, Kinder Bataw's weekly average attendance went from 1.69 to 2.93. From 56.33% it has risen to 97.33%. Week 1 and Week 8 had a 72.78% increase in their interval.

**Table 3**



***Parents Perception on the RSW Series of Webinars***

From the results of the participants Likert scale survey questionnaire, it shows that for question number 1, 3, 4 and 5: *The skills and information presented were timely and relevant; The topics of the webinars increased my knowledge and skills to help me guide my child for the new normal education.; The webinar helped me prepare my child for the incoming new normal education; I am very satisfied with the webinars* each had a mode of 5 which means that most of the participants strongly agree with the statements while question 2, *The webinars were properly presented and easily understood* had a 4 as the most frequent answer which means that most of them agree.

**Table 4**

1. The skills and information presented were timely and relevant.	2. The webinars were properly presented and easily understood.	3. The topics of the webinars increased my knowledge and skills to help me guide my child for the new normal education.	4. The webinar helped me prepare my child for the online classes.	5. I am very satisfied with the webinars.
5	5	5	5	5
5	5	5	5	5
5	5	5	5	5

5	5	5	5	5
5	5	5	5	5
5	5	5	5	5
5	5	5	5	5
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5	5	5	5	5
5	4	5	5	5
5	4	5	5	5
5	4	5	5	5
4	4	4	5	5
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4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4
3	4	4	4	4
3	3	3	4	3
3	3	3	3	3
3	3	3	3	3

mode	5	4	5	5	5
mean	<b>4.38</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>4.42</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.46</b>

In conclusion, the attendance rate of the pupils increased from the first week of classes before the parents and guardians attended any webinars and continued to improve successively after each webinar series. The implication that the improvement was credited to the RSZ webinar series were derived from the results of the parents Likert Survey questionnaire. Item no. 3 which asks if the topics of the webinars increased the parents' knowledge and skills to help them guide their child for the new normal education, had an average of 4.42 out of 5. While for question 4, which asks if the webinars generally helped the parents prepare the pupils for online classes scored 4.5 out of 5.

Moreover, the researcher suggests that in this time of the pandemic, teachers should take into consideration in helping and training the parents to guide their children since the new normal and different types of modalities are entirely a new territory for all stakeholders.

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