
IMPACT OF TEACHERS' PROFILES AND TRANSITION PERCEPTION ON KEY STAGE 1 TRANSITION PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to the demographic profile of the teachers in terms of age, sex, and years of teaching experience. This study employed descriptive-comparative research design, and it was conducted at the DepEd-managed schools of the municipality of San Fernando, Bukidnon. The teachers handling Kindergarten are actively involved in the instruction and preparation of learners entering Grade 1, and those handling grades 2 and 3 under District I, San Fernando Division of Bukidnon, are selected as the study's respondents. It consists of 100 teachers as respondents. The The findings revealed that majority of the respondents were between the ages of 31 – 40, mostly female and had 27 years in teaching. The teachers strongly agree on their perception of learners' transition from kindergarten to grade 3.the result also revealed that years in teaching had a significant difference in the level of practice of teachers on transition strategies. Age and sex did not show a significant difference in teaching, but there was a significant difference in the level of practice of teachers on transition strategies. These suggest that teachers may continuously refine and adapt transition strategies, drawing on their growing professional experience and collaboration with colleagues to address learners' academic, behavioral, and social needs effectively. Experienced teachers may be considered as mentors or coaches to less experienced educators to ensure continuity and enhancement of best practices and experiences in managing learners' transitions, and also encourage them to participate in research projects, focusing on learner transitions, to further inform best practices that may be used by curriculum developers to align early childhood and primary curricula.

KEYWORDS: *teachers' Perception, learners' transition, transition strategies.*

INTRODUCTION

The transition period for Key Stage I learners is a crucial stage in their academic journey, marked by important developmental milestones that influence their future educational experiences. During this phase, children aged five to seven move from informal, play-based learning to a more structured and curriculum-driven environment. The success of this transition depends not only on the curriculum and school environment but also on teachers' approaches, practices, and professional backgrounds. Teachers serve as the first formal guides in a child's education, and their pedagogical strategies greatly affect learners' academic development, social skills, and emotional adjustment. Research highlights that teachers' understanding of children's developmental needs, their ability to differentiate instruction, and their efforts to create nurturing classrooms are essential for a smooth transition (Mendoza, 2017). In addition, positive teacher–student interactions help children feel safe, valued, and motivated to learn, supporting their successful adaptation to formal schooling (Pineda & Flores, 2019).

In the Philippine context, teachers often face challenges related to limited resources, varying levels of training, and differences in parental involvement, which can affect how they support learners during this transition. Cultural expectations, educational policies, and differences between rural and urban schools also influence teachers' practices and the support they provide to young learners. Beyond academic instruction, teachers play a vital role in helping children adjust socially and emotionally, guiding them to develop cooperation, self-regulation, and confidence in the classroom. Because of these responsibilities, teachers must create supportive learning environments and apply responsive teaching strategies that address learners' developmental changes. Despite the importance of this transition period, limited research focuses specifically on the experiences of Key Stage I learners and teachers in District I, San Fernando, Division of Bukidnon. Therefore, this study aims to examine teachers' perspectives and teaching practices during the transition period in the school year 2025–2026 to provide baseline data for improving educational quality and learners' academic achievement in the district.

Conceptual Framework

The study was anchored on the concepts of continuity and discontinuity, which are central to the Stage–Environment Fit Theory proposed by Eccles et al. (2022). This theory assumes that changes in children’s well-being, particularly their motivation to learn, may be influenced by the degree of compatibility between their developmental stage and the learning environment they experience. When the psychological and social development of learners matches the expectations and conditions of their educational environment, they are more likely to experience positive developmental outcomes. Conversely, mismatches between learners’ developmental needs and environmental demands may create challenges during educational transitions. Thus, learners have a better chance of thriving when their cognitive and emotional development aligns with the structure, expectations, and support provided within the school environment.

The Stage–Environment Fit Theory is commonly used in the design and evaluation of educational programs because it recognizes that learners progress through different developmental stages, each with specific cognitive, emotional, and social needs. These needs may include the desire for autonomy, opportunities for social connection, and engagement in meaningful and age-appropriate learning tasks. Figure 1 presents the variables of the study, where the independent variables include the teachers’ demographic profile—such as age, sex, and years of teaching experience—as well as teachers’ perceptions of learners’ transition from kindergarten to Grades 1, 2, and 3. On the other hand, the dependent variable is the extent of teachers’ practices in implementing transition strategies in the classroom in District I, San Fernando, Division of Bukidnon. Overall, the study focuses on examining the relationship between teachers’ profiles and perceptions and their classroom practices in supporting learners during the transition period.

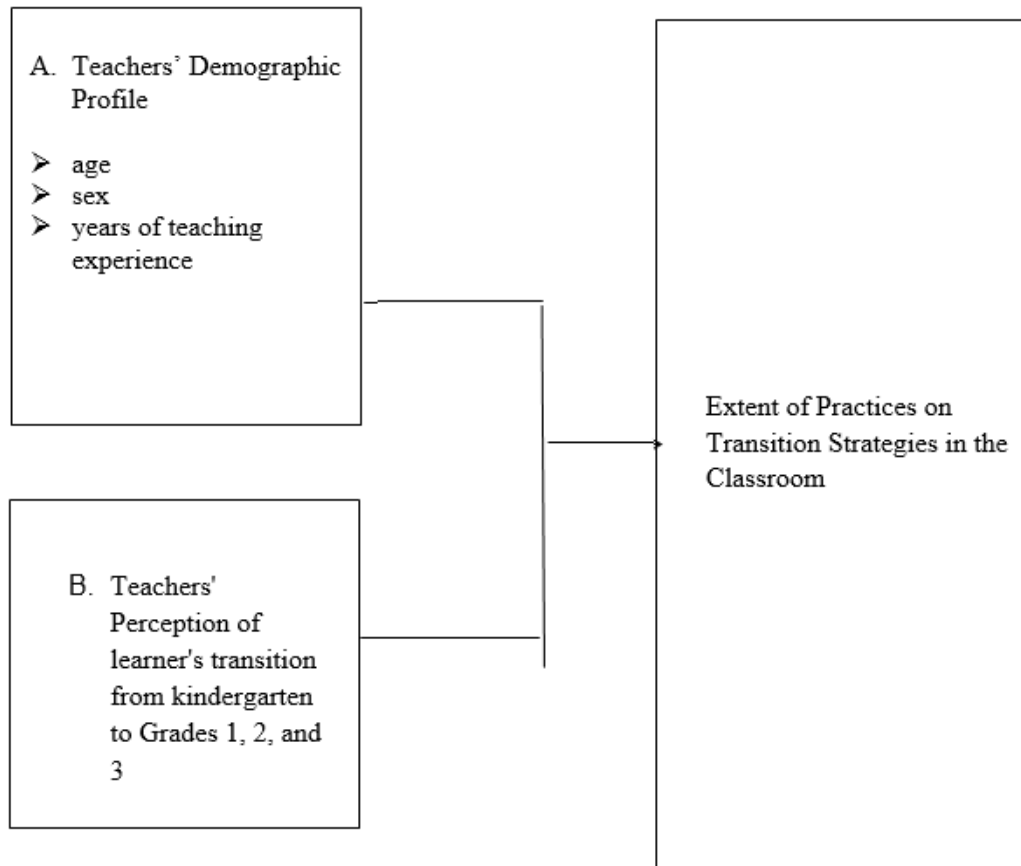


Figure 1. The schematic diagram of the study showed the independent and dependent variables.

Statement of the Problem

The study generally examined the teacher's profile and practices in the transition period of key stage 1 learners in District I, San Fernando, Division of Bukidnon, for the school year 2025-2026.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the teachers in terms of age, gender, and years of teaching experience?
2. What is the teachers' Perception of learners' transition from kindergarten to grade 3?
3. What is the level of practice teachers have on transition strategies?
4. Is there any significant difference in the level of practice of teachers on transition strategies according to age, sex, and years of teaching experience?

Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited within the given geographic and educational settings of District I, San Fernando, Division of Bukidnon. The study's findings might need to be more

generalizable as they were unique to the chosen geographic location, educational system, and cultural environment. As a result, the findings must be understood in this context and might not be generalizable to other academic contexts. In addition, although the study recognizes the need to examine key stage I learners' transitional experiences, its main emphasis was on teacher profile and teaching practices during the transitional period from kindergarten to Grade 3 during the third quarter of school year 2025-2026. Hence, the study is limited to a thorough examination of learners' experiences, which might call for further study.

Review of the Literature

Transition Period among Key Stage I Learners

The transition period for Key Stage I learners is a crucial stage in early education, as it shapes children's academic, social, and emotional development. During this stage, learners move from play-based learning in kindergarten to a more structured and formal academic environment in the primary grades. Research highlights that smooth transitions lead to positive academic outcomes and improved socio-emotional adjustment among young learners. Collaboration among teachers, families, and the community plays an important role in supporting children as they adjust to new expectations and learning environments. Cultural background and contextual factors also influence how learners experience this transition and how educators respond to their needs. Ultimately, effective transition practices aim to support children's well-being and ensure successful learning experiences during the early years of schooling (Jindal-Snape, D., Hannah, E., Cantali, D., Barlow, W., & MacGillivray, S. 2020).

However, learners and teachers often face several challenges during this transition period. Students may struggle with academic readiness, social adjustment, and emotional concerns such as anxiety or separation from parents. At the same time, teachers must adapt their instructional strategies to help learners shift from play-based activities to structured classroom learning. Curriculum alignment between kindergarten and the early primary grades is also essential to avoid learning gaps and confusion. Parental involvement and strong communication between school and home are necessary to support learners throughout the process. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts among educators, families, and policymakers to provide appropriate resources and support systems (Jindal-Snape, D., and Cantali, D. 2019).

Teachers' Profile and Practices in Supporting the Transition Period

Teachers play a significant role in guiding learners through the transition period in KeyStage I. Their attitudes, beliefs, educational background, and professional training influence how they support children during this stage. Teachers help create a safe, supportive, and inclusive classroom environment that promotes learners' sense of belonging and confidence. They also ensure continuity in the curriculum by adjusting instructional strategies to meet the developmental needs of young learners. Continuous monitoring and assessment allow teachers to identify learners who may require additional support during the transition. Collaboration with parents further strengthens the support system for learners as they adapt to new academic expectations (Ladd, G. W., & Price, J. M. 2007).

Effective teaching practices during the transition period include differentiated instruction, strong classroom management, and the use of orientation or familiarization programs. Teachers often work collaboratively with kindergarten and primary grade educators to ensure alignment of learning goals and expectations. Family involvement, individualized support plans, and clear communication with learners and parents also contribute to successful transitions. Professional development programs help teachers strengthen their skills in early childhood education and transition support strategies. Educational policies and school leadership also play a role by providing resources, training, and guidance for teachers. Overall, teachers' profiles and teaching practices significantly influence how smoothly learners adjust to the early stages of formal education (Mashburn, A. J., Pianta, R. C., & Humphries, H. 2010).

Research Methodology

The study employed descriptive research. The design intends to thoroughly review the teachers' viewpoints and teaching practices in school throughout the crucial transitional phase of the pupils in District I, San Fernando, Division of Bukidnon, for the school year 2025-2026. The study was conducted at the DepEd-managed schools of the municipality of San Fernando, Bukidnon. San Fernando is a municipality in the province of Bukidnon, located in the northern part of Mindanao, Philippines. Here's a brief history of San Fernando, Bukidnon. The study used a survey questionnaire to gather pertinent data on the other variables explored. The questionnaire was adopted from Garcia's (2018) study, which specifically studied the transition experiences of teachers and early learners. The study would employ total enumeration when selecting the respondents. This procedure, also known as

census or entire enumeration, involved collecting data from every member of the population rather than selecting a subset.

Findings

Table 1 Profile of respondents in terms of age.

| Age | f | % |
|-------------------|-----|-------|
| 20 – 30 Years Old | 23 | 23.0 |
| 31 – 40 Years Old | 41 | 41.0 |
| 41 - 50 Years Old | 31 | 31.0 |
| 51 - 60 Years Old | 5 | 5.0 |
| 61 – 65 Years Old | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 100 | 100.0 |

The results in Table 1 showed the profile of respondents in terms of age. The largest group of respondents falls under “31–40 years old” (f = 41, 41.0%), indicating that most of the teachers were in their early to mid-career stage. This was followed by “41–50 years old” (f = 31, 31.0%). Meanwhile, “20–30 years old” (f = 23, 23.0%) represent the younger teachers who were relatively new in the profession, while only a small number belong to the “51–60 years old” (f = 5, 5.0%) group. Notably, there were no respondents in the “61–65 years old” (f = 0, 0%) category.

Overall, the data revealed that the majority of teachers were concentrated in the 31–50 age range, indicating a workforce dominated by both mid-career and experienced professionals.

Table 2 Profile of respondents in terms of sex.

| Sex | f | % |
|--------|-----|-------|
| Male | 8 | 8.0 |
| Female | 92 | 92.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100.0 |

Table 2 presents the profile of respondents in terms of sex. The data showed that the majority of the respondents are Female (f = 92, 92.0%), while only a small portion are Male (f = 8, 8.0%).

Table 3 Profile of respondents in terms of years of teaching experience.

| Parents’ Occupation | f | % |
|---------------------|----|------|
| 1 – 5 | 14 | 14.0 |
| 6 – 10 | 20 | 20.0 |
| 11 – 15 | 17 | 17.0 |
| 16 – 20 | 27 | 27.0 |
| 21 – 25 | 10 | 10.0 |

| | | |
|---------|-----|-------|
| 26 – 30 | 11 | 11.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100.0 |

Table 3 presents the profile of respondents in terms of years of teaching experience. The highest proportion of respondents belongs to the “16–20 years” ($f = 27, 27.0\%$). This is followed by “6–10 years” ($f = 20, 20.0\%$) and “11–15 years” ($f = 17, 17.0\%$), which suggested that a significant portion of the respondents were relatively early in their teaching career but already with several years of professional practice. Meanwhile, “26–30 years” ($f = 11, 11.0\%$) and “21–25 years” ($f = 10, 10.0\%$) represent the more seasoned teachers who bring long-term experience to the classroom. The smallest group is those with “1–5 years” ($f = 14, 14.0\%$).

Table 4 The teachers' Perception of learners' transition from kindergarten to grade 3.

| Indicator | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|------|-------|----------------|
| Children need more academic skills. | 4.78 | 0.416 | Strongly Agree |
| Children show difficulty maintaining attention and concentration. | 4.71 | 0.456 | Strongly Agree |
| Children need help taking turns or waiting until their turn to speak. | 4.61 | 0.490 | Strongly Agree |
| Children show behavior problems. | 4.60 | 0.492 | Strongly Agree |
| Children need help in carrying out the work. | 4.60 | 0.492 | Strongly Agree |
| Children show difficulty getting along with other children. | 4.55 | 0.520 | Strongly Agree |
| Children show difficulty working independently. | 4.50 | 0.503 | Strongly Agree |
| Children show difficulty communicating or language problems. | 4.49 | 0.541 | Strongly Agree |
| Children show difficulty adjusting to the day's schedule or rhythm. | 4.23 | 0.489 | Strongly Agree |
| Children show difficulty working as part of a group. | 4.21 | 0.537 | Strongly Agree |
| Children show difficulty respecting my authority as a teacher. | 4.14 | 0.551 | Agree |
| Overall | 4.49 | 0.335 | Strongly Agree |

The findings revealed that teachers strongly perceived several challenges experienced by learners during the transition from kindergarten to Grade 4. The indicator with the highest mean was the need for greater academic skills, suggesting that learners often struggle with

the shift from play-based learning to more formal instruction. Teachers also observed that many children have difficulty maintaining attention and concentration, indicating common challenges in sustaining focus in a structured classroom environment. The overall mean showed that teachers strongly agreed on the presence of academic, behavioral, and communication-related difficulties among learners during this transition period. These results support the findings of Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta (2020), who emphasized that the shift from informal to formal learning demands higher academic preparedness. Similarly, the observations align with Pianta and Kraft-Sayre (2020) and Sink et al. (2017), who noted that learners often face attention, social adjustment, and communication challenges as they adapt to the expectations of primary education.

Table 5 The level of practice teachers have in transition strategies.

| Indicator | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|--|------|-------|----------------|
| Give parents an orientation session about the primary first grade. | 4.60 | 0.492 | Strongly Agree |
| You consider your teaching action activities/content according to the first-grade curriculum. | 4.58 | 0.535 | Strongly Agree |
| Have parents and children visit the primary school before the start of the school year. | 4.53 | 0.540 | Strongly Agree |
| Preschool children visit the 1st-grade class. | 4.53 | 0.502 | Strongly Agree |
| Have first-grade children visit the preschool class to discuss their first-grade experience. | 4.50 | 0.503 | Strongly Agree |
| Provide a final report to parents regarding the child's academic and developmental skills. | 4.49 | 0.502 | Strongly Agree |
| Provide written (letter, brochure, flyer) communication regarding the transition to your children's family. | 4.41 | 0.494 | Strongly Agree |
| The preschool and first-grade teachers talk about social and academic skills to prepare children for primary school. | 4.39 | 0.490 | Strongly Agree |
| Talk with the child's parents before primary school starts. | 4.19 | 0.506 | Agree |
| Have preschoolers perform a planned activity in the first-grade classroom. | 4.19 | 0.506 | Agree |
| Have informal contact with first-grade teachers about children. | 4.18 | 0.539 | Agree |
| Overall | 4.41 | 0.259 | Strongly Agree |

The results in Table 5 present the level of practice teachers have in transition strategies. The indicator with the highest mean was "Give parents an orientation session about primary first grade" (Mean = 4.60, SD = 0.492). Closely following were "You consider your teaching action activities/content according to the first-grade curriculum" (Mean = 4.58, SD = 0.535) and "Have parents and children visit primary school before the start of the school year"

(Mean = 4.53, SD = 0.540). Other strategies that also received strong agreement include “Preschool children visit 1st grade class” (Mean = 4.53, SD = 0.502), “Have first-grader children visit the preschool class to discuss their first-grade experience” (Mean = 4.50, SD = 0.503), and “Provide a final report to parents regarding the child’s academic and developmental skills” (Mean = 4.49, SD = 0.502). Written communication methods, such as letters, brochures, and flyers, are also well-practiced with strong agreement (Mean = 4.41, SD = 0.494).

Meanwhile, indicators with relatively lower means but still important include “The preschool and first-grade teacher talk about social and academic skills” (Mean = 4.39, SD = 0.490), followed by “Talk with the child’s parents before primary school starts” (Mean = 4.19, SD = 0.506), and “Have preschoolers perform a planned activity in the first-grade classroom” (Mean = 4.19, SD = 0.506), which were rated as “Agree.” The lowest practice observed is “Have informal contact with first-grade teachers about children” (Mean = 4.18, SD = 0.539).

Overall, the results (Overall Mean = 4.41, SD = 0.259) indicated that teachers strongly agree in practicing various transition strategies, with particular emphasis on parental orientation, curriculum alignment, and early exposure visits. These findings aligned with literature emphasizing that effective transition practices involve active parental engagement, curriculum alignment, and early familiarization activities. Parental orientation and open communication help reduce anxiety and build trust, supporting positive transitions (Henderson & Mapp, 2022; Boylan, 2024). Curriculum mapping and joint planning across

Table 6 Test of significant difference in the level of practice of teachers on transition strategies according to age, sex, and years of teaching experience.

| Variable | Sum of Squares | | Mean Square | | F | p - value |
|-------------------|----------------|--------|-------------|--------|--------|-----------|
| | Between | Within | Between | Within | | |
| Age | .500 | 6.128 | .167 | .064 | 2.613 | .056 |
| Sex | | | | | -1.194 | .235 |
| Years in Teaching | .834 | 5.795 | .167 | .062 | 2.706 | .025 |

The results in Table 6 presented the test of significant difference in the level of practice of teachers on transition strategies when grouped according to age, sex, and years of teaching experience. For Age (F = 2.613, p-value = .056), the result was not significant since the p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, indicating that teachers’ practices on transition strategies do not significantly differ across age groups. For Sex (F = -1.194, p-value

= .235), the result was also not significant, suggesting that male and female teachers practiced transition strategies at comparable levels.

However, for Years in Teaching ($F = 2.706$, $p\text{-value} = .025$), the result was significant since the $p\text{-value}$ is less than 0.05. This implied that teachers' practices on transition strategies vary depending on their length of teaching experience, with more experienced teachers likely employing different or more refined strategies compared to their less experienced counterparts. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

These findings correspond with literature emphasizing that while foundational knowledge of transition practices might be broadly shared among teachers regardless of age or gender, teaching experience significantly influences the refinement and implementation of these strategies (Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 2022; Boylan, 2024). Experienced teachers often have a deeper understanding of students' needs during transitions and are more adept at tailoring practices to individual contexts (Joerdens, 2014; Fabry et al., 2022).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing from the study's findings, the following conclusions can be made:

The profile of the respondents revealed that most teachers are aged 31-40, predominantly female, with a majority having 27 years of teaching experience. This reflected a relatively experienced cohort engaged in the study, likely influencing their insights and practices regarding learner transitions.

Teachers strongly perceived significant challenges faced by learners in their transition from Kindergarten to Grade 3, particularly in academic readiness, attention span, behavioral adjustment, and social interactions. This confirmed the multifaceted nature of the transition period that requires comprehensive support.

Teachers also strongly affirmed their active engagement in practicing various transition strategies, such as parental orientation, curriculum alignment, and facilitating early visits between preschool and primary grades. These practices

Demonstrated a commitment to easing learners' academic and social adjustment through structured and collaborative approaches.

The significant difference found in transition practices based on years of teaching experience but not gender or age suggested that experience played a crucial role in the refinement and application of effective transition strategies. More experienced teachers tend to implement more nuanced or effective approaches compared to their less experienced counterparts.

Derived from the study's conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

Teachers may continuously refine and adapt transition strategies, drawing on their growing professional experience and collaboration with colleagues to address learners' academic, behavioral, and social needs effectively. Experienced teachers may be considered as mentors or coaches to less experienced educators to ensure continuity and enhancement of best practices and experiences in managing learners' transitions, and also encourage them to participate in research projects, focusing on learner transitions, to further inform best practices that may be used by curriculum developers to align early childhood and primary curricula.

Learners may be encouraged to actively engage in their educational transition by participating in orientation activities, school visits, and early engagement opportunities designed to ease adjustment. Parents are recommended to collaborate closely with teachers, attend orientation sessions, and support their children's emotional and academic readiness at home to foster confidence and continuity between home and school environments.

Curriculum developers may align early childhood and primary curricula carefully to ensure a seamless progression that responds to developmental stages, supports differentiated instruction, and incorporates family involvement components. School Administrators may prioritize professional development opportunities that highlight effective transition methods such as orientation programs, teacher cooperation, family participation, tailored assistance techniques, direct interaction, and inclusive education approaches.

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