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Munting Paaralan sa Barangay (MPB) – A Community Literacy Program: Its Impact on the Educational, Social, and Spiritual Development of the Child

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ABSTRACT: Literacy is important among children. It gives them the chance to discover and improve their potential. It engages them to learn more, aims for better education, fulfills their dreams, and builds a better nation. This emphasizes that literacy is a right for everyone. This survey-correlational research aimed to determine the impact of Munting Paaralan sa Barangay (MPB) as a community literacy program on the educational, social, and spiritual development of the child. The respondents were the eighty-three (83) MPB parents whose children were recipients of the literacy program. Data were gathered using the researcher-made questionnaire on the impact of the MPB literacy program on the educational, social, and spiritual development of the child. The findings indicated that the MPB literacy program had a very high impact on all aspects of the children's growth. Specifically, the program significantly contributed to the educational development of the children, helping them improve their learning abilities and academic performance. Socially, the program fostered stronger relationships, cultural competence, and greater community involvement among the children. Spiritually, the program nurtured a deeper connection with faith, highlighting its role in the children's spiritual development. Additionally, the research revealed a positive and significant relationship between the MPB program's implementation and the children's overall development. The program's objectives, activities, and effectiveness were all crucial factors contributing to the high impact. Significant differences were observed in educational, social, and spiritual development, with improvements most notable in the children's interest in learning, cultural competence, and relationship with God.

KEYWORDS: Community Literacy Program, Educational, Social, Spiritual Development of the Child

I. INTRODUCTION

Literacy is a fundamental right for children, offering them the opportunity to realize and enhance their potential. It engages them in the learning process, fosters the desire for better education, and helps fulfill their dreams, ultimately contributing to a stronger and more developed nation. As Stronquist argues, literacy not only empowers individuals but also benefits families, communities, and nations by enabling informed decision-making and active participation in both local and global contexts [1].

Rooted in the right to education, literacy is regarded as a key component of basic education, which includes essential skills like reading, writing, and arithmetic [2]. The importance of literacy lies in its role in shaping educational, social, and spiritual development in children's lives. It highlights that children with educated parents are more likely to attend school and receive support in their education, leading to long-term benefits. Thezen and Pletzen also emphasize that literacy helps children refine their intelligence, foster logical thinking, and improve their research and reflective skills [3].

In terms of social development, literacy plays a crucial role in establishing relationships, developing social skills, and fostering cultural competence. Papen points out the strong correlation between literacy and socio-cultural context, while Gray stresses that functional literacy allows individuals to apply their knowledge effectively in their professional

and community roles. This functional literacy contributes to personal development and social integration, improving societal well-being [3].

Spiritually, literacy also helps fulfill children's deeper needs for love, acceptance, and connection, particularly within religious or spiritual frameworks. Sherwin and Stevenson suggest that when social needs are unmet, religion and spirituality can serve as a source of motivation and support. Teachers can assist by empathizing with children's spiritual and emotional needs, ensuring they have space to grow in their beliefs [4].

Recognizing these benefits, the *Munting Paaralan sa Barangay* (MPB) literacy program was initiated by the College of Teacher Education (CTE) to address the educational challenges faced by underprivileged children. According to Ferguson, social integration emphasizes building the values and institutions necessary for creating a just society [4]. The MPB program aims to foster such integration by providing basic education—such as reading, writing, and arithmetic—while also teaching socialization skills and Christian values. By doing so, the program supports social justice and helps ensure that all children, regardless of their socio-economic background, have access to the opportunities and rights they deserve.

The study aimed to determine the impact of Munting Paaralan sa Barangay (MPB) as a community literacy program on the educational, social, and spiritual development of the children for the school year 2020-2021. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of impact of MPB on the educational development of the child as an entire group and in terms of learning interests, motivation, and academic self-efficacy?
2. What is the level of impact of MPB on the social development of the child as an entire group and in terms of social relationships, social skills, and cultural competence?
3. What is the level of impact of MPB on the spiritual development of the child as an entire group and in terms of spirituality, spiritual asset, and relationship with God?
4. What is the level of impact of MPB as a community literacy program in its entirety and in terms of implementation, attainment of objectives, benefits, activities designed, and effectiveness of the program?
5. Are there significant differences in the educational, social, and spiritual development of the child based on the impact of the MPB literacy program?
6. Are there significant relationships among the educational, social, and spiritual development and the impact of the MPB literacy programs on the child?

II. RELATED LITERATURE

Children's literacy development begins at birth, with early exposure to language playing a crucial role in later academic success. The first five years are especially critical, as this period sets the foundation for future literacy skills and academic achievement, with children who lack basic literacy skills by school entry facing a higher risk of dropping out [5]. Families play an essential role in this development, as parents who are actively involved in their children's learning—such as reading together—create a literacy-rich environment that supports language growth [6]. Community-based family literacy programs have proven effective in improving literacy skills for both children and parents by encouraging shared reading and teaching parents specific reading strategies, which enhances children's academic progress [5]; [7]. However, socio-economic factors can impact literacy development, with children from lower-income backgrounds facing more challenges, underscoring the importance of targeted literacy programs [8].

In addition to family involvement, teachers play a critical role in fostering literacy development by supporting collaboration between schools and parents. A strong partnership helps meet children's socio-emotional and cognitive needs, which are essential for academic success [9]. Children's emotional development, including skills like self-control and motivation, influences their academic performance, making a balanced home and school environment crucial for self-actualization [10]. Teachers also influence children's social, emotional, and academic growth by providing space for spiritual expression, as children often view religion and spirituality as central to their lives and education. Addressing these spiritual needs within the classroom fosters emotional well-being and enhances academic outcomes, reinforcing the need for a holistic approach to supporting literacy and overall development [11]; [12].

III. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a survey-correlational research design. The participants consisted of eighty-three parents of children who were enrolled in the MPB literacy program. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula, and participants were selected randomly through a lottery system, employing simple random sampling. Data was collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire, designed to assess the impact of the MPB literacy program on children's educational, social, and spiritual development. All research instruments were validated and reviewed by an examination committee, with revisions made based on their feedback. After validation, a pilot test was conducted for factor analysis, construct validation, and reliability testing, with the results analyzed using SPSS software. The independent variable was the effect of the Munting Paaralan sa Barangay community literacy program, while the dependent variables were the children's educational, social, and spiritual development. Statistical analysis was performed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, while ANOVA and Pearson's r were used for inferential statistics. The significance level was set at 0.05.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Level of Impact of MPB on Educational Development of the Child

The level of impact of MPB on the educational development of the child as an entire group and in terms of learning interests, motivation, and academic self-efficacy is shown in Table 1. Generally, the level of impact of MPB on the educational development of the child ($M = 4.60$, $SD = .23$) is very high. Data show that the level of impact of MPB on educational development based on interest ($M = 4.62$, $SD = .25$), motivation ($M = 4.58$, $SD = .28$), and academic self-efficacy ($M = 4.60$, $SD = .27$) is very high.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Impact of MPB on Educational Development

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Educational Development	4.60	Very High	.23
Interest	4.62	Very High	.25
Academic Self-Efficacy	4.60	Very High	.27
Motivation	4.58	Very High	.28

Note Interval. 4.21 - 5.00 Very High: 3.41 - 4.20 High: 2.61 - 3.40 Fair: 1.81 - 2.60 Low: 1.00 - 1.80 Very Low

The children attending the MPB literacy program show strong academic progress, driven by positive relationships with their preservice teachers who provide tailored support for their learning needs. These children are eager to participate, attend classes regularly, and appreciate help with homework, reading, math problems, and Christian songs. Their enthusiasm and high academic self-efficacy are evident as they actively engage in lessons, work cooperatively, and perform well in assessments. Parental involvement further contributes to their motivation and success, as the children are supported at home as well.

B. Level of Impact of MPB on Social Development of the Child

The level of impact of MPB on the social development of the child as an entire group and in terms of social relationships, social skills, and cultural competence is shown in Table 2. Generally, the level of impact of MPB on the social development of the child ($M = 4.37$, $SD = .25$) is very high. In the same way, the level of impact of MPB on the social development of the child based on cultural competence ($M = 4.61$, $SD = .31$), social relationships ($M = 4.57$, $SD = .30$), and social skills ($M = 4.57$, $SD = .32$) is very high.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Impact of MPB on Social Development

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Social Development	4.37	Very High	.25
Cultural Competence	4.61	Very High	.31
Social Relationships	4.57	Very High	.30
Social Skills	4.57	Very High	.32

Note Interval. 4.21 - 5.00 Very High: 3.41 - 4.20 High: 2.61 – 3.40 Moderate: 1.81 – 2.60 Low: 1.00 – 1.80 Very Low

The MPB literacy program is helping children develop strong social and emotional skills. Through effective collaboration between preservice teachers and parents, the children gain confidence, build friendships, and adjust both emotionally and socially. The warmth, compassion, and kindness of the teachers create a supportive environment, encouraging participation regardless of social status. The children also exhibit high cultural competence, feeling comfortable in the program and fostering positive relationships with peers and teachers. They demonstrate strong social skills, such as good communication, teamwork, empathy, and respect, which enhance their ability to work and interact well in the program. Overall, the MPB literacy program effectively nurtures children's social development and relationships.

C. Level of Impact of MPB on the Spiritual Development of the Child

The level of impact of the MPB on the spiritual development of the child as an entire group and in terms of spirituality, spiritual asset, and relationship with God is shown in Table 3. Generally, the level of impact of MPB on the spiritual development of the child ($M = 4.60$, $SD = .22$) is very high. The results showed that the level of impact of MPB on the spiritual development of the child based on relationship with God ($M = 4.63$, $SD = .27$), spiritual asset ($M = 4.61$, $SD = .27$), and spirituality ($M = 4.55$, $SD = .33$) is very high.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Impact of MPB on Spiritual Development

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Spiritual Development	4.60	Very High	.22
Relationship with God	4.63	Very High	.27
Spiritual Asset	4.61	Very High	.27
Spirituality	4.55	Very High	.33

Note Interval. 4.21 - 5.00 Very High: 3.41 - 4.20 High: 2.61 – 3.40 Moderate: 1.81 – 2.60 Low: 1.00 – 1.80 Very Low

The MPB literacy program has been highly effective in nurturing the spiritual development of children. Through activities like prayer, singing Christian songs, memorizing Bible verses, and listening to Bible stories, children grow in qualities such as respect, responsibility, and reverence for themselves and God. Their strong relationship with God is evident in their obedience and good relationships with their preservice teachers. The program instills Christian values like humility, respect, and love, fostering positive behavior and a supportive atmosphere. Children exhibit high spiritual assets by demonstrating good qualities, supporting others, and avoiding conflicts, all of which contribute to their overall spiritual growth.

D. Level of Impact of MPB as a Community Literacy Program

The level of impact of MPB as a community literacy program in its entirety and in terms of implementation, attainment of objectives, benefits, activities designed, and effectiveness of the program is shown in Table 4. In its entirety, the level of impact of MPB as a community literacy program ($M = 4.64$, $SD = .24$) is very high. Data show that the level of impact of MPB as a community literacy program based on implementation ($M = 4.71$, $SD = .28$), attainment of objectives ($M = 4.65$, $SD = .31$), benefits ($M = 4.64$, $SD = .30$), effectiveness of program ($M = 4.62$, $SD = .31$), and activities designed ($M = 4.60$, $SD = .34$) is very high.

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Impact of MPB as a Community Literacy Program

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Impact of MPB	4.64	Very High	.24
Implementation	4.71	Very High	.28
Attainment of Objectives	4.65	Very High	.31
Benefits	4.64	Very High	.30
Effectiveness of Program	4.62	Very High	.31
Activities Designed	4.60	Very High	.34

Note Interval. 4.21 - 5.00 Very High: 3.41 - 4.20 High: 2.61 – 3.40 Moderate: 1.81 – 2.60 Low: 1.00 – 1.80 Very Low

The MPB literacy program has made significant contributions to the educational, social, and spiritual development of children in the community. The program's success is attributed to the continued support of stakeholders, including the school, barangay officials, parents, and children, fostering a strong partnership that helps families overcome poverty while fulfilling the school's mission of social responsibility. The program is highly valued by parents for its practicality and effectiveness, and its long-term presence in the community has earned appreciation for its consistent impact. The program has successfully achieved its objectives by building children's confidence, providing learning resources, and instilling Christian values, all through the volunteer efforts of preservice teachers and active participation from the community. The MPB literacy program offers a free and engaging learning environment, benefiting children's academic and spiritual growth. Its activities, such as reading, writing, dancing, praying, and social interactions, align with the program's mission and have made a lasting positive impact on both the children and their families.

E. Differences in the Educational, Social, and Spiritual Development Based on Impact of MPB as a Literacy Program

Table 5 presents the Analysis of Variance on the difference in the educational, social, and spiritual development of the child based on the impact of MPB as a literacy program. Data show that there is a significant difference in the educational development (26.858^*) = .000, $p < .05$, in favor of the interest ($M = 4.62$, $SD = .25$) of the children on the MPB literacy program. There is also a significant difference in the social development (5.208^*) = .025, $p < .05$ in favor of cultural competence ($M = 4.61$, $SD = .31$) developed in the MPB literacy program. Moreover, there is also a significant difference in the spiritual development (7.384^*) = .008, $p < .05$ in favor of a relationship with God ($M = 4.63$, $SD = .27$) nurtured in the MPB literacy program. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there are no significant differences in the educational, social, and spiritual development based on the impact of MPB as a literacy program, is rejected.

Table 5: ANOVA on the Differences in the Educational, Social, and Spiritual Development Based on the Impact of MPB as a Literacy Program

Category	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Educational					
Between Groups	1.213	1	1.213	26.858*	.000
Within Groups	3.658	81	.045		
Total	4.871	82			
Social					
Between Groups	.270	1	.270	5.208*	.025
Within Groups	4.202	81	.052		
Total	4.473	82			
Spiritual					
Between Groups	.349	1	.349	7.384*	.008
Within Groups	3.824	81	.047		
Total	4.173	82			

* $p < .05$ – significant at 5% level

The MPB literacy program has had a noticeable impact on the educational, social, and spiritual development of children, with significant differences in these areas based on the program's implementation, objectives, activities, benefits, and effectiveness. The preservice teachers have played a key role in nurturing the children, recognizing that their support can transform lives and strengthen the community.

F. Relationships among Educational, Social, and Spiritual Development and Impact of MPB as a Literacy Program

Table 6 shows the significant relationship between educational, social, and spiritual development and the impact of MPB as a literacy program. Data demonstrate that there is a positive, strong correlation, and significant relationship between educational development $r = .768^*$, $p = .000 < .05$ and the impact of MPB as a literacy program. There is a positive, strong correlation, and significant relationship between social development $r = .843^*$, $p = .000 < .05$ and the impact of the MPB literacy program. Moreover, there is a positive, strong correlation, and significant relationship

between spiritual development $r = .728^*$, $p = .000 < .05$ and the impact of the MPB literacy program. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there are no significant relationships among educational, social, and spiritual development and the impact of MPB as a literacy program, is rejected.

Table 6: Pearson r on the Relationships among Educational, Social, and Spiritual Development and Impact of MPB as a Literacy Program

Variables	r-value	Sig
Impact of MPB and Educational Development	.768*	.000
Impact of MPB and Social Development	.843*	.000
Impact of MPB and Spiritual Development	.728*	.000

* $p < .05$ – significant at 5% level

The MPB literacy program plays a crucial role in shaping the educational, social, and spiritual development of children, with preservice teachers being instrumental in addressing learning difficulties, enhancing social skills, and fostering spiritual growth. There is a strong and significant positive relationship between the MPB literacy program and the children's educational development, suggesting that the program directly contributes to better academic outcomes. Additionally, the program significantly influences the children's social and emotional skills, providing opportunities for their growth in these areas. The program also strongly supports the spiritual development of the children, instilling Christian values alongside academic learning, making it more than just a tutoring program.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The MPB literacy program effectively addresses children's learning needs, offering tutorial services that foster motivation, academic self-efficacy, and positive learning outcomes. The program also enhances children's social and emotional skills by promoting cultural sensitivity and encouraging positive interactions with preservice teachers and peers, resulting in stronger social competence. Additionally, the program nurtures spiritual growth by instilling Christian values, contributing to the children's holistic development and resilience despite life challenges.

The MPB literacy program serves as a valuable community outreach initiative, providing free tutorial services that improve the quality of life for families. It strengthens relationships within the community, offering preservice teachers practical teaching experience and supporting the school's mission. The program's impact on the children's educational, social, and spiritual development highlights its effectiveness and the positive collaboration between the school, community, parents, and teachers. Overall, the MPB literacy program has had a significant, positive impact, reinforcing children's academic growth, social skills, and spiritual well-being.

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