

What do Kindergarten Children Need to Know about COVID-19 Pandemic? A Supplementary Curriculum for Filipino Young Children during the Period of Enhanced Community Quarantine

Greg Tabios Pawilen¹⁾

University of the Philippines Los Banos

Abstract

The study aims to help teachers develop a supplementary curriculum for kindergarten children in the Philippines who were affected by the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) period brought by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The curriculum focuses on helping children make use of their time at home to experience meaningful learning with their family while understanding what is happening around them and why they need to follow a lot of rules individually, as a family, and as a community. The curriculum proposes the use of home-based learning anchored on Filipino cultural values of strong family relationship and on the philosophy of holistic learning.

Keywords: kindergarten, COVID 19 pandemic, curriculum, community quarantine

Corresponding author, ¹⁾ gtpawilen@up.edu.ph

Introduction

Over the past months, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has rapidly spread across various countries around the world. It expanded too swiftly, prompting the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare it as a global pandemic. This disease belongs to a family of viruses that may cause various symptoms. The most commonly reported symptoms are fever, cough, myalgia or fatigue, pneumonia, and complicated dyspnea, whereas less common reported symptoms include headache, diarrhea, hemoptysis, runny nose, and phlegm-producing cough (Huang et al., 2020; Li et al., 2020).

COVID-19 has been identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China beginning December 2019 (Li et al., 2020). A number of people that are getting sick and dying across several nations have been increasing at an alarming rate every day. Worse, countries were caught unprepared and people began to experience mixed emotions and responded differently. Many were afraid, uncertain, and angry while the religious became dependent on divine intervention. This particular disease is new to scientists and therefore no vaccine has been developed yet to protect the people and limit the contagion.

COVID-19 prevention and control strategies and methods are currently done at three levels: national level, case-related population level, and general population level (Adhikari et al. 2020). Lockdowns that seemed draconian when instigated in Wuhan few months ago are now becoming commonplace (The Lancet, 2020). Many countries closed their educational institutions, prohibited social gatherings, cancelled off domestic and international travels, provisionally closed business centers, temporarily cancelled work, and limited the movements of the people. Social and physical distancing was encouraged to avoid the spread of the virus. Tomes (2010) noted that recent historical work suggests that the early and sustained imposition of gathering bans, school closures, and other social distancing measures significantly reduced mortality rates during the 1918–1919 epidemics.

In the Philippines, classes started to be suspended in Metro Manila from the first week of March and on March 15, 2020, the President issued Presidential Proclamation 922 to put the entire country in a State of Public Health Emergency and declared the entire island of Luzon under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) for one month. The people have never

experienced this over the past centuries, except during the World War 2. Similar to other nationalities, many Filipinos felt uncomfortable, experienced anxieties, and responded with mixed emotions over the personal and social changes and challenges that they needed to do in compliance with the ECQ policies.

Schools were the first institutions affected by the ECQ policies when the government closed down the operation of all schools in all levels. The ECQ period falls under the fourth quarter of the basic education school calendar in the Philippines, when young children prepare for their *moving up ceremony*, which is equivalent to a graduation from kindergarten. As a result, the Department of Education (DepEd) released DepEd Order 42 s.2020 to guide schools, administrators, and teachers in handling the remaining activities for the school year 2019-2020 in the light of the COVID 19 pandemic. The DepEd also encouraged the use of alternative learning approaches, online learning platforms, and home-based learning to supplement the learning of students from kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12). The problem, however, is the lack of preparation and limited instructional materials available especially for kindergarten pupils.

The University of the Philippines COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team (2020) has done simulations on the spread of SARS-COV-2 in the country. The group estimated a peak by end of April to June with approximately 140,000 to 550,000 people infected in Metro Manila. In response to the estimations provided by the said team and by the scientific community, the government extended the ECQ period to April 30. However, after April 30, the government decided to continue the community quarantine policies in different levels based on the situation of every province, city, or town in the country until a vaccine or a cure is developed and made available for the public. The government likewise decided to move the opening of classes from first week of June to the last week of August 2020. The Department of Education released a streamlined curriculum called Most Essential Learning Competency (MELC) that will be used for the school year 2020-2021 and ordered all schools to explore alternative delivery modes of instruction and avoiding face to face classroom instruction especially in places where numbers of infected cases are still high.

Young children must be protected during this COVID-19 pandemic. It is essential for parents and teachers to protect themselves against this highly contagious disease. Thus, this study proposes a supplementary curriculum that could be used by teachers and parents in

teaching young kindergarten children while they are staying in their homes. This supplementary curriculum will develop the awareness of young children about the COVID-19 pandemic and learn how to protect themselves from the viruses.

Literature Review

The review of related literature is clustered into four sections (1) meaning of curriculum, (2) teaching young children at home, (3) young children at the time of COVID-19 pandemic, and (4) constructivism and teaching social phenomenon like COVID-19 to young children.

The meaning of curriculum

Since the beginning of the 20th century, curriculum is defined differently by teachers and scholars (Pawilen, 2012). Looking at the different definitions available in various literatures and studies, curriculum can be defined as a set of learning experiences, set of contents, a plan of learning, a set of competencies and learning outcomes, a list of courses and subjects, and it could also mean everything that students learn in school whether planned or unplanned (Pawilen, 2019). In a more artistic way, Erickson (2001) defined curriculum as the *head* and the *heart* of education. It is the centerpiece of the whole education system whereby all learning areas and disciplines are learned. (Pawilen, 2018). In this study, curriculum is defined simply as a set of intended learning outcomes that includes standards and competencies that will guide young children in learning.

The curriculum in this study will focus on helping young children understand what coronavirus is and what they can do to protect themselves from this disease. It also focuses on teaching Filipino values that will guide young children's behavior towards adjusting to different changes and challenges they experience in everyday as result of the ECQ. It is a supplementary curriculum because it is not part of the existing Kindergarten Curriculum Guide prescribed by the Department of Education. It is not an ordinary topic for curriculum integration; rather it is a necessity for children to learn particularly at this period of a global

crisis.

Teaching young children at home

Teaching young children at home has a long history in the Philippines, similar with other countries. Filipino ancestors taught their children focusing on life skills, cultural values, local literatures, and basic mathematical skills like counting, comparing, size, shapes, problem solving, and understanding nature (Pawilen & Sumida, 2007). Parents, particularly the mothers, and community elders served as teachers for these children and the conduct of education during this period is home-based and community-based (Pawilen, 2018). This practice of teaching young children has not been repealed amidst the increasing demands for both parents to work. Sanchez (2012) also observed that an increasing number of Filipino parents are beginning to embrace the concept of enrolling their children to homeschooling and believing firmly that home education is the best form of education for young children.

Teaching young children at home is highly encouraged, especially during the enhanced community quarantine period. In doing this, parents will not only allow the kids to continue learning; it will also give them time to have bonding and fellowship with their other siblings and with one another. This will reduce the loneliness, boredom, and trauma experienced by young children brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Learning at home with parents and siblings also provides positive impact in the development of young children (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017).

Young children at the time of COVID-19 pandemic

Throughout the enhanced community quarantine period, it can be observed that the *Stay at Home Policy* of the government provided an opportunity for families to spend time together. Family activities at home emerged to reduce boredom experiences of the family members, as they cannot go out from their households. However, the pandemic also brought sadness and confusion to children whose family members belong to the so-called frontliners and to those whose family members are infected by COVID-19. These children

were advised to refrain from embracing their parents or grandparents. Neither can they visit their sick family members nor stay with them in their houses. Young children also miss playing outside with their classmates and with other children. They miss all their outdoor activities and they cannot eat their favorite foods from fast food restaurants. The effects of ECQ are not easy to understand for young children. Parents and the whole family need to help them cope up with the changes and sacrifices they need to do. These can lead young children to experience loneliness and trauma especially for those whose relatives and friends have died due to the COVID-19. These surely affect the well-being of young children.

The Children's Society (2019) reported in their study on loneliness in childhood in the UK that there are strong links between loneliness and well-being among young children. Accordingly, relationships are the most important factor in children's well-being particularly with their family, careers, and friends. As a result, any instance of feeling left out, or not having anyone to talk to, is likely to damage the strength of children's relationships and potentially lower their overall well-being (The Children's Society, 2019). A focus on promoting mental health among young children is important at this period of crisis.

The proposed supplementary curriculum, through the guidance of parents and other family members, will help young children understand the COVID-19 crisis in a learner-centered way and in the context of the home environment. The home environment plays an important role for young children's development and learning (Pawilen, 2018). Educators should find a way to help young children learn and cope up with the situation during the period of ECQ. The home is a perfect venue for learning and coping at this time of crisis.

Constructivism and teaching social phenomenon like COVID-19 to young children

Children's everyday experience is the foundation of early childhood curriculum. It is important for young children to understand facts and concepts related to what they experience every day. The constructivist theory explains that young children construct knowledge based on their experiences and prior knowledge. It posits that knowledge is based on the learners' intellectual development as they experience reality while doing or

engaging themselves in either physical or social activity (Hodson, 1998; Martin, 2001).

In constructivism, learners are viewed as goal-directed agents who actively seek knowledge and information, and are seen taking an active role in the development of their own ideas (Bliss, 1994). Hartman and Glasgow (2002) postulate that children's ideas are personal and social constructions that are influenced by personal experience and the culture they live in. Constructivism believes that children learn new ideas about the natural world as a result of what they have observed, have experienced, and what they have been told, by integrating them into existing knowledge structures (Carale & Campo, 2003; Martin, 2001; Tolman, 1995).

In the Philippines, kindergarten educators are actively engaged in developing instructional materials and supplementary curriculum for understanding social phenomenon and natural disasters. For instance, teachers developed lessons about typhoons, earthquakes, and other natural disasters to help young children understand and survive in the period when these disasters come. Teachers also made teaching materials for children to understand social issues confronting them every day. At this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, a quick response came from the College of Education of the University of the Philippines where a group of faculty members developed a children's dictionary composed of 10 words for the young to further understand terms they usually encounter every time new about the disease is reported over the radio or television. The Department of Education also encouraged teachers and students to use DepEd Commons for Alternative Learning System to augment the lessons missed from school due to the enhanced community quarantine.

Young children cannot be isolated from what is happening due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their lives are also endangered. They are entitled to know what is happening and they deserve to understand all information they need to grasp about this coronavirus phenomenon. Constructivist theory provides the foundation for adults to know that young children are capable of understanding complex issues provided they are taught in a learner-centered manner.

Constructivism challenges educators to develop a supplementary curriculum for young children to understand the effects of COVID 19 in peoples' lives and to the communities, and accept whatever responsibilities they need to do. It is essential that the proposed

supplementary curriculum should provide learning experiences that: (1) are appropriate to the intellectual abilities and experiences of the children; (2) lead to new insights and awareness about the virus and its effect to human beings; and (3) provoke children's curiosity, engage their attention, and sustain interest to learn how to participate in controlling the spread of the virus. They children will also learn Filipino values that develop their resiliency during the crisis period.

Methods

This study relied on analysis of existing kindergarten curriculum, and review of data and reports on COVID-19 in the Philippines and WHO to answer the following questions: (1) What are the curriculum themes that could be used for the proposed supplementary curriculum? (2) What are the concepts and information about COVID-19 that should be taught to young children? (3) What are the Filipino values and right attitudes that could be included in the proposed supplementary curriculum? and (4) What are the contents of the proposed supplementary curriculum for Kindergarten during the period of enhanced community quarantine?

Data Gathering Procedure

1. Document analysis. WHO papers and existing government reports, data, executive orders and guidelines were analyzed to serve as basis for selecting the contents of the proposed supplementary curriculum.

2. Curriculum analysis. The DepEd Kindergarten Curriculum Guide and the K-12 Curriculum Guide for lower grades (Grade I to Grade III) and the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELC) were analyzed to align the curriculum standards and competencies of the proposed supplementary curriculum with the curriculum requirements of the Department of Education.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data from the document analysis were analyzed qualitatively. Emerging themes from the government and from the WHO documents served as guide in selecting the curriculum themes, standards, and learning competencies for the proposed curriculum. The result of the curriculum analysis served as guide in organizing the contents and in ensuring that the contents of the proposed supplementary curriculum are constructively aligned with the requirements of the Department of Education Kindergarten Curriculum Guide and with the K-12 Curriculum Guide.

The results of the document analysis and curriculum analysis were used to develop the final output of the study, which is a supplementary curriculum for kindergarten children affected by the enhanced community quarantine because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The results will be used to design the contents of the curriculum that include content standards and learning competencies.

Results

The results of the study were organized and presented based on the four research questions that were identified earlier in the methodology.

The curriculum themes that could be used for the proposed supplementary curriculum

The results of the analysis of the Kindergarten Curriculum Guide and the K-12 Curriculum Guide in the Philippines showed that there are possible curriculum themes that can be used for the proposed supplementary curriculum. The K-12 Curriculum Guide, specially the lower grades level (Grade I to Grade III), was also used because Republic Act 10533 otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act in the Philippines, specify that Kindergarten is a preparation for Grade 1 and that the Kindergarten Curriculum should develop the necessary academic skills among all kindergarten pupils. RA 10533 also requires that the curriculum should follow a spiral progression possibly using themes, standards, and competencies that are constructively aligned. The result as shown in Table 1

identifies seven themes that could be used as organizing themes to design the contents of the proposed supplementary curriculum.

Table 1. *Themes that could be used for the Proposed Supplementary Curriculum*

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- Human Body
 - Organism
 - Health Habits
 - Materials
 - Family
 - Community
 - Global Community
-

Concepts and information about COVID 19 that should be taught to young children

The results of the analysis of government guidelines, executive orders, and policies including those from the World Health Organization shows that there are concepts and information that everyone, young and old, should know about the COVID-19 pandemic. The result is shown in Table 2. These will empower them to behave properly, observe community quarantine rules, and understand public discourse on the ongoing effects of COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 2. *Concepts and Information on COVID 19 that should be taught to Young Children*

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- Concept of corona virus
 - Effects of the corona virus to the body
 - Controlling the spread of the virus
 - Persons Under Investigation
 - Persons Under Monitoring
 - Maintaining proper hygiene
 - Strengthening the Immune System of the Body
 - What to do when infected or when a family member is infected
 - Physical distancing
 - Community Quarantine
 - Staying at Home as a Family
 - Supporting the frontliners
-

Filipino values and right attitudes that could be included in the proposed supplementary curriculum for kindergarten

The study finds several Filipino cultural values that should be highlighted in the proposed curriculum, considering the various challenges and problems that people encounter every day. Table 3 shows these Filipino cultural values.

Table 3. Filipino Values that should be taught in the Proposed Curriculum

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- Spirit of Bayanihan
 - Spirituality
 - Family-oriented
 - Resourcefulness
 - Cleanliness
 - Resiliency
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Results from the analysis of the Kindergarten Curriculum Guide also show that there are positive attitudes that should be reinforced to young children at this period of the pandemic. These positive attitudes are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Positive attitudes that should be taught in the Proposed Curriculum

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- Concern for others
 - Sharing
 - Helping others
 - Cooperation and unity
 - Respecting rules and authorities
 - Conservation of resources
 - Cleanliness
-

These positive traits are included in the Kindergarten curriculum and they need to be reinforced specially in this period when the whole country experiences this COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis people are all experiencing calls for these positive traits to be practiced every day. For young children, teaching these positive traits at a period of uncertainty contributes to their moral development.

Table 5. *Contents of the Proposed Supplementary Curriculum for Kindergarten*

Content Standards	Learning Competencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the importance of having a healthy body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify good practices that will keep the body healthy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that there are organisms that could make the body sick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify organisms that can make the human body sick like bacteria, virus, and parasites.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that immune system helps to protect people against diseases caused by tiny invaders such as viruses, bacteria, and parasites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that the immune system is made up of specialized organs, cells, and tissues that all work together to destroy viruses, bacteria, and parasites. • Identify practices that strengthen the immune system of the body. • Explain how the food we eat can strengthen the immune system of the body. • Explain that regular and proper body exercise helps strengthen the immune system of the body.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the importance of practicing good health habits in fighting the virus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that the most effective ways to protect oneself and others against COVID-19 are to frequently clean or wash one’s hands, cover one’s mouth with a tissue or the bend of the elbow whenever one coughs, and maintain a distance of at least one meter from people who are coughing or sneezing. • Wear a mask when a family member has cough or colds, or when going to a crowded place. • Practice other good health habits like taking a bath regularly, brushing teeth after eating, and changing clothes regularly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that the coronavirus through droplets can live for few hours in some materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that the coronavirus through droplets can live for few hours in some materials like metals, papers, plastic, woods, or in any object touched or used by an infected person or from droplets of infected people. • Explain the importance of sanitizing places and objects at home or in the community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the importance of staying together as a family during the period of pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why families need to stay together in their homes during the period of pandemic. • Cooperate with the whole family. • Take good care of each member of the family. • Help each other in doing some household chores. • Help conserve food and other resources at home. • Explain the need for self-quarantine for family members who are sick. • Recognize the importance of praying together as a family.

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Table 5. *Contents of the Proposed Supplementary Curriculum for Kindergarten (continued)*

Content Standards	Learning Competencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the importance of cooperation as a member of a community during the time of pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the bayanihan concept of cooperating and helping each other at the period of the pandemic. • Explain the importance of following rules from the community leaders. • Respect community officials and other people maintaining public health and safety. • Practice physical and social distancing when meeting people. • Appreciate every service and help provided in the community. • Identify frontliners and what they do to help people at the time of this pandemic. • Appreciate front liners who are serving in the community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that the pandemic is affecting the global community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that the virus is affecting almost all countries in the world. • Explain that there are leaders helping people fight the virus.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that caring and sharing with one another are important in times of crisis or pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show concern to people who don't have homes, people who are hungry, and those who are far from their families. • Identify things they can be shared to other people specially those who are poor and needy. • Pray for the protection of front liners and healing of those who are infected. • Empathize with people who are sick and suffering because of the pandemic. • Express concern to other children and families affected by the pandemic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn important vocabulary words used during the period of the pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the meaning of these terms: • Pandemic • Quarantine • Home Quarantine • Community Quarantine • Enhanced Community Quarantine • Lockdown • Vaccine • Mass testing • Physical Distancing • Social Distancing • Droplets • Airborne • Symptomatic • Asymptomatic • Infectious • Transmission

Contents of the proposed supplementary curriculum for Kindergarten during the period of enhanced community quarantine

The results of the previous three research questions were organized to design the contents of the proposed curriculum. The curriculum content standards are the big ideas that young children should know and be able to do. It includes general statements of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students should learn and master as a result of schooling (Glatthorn et al., 1998; Marzano, 1996). Competencies are more specific in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that students should learn (Pawilen, 2019).

Discussion

The curriculum themes were selected from the K-12 Curriculum Guide specifically from the Kindergarten Curriculum Guide prescribed by the Department of Education. *Human body* as a theme in the Kindergarten curriculum allows young children to understand the different parts of the human body, and how the human body works and develops. This means that young children already have basic ideas about the human body and how to take care of it. The proposed supplementary curriculum will reinforce this background knowledge of the learners by providing information about human diseases caused by virus and bacteria, and how the human body is protected from them.

Organism as a theme is lifted from the higher grades curriculum. This will help young children understand better the concept of virus that causes various diseases. In the kindergarten curriculum, young children have already basic knowledge about germs causing diseases so this curriculum theme will enhance children's understanding of coronavirus and other organisms that are harmful to the human body.

Health habits as a theme is taught in the curriculum starting in Kindergarten. This theme includes proper nutrition, body exercise, and good habits that will keep the body healthy. In the proposed supplementary curriculum, this theme will provide enough background on the importance of strengthening the immune system of the human body in fighting various types of diseases.

The theme *material* is discussed under *non-living things* in the Kindergarten curriculum. So young children already have idea of different classification and types of objects around them. This is important information to teach students why they have to be careful in touching objects around them, why they have to wash their hands, and why they need to disinfect their surroundings as necessary measures in protecting people from the virus.

The theme on *family*, in the Kindergarten Curriculum Guide, the children are expected to develop understanding of concepts, ideas, practices that guide the child to be responsible and proud of himself and his family (Department of Education, 2012, p. 32). While the theme about *community* children are expected to have developed understanding of concepts, ideas, practices, situations, and responsibilities that the learner should acquire and understand so that they will become functional and responsive member of the community (Department of Education, 2012, p. 32). In this theme, the learners also develop a sense of community where the values of cooperation, sharing, caring, and unity are taught. They also develop the concept of understanding importance of following rules to keep order and they develop understanding of how community is organized.

The theme on global community is part of the Social Studies curriculum in the early grades curriculum (Grade I to III) where students are exposed to basic understanding of different culture and geography of different countries. This theme reinforces the concept that the world is composed of different countries, which is already introduced in the Kindergarten curriculum. The identified themes are also connected to the Science, Health, and Social Studies under the Grade I to Grade III of the K-12 Curriculum Guide.

There are basic concepts and information about COVID 19 that should be taught to young children. Young children should first understand the nature of coronavirus; what is it and how can it penetrate the human body; what happens when someone is exposed to the virus; and how to control the spread of the virus. This information will help young children understand why people are getting sick and why people are dying because of the corona virus. They will be able to know also why they need to protect themselves from the virus.

Young children need to know the basic difference between the people called PUI (person under investigation) and PUM (person under monitoring). They hear these terms every day from different people, from the TV, or in some community announcements. They need to know the protocols if ever they have neighbors, friends, and family members who are

considered as PUI or PUM. This will reduce their anxieties and satisfy their curiosities if they understand the reasons why some people need to be on quarantine.

The Philippine government through the Department of Health is always encouraging people to maintain proper hygiene and strengthening the immune system of the body. Children are guided by parents to observe proper hygiene everyday like proper washing of hands, using alcohol, taking a bath, cleaning the body, among others, as ways to maintain good body hygiene. Young children are also encouraged to take their vitamins, eat vegetables and fruits, drink healthy juice, drink water, and avoid junk foods and soda drinks to strengthen the immune system of their bodies. Young children need to understand the importance of having a strong immune system and how these practices can help.

The government through the local government units imposed some protocols to follow when the virus infected one member of the family or considered to be PUI or PUM. They also encouraged people to practice social and physical distancing. These are not easy to understand for young children. They are used to hugging and playing with their parents, siblings, and other members of the family. It is not easy for them to understand why people need this physical distance and isolation. For young children this could be traumatic and a source of loneliness. This will surely cause some stress to the whole family.

For children who are used to going out with family and friends, community quarantine is not easy. They need to understand why schools, malls, parks, travels, and other establishments are temporarily closed. They need to know why many people are getting hungry and why they have to conserve resources at home.

Staying at home as a family is easier to accept and young children find this beneficial to them. This enables the whole family to spend more time together, watch movies and TV, eat meals, and do household chores together. The enhanced community quarantine in many ways strengthened the relationships and bonds of families. Parents can spend more time with their children, teach them, and listen to their stories and concerns. Filipinos are known to be family-oriented people. Staying at home reinforces some Filipino traits and family values.

Since the start of the quarantine, young children hear and watch from the news about the front liners who are dedicating their lives and services to make people safe and comfortable during the ECQ and to save people from COVID-19. So this is the perfect situation for

children to learn the value of empathy, caring and respecting other people, nationalism, and other values. Children also need to know who are these so-called front liners and what they are doing for all people.

All these concepts and information related to the COVID-19 pandemic are essential for children to understand. The personal and social crisis, and the threats brought by the COVID-19 pandemic are real to them. They experience and observe them every day. Young children learn new ideas about the natural world as a result of what they observed, experienced, and what they have been told, by integrating them into existing knowledge structures (Carale & Campo, 2003; Martin, 2001; Tolman, 1995). This was well supported by Hodson (1998) in advocating that the learners are active constructors of knowledge and re-constructors of their own understanding. Through the proposed supplementary curriculum, young children will develop a better understanding of what is happening around them by making sense of what they observed, heard, and experienced.

The supplementary curriculum also provides an opportunity to develop Filipino values and right attitudes. For example the spirit of *Bayanihan* is a unique Filipino culture of helping one another without expecting anything in return. It is an act of offering help to people in need. In *Bayanihan*, one doesn't need to be asked for help. It involves a spirit of empathy and volunteerism.

Spirituality, whether Christian, Muslim, or other ethnic religion in the Philippines, is influenced by an indigenous culture and inspired by an indigenous belief that all people are children of God. Spirituality connects the people as one family and as a united community. Hence, in this period of pandemic people need to pray for God's protection and blessings. Spirituality makes Filipinos resilient during previous crises brought about by natural disasters like earthquakes and typhoons. Young children need to be learn these things.

Resourcefulness is a Filipino trait that helps them survive in meeting the daily challenges of poverty in their lives. Resourcefulness is a creative culture that enables Filipinos to be contented of what is available for them and to make use of these resources to survive. Young children need to be creative and resourceful at the time of any crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cleanliness is universal but the practice of Filipino cleanliness of the body is quite different from other cultures. Filipinos are taught to wash hands before eating, take a bath

twice a day; during morning before going to school or office, or before they work in the fields for farmers, and during the night before they sleep. Changing of clothes and underwear has its ritual too. Cleaning the house and surroundings is a must especially for those living in the provinces. These practices of cleanliness can be reiterated this period of pandemic. Young children need to be reminded or taught to practice these Filipino traits that are long forgotten by some Filipinos too.

Young children also need to learn the spirit of resiliency, which is known among Filipinos especially during crisis. Resiliency will help young children cope up with stress and anxieties brought by the pandemic. It develops children's fighting spirit and inner courage in times of crisis such as this COVID-19 pandemic.

Children's ideas are products of personal and social constructions influenced by their personal experience and the culture they live in (Hartman & Glasgow, 2002; Pawilen & Sumida, 2007). Thus, it is important to reinforce and highlight these Filipino values in the proposed supplementary curriculum for young children

The identified curriculum themes from the first research question served as the basis for selecting and formulating the content standards. The results from the second and third research questions were used to select and formulate the learning competencies. The curriculum as shown in Table 5 was designed as supplementary, which means it does not duplicate the existing topics or competencies in the prescribed curriculum. The primary goal of the complementary curriculum is really to help young children learn what is happening around them and how they can protect themselves from the corona virus disease. Since the kindergarten pupils are already in the fourth quarter of their lesson, and with the guidance of teachers and parents, they are already capable of learning the proposed supplementary curriculum. Some adults think that kindergarten learners are not capable of thinking logically or evaluating explanations, but according to Einon (2002) young children have all the characteristics needed to become great scientists: being observant, being curious and above all, being eager to know why things happen.

Recommendations for the implementation of the Curriculum:

1. Teachers can develop worksheets and send these online to parents so they could use them in teaching their children at home.

2. Teachers can use online learning platforms in teaching the lessons if internet is available in the homes of young children.
3. A copy of the supplementary curriculum with schedule of lessons should be provided to parents for their supervision and to serve as their guide in helping their children learn at home.
4. The local language should be used in the implementation or in the teaching process.
5. The Department of Education can adapt this curriculum to help kindergarten pupils in public schools. DepEd can provide instructional materials that children can use at home.
6. The schools can use the supplementary curriculum even after the enhanced community quarantine period.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic is an ongoing phenomenon but alongside these dark experiences and sentiments of many people, images of hope and various acts of creativity and innovation emerged from people from different walks of life to help one another in coping with various personal and social crises brought by the virus. These complement the works of scientists and medical professionals in finding solutions to totally eradicate the virus.

The development of a supplementary curriculum for young children is brought about by the necessity to help young children understand the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect to their lives, families, and communities. As citizens, young as they are, it is their right to know what is happening around them and it is their duty to participate in the survival of the human race against the coronavirus. When a global crisis that threatens the lives of people flares up, all people young and old need to act. The proposed curriculum will guide the teachers and parents in this noble endeavor.

The contents of the proposed supplementary curriculum could also be used in other countries as a guide in developing their own curriculum. Finally, this curriculum could serve as a guide for teachers in developing instructional materials for young children to understand further COVID-19 and all the things people can do to help to survive in this

time of pandemic.

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