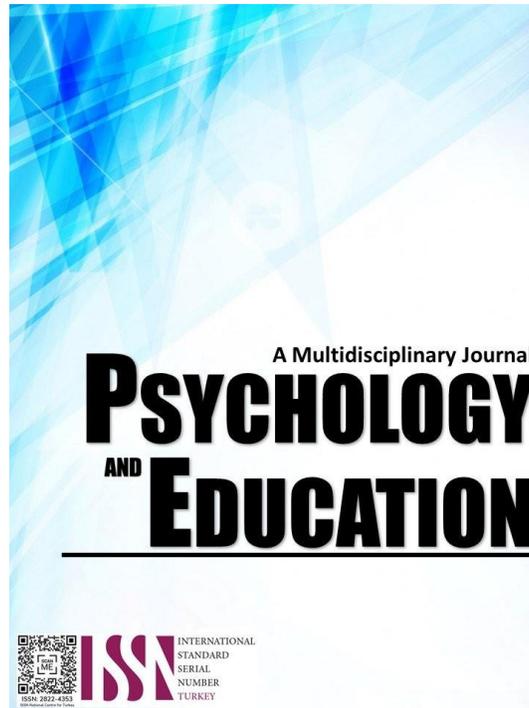


SEPARATION ANXIETY AMONG KINDERGARTEN LEARNERS



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Separation Anxiety among Kindergarten Learners

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Abstract

This study is concerned with the separation anxiety among kindergarten learners in Pangasinan Schools Division II for school year 2023 – 2024. Specifically, this study determined the level of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along inferiority complex, self-esteem needs, safety needs, socialization needs and love and feeling of belonging needs. (1) It looked into the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, length of service as a Kindergarten teacher, and number of relevant trainings and seminars attended, (2) the teachers level of perceived separation anxiety among kindergarten learners, (3) the significant difference in the level of perceived separation anxiety among kindergarten learners across the profile variable. (4) the problems encountered by the kindergarten learners. To address the foregoing problems raised in this study, statistical measures were used for data analysis and interpretations. These are the frequency counts (f) and percentage (%), the average weighted means (AWM), and the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used. The study reveals that kindergarten learners often come from lower-income families, with farming and housewives as their parents. Factors like inferiority complex, self-esteem, safety, socialization, love, and belonging contribute to separation anxiety. The study suggests that separation anxiety may be a common issue due to emotional and developmental challenges faced during their first school experiences. The study suggests several strategies to enhance the well-being and educational outcomes of lower-income children, including tailored support programs, parental engagement initiatives, community partnerships, financial literacy programs, and scholarship opportunities. It also recommends the use of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs in kindergarten classrooms to develop skills like self-awareness and empathy. Teachers should have access to resources and training to address separation anxiety effectively, and further research is recommended to understand the relationship between factors and separation anxiety.

Keywords: *kindergarten, separation anxiety, inferiority complex, self-esteem needs*

Introduction

As the school year starts, children may have some anxiety about going to school. This could happen even if they are not going to school for the first time. The idea of new experiences away from their parents or other loved ones can be quite scary for children. Complaining of an upset stomach, headache, or something else is often how children show anxiety and fear. Separation anxiety is a normal part of development for all children. Starting preschool, kindergarten or a new primary school is a very exciting time but it can cause anxiety for some children. Separation anxiety is very common at these junctures, especially when children haven't yet been apart from their parents for long stretches of time during the day. The anxiety may not only be related to school. It can happen before other separations like sleepovers at friend's houses or a parent's business trip. Children may be afraid that something bad will happen during the separation. And clingy behavior, pleading, and tantrums are common just before the separation. They may also have nightmares, refuse to sleep alone, or need frequent reassurance that everything is ok.

Smith (2023) said that separation anxiety disorder occurs because a child feels unsafe in some way. Take a look at anything that may have thrown your child's world off balance, made them feel threatened, or upset their normal routine. If you can pinpoint the root cause—or causes—you'll be one step closer to helping your child through their struggles. Separation anxiety in kindergarten learners typically occurs due to the unfamiliarity of the school environment and being away from their primary caregivers for an extended period of time. Kindergarteners are often transitioning from being at home or in a more familiar childcare setting to attending school, which can be a significant change for them. Additionally, they might feel anxious about being in a new place, with new people, and not having their parents or caregivers readily available. This fear of separation can manifest as clinginess, crying, or becoming upset when parents or caregivers leave them at school. It is a normal part of a child's development and tends to decrease over time as they become more accustomed to their new routine and form attachments with their teachers and peers.

According to Segal (2023), it's natural for your young child to feel anxious when you say goodbye. In early childhood, crying, tantrums, or clinginess—all the hallmarks of separation anxiety—are healthy reactions to separation and a normal stage of development. It can begin before a child's first birthday and may reoccur until the age of four. While the intensity and timing of separation anxiety can vary tremendously from child to child, it's important to remember that a little worry over leaving mom or dad is normal, even when your child is older. With understanding and the right coping strategies, your child's fears can be relieved—and should fade completely as they get older. Separation anxiety is a common experience for many kindergarten learners. It refers to the distress or worry that children may feel when they are separated from their primary caregivers, usually experienced when starting school or being in unfamiliar environments.

The developmental stage of kindergarten is often the first time children are separated from their caregivers for an extended period. This stage of development is marked by increased independence but also a heightened need for security and attachment to parents or primary

caregivers. Starting school can be intimidating and fear of unknown for young children as they are entering a new environment with unfamiliar faces and routines. This fear of the unknown can contribute to separation anxiety as they may worry about what will happen when their parents are not present.

Nall (2023) said that kindergarten learners have typically developed strong attachments to their parents or primary caregivers, who have been their main source of comfort and security since birth. Separation from these caregivers can be emotionally challenging and trigger anxiety. Children who have previous negative experiences with separation, such as being separated from their parents during medical procedures or other events, may be more prone to separation anxiety. Traumatic experiences can heighten the fear and worry associated with being apart from their caregivers.

It is common for separation anxiety to be most intense during the initial period of starting kindergarten. This transition period requires adjustment for both the child and the parent, as routines and expectation change. Over time, with familiarity and routine, separation anxiety tends to diminish. Kindergarten learners experiencing separation anxiety may exhibit various signs, including clinginess, crying, tantrums, refusal to attend school, physical complaints (e.g., stomachaches, headaches), and a general sense of unease or distress.

According to Jones (2021) teachers and parents can employ various strategies to help kindergarten learners cope with separation anxiety. These may include gradually introducing the child to new environments, maintaining consistent routines, providing reassurance, using transitional objects (e.g., a favorite toy or photograph), and encouraging socialization and peer interactions. Creating a supportive and nurturing classroom environment is crucial for minimizing separation anxiety in kindergarten learners. Teachers can establish a warm and welcoming atmosphere, encourage open communication, foster positive relationships between children, and provide opportunities for parents to be involved in the school community.

Brown (2018) said that separation anxiety is a common experience for many kindergartners, it typically lessens over time as children become more comfortable and familiar with their new surroundings. However, some children may require additional support or intervention if the anxiety persists and significantly impacts their well-being or ability to participate in school activities. Anxiety separation of kindergarten learners is a normal part of their developmental process. By understanding and addressing these anxieties, parents and educators can help support children through this transition and promote their emotional well-being as they embark on their educational journey.

The anxiety may not only be related to school. It can happen before other separations like sleepovers at friend's houses or a parent's business trip. Children may be afraid that something bad will happen during the separation. And clingy behavior, pleading, and tantrums are common just before the separation. They may also have nightmares, refuse to sleep alone, or need frequent reassurance that everything is ok.

Gerber (2021), Separation anxiety is a common condition experienced by many kindergarten learners in the United States of America. It refers to a child's distress or anxiety when separated from their primary caregiver, typically their parents or guardians. There are several reasons why separation anxiety may occur in kindergarten learners, Kindergarten marks a significant transition for children, as they start attending school and spending more time away from their caregivers. This change can trigger feelings of uncertainty, fear, and anxiety in young learners. Kindergarten learners often have a strong attachment bond with their primary caregivers. Separation from these trusted individuals can cause distress as children may worry about their safety and well-being. Starting kindergarten involves entering a new and unfamiliar environment. The change in routine, surroundings, and interaction with new peers and teachers can be overwhelming for some children, leading to increased anxiety. Kindergarten learners may have limited experience being away from their caregivers, which can make them apprehensive about what will happen in their absence. They may worry about being alone, not knowing what to expect, or feeling uncomfortable in new situations. Negative experiences, such as previous separations that were distressing or traumatic, can also contribute to separation anxiety in kindergarten learners. These experiences may create a fear of being separated again. It is important for parents, teachers, and caregivers to understand and address separation anxiety in kindergarten learners. Providing a supportive and comforting environment, establishing a consistent routine, gradually increasing separation time, and encouraging open communication can help alleviate anxiety and facilitate a smooth transition into kindergarten.

In Australia, Barnes (2018) said that separation anxiety is a child's fear of being away from their parents or caregivers. While it's a common and natural worry in babies and toddlers, it sometimes persists into the preschool and school years. Approximately 4 percent of Australian children aged 4 to 17 suffer from a condition known as separation anxiety disorder that can significantly interfere with their lives. Children with separation anxiety may become homesick, not want to attend school or other activities, avoid visiting friends' houses or be unable to enter a room on their own. They may also have difficulty around bedtime and may insist that someone stay with them until they're asleep. Other common symptoms include stomach aches, headaches, nausea, emotional overwhelm and/or vomiting when separation occurs.

In Amman City, Jordan, separation anxiety is a normal and common experience for children, especially during the preschool and early school years. Separation anxiety refers to the distress that a child experiences when separated from a primary caregiver, such as a parent or other family member. Children with separation anxiety may worry excessively about losing their caregivers, fear being away from home, or have trouble sleeping without a parent nearby. In some cases, they may also experience physical symptoms, such as headaches

or stomachaches, when separated.

While separation anxiety is a normal part of development, it can be distressing for both children and their caregivers. To help a child manage separation anxiety, it's important to provide reassurance, consistency, and structure. This can include creating a predictable routine, making sure your child knows what to expect when separated, and offering comforting items, such as a special toy or blanket. Gradual exposure to brief separations can also help children get used to being away from their caregivers and build their confidence.

The child's separation anxiety affect their daily life or causing significant distress, it's important to seek professional help. A mental health professional can help identify the underlying causes of your child's anxiety and develop an appropriate treatment plan, which may include therapy or medication. Research findings in Jordan showed that separation anxiety is significantly associated with parenting styles. This might be referred to that parenting style can have an impact on a child's level of anxiety. Research has shown that children who are raised in an authoritarian parenting style, where there is a lot of control and pressure to conform to strict rules and expectations, may be more likely to experience anxiety. On the other hand, children who are raised in a more supportive and responsive parenting style, where parents are involved and responsive to their child's needs and feelings, may be less likely to experience anxiety.

A parenting style that balances warmth and nurturing with appropriate limits and structure, known as authoritative parenting, has been shown to be associated with the least amount of anxiety in children. This style emphasizes open communication, mutual respect, and encourages independence and self-regulation in children. It's also important to note that parenting style is just one factor that can contribute to a child's level of anxiety. Other factors, such as genetics, temperament, and life experiences, can also play a role. That being said, a supportive and involved parenting style can help reduce the risk of anxiety and promote overall well-being in children.

Overprotective parenting, also known as helicopter parenting, can contribute to anxiety in children. When parents are overly protective, they may constantly monitor their child's activities, make decisions for them, and intervene in their problems, instead of allowing their child to solve problems on their own and develop independence. This type of parenting can lead to feelings of anxiety in children because it sends the message that the child is not capable of handling challenges and making decisions on their own. It can also lead to a lack of trust in their own abilities and a fear of making mistakes, which can further contribute to anxiety. In addition, children who are raised in an overprotective environment may struggle with coping skills and resilience, as they have not had the opportunity to develop these skills through experiencing challenges and overcoming obstacles on their own. This can make them more susceptible to anxiety and stress later in life. It's important for parents to strike a balance between being supportive and allowing their child to take risks and make mistakes, as this can help promote their child's independence and resilience. Encouraging children to solve problems on their own and make their own decisions in a safe and supportive environment can help build their confidence and reduce the risk of anxiety.

Separation anxiety among kindergarten learners does occur in the Philippines, just as it does in many other countries around the world. Separation anxiety is a normal developmental stage that typically occurs to children, but it can also persist into the kindergarten years for some children. There are several reasons why separation anxiety may occur among kindergarten learners in the Philippines: Kindergarten learners are still in the early stages of developing emotional resilience and independence. They may have difficulty adjusting to new environments, unfamiliar faces, and being away from their primary caregivers. Cultural factors is one of many reasons why they feel separation anxiety. Filipino culture places a strong emphasis on family ties and close relationships. Children in the Philippines often have strong attachments to their parents or caregivers, making separation more challenging for them. In the Philippines, it is common for parents to be heavily involved in their child's daily life, including accompanying them to school. When children are suddenly expected to be independent and separate from their parents, it can lead to anxiety and distress. Some kindergarten settings in the Philippines may not have adequate resources or support to help children with separation anxiety. This can exacerbate the issue, making it more difficult for children to adjust and feel secure in their new environment. Separation anxiety is a normal part of a child's development, and it is not unique to the Philippines. It is important for parents, caregivers, and educators to provide a supportive and nurturing environment to help children navigate through this stage successfully.

In the Philippines, the study of Quimson (2018) said that Kindergarten is a critical year where children's experiences nurture positive approaches to learning and prepare children for the more rigorous academic expectations of the primary grades. However, children at this age are also the most vulnerable to experience separation anxiety especially when starting to go school. Her study aimed to determine the prevalence of separation anxiety among kindergarten pupils. Results revealed that separation anxiety among kindergarten learners are sometimes prevalent. Further, results also revealed that profile variables Parent's occupation and Birth orders have a significant effect on the prevalence of anxiety among kindergarten learners. Furthermore, 'refusal to go to school' is the most serious problems being encountered on kindergarten learners who experience separation anxiety as perceived by their teachers. Moreover, management of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners using the proposed intervention program is one of the recommendations given in the study.

In the Umingan District 2, separation anxiety of kindergarten learners also happens in the schools specially during the first day of school and even within the school year. For teachers its normal for a child to exhibit many emotions on the first day. Some children face separation anxiety, which leads to crying, while others run around uncontrollably because they're so excited. These behaviors and others are completely normal. It's important to know that teachers are trained to deal with them, and eventually, children will adjust

and feel comfortable with their new school-day routine.

Kindergarten learners in Umingan District 2 are used to spending every minute of the day with their family. When it comes time for young children to enroll in kindergarten, they struggle with separation anxiety, which can make the transition difficult and stressful.

Kindergarten learners experiencing separation anxiety cling to their parents during drop-offs, refuse to take naps, or cry and yell when their parents leave. Other signs of separation anxiety in kindergarten learners include resisting attention or support from teachers or caregivers and throwing a tantrum.

Kindergarten teachers play a critical role in supporting children with separation anxiety in the school. Creating a welcoming environment and building positive relationships with children is key in making them feel secure and confident in their new surroundings. By establishing a predictable routine from day one and working closely with parents and other caregivers, teachers can help ease the transition into kindergarten and support children as they navigate this important milestone.

This are some of the reason why this study is being conducted to minimize the separation anxiety of kindergarten learners in Umingan District 2, Pangasinan Division II for SY 2023 – 2024.

Research Questions

This study determined the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among Kindergarten learners in public elementary schools for school year 2023 – 2024. Specifically, this study answered the following questions:

1. What is the profile variables of kindergarten learners in terms of:
 - 1.1. age;
 - 1.2. sex;
 - 1.3. birth order;
 - 1.4. parent's highest educational attainment;
 - 1.5. parent's occupation; and
 - 1.6. monthly family income?
2. What is the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners in public elementary schools as perceived by the teachers:
 - 2.1. inferiority complex;
 - 2.2. self – esteem needs;
 - 2.3. safety needs;
 - 2.4. socialization needs; and
 - 2.5. love and feeling of belonging needs?
3. Are there significant differences in the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners across their profile variables?
4. What problems do kindergarten learners with separation anxiety encountered as perceived by the teachers?
5. What intervention program can be proposed to reduce separation anxiety of kindergarten learners?

Methodology

Research Design

The researcher used mixed research design or method. This is a research approach that combines elements of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single study. This type of research design allows researchers to gather and analyze data from different perspectives, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. In a mixed research design, researchers typically collect and analyze both quantitative data (such as numerical data, survey responses, or statistical information) and qualitative data (such as interviews, observations, or open-ended responses).

By incorporating both types of data, researchers can gain a deeper insight into the research problem, as well as triangulate findings to enhance the validity and reliability of the study. There are different ways to integrate quantitative and qualitative data in a mixed research design, including sequential designs (where one type of data collection and analysis follows the other), concurrent designs (where both types of data are collected and analyzed simultaneously), and transformative designs (where one type of data is used to inform the other). Overall, mixed research designs offer a more holistic approach to research, allowing researchers to explore complex research questions, validate findings, and generate richer insights that may not be possible with just one type of research method.

Respondents

The subjects of this study are the Kindergarten learners and teachers in Umingan District 2, Pangasinan Division II for School Year 2023 – 2024.

Table 1. *Distribution of Respondents*

<i>School Cluster 6</i>	<i>Number of Kindergarten Learners</i>	<i>Number of Teachers</i>
Casilan Elementary School	6	1
Sta Rosa Elementary School	12	1
Resurreccion Elementary School	8	1
Pangangaan Elementary School	13	1
Luna Este Elementary School	16	1
Prado Elementary School	25	1
Total	80	6

Instruments

The researcher used questionnaire checklist instrument specifically made for the study based on DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2016 Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten Education and K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum.

The questionnaire-checklist evaluated and validated by experts like Master Teacher, District Kindergarten Coordinator, School Principal, District Supervisor, and Program Specialists. The suggestions will be incorporated in the final draft. The questionnaires finalized after its approval by the examination committee.

The main objective of the validation is to ascertain that every question is clearly understood and within the experience of the actual respondents of the study. This ensure that the respondents do not find difficulty in answering the questionnaire and the data gathered would valid and reliable

Procedure

Before administering the research instrument, permission will be secured from Schools Division Superintendent and the School Heads.

The researcher personally distributed and administered the questionnaires to all Kindergarten teachers in Umingan District 2, Pangasinan Division II.

Likewise, the researcher will personally retrieve the same questionnaires. The responses and data obtained kept confidential by the researcher to ensure the highest degree of objectivity of responses.

The respective Kindergarten teachers and school heads of the institutions will be informed and oriented by the researchers regarding the purpose of the study.

Data Analysis

The following statistical tools will be used to answer the specific problems of the study.

To determined the profile of the Kindergarten learners namely, age, sex, birth order, parent's highest educational attainment, parent's occupation, and family monthly income, frequency counts and percentages will be used.

To determined the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners, the weighted average mean will be used.

The responses will be categorized into five-point scale with corresponding numerical categories. The choices will be classified as "Very High", "High", "Moderately

High", "Low", and "Very Low". Literal value A, B, C, D, and E will be assigned respectively.

To answer specific problem number 4, determining the differences between the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among Kindergarten learners across their profile variables, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) will be utilized.

The researcher used interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to gather the problems encountered by the Kindergarten learners. The teachers asked individually through FGD and summarizes their answers to come up with the most severe problems encountered by the Kindergarten learners. The Kindergarten learners also interviewed by the researcher to get their most serious problems.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presented the details of the analysis and the interpretations of the data in relation to the problems posed in the study.

Specifically, it presents the four (5) significant parts of the study through which the data gathered had been discussed. These includes the profile variables of the respondents,

frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among Kindergarten learners, significant differences in the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among Kindergarten learners across their profile variables, problems encountered by the by the Kindergarten learners with separation anxiety as perceived by the teachers, and intervention program can be proposed to reduce separation anxiety of Kindergarten learners.

PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Some variables related to the profile of the Kindergarten teachers in Pangasinan Division II are herein considered. Such variables included was age, sex, birth order, parent's highest educational attainment, parent's occupation and family monthly income.

In this study, the Kindergarten teachers of Pangasinan Division II were taken as respondents. They were categorized according to certain variables.

Table 2 provides a profile of 80 respondents, presenting various demographic and socio-economic variables. Here's an interpretation and discussion of the findings.

Table 2. *Profile of the Respondents N =80*

Profile Variables	Variable Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	5 years old	71	89%
	6 years old	8	10%
	10 years old	1	1%
Sex	Male	39	49%
	Female	41	51%
Birth Order	First Born	34	40%
	Second Born	24	30%
	Third Born	16	20%
	Fourth Born	5	6%
	Fifth Born	1	1%
Parent's Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor Degree Holder	7	9%
	High School Graduate	64	80%
	High School Undergraduate	5	6%
	Elementary Graduate	3	4%
	Elementary Undergraduate	1	1%
Parent's Occupation	Police Officer	1	1%
	Nurse	2	1%
	Teacher	3	2%
	Farming	53	33%
	Housewife	51	32%
	Technician	1	1%
	Construction Worker	12	8%
	OFW	16	10%
	Sales Lady	2	1%
	Barber	1	1%
	Mechanic	1	1%
	Vendor	8	5%
	Factory Worker	1	1%
	Online Seller	1	1%
	Driver	3	2%
None	3	2%	
Monthly Family Income	P10,000 and below	42	53%
	P10,001 – 20,000	23	29%
	P20,001 – 30,000	9	11%
	P30,001 – 40,000	5	6%
	P40,001 – 50,000	1	1%

Age. The majority of the respondents (89%) are 5 years old, with only a small percentage being 4, 6, or 10 years old. This suggests that the study is likely focused on a specific age group.

Sex. There is a relatively equal distribution between male (49%) and female (51%) respondents, indicating that both genders are represented in the sample.

Birth Order. The largest group is first-born children (40%), followed by second-born (30%), third-born (20%), and a smaller percentage for fourth-born (6%) and fifth-born (1%) children. This distribution provides insight into the family structure and dynamics of the respondents.

Parent's Highest Educational Attainment. The majority of parents (80%) are high school graduates, while only a small percentage have a Bachelor's degree (9%). A few parents are still pursuing higher education. This suggests that the education level of the parents is generally lower to moderate.

Parent's Occupation. The most common occupations among parents are farming (33%), housewives (32%), and construction workers (8%). There is a diverse range of occupations represented, with some parents engaged in professional roles and others in manual labor.

Monthly Family Income. Over half of the families (53%) have a monthly income of P10,000 and below, indicating that most of the respondents come from low-income households. A smaller percentage of families have a monthly income between P10,001 and P20,000 (29%), and only a few have a higher income. This highlights the economic background of the families involved in the study.

In summary, the table provides a comprehensive overview of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the 80 respondents. The findings can be useful for understanding the context and background of the study participants, which may influence their experiences, behaviors, and outcomes.

Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners in Public Elementary Schools as Perceived by the Teachers

The main purpose of this study was to determine the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among Kindergarten learners as perceived the teachers in Pangasinan Division II.

It was done by requesting the Kindergarten teachers to give their perceptions on the separation anxiety among Kindergarten learners along inferiority complex, self – esteem needs, safety needs, socialization needs; and love and feeling of belonging needs.

A. Inferiority Complex

Table 3 presents the indicator of frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among Kindergarten learners as perceived the teachers in Pangasinan Division II.

Based on the table provided, it shows the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along with inferiority complex traits. The table also shows that the occurrence of separation anxiety along inferiority complex weighted mean is 4.52 which described as “Very High”.

The table also provides a comprehensive overview of the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along with inferiority complex traits.

Table 3. *Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners Along Inferiority Complex*

	<i>Inferiority Complex The learner might...</i>	<i>AWM</i>	<i>DE</i>
1	experiences constant scolding from parents/guardians.	4.54	VH
2	encounters public embarrassment.	4.48	H
3	lacks moral support from their parents or guardians.	4.44	H
4	lacks appreciation for everything he or she does.	4.46	H
5	displays signs of <u>low self-esteem</u> .	4.52	VH
6	is persistently looking for <u>validation</u> and praise from others.	4.56	VH
7	refuses to participate in competitive events for fear of being compared to others.	4.57	VH
8	keeps away from his peers.	4.55	VH
9	pulls away from family, friends, and colleagues, especially in social situations.	4.53	VH
10	keeps on committing mistakes.	4.50	VH
	OWM	4.52	VH

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00, Always/Very High (VH); 3.50 – 4.49, Often/High (H); 2.50 – 3.49, Sometimes/ Moderately High (MH); 1.50 – 2.49, Seldom/Low (L); 1.00 – 1.49, Never/Very Low (VL)

It includes various factors such as constant scolding from parents/guardians, public embarrassment, lack of moral support, lack of appreciation, signs of low self-esteem, seeking validation from others, fear of comparison in competitive events, isolation from peers and others, and making mistakes. Each factor is rated based on its impact on separation anxiety, with higher numbers indicating a more significant influence. This comprehensive analysis helps in understanding the various aspects contributing to separation anxiety in kindergarten learners.

The numerical ratings assigned to each factor indicate the level of impact it has on separation anxiety, with higher numbers suggesting a more pronounced influence. For instance, factors like public embarrassment and fear of comparison in competitive events are rated relatively high, indicating that these experiences may significantly contribute to separation anxiety in kindergarten learners.

By analyzing and understanding the data presented in this table, educators, parents, and mental health professionals can gain valuable insights into the various aspects that may trigger or worsen separation anxiety in young children. This comprehensive analysis can inform targeted interventions and support strategies to address these factors effectively and promote the well-being of kindergarten learners experiencing separation anxiety.

The highest indicator in the table, rated as VH, represented factors that have a very high impact on separation anxiety among kindergarten learners. These factors, such as poor academic performance leading to a lack of confidence, a negative outlook on life, worries about appearance and body image, and feeling self-conscious around others, are likely to significantly contribute to feelings of anxiety and insecurity in young children. These factors can deeply affect a child's self-esteem and sense of worth, leading to heightened levels of separation anxiety as they struggle to cope with these challenges.

On the other hand, the lowest indicator in the table, rated as H, represents factors that have a relatively lower impact on separation anxiety among kindergarten learners. These factors, such as doubts about showing strengths and talents, avoiding activities involving other people due to fear of judgment, and experiencing medical problems, while still important, may not have as pronounced an effect



on separation anxiety compared to the VH-rated factors. These factors may contribute to feelings of anxiety and insecurity to a lesser extent or may be more manageable for children to navigate in terms of their impact on separation anxiety.

Understanding the reasons behind the highest and lowest indicator ratings can help educators, parents, and mental health professionals identify key areas to focus on when addressing separation anxiety in kindergarten learners. By targeting interventions towards mitigating the impact of high-rated factors and providing support in areas where the impact is lower, it is possible to create a more comprehensive approach to supporting children's emotional well-being and reducing separation anxiety.

According to Gordon (2021), children may struggle with inferiority due to various factors such as consistent bullying, criticism, or growing up in an emotionally abusive home. While feelings of inferiority are situational, those who struggle with it regularly experience consistent invalidation at home, school, and in the community. Even healthy, well-adjusted children can experience feelings of inferiority. Tease, bullying, and a lack of positive input can also contribute to feelings of inferiority.

B. Self-Esteem Needs

Table 4 pictures the Kindergarten teachers perceived occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along self-esteem needs.

The table show the assessment perceived by the Kindergarten teachers perceived occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along self-esteem needs. The assessed weighted mean of Kindergarten teachers is 4.49 with a transmuted rating of “High”.

The table also provides a comprehensive overview of the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners in relation to self-esteem needs. Each row in the table represents a specific self-esteem need or factor that may contribute to separation anxiety, along with a corresponding rating indicating the impact of that factor on separation anxiety.

For example, factors such as poor academic performance leading to a lack of confidence, a negative outlook on life, fear of trying and doubting abilities, and worries about appearance and body image are rated relatively high (VH) in terms of their influence on separation anxiety. These factors suggest that issues related to self-esteem and confidence play a significant role in the development and exacerbation of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners.

Conversely, factors like experiencing medical problems, doubts about showing strengths and talents, and avoiding activities involving other people due to fear of judgment are rated lower (H) in terms of their impact on separation anxiety.

Table 4. *Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners Along Self-Esteem Needs*

	<i>Self-Esteem Needs</i>	<i>AWM</i>	<i>DE</i>
1	The learner has poor academic performance in school, resulting in a lack of confidence.	4.55	VH
2	The learner finds it hard to cope with a challenging life event because they already believe themselves to be ‘hopeless’.	4.46	H
3	The learner experienced an unhappy childhood where parents (or other significant people, such as teachers), were extremely critical.	4.52	VH
4	The learner has a negative outlook on life, feels a lack of control, and has negative feelings.	4.51	VH
5	The learner has a fear of trying; they may doubt their abilities or worth and avoid challenges.	4.48	H
6	The learner avoids activities that involve other people, like sports or social events, because they are afraid they will be negatively judged.	4.45	H
7	The learner feels self-conscious and stressed around others and constantly looks for ‘signs’ that people don’t like them.	4.52	VH
8	The learner worries about his or her appearance and body image.	4.56	VH
9	The learner experiences medical problems such as chronic pain, serious illness, or physical disability.	4.38	H
10	The learner has doubts about showing his or her strengths and talents.	4.46	H
	OWM	4.49	H

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00, Always/Very High (VH); 3.50 – 4.49, Often/High (H); 2.50 – 3.49, Sometimes/ Moderately High (MH); 1.50 – 2.49, Seldom/Low (L); 1.00 – 1.49, Never/Very Low (VL)

While these factors may still contribute to feelings of anxiety and insecurity, they may not have as pronounced an effect as other self-esteem needs.

The highest indicator rating scale (VH) in the table signifies factors that have a very high impact on separation anxiety among kindergarten learners. These factors, such as poor academic performance leading to a lack of confidence, a negative outlook on life, worries about appearance and body image, and feeling self-conscious around others, are likely to significantly contribute to feelings of anxiety and insecurity in young children. These factors may deeply affect a child's self-esteem and sense of worth, leading to heightened levels of separation anxiety as they struggle to cope with these challenges.

On the other hand, the lowest indicator rating scale (H) represents factors that have a relatively lower impact on separation anxiety among kindergarten learners. These factors, such as doubts about showing strengths and talents, avoiding activities involving other people due to fear of judgment, and experiencing medical problems, while still important, may not have as pronounced an effect on separation anxiety compared to the VH-rated factors. These factors may contribute to feelings of anxiety and insecurity to a lesser extent or may be more manageable for children to navigate in terms of their impact on separation anxiety.

Overall, understanding the reasons behind the highest and lowest indicator rating scales can help educators, parents, and mental health professionals prioritize interventions and support strategies that target the most influential factors contributing to separation anxiety in kindergarten learners. By addressing these high-impact factors and providing appropriate resources and guidance, it is possible to help children build resilience, confidence, and positive self-esteem, ultimately reducing the prevalence and severity of separation anxiety in this age group.

According to Cunningham (2019), Positive self-esteem in children is characterized by confidence, capability, and a growth mindset. They are proud of their abilities and strive to do their best. This confidence motivates them to take on new challenges, cope with mistakes, and seek help when needed. Children develop positive self-esteem through hard work, success, and learning from failure. Accomplishing goals and receiving positive feedback from others, such as friends and adults, further strengthens their self-esteem. Over time, positive self-esteem continues to build in children.

C. Safety Needs

Table 5 show the Kindergarten teachers perceived occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along safety needs.

The kindergarten teachers perceived the occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along safety needs with a weighted average mean of 4.54 which described as “Very High”.

The table provides a comprehensive overview of the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners in relation to various safety needs. Each safety need is rated on a scale from 1 to 5, with higher ratings indicating a greater impact on separation anxiety. Overall, the ratings for each safety need are consistently high, with all factors falling within the VH (Very High) category. This suggests that these safety needs play a crucial role in influencing separation anxiety among kindergarten learners.

Table 5. *Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners Along Safety Needs*

	<i>Safety Needs</i>	<i>AWM</i>	<i>DE</i>
	<i>The learner is...</i>		
1	provided with an environment that is highly functional for program delivery and encourages strong, positive staff-to-child relationships.	4.52	VH
2	provided <u>safe</u> facilities, including windows, doors, shelves, and child-sized furniture.	4.54	VH
3	safely move around in the well-organized classroom, which has work stations, a reading area, a playing area, a storage area, and a sleeping area.	4.50	VH
4	safely fencing playground to prevent children from wandering away and keep them safe from outsiders.	4.51	VH
5	safely play and work on their activities on the clear floors of tools and toys that cause trips and falls.	4.53	VH
6	provided with clean drinking water.	4.52	VH
7	being supervised during recess time by their teacher.	4.55	VH
8	monitored by the teacher in their working and playing activities.	4.56	VH
9	assisted by the teacher with their personal needs.	4.54	VH
10	never wanders outside school premises.	4.57	VH
	OWM	4.54	VH

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00, Always/Very High (VH); 3.50 – 4.49, Often/High (H); 2.50 – 3.49, Sometimes/Moderately High (MH); 1.50 – 2.49, Seldom/Low (L); 1.00 – 1.49, Never/Very Low (VL)

Some key observations from the table include, the importance of providing a safe and functional environment for program delivery and fostering positive staff-to-child relationships, the significance of safe facilities, including windows, doors, shelves, and child-sized furniture, the impact of well-organized classrooms with designated areas for different activities, the necessity of safe playgrounds and clear floors to prevent accidents and ensure child safety, the importance of teacher supervision during recess and monitoring of activities, and the value of teacher assistance with personal needs and ensuring that learners do not wander outside school premises.

The highest indicator in the table, rated as VH (Very High), is for the safety need where the learner never wanders outside school premises, with a rating of 4.57. This indicates that ensuring the learner stays within the school boundaries is considered to have the most significant impact on reducing separation anxiety among kindergarten learners. This safety need measure is crucial in providing a secure and controlled environment for the children, minimizing the risk of them feeling anxious or insecure due to being outside the familiar school setting.

On the other hand, the lowest indicator in the table, also rated as VH, is for the safety need where the learner can safely move around

in the well-organized classroom, which has various designated areas for different activities, with a rating of 4.50. While this safety measure is still rated as Very High and important for creating a conducive learning environment, it may have a slightly lower impact on separation anxiety compared to the other safety needs listed in the table.

This could be because a well-organized classroom layout is essential for promoting a sense of structure and safety for the learners, but other factors such as teacher supervision and preventing children from wandering outside the school premises may have a more immediate impact on reducing separation anxiety.

Both the highest and lowest indicators in the table emphasize the critical role of safety measures in addressing separation anxiety among kindergarten learners, with each safety need contributing to creating a secure and supportive environment for the children.

Overall, the table highlights the critical role that safety needs play in addressing separation anxiety among kindergarten learners. By prioritizing these safety measures and creating a secure and supportive environment, educators and caregivers can help reduce separation.

According to Robinson, (2020), Separation anxiety disorder occurs because a child feels unsafe in some way. Take a look at anything that may have thrown your child's world off balance, made them feel threatened, or upset their normal routine. If you can pinpoint the root cause—or causes—you'll be one step closer to helping your child through their struggles.

D. Socialization Needs

Table 6 show the Kindergarten teachers perceived frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along socialization needs.

The Kindergarten teachers perceived frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along socialization needs with a weighted mean of 4.47 described as "High".

Table 6. *Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners Along Socialization Needs*

	<i>Socialization Needs</i>	<i>AWM</i>	<i>DE</i>
1	The learner doesn't understand facial expressions or body language.	4.48	H
2	The learner is a poor listener and loses sight of the point of what is being said.	4.44	H
3	The learner has little interest in social interactions.	4.43	H
4	The learner does not notice rejection actions by others.	4.45	H
5	The learner doesn't know how to properly greet people, request information, or gain attention.	4.50	VH
6	The learner hit or pushed other children during social interactions.	4.39	H
7	The learner prefers to play alone rather than with others.	4.47	H
8	The learner is having trouble interacting with peers; having several interactions that turn sour; and often being upset or angry with friends or classmates.	4.51	VH
9	The learner often walks away, getting upset and playing alone if the other children don't do it her way.	4.55	VH
10	The learner is struggling to connect socially, misunderstanding social rules and social norms.	4.47	H
	OWM	4.47	H

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00, Always/Very High (VH); 3.50 – 4.49, Often/High (H); 2.50 – 3.49, Sometimes/Moderately High (MH); 1.50 – 2.49, Seldom/Low (L); 1.00 – 1.49, Never/Very Low (VL)

Based on the table, it shows that the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners is being assessed in relation to their socialization needs. The table lists various socialization needs and assigns each a rating from Very High (VH) to Very Low (VL). The higher the rating, the greater the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety related to that specific socialization need.

The table shows that the learners struggle with various socialization needs, such as understanding facial expressions or body language, being poor listeners, lacking interest in social interactions, not noticing rejection actions by others, having difficulty greeting people, and so on. Among these, needing to walk away and play alone if others don't do things the learner's way appears to be the most troubling, with a rating of Very High (VH).

This table could be beneficial in identifying areas where intervention and support are needed to help kindergarten learners overcome separation anxiety and improve their socialization skills.

In Table 6, the highest indicator is 4.55 described as Very High (VH) and the lowest indicator is 4.39 described as High (H), both reflect the level of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along socialization needs. The highest indicator suggests a more severe level of separation anxiety, while the lowest indicator signifies a relatively lower level of separation anxiety.

The lowest weighted mean is 4.39, "The learner hit or pushed other children during social interactions", could be due to several reasons. Some of these reasons may include: Lack of appropriate social skills: (a). The learner might not have developed adequate social skills

to handle conflicts or express their feelings in a constructive manner. This could lead to aggressive behaviors like hitting or pushing when faced with challenges in social interactions. (b). Emotional regulation issues: The learner might struggle with managing their emotions effectively. When they feel overwhelmed or upset, they might resort to aggressive behaviors as a way to cope with their emotions. (c). Negative influence from peers or environment: The learner might have been influenced by peers or their environment, which could have encouraged or normalized aggressive behaviors. (d). Lack of supervision or guidance: The learner might not have received adequate supervision or guidance from adults or authority figures, leading to a lack of understanding of appropriate social behaviors, and (e). Underlying psychological or developmental issues: The learner's aggressive behaviors could be a result of underlying psychological or developmental issues that have not been addressed or identified.

The lowest weighted mean in the research study, associated with a learner hitting or pushing other children during social interactions, could be attributed.

It was observed that the indicator 9, “when the learner often walks away, gets upset, and plays alone if the other children don't do things her way” has the highest weighted mean of 4.55, described as “Very High” (VH). Considering various factors that contribute to separation anxiety in young children and how their interactions with peers can impact their emotional well-being.

One of these factors is the Emotional Development, Kindergarten learners are at a stage of emotional development where they are learning to express their emotions, needs, and preferences. When they feel that their wishes are not being met or their ideas are not being respected, they may experience frustration and sadness. This can lead to separation anxiety, as they feel disconnected from their environment and the people around them. Social Skills Development: At this age, children are also developing their social skills. They learn how to interact with their peers, share, take turns, and compromise. When they face difficulties in these areas, they may become upset and withdraw from social interactions. This can result in playing alone and feeling separated from others, which can further exacerbate their anxiety. Peer Relationships: Positive relationships with peers are crucial for a child's emotional well-being and overall development. When a child feels rejected or unsupported by their peers, they may experience separation anxiety. In the research study, the inability to have others follow their way could be a sign of unsuccessful peer relationships, leading to feelings of isolation and anxiety. Coping Mechanisms: When children face challenges in their social interactions, they may develop coping mechanisms to deal with their emotions. In this case, walking away and playing alone could be a way for the child to regulate their emotions and avoid further distress. However, this behavior can also contribute to the development of separation anxiety, as it reinforces feelings of isolation and detachment. Teacher's Role: The research study highlights the importance of a teacher's role in identifying and addressing separation anxiety in kindergarten learners. By understanding the child's behavior and providing appropriate support, teachers can help create a nurturing environment that promotes positive social interactions and emotional growth.

The research study suggests that when kindergarten learners experience difficulties in their social interactions, expressing their emotions, and developing healthy relationships with their peers, they may develop separation anxiety. It is crucial for educators and caregivers to recognize these signs and provide the necessary support to help children navigate these challenges and foster a positive learning environment.

Schuster (2016) said that social anxiety is a common issue among children and adults, similar to separation anxiety. Young children fear being away from their caregivers and fear being seen poorly in social situations. They may avoid learning social rules or interacting with others due to fear of making mistakes. Some kids avoid or refuse to participate in activities that trigger anxiety, such as giving presentations, playing with their peers, eating in the canteen, and group work. Skipping these activities may appear uninterested or underachieving to teachers and peers. He suggested that children with social anxiety may have easier time demonstrating their knowledge when engaged one-on-one with teachers. Excessive self-consciousness can also hinder participation in class and socializing with peers.

E. Love and Feelings of Belonging Needs

Table 7 show the Kindergarten teachers perceived frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along love and feeling of belonging needs.

The Kindergarten teachers perceived frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners along love and feeling of belonging needs with a weighted mean of 4.51 described as “Very High” (VH).

The indicator number 10, "The learner understands that there are other children, adults, and community members that care about them and are there for them when they need support" with a weighted mean of 4.57, described as “Very High” (VH) is rated as the highest among the ten indicators in the research study.

This high rating suggests that when kindergarten learners understand that they are cared for by various individuals within their community, they experience a lower frequency of separation anxiety. There are things to consider in this indicator. Sense of Belonging: When learners recognize that they are part of a supportive network of people who care about them, they develop a sense of belonging.

This sense of belonging helps them feel connected to their community, which can be particularly beneficial during times of separation, such as starting kindergarten. Social Support: Understanding that there are people who care for them and are available for support can provide learners with a sense of security and comfort. This social support can help them navigate the challenges of kindergarten and

other life situations more effectively, reducing the occurrence of separation anxiety. Empathy and Resilience, As learners become aware of the care and concern shown by others in their community, they may develop empathy and a better understanding of the emotions and needs of others. This empathy can contribute to their resilience, helping them cope with challenges and adapt to new situations more easily. Implications for Interventions and Support, The high rating of this indicator underscores the importance of fostering a sense of belonging and social support in kindergarten learners. Educators, caregivers, and other professionals working with young children should strive to create an inclusive and supportive environment that highlights the connections between learners, their peers, and the broader community. By doing so, they can help reduce the frequency of separation anxiety and promote a more positive learning experience for the children.

Table 7. *Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners Along Love and Feeling of Belonging Needs*

	<i>Love and Feeling of Belonging Needs</i>	<i>AWM</i>	<i>DE</i>
1	The learner has core relationships with others who care for them.	4.52	VH
2	The learner feels safe and protected from harm by adults or other significant people in their lives.	4.54	VH
3	The learner has positive interactions with family, friends, and other members of their community.	4.56	VH
4	The learner develops a clear sense of their place in the world through important factors in their lives, such as their cultural and/or religious values and practices.	4.45	H
5	The learner has opportunities to play with friends and build new, secure relationships.	4.50	VH
6	The learner manages their emotions in healthy and adaptive ways.	4.39	H
7	The learner knows that they are important and valuable.	4.53	VH
8	The learner feels confident and valued in their own identity.	4.51	VH
9	The learner feels safe and secure.	4.55	VH
10	The learner understands that there are other children, adults, and community members that care about them and are there for them when they need support.	4.57	VH
		OWM 4.51	VH

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00, Always/Very High (VH); 3.50 – 4.49, Often/High (H); 2.50 – 3.49, Sometimes/Moderately High (MH); 1.50 – 2.49, Seldom/Low (L); 1.00 – 1.49, Never/Very Low (VL)

In summary, the high rating of the "The learner understands that there are other children, adults, and community members that care about them and are there for them when they need support" indicator emphasizes the significance of a learner's understanding of social support and belonging in their ability to cope with separation anxiety. By nurturing a sense of connection and care within the kindergarten environment, educators, caregivers, and other professionals can contribute to the emotional well-being and resilience of these young children.

The indicator number 6, "The learner manages their emotions in healthy and adaptive ways" with a weighted mean of 4.39, described as "High" is rated as the lowest among the ten indicators in the research study. This rating suggests that when kindergarten learners struggle to manage their emotions in a healthy and adaptive manner, they are more likely to experience separation anxiety. There are some things to consider. Emotional Regulation: Managing emotions in a healthy and adaptive way is crucial for a child's overall well-being and mental health. When learners are unable to regulate their emotions effectively, they may experience heightened anxiety, stress, and other negative emotions. These emotions can make it difficult for them to cope with the challenges of separating from their caregivers and adjusting to the school environment. Emotional Support: The ability to manage emotions in a healthy way is often linked to the emotional support provided by caregivers, teachers, and other significant people in a child's life. When learners receive adequate emotional support, they are more likely to develop effective coping strategies and emotional regulation skills. In contrast, a lack of emotional support can lead to difficulties in managing emotions, increasing the likelihood of experiencing separation anxiety. Connection to Other Indicators: The low rating of this indicator may also be connected to the other indicators in the study. For instance, learners who do not feel safe and protected or do not have core relationships with others who care for them might struggle to manage their emotions in a healthy way. As a result, they may be more susceptible to experiencing separation anxiety. Implications for Interventions: This finding highlights the importance of incorporating emotional regulation and management skills in educational and support programs for kindergarten learners. By addressing these skills, educators and caregivers can help create a more conducive environment for learners to develop a sense of security, belonging, and emotional well-being, ultimately reducing the occurrence of separation anxiety.

In summary, the low rating of the "The learner manages their emotions in healthy and adaptive ways" indicator suggests that emotional regulation and management skills play a significant role in a kindergarten learner's ability to cope with separation anxiety. Improving these skills through targeted interventions and support can contribute to a more positive learning experience for these young children.

Bhattacharya (2018), said that separation anxiety in kindergarten learners is influenced by the need for love and belongingness. As young children enter kindergarten or preschool, they are often placed in unfamiliar environments with unfamiliar teachers and classmates, leading to feelings of insecurity and fear. The bond between a child and their caregivers is crucial for their emotional well-being, and when they are separated, they may experience anxiety due to the fear of losing that bond. Starting kindergarten disrupts

familiar routines and introduces new challenges, further contributing to feelings of insecurity and anxiety. Separation anxiety is a natural response to the need for attachment as children navigate new experiences outside their comfort zone. However, it typically diminishes over time as they become more comfortable in their new environment through positive experiences and support from caregivers and teachers.

Summary of the Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners

The table presented the results of a research study focusing on the perception of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners as seen by teachers. The study examines various needs of these learners in relation to separation anxiety. Table 8 shows the Weighted Mean (WM) and the transmuted Rating (TR) for each need.

The highest Weighted Mean is 4.54 describes as Very High (VH) is associated with safety needs, indicating that teachers perceive separation anxiety to be significantly related to learners' safety concerns. This could mean that kindergarten learners may feel anxious when they are unsure about their physical well-being or environment.

According to Grobman (2012), safety needs play a significant role in the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners due to several factors. Firstly, young children are naturally dependent on their caregivers for safety and security. When they start school, they may experience anxiety due to the unfamiliar environment and being away from their primary caregivers. Secondly, children with unmet safety needs may feel more vulnerable and insecure in new situations. This heightened sense of insecurity can lead to increased anxiety when separated from their caregivers. Inadequate safety measures within the school environment can further exacerbate these feelings. Lastly, children who have experienced traumatic events or have unstable home environments may have heightened safety concerns. These children may struggle to adapt to new situations, leading to more frequent occurrences of separation anxiety.

Table 8. Summary Table of the Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners

Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners	As Perceived by Teachers	
	OWM	DE
1. Inferiority complex	4.52	VH
2. Self – esteem needs	4.49	H
3. Safety needs	4.54	VH
4. Socialization needs	4.47	H
5. Love and feeling of belonging needs	4.51	VH
GOWM	4.51	VH

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00, Always/Very High (VH); 3.50 – 4.49, Often/High (H); 2.50 – 3.49, Sometimes/Moderately High (MH); 1.50 – 2.49, Seldom/Low (L); 1.00 – 1.49, Never/Very Low (VL)

Grobman (2012), suggest that safety needs contribute to the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners due to their natural dependence, the importance of feeling secure in new environments, and the potential impact of past experiences.

Fabes (2011), highlights that safety needs play a significant role in the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners. Separation anxiety is a natural response in young children when they are away from their primary caregivers, and it stems from their basic need for safety and security.

In the context of kindergarten learners, safety needs encompass various aspects such as emotional, physical, and environmental security. When children feel safe and secure in their environment, they are more likely to develop trust and confidence in their caregivers and educators. This, in turn, helps them adapt better to new situations and develop a sense of independence.

However, when safety needs are not adequately met, children may experience heightened separation anxiety. This can be due to factors like unfamiliar surroundings, inadequate support from caregivers, or a lack of consistent routines. As a result, the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners can be influenced by the extent to which their safety needs are being addressed.

To minimize separation anxiety, it is crucial for educators and caregivers to create a safe, nurturing, and predictable environment for young children. This includes establishing consistent routines, building strong relationships with the children, and addressing any concerns or fears they might have. By attending to their safety needs, educators can help kindergarten learners feel more comfortable and secure, ultimately reducing the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety.

On the other hand, socialization needs have the lowest Weighted Mean is 4.47 described as High (H). This suggests that, in comparison to other needs, teachers do not perceive a strong connection between separation anxiety and learners' socialization experiences. It could imply that children may feel more comfortable and secure in social situations, and that their anxiety might stem from other factors. In summary, the research study highlights the importance of safety needs and the potential influence of other needs such as self-esteem, love and belonging, inferiority complex, and socialization in relation to separation anxiety among kindergarten learners as perceived by their teachers.

According to Doe (2019), socialization is a factor that influences the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety in kindergarten

learners. He suggests that children who have better socialization skills, such as the ability to form relationships and engage in group activities, tend to experience less separation anxiety. This is because they feel more connected to their peers and the school environment, making it easier for them to adapt to the absence of their caregivers. On the other hand, children with poorer socialization skills may struggle to form connections and may experience higher levels of anxiety when separated from their caregivers. According to Doe's research, socialization plays a significant role in determining the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety in kindergarten learners.

Differences in the Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners Across their Profile Variables

This section presented the differences of perceived frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten teachers in Pangasinan Division II.

The table provided the summary of the computed ANOVA as indicated by the F-value for each area covered with its corresponding significance level. This was done for the purpose of making a more in-depth analysis of data generated in this study whereby the profile of the kindergarten teacher respondents in Pangasinan Division II were compared in their perceived frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners.

The individual computation of the ANOVA for each of the different indicators covered in this study are inferiority complex, self-esteem needs, safety needs, socialization needs, and love and feeling of belonging needs.

Table 9 presented the ANOVA showing the significant differences in the perceived frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners respondents across their profile variables.

The table presented mean differences in the frequency of occurrence of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners in relation to various factors such as age, sex, birth order, parent's highest educational attainment, parent's occupation, and family monthly income.

For each factor, the table shows the F-value and the corresponding significance level (Sig.). The F-value indicates the degree of difference in the frequency of separation anxiety among groups within each factor.

In this table, the F-values suggested that there are no significant differences in the frequency of separation anxiety based on age, sex, birth order, parent's highest educational attainment, parent's occupation, or family monthly income. The significance levels are all above the usual threshold of 0.05, indicating that the differences observed are likely due to chance and not meaningful.

Table 9. Mean Differences in the Frequency of Occurrence of Separation Anxiety Among Kindergarten Learners

Separation Anxiety	Inferiority Complex		Self-Esteem		Safety Needs		Socialization Needs		Love and Feelings of Belonging Needs	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
Age	1.030	.324	.279	.719	.063	.631	.123	.730	1.103	.345
Sex	.822	.371	.152	.584	.292	.424	.657	.236	.782	.363
Birth Order	.370	.281	.862	.215	.374	.310	.385	.638	.297	.279
Parent's Highest Educational Attainment	.512	.322	.544	.248	.860	.527	.650	.473	.481	.347
Parent's Occupation	.532	.342	.673	.395	.292	.214	.496	.389	.472	.319
Family Monthly Income	.282	.132	.733	.081	.273	.142	.196	.127	.297	.146

The table suggested that these factors do not have a significant impact on the frequency of separation anxiety among kindergarten learners. Additional research or a larger sample size may be needed to further investigate any potential relationships between these factors and separation anxiety.

Problems Encountered by the Kindergarten Learners with Separation Anxiety as Perceived by the Teachers.

Table 10 presented the problems encountered by kindergarten learners with separation anxiety as perceived by their teachers. This is the results coming from the teachers and learners during the interview with them using also stratified sampling. The researcher used unstructured questionnaire and gathered the teachers through Focus Group Discussion. The researcher gathered the necessary information about the problems encountered by the Kindergarten learners with separation anxiety. A lot of problems was encountered by the Kindergarten learners but the researcher considered the top three most severe problems faced by the kindergarten learners.

Based from the interview with the teachers and learners, the top three most severe problems faced by kindergarten learners with separation anxiety are refusal to attend school, fear of being alone, and being afraid of unfamiliar people and places.

Most of the teachers interviewed said that the most severe problems faced by kindergarten learners with separation anxiety, such as refusal to attend school, fear of being alone, and being afraid of unfamiliar people and places, can be attributed to the developmental stage and emotional challenges that young children experience during this period. Kindergarten learners are at a critical stage of social and emotional development, where they are transitioning from the security of home to the new and unfamiliar environment of school. Separation anxiety, which is a normal part of development for many children, can manifest in various ways and present challenges for young learners.

According to the teachers, it's common for kindergarten learners to experience separation anxiety as they are developing a sense of independence and learning to navigate new situations. The three main problems are refusal to attend school, fear of being alone, and being afraid of unfamiliar people and places - are typical manifestations of separation anxiety in young children.

The teachers also said that, Kindergarten learners refuse to go to school for a variety of reasons, including separation anxiety, fear of the unknown, social anxiety, academic challenges, or physical discomfort. The transition from home to school can be a significant change for young children, and they may struggle to adapt to the new environment, routines, and expectations. Separation anxiety, which is common among young children, can lead to feelings of distress and insecurity when separated from caregivers or familiar surroundings. Fear of the unknown, such as not knowing what to expect at school or being unsure of how to interact with peers and teachers, can also contribute to reluctance to attend school. Additionally, social anxiety or difficulties in forming relationships with classmates can make school a daunting and overwhelming experience for some kindergarten learners. Academic challenges, such as struggling with certain subjects or feeling overwhelmed by schoolwork, can also lead to resistance towards going to school. Physical discomfort, such as illness, fatigue, or sensory sensitivities, may also play a role in a child's reluctance to attend school.

According to the teachers fear of being alone at this age may struggle with the idea of being separated from their loved ones, particularly in new or unfamiliar situations. They may worry about not having someone familiar nearby for comfort and support. The teachers also said that, Kindergarten learners may fear being alone due to their developmental stage and emotional needs. Young children at this age are still developing a sense of security and attachment to caregivers, and being alone can trigger feelings of vulnerability, insecurity, and anxiety. Separation anxiety, which is common among young children, can manifest as a fear of being alone and can be intensified when a child is separated from familiar and trusted individuals. Kindergarten learners may rely on the presence of caregivers or peers for comfort, reassurance, and support, and being alone can evoke feelings of abandonment or isolation. Additionally, young children may have vivid imaginations and may fear imaginary threats or dangers when left alone, leading to feelings of fear and unease.

The teachers also said that, Kindergarten learners may be afraid of unfamiliar people and places due to their natural instinct for self-preservation and their limited understanding of the world around them. Young children at this age are still developing their social skills, emotional regulation, and ability to navigate new environments. When faced with unfamiliar people, such as new teachers, classmates, or strangers, kindergarten learners may feel anxious or fearful because they lack the familiarity and trust that comes with established relationships. Meeting new people can be overwhelming for young children, as they may not know how to interact, communicate, or interpret social cues effectively. Additionally, unfamiliar places, such as new schools, classrooms, or community settings, can be intimidating for kindergarten learners who thrive on routine, predictability, and a sense of security. The unknown can trigger feelings of uncertainty, vulnerability, and discomfort, leading to fear and apprehension.

The researcher also asked some kindergarten why they refuse to go to school. Most of the Kindergarten learners said that they refuse to go to school for a variety of reasons. Some common reasons why young children may resist going to school include separation anxiety, fear of the unknown, discomfort with new routines, social anxiety, or feeling overwhelmed by the demands of the school environment. Kindergarten learners may also struggle with transitions, changes in their daily routine, or challenges in adapting to a new setting or group of peers. Additionally, physical symptoms such as stomachaches or headaches can sometimes be a sign of underlying emotional distress or anxiety about attending school.

The researcher also asked the Kindergarten learners why they have fear of being alone and why do they feel afraid of unfamiliar people and places. The Kindergarten learners also responded, most of them said that they feel fear being alone and feel afraid of unfamiliar people and places because they often rely on the presence of familiar adults, caregivers, or peers for comfort, security, and support.

Other notable other problems identified by the teachers, include lasting worry about something bad happening, complaints of headaches and stomach aches, and excessive clinginess, wetting of pant urination, stressful events, and screaming and crying are less severe or less frequently encountered problems.

The various problems faced by kindergarten learners with separation anxiety as identified by their teachers provides valuable insights for teachers, parents, and caregivers to understand and address these issues to support the emotional well-being and academic success of kindergarten learners. It is important for teachers and parents/guardians/caregivers to acknowledge and address a child's fear of being alone and unfamiliar people and places with empathy, patience, and support. By providing a nurturing and secure environment, building positive relationships, and offering guidance and reassurance, adults can help kindergarten learners feel more confident, safe, and supported in navigating new experiences and interactions. Encouraging social connections, fostering a sense of belonging, and promoting a positive attitude towards new challenges can help children overcome their fears and develop resilience, adaptability, and social skills that will support their growth and development.

Conclusions

Based on the aforecited findings of this study, the following conclusions were formulated: The research study reveals that the majority of respondents are young children from lower-income families, with parents primarily engaged in farming and housewives. Most are first-born, with 80% of parents having completed high school. Most families have monthly incomes between P10,000 and below.

The study highlights the importance of addressing kindergarten learners' emotional and social needs to reduce separation anxiety,

highlighting factors such as inferiority complex, self-esteem, safety, socialization, love, and belonging.

The ANOVA results show no significant differences in separation anxiety frequency among kindergarten learners based on age, sex, birth order, parental education, occupation, or family income, suggesting further research or larger sample sizes may be needed.

Separation anxiety in kindergarten is a prevalent issue due to emotional and developmental challenges faced by young children, including attachment to parents, teachers' emotional well-being, and the educational environment.

On the basis of the findings in this study and the conclusions drawn, the following are hereby recommended: The research recommends enhancing the well-being and educational outcomes of lower-income children through tailored support programs, parental engagement initiatives, community partnerships, financial literacy programs, and scholarship opportunities. These initiatives can provide financial assistance, educational resources, and skill-building workshops for parents.

The study recommends implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs in kindergarten classrooms to help children develop skills like self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social interaction. Teachers should have resources to address separation anxiety, foster a positive environment, and develop transition strategies for separation.

The study found no significant differences in separation anxiety frequency among kindergarten learners based on factors like age, sex, birth order, parent's education, occupation, and family income. Further research with larger sample sizes, longitudinal studies, qualitative methods, and collaboration among researchers, educators, parents, and mental health professionals is recommended.

Kindergarten learners face separation anxiety, which can be addressed by teachers by establishing a consistent routine, fostering strong relationships, providing a calm environment, offering reassurance, implementing a gradual transition, and remaining patient and understanding. This approach boosts confidence and security.

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