

**DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY
MANUAL FOR USE OF PARENTS, TEACHERS AND HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN
WITH CHRONIC ILLNESS (CWCI)**

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation research is a three-phased descriptive and quasi-experimental study with an ultimate goal of developing an Interdisciplinary Teaching Manual that can be used by parents, teachers and health professionals to promote therapeutic healing of children with chronic illness (CWCi) through enjoyable education with incidental cognitive and psychomotor benefits.

The first phase of the study gathered baseline data on the demographic, health condition, learning / education, psychosocial and support system characteristics of CWCi which were used as springboard in analyzing the educational needs of these children. Moreover, the study also investigated on the practices of the interdisciplinary team members specifically the parents, teachers and health professionals in the education of CWCi which is crucial in achieving successful educational outcomes. Four research questionnaires were developed and validated to gather data from four groups of respondents comprising 80 CWCi, 80 parents of CWCi, 14 teachers and 28 health professionals handling CWCi. CWCi respondents of the study belong to 3 to 8 age group either confined or has regular out-patient check-ups because of their illness in the following six major hospitals serving as research locales, namely: a.) East Avenue Medical Center (EAMC) in East Avenue, Quezon City, b.) Fe Del Mundo Hospital (FDH) formerly Children's Medical Center in Banawe, Quezon City, c.) National Children's Hospital (NCH) in E. Rodriguez, Quezon City, d.) Philippine Children's Medical Center (PCMC) in Quezon Avenue, Quezon City, e.) Philippine General Hospital (PGH) in Taft Avenue, Manila, and lastly f.) Philippine Orthopedic Center (POC) in Banawe, Quezon City.

Based on educational needs of CWCi realized in phase 1 of the study, and with special focus on the psychosocial characteristics of these children, the second phase of the study commenced as the researcher developed a manual that can address the special needs of the CWCi. The manual was validated by ten experts belonging to the field of special education, pediatric health care (i.e. developmental pediatrics, pediatric internal medicine and oncology, family medicine and pediatric nursing), rehabilitation medicine (physiatrist and physical therapist), educational psychology, research and administration.

In an attempt to further test the effectiveness of the manual in addressing the psychosocial needs of CWCi, the CWCi and parent respondents of the study were divided into control and experimental groups where the CWCi of the latter were given copies of the manual for utilization and monitoring. The CWCi experimental group was given at least three weeks of continuous manual use or at least a completion of ten manual activities prior to being post-tested for changes in psychosocial characteristics.

The third and last phase of the study involved the post-testing period wherein both the control and the experimental groups were made to answer the psychosocial characteristics part of the questionnaire used in phase 1 of the study. Results of the pre-test and the post-test scores for both control and experimental groups of CWCi and parent respondents were compared using t-test of paired samples.

Overall, results revealed that CWCi are faced with multifaceted challenges brought about by their health condition and other related socioeconomic factors. They are faced with health, cognitive and psychosocial issues that affect the quality of their lives including their family. Health and psychosocial issues intertwine to produce problems concerning school attendance, learning and cognition as well as intrapersonal and interpersonal relations of CWCi. Depressed health and emotional being of the CWCi contribute to daily activity limitations, including those in school that result eventually in pressing further psychosocial issues with the child including his/her family.

CWCi, their parents, teachers and health professionals consider education and learning of CWCi as a positive impetus for the well-being of CWCi. Specially noted are those therapeutic teaching activities that improve the psychosocial characteristics of CWCi like art therapy, play therapy, music therapy and drama / role playing. And considering such premise, the interdisciplinary teaching manual, which can be used by the parents or health professionals involved with the CWCi even when the child is required to stay at home or be confined in the hospital, which was developed and validated in this study was proven effective in improving the psychosocial characteristics of CWCi based on an improved post-test psychosocial scores in both intrapersonal and interpersonal psychosocial characteristics.