

Tiny Steps To Big Dreams: An Opportunity Assessment on the Establishment of Bright Beginnings Child Care Center in Nueva Vizcaya

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ABSTRACT

This feasibility study assessed the proposed establishment of Bright Beginnings Child Care in Nueva Vizcaya. The project aims to meet the growing demand for quality, full-day childcare services driven by the rising number of working parents and dual-income households. Anchored on the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) framework, the center seeks to provide a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for young children. A market survey of local parents confirms strong demand for the proposed childcare center. Results show that more than 80% of respondents agreed that the area needs a full-day childcare and learning center, while over 90% said they would enroll their children if such a facility were established. The survey also showed that parents prioritize qualified teachers, child safety, cleanliness, and holistic child development. In addition, approximately 70% of respondents indicated willingness to pay for additional services, such as nutritionist-supervised meals and school bus transportation, supporting the feasibility of offering ancillary services. The technical and management studies demonstrate that the project is operationally feasible. The center is designed to accommodate 50 students, maintaining the recommended 1:10 teacher-to-student ratio, with facilities that include learning classrooms, creative activity areas, dining and rest spaces, child-friendly sanitation facilities, and administrative offices. A lean management structure, with the owner serving as School Head, ensures efficient operations and cost control. The financial study confirms the project's viability. The initial investment of ₱3,650,000, financed through 69.86% owner's equity and 30.14% bank loan, supports start-up and operational needs. Based on the academic year, the projected first-year net income after tax is ₱1,034,765.20, with a break-even point at approximately 47 students. Overall, the study concludes that the project is marketable, technically feasible, financially viable, and socially beneficial, and recommends its implementation.

Keyword: Bright Beginnings Child Care, childcare services, Early Childhood Care, nutritionist-supervised meals, child-friendly sanitation

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is a vital period in human development, establishing the foundation for lifelong learning, behavior, and health. Recognizing this, the Philippine government has prioritized early childhood education through the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) framework, formalized in Republic Act 12199 or the Early Childhood Care and Development Systems Act of 2025. This landmark legislation mandates universal access to quality education and care for children aged 0 to 8 years and emphasizes the need to strengthen preschool services nationwide.

In Nueva Vizcaya, many private preschools operate on limited schedules, commonly offering only two hours of instruction per day. Although this provides basic academic exposure, it poses considerable challenges for working families, especially dual-income households. Parents often resort to hiring informal caregivers, relying on relatives, or leaving children unsupervised, with electronic gadgets serving as their primary entertainment. While these devices provide some stimulation, they cannot replace structured learning, social interaction, and holistic developmental experiences essential during early childhood.

Research consistently shows the benefits of full-day preschool models, which integrate academics with play, rest, and enrichment activities such as music, art, and movement. For example, a randomized controlled trial in Denver, Colorado found that children attending full-day pre-kindergarten scored significantly higher in vocabulary and school readiness than those in half-day programs, with effects lasting into kindergarten (Atteberry et al., 2018). Similar studies report improvements in linguistic, social-emotional, and cognitive development, as well as reductions in behavioral difficulties and grade repetition (Herry, 2007; Ansari, 2018).

Globally, many countries including Japan, Canada, and the United States have adopted full-day preschool as the standard, responding to the dual needs of child development and working families. In contrast, full-day preschool remains limited in the Philippines, particularly in rural provinces like Nueva Vizcaya. This gap presents an opportunity to establish a preschool that delivers holistic, ECCD-aligned programs tailored to local needs.

The proposed Bright Beginnings Preschool aims to bridge this gap by offering accessible, high-quality full-day education that balances academics, supervised play, creative enrichment, life skills, and rest. By situating this initiative within both local and global contexts, this feasibility study highlights the urgent need for expanded full-day preschool services in Nueva Vizcaya, addressing parental needs while advancing the national ECCD agenda.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive-evaluative research design to determine the feasibility of establishing Bright

Beginnings Child Care Center. The approach focused on analyzing market demand, operational requirements, financial sustainability, and compliance with regulatory standards.

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 30 mothers of young children residing in Solano and Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya. The researchers selected these respondents using purposive sampling, as they are the primary decision-makers for childcare and early education. The survey gathered information on parental preferences, willingness to enroll, childcare challenges, and willingness to pay for services.

The study also used secondary data to support the findings. These included government reports, ECCD policies, demographic data, and industry-related studies. These sources provided broader context for understanding the childcare market and helped validate the primary data collected.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage distributions. In addition, financial analysis techniques including break-even analysis, return on investment (ROI), net present value (NPV), and internal rate of return (IRR) were used to evaluate the project's financial viability. A SWOT analysis also identified potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

The study strictly followed ethical considerations. Participation was voluntary, respondents' identities were kept confidential, and all collected data were used solely for research purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 5. Profile Variables

Table 5 shows the demographic profile of respondents for the Bright Beginnings Child Care Center in Nueva Vizcaya and provides insight into the center's potential market.

Children range in age from infants to early primary school, with the largest group being 5-year-olds (30%), followed by 3-year-olds (16.67%) and infants aged 1–11 months (13.33%). This distribution suggests that the center will mainly serve toddlers and preschool-aged children, highlighting the need for programs tailored to these developmental stages.

Most respondents reside in Solano (60%), with a significant portion from Bayombong (26.67%), and smaller numbers from Bagabag, Isabela, and Quezon. This indicates that the primary market is local, while also presenting an opportunity to serve families from nearby towns.

Most parents or guardians are employed full-time (80%), with smaller proportions being stay-at-home parents (10%), self-employed (3.33%), part-time employed (3.33%), or working remotely/overseas (3.33%). This highlights a strong demand for full-day childcare services that accommodate working parents' schedules.

In terms of caregiving, parents are the primary caregivers for half of the children (50%), followed by grandparents (26.67%), shared caregiving arrangements (13.33%), and yaya/nanny or other relatives (10%). This pattern underscores the importance of flexible programs that can complement home caregiving arrangements.

Finally, most households earn ₱36,000 or below per month (63.33%), with 23.33% earning between ₱36,000 and ₱50,000. Only a small percentage of families earn above these levels, indicating that the target market largely consists of low-to-middle income families. This emphasizes the need for affordable yet high-quality childcare services.

Overall, the demographic profile indicates that Bright Beginnings will primarily serve working parents with preschool-aged children from Solano and nearby towns who seek safe, reliable, developmentally appropriate childcare services within their financial means.

Table 6. Perceived Need and Demand for Full-Day Child Care Services

Table 6 shows strong agreement on the need for a full-day childcare and early learning center in the community, with 86.67% of respondents affirming the need and only 13.33% indicating otherwise. This suggests that most parents and guardians consider establishing such a center essential to addressing their childcare needs.

When examining the challenges parents face in caring for or educating their children during the day, multiple issues emerged. The most frequently cited challenge was excessive gadget exposure (56.67%), followed closely by difficulty balancing work and childcare (50.00%), and the need for socialization with other children (36.67%). Parents also reported a lack of available caregivers (30.00%) and limited structured learning (16.67%), though less frequently. These results indicate that parents are struggling not only to manage time and responsibilities but also to ensure their children receive appropriate social and educational experiences. The prevalence of these challenges highlights the community's need for a structured childcare solution that can provide supervision, learning opportunities, and social interaction for children throughout the day.

In terms of program preference, respondents were slightly more inclined toward the Full-Day Program (56.50%) compared to the Half-Day Program (43.50%). This preference reflects respondents' employment demands, as most are working parents, while also indicating a need for flexibility to accommodate families who may prefer shorter childcare hours.

Overall, the findings indicate a strong demand for full-day childcare services that not only relieve parental burdens but also support children's holistic development through structured learning, social interaction, and supervised care. The data also suggest that the center should offer flexible programming options while addressing the most pressing parental concerns, such as gadget exposure and balancing work responsibilities.

Table 7. Transportation Patterns and Interest in School Bus Service

Table 7 shows that overall interest in a school bus pick-up and drop-off service is high, with 73.33% indicating willingness to use the service and 26.67% not. This demonstrates that most parents recognize the convenience and safety benefits that a structured transportation option can provide for their children.

By distance from the town proper, the largest group of families lives 1–3 km away (43.33%), followed by 3–5 km (30.00%), within 1 km (16.67%), and more than 5 km (10.00%). These results indicate that most children live at distances that may make daily commuting challenging, further reinforcing the need for a safe and reliable school bus service.

The current modes of transportation show that families rely primarily on family vehicles (40.00%) and tricycles (36.67%), with fewer using motorcycles (30.00%) or walking (6.67%). This suggests parents depend on motorized transport, which can be costly, time-consuming, and sometimes unsafe. Implementing a school bus service could reduce parental burden while ensuring consistent, secure transportation for children.

Regarding expected safety features, parents prioritize multiple measures to keep their children safe. The most requested features include a background-checked and trained driver (80.00%), CCTV inside the bus (76.70%), GPS tracking (70.00%), strict pick-up/drop-off identification protocol (63.30%), and the presence of a bus aide or caregiver on board (56.70%). These results show that parents are highly concerned about supervision and monitoring, underscoring the importance of implementing a well-structured, safety-oriented transportation system.

Overall, the findings suggest strong demand for a school bus service, particularly one that is well monitored, staffed with trained personnel, and equipped with safety features to ensure children's security. Providing such a service would not only address parental concerns regarding commuting and child safety but also increase the overall attractiveness and accessibility of the childcare center.

Table 8. Program and Service Preferences

Table 8 shows overall preferences for various program components for child development, indicating that parents highly value a balanced approach to learning and growth. Foundational Academics received the highest preference at 90.00%, followed closely by Music, Arts, and Creative Expression at 86.67%, demonstrating that parents recognize the importance of both cognitive and creative development. Other components such as Life Skills and Independence (76.67%) and Outdoor Play and Physical Development (70.00%) are also considered important, indicating a strong focus on holistic child development. Meanwhile, Social–Emotional Learning (66.67%), Hygiene and Sanitation Practices (56.67%), and Nutritious and Balanced Meals (63.33%) are moderately prioritized, while Nutrition and Feeding Support (46.67%) and Structured Rest / Nap Time (46.67%) are less emphasized, suggesting that these are viewed as supplementary rather than primary needs.

Regarding classroom supervision, most parents (70.00%) consider maintaining a 1:10 teacher-to-student ratio very important, highlighting the value placed on personalized attention and quality instruction. In terms of communication with teachers and staff, parents show a preference for digital and interactive methods, with the Messenger App leading at 66.67%, followed by Parent Meetings (40.00%), while Text Messaging (20.00%) and Communication Notebooks (3.33%) are less preferred. This indicates a clear trend toward convenience, real-time updates, and effective engagement through modern communication channels.

Overall, the findings suggest that parents prioritize programs that support academic, creative, and holistic development, value low teacher-to-student ratios for personalized care, and prefer efficient, digital modes of communication with staff. Implementing these priorities would ensure a learning environment that meets parental expectations while enhancing the overall quality and appeal of the childcare center.

Table 9. Respondents' Safety, Location, And Operational Considerations

Table 9 shows parents' overall preferences for safety, location, and operational considerations, revealing clear priorities that strongly influence their choice of childcare center. For location, most respondents (60.00%) prefer a center within 1–3 kilometers of home, indicating that accessibility and convenience are critical factors for families. Only a small proportion are willing to travel less than 1 km (20.00%) or more than 5 km (6.67%), suggesting that parents generally seek a nearby facility that is easy to reach for daily drop-off and pick-up routines.

Safety features emerge as one of the most important considerations. CCTV surveillance and clean and sanitary facilities received the highest preference at 90.00%, showing that parents prioritize both security monitoring and hygiene in the childcare environment. Other essential safety measures, such as a secure gate with personnel (80.00%), emergency and disaster preparedness (73.33%), and child-proof classrooms (70.00%), also rank highly. These strong percentages reflect a collective expectation that a childcare center must offer a safe, protected, and well-prepared environment for young children.

Regarding operational standards, almost all parents (96.67%) consider having licensed teachers and trained childcare staff as very important, while only 3.33% view it as simply "important." This strong preference suggests that parents associate staff qualifications with the quality of care, professionalism, and reliability a childcare center should provide.

Overall, the results show that parents prioritize three key aspects in their decision-making: a childcare center that is conveniently located, equipped with comprehensive safety and hygiene measures, and staffed by highly qualified professionals. Meeting these expectations is essential to building trust and ensuring that the childcare center is perceived as secure, accessible, and capable of delivering high-quality care and early childhood services.

Table 10. Respondents' General Perception and Acceptability of a Full-Day, ECCD-Aligned Child Care Center

Table 10 shows that the general perception and acceptability of a full-day, ECCD-aligned child care and learning center indicate a strong likelihood of enrollment among parents. Most respondents reported being very likely to enroll their child (63.33%), followed by likely (33.33%), while only a small portion were unlikely (3.33%). This shows strong parental interest in structured early childhood education programs.

Regarding factors influencing enrollment, parents highly prioritize quality curriculum, which received the highest preference at 96.67%. This is closely followed by a holistic development approach and teacher qualifications (both at 93.33%), reflecting the importance parents place on well-rounded learning experiences delivered by skilled staff. Other significant considerations include modern facilities (83.33%), affordability (83.33%), and flexible scheduling (80.00%), indicating that convenience and accessibility also play a major role in decision-making. Additionally, positive reviews/referrals were selected by 76.67% of respondents, while school bus availability was considered by 60.00%, and other factors such as afternoon schedule were minimally prioritized (3.33%).

Overall, the findings suggest that parents' enrollment decisions are largely driven by education quality, holistic child development, and teacher competence, while operational and logistical factors such as flexibility, affordability, and transportation are secondary yet important considerations. Implementing these priorities is likely to enhance the acceptability and attractiveness of the child care center.

Table 11. Cost Considerations and Willingness To Pay

As shown in Table 11, the data on household willingness to pay and preferences for additional services in a full-day ECCD program reveal important insights into parental decision-making. Most respondents indicated that a monthly tuition of ₱6,000–₱8,000 is acceptable (46.67%), followed by ₱8,001–₱10,000 (20.00%) and ₱10,001–₱12,000 (13.33%). Only a small portion of households were willing to pay ₱5,000 (6.67%), ₱15,000 (3.33%), or ₱16,000 (3.33%). This suggests that most parents prefer a moderate tuition range that balances affordability with quality.

Regarding flexible payment options, an overwhelming majority of respondents (93.33%) agreed that having the choice of monthly, quarterly, or semiannual payments would help them make enrollment decisions. This highlights the importance of offering flexible financial arrangements to accommodate different household budgets.

When asked about willingness to pay additional fees for optional services, 70.00% of respondents expressed willingness to pay for school bus service, and the same percentage (70.00%) were open to paying for nutritious, nutritionist-supervised lunch meals. A higher proportion (83.33%) indicated readiness to pay for enrichment programs such as music, arts, and dance. These findings demonstrate that parents value added services that enhance convenience, child development, and overall well-being.

Overall, the data suggest that parents' enrollment decisions are largely influenced by affordable tuition rates, flexible payment schemes, and the availability of value-added services. Implementing moderate tuition levels along with optional paid programs and flexible payment arrangements is likely to increase enrollment attractiveness and meet parental expectations.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on the market survey, technical evaluation, management analysis, and financial study, the proposed establishment of Bright Beginnings Child Care and Learning Center is FEASIBLE.

The market study results indicate strong demand and acceptability for the project. Survey findings show that 86.67% of respondents agreed that the community needs a full-day childcare and learning center. Furthermore, 63.33% of parents reported being very likely to enroll, while 33.33% indicated they are likely to enroll, suggesting a high probability of achieving the projected first-year enrollment of 50 students. Parents emphasized essential service features, including qualified teachers (96.67%), CCTV surveillance and clean facilities (90%), and child-proof learning environments (70%), confirming that the proposed operational design aligns closely with parental expectations.

The survey also supports future growth potential. A significant proportion of respondents expressed willingness to avail supplementary services such as school bus transportation (73.33%), enrichment programs (83.33%), and nutritionist-supervised meals (70%), indicating opportunities for revenue diversification. Additionally, the expressed demand suggests potential for increased enrollment beyond the initial capacity.

In response, the proponent plans to secure a larger facility in the succeeding years of operation to accommodate additional enrollees once operational stability is achieved.

The financial study confirms the project's viability under conservative assumptions. With an initial investment of ₱3,650,000, the projected first-year operations generate a net income after tax of ₱1,034,765.20. The break-even analysis indicates a break-even enrollment of approximately 47 students, providing a margin of safety relative to the planned initial capacity. Key financial indicators—including a payback period of approximately 3.6 years, an ROI of 28.35%, a positive NPV, and an IRR exceeding the cost of capital demonstrate the project's financial sustainability and its ability to support future expansion.

AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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