USING PLAY TO IMPROVE THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

Nang Mo Hline San^{1*}, Aye Aye Myint², Cherry Zin Oo³

¹Mandalay Education Degree College, Mandalay, Myanmar

^{2,3}Yangon University of Education, Yangon, Myanmar

mohline88@gmail.com¹, aamyint15259@gmail.com², cherryzinn@gmail.com³

*Corresponding Author

Received: 21 April 2021; Accepted: 11 September 2021; Published: 24 Septmber 2021

To cite this article (APA): San, N. M. H., Myint, A. A., & Oo, C. Z. (2021). Using play to improve the social and emotional development of preschool children. *Southeast Asia Early Childhood Journal*, *10*(2), 16-35. https://doi.org/10.37134/saecj.vol10.2.2.2021

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.37134/saecj.vol10.2.2.2021

ABSTRACT

Every child deserves the opportunity to play during their preschool-age towards optimal development of physical, intellectual, social and emotional. However, parents or caregivers from the remote villages in Myanmar have not raised awareness of the play with their preschoolers. There was no preschool program in these remote villages in Myanmar. Therefore, this study aims to support parents and caregivers to nurture the social and emotional development of preschool children using play. This study shows them how they can create an environment for their preschoolers to improve the social and emotional development and the empirical evidence of the children development using play. Drawing on a pre-test-post-test control group design, a total of 90 preschool children involving 45 children in the experimental group and 45 children in the control group were observed before, during, and after the play program by using social and emotional development surveys. The descriptive and inferential data analysis results revealed that there was an effect of play program on preschool children's social and emotional development. The program helps preschool children to optimize their social and emotional development. Implications of the results for the development and implementation of the play program are discussed.

Keywords: preschool children, play, social development, emotional development, child development

INTRODUCTION

Nurturing the social and emotional development of children since their early years plays an important role for parents, teachers and caregivers. Emerging social and emotional skills in early childhood stage is more important than their social and emotional competence in later stages (Denham & Burton, 2003). According to the findings of Tan and Dobbs-Oates (2013), there is a significant correlation between the social and emotional development in preschool children and their emergent literacy. Children need a level of socio-emotional development which allows them to regulate their behavior and emotions (Aquino et al., 2019). These developments in early childhood stage help with the establishment of their personality and personal character in the future (Zakaria et al., 2021). Therefore, the social and emotional development of children needs to be nurtured, particularly during the preschool years.

Child development is not the same as growth. The term 'growth' refers mainly to changes in size, while 'development' is characterized by changes in complexity and function.

Vygotsky (1998) highlighted that the children develop in relation to not just their biology, also the conditions in their environment. Therefore, the child should have the environment to develop their social and emotional skills in their early childhood years. The child can develop their emotions through the social process (Vygotsky, 1987) as these are considered as a unified concept.

To emerge social and emotional development of the preschool child, previous research highlighted play-based learning as one of the main sources for child development. Vygotsky (1966) commented that "play is not the predominant form of activity, but is, in a certain sense, the leading line of development in the preschool years" (p. 6). Through play-based learning, the child can actively engage with people, objects and representations that make their sense of social worlds (DEEWR, 2009; Mamat & Omar, 2013). Also, (White & Walker, 2018) found that play-based preschool program helps to enhance the social and emotional development of the child.

Pre-school children love to play. They spend hours building and knocking down towers, playing house and acting out stories with playmates. While playing in infancy consists mainly of imitations of repeated actions, sometimes with variations, in the preschool years, play expands into much of the child's life. Preschools love to play games that test and fine-tune the mastery of their bodies – running, climbing, swinging, throwing. They like to build structures with mud, sand or blocks and they love to pretend. They 'make believe' about all kinds of things; everyday concerns, new things they have learned and imagined adventure (Almon, 2003).

Elkind (1987) argues that many young children today are not given enough time simply to be children-to play and socialize as they choose. Elkind even worries that children may lose their self-initiative and enjoyment of learning if their lives are orchestrated by parents who incessantly push them to achieve. This is because parents and teachers do not realize the positive and indirect contribution of play behavior in child development (Sigelman & Rider, 2018). With play on the decline, there are at risk of losing love, social connection, mutual respect, friendship, cooperation, and competition (Sanson et al., 2004). So, play is an important component of the child development curriculum.

Jean Piaget considered play not only as a reflection of the cognitive skills but also of children's daily lives and problems. It is possible, through play, to link intellect with emotions. This is the reason Piaget believed that a child's toys would have the repercussions of the experiences of the child in recent past (Piaget, 1962). Children of today are overwhelmed by a wide range of toys, other play objects or even high-tech toys. This variety of choices can intrude with the children's play to some extent. It is difficult to deny that programming toys enable the children get computational thinking or fun. For preschool children, however, the simpler the playthings, the more effective they are in stimulating the children's creative play, learning and thinking.

Letting the children be in touch with natural materials such as wool, cotton and silk, stones, wood and metals which are easily accessible in their environment can enhance their sense impressions. The children can learn how things are different and at the same time they can feel and different the different senses of their playthings rather than the same sense they get by the touch to only the plastic playthings.

Choosing the right playthings for the children according to their developmental needs can truly support their overall development – physical, social, and cognitive growth of them. For example, manipulating the toys that are too small would be difficult for the young children. Appropriate sizes of toys help the development of a child's large and small muscles as well as encourage eye-hand coordination. Playthings should be simple enough as the children's age so that they are able to comprehend what to do with them as their experiences of the world around them. Open-ended playthings, such as blocks, nurture the social skills such as negotiation, and develop the cognitive skills such as language and grouping.

Preschool programs that offer a healthy mix of play and child-initiated discovery learning can be very beneficial to young children (Stipek, 2002). According to the systematic review of social and emotional learning in early childhood education conducted by Blewitt et al. (2020), curriculum-based social and emotional learning programmes have a positive impact on children's developmental outcomes.

In the provision of Early Childhood Care and Development services in Myanmar, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR), the lead government ministries, non-governmental and private sector organizations are involved in supporting early childhood communities. However, there are no preschools in most villages in Myanmar in order to see how their children development including social and emotional development have progressed. Parents today have become unaware or unable to provide their children with early opportunities for peer experiences which can lead to later maladjustment in later relations and learning activities in the school settings (Aye Min Naing, 2012). In addition, most parents do not think of the importance of play in their children development such as physical, social, emotional and language development. They have insufficient knowledge and unaware of the concept of learning by playing.

Therefore, this study aims to support parents and caregivers to nurture the social and emotional development of preschool children using play. These preschool children do not have a chance to join the preschool as there is no preschool in their remote villages. This study shows them how they can create an environment for their preschoolers to improve the social and emotional development. This study was guided by the following research questions:

- (i) To what extent does play enhance preschool children's social development?
- (ii) To what extent does play enhance preschool children's emotional development?

METHODOLOGY

A true experimental design was used in order to answer the research questions. The systematic random sampling method was used. The participants in this study were a total of 90 preschoolage children (3-5 years old) from six villages involving 45 children each in the experimental group and control group. Preschool-age children participated in the program with their respective parents or caregivers. The socio-economic status of the children was gathered with the help of village leaders. Parents or caregivers were asked to fill out the development of their children at the beginning of the program. The social and emotional development of preschool children were observed 6 times during their play.

Characteristics of Participants

A total of 90 preschool-age children from six villages from Kyaukme Township, Northern Shan State, Myanmar, participated in this study. Preschool children are randomly selected into experimental group and control group. A breakdown of the sample of 90 preschool children including gender, family type, their father and mother education is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Sample Preschool Children

| Demographics | N | Percentages (%) |
|--------------------------|----|-----------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 34 | 38 % |
| Female | 56 | 62 % |
| Family type | | |
| Nuclear family | 51 | 57 % |
| Extended family | 39 | 43 % |
| Father's education level | | |
| Post or graduated | 1 | 1 % |
| High school level | 3 | 3 % |
| Middle school level | 12 | 13 % |
| Primary school level | 48 | 54 % |
| Uneducated | 26 | 29 % |
| Mother's education level | | |
| Post or graduated | 1 | 1 % |
| High school level | 4 | 4 % |
| Middle school level | 17 | 19 % |
| Primary school level | 42 | 47 % |
| Uneducated | 26 | 29 % |
| Total | 90 | |

Note. N = Number of participants

As shown in Table 1, of the 90 preschool children, 34 preschoolers (38%) were male and 56 preschoolers (62%) were female. As Myanmar is one of the Southeast Asia countries, extended family have been common. There were 51 preschoolers (57%) were from nuclear family and 39 preschoolers (43%) were from extended family. The education level of preschoolers' father and mother were mostly uneducated and only have the primary school level (see Table 1).

Intervention Program

First, the authors provided the workshop to the village leaders, parents and caregivers regarding the children development in early childhood with the help of play. Thirty trainees who can play

with their children participated in the toy-making program. At the beginning of the workshop, the following topics regarding the child development were discussed:

- (i) Ways of children learning, and playing
- (ii) Role of the play for child development
- (iii) Benefits of playing with traditional playing methods, toys and materials

Then, toy materials were made with the help of parents, caregivers and villagers including:

- (i) Dolls of different sizes
- (ii) Car models in different sizes
- (iii) Matching cards
- (iv) Musical instruments
- (v) Puzzle games and dozets
- (vi) Colored tins and cans
- (vii) Scale pan
- (viii) Storybooks
- (ix) Clocks
- (x) Seriation sets
- (xi) Bamboo clappers
- (xii) Ladders
- (xiii) Zippers boards
- (xiv) Inserting boards
- (xv) Number bingo
- (xvi) Charts of Myanmar and English Alphabets
- (xvii) Charts of Myanmar and English Numbers
- (xviii) Charts of vegetables

The example of toy materials made with the help of parents, caregivers and villagers for preschoolers are shown in Appendix A. Then, how to play with the toy materials were shown to the parents, caregivers, and villagers. After the workshop, the parents and caregivers were asked to play with children using the toys that had been done.

Instruments

The playing behaviors of children were rated according to the scale of social and emotional development for preschoolers developed by Aye Min Naing (2012) (See Appendix B). Regarding the social development scale, the scale consisted of 35 items including two subscales: 18 items for social development and 17 items for antisocial development. In terms of the emotional development scale, the scale consisted of 52 items including positive emotional development: interest, joy, and initiative; and negative emotional development: dependency, fear, anger, distress, and shyness. The response scale for each item of social and emotional development scales was rated on a three-point scale: never (zero, 0), fair (one, 1) and always (two, 2).

The playing behaviors of preschoolers were observed and assessed one time per three weeks. The observing time was taken for 3 hours once a time in each village. Children were

allowed to play and were observed and rated. The parents or caregivers (termed as supervisor) were not allowed to join during the process of the play. They would sit in a corner, but be available to help or play, whenever demanded by any child. Occasionally the observer had to interfere to solve minor disputes among the children mostly on the issues of possessing to play in a friendly, smooth, relaxed and playful atmosphere.

Observation of The Children at Their Homes

The observation of the children at their homes was carried out as the naturalistic environment as possible. In most cases, only the parents or caregivers knew that the child is being observed. The elder siblings or other adults in the family were not even aware that the child is being observed. For the rest of the family members, the researcher was just a casual visitor or a social friend of the parents of the house.

The first visit to these families resulted in some common observations. Since the parents or caregivers knew that researchers would be visiting to observe the child, the child was dressed up quite nicely; the house was specially cleaned, and a formal tea was offered. In spite of the special request that the visit of the researchers should be taken casually, the mother took it as a special occasion. However, the researchers tried to reassure them, and introduce informalities. It did work and the subsequent visits were taken in a more relaxed manner. The caregivers continued with her household tasks while the researcher observed communicating with the child.

These children were observed during a number of situations when the child was busy by himself, with the family members or with the siblings. The children were observed for the type of activities they do when alone, the level of communication they have with the elders and the way in which elders communicate with them. Although it was mainly an observation study, however, at times, the researcher talked with the playing child and occasionally participated in the play. In addition to study within the family members, the children were observed in groups to see how they would behave with the other people. The group of children was observed on a number of occasions, while busy in the playground, while at lunchtime and even during their rest period. In the earlier, the researchers observed the children sitting in a corner near a few distances of their playing. They appeared and felt uncomfortable and uneasy in such a situation. After a couple of visits, they were familiar with the type of observation and they did not feel uncomfortable and even notice the observer whether they were or not.

RESULTS

This section presents the analysis results of the social and emotional development of preschool children through their play. The data was collected 6 times during their play by themselves at homes and with their peers.

Effectiveness of The Program on Preschool Children's Social Development

In order to investigate the effectiveness of the play intervention on preschool children's social development, a dependent sample t-test was used. The analysis results can be seen in Table 2. After the play intervention, the social development of preschool children both from the

experimental group and the control group was increased. The mean difference was 32.51 for preschool children from the experimental group and 17.37 for those from the control group.

Table 2
Effect of the Play Program on Preschool Children's Social Development

| Group | | Pre-test | Post-test | t | df | p |
|---------------|------|----------|-----------|-----------|----|-------|
| Evenerimental | Mean | 31.36 | 63.87 | -29.966** | 88 | 0.000 |
| Experimental | SD | 6.71 | 2.18 | -29.900 | 00 | 0.000 |
| Control | Mean | 30.07 | 47.44 | -14.948** | 88 | 0.000 |
| Collifor | SD | 6.35 | 4.52 | -14.340 | 00 | 0.000 |

^{*}*p* < .05, ***p* < .01

According to Table 2, the dependent sample t-test showed that the significant difference between pre-test and post-test mean scores, t (1,88) = -29.966; p < 0.001, indicating that the program was effective for improving the social development of pre-school children from the experimental group. Also, there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test mean scores of preschool children from the control group, t (1,88) = -14.948; p < 0.001. Over a period of time, preschool children from the control group who did not receive the play program improved their social development. However, post-test mean scores of preschool children from the experimental group (M = 63.87) was higher than those from the control group (M = 47.44). This finding implies that the play program is needed to improve their social development.

Changes in Preschool Children's Social Development

As presented in the previous section, the social development of preschool children has increased after the play program. This section presents the changes in their social development during the play program through the results of 6 times observation. Preschoolers' social development changes were observed using the three-point Likert scales over the 6 times observation. The descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation for each social development changes are presented in the following. A visual representation of the preschoolers' social development changes over time for the experimental group and control group is presented in Figure 1. This figure clearly shows the trend of the differences in preschool children's social development among the observation times of the experimental and the control group, respectively.

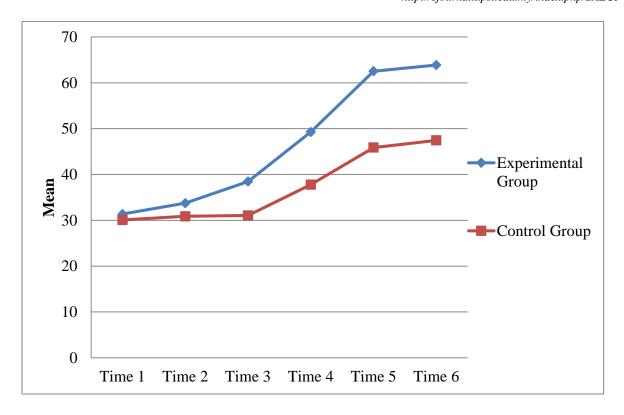


Figure 1. Social Development of Preschool-age Children for Experimental and Control Group

According to Figure 1, preschool children from the experimental group increased their social development mean scores over time. However, preschool children from the control group did not change their social development mean scores at the beginning of the program, that is, the first 3 observation times. After Time 3, preschool children from the control group increased their social development. As can be seen in Figure 1, the growth rate of preschoolage children in the experimental group revealed much more progress in social development. Although there was the progress in the growth rate of social development of the control group children, this rate was not as high as that of experimental group children. These results suggested that the play program impacted the preschoolers' social development.

The findings of Time 1 revealed that preschool children from the experimental group and the control group demonstrated similar social development mean scores (MD = 1.29). In Time 6, the findings revealed that preschool children from the experimental group demonstrated higher social development than those from the control group (MD = 16.43). These observed differences were examined to find out if there were significant differences in each Time by using an independent sample t-test. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Comparison between Preschool Children from the Experimental Group and the Control Group on Social Development in each Observed Time

| | Group | Mean | SD | t | p |
|----------|--------------|-------|------|-------------|-------|
| Time 1 | Experimental | 31.36 | 6.71 | 1.622 | 0.100 |
| Tille I | Control | 30.07 | 6.35 | 1.022 | 0.100 |
| Time 2 | Experimental | 33.73 | 6.39 | 2.094^{*} | 0.039 |
| Time 2 | Control | 30.87 | 6.6 | 2.094 | 0.039 |
| Time 3 | Experimental | 38.27 | 5.14 | 5.838** | 0.000 |
| Tille 3 | Control | 31.04 | 6.52 | 3.030 | 0.000 |
| Time 4 | Experimental | 49.27 | 4.29 | 9.440** | 0.000 |
| 111116 4 | Control | 37.78 | 6.95 | 9.440 | 0.000 |
| Time 5 | Experimental | 62.53 | 3.04 | 13.653** | 0.000 |
| Time 3 | Control | 45.87 | 7.6 | 13.033 | 0.000 |
| Time 6 | Experimental | 63.87 | 2.18 | 21.950** | 0.000 |
| Time o | Control | 47.44 | 4.52 | 21.930 | 0.000 |

^{*}p < .05, **p < .01

According to Table 3, the independent sample t-test showed that there was no significant difference in social development mean scores between the experimental group and the control group in Time 1, t (1,88) = 1.622; p > 0.05. However, in Time 2, there was a significant difference in social development mean scores between the experimental group and the control group, t (1,88) = 2.094; p < 0.05. Similarly, in Time 3, 4, 5, and 6, there were statistically significant differences for social development mean scores between experimental and control groups (see Table 3). These results highlighted that preschool children from the experimental group have higher social development than those from the control group. Therefore, this implies that the play program is needed as it helps to improve preschool children's social development.

Effectiveness of The Program on Preschool Children's Emotional Development

Also, in order to investigate the effectiveness of the program on preschool children's emotional development, a dependent sample t-test was used. Table 4 shows the analysis results. As the analysis, there were increases in the emotional development of preschool children from both the experimental and control group. The mean differences were 31.8 for preschool children from the experimental group and 8.11 for those from the control group.

| | Changes of Preschool | Children's Emotional | l Development aft | er the Program |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|
|--|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|

| Group | | Pre-test | Post-test | t | df | p |
|--------------|------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Evporimental | Mean | 48.62 | 80.42 | -31.597** | 88 | 0.000 |
| Experimental | | 3.48 | -31.391 | 00 | 0.000 | |
| Control | Mean | 48.71 | 56.82 | -5.114** | 88 | 0.000 |
| Control | SD | 5.78 | 9.08 | -3.114 | 00 | 0.000 |

p < .05, p < .01

According to Table 4, the significant difference of the dependent sample t-test between pre-test and post-test mean scores, t (1,88) = -31.597; p < 0.001, indicated the effectiveness of the program on the emotional development of pre-school children from the experimental group. Also, there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test mean scores of preschool children from the control group, t (1,88) = -5.114; p < 0.001. Preschool children from control group who did not receive the play program also improved their emotional development over a period of time. However, post-test mean scores of preschool children from the experimental group (M = 80.42) was significantly higher than those from the control group (M = 56.82). This finding conveys that the play program is required in helping to improve preschool children's emotional development.

Changes in Preschool Children's Emotional Development

The emotional development of preschool children has improved after the play program according to the analysis presented in the previous section. In this section, the changes of their emotional development during the play program through the results of 6 times observation are presented. Preschoolers' emotional development changes were observed using the three-point Likert scales over the 6 times observation. The descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation for each emotional development changes are presented in the following. A visual representation of the preschoolers' emotional development changes over time for the experimental group and control group is presented in Figure 2. The differences in preschool children's emotional development among the observation times of the experimental and the control group can be seen clearly.

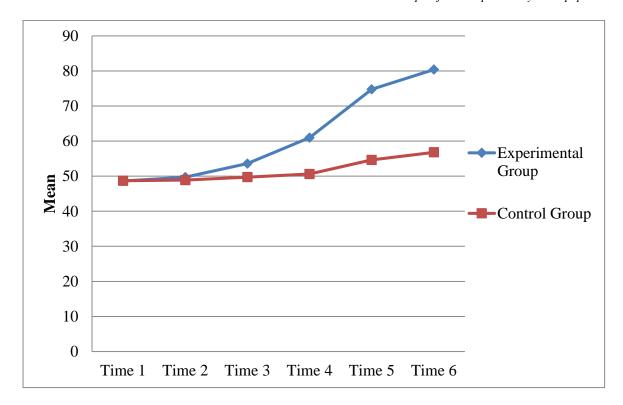


Figure 2. Emotional Development of Preschool-age Children for Experimental and Control Group

According to Figure 2, the emotional development mean scores of preschool children from the experimental group became higher and higher over time. As the analysis shows, the emotional development of preschool children from the control group did not change at the beginning, first 2 observation times and there was a slight improvement in Time 3 observation. Although the growth rate of control group children's emotional development had progressed over time, that of children from the experimental group revealed much more progress. These results revealed that the play program impacted the preschoolers' emotional development.

The findings of Time 1 show that the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group were similar (MD = 0.09, i.e. the control group had a higher mean score than the experimental group). However, in Time 6, the preschool children from the experimental group demonstrated higher emotional development than that of control group (MD = 23.6) as can be seen in the findings. These observed differences were examined to find out if there were significant differences in each Time by using an independent sample t-test. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5
Comparison between Preschool Children from the Experimental Group and the Control Group on Emotional Development in each Observed Time

| | Group | Mean | SD | t | n |
|-----------|--------------|-------|------|-------------|--------------------|
| | - | | | <i>l</i> | p |
| Time 1 | Experimental | 48.62 | 5.79 | 0.073 | 0.942 |
| 111116 1 | Control | 48.71 | 5.78 | 0.073 | U. J42 |
| Time 2 | Experimental | 49.73 | 6.9 | 0.795 | 0.429 |
| 111110 2 | Control | 48.89 | 5.28 | 0.793 | U. 4 27 |
| Time 3 | Experimental | 53.6 | 7.17 | 2.608^{*} | 0.011 |
| Time 3 | Control | 49.73 | 6.9 | 2.006 | 0.011 |
| Time 4 | Experimental | 60.98 | 6.54 | 7.717** | 0.000 |
| 1 mile 4 | Control | 50.62 | 6.18 | /./1/ | 0.000 |
| Time 5 | Experimental | 74.78 | 4.35 | 16.19** | 0.000 |
| Tille 3 | Control | 54.64 | 7.12 | 10.19 | 0.000 |
| Time 6 | Experimental | 80.42 | 3.48 | 16.279** | 0.000 |
| ime o | Control | 56.82 | 9.08 | 10.419 | 0.000 |
| * . 05 ** | . 01 | | | | |

^{*}p < .05, **p < .01

According to Table 5, the independent sample t-test showed that at the beginning of Time 1, there was no significant difference in emotional development mean scores between experimental group and control group, t (1,88) = 0.073; p > 0.05. In Time 2, a slight difference can be seen, t (1,88) = 0.795; p > 0.05. However, started from Time 3, there was significant difference in emotional development mean scores between the experimental group and the control group, t (1,88) = 2.608; p < 0.05. The statistically significant differences for emotional development mean scores between the experimental and control groups in Time 4, 5, and 6 are as shown in Table 4. These results highlighted the fact that preschool children from the experimental group have improved higher emotional development than those from the control group. Therefore, this inferred that the play program is vital for the improvement of preschool children's emotional development.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings in this study add to the growing body of the empirical evidence for using the preschool program to enhance the social and emotional development of preschool children. The positive significant changes in preschool children's social and emotional development at the end of the program is consistent with that of previous studies (Blewitt et al., 2020; Pahl & Barrett, 2007; White & Walker, 2018). This suggests that early childhood education should be focused on promoting child development, physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development.

In preparing the preschool program, this study highlights the importance of play to optimize child development, especially social and emotional development. The key contribution of this study is the improvement of preschool children's social and emotional

development after the play program. These findings reflect those of prior studies (Aye Min Naing, 2012; DEEWR, 2009; Shwe Yee Win & Khin Hnin Nwe, 2020; White & Walker, 2018). Although preschool children from the control group have increased their social and emotional development, preschool children from the experimental group revealed much more progress. This is possible because of the time. This implies that the play program is crucial for preschool children to gain optimal development in their social and emotional development.

In addition, parents or caregivers do make a real difference to young children's development. There is a range of activities that parents undertake with pre-school children which have a positive effect on their development. For example, reading with the child, teaching songs and nursery rhymes, painting and drawing, playing with letters and numbers, teaching the alphabet and numbers, taking children on visits and creating regular opportunities for them to play with their friends at home, were all associated with the progress of intellectual, social and emotional development. What parents or caregivers do with their children is more important than who are the parents? Even poor mothers with few qualifications can improve their children's progress and give them a better start at school by engaging in activities at home that engage and stretch the child's mind (Sylva et al., 2004).

Nowadays in Myanmar, teachers, government officials, non-government organizations (NGOs), parents and communities are together learning a more holistic and child-centered approach to early childhood education. Many centers are concentrating on reading and writing, which may be poorly suited for every young child. Therefore, the findings of this research suggest that the implications of the play program at community centres, local childcare centres, and home should be encouraged. This is because toy making or playing with materials and with peer promotes physical, intellectual, social development and emotional support, which is very needed for children to learn for their future lives. Therefore, playing with toys can set the foundation for reading, writing, mathematical reasoning, social interaction, emotional stability and creativity. Hence all of the children under 5 should be able to go to appropriate preschool so that they will be ease in transition to formal schooling. It is in preschools where most striking changes in behaviors are linked to the child's growing sense of his/her own identity and increasing independence. The child delights in the mastering of new skills and enjoys exploring the world outside his/her home. If there is no preschool or child-caring centers in the disadvantaged areas, parents and communities should try to make the toy-making programme that enables children to be alert and ready for formal schooling and gain social dealing and emotional stability.

Therefore, this study provides the awareness for early childhood care to the parents so as to remove the major disturbances to the way of social and emotional development, which are vital for the children's whole lives. However, the impact on physical and intellectual development, which are also crucial for children development, is still needed to be explored. Most parents are demanding a great weight on academic skills and thus it shows the necessity of effective parental education programs that either needed to be trained which can change their perceptions and attitudes upon child caring and development.

REFERENCES

- Almon, J. (2003). The vital role of play in early childhood education. In *All work and no play...How educational reforms are harming our preschoolers.* (pp. 17–42). Praeger Publishers/Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Aquino, L. N., Mamat, N., & Che Mustafa, M. (2019). Levels of competence in the learning domains of kindergarten entrants. *Southeast Asia Early Childhood Journal*, 8(1), 37–45. https://doi.org/10.37134/saecj.vol8.no1.5.2019
- Aye Min Naing. (2012). The effectiveness of toy making programme on social and emotional development of Myanmar preschool age children. [Unpublished master's thesis]. Yangon University of Education.
- Blewitt, C., O'connor, A., Morris, H., Mousa, A., Bergmeier, H., Nolan, A., Jackson, K., Barrett, H., & Skouteris, H. (2020). Do curriculum-based social and emotional learning programs in early childhood education and care strengthen teacher outcomes? A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(3), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17031049
- DEEWR. (2009). *Belonging, being & becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia*. Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee. http://www.crossref.org/deleted_DOI.html
- Denham, S. A., & Burton, R. (2003). *Social and emotional prevention and intervention programming for preschoolers*. Kluwer-Plenum.
- Elkind, D. (1987). Miseducation: Preschoolers at risk. Knopf Publishing Group.
- Mamat, N., & Omar, A. (2013). Culturally responsive pre-school education: Interaction among children from cross-ethnic groups in a multiple-ethnic pre-school. *Southeast Asia Early Childhood Journal*, 2, 51–61. https://ejournal.upsi.edu.my/index.php/SAECJ/article/view/929
- Pahl, K. M., & Barrett, P. M. (2007). The development of social—emotional competence in preschool-aged children: An introduction to the Fun FRIENDS program. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 17(1), 81–90. https://doi.org/10.1375/ajgc.17.1.81
- Piaget, J. (1962). Play, dreams, and imitation in childhood. Norton.
- Sanson, A., Hemphill, S. A., & Smart, D. (2004). Connections between temperament and social development: A review. *Social Development*, *13*(1), 142–170. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1467-9507.2004.00261.x
- Shwe Yee Win, & Khin Hnin Nwe. (2020). An analysis of the impact of play on preschool children's social skills development. *J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci*, 18(9).
- Sigelman, C., & Rider, E. (2018). Life-span human development (9th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Stipek, D. (2002). At what age should children enter kindergarten? A question for policy makers and parents. *Social Policy Report*, 16(2), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2379-3988.2002.tb00018.x
- Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Taggart, B. (2004). *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Final report: A longitudinal study funded by the DfES 1997-2004* (Research Report No. SSU/FR/2004/01). http://eprints.ioe.ac.uk/5309/1/sylva2004EPPEfinal.pdf
- Tan, M., & Dobbs-Oates, J. (2013). Relationship between emergent literacy and early social-emotional development in preschool children from low-income backgrounds. *Early Child Development and Care*, 183(11), 1509–1530. https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2012.729051
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1966). Play and its role in the mental development of the child. *Soviet Psychology*, *5*(3), 6–18. https://doi.org/10.2753/RPO1061-040505036
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). Emotions and their development in childhood. In R. W. Rieber & A. S. Carton (Eds.), *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky: Vol. 1. Problems of general psychology: including the volume thinking and speech* (pp. 325–2338). Plenum Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1998). The problem of age. In R. W. Rieber (Ed.), *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky: Vol. 5. Child psychology* (pp. 187–205). Plenum Press.
- White, A., & Walker, S. (2018). Enhancing social—emotional development through evidence-based resources. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 43(4), 4–12. https://doi.org/10.23965/AJEC.43.4.01
- Zakaria, M. Z., Yunus, F., & Mohamed, S. (2021). Drawing activities enhance preschoolers socio emotional development. *Southeast Asia Early Childhood Journal*, 10(1), 18–27. https://doi.org/10.37134/saecj.vol10.1.2.2021

Appendix A: Toy materials made with the help of parents, caregivers, and villagers for preschoolers.





Appendix B: Preschoolers' Social and Emotional Development Scale

Name of the village _____ Duration_____

| | 3.7 | D . | | | | | | | | So | cial D | evelopm | ent | | | | | | | |
|-----|------|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| No. | Name | Date | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| | | | Persuades others not to play with whom not in good relation with him/her | Has close friends | Wants to get the attention from others | Hides the face when talking with others | Can play or talk to the elders who are not the same age with him/ her | Tries to hurt other children (eg: by punching, pinching etc.) | Has a lot of friends | Follows the rules of the play | Listens attentively to others | Gazes to others children playing without participating in the play | Waits for his/her turn when playing | Being alone or stay alone not knowing what to do in the play | Not responding when others greet | Seems unhappy | Being ignored by others | Being able to read social cues of others | Shares snacks or play things with friends | Can play by looking at how others play |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Name o | of the village | | | | | | | | | - | | | | | | | Dura | ation | |
|--------|----------------|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| No. | Nama | Data | | | | | | | | Social I | Develo | pment | | | | | | | |
| No. | Name | Date | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 |
| | | | Imitates how others play or watch them play and just play alone nearby | Looks at the speakers when talking | Likes to play alone | Helps others with moving or lifting things when playing | Plays alone with own's idea without even noticing others | Tells other children " I won't play with you" when they don't do what he/she asks for | Tells others " Don't participate in our play if you don't give me what I ask for" | Destroys things of others when he/ she feels annoyed or upset somehow | Over-teasing | Yells at others when getting angry | Feels shy to talk with others | Hardly smiles or laughs | Being scared of strangers | Earnestly runs the errands when the elders ask for | Being stubborn | Greets or talks first when he/ she meets a friend | leads the group when playing and welcomes the others who are shy to participate in the play |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Duration----

Name of the village -----

| No. | Nama | Date | | | | | | | P | ositive E | motio | nal De | velopm | ent | | | | | | |
|-----|------|------|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| No. | Name | Date | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| | | | Easily participates in the group | Watches others play | Being able to do the conversations in group-playing | Cooperates with other children | Not scared of being bullied | Concentrates only on playing even when the strangers or the guests are at home | Has a great interest in new play things or new ways of playing | Shows interest on how others play or do something | Shows interest in group work | Always looks happy | Feels pleased on whatever has done | Easily smiles at others | Can sing solo or in group | Does singing or dancing very often | Chooses what to do without getting the help from others | Actively carries out whatever to be done by himself/herself | Being able to handle the sudden change or situation | Easily befriends to the guests |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |

Name of the village -----

| _ | |
|------|-------|
| Dura | tion |
| Duia | 11011 |

| | | D. (| | | | | | | | Posi | tive Em | otional | Devel | opment | | | | | | |
|-----|------|------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| No. | Name | Date | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |
| | | | Being unable to control the emotions | Can do well even when his/her parents are not around | Likes to follow along rather than to lead | Clings on others too much | Always clings on one of the family members | Asks for the appreciation of what he/she has done | Can easily leave mum behind when he/ she wants to play | Shows love to the parents or caretakers | Asks for the elders' help in coping with the emotions | Being difficult to make a change | Makes eye contact when talking to the elders | Being able to do basic matters at others' houses (like sleeping, eating, going to toilet etc.) | Tries to avoid others | Being in boldness | Likes to be by himself/herself | Hardly makes eye contact even with parents | Being scared too much when there is something to respond | Feels scared and wants to avoid a new situation |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Name of the village -----

| Name o | of the village | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Duration | n |
|--------|----------------|------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| No. | Name | Date | | | | | | Neg | ative E | Emotion | al Develo | pment | | | | | |
| NO. | Name | Date | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 |
| | | | Being scared of the height | Shows anger with words not with the behaviors | Being less patience | Easy to be in bad temper | Starts a fight with the family members | Being contemptuous to what others do | Breaks the play things into pieces when upset | Shouts or screams most often | Being angry when the play is hindered or disturbed | Does not do what he/ she is asked to do | Looks depressed | Usually worries over something | Shows dislike to others' behaviors | Cries whenever being punished (like being beaten or being scolded) | Cries whenever he/ she has a tantrum |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |