

Outdoor play and learning; A study of the parental participation in outdoor play and education of children among the mizo family

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Abstract

The earliest years of a child's life are key to predicting ultimate success in school and life. Play has been described as practice in divergent thinking, because in play, children are constantly coming up with new ideas and recombining them to create novel scenarios. Children learning can best be developed when family participate whole heartedly and showed their concern for their child's welfare. Studies have revealed that when children are not given proper care and education in early years of their life, it has a bad impact on their later life. Mothers' education has impact on the spend with their children in outdoor play and taking their to children's park etc. It was also found that Middle and Secondary education mothers sent their children to Balwadi /Anganwadi then the higher education group

Keywords: early childhood care and education, mothers' education and location, ex-post-facto research, ses, percentage't' test.

1. Introduction

Early childhood care and education is the most complex and challenging task in every parent's life and its significance is now being recognized all over the world. In the contemporary view a child is seen as a helpless being neither good nor bad at birth, one who has to be protected and moulded through discipline (Lallianzuali Fanai 2005, p.1) [24]. Children therefore, need to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tender care, as their behaviour, adjustment, intellectual development, emotional security, self-esteem and social attitudes are greatly influenced by the way that they are brought up. It is ultimately the parents' responsibility to see that as the child grows up, he/she is being able to discriminate good from evil, constantly adopting the former and eschewing the latter. If proper care is given to children during their formative years it will help them learn and respond appropriately to life situations.

Since, early childhood is the most and rapid period of development in a human life. The years from conception through birth to eight years of age are critical to the complete and healthy cognitive, emotional and physical growth of children. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children, "early childhood education" concerns the education of children from birth to age eight, and is considered to be the most vulnerable stage of a person's life.

Play is needed for healthy development for your child. Research shows that 75 percent of brain development occurs after birth. Play helps with that development by stimulating the brain through the formation of connections between nerve cells. This process helps with the development of fine and gross motor skills. Fine motor skills are actions such as being able to hold a crayon or pencil. Gross motor skills are actions such as jumping or running. Play also helps your child to develop language and socialization skills. Play allows children to

learn to communicate emotions, to think, be creative and solve problems. (Anderson Jona K.& Bailey S.J.2010, p.1) [16]

Play is a natural channel for young children's thinking, learning and development and is central to their holistic well-being. Play physically strengthens children's bodies, expands their minds and influences many dimensions of development and is a powerful tool for learning. For young children, play is a way of strengthening meaningful relationships and co-operation with others and supports the development and use of language. (Avril Mc Monagle 2012, p.10) [1]. Play is important for identity formation, expression and social learning (Bennett 2005, p.21) [19]

Play unlocks children's creativity and imagination, and develops reading, thinking and problem solving skills as well as motor skills. When children play, they process and manage emotions, understand and interpret the world around them, learn relationship and social skills, and develop values and ethics. Play feeds the brain, helping it develop in ways critical to success in life. During play, one develops a foundation for learning including language, reading, thinking and reasoning skills. And play between parent and child provides important opportunities for parent-child bonding. Children who are able to express emotion, both positive and negative, in their play generally feel happier, more energetic, and more cheerful than children who are more constricted in their play. (Julie A. Fiorelli and Sandra W. Russ 2012, p.100) [21]

Outdoor play develops disposition for the outdoors, for physical activity, and for care of the environment. Children who engage in lots of physical activities at school tend to engage in more energetic activities at home, while children who have childcare and school experiences that lack active physical activity, engage in more sedentary behaviors at home. Children who learn to

enjoy the outdoors have a much higher likelihood of becoming adults who enjoy hiking, gardening, jogging, bicycling, mountain climbing, or other outdoor endeavors. Therefore, extensive physical activity is also needed to address a growing problem of obesity. Outdoor play also enables children to enjoy the natural environment and learn to seek out exercise, fresh air, and activity. Parents must spend time with their children in order to enhance their full developments, Families are the child’s first educators. They have the greatest influence in shaping young children’s attitudes, values, behaviours, habits and skills. As such, they have a central role to play in educating their children for sustainable development. Children leaning can best be developed when family participate whole heartedly and showed their concern for their child’s welfare. Studies have revealed that when children are not given proper care and education in early years, it has a bad impact on their later life.

Aim of the study

1. To examine the parental participation in outdoor play and the learning of their children at different levels of Mothers’ Education

Hypotheses

The present study is to test and verify the following hypotheses:

1. Mothers’ Education has no significant influence on the participants of parents’ in outdoor play and learning of children.

Method of Study

The present study basically is an Ex-post-facto research in which the investigator instead of creating a special treatment has evaluated the effect of Education on the Outdoor Play and Learning after these treatment have occurred. The investigator has not given the treatment by manipulation but by selection, as it was impossible to manipulate variables such as Education.

Population

Population of Mizo Women here means all married Mizo Women with children residing inside the Mizoram.

Sample and Sampling Design

A sample of 300 married women was drawn from the different districts of Mizoram with the help of stratified proportionate random sampling.

Table 1: District-wise and Rural - Urban Distribution of Sampled Mother

Sl.No.	District	Rural Sample	Urban Sample	TOTAL
1	Aizawl	53	53	106
2	Lunglei	23	23	46
3	Champhai	22	22	44
4	Lawngtlai	13	13	26
5	Mamit	12	12	24
6	Saiha	11	11	22
7	Kolasib	10	10	20
8	Serchhip	6	6	12
TOTAL				300

Administrations of Tools and Data Collection

The Investigator visited all the 8 districts of Mizoram and interviewed 300 women.

Tabulation of Data

The data collected were accurately edited and classified in accordance to their Education. Then the raw information contained in the interview schedule were carefully coded and tabulated. It was again arranged in a systematic and orderly way for further statistical analysis.

Statistical Techniques for Analysis

Percentage ‘t’ test

To examine the impact of different levels of Education of Mizo women on Outdoor play and learning, the present study employed percentage ‘t’ test.

Spend time with children for indoor and outdoor games

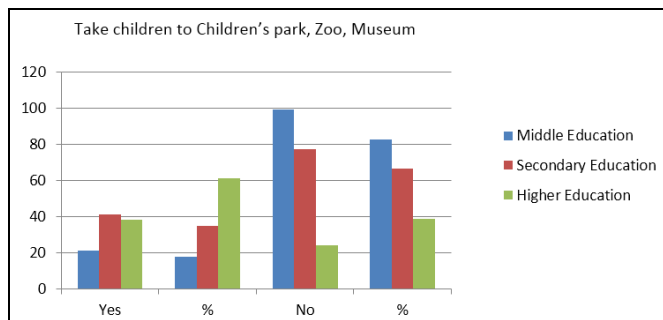
Take children to Children’s Park, zoo, museum etc.

Table 2: Take children to Children’s Park, zoo, museum etc

ITEMS	Total		Middle Education				Secondary Education				Higher Education				't-values'
	Yes %	No %	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	
Take children to Children's Park, Zoo, Meuseum etc.	33.33	66.67	21	17.50	99	82.50	41	34.75	77	65.25	38	61.29	24	38.71	ME vs SE = 3.03 **
															ME vs HE = 5.99 **
															SE vs HE = 3.41 **

* Significant at 0.05 level

** Significant at 0.01 level



An analysis of data vide Table 2 that only 33.33 per cent of mothers take children for outing to children's Park, zoo, museum etc., whereas rest of the 66.67 per cent of mothers never take their children to these places. A perusal of the same table also shows that the percentage

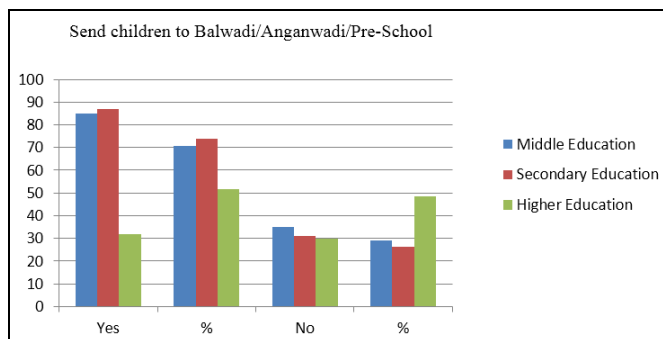
of mothers from middle, secondary and higher education groups, who take children to children's Park, zoo, museum etc. are 17.5 per cent, 34.75 per cent and 61.29 per cent respectively. The 't-values', for the comparison of mothers from the ME vs SE, ME vs HE and SE vs HE are 3.03, 5.99 and 3.41 respectively. All these 't-values', are significant at 0.01 level. The existence of significant differences among different educational groups of mothers implies that the higher the educational level of mothers, the higher is the percentage of mothers who take children for outing to children's park, zoo, museum etc. Therefore, the result leads the investigator to reject the relevant null hypothesis.

Send children to Balwadi/Anganwadi/Pre-school

Table 3: Send children to Balwadi/Anganwadi/Pre-school

ITEMS	Total		Middle Education				Secondary Education				Higher Education				't-values'
	Yes %	No %	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	
Send children to Balwadi/Anganwadi/Pre-school	68.00	42.00	85	70.83	35	29.17	87	73.73	31	26.27	32	51.61	30	48.39	ME vs SE = 0.05 ME vs HE = 2.56 SE vs HE = 2.98

* Significant at 0.05 level ** Significant at 0.01 level



A casual look at Table 3 shows that 68 per cent of mothers send their children to Balwadi/Anganwadi/Pre-school before admitting them to Nursery/ KG - I. An analysis of the same table further reveals that the percentage of mothers from middle, secondary and higher education groups, who do so are 70.83 per cent, 73.73 per

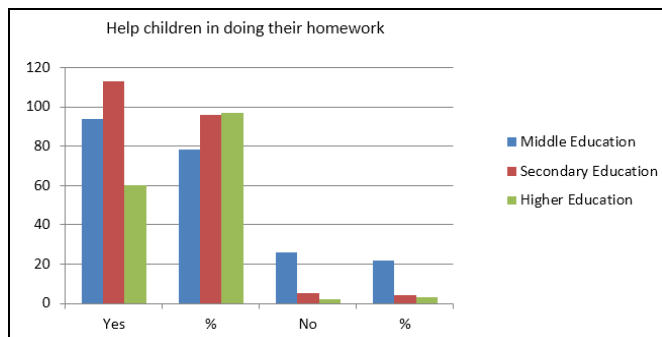
cent and 51.61 per cent respectively. The 't-values', for the comparison of mothers from the ME vs SE, ME vs HE and SE vs HE are 0.05, 2.56 and 2.98 respectively. All these 't-values', except the first, are significant. From an examination of the percentage of mothers under different educational groups one can notice that these significant differences are in favour of mother from middle and secondary education groups. This finding implies that the percentage of mothers who send their children to Balwadi/Anganwadi/Pre-school is significantly higher among mothers with middle and secondary education groups than higher education group. Therefore, the result leads the investigator to reject the relevant null hypothesis in relation to the comparison between ME vs HE and SE vs HE.

Help children in doing their home-work

Table 4: Help children in doing their home-work

ITEMS	Total		Middle Education				Secondary Education				Higher Education				't-values'
	Yes %	No %	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	
Help children in doing their home-work	89.00	11.00	94	78.33	26	21.67	113	95.76	5	4.24	60	96.77	2	3.23	ME vs SE = 3.99 ME vs HE = 3.27 SE vs HE = 0.32

* Significant at 0.05 level ** Significant at 0.01 level



A perusal of data vide Table 4 reveals that 89 per cent of mothers extend help to children in doing their homework, whereas the rest of the 11 per cent do not so because of their socio-cultural, religious, economic and engagement and activities. A quick glance at the same table further shows that the percentage of mothers from middle, secondary and higher education groups, who help children in their home-work, are 78.33 per cent, 95.76 per cent and 96.77 per cent respectively. The 't-values', for the comparison of mothers from the ME vs SE, ME vs HE and SE vs HE are 3.99, 3.27 and 0.32 respectively. All these 't-values', except the last one are statistically significant. From the existence of significant differences between mothers with ME vs SE, ME vs HE which is in favour of secondary and higher education groups of mothers, it is concluded that the percentage of mothers who help children in their home-work is significantly higher in secondary and higher education groups than their counterpart from middle education group. Therefore, the result leads the investigator to reject the relevant null hypothesis in relation to the comparison between ME vs SE and ME vs HE.

Relevance

The earliest years of a child's life are key to predicting ultimate success in school and life. The child learning many things in the school, home and with peers. Play enables the child to extend her sense of wonder, experience success and develop a positive attitude towards learning. Play is a mirror of society. It reflects its basic values and transmits these to the child. Play is one of the major educational influences, helping the child to acquire the technical knowledge, the roles and the values that will be required in adult life. It provides tremendous benefits for children with regards to all round growth and development. (Aparajita C. & Rita C. 2002, p. 127) [5] Psychologists consider play or activity to be of the utmost relevance to all round development of the child. Play is the relationship between the child and the other children, between the child and adults and between the child and its needs and problems.' Just playing is a crucial ingredient in human development. (Robert B. Burns 1987, p. 261) [4]. Learning and development are inextricably intertwined and are enmeshed within the milieu of social relationships. The child develops not in isolation but in the context of family, neighbourhood, community, society and public policies. Children's early learning and development, therefore, is a matter for the whole of society (Geraldine F. 2007, p. 13) [14]

The quality of tomorrow's world and perhaps even its survival will be determined by the well-being, safety, physical and intellectual development of children today. To predict the future of a nation it has been aptly remarked that one need not consult the stars; it can more easily and plainly be read in the face of its children. Child development experts agree that play is very important in the learning and emotional development of all children. Play is multi-faceted. Although it should be a fun experience for the child, often many skills can be learned through play. Play helps children learn relationship and social skills, and develop values and ethics. Play should always be considered an essential part of a child's early education. Mothers' education has a significant influence on the type of care received by the children. According to Government of India ECCE Policy 2013, 'Early childhood care and education encompasses the inseparable elements of care, health, nutrition, play and learning within a protective environment (National Early childhood Care and Education Policy 2013, p.1) [15]. Due to this, proper care need to be given to children during their formative years for the around development of the Individual child.

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