

Knowledge and Practice Regarding Play for Preschooler among Mothers

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Play is a universal and innate disposition that is believed to be one of the most significant components to holistic wellbeing and development during the foundational years of childhood. The overall objective of the study was to identify the knowledge and practice regarding play for preschoolers among mothers.

Methods: A descriptive cross sectional study design was conducted. A pretested semi structured questionnaire was used to collect data on socio-demographic characteristics and the information on knowledge and practice regarding play for preschoolers among mothers. Obtained data were edited, coded and entered into Epi Data 3.1 and exported to Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 20 version and analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: The present study findings showed that the level of knowledge regarding play was statistically significant with ethnicity, education, no. of children and place of residence (p value 0.014, 0.009, 0.010, and 0.008) respectively. The level of practice regarding play was significantly associated with ethnicity and gender of preschoolers (p value 0.010 and 0.023) respectively. The findings revealed that there was statistically significant positive correlation between the knowledge score and practice score of respondents regarding play ($P < 0.001$).

Conclusion: The study concluded that respondents in general possess average Knowledge and Practice regarding Play. Knowledge and Practice of mothers regarding play tends to be correlated which means that if level of knowledge increases then level of practice also increases and vice versa. Further the findings suggest that different programs should be organized to increase awareness and to motivate the mothers about the importance of play for their children.

Key words: Knowledge, Practice, Play, Preschooler, Mothers.

INTRODUCTION

Today's children are tomorrow's citizens; childhood is very special and vulnerable period of life. A bright future for an individual for a family, for a society, for a country lies in providing a safe and playful environment for children to grow and mature. ⁽¹⁾ Play is an inborn disposition which enables children to learn, imagine, and explore their innate curiosity about the

world around them. ⁽²⁾ Play is a central component in enabling healthy and holistic development in children and its importance to life can be equated to the basic needs of sleep, food, water, and warmth. Play has been recognized as being the crucial way in which children learn and develop their ability to engage in later higher order critical thought. When children have opportunities to engage in creative thinking

through play, they are laying the foundational development required to enable abstract thinking in adult life. ⁽³⁾

Preschooler is the period of life from 3 years to the completion of age 5 years, comprises the end of early childhood. It is also an age of discovery, investigation, curiosity, and developing socio-cultural patterns of behavior. ⁽⁴⁾ Various types of play are typical of these periods but preschoolers especially enjoy associative play-group play in similar or identical activities but without rigid organization or rules. ⁽⁵⁾ Preschoolers need lots of active play time. For this age, the goal is at least 3 hours (180 minutes) of active play each day. Preschooler should play every hour throughout the day for about 15 minutes at a time. They spend less than 2 hours each day on screen time - watching TV or movies, using the computer, smart phones, or tablets, or playing video games. So consider setting such limits to keep game playing from interfering with schoolwork, household responsibilities, and the physical activity preschoolers need every day. ⁽⁶⁾

A comparative study was conducted among Asian and Euro-American parents of preschool-aged children who were interviewed concerning their beliefs about the nature and purpose of play; they also completed two questionnaires and a diary of their children's daily activities. The Euro-American parents were found to believe that play is an important vehicle for early development, while the Asian parents saw little developmental value in it. Asian parents did not value play for the development of preschool children; they thought fewer toys and those they selected were more typically educational toys. ⁽⁷⁾

There are a few studies reporting knowledge and practice among mothers regarding Play for their Preschooler in Nepal. Child care is mostly the responsibility of mothers in the context of Nepal. There is a need for knowledge of mother towards the play for preschoolers to improve the growth and development of the

preschoolers in all aspect. However, there is no published literature on knowledge and practice among mothers regarding Play for their Preschooler.

In view of these contexts, this study was undertaken to study knowledge and practice among mothers regarding Play for their Preschooler in educational institution at Butwal which is the western part of Nepal. The finding of the study would be helpful to prepare IEC (information, Education and communication) materials related to play and helpful for planning and implementing the awareness programs about importance of the play, selection of appropriate play materials and risk and injuries from play.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive cross sectional study design was adopted for the study to identify the knowledge and practice among mothers regarding play for their preschooler. The study was carried out at Everest English Boarding Higher Secondary School, Butwal, Nepal. The School was a private boarding school conducting program for nursery to higher secondary. The population of this study was the mothers who had at least one of the preschool aged children studying at Nursery class in that school. The selection of setting was done by a convenience sampling technique. The total number of Preschoolers in the Nursery class at that school was 110. Then the mothers of all Preschoolers were approached. Prior to the commencement of the study, the study proposal was approved by the Institutional Review Committee of National Medical College (NMC-IRC). Written permission was obtained from the school authority before the collection of data. After getting verbal consent from the respondent, researcher herself had conducted interview with the mothers who had children aged of preschool were studying in Everest English Boarding Higher Secondary School, Butwal. Data was collected from the all respondents using pretested semi structured interview

schedule from 2072-10-17 to 2072-11-15 in the morning (9 am to 10.30 am) during dropping their children and on afternoon (2.30pm to 3.30pm) during picking their children and five to six respondents per day

At first, the collected data were edited for the completeness, consistency and accuracy. Then Data were coded, organized entered into Epi Data 3.1 and exported to IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 20 version. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (chi square test) was used to find out the association of levels of knowledge and practice with selected socio-demographic variables. The Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation was used to identify the correlation between level of knowledge and level of practice of mothers regarding play.

RESULTS

The study results were presented in Socio-demographic variables, Knowledge regarding play for preschoolers, Practice regarding play for preschoolers.

Socio-demographic characteristics

Table 1 reveals that 46.4% of the respondents aged between 25-30 years of age and followed by 7.3% of respondents aged to 35 years and over. Regarding the ethnicity 43.6% were Brahmin and 3.6% were Newar and Chaudhary respectively. The majority (86.4%) of the respondents were Hinduism where as minority of respondents were Christianity (6.7%). About the educational level, 47.3% of the respondents' educational level was Higher Secondary level and above and only 0.9% respondents were illiterate. The majority (74.4%) of the respondents' occupation was home-maker and minority (1.8%) of the respondents' occupation was agriculture. More than half of respondents (52.7%) were belonged to nuclear family and 6.4% of the respondents were belonged to extended family. About total no. of children 45.5% of the respondents had only

one child where as only 1.8% respondents had five and more children. Majority (78.2%) of respondents were lived on urban area. Regarding the preschoolers 65.5% were 4-5 years age whereas 34.5% were 3-4 years with mean 4.15 and standard deviation 0.54. Regarding gender 50.9% were male and 49.1% were female.

TABLE 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents and Preschoolers. n=110

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
20-25 years	33	30.0
25-30 years	51	46.4
30-35 years	18	16.4
35 years and over	8	7.3
Ethnicity		
Brahmin	48	43.6
Chhetri	20	18.2
Newar	4	3.6
Gurung	7	6.4
Magar	27	24.5
Chaudhary	4	3.6
Religion		
Hinduism	95	86.4
Buddhism	8	7.3
Christianity	7	6.4
Educational Level		
Illiterate	1	0.9
Primary level	15	13.6
Secondary level	42	38.2
Higher secondary and above	52	47.3
Occupation		
Home-maker	82	74.5
Service	20	18.2
Business	6	5.5
Agriculture	2	1.8
Type of Family		
Nuclear	58	52.7
Joint	45	40.9
Extended	7	6.4
No. of Children		
One	50	45.5
Two	46	41.8
Three	12	10.9
Five and more	2	1.8
Place of Residence		
Urban	86	78.2
Semi urban	24	21.8
Age of Preschoolers		
3-4 years	38	34.5
4-5 years	72	65.5
Mean±SD	4.15±0.54	
Gender of Preschoolers		
Male	56	50.9
Female	54	49.1

Table 2 reveals that mean score of meaning was 2.2 ± 0.688 whose maximum score was three. The finding showed that there was 73.33% knowledge of respondent about meaning of play. Mean score of importance was 6 ± 1.092 whose maximum

score was seven. The finding showed that there was 85.71% knowledge of respondent about importance of play. Mean score of play materials was 2.736 ± 0.442 with maximum score was three. The finding represented that there was 91.20% knowledge about play materials. Mean score of hazards was 2.7 ± 0.963 with

maximum score was four. The finding revealed that there was 67.50% knowledge about hazards of play. Mean score of safety measures was 3.445 ± 0.583 with maximum score was four. The finding showed that there was 86.12% knowledge of respondent about safety measures during play.

TABLE 2: Respondents' Score on Different Aspects of Knowledge regarding Play. n=110

Characteristics	Mean score \pm SD	Percentage	Range	Maximum possible score
Meaning	2.2 \pm 0.69	73.33	0-3	3
Importance	6 \pm 1.09	85.71	3-7	7
Play materials	2.74 \pm 0.44	91.20	2-3	3
Hazards	2.7 \pm 0.96	67.50	1-4	4
Safety measures	3.45 \pm 0.58	86.12	2-4	4
Total knowledge	17.08 \pm 2.11	81.34	9-21	21

Table 3 portrays that 35.5% respondents had below average knowledge where as 64.5% respondents had average knowledge regarding play.

TABLE 3: Respondents' Level of Knowledge regarding Play n=110

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Below average Knowledge	39	35.5
Average Knowledge	71	64.5

TABLE 4: Association of Level of Knowledge with Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents and Preschoolers. n=110

Characteristics	Level of Knowledge		χ^2	p-value
	Below average n(%)	Average n(%)		
Age (in yrs.)				
20-25	13 (39.4%)	20 (60.6%)	1.123	0.570
25-30	19 (37.3%)	32 (62.7%)		
30 & over	7 (26.9%)	19 (73.1%)		
Ethnicity				
Brahmin	10 (20.8%)	38 (79.2%)	8.548	0.014*
Chhetri	8 (40.0%)	12 (60.0%)		
Janajati	21 (50.0%)	21 (50.0%)		
Religion				
Hinduism	31 (32.6%)	64 (67.4%)	3.056	0.217
Buddhism	5 (62.5%)	3 (37.5%)		
Christianity	3 (42.9%)	4 (57.1%)		
Educational level				
Up to primary level	9 (56.2%)	7 (43.8%)	9.427	0.009*
Secondary level	19 (45.2%)	23 (54.8%)		
Higher secondary & above p11	21 (21.2%)	41 (78.8%)		
Occupation				
Home-maker	30 (36.1%)	53 (63.9%)	0.070	0.791
Other than home-maker	9 (33.3%)	18 (66.7%)		
Type of family				
Nuclear	18 (34.6%)	34 (65.4%)	0.030	0.862
Joint				
No. of children	16 (32.0%)	34 (68.0%)	9.218	0.010*
One	13 (28.3%)	33 (71.7%)		
Two	10 (71.4%)	4 (28.6%)		
Three & more				
Place of residence				
Urban	14 (58.3%)	10 (41.7%)	7.022	0.008*
Semi urban				
Age of preschoolers				
3-4yrs	18 (47.4%)	20 (52.6%)	3.601	0.58
4-5 yrs	21 (29.2%)	51 (70.8%)		
Gender of preschoolers				
Male	24 (42.9%)	32 (57.1%)	2.732	0.114
Female	15 (27.8%)	39 (72.2%)		

* Significant at the level of (p=0.05).

Table 4 shows, regarding age 30-35yrs and 35yrs and over were categorized as 30 yrs and over. There was no association of level of knowledge with age (p=0.570). Regarding ethnicity, Newar, Gurung, Magar, and Chaudhary were categorized as Janajati. Level of knowledge was statistically significant with ethnicity (p=0.014). There was no association of level of knowledge with religion (p =0.217). About educational level, illiterate and primary level was categorized as up to primary level. There was highly significant of level of knowledge with education (p =0.009). Regarding occupation, service, business and agriculture were categorized as other than home-maker, which is not association with level of knowledge with (p =0.791). Regarding type of family, joint and extended were categorized as joint. There was no association of level of knowledge with type of family (p=0.862). Regarding no. of children, three, four, five and more were categorized as three and more. There was association of level of knowledge with no. of children (p=0.010). The level of knowledge was highly significant with the place of resident (p =0.008). There was no

association of level of knowledge with age and gender of preschoolers (p =0.58 and 0.114) respectively.

Table 5 shows that the category play materials include three statements. There was set of play materials played, quality of play materials and playmates. Mean score of meaning was 2.572 ± 0.496 whose maximum score was three. The finding showed that there was 85.67% practice of respondent about play materials for child. The category of playing includes four statements. There was set of playing hours, activity after returning back home, play video games and playing hour of video games. Mean score of playing was 2.272 ± 1.240 and whose maximum score was four. The finding showed that there was 56.75% practice of respondent about playing. The category of precaution during play includes two statements. There was set of playing environment and precaution during play. Mean score of precaution was 6.509 ± 1.518 whose maximum score was two. The finding showed that there was 72.32% practice of respondent about precaution during playing.

TABLE 5: Respondents' Score on Different Aspects of Practice regarding Play. n=110

Characteristics	Mean score \pm SD	Percentage	Range	Maximum possible score
Play materials	2.572 ± 0.496	85.67	2-3	3
Playing	2.272 ± 1.240	56.75	0-4	4
Precaution	1.663 ± 0.5118	83.15	0-2	2
Total practice	6.509 ± 1.518	72.32	3-9	9

Table 6 indicates that 46.4% respondents had below average Practice where as slightly higher than half of the respondents (53.6%) had average Practice regarding play.

TABLE 6: Respondents' Level of Practice regarding Play n=110

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Below average Practice	51	46.4
Average Practice	59	53.6

Table7 portrays that regarding age, there was no association of level of practice with age (p =0.633). Regarding ethnicity, Newar, Gurung, Magar, and Chaudhary were categorized as Janajati. Level of

practice was statistically significant with ethnicity (p =0.010). There was no association between level of practice and religion (p =0.400). Regarding educational level, illiterate and primary level was categorized as up to primary. There was no association of level of practice with education (p=0.2360). Regarding occupation, service, business and agriculture were categorized as other than home-maker, which is not association with level of practice (p =0.818).

Table 8 illustrates that regarding type of family, joint and extended were categorized as joint. About no. of children,

three, four, five and more were categorized as three and more. There was no association of level of practice with type of family, no. of children and place of resident and age of

preschooler (p=0.469, 0.704, 0.148 and 0.174) respectively. There was association of level of practice with gender of preschoolers (p=0.023).

TABLE 7: Association of Level of Practice with Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents: Age, Ethnicity, Religion, Educational Level and Occupation. n=110

Characteristics	Level of Practice		χ^2	p-value
	Below average	Average		
Age (in yrs.)	n(%)	n(%)		
20-25	15 (45.5%)	18 (54.5%)	1.720	0.633
25-30	26 (51.0%)	25 (49.0%)		
30-35	6 (33.3%)	12 (66.7%)		
35 & over	4 (50.0%)	4 (50%)		
Ethnicity				
Brahmin	29 (60.4%)	19 (39.6%)	9.265	0.010*
Chhetri	10 (50.0%)	10 (50.0%)		
Janajati	12 (28.6%)	30 (71.4%)		
Religion				
Hinduism	45 (47.4%)	50 (52.6%)	1.834	0.400
Buddhism	2 (25.0%)	6 (75.0%)		
Christianity	4 (57.1%)	3 (42.9)		
Educational level				
Up to primary	10 (62.5%)	6 (37.5%)	2.891	0.236
Secondary	16 (38.1%)	26 (61.9%)		
Higher secondary & above	25 (48.1)	27 (51.9%)		
Occupation				
Home-maker	39 (47.0%)	44 (53.0%)	0.053	0.818
Other than home-maker	12 (44.4%)	15 (55.6%)		

* Significant at the level of (p=0.05).

Table 9 represents that regarding correlation between knowledge score and practice score (r=0.475), there was statistically significant positive correlation between knowledge score and practice score of respondents regarding play (p <0.001).

TABLE 8: Association of Level of Practice with Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondent and Preschoolers n=110

Characteristics	Level of Practice		χ^2	p-value
	Below average	Average		
Type of family n (%)	n (%)	n (%)		
Nuclear	25 (43.1%)	33 (56.9%)	0.524	0.469
Joint	26 (50.0%)	26 (50.0%)		
No. of children				
One	21 (42.0%)	29 (58.0%)	0.702	0.704
Two	23 (50.0%)	23 (50.0%)		
Three & more	7 (50.0%)	7 (50.0%)		
Place of residence				
Urban	43 (50.0%)	43 (50.0%)	2.096	0.148
Semi urban	8 (33.3%)	16 (66.7%)		
Age of preschoolers				
3-4yrs	21 (55.3%)	17 (44.7%)	1.849	0.174
4-5 yrs	30 (41.7%)	42 (58.3%)		
Gender of preschoolers				
Male	20 (35.7%)	36 (64.3%)	5.202	0.023*
Female	31 (57.4%)	23 (42.6%)		

* Significant at the level of (p=0.05).

TABLE 9: Relationship between Knowledge Score and Practice Score of Respondents regarding Play. n=110

Characteristics	Correlation	p-value
Knowledge score vs. Practice score	0.475	<0.001*

* Significance at level of (p= 0.05)

DISCUSSION

This study was aimed to identify Knowledge and Practice regarding Play for preschoolers among 110 mothers who had

preschool aged children studying in Nursery class of private School of Butwal, Nepal. This study revealed that more than half (64.5%) of respondents had average Knowledge where as 35.5% respondents had below average Knowledge regarding Play. The mean of respondents' knowledge score on play was 17.08 and standard

deviation was 2.11, mean percentage was 81.34 and maximum possible score was 21. This study indicated that concerning of importance of play, all (100%) respondents answered that play is important for children. The findings were consistent with some studies conducted by Kariuki and Anghelescu et al. that regarding the importance of child play were 98.3% and 95% respectively. ^(8,9) The present study revealed that slightly higher than half of respondents (53.6%) had average Practice where as 46.4% respondents had below average Practice regarding Play. The mean of Respondents' Practice score was 6.509 and standard deviation was 5.11, mean score percentage was 72.32 and maximum possible score was 9.

Regarding play material, all 100% respondents' practice that they used to play materials for their children ball, cycle, train, motorcars, dolls, blocks and only 12.7% respondents used also pieces of stones. Regarding quality of play materials, 100% respondents used strong and unbreakable play materials. 57.3% respondents allowed their child to play with same age mates while only 1.8 % with parents. However the finding was contradictory to the study conducted by Kariuki which showed 95% of them took time to play with their children. ⁽⁸⁾ 68.2% respondents allowed their child to play 3-4 hours while only 1.8% respondents allowed their child to play less than 2 hours per day. It is supported by other study regarding playing hour, 2.4% and 3.1% preschoolers play less than 2 hour in urban and rural areas; and 43.2% and 61% play 2-4 hours in urban and rural areas. ⁽⁹⁾ 55.5% of respondents forced their children to do homework after returning back from school while 44.5% respondents provide play materials to play for some time. More than half of respondents (57.3%) allowed their child to play video games and among them 100% allowed their children to play less than 2 hours per day. Regarding playing environment, 70.9% of respondents' practices they provide freely play with supervision. Regarding safety precaution,

most of the respondents (95.5%) take safe play materials and continuous supervision and 4.5% respondents leave the child to play alone.

The study revealed that there was no significant association of the level of knowledge regarding play with age ($p=0.570$), religion ($p=0.217$), occupation ($p=0.791$), type of family ($p=0.862$), age and gender of the preschooler ($p=0.58$ and ($p=0.114$) respectively. The findings were consistent with similar study, there was no significant association in the knowledge score of respondents in terms of age of mother ($p=0.194$). ⁽⁸⁾ Other demographic variables like religion, occupation, type of family and age and gender of preschooler, the sample variability was too small, different setting to investigate any statistical differences.

The findings of the study showed that there was statistically significant of level of knowledge with ethnicity ($p=0.014$), education ($p=0.009$), no. of children ($p=0.010$) and place of residence ($p=0.008$). Regarding education, it is supported by other study done by Proulx which showed the findings that maternal level of education was significantly associated with parental engagement in early learning activities (play activities) in the home. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Parents engaged in more early learning activities in households that had higher levels of maternal education. Regarding Ethnicity, no. of children and place of residence, the sample variability was too small, different setting to investigate any statistical differences.

The study revealed that there was no significant association of the level of practice regarding play with age ($p=0.633$), religion ($p=0.41$), education ($p=0.236$), occupation ($p=0.818$), type of family ($p=0.469$), no. of children ($p=0.704$), place of residence ($p=0.148$) and age of the preschoolers ($p=0.174$). The findings were supported by the findings of study done by Smith (2012). The findings that there is association between mothers' perception and practice with the demographics, such as

age, education of mother and gender, age and the number of children in each family.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Other demographics like religion, education, occupation, place of residence, the sample variability was too small, different setting different tool to investigate any statistical differences.

The findings of the study showed that there was statistically significant of level of practice with ethnicity ($p=0.010$) and gender of preschoolers ($P=0.023$). The sample variability was too small, different setting and different tool to investigate any statistical differences. No similar research findings were found to support this study.

The present study revealed that correlation between knowledge score and practice score ($r=0.475$), there was statistically significant positive correlation between knowledge score and practice score of respondents regarding play ($p < 0.001$). No similar research findings were found to support the study.

The study was conducted only among mothers of preschooler children. Similar study can be conducted in large scale. Intervention programs including health education can be carried out to raise awareness regarding play. This also indicates that the local health sector should collaborate with school health program for delivering health education to parents to enhance the knowledge about importance of play. It is equally importance as education to children.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of findings, it is concluded that respondents in general possess average Knowledge and Practice regarding play. The level of overall knowledge is tends to be associated with ethnicity, education, no. of children, and place of residence. Ethnicity and gender of preschoolers tends to be associated with mothers' practice of play. Knowledge and practice of mothers regarding play tends to be correlated which means that if level of knowledge increases then level of practice also increases and vice versa.

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