



## The role of pre-school education on social adaptability

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**ABSTRACT:** The aim of present study is to get acquainted with the role of pre-school education on social adaptability. Although the vast majority of parents and teachers emphasize the need for codified training of preschool, the effectiveness of these experiences should be explored. And the results of this research may pave the way for teachers, parents, and preschool officials. This research is an applied research that has conducted by descriptive-analytical method and data gathered by note-taking. According to the findings, preschool education usually addresses to the experiences of children in kindergartens and preparation courses. The most important goals of trainings in preschool period are identification of the environment, development of social adaptability and life skills which are the most important criteria of mental health.

A large number of researches have conducted in this field that shows the beneficial effect of preschool education on social adaptability. Childhood is the first and the most important period of human life, a large part of personality in human behavior is established in this period. The children learn in this period how to communicate their peers, change their inappropriate and irrational taught, and find out their strengths and weaknesses. Preschool children become friends with their same-sex peers and would gradually change the way they select their friends. Pre-school institutions with high quality, codified programs will enhance the child's self-esteem and create social adaptability in child in addition to increasing the child's responsibility.

**Keywords:** education, preschool, social adaptability.

### INTRODUCTION

Children's success in school depends in part on events that they have experienced before entering school. Factors such as social, physical, and cognitive growth and learning quality play a major role in determining their success.

In the past it was believed that children's entrance to the schools is a starting point for learning and easy prosperity in all aspects of growth. But today, due to the efforts of several experts, the direction of thinking and planning has redirected to the belief in preschool education as a prerequisite for children entering to school (Mofidi, 1996).

Due to the progress of science and technology in recent century and manifestation the fact that the prosperity of a country arises from its educational context, the need to extend the preschool course reveals more than the past.

Therefore, it is necessary to prepare and provide a qualitative and quantitative program appropriate for preschool children's physical needs according to the characteristics of this period of growth. But a prerequisite for planning and investment in this area is conducting researches that include right methodologies and theoretical foundations; if so, it would be possible to meet the needs of society in this field and take, even

minor, steps to improve education and training conditions.

### THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

#### A. Definition of preschool education

The concept of preschool education usually points the experiences of children in kindergartens and preparation courses. But psychologists fail to provide sustainable criteria to determine the exact time for start and end of the education in early childhood period.

Eileen Allen believes that the purpose of the preparation course is to create those educational opportunities for child to be able to benefit physical, emotional and social development.

Physical, cognitive, and motor development are significantly of the man characteristics of preschool children

The objectives of the preschool period include:

- (1) Identifying the properties;
- (2) improving language skills;
- (3) developing physical abilities;
- (4) protecting limbs;
- (5) identifying ecology and caring it;
- (6) developing mental abilities;
- (7) understanding the environment and developing social relations;
- (8) developing life skills;
- (9) recognizing the culture and religious landmarks;
- (10) training artistry and understanding the beauties.

**Socialization.** It is a process where norms, skills, motivations, attitudes, and behavior of the individual is shaped in order his present role playing in society to become favorable.

**Adaptability.** Adaptability can be considered a relationship that an organism establishes due to status quo with the environment. And the concept of human which refers implicitly to an individual who is engaged in an ongoing process toward the environment and at the same time is going to change it safely and effectively. This is different from negative concept of appeasement and submission against others.

**Social Adaptability.** Wellman (2000) believes that social adaptability is actually the ability of being with other people and since no one can live alone, individuals need for social relations. So, inability to collaborate with others is considered a characteristic of mental problems. Many experts also believe that social adaptability is one of the criteria for mental health and sometimes mental health is considered the most significant criteria.

## METHODOLOGY

- a) Type of research: applied
- b) Research method: descriptive and analytical
- c) Data collecting method: library research

**Background:** Some studies on socialization of children like the study by Pazhoohandeh (2009) (in Persian) shows that preschool education cannot make a significant change in the psycho-motor skills and social adaptability in children but, on the contrary, many studies have been conducted that show the beneficial effect of preschool education on social adaptability. Perera (2005) has assessed the development of children of 4-5 years old in low-income urban community of Sri Lanka and has found that children who are in preschool institutions are significantly better in social skills than those who are not kept in these institutions.

Lazar and Darlington (1982) in "Lasting effects of early education" conclude that preschool education, when evaluated after a one-year period, showed dramatic effects on various aspects of development of children.

Moreover, according to the study of Shahabadi (2011), there is a significant relationship between preschool education and social adaptability. That is, the trained students show better adaptability than untrained students. Stanley Hall, entitled the father of developmental psychology, has significant opinions on recognizing and educating children, and recognizes the importance of pre-school education.

The impact of preschool education on social adaptability

Regarding the importance of preschool education, Bloom believes that childhood is the first and most important period of human life. In this period, the child communicates with the nature, establishes his/her social relationships, and understands the concept of self for the first time.

Since the personality structure is created in human behavior, childhood has been considered a critical, positive period.

James Hunt and Benjamin Bloom have also found during studies that early education is optimal in some sense, because children capacity for of learning, growth and real progress is influenced by such early experiences. John Dewey is another pioneer in the case of education of children. Dewey expresses the purpose of education is having talent and social competence, by which man can participate in the community affairs and perform his daily and religious duties to others. So, the child should receive education when need for education. In addition, according to the studies, some experts and specialists in this area believe that the years between 3 and 6 years of age is the stage of the formation of character that would be characterized with the child's extreme sensitivity to the surrounding. This period of time is precisely the time of education in preschool institutions. This influence can be permanent and result in comprehensive development and growth of child in the coming years, and increase child's social adaptability. The child learns how to live collectively with children who are almost the same age and with adults who are not his/her parents but do certain tasks, and get adaptability.

Children gradually achieves more social skills through communication with others. Friends and playmates plays a significant role in the social growth of children in this period. The child gradually realizes that some of what he had learned are not appropriate and not acceptable and must be changed. If the preschool institutions have adequate facilities, it can increase the child's social skills. There, children begin to learn and experience, learn the ways to communicate with others, discover their strengths and weaknesses, and be compatible. Kindergartens and preschool institutions can increase the inventiveness and self-confidence of children, develop their social skills, and refine his inappropriate behavior. Preschool children make friends from same-sex children and gradually change the way they choose their friends. Temporary friendship will also become deep and stable in later periods. Other social characteristics of preschooler include:

1. Preschool children have very close friends but change their friends quickly.
2. Game group usually is small and has little organization and is quickly changed.
3. Conflicts occur frequently but usually don't last, and is quickly forgotten.
4. The child likes more to communicate and desire to cooperate.
5. Awareness of sexual role gradually begins in this age, and the child in this period is usually ready for accepting the patterns of social roles related to their gender.
6. The child likes theater shows and will be affected by TV shows and programs.

Children usually tend more social activities after mastering the language. They need a set of skills and capabilities before entering school, by which they are equipped for social and environmental adaptation. On the other hand, since they still have characteristics of autonomy at preschool age, they are needed to achieve the skills to draw them out. These skills include (1) the desire to help others, (2) enjoying friends and intimacy with them, (3) understanding the feelings of others. These skills cause the children feel empathy, generosity, respect for others and discipline. Another notable issue is that preschool-age children are interested in planning, carrying out, and being responsible for social activities. The child at any time is not so ready to learn fast and take active responsibility. Responsibility must be learned through experience.

Children have to increase their accountability from the early life to the adulthood. They realize the importance of being responsible through interactions with parents, teachers and peers. According to Clemes and Bean (1990), the feeling of being responsible is developed in child when he/she is given a responsibility and gets feedback on the effectiveness of his/her responses. If the child has some information on various ways that are appropriate in other situations, he will be interested and can make things working with other children and under supervision of adults, or he can join other children to build and plan. He would like to accept the adults as a role model. This can effectively be guided in preschool institutions by well-trained and experienced teachers

The child enters a new, different world in preschool institutions; a world where there are new factors for socialization. Children learn lessons related to themselves, other children, elders, and environment. Socialization of children in preschool institutions happens during various daily activities. So, socialization is a lifestyle that the child gets used to it, rather than a particular field of education.

Increased verbal intelligence, that in turn improves the social communications, is another significant item that is considered as a positive and constructive effect of these institutions.

## CONCLUSIONS

*According to the findings from researches, the authors believe that:*

Preschool educations can have a positive and constructive effect on social adaptation of students. Due to the formation of a large part of the personality of the child, it is important to pay attention to preschool age. And due to the importance of children interaction with their environment, the process of controlling and

guiding should be done effectively, actively, and consciously. 5-6-years-old Children, in preschool institutions, go forward systematically and learn to adapt with the peers and the environment and communicate positively and constructively. Moreover, they feel greater responsibility and achieve greater self-esteem, and their friendships remain more stable.

Finally, considering the issues raised, the authors provide some suggestions in the context of the need for public preschool centers and preparation course educations, and they acknowledge that qualitative and quantitative appropriate for children's physical and psychological needs according to the traits of children in this period should be prepared and provided. Relevant institutions, especially the Ministry of Education, are needed to take measures to create, modify, and develop programs existing in this area. Also, novices should be provided the roles and patterns to play actively and effectively in the process education.

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