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**PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS PLAY  
BAESD INSTRUCTION IN PRIVATE PRESCHOOLS IN GUJI  
ZONE, OROMIYA REGIONAL STATE.**

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**Preschool teachers' perceptions towards play based instruction in  
private preschools in Guji Zone, Oromiya regional state.**

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>ANRSEB</b>	Amhara National Regional State Education Bureau
<b>DAP</b>	Developmentally Appropriate Practices
<b>ECCE</b>	Early childhood Care and Education.
<b>IPA</b>	International Play Association.
<b>KG</b>	Kindergarten.
<b>MoE</b>	Minister of Education.
<b>NAEYC</b>	National Association for the Education of Young Children.
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of proximal development.

## ***ABSTRACT***

*The main purpose of this study was to assess the perceptions of preschool teachers towards play based instruction. In order to achieve the objectives, a mixed research design was employed. Random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the sample size from the population. Data was collected from 44 preschool teachers, through questionnaire, interview and observation. The quantitative data obtained from questionnaire were analyzed in SPSS software version 20 by using descriptive (mean and standard deviation). On the other hand, the qualitative data obtained through interview and observation were analyzed qualitatively in narrative form and used to supplement and/or triangulate the responses. Accordingly, from the findings of the study, it would appear that the sample of preschool teachers surveyed endorse the importance of play based approach in preschool education. However, many teachers did not integrate play into their activities to support teaching and learning process, even though they agree that children love to play. Apparently, factors such as time allocation for play activities, limited and unsuitable space for play, lack of knowledge and skills required to implement play based instruction and poor support from administrators, are the main reasons the teachers cited for minimizing play. Hence, it is recommended that the Woredas Education Office, Guji zone Education office and Oromiya Educational Bureau with different pertinent stakeholders shall work in a coordinated manner to provide stimulation programs for preschool teachers so as to enhance their capacity for effective implementation of play based instruction.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

Early childhood education is about honoring and molding the holistic child, which will eventually form the basis of their lifelong journey. Children arrive at school with different backgrounds, experiences, and at different stages of development (Haile, 2010)

All children love to play because children have natural instinct to engage in enjoyable activities. Proponents of early childhood education believe children learn naturally through play. According to Chowdhury and Choudhury (2002), play as “It is part and parcel of a child’s life, Play is a fun, Children without fun, children without play, is children without childhood.” The right to play is truly a basic right for each child.

The International Play Association (IPA), an association for the child’s right to play, believes that play is vital for children’s development and well-being (IPA, 2009). Playing helps children fulfill their needs, and children have fun learning about the world around them. It is through play that children build their identity and self confidence (Christie & Roskos, 2009).

Play as a way of learning for children has been a priority in childhood education (Gestwicki & Bertrand, 2011). Playing and learning in children are dimensions that stimulate each other and can be seen as an indivisible entirety. It is a part of children’s experiences which helps them create an understanding of the world they live in. As play is a natural instinct for a child, using the learning through play approach is an effective way to shape and develop children’s thinking ( Norshidah & Aliza, 2009).

Every child deserves a chance to grow and learn in a play-based experiential preschool (Miller & Almon, 2009). According to Bodrova and Leong (2010), the need to integrate play into the early childhood curriculum has been supported by decades of child development research and is reflected in the most recent documents of professional organizations, such as National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and International Play Association (IPA). NAEYC promotes play-based approaches in the early childhood curriculum and states that teaching practices should be

appropriate for children's needs, age group and development. NAEYC believes that Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) contributes to children's healthy development in learning (NAEYC, 2009).

As NAEYC defines it, DAP is the best practice in early childhood education and that the early childhood curriculum should be presented in ways that are accessible and achievable for young children. A developmentally appropriate approach enables children to build cognitive skills through concrete experiences. Miller and Almon (2009) and Arce (2000) reiterated that children in play based kindergartens have a double advantage over those who are denied play, ending up equally good or better at all skills.

International evidence has shown that children enrolled in the play-based program developed a strong foundation for learning compared to their peers who were subjected to a didactic teacher directed program. A series of studies by Schweinhart and Weikart (1997) cited in (Walsh & Gardner, 2006) that examined early childhood programs in Michigan, USA, showed that the children in the programs encouraging self-initiated activity, including play, were faring significantly better than the children receiving more direct academic instruction. The study reported that early childhood programs in which teachers encourage children to initiate and activate their own learning activities are more beneficial than didactic teacher-directed programs. The measures included intellectual and scholastic performance over time, self-reports, various aspects of social behavior and attitudes, mental health, employment and financial affairs.

Other studies have also reached similar conclusions. The children in the more formal settings were found to possess a lower degree of social acceptance and more anxiety about school, while those in play-based programs displayed greater academic progress in all skills (Walsh & Gardner, 2006). For this reason, it is important to incorporate a play-based approach as part of the preschool curriculum to help children develop physically, academically, mentally, and socially.

Researchers maintain that the majority of the early childhood teachers believe in play and the advantages it offers ( Sisson & Kroeger, 2017). However, constraints of time and resources in combination with the pressure of accountability and testing seem to compel

teachers to return to a back-to-basics curriculum and to focus on narrowly defined outcomes (Lynch, 2015; Nicolopoulou, 2011).

To reverse this negative tendency, early childhood teacher educators in many universities work diligently to teach pre-service teachers about the importance of play during a child's early years. Yet, when placed in schools for their student teaching fieldwork, many pre-service teachers align their perceptions about play with the reality they observe, in which play is devalued (Jung & Jin, 2015; Jung & Jing, 2014; Pistorova & Ruslan, 2017). Therefore, the challenge today is to prepare preservice teachers for the education field in which, "child-initiated play-based curriculum, standards-based curriculum, and accountability issues frequently collide" (Jung & Jin, 2014, p. 358).

Although there has been considerable evidence supporting the effectiveness of learning through play, scholarly discussion of play in teacher education is still limited (Blom & Damico, 2019, Miller & Almon, 2009, Jung, Zhang & Zhang, 2016). Close examination of existing studies on preservice teachers' beliefs on play indicates that play, as a concept, does not have a shared meaning. Multiple meanings and contradictions present within the pre-service teachers' beliefs about play highlight the challenges of defining and conceptualizing play within teacher education (Altun, 2018; Klugman, 1996; Sherwood & Riefel, 2010). Yet, it is important to understand how preservice teachers perceive play since, as research shows, the perspectives they hold as future educators before beginning intensive instruction will have a vital role in how they will be able to link play and curriculum in an early childhood setting (Jung & Jing, 2014; Klugman, 1996; Jung, Zhang, & Zhang, 2016).

As for the concept of play, in the context of school, play is best viewed as a continuum with guided play on one end and free play on the other (Miller & Almon, 2009). Typically, playful learning includes both guided play and free play (Bodrova & Leong, 2010; Reed, Hirsh-Pasek, & Golinkoff, 2012). Usually play is described as an intrinsically motivated, enjoyable, process-oriented, non-realistic, and self-chosen activity (Hirsh-Pasek et al., 2009; Krasnor & Pepler, 1980). Play as "playful learning" is a focus of this study.

The concept of perception, according to Leibniz is “the expression of many things in one” (as cited in Kulstad, 1982, p. 66); in other words, a sensation along with an image.

Various traditional as well as contemporary theories are entrenched in early childhood literature to explain how we can present children with the right stimuli on which to focus their attention and mental effort so that they will acquire knowledge and skills (Slavin, 2003). Early childhood theorists like Froebel regards kindergarten children grow naturally through creative play, exploration and self-expression (Essa, 2007). Froebel’s approach to early childhood teaching emphasizes the inherent nature of children learning that unfolds through their play activities. He sees play activities as a pure and natural mode of learning through which children achieves harmony (Essa, 2007).

On the other hand, psychoanalytical theorists, such as Freud, believe that children’s play is primarily emotional (Santer et al., 2007). Through enacting real scenarios in their play, children work out their emotional conflicts in play such as a visit to a dentist (Hughes, 1999; Dockette & Flear, 2003; Santer et al., 2007). Through play children express emotions that relate to situations that they have no control over and this helps to develop mastery over stressful situations (Santer et al., 2007).

Erikson theories the psychosocial stages of child development (Mooney, 2000). According to Erikson, children learn to master their emotional conflicts and resolve the anomaly in each of the stages. For example, the first stage of trust versus mistrust, to a child, means achieving a sense of trust and secured attachment that outweighs mistrust and this same feeling will provide the child with confidence to explore, play and interact with others in the future (Mooney 2000).

Emphasizing the affective aspects of play, both Freud and Erikson position play as a tool for emotional development and a medium for children to cope with difficult experiences and to work out their problem (Hughes, 1999; Santer et al., 2005) and learning is an individual endeavour (Frost et al., 2005). Teachers who are influenced by psychoanalysis theorists will provide children with materials, time and space to play independently for them to work out their emotional conflicts (Trawick-Smith, 2008).

Several other theorists hold a constructivist view in children's learning (Bruner, 1960; Montessori, 1965; Piaget, 1962; Vygotsky, 1978). For example, Dewey advocates that children are active learners who learn directly from exploration and discovery (Mooney, 2000). He believes in progressive education where the focus of learning is based on the child's interest rather than on subject matter (Mooney 2000). Montessori (1965) regards the child as constructing and transforming the environment through his or her own activity. According to Montessori (1965), when children engage in play, they learn about the world and reality of how things work. Bruner's constructivist theory (1966) views learning as an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts base upon their current/past knowledge. The child selects and transforms information, constructs hypotheses, and makes decisions, relying on cognitive structure (that is, schemes, mental models) which provides meaning and organisation to experiences and allows the child to go beyond the information given (Bruner, 1966).

According to Frost et al., (2005), theoretical frameworks provide different lenses for understanding play because each theory allows us to see different aspects of play. Each of these theoretical perspectives points to the importance of play, but the underlying assumptions differ (Frost et al., 2005). Perhaps the two most prominent theoretical orientations, which have shaped the current conceptions of children's learning and development, are those of Piaget and Vygotsky (Berk, 2006; Crain, 2000). The reason for their prominence lies in the fact that Piaget's theory on cognitive development is often regarded as the single most comprehensive and compelling theory on the study of children's intellectual development with "more than thirty books and several hundred articles" written by Piaget (Essa, 2007; Crain, 2000). Vygotsky, though agreeing on the importance of such intrinsic development, stresses that children's ability to learn constructively is also dependent on the social-cultural and historical settings where family history and economic circumstances do influence a child's development (Hughes, 1999).

According to Similarly Hadley in ( Daniel Gebreslassie, 2016 ) stated that an educator's pedagogy is one of the most important aspects when assessing the quality of children's learning. So early childhood educators need to carefully consider and question their

pedagogy and corresponding practices. In implementing the early childhood learning framework, educators have discussed and described their understandings of the practice principles. One of the practices most commonly used in the early childhood sector is 'learning through play'. Learning through play is an essential and critical part of all children's development. It is an enjoyable and motivating for children's education and it is how they spend much of their time. Not only learning through play is an important part of children's daily routine, it is also a window of opportunity into their developmental levels and a context where valuable teaching and learning can occur. Play starts in the child's infancy and ideally, continues throughout his or her life. Play based learning is how children learn to socialize, to think, to solve problems, to mature and most importantly, to have fun.

The study conducted by Daniel Gebreslassie (2016), "An Assessment of the Current Practices of Play Based Learning in North Gondar", the study stressed that, early childhood teachers have to recognize the developmental significance and appropriateness of play in promoting children's socioemotional development, and engage in practices (whether inside the flow or outside the flow) that scaffold children's experiences and socioemotional skills during play. This implies that there is a role for child-initiated and teacher-guided play. Teacher-guided play could be used to scaffold understanding of concepts or issues that children are interested in, but requires some form of adult intervention and guidance. In summary, play based learning contributes to children's emotional and social development. As children engage in play, they develop and enhance emotional and social skills that will serve them in the school setting and other aspects of life. Also, early childhood teachers have a role to play in making play a developmental and learning experience for young children.

Curriculum Framework for Ethiopian Education stated that Kindergarten education uses a child-centered approach where children can learn through play in an informal environment at their own pace. Free play encourages the child to engage in learning voluntarily, experimenting and making their own discoveries both independently or with other children and adults. This contributes to the formation of their identity, expression and social learning. (MoE, 2009:10)

The Ethiopian National Policy Framework for ECCE since 2010 recognized the importance of play as a mode of instruction in early childhood education. This program is guided by a child centered approach and promotes the child's holistic development. It includes culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate and inclusive of indoor and outdoor play materials to that activity effect. Its curriculum design should follow a play based approach by stating preschool teachers as a first responsible body for the implementation of preschool program .Thus, preschool teachers' knowledge, attitude and skill are critical for effective implementation of the instructional approach and was so considered in education and training policy of Ethiopia to address the needs of preschool children (MOE,2010).

In Guji Zone, preschool children are facing numerous challenges associated with play, even though many children are motivated to attend school by the thought of meeting and playing with their peers, the question of play materials, time to play, support from school administration and teachers involvement in their play still arise, since most preschools in Guji Zone are not keen on preparing play materials for children. Most of the time in these preschools children are spend in classroom and children only go outdoors for a few minutes, this teachers have argued that it enables them cover the course work and put emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills, which are vital for the children's academic excellence.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Extrapolating preschool teachers' perception and challenges regarding play based instruction is important for understanding and improving educational processes in early childhood settings. It is difficult to ignore the problem because preschool teachers who lack a basic knowledge, attitude and skill about play based instruction will not be able to meet their children's holistic learning and developmental outcome. Preschool teachers' perception, professional knowledge, attitudes, actual practices and challenges may differ in professional background factors such as type of training, qualification and professional development. Play based instruction, of course, is not determined just by the teacher's background; perception, knowledge, attitudes and practice; it should also be responsive to children's needs and various classroom and school background factors (OECD, 2009).

The impetus for this study grew from the researchers' practical observation and related literature readings, preschool teachers in Ethiopia face diverse challenges in the implementation of play based instruction due to lack of available play materials, lack of a common perception of play among preschool teachers, lack of time and space allotted for play, lack of training and teachers giving high attention to academic outcomes with little emphasis to developmental outcomes and other related problems. There are great variations among preschool teachers perception and practice regarding the use of play based instruction among preschool teachers themselves, among preschools and different countries of the world due to the presence of different factors hindering its implementation. This shows that the problem is deep rooted among preschool teachers throughout the world and needs an investigation. overwhelmingly in Ethiopia, since ECCE is a recently introduced field and the field received little attention due to lack of knowledge, attitude and practice about the importance of play and play materials for children's holistic development and learning, the problem seems prevalent among ECCE professionals (MOE, ESDPV, 2015).

The pedagogy of play based instruction is relatively new and more empirical research is needed to determine the effective implementation of early childhood curriculum by considering preschool teachers as key players in young children's education. To enhance and promote effective play-based learning in these settings, further research has to be

conducted because recognizing preschool teachers' perception, attitude, practice and challenges on play based instruction is necessary in educating preschool children (Gestwicki, 2017).

Even though there are different researches conducted in the area of ECCE, little research has been carried out in the area of preschool teachers' perception, attitude, practice and challenges regarding play based instruction in preschool settings. In fact, there are different separately studied previous studies conducted in different countries regarding preschool teachers' perception, attitudes, practices and challenges regarding play based instruction. For instance, a qualitative research conducted by Peng(2011) in Singapore on early childhood educators' knowledge and practice of learning through play in preschool classrooms revealed that teachers (a) defined play differently, (b) believed that play was important for children's learning and development across key domains (c) performed multi-faceted roles, and (d) encountered obstacles using play as a curricular tool. The results of this study showed that kindergarten teachers have enough knowledge and practice about learning through play. Cheng's (2012) study also showed the relationship between early childhood teachers' conceptualization of play and their practice. The finding shows that there is a strong relation between conceptualization of play and practice.

A quantitative research finding by Aliza (2013) in Malaysia on preschool teachers' attitude towards play based instruction showed that teachers have a positive attitude towards play based instruction. They believed that children like to play and are actively involved in play. However, they were unsure about the use of play based approach due to the presence of the following issues and constraints such as time allocation for play activities, limited and unsuitable space for play, lack of support from administrators and lack of knowledge and skills required to implement developmentally appropriate teaching including play, made them resort to a didactic teacher-directed approach in their classrooms.

In addition, a qualitative research finding by Rengel (2013) in Croatia on preschool teachers' attitude towards play based instruction revealed that preschool teachers have mixed or contradictory attitudes towards play-based instruction, conceptualization of play

in general and their roles as viewing in terms of educational tool and authentic play. The results of this research indicate that, alongside contradictory conceptualizations of play in theory, preschool teachers have contradictory attitudes towards play, and this has implications for practice, i. e. reality of early childhood education.

Recent qualitative research study by sjoerdsma (2016) in USA on early childhood education with a purpose to investigate and compare the attitudes and beliefs about play based instruction in preschool classrooms, among a variety of early childhood professionals indicated that Kindergarten teachers and elementary administrators have mixed beliefs and attitudes about Play-based instruction. It is developmentally appropriate for children to learn through hands on meaningful experiences implemented through play based instruction. Preschool teachers can provide these opportunities based on children's interest and personal experience. However, not all preschool teachers agree on the value of play based instruction and different teachers understand play differently in practice .In addition, teachers' knowledge, attitude and implementation on the use of a play-based approach involves awareness, understanding and interpreting how a play based approach provides learning benefits to children.

Unpublished research study in Ethiopia by Sewalem (2018) on the practice of learning through play in ECCE settings revealed that preschool teachers view play-based instruction as a daily routine, fun and pleasurable. However, teachers' knowledge and practice of learning through play was low due to the challenges such as lack of training, lack of available indoor and outdoor play materials, unavailability of enough playing ground, lack of time allocation for play, lack of support from the administrators and high child-teacher ratio.

Similarly, a study conducted by Animaw, Abebaw , Mehari ,Temesgen and Zemenu (2015) on the practices and challenges of ECCE in west Amhara sub region revealed that lack of teachers appropriate training, qualification and inadequacy of indoor and outdoor play materials were major challenges to use play as a method of teaching. It is also showed that in most preschools instructional and play materials, specifically the curriculum, was serious problem (ANRSEB, 2016).

In spite of the importance of play based instruction in preschool classrooms, preschool teachers' perception, attitude, practice and challenges on play based instruction are not explored yet in Ethiopia, especially in Bahirdar City Administration to the best of researcher's knowledge. Actually there are few abroad studies for instance; Rengel's (2013), Peng's (2011) and sjoerdsma's (2016) conducted in the area of preschool teachers' perception, attitude, practice and challenges of play based instruction, they lack empirical evidence and methodological gap and largely most of them focused on other aspects of preschool teachers towards play based instruction.

Likewise, most studies conducted abroad tried to study preschool teachers' perception, attitude, practice and challenges separately by overlooking preschool teachers' perception and the challenges they face for the implementation of play based instruction utilizing qualitative research approach within small samples in some selected type of preschools, rather psychological constructs like attitude and knowledge have to be studied quantitatively and comprehensively. Moreover, most of the previous aforementioned researches did not focus on the probable interaction or predictive nature of preschool teachers' perception, attitude and practice towards play based instruction conducted through regression analysis. So far the researcher has been able to find one small scale unpublished local research; Sewalem's (2018) study on teachers' practice of learning through play. However, the current study explored the implementation of play based instruction by integrating knowledge, attitude practice and challenges of preschool teachers' comprehensively to fill the empirical research gap and methodological gap utilizing mixed research approach in different types of preschools.

As preschool teachers are a mediator of the teaching-learning process, the role of their perception, attitude and practice requires closer examination. By examining perception and attitudes of preschool teachers, one can better understand what impacts the practice of play based instruction. Thus, a rationale for conducting a research on this topic is to address the research gap by examining the level of perception and current challenges of preschool teachers regarding play based instruction and to make significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge.

Therefore, the researcher was interested to conduct this study to explore teachers' perceptions towards play based approach and challenges regarding play based approach in the selected kindergartens of Guji Zone Oromia Regional State.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What is the conceptions of play for preschool teachers?
2. What are the perceptions of preschool teachers about the benefits of play-based instruction in the preschool class?
3. How do preschool teachers see their roles in promoting learning through play?
4. What are the challenges hindering preschool teachers' implementation of play based instruction?

### **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to investigate the perceptions of preschool teachers towards play based approach in private kindergartens in Guji Zone Oromoya regional state. Specifically the objectives of the study are as follows:

- To assess the perceptions of preschool teachers towards the concept of play;
- To assess the perceptions of preschool teachers about the benefits of play based instruction in the preschool setting;
- To assess how preschool teachers see their roles in promoting learning through play and;
- To identify factors affecting the implementation of play based instruction in the preschool setting.

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study would be significant for various stakeholders (groups of people and institutions at large). Consequently, the present study would benefit ECCE educators

in filling the gap between the perception and the rhetoric of play. Hence, this study would shed light to see the importance of preschool teachers' perception to reduce the challenges they face in implementing play based instruction and then to refine their misunderstandings, misconceptions and misuses. Specifically; preschool teachers, school administrators and educational experts working at all levels of preschool education would use the result of this study as a spring board or window to plan their action and to fill preschool teachers' perception and challenges concerning play-based pedagogy in ECCE.

The result of the study will be used as base line information for Oromiya educational bureau and Guji zone education office to design appropriate intervention strategies to increase preschool perception and practice of play based instruction and reduces the challenges they face in implementing it.

### **1.6. Delimitation of the study**

It is obvious that the study would be more fruitful if it embraces all preschools found in Guji Zone. However, since such a large scale study required much resource, time and much manpower, the study was delimited only on the selected private kindergartens in Guji Zone in Oromoya regional state.

### **1.7. Definitions of Key Terms**

**Play based learning:** is a child-directed approach of instruction in preschools where teachers provide meaningful hands- on learning experience, taking account of children's interest by using a variety of play materials. It was measured through play based instruction scale that was developed by the researcher. Study participants who fall in highest, moderate and low quartile range and mean on prepared items are scaled as having high, moderate and low level of play based instruction respectively. This term used interchangeably with play- based learning and learning through play.

**Perception:** preschool teachers' feeling, belief, perception and perspective towards play based instruction. It was assessed by attitude scale that was developed by the present researcher. Study participants who fall in highest, moderate and low quadrille range and mean on attitude items are scaled as having positive, enough and negative level of attitude respectively.

**Challenges:** different constraints that hinder preschool teachers practice of play based instruction

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2. Theoretical Framework**

Early childhood education experts agreed that the early years are a critical learning time for children as they develop their cognitive, emotional, physical and social faculties and skills (Katz 1989). What is the best way to help children learn? This has been a concern in education and has been a topic of various studies (Surbeck & Taylor, 2003). Berthelsen and Brownlee (2005) find that children learn by observing their social settings; they are active in their learning; they collaborate with adults and peers and they initiate their own learning experiences.

The body of literature examining how children learn is growing rapidly. Numerous studies have been conducted and results suggest the importance of children interacting and learning in creative, investigative and problem-solving ways, where they can take ownership of and responsibility for their own learning and where their emotional and imaginative needs are met (Hirsh-Pasek 2009). Play is acknowledged as supporting intellectual development alongside social, emotional and physical development (Wood, 2007 ) and (Brewer, 2004).

As both Piaget and Vygotsky have encapsulated in their thinking a holistic framework that covers significant aspects of both inner and outer forces of cognitive development of the child (Wood & Bennett, 1998), these two theoretical orientations will be examined and used as the theoretical framework for my study. These two constructivist theories are chosen because of the underlying assumptions that learning takes place through constructing knowledge when children engage in play activities and explorations. According to Cooney (2004), the constructivist theories of Piaget and Vygotsky are prevalent in the literature of play and focus on learning through play.

#### **2.1.Theoretical Perspectives about How Children Learn**

##### **2.1.1 Cognitive Constructivism**

The primary conceptual framework of Piaget's theory is cognitive constructivism (Hendrick & Weissman, 2007). Piaget emphasizes the importance of young children constructing knowledge (understanding concepts) through their own activities, as opposed to being told correct answers by other (Hendrick & Weissman, 2007). Piaget

sees the child as the source of action, actively constructing knowledge through a process of meaning-making through connection with prior knowledge and the real world (Hendrick & Weissman, 2007). When mismatch occurs, the child experiences disequilibrium, thereby activating his/her mental processes to resolve such disequilibrium, and in doing so, created a new scheme (Essa, 2007).

Piaget views cognitive development as a stage process (Essa, 2007). A child develops from the sensor motor stage, preoperational stage to concrete operational and finally formal operational stage (Essa, 2007). Each of these stages is characterized by qualitative changes in a child's thinking (Piaget, 1962). In the sensor motor stage, (from birth to two years), the infant knows about the world through their actions and perceptions. In the preoperational stage (from two to six years), children begin to use symbols, images, words or actions to represent their thoughts. Their thinking is characterized by Egocentrism, Irreversibility and centration (Berk, 2006). In the concrete operational stage (from six to twelve years), children understand concepts of conservation and continue to expand their thinking and can perform logical mental operations, such as addition and subtraction. In the formal operational stage (twelve years on wards), children are able to reason deductively, to formulate and test hypotheses (Piaget, 1962; Essa, 2007; Berk, 2006).

Piaget (1962) asserts that children acquire physical, logic o-mathematical and social knowledge when they explore their environment. Physical knowledge is acquired from activities that allow children to observe and draw conclusions about the physical properties of the objects. In the logic o-mathematical realm, children's thoughts become more differentiated and are able to act on the objects and create abstract reasoning and relationships, for example, a child playing with blocks will soon discover that the longer piece can serve as a sturdier base than the shorter. Social knowledge is assimilated through social conventions that have been taught by third parties through imparting cultural norms and societal customs and acceptable behaviors. Through social interchanges, children begin to be more aware of the ideas and opinions of peers and they learn that others can have views different from their own.

Piaget (1962) believes that children can construct knowledge about the real world through play. This view suggests that the whole child integrates both cognitive and emotional information in meaningful ways with the help of a rich environment and supportive adult (Hirsh-Pasek 2009). Central to this view is the idea that knowledge is acquired through a constructive process of the learner and that through meaningful activities, children not only practice and hone their social skills but also engage in cognitive acts that expand their repertoires of learning (Hirsh-Pasek 2009).

From a practical viewpoint, teachers who believe in the constructivist cognitive approach will provide a classroom environment that allows for exploration and experimentation, and is seen as “operating with” a child where the teacher follows a “wait-challenge-wait” procedure and ensuring that the child has ample opportunity to assimilate and accommodate through the provision of novelty in the environment (Bodrova & Leong, 1996).

### **2.1.2 Socio-cultural Theory**

From a social constructivist perspective, children build and extend their knowledge and skills as they interact with the outside world (Vygotsky 1978). Vygotsky emphasises the social influence – the roles that adults and peers play in what and how the child learns (Berk, 2006). He argues that the child needs social tools (such as speech, writing skills, mathematical and scientific concepts) to advance his/her cognitive and intellectual abilities (Essa, 2007). Peers and teachers who are able to systematically provide scaffolds to advance the child’s cognitive and intellectual front best serve Vygotsky’s notions of guided participation (Essa, 2007). The child should be positioned in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) to advance from the existing position to the next level of development (Vygotsky, 1978). As Vygotsky puts it “What a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow” (1978, p.87).

Like Piaget, Vygotsky believes that much learning takes place when children are involved in activities (Mooney, 2000) where they can interpret their experiences and determine the conditions of the make-believe; discuss roles, objects and directions. Vygotsky (1978) also points out that the cultural reality children live in influences them. In engaging with the environment, the child use symbols in the process of perspective-taking where the child substitutes meanings and negotiates ideas and feelings (Essa, 2007;

Berk, 2006). He advocates that social engagement and collaboration with others form a powerful force that transforms children's thinking during the process of such interactions (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky (1966) addresses the significance of play in the development of symbolic thinking as a cornerstone of cognition. He argues that play contains all the developmental tendencies (cognitive, physical, social and emotional) and thus creates a zone of proximal development that pulls the child forward. For this reason, play activities are essential in the preschool years because it leads to development, giving rise to abstract thinking, self-awareness and self-regulation (Vygotsky, 1966). From the sociocultural perspective, adult interaction serves an important role in children's learning and development (Bodrova and Leong, 1996). Teachers who believe in this perspective are encouraged to participate broadly in children's play activities Trawick-Smith, (2008), take on multiple teaching roles and used a variety of play activities in the classroom to scaffold children's learning and development (Bodrova & Leong, 1996).

## **2.2. Conception of Children's Play**

Although most professionals speak about play as though it were a single entity, play has been defined and theorized in many different ways. For instance, Fromberg (1992) suggested that play is characterized by thinking and activity that is symbolic, meaningful, active, pleasurable, voluntary, rule governed and episodic. Bateson (1972) suggests that play is evident when participants frame events, through attitude, pretence, vocalization and other Meta communicative cues. G"onc"u et al. (2000) suggests that play is evident when there is a sense of playfulness and fun, but also that we should look carefully across cultures for variations. These examples illustrate the diversity of views on how play is defined. This is not simply a contemporary challenge, but rather something that has been with us as a profession for a long time. For instance, Hutt et al. (1989) found in their review of children's activities, 'some fourteen distinct categories of behaviour were identified, all of which, in one or another context, have been labelled as "play" (p.10). What is particularly interesting about their review of the literature at that time is that the fourteen distinct categories actually represented almost all children's behaviour. In essence, play could be viewed in its broadest sense as describing almost all the activities

that young children engage in. This literature suggests that there is no standard definition for play and that most of the behaviours and activities young children engage in can be termed as play by one theorist or another.

Historically, different theories have been developed to explain the activities of children. For instance, Mitchell and Mason (1948) suggested that play was a way of 'blowing off steam'. Their surplus energy theory explained that play was undertaken when humans had excess energy. In contrast, Lazarus (1883) put forward the Recreation theory of play, whereby children restore their energy levels by playing. After extensive investigations of human and animal behaviours, Groos (1898) suggested that through play, children practiced the skills they needed in adult life. He termed this the Instinct-practice theory of play. Hall (1906) also recognized instinct as an important dimension in play, suggesting that play was important for human evolution. The recapitulation theory of play put forward by Hall (1906) suggests that children enact the stages of human evolution through play. Play has also been explained as an opportunity for the safe expression of pent-up emotions (Carr, 1902). Moreover, Shipley (2008) stated that while there is no one definition of play, there are a number of agreed characteristics that describe play. Play can be described as:

**Pleasurable** - play is an enjoyable and pleasurable activity. Play sometimes includes frustrations, challenges and fears; however enjoyment is a key feature;

**Symbolic** - play is often pretend, it has a 'what if?' quality. The play has meaning to the player that is often not evident to the educator;

**Active** - play requires action, either physical, verbal or mental engagement with materials, people, ideas or the environment;

**Voluntary** - play is freely chosen. However, players can also be invited or prompted to play;

**Process oriented** - play is a means unto itself and players may not have an end or goal in sight;

**Self motivating** - play is considered its own reward to the player.

Once you have decided what play means to you, you should next ask yourself, why play-based learning? What is it about play that makes it so important? Play has a long and detailed research history that dates back to the work of Locke and Rousseau. Research and evidence all point to the role of play in children's development and learning across cultures (Shipley, 2008). Many believe that it is impossible to disentangle children's play, learning and development. NAEYC (2009, p. 14) clearly stated that children of all ages love to play, and it gives them opportunities to develop physical, competence and enjoyment of the outdoors, understand and make sense of their world, interact with others, express and control emotions, develop their symbolic and problem solving abilities, and practice emerging skills.

### **2.3. Benefits of Play**

The developmental literature has identified play as stimulating all aspects of children's developmental domains Wood, (2007) Also, play activities are socially and symbolically complex and involve social reciprocity which is important for effective and personality development (Brewer, 2004).

Advocates of play frequently claim that play contributes to the development of problem-solving capabilities and creative thinking in children (Brewer, 2004). Children need to organize tasks, assign characters to assume the play roles, engage in problem-solving behaviours such as looking for props and materials to meet the play intent. A play-based curriculum is said to offer children opportunities to acquire these positive attributes and dispositions that are considered essential to learning, such as planning and organization, concentration, engagement, reflection, involvement and participation (Wood, 2007).

According to Play work Principles Scrutiny Group (2005), children are very different from adults, and one of the differences is the need for children to play and be playful. Since being playful is a biological drive that is intrinsically motivated, suppressing such want can affect children's development in many ways. Many classic theories emphasized the importance of play and how it affects children's lives. For instance, Vygotsky (1978) noted that play helps to shape how children make sense of their worlds, learn thinking skills, and acquire language.

Piaget also mentioned the importance of play through his theory of assimilation. As children assimilate new experiences, they reflect on the new knowledge and practice such skills through play (Smith & Lillard, 2012). Montessori regarded play as “the child’s work” and that working with toys and objects helps children to develop cognitively, socially, and emotionally (Lillard, 2013; Miller, 2003). These pioneers proposed that children show what they know and what they are thinking through play. Following the logic, children’s play behavior could be used to evaluate their knowledge, and play could thus be an effective pedagogy in assisting children learn and develop. Kindergartners spend a lot of time playing every day. While they are inventing games and dramatizing fantasies, they develop their bodies and minds through the playing process. During free play, kindergartners develop well-being because they need to pay attention and affiliate with other children continually (Pyle & Deluca, 2017).

Therefore, the relationship between development and play as described within the physical, cognitive, language, and social domains of development will be explored in the following sections.

### **2.3.1. Physical development and play**

The kindergarten years are the period when young children acquire basic fine and gross motor skills. Fine motor skills involve the use of hands and fingers, whereas gross-motor skills are the movements that allow the individual to become mobile and engage in skills requiring body movement.

Gallahue (1993) proposed that children move through a developmental progression in the acquisition of motor skills. Although the sequence of the appearance of these phases is universal, the rate of acquisition of motor skills varies from child to child. Gallahue (1993) warned that maturity and physical activity do not necessarily ensure that children will acquire fundamental movement skills in the kindergarten years, and children who do not master these skills are frustrated and will experience failure in recreational and sports activities. Play, especially outdoor play, is commonly associated with physical exercise. In general, educators and parents may not distinguish among free play, teacher-directed motor skills activities, and adult-directed sports. Although each type of activity provides

opportunities for physical exercise, play is different in that it is initiated by the child (Lynch, 2015). Myers (1985) found that the children engaged in significantly more motor behaviors in free play than in the structured physical education classes. Frost (1992), therefore, suggested that the most effective teacher might be the one who provides a balance between directed and free-play activities. In fact, children need time to mess around and do nothing (Wood, 2013). Although a full range of motor skills can be nurtured through adult-directed activities, there is also a need for an opportunity for children to engage in physical movements related to spontaneous, natural play (Wortham, 2010).

### **2.3.2. Cognitive development and play**

Children make major strides in cognitive development in the kindergarten years. They get more opportunities to explore the surrounding environment and learn new information.

According to Piaget (1962), kindergartners are in the preoperational stage of development, where children are able to represent objects and events mentally, thus permitting more complex symbolism. However, they are controlled by their perception, which means that they understand concepts in terms of what they can see. Here Piaget (1962) described that preoperational children are egocentric. They are concerned more with their own thoughts and are unable to consider the point of view of others. Egocentrism results in the child's inability to distinguish between her own perspective and the perspective of others. In play, kindergartners may assume that other children share the same feelings and thoughts. In fact, play is considered necessary for cognitive development and learning (Gordon & Browne, 2014).

Researchers have found that preschoolers who spend more time engaged in socio-dramatic play are advanced in intellectual development. In addition, children who enjoy pretend play score higher on tests of imagination and creativity. Novel play with objects may also enhance children's ability to think inventively (Gordon & Browne, 2014). Wood (2013) identified the involvement of thinking processes and the repetition of social interactions as two essential ingredients of play. For instance, pretend play fosters young children's ability to reason and assists children in separating meanings from objects

(Yuen, & Rao, 2017). Dramatic play, moreover, permits kindergartners to imitate human relationships through symbolic representations (Smith & Lillard, 2012).

Vygotsky (1978) focused on representational play and fantasy play rather than on stages of play. Representational play permits kindergartner to deal with unrealizable desires (Gordon & Browne, 2014). At the same time, it allows children to separate objects and meaning. When the child substitutes one object for another, the representation helps the child separate an object's real meaning from a pretend meaning.

Pretend play, then, represented in the separation of meaning from objects, serves as preparation for later abstract thinking and use of symbols, such as letters, for reading and writing (Lynch, 2015). Fantasy play appears when children must learn to follow approved behaviors and delay gratification. As children mature, more rules and routines are expected, and fantasy play expands. For Vygotsky (1978), the essential feature of play is self-restraint. During play kindergartners subordinate desires to play roles; and they are willing to follow set rules, which in turn enables them to follow more general rules and develop culturally accepted behaviors in real life.

### **2.3.3. Language development and play**

The kindergarten years are significant for language development in young children. They learn about 10,000 words between ages 2-6. Language development is related to advances in cognitive development, follows rules of language, and is characterized by development in vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatics (Gordon & Browne, 2014). Children in general achieve major milestones in language development by the age of 6, with some differences occurring in language achievement. When children enter kindergarten, the individual gap in language development can be great.

The differences in families and cultures can determine how much and what type of language is used. For that reason, differences in language acquisition can be documented. According to Berk (2013), some groups such as girls, middle-class children, single-born children tend to be more proficient and advanced in language than boys, children from low socioeconomic status families, twins, and triplets. Researchers who have studied familial and cultural differences in children's language development explored various

reasons for the findings. Some adults use strategies that foster language development, and such actions reflect Vygotsky's ideas on scaffolding, in which more knowledgeable people interact with children in order to develop children's zone of proximal development (Sheridan, 2011). When the relationship between language development and play is described, it is essential to explore how children play with language and how language is used in play. Pyle and Bigelow (2015) proposed that children explore the elements of language and develop a meta-linguistic awareness, or understanding of the rule system, through play with language. There is a hierarchy in how children play with language. According to the research, the categories do not develop independently, nor do they imply that one precedes the other.

According to Heidemann and Hewitt (2010), kindergartners collaborate in play they use language by telling jokes and using chants. When language is used in play, it is in essence a social event. Language is therefore used as a tool in their play. It is used to plan play episodes, carry out roles, and talk about play events. When planning for play, children must use persuasive language if they are to take charge during the play event that follows. There are also times when children must use tones and expressions that are representative of the roles being played. The language that children use when playing pretend is similar to the language they have heard from books, and this language is like the language in a story when they narrate their play with small toys (Davidson, 1998).

During play, children might give instructions to each other as to what should be said and how the children should express their part of the dialogue or conversation in play. Therefore, play not only facilitates language development in kindergartners, the use of language in it also reflects children's cognitive development (Davidson, 1998, p. 181).

#### **2.3.4. Socio-emotional development and play**

During the kindergarten years, children increasingly understand themselves as individuals; in addition, they understand themselves as a part of a social world (Roopnarine & Johnson, 2013). They are becoming more autonomous, and their cognitive abilities permit them to understand how they fit into different social groups. Important characterizations of social and emotional development are self concept, self-esteem, and self-regulation of emotions.

Relationships with others are exhibited through the development of empathy and social competence; and the nature and direction of social-emotional development are affected by their relationships with others.

According to Erikson's stage theory Berk, (2013), kindergartners are in the stage of initiative versus guilt. If they can feel secure after separating from their parents and feel competent in their abilities, they can develop autonomy and eagerly participate in new tasks and experiences. Wood (2013) characterized the kindergarten years as the play years. This description is particularly appropriate for social development because much of the progress occurs through play. Piaget's cognitive-developmental theory, Erickson's psychosocial theory, and Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory all have significant contributions to ward understanding the relationship between play and social development. Piaget (1962) felt that play has a primary role in the child's development. Although he placed little emphasis on play as a factor in children's responses to the social environment, he emphasized the role for peer interactions within play for social-cognitive development.

Interactions during playtime helped children understand that other players have perspectives different from their own. In Piaget's view (1962), play provides children with opportunities to develop social competence through ongoing interactions. In Erikson's view (1963), there is a relationship between the make-believe play and the wider society, because this kind of play permits children to learn about their social world and to try out new social skills. Moreover, play facilitates the understanding of cultural roles and the integration of accepted social norms into their own personalities. Lastly, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory has a significant role for play in that he proposed that make-believe play in the preschool years is vital for the acquisition of social and cognitive competence (Berk, 2013). Vygotsky suggested that make-believe play requires children to initiate an imaginary situation and follow a set of rules to play out the situation; and in it the child is able to act separately from reality.

This type of planned pretend play helps children to choose between different courses of action (Creasey 1998). Make-believe play also forces young children to control their impulses and subject themselves to the rules of play. Vygotsky believed that all

imaginary situations devised by young children follow social rules. Through make-believe play, children develop an understanding of social norms and try to uphold those social expectations (Berk, 2013).

There is a close relationship between play and child development. Through play activities, kindergartners develop skills needed for future success in the society and in life. Therefore, investigating play in kindergarten and in early childhood programs become essential.

Furthermore, (Sawyers, 1994) explained that Play help children develop knowledge, social skills, and motor skill. It also helps those express feelings appropriately (as cited in Haile 2010:20).

Also believed that play helps children to prepare for adult life by letting them, in natural way, practice and explore what they will need to be able to do as adults. According to Aggarwall (2006:153), “play is the purest, most spiritual activity of the child and gives joy, freedom, contentment, inner rest and peace in the world. It is the source of all that is good”.

Hence, most scholars agreed that play is the first and most appropriate method of teaching in kindergarten or pre-school (Saracho, 1993; Curtis, 1998; Feeney et al, 1987; Bruce, 1991; Wall, 1975 cited in Haile 2010:20).

In addition, play based learning has many benefits for children as it facilitates the development of skills, dispositions and knowledge. As effective play based learning can assist children to develop lifelong learning skills that will stay with them beyond the early learning environment. Therefore, engaging in play based learning enables children to use and develop thinking skills such as problem solving, reasoning and lateral thinking. It offers opportunities to interact with others develop communication strategies and work in collaboration with peers and adults. It can foster literacy, numeracy and the development of scientific concepts. As children are empowered to make decisions and initiate play, they become confident and motivated learners. This in turn fosters responsibility and self regulation. Play based learning also provides children with many opportunities to resolve conflict, challenge unfair play and embrace diversity. Moreover, play based learning

provide for KG children to express their feeling, to appreciate beauty and to learn numbers (MoE, 2002:76).

#### **2.4. The early childhood teacher's role in play**

Researchers have stressed the importance of teachers' roles in providing children with a quality educational setting (Isenberg & Quisenberry, 2002). A number of studies have focused on the role of the teacher in facilitating children's learning through play and that teacher participation in classroom playful activities encourages children's involvement in such activities (Anning & Edwards, 2006).

Teaching practices for young children include opportunities for choice, hands-on learning, and promotion of collaboration between children, use of a variety of teaching strategies, individualization, self-regulation and teachers should also balance between teacher initiated and child initiated activities (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). In play based strategy teachers have no dominant role in the learning activities, but engage in various roles such as that play facilitator, play supporters and play observers. preschool teachers perform a complex and multidimensional roles, they are responsible for implementing a program that is thoughtfully planned, challenging, engaging, integrated, developmentally appropriate, and culturally and linguistically responsive, and that promotes positive outcomes for all children (Wood, 2007).

According to Montessori approach, the role of the teacher is changing and organizing the environment in convenient way to the children's need and their development. As the curriculum implementer, teachers should also consider play, learning, and care as a whole, as these are inter-related in the holistic development of children. They must also have the knowledge, awareness, ability and attitude to support life-long learning. Teachers not only transmit knowledge, but also help children to construct knowledge.

Through play interactions, teachers can provide children with developmentally appropriate materials, ideas, practical achievements and support them in the development of their own thoughts and interests (Frost et al., 2005; Vygotsky, 1978). In sum, play involves different kinds of teacher interactions with children and teachers have to decide on the degree of involvement in children's activities. Teachers have to observe what

children are doing, support their efforts, and get involved thoughtfully to support additional learning.

Two dominant discourses about the roles in which preschool teachers are involved in play can be distinguished from the literature: guidance, i. e. regulation and support of play. Regulation of play refers to play that is initiated, guided and directed by the preschool teacher, and support of play refers to child-initiated play that is supported by the preschool teacher that builds on children's interests (Bodrova & Leong, 2010). Similarly, NAEYC(2009) position statement and DAP teaching guide line that teachers know how and when to scaffold children's learning that is, providing just enough assistance to enable each child. Scaffolding can take a variety of forms. It can be provided in a variety of contexts, not only in planned learning (Breadkamp & cople, 2009).

There are specific roles preschool teachers take when they are involved in play, identified by various authors, such as co-player (Reynolds & Jones, 2011), stage-manager, play leader (Johnson, Christie, & Yawkey, 1999), collaborator, model, mediator and responsive preschool teacher (Bodrova & Leong, 2016). The roles can be considered within the discourse of regulation and/or support, depending on the conceptualization of play by the preschool teacher who takes the role.

The passive position of the preschool teacher in relation to play is exemplified by the roles of the observer who reflects, builds and plans (Reynolds and Jones, 2011), preschool teacher as a provider of materials, time, space and experience (Johnson et al., 1999), preschool teacher as a planner and monitor of children's safety, preschool teacher as the one who encourages children and provides experiences that inspire children (Bodrova & Leong, 2016).

Preschool teachers understood their role to be that of co-constructors, co-learners, facilitators, and scaffolding of children's learning (Van Oers & Duijkers, 2013; Martlew et al., 2011). Teachers have an understanding of how to set up classroom activities to support play-based learning. In relation to the first theme of teachers being co-constructors of knowledge, teachers often choose themes within the classroom that are

based on children's interests (Van Oers & Duijkers, 2013). Teachers are engaged in co-constructing the curriculum with children in mind so that it includes children's interests as well as meeting curriculum expectations (VanOers & Duijkers, 2013).

While children are playing, teachers are acting as observers (Karia, 2014; Bennett et al., 1997); as the children are problem solving, observing provides a clear understanding of what is happening within a child's mind to understand how they learn and how to assist them (Bennett et al., 1997). Within a daily routine, play would include students sharing knowledge with each other, asking questions, and demonstrating individual skills (Pyle & Bigelow, 2015). Jones and Reynolds in their book "*The Play's the Thing*" (2011, p.32-96) describe teachers' have integral roles in play such as being: Stage Manager, Mediator, Player and Planner.

To summarize, the researcher believed that preschool teachers perform multidimensional roles such as facilitating, being a play mate and friend, guiding behaviors, role models, observer, planner and so forth both in both care and education aspects.

## **2.5. The Challenges Hindering Preschool Teachers Implementation of Play Based Instruction**

Play based instruction brings challenges and opportunities on the part of preschool teachers. Preschool teachers' inadequacies in the knowledge, attitude and skill of play based instruction may result in children to feel bored, depressed, less motivated and interested and make them passive in the teaching learning process because children are concrete learners than abstract learners. As a result, teaching children with joy and fun by shifting chalk and talk method to fun teaching brings can bring opportunities (Frost et al., 2008). There are array of challenges mentioned in literature. But for purpose of this study teacher related, administrative related, and resource related factors were reviewed and considered.

Tran's (2017) research finding on the challenges of implementing play based instructions revealed that although learning through play can have a significant impact on young children's learning, there are concerns with this new approach. There have been numerous concerns with this new approach. Firstly, teachers expressed how there is a

lack of time when creating a play based classroom (Van Oers & Duijkers, 2013; Karia, 2014). When teachers provide activities that are based on children's interest, they have to be observant in order to acknowledge when activities turn less exciting for students. In order to regain the children's interests, teachers must think of new ways to excite them. This may mean changing the entire learning centre (Karia, 2014).

Secondly, teachers expressed a concern about the difficulties with assessment and teaching within play-based to meet curriculum expectations (Karia, 2014 & Martlew et al., 2011). Martlew et al. (2011) suggested that, "an approach based on both curriculum-generated play to support the development of specific skills and knowledge and a play-generated curriculum based on teachers responding to the interests of the children is the best approach to curriculum planning" (as cited in Wood & Attfield, 2005, p. 32).

Thirdly, teachers' understanding of the meaning of play is different across various researches (Pyle & Bigelow, 2015; Baker, 2014; Samuelsson & Johansson, 2006). Different definitions and perspectives of play and learning make it challenging for teachers to integrate play within their classroom (Pyle & Bigelow, 2015). Lastly, teachers often express concerns on how to balance between teacher and child directed learning. They need to determine the right time to get involved within these experiences (Pyle & Bigelow, 2015).

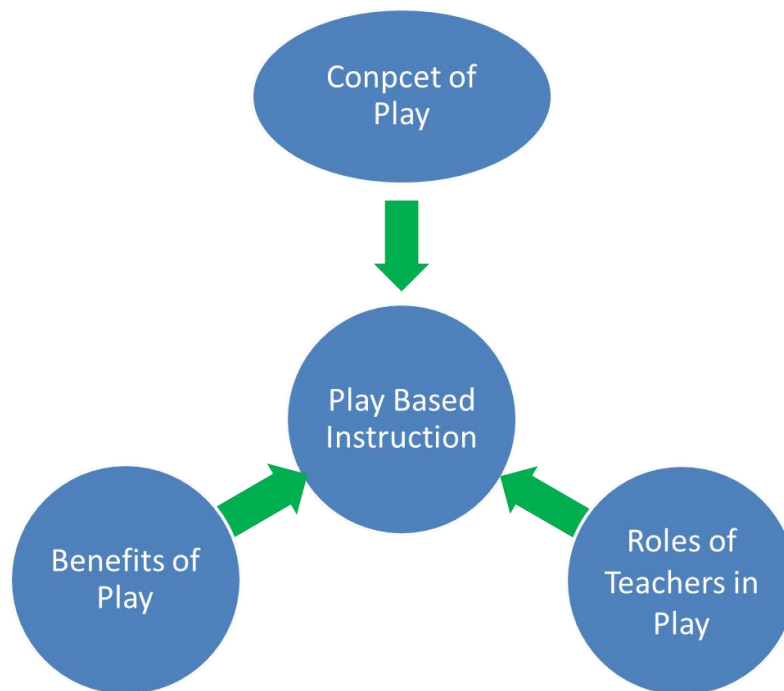
The Challenges in Implementing Play-Based Approach according to Rengel(2013) research finding includes lack of; time allocation ,handling materials, student control, space not suitable, teachers' skills, support from school administrators and parents. Wood (2004) also asserted that teachers have also identified limitations as follows: (a) pressures and expectations from parents, colleagues, and school inspectors; (b) lack of time for adult involvement;(c) the structure of the school day (timetable, fixed times for school assemblies and outdoor play); (d) downward pressures associated with the national curriculum; and (e) the emphasis on literacy and numeracy.

In sum, the present researcher believed that preschool teachers encountered different challenges or obstacles to use play as a means of instruction in and out of the classroom such as structural school related constraints (time, space, resource) ,teacher-related

constraints (lack of adequate knowledge, attitude, skill, training) and attitudinal constraints (administrator expectation and support).

## 2.6. Conceptual Framework

A review of related literature indicated the significance of the play based instruction. However, the research investigating the perception of preschool teachers' towards the concept of play, benefits of play and their roles regarding play based instruction. After synthesizing different literatures, this conceptual framework is developed as a method to examine perception of preschool teachers' towards the concept of play, benefits of play and their roles regarding play based instruction. The framework was developed with the assumption that the variables such as perception of teachers, benefits of play and roles of teachers in play based instruction. Thus, these frameworks had their own implication in instrumentation, data collection, findings and discussion.



**Fig 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study**

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODS

#### 3. The Research Design

To achieve the set objectives and answer research questions, the researcher was used mixed research design believing that this method would help researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data to understand more about the research questions. Creswell, et.al (2003), described a mixed design as a mixing of both quantitative and qualitative data either in parallel or sequentially at one or more phases of the investigation process. Thus, the researcher uses this design to reduce the weakness of both quantitative and qualitative in order to understand more about the basic questions by combining concurrently (Creswell, 2009). As a result, concurrent mixed design was chosen; believing that, this method was advantageous to understand the research problems deeply like how teachers conceptualize play, benefits of play and factors hindering the implementation of play based instruction.

According to Creswell (2012), a basic rationale for mixed research design is that the quantitative data gathering form “supplies strengths to offset the weaknesses” of the qualitative, and helps researcher to understand more about research basic question. Thus, the researcher believed that, gathering both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently during the study and then combining the gathered data in the interpretation after comparing the result to increase the reliabilities of the overall results and triangulating the evidence for the validation of the results of the issues by converging both qualitative and quantitative data will be more advantageous.

#### 3.1. Study Area

The setting for this study was Guji zone, Oromiya Region, Ethiopia specifically on preschools providing preschool education. Guji zone which is one of the 21 zone of Oromiya Regional state. It is divided into seventeen district and located approximately 578 Km far from the South of Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia at the elevation of 1,540 meters above sea level. It is bordered by Somalia Region in the East, in the West by East Guji zone, in the North by Sidama Region and in the South by Genale River having 27 km<sup>2</sup>. According to Guji Zone Educationa Office statistics of 2019, in Guji

Zone, totally there are 40 preschools. Out of 40 preschools, 24 of them are owned by private and 16 of them are owned by government and also there are 310 preschool teachers are working in teaching preschool children in the 2018/19 academic year with having different level of education, experience and type of training.

### **3.2. Target Population of the Study**

The participants or subjects of this study were 44 preschool teachers' (Female=24, Male=20) those are working in 10 randomly selected private preschools from five districts was target population of the study in order to examine perception and challenges of preschool teachers on play based instruction. In this regard, a total of 108 participants were the target population of the study.

### **3.3. Sample and sampling techniques**

The populations for this study were private kindergartens teachers and principals in Guji Zone, Oromia Regional State. In this zone, there are 17 districts and from which 16 districts have preschools. One district was excluded due to security problem to go there and collect data totally, there are 15 districts which have 24 private and 15 government preschools and also there are 290 preschool teachers are working in teaching preschool children with having different level of education, experience and type of training and 440 students were enrolled in the 2020/21 academic year . Thus, to select representative kindergarten teachers in the Zone for quantitative approach, simple random sampling was employed Accordingly, five districts which account 33.3% had been selected first, and then, 44 teachers (20 males &24 females) from total populations of 108 (40 male and 68 female) in general and from 54 (24 male and 30 female) target populations of selected districts were selected respectively. The sample accounted 40.7% of the total population and 81.5% of the target populations. 44 (20 male &24 female) participants were filled and returned the questionnaire.

For qualitative section, In order to gain a deeper insights into teachers' perceptions towards play-based learning, play benefits, their roles and possible challenges that hinder implementation of play based instruction a total 8 (five teachers and three principals)

respondents were selected from the selected five districts to the investigator depending on their willingness and consent.

### **3.4. Instruments**

To collect data the researcher had used close-ended questionnaire to collect quantitative data and open-ended questions to collect qualitative one. As literatures indicate, the triangulating multiple data sources lets the investigator to decrease bias in data gathering and analysis and also to get deeper understanding about the issues under study (De Vos et al., 2011; Creswell, 2009). Therefore, for quantitative part closed-ended questionnaires techniques had been employed whereas for qualitative part semi-structured interviews had been used to address the research questions mentioned in chapter one. In this study, basically employed self-developed questionnaire as an instrument. In the design of this instrument the literature review was used as a base. After, the instruments of data collection had been commented by respected advisor before sample tested distribution for respondents. Both close and open-ended types of questions were prepared in English language, then were translated in Oromigna language for maximize comprehension.

#### **3.4.1. Questionnaire**

Guided by research questions of the study and review of related literature, the questionnaire was designed and administered for preschool teachers to get more dependable and reliable data from large samples about their opinions and attitudes as it is supported by Best & Khan (2005) and Yalew (2017). Therefore, in order to examine preschool teachers' perception on play, benefits of play, role of teachers and challenges of play-based instruction, the researcher adapted (Self developed structured survey) questionnaire was employed to collect data from the sample of preschool teachers.

Four scaled item questionnaires namely perception scale, benefit scale and role scale were used to collect data from preschool teachers. The questionnaire items were adapted based on play based statements from early childhood approaches, play based instruction and Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) for young children NAEYC guidelines (Bredekamp&Copple, 2009) and Ethiopian ECCE policy guideline (MOE,

2010) literatures. Accordingly, major themes on preschool teachers' perception, benefits of play and role of teachers in play-based instruction were identified from the literature.

The questionnaire includes a total of 33 closed-ended items (Eight non-scaled items and 25 scaled items). Particularly eight non-scaled items to gather data on the challenges they face while interacting and using play as an instruction, a 5 point Likert type scale consisted of 25 items were administered to collect data on perception, benefits of play, role of teachers in play based instruction and Play based instruction variables of preschool teachers while four background information questionnaire items on gender, educational level, experience and training type was utilized to gather data about their demographic variables. This is to assure more consistency on the participant's response that shows their agreement or disagreement. The questionnaire was prepared in English and latter translated into Oromifa language so as to alleviate any unnecessary complication, responding to the items and meaning differences in the versions.

Consequently, the questionnaire was designed and organized in to different parts. All statements were positively worded and item pool was drafted based on literature reviews for all variables. Specifically; the questionnaires were organized with the following four self developed (researcher adapted) scales.

**I) Perception Scale;** designed to investigate preschool teachers' perception about play based instruction with closed ended items ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5=strongly disagree with possible scores range from 10 (10x1) to 50 (10x5). The item pool consisted of 10 items with a cronbach alpha value of 0.725.

**II) Benefit Scale;** designed to examine preschool teachers' perception towards benefits of play based instruction with closed ended statements ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5=strongly disagree with possible scores range from 5 (5x1) to 25 (5x5). The item pool consisted of 5 items with a cronbach alpha value of 0.722.

**III) Role Scale;** designed to explore preschool teachers' roles in play based instruction with close ended statements ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5=strongly disagree with possible scores range from 10 (10x1) to 40 (10x4).

The item pool contains 10 items with a cronbach alpha value of 0.74. Thus, the internal consistency of the three scales was high and the instruments were found reliable to collect the data because the reliability coefficient was above 0.70.

**Pilot Testing:** Before administering the main questionnaires to the participants, the instrument was pilot tested in one preschool on a sample of 15 teachers.

The overall result of preschool teachers' perception towards play based instruction, benefits of play and roles of teachers in play based instruction was analyzed based on participants perception towards play concept, play benefit and their roles in play based instruction. Thus, the mean score of internal consistency of the three scales was high and the instruments were found reliable to collect the data because the reliability coefficient was 0.729.

Finally, the main questionnaire was distributed to 44 preschool teachers and all 44(100%) were returned and employed as usable responses for data analysis.

### **3.4.2. Semi-structured interview**

Semi-structured interview would have been selected to get in depth picture of participants' perception on play, perception towards the benefits of play, how do see their roles in promoting learning through play and factors affecting the implementation of play based instruction. In this investigation, face-to-face interviews were accomplished with eight preschool teachers (five teachers and three principals).

The interview questions include teachers background information, teachers' perceptions on the nature of play, perceptions of teachers' about the benefits of play based instruction, how do preschool teachers' see their roles in promoting learning through play and factors affecting the implementation of play based instruction by using eight (8) main questions which were open-ended.

### **3.4.3. Observation**

Based on the synthesis of literature review, the researcher prepared observation checklist items (33 items) to examine the practices, roles and challenges of preschool teachers regarding the implementation of play based instruction. In doing so, observation was

employed to draw pertinent data from classrooms and outdoor play areas that supplement teachers self-reported data obtained through the questionnaire. This is because Classroom(indoor) and outdoor observation has given tangible information about the school conditions, classroom activities and children's condition in and out of the class and teachers teaching methods. The researcher used direct non-participatory observation through an observation checklist in 10 selected preschools for 10 days and for one period with each grade levels both for indoor and outdoor activities.

Items of the observation checklist consisted; detailed instruction in the classroom, classroom size, organization of classrooms and activity centers, availability of indoor and outdoor play materials, learning centers, school minute (time table or schedule), interaction between preschool children with their materials and teachers, teachers teaching approaches, provision of materials and planning learning environment (center) and challenges in implementing play based instruction.

### **3.5. Data Collection Procedures**

In order to collect the whole necessary data for this study, the researcher used the following procedures step by step. First, the researcher identified preschools where participants are possibly available by receiving official permission letter from Addis Ababa University, college of Education and Behavioral Science, ECCE Center to Guji Zone Education Office. Then, the researcher received cooperation letter from the Zone administration to the preschools and requested the selected preschools to get their informed consent. After designing or developing data gathering tools and made ready for administration, the researcher contacted the participants using cooperation letter given from the above mentioned bodies to collect the main data.

After that, the purpose, objective and actual benefit of the research was described to various bodies. This helps the researcher to get support from all the concerned bodies to conduct the research and make easy to obtain the required information. Following the selection of respondents, data for the pilot study was collected from the participants of the study. Moreover, before administering the main data gathering instruments, a pilot study for survey questionnaire was tried out in one preschool on 5 sample preschool

teachers and performed by assuring informed consent from the participants to check the wording, clarity and content validity to create the pool of items. Following the pilot study, the reliability estimates of the various scales were computed using cronbach alpha Coefficient. Items in the survey questionnaire were clearly explained to the respondents before they made to provide any necessary responses to the scale items. This ensured consistency and accuracy of responses of the pre-school teachers.

The questionnaire was distributed and collected on the same day that helps to get accurate and maximum return rate. Then items with poor item-total correlation were removed from the instruments, which resulted in the revised version with the reduced number of items. The correlation analysis was conducted to validate the instruments with the reduced number of items. Accordingly, further improvement was made on the instruments. All the information gathered from the study using the questionnaires were checked for accuracy and clarity of expression. Likewise, semi-structured interview was administered for preschool teachers, indoor and outdoor observation in line was also conducted after administering questionnaire. The participants were contacted by phone and an interview time was arranged in a convenient time and place for the interviewee. Besides, unstructured interview was conducted for some purposively selected preschool teachers for better understanding of the issue after observation.

Finally, all necessary data was administered in person for one month and collected through questionnaire, interview and observation. Accordingly, the collected data through different instruments was analyzed i.e., the collected data through questionnaire was coded and entered in to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program version 20, whereas the collected data through interview and observation was thematically arranged before the actual analysis and was triangulated in order to assure validity and reliability.

### **3.6. Method of data analysis**

The quantitative and qualitative data would have been analyzed separately using different method and then, after analysis the result were compared side-by-side in discussion section whether the qualitative and quantitative support each other or contradict each

other and finally integrated to answer the basic research questions during interpretations. Therefore, in this study, data that were collected through the questionnaire had been prepared and organized as single items score and the missed values were identified and substituted by using series mean of SPSS. Then after the data was processed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 and analyzed by employing different descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviations collected data using Likert-scale.

Additionally, the data collected through semi-structured interviews were analyzed by identifying and underlying themes emerged and constant comparison method to consider the multiple realities and perceptions of participants. The investigator read throughout all evidence before applying the constant comparative method and then, the data were prepared in terms of their similarities and themes, and finally the themes had been interpreted based on how they were associated to the basic questions of the study.

The One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was used to compare level of teachers' perceptions from the five districts. Teachers' academic qualifications and teachers' experience were related to teachers' perceptions of the play based approach.

Finally, the results were interpreted by comparing the results of both qualitative and quantitative which had been analyzed using side-by-side analysis by determining whether their result contradict or support each other. As Creswell (2012) described, in such analysis the statistical trend are supported by qualitative themes or vice versa.

### **3.7. Ethical Considerations**

Ethics is one of the most crucial areas of the research. In this research the researcher established strong positive interaction between researcher and population sample. The researcher has to seek the consent of those he/she is going to interview, question or observe. Moreover, he/she has to reach agreements with them about the use of data, and how its analysis will be reported and disseminated. In this regard, the researcher contacted the principals of kindergarten in order to seek their prior permission to administer the three research instruments. Adequate information on the aims of research, the procedures followed and the use of results were given to each participant. The

participants were given full assurance that the findings of the study would be used strictly for academic purposes.

## CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS

### 4. Introduction

This chapter deals with the data presentation, analysis and interpretation of the study.

### 4.1. Quantitative Analysis

#### 4.1.1. Characteristics of Respondents

**Table 1. Demographic characteristic of respondents**

Variables	Category	Respondents	
		f	%
Sex	Male	20	45.45
	Female	24	54.55
	Total	44	100
Age	25 and below	20	45.45
	26 to 34	18	40.9
	35 to 44	5	11.3
	45 and above	1	2.35
	Total	44	100
Qualification	Certificate	12	27
	Diploma	26	59
	BA Degree	6	14
	Total	44	100
Work Experience	5 and below years	22	50
	6 to 10 years	10	23
	11 to 15 years	8	18
	16 and above years	4	9

Total

44

100

As shown in Table 1 above, the number of teachers, participated in the study were 44, of which 20(45.45%) were males and 24(54.55%) were females and participants, 20(45.45%) were found in the category of 25 and below age group, participants 18(40.9%) were between the age group of 26-34 and 5 (11.3%) were found in the category of 35-44 age group. And 1(2.35%) of the participant was aged 45 and above. The data indicate that a large percentage of teachers fall in the young age group and may an active working age.

Regarding educational level 12 (27%) were certificate holders, 26 (59%) were diploma holders and 6(14%) were BA degree holders. This shows that the majority of teachers were diploma holders .

In relation to teaching experience, 22 (50%) of teachers found in between the category of 0-5 years. The 10(23%) of them were in between the category of 6-10 years, 8(18%) of them were between the category of 11-15 years and 4(9%) of them were founded 16 and above years working experience in kindergartens. From the data one can understand that the experience of traditional perspective, the majority of participants were below five years. It may could help them to understand the modern perspective how to children learn.

#### ***4.1.2. Preschool Teachers' Perception Towards the Concept of Play, According to Academic Qualification.***

Table 2 summarizes the mean scores of teachers' perception towards play concept, according to teachers academic qualifications. The results are analyzed as follows.

***Table 2 Mean Scores Based Academic Qualification and One-Way ANOVA***

<b>Teachers' Academic Qualification</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>F-ratio</b>	<b>Sig. (p)</b>
Certificate	12	80.50	7.003			
Diploma	26	82.64	8.167			

BA Degree	6	85.65	8.825			
Total	44					
Between Groups				3	1.223	0.312
Within Groups				42		

Significant level  $p < 0.05$

Analysis based on academic qualification showed that those with BA Degree scored the highest mean (mean=85.65, standard deviation=8.825), followed by those with Diploma (mean=82.62, standard deviation=8.167), and certificate holders (mean=80.50, standard deviation=7.003). In contrast, Certificate holders scored the lowest mean among the groups (mean=80.50, standard deviation=8.167). Result of One-Way ANOVA test revealed teachers' perceptions among the three groups, based on their academic qualifications, is at df 3 F-ratio 1.223,  $p=0.312$  indicating no significant difference in the level of perceptions among them. Analysis showed that teachers' perception does not differ based on their academic qualification towards play concept.

#### ***4.1.3. Preschool Teachers' Perception about the Benefits of Play Based Instruction According to Duration of Teaching Experiences.***

Table 3 summarizes the mean scores of teachers' perception about the benefits of play based instruction, according to teachers' duration of teaching experiences. The results are analyzed as follows.

***Table 3 Mean Scores Based Duration of Teaching Experiences and One-Way ANOVA***

<b>Duration of Teaching Experiences</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>F-ratio</b>	<b>Sig. (p)</b>
0-5 Years	22	89.00	10.003			
6-10 Years	10	82.68	7.238			

11-15 Years	8	80.73	6.943			
16 and above years	4	83.60	7.335			
Total	44					
Between Groups				3	1.467	0.235
Within Groups				42		

Significant level  $p < 0.05$

Analysis based on years of teaching experience among groups of teachers showed those with 0-5 years experience scored the highest (mean=89.00, standard deviation=10.003), followed by those with 16 and above years (mean=83.60, standard deviation=7.335), and those with 6-10 years (mean=82.68, standard deviation=7.238). In contrast, teachers with teaching experience 11-15 years scored the lowest among the groups (mean=80.73, standard deviation=6.943). Result of One-Way ANOVA revealed that teachers' perception, based on duration of teaching experience among the four groups, is at df 3, F-ratio 1.467,  $p=0.235$ , indicating no significant differences in perceptions among them. The analysis of the result showed that teachers' perception does not differ based on their teaching experiences about the benefits of play based instruction.

#### ***4.1.4. How do Preschool Teachers See Their Roles in Promoting Learning Through Play, According to their Gender status.***

Table 4 summarizes the mean scores of teachers' role in promoting learning through play, according to teachers gender status. The results are analyzed as follows.

***Table 4 Mean Scores Based Gender status and One-Way ANOVA***

<b>Teachers' Gender Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>F-ratio</b>	<b>Sig. (p)</b>
Female	24	84.07	9.498			

Male	20	80.73	6.943		
Total	44				
Between Groups				3	0.855 0.471
Within Groups				42	

Significant level  $p < 0.05$

Analysis based on gender status showed that female teachers scored the highest mean (mean=84.07, standard deviation=9.498), In contrast, male teachers scored the lowest mean among the groups (mean=80.73, standard deviation=6.943). Result of One-Way ANOVA test revealed teachers' perceptions among the two groups, based on their gender status, is at df 3, F-ratio 0.855,  $p=0.471$  indicating no significant difference in the level of perceptions among them. Analysis showed that teachers' perception does not differ based on their gender status in promoting learning through play.

#### ***4.1.5. Constraints and Challenges in Implementing Play-Based Approach.***

Table 5 shows the list of factors that created constraints and the list of factors teachers felt most challenging in implementing the play-based approach.

***Table 5 Constraints and Challenges***

Factors	Districts					Total (n)
	A (n)	B (n)	C (n)	D (n)	E (n)	
The most challenging factors in implementing play-based in teaching and learning:						
● Time allocation	9	7	7	8	8	38
● Handling materials	8	6	9	7	6	36
● Space not suitable	9	9	9	9	8	44
● Teachers' skills	9	8	8	8	8	41

● Support from school	9	7	7	7	7	37
Administrator						

**Time Allocation** – Many teachers felt time allocation was the main constraint hindering the use of a play-based approach in their teaching. More than their colleagues at other schools, Teachers of District (A) preschools felt that lack of time caused them not to use play based activities. The results indicated that the allocated two hours a week play time is not enough for teachers to adopt play in their teaching instruction.

**Handling Materials** – The majority of District (D) teachers felt that handling play materials were the most challenging factor. It is clear, then, that, teachers should be given more training on using the play materials.

**Space Not Suitable** – The lack of suitable space for play activities was a challenge for all teachers. Many teachers reported that there was not enough space for children to learn and play in classroom. They did not know how to make effective use of classroom space and transform the classroom into a quality play space.

**Teachers’ Skills** – As for teachers’ skills, the District (A) preschools teachers felt that this was their biggest challenge, compared to their peers in District B, C, D and E. Lately, the shortage of qualified preschool teachers in all Districts preschools has had the largest impact on the creation of effective classrooms. It is important for all Districts preschool teachers to be highly qualified which means they have had teachers’ training conducted by Guji Zone Educational Office.

**Support from School Administrator** – Results have shown that lack of administrator support has become a big challenge to teachers. Teachers reported that they choose direct instructional methods to teach children because of pressure from the school administrator to meet academic achievement standards. Efforts should be made to raise administrator’s awareness about the benefits of integrating play in teaching preschoolers.

## 4.2. Qualitative Analysis

For this section data were collected from three directors and five preschool teachers using open ended semi-structured questions.

### 4.2.1. *Preschool Teachers' Perception Towards the Concept of Play.*

Based on interview data, all of participants confirmed that, play gave children a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment while engaging with the activity. For example, teacher-participants made typical statements like:

- *Play is fun and children are happy when playing.*
- *Play means to have fun and enjoy.*
- *Play is fun, enjoyable and children can learn a lot merely by playing.*
- *Teacher-participants described play as a pleasurable activity because it engaged children in many ways.*
- *Teacher-participants indicated that “play is freedom of choice”, when children play, they choose materials, activities and playmates.*
- *Teacher-participants associated “play is voluntary” as it was an activity pursued without ulterior purpose and, on the whole, with enjoyment or expectation of enjoyment. For example, Teacher “Y” shared that “children were not restricted during play and they can interact very freely. It’s stress-free for them”.*

In general, all teachers were positive in their perceptions of the play-based approach. There was an agreement among teachers that all children like to play, that children never get bored while playing, and that they look forward to play.

### 4.2.2. *Preschool Teachers' Perception about the Benefits of Play Based Instruction.*

Accordingly, the interviewed respondents indicate that, participants had provided various examples of how they used play experiences to direct children’s learning and development. For instance, in language and literacy, teacher-participants demonstrated how classroom environments could promote functional and meaningful language and

literacy skills such as reading readiness, sentence construction, emergent handwriting, and vocabulary by allowing children to choose and direct their own play and exploration, and relate the curricula to children's interest and everyday lives. They provided literacy-enriched props such as children's literature, interactive charts, stickers, markers, pencils, dictionaries, magnetic letters, erase boards and papers for children to engage in speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

Additionally, participants related to play to children's social development where they learn to relate to people and situations, participants shared that play enhanced children's self-esteem as children prove to themselves, their own worth and the worth of others. For example, Teacher "x" stressed that "Children build up their self-esteem when they are successful in doing things like stacking blocks, helping their friend to do things and putting on their shoes."

When playing with peers, children learn a system of social rules, including ways to control themselves and tolerate their frustrations in a social setting. Children learn skills to get along with others, developed attitudes, learn to collaborate and resolve social conflicts (Saracho, 2003).

On the other hand, regarding to physical development, participants shared their views on the contributions of play to children's physical development, children's practiced all the gross motor skills of running, jumping and chasing during outdoor activities.

Observations also affirmed that, around 69(%) teacher-participants included locomotor, non-locomotor and components of health-related physical exercises in their activities such as music and movement.

Curriculum Framework for Ethiopian Education also stated that, play encourages the child to engage in learning voluntarily, experimenting and making their own discoveries both independently or with other children and adults. This contributes to the formation of their identity, expression and social learning. MoE, (2009:10)

Finally, majority of teacher-participants felt that well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, contributed to enhancing children's literacy skills, mathematics and science

concepts. Through creative and imaginative play, children gained mastery in their literacy skills such as phonological awareness, vocabulary, listening, reading, speaking and writing skills.

Therefore, Both data sources indicated that, it would be possible to realize that, majority of participants were confirmed play contributed to children's learning and development in their cognitive, social, emotional and physical domains.

#### ***4.2.3. How do Preschool Teachers See Their Roles in Promoting Learning Through Play?***

When children play, they are engaging in a complex process that affects all aspects of their development and the role of the teacher in play is critical, because the teacher must develop a repertoire of responses that are relevant and appropriate to meet the needs of the child (Santer et al., 2007). All teacher-participants had revealed wide ranging perspectives on their roles in promoting learning through play, such as participation, observation, planning, guiding, selecting materials and resources and setting up learning corners.

Interviewee data states that on the role of teachers', teacher-participants shared that they used verbal and behavioral techniques to manage classroom behaviours. They set out routines and classroom rules to ensure safety and respect for others; and provided boundaries within which children can learn and grow, they modeled correct ways to play with objects, encouraged children to play with others to develop their social skills and also helped children to sustain their play scenarios and played the role of a facilitator in children's play. They would provide materials and props for the play environments; observe children during play, not only for assessment, but also to facilitate appropriate social interactions and physical behaviours respectively.

In the same vein, Teacher "X" would join in the play and ask questions that would guide the children in thinking through their roles. She said,

Sometimes we play with them; we will make a case scenario where I'm sick. What will you give me? How will you treat me? And they will start oh you know, oh, I'll put this on you, I give you injection. You know? Yeah. So it's like we're the guinea pigs to it. Try to

do stuff on us but it is from there where we know whether they, they are able to understand certain terminology like injection, doctors, what do doctor do, the language they use.

Majority of participants associated with their roles, they perceived their roles in promoting learning through play, as guiding behaviours, role model, demonstrating mutual respect, playmate/friend and as facilitator, observer, planner and evaluator.

In summary, majority of teacher-participants to this study revealed a sense of pragmatism in their views on their roles in providing learning through play. Most of the participants were observed to be focused and practiced tried to scaffolding roles in assisting children to learn.

#### ***4.2.3. Constraints and Challenges in Implementing Play-Based Approach***

The interviewed participants points out the following about the factors affecting preschool teachers' implementation of play-based learning in their classroom:

- *Time is challenge. Participants need to do so many things like preparing lessons and teaching materials, doing observations.*
- *Participants highlighted physical space limitations as another issue that hindered their efforts in using play to promote teaching.*
- *Teacher-participants voiced their concerns on the lack of trained staff in their centre that had impacted them in their classroom practices in using play as a means to learning.*
- *The lack of resources as a concern associated with using play in their classrooms. For example, some typical statements by teacher-participants were:*
  - ✓ *When children are engaged in play..... they faced with the lack of resources such as story books, teaching aids such as cassettes, videos, and play materials. It is very troublesome.*
  - ✓ *Children play the same toys every time.*

Adequate and properly selected materials and equipment provide more opportunities for children's individual and group play. Play is an important contributor to the all development of children in the kindergarten. Hence, children should be provided with adequate and properly selected play materials and equipment (Christine and Jill, 1999).

In general, based on the responses obtained, it would be possible to conclude that the supply and selection of outdoor play materials and equipment were neither adequate nor suitable to meet the requirements of children in the studied kindergartens.

The following are some of the responses of the teachers.

- *“Children love to play. Children can develop their all skills through this approach. However it is difficult to practice it because we do not have enough support from school administration.”*
- *“We have heard about the play-based approach but we are not sure to incorporate play in my teaching practice.”*
- *“We rarely use play-based approach because we are not sure how. We used flash cards, books and the white board. It is much easier and less hassle.”*
- *“I am not sure how to use this approach in my teaching. Anyway, I am still new.”*
- *“I really feel that this approach is only good in the document, only on paper. I know that in Curriculum Framework for Ethiopian Education(2009:10) the approach is strongly recommended. In reality many teachers do not practice and that include me. The principal always reminds me to make sure that all children can read and write before they go to primary school. So, I use books to teach children reading and writing.”*
- *“ I agree play-based approach is good for preschool children because all children love to play. But I don't have the time to do this.*

Direct observation of playground by the researcher, also identified the critical shortage and lack of play equipment in the kindergartens. Equipment of minimum essentials like balance, tricycle, crawling tunnels, climbing frames, swinging, etc, were inadequate in

the studied kindergartens. The only available ones in some cases were merry-go-round and slides one from each kind to be used by all children attending kindergartens.

In summary, all teacher-participants to this study revealed that, they have encountered challenges in using play to promote learning.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This part of the study focuses on the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations on the basic findings.

#### 5.1. Summary of The Study

The general objective of this investigation was to assess the perceptions of preschool teachers' toward the concept and benefits of play based instruction in selected private kindergartens in Guji Zone, Oromia Regional State. To address this objective, the researcher was guided by the following four basic research questions:

1. What is the conceptions of play for preschool teachers?
2. What are the perceptions of preschool teachers about the benefits of play-based instruction in the preschool class?
3. How do preschool teachers see their roles in promoting learning through play?
4. What are the challenges hindering preschool teachers' implementation of play based instruction?

To this effect, the study was conducted in five randomly selected districts of private kindergarten centers. Then 44 kindergarten teachers from 54 target populations were selected using simple random sampling technique for quantitative section and eight teachers were selected using purposive sampling for interview parts. Both data were collected simultaneously since the researcher use concurrent mixed design to understand more about the basic questions. The collected data were analyzed separately and then integrated in the interpretations after comparing the results to increase reliability and triangulate for the validation of the finding.

Both questionnaire and interview questions were developed by the researcher based on the literature reviews, translated to local language, after commented by advisor and tested in one kindergarten before distributing collect data for this study.

The quantitative data were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistical tools like mean scores and standard deviations using SPSS version 20. The data gathered through interview were analyzed using narration. Hence, the major findings of the study are summarized as follows:

### **i. Regarding Teachers' Conception of Play**

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the respondents, most respondents held positive beliefs about children's play in contributing to learning and development and unanimously agreed that play is pleasurable for young children. Additionally, there was an agreement among teachers that all children like to play, that children never get bored while playing, and that they look forward to play.

### **ii. Regarding Teachers' Perception about the Benefits of Play- Based Learning**

Both data sources indicated that, it would be possible to realize that, majority of participants were confirmed play contributed to children's learning and development in their cognitive, social, emotional and physical domains.

In the same vein majority of teacher-participants felt that well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, contributed to enhancing children's literacy skills, mathematics and science concepts. Through creative and imaginative play, children gained mastery in their literacy skills such as phonological awareness, vocabulary, listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. Additionally, participants shared that play enhanced children's self-esteem as children prove to themselves, their own worth and the worth of others.

Regarding to physical development, participants shared their views on the contributions of play to children's physical development, children's practiced all the gross motor skills of running, jumping and chasing during outdoor activities.

### **iii. Regarding Teachers' Roles**

The result of the study showed that majority of participants associated with their roles, they perceived their roles in promoting learning through play, as guiding behaviours, role model, demonstrating mutual respect, playmate/friend and as facilitator, observer, planner and evaluator.

Additionally, majority of teacher-participants to this study revealed a sense of pragmatism in their views on their roles in providing learning through play. Most of the participants were observed to be focused and practiced tried to scaffolding roles in assisting children to learn.

#### **iv. Regarding factors that Affects the Implementation of Play based instruction**

The result of the study showed that there are many factors that affect the implementation of play based instruction. From these factors are: Time allocation, materials management, inappropriate space, teachers' skill, and poor support from administrators are the main reasons why play has been sidelined.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

Literature has shown that learning through play based approach is crucial to be applied in the process of teaching and learning at a pre-school level. Thus, from the findings of the study, it would appear that the sample of preschool teachers surveyed endorse the importance of play based approach in preschool education. However, many teachers did not integrate play into their activities to support teaching and learning process, even though they agree that children love to play. Apparently, factors such as time allocation for play activities, limited and unsuitable space for play, lack of knowledge and skills required to implement play based instruction and poor support from administrators, are the main reasons the teachers cited for minimizing play.

Additionally, they could be argued that the positive response towards play-based education suggest that teachers accept play as being of benefit to the development of children and that the play based approach will ensure effective learning. However, Many teachers surveyed apparently do not adopt play-based activities into their teaching

instructions because they are under constant pressure to meet academic targets by administrators expectations and they do not see play as contributing to academic goals. Therefore, many teachers still use the conventional teacher-direct instructions in their classroom widely.

These findings have implications on perceptions of kindergarten teachers towards the concept and benefits of play based approach in the study area. Thus, for the success of play based approach, involving children actively in their learning, is critically important in early childhood learning and holistic child development by implementing play based instruction. So, ensuring that kindergarten teachers' awareness on play based approach and even trained with its implementations very important by expanding teachers' knowledge and expertise on the theories and implementation of play for learning to improve classroom instructional process.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

Based on the above findings and conclusions the following suggestions and recommendations are provided:-

#### **For Preschool Teachers**

- ❖ Preschool teachers should be organized to work as advocators of play based instruction and in this regard they should be sensitized through workshops and seminars.
- ❖ Preschool teachers should involve and use any opportunity to update their knowledge and skill on Play based instruction via with appropriate regular and continuous training, retraining, guidance and stimulation activities.
- ❖ Preschool teachers should read and understand the basic concept of play, types of play and play materials, their use, indoor and outdoor play organization to implement play based teaching in line with other areas of child development, and professional knowledge of child development to build experiences that meet children's needs across multiple domains.

### **For Preschool Administrators**

- ❖ Children can learn better if they get various play choices. However, the limited accesses of some basic play materials from the studied preschools make children disadvantaged of gaining benefit from the engagement of various kinds of play. So, it is better if the preschools buys the play materials that are not available in the school and adds play materials that have scarcity.
- ❖ Though the awareness of some teachers about play materials is good, there are also teachers whose awareness is not clear and detail. So, it is better if the preschools invite ECCE professionals to provide refreshment training to preschool teachers on the importance of play materials for children,,s holistic learning and development that ultimately fosters play based instruction practice.
- ❖ Preschool administrators must advocate for the need of play based instruction for children in all early educational settings with the underlying assumption that when children are playing they are learning to become well-rounded students. Besides, pre school administrators need to stop the „sit and watch approach“ and consider them as part of responsible persons.

### **For Guji Zone Education Office**

- ❖ Guji Zone Education Office in collaboration with other stakeholders shall organize a panel discussion on the issue of how to teach preschool children in early childhood settings with a focus on play based instruction by allocating all the required indoor and outdoor play materials.
- ❖ The Zone Education Office should Provide appropriate (sufficient) both in-service and pre service training in collaboration with government, NGOs and concerned bodies involved in the sector for preschool education to promote the practice of play based instruction . Training, seminars and professional guidance should be given so as to equip teachers with appropriate knowledge, attitude and skills required at the level that helps them to implement play based instruction.

- ❖ The researcher recommends the Zone Education office should organize training and education about play-based instruction for preschool teachers and school administrators (both primary and preschool level) on what play-based instruction actually looks like in the preschool classroom and how students learn through play.

#### **For Oromiya National Regional State Education Bureau**

- ❖ The ONRSEB in collaboration with Guji Zone Education Office should take immediate measures to prepare developmentally appropriate and relevant curriculum materials, print and distribute the kindergarten textbooks, teacher's guides, syllabuses, standards and other related directives to preschools with proper improvement. This will help to make the implementation of play based instruction uniform.
- ❖ The Regional Education Bureau, Zone Education Department and Woreda Education Office shall work together to solve preschool teachers knowledge, attitude and challenges regarding play based instruction through an increased linkage and frequent supervision, follow up, monitoring and evaluation.
- ❖ The regional bureau in general and professionals in each level in particular should organize sensitization workshops and facilitate an awareness program to the preschool teachers about the general characteristics of play based instruction in collaboration with the nearest universities.
- ❖ Curriculum experts working at regional level in collaboration with assigned authorities should work to increase the pre-service training term of preschool teachers to a relatively longer period, perhaps from 10 month to two or three years that focused more deeply on preschool education related courses more importantly on play based pedagogy and other important areas of child development to enable early childhood pedagogy to be more effective.

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## **Annex A Data Gathering Instrument**

**Addis Ababa University**

**College of Education and Behavioral Studies**

**Center for Early Childhood Care and Education**

Questionnaire will fill by preschool teachers

The main objective of this questionnaire is to collect data regarding the perception of preschool teachers towards play based instruction in private kindergartens in Guji Zone, Oromiya Regional State so that the result could assist to make further improvement. Thus, your direct participation in filling the questionnaire has been found essential and determinant. So, you are kindly requested to provide genuine information to each of the question items. Please be assured that the collected data will be kept confidential and used for research purpose only. Please give your responses based on the stated instructions of each part. Note that no need of writing your name any where.

I would be very grateful if you could find the time to complete this questionnaire to assist me and play your own professional role in my research. Please feel free to write down your opinions and experiences.

Thank you in advance.

Tamirat Yohannes

Department of ECCE

Tel: 0916115830

Email: tamratyohannis6@gmail.com

**SECTION A:**

**1 DEMONGRPAHIC DATA**

1. What is your gender?

Male ( ) Female ( )

2. What is your age bracket?

25 and below ( )

26-34( )

35- 44( )

45 and above ( )

3. What is you highest qualification?

Certificate ( )

Diploma ( )

Degree ( )

Others \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is your teaching experience in year?

5 years and below ( )

6 -10 year( )

11- 15 year ( )

16 and above ( )

5. Are you trained as a preschool teacher?

Yes ( ) No ( )

6. If not trained as preschool teacher, what did you study?

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**SECTION B:**

1. Perception of preschool teachers’ towards the concept of play

**Direction:-**The following are statements about your perception on play concept. Please rate from strongly agree to strongly disagree by ticking (√) which most closely represents your opinion using the following 5 point scales.

Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1).

No	Items	Agreement				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Play is fun.					
2	Play is freedom of choice.					
3	Play is voluntary.					
4	Play is a natural instinct.					
5	Play involves positive emotions and active engagement.					
6	Play is process oriented					
7	Play is hands on activity					
8	Play is self oriented					
9	Play is naturally motivated					
10	Play is child’s work					

2. Perception of preschool teachers’ about the benefits of play-based instruction.

**Direction:-**The following are statements about benefits of play based instruction. Please rate from strongly agree to strongly disagree by ticking (√) which most closely represents your opinion using the following 5 point scales. Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1).

No	Items	Agreement				
		5	4	3	2	1
11	Children learn from play activities.					
12	Play-based learning promotes Children’s cognitive development.					
13	Play-based learning promotes Children’s social development.					
14	play-based learning promotes Children’s language development					
15	play- based learning promotes Children’s physical development.					

3. How do preschool teachers see their roles in promoting learning through play.

**Direction:-**The following are statements about teachers' role in promoting learning through play. Please rate from strongly agree to strongly disagree by ticking (√) which most closely represents your opinion using the following 5 point scales. Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1).

No	Items	Agreement				
		5	4	3	2	1
16	I have knowledge in planning play based activities for children's learning.					
17	I have seen my role in promoting learning through play as guiding children's behavior.					
18	I have seen my role in promoting learning through play, be a role model for children.					
19	I have seen my role in promoting learning through play, demonstrating mutual respect among children..					
20	I have seen my role in promoting learning through play, be playmate and friend with children.					
21	I have seen my role in promoting learning through play, as a facilitator for children play.					
22	I have seen my role in promoting learning through play, as observer.					
23	I have seen my role in promoting learning through play, as evaluator.					

4. Factors affecting preschool teachers' implementation of play-based learning in their classroom.

**Direction:-**The following are statements about factors affecting preschool teachers' implementation of play-based learning in their classroom. Please indicate your answer to the following statements by putting "√" among the options. No (N), Yes (Y)

No	Items	Scale	
		Yes	No
24	I have ever been challenged when I implement the play based		

	instruction.		
25	I have lack of outdoor space when I implement the play based instruction.		
26	I have lack of knowledge on creating a playful classroom.		
27	I have lack of skills on using the play materials .		
28	I have lack of support from the school administer.		
29	I have lack of time on creating a playful classroom.		
30	I have lack of training on creating a playful classroom.		
31	I have lack of safety condition for play ground.		
32	I have lack of supply of play materials and equipment.		
33	I have lack of classroom space for play activities.		

### **Semi-Structured Interview for Teachers Participants**

#### **SECTION A**

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee (Title and Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION B: Play-based learning

One of the things I am interested in learning about is how you define “play-based learning.” I would like to hear about your perspective/experience about “play-based learning” in your own words. To do this, I am going to ask you some questions about the key experiences you encountered. If you mention other people, please do not mention names and give the person a pseudonym.

### THE CONCEPTION OF “PLAY-BASED LEARNING”:

1. In your own words, how would you describe your understanding of what “play-based learning” is?

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### TEACHERS’ ROLE IN PROMOTING LEARNING THROUGH PLAY:

2. How do you see your role in promoting learning through play?

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### BENEFITS/OPPORTUNITIES:

3. What do you think children could learn from play activities?

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4. How do you think play-based learning promote...

a) Children’s cognitive development? Examples?

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b) Children’s social development? Examples?

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c) Children's language development? Examples?

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d) Children's physical development? Examples?

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**CHALLENGES/OBSTACLES:**

5. Have you ever been challenges when implementing the play based instruction?  
Example?

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6. How do these challenges/obstacles effect on the quality of your provision for play?

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7. Describe any additional experiences that impact on how you incorporate "play" in your classroom.

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Thank you!

## **Annex B Afan Oromo Data Gathering Instrument**

### **Universiitii Finfinneetti**

Dippartimentii Barnoota Idileen Duraa (Early Childhood Care and Education)

### **Gaafannoo Barsiisitaaf Qophaa'e**

Kabajamoo Barsiisa,

Ani Taammiraa Yohaannis kan jedhamu bara 2009 kaasee Univaristii Finfinneetti digrii 2ffaa (MA) barnoota Kunuunsa Daa'immanii fi Barnoota Isaanii (Early Childhood Care and Education) barachaa kan ture yoo ta'u, yeroo ammaa kana qorannoo eebbaaf hojjachaa jira. Qorannoon kunis “ **Akka Godina Gujiitti Sakatta'iinsa Ilaalcha Barsiisaan Mala Baru-Barsiisuu Tapha Irratti Hunda'ee irratti Qabu Manneen Barnoota Dhuunfaa Barnoota Idileen Duraa (Kindergarten) Filataman Keessatti**” kan jedhu irratti kan gaggeessu yoo ta'u, isinis sababuma kanaaf filatamtaniirtu. Kaayyoon qorannoo kanaa inni guddaan ilaalcha barsiisonni mala baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee irratti qaban walqabate, ciminootaa fi hanqinoota barsiisota barnoota idileen duraa barsiisan bira jiru sakatta'uun adda baasuun si'aayinaan barachuu daa'immanii dabaluun lammii gahumsa qabu horachuufi. Dabalataan danqaawwan mala baruu-barsiisuu kana hojiirra oolchuuf barsiisota mudatan yoo jiraatan adda baasuun qaama furmaata kennuuf kallattii furmaataa akeekuudha. Kanaaf, qorannoo kana keessatti hirmaattanii deebiin isin dhugaa lafa jiru irratti hundooftanii kennitan argannoo qorannichaa baay'ee kan gargaaru waan ta'eef yeroo deebii filattan hunda haqa jiru irratti hundooftanii akka naaf guuttan kabajaa isin gaafadha. Kana deebisuu keessaniif wanti guddaan isin argattan yoo jiraate akka nama dhuunfatti anarraa galata guddaa kan qabdan yoo ta'uu, akka ogeessa fi abbaa barnootaatti rakkinnicha mata duree kanaan walqabatee jiru kana akka furamuuf kallattii kaa'amu keessatti gahee keessan taphachuu kan isiniif carraa kennuudha. Odeeffannoon isin guuttan dhimma qorannoo kanaaf qofa kan ooluu fi qaama biroof dabarfamee kan hin kennamne ta'uu dursee ibsaa yeroo keessan naaf kennuun gaafannoo kana guutuu keessaniif hedduu galatoomaa.

'Departments of Early Childhood Care and Education'

Taammiraat Yohaannis Lakk. Bil.0916115830

## I: Odeeffannoo Durduubee

**Ajaja 1:** Gaaffii Armaan Gadiitiif Deebii Keessan Sanduuqa Kenname Keessatti “X” Godhi.

1. Koorniyaa Keessan 1) Dhiira  2) Dubara
2. Sadarkaa Barnootaa Keessan:
  - 1) Sartifikeetii kan qabu
  - 2) Dippiloomaa kan qabu
  - 3) Digrii kan qabu
3. Umrii Keessan: 1) 25 fi achii gadi  2) 26-34  3) 35-44  4) 45 fi isaan oli
4. Muuxannoo Barsiisummaa irratti qabdan: 1) Waggaa 5 fi isaa gadi  2) Waggaa 6-10  3) Waggaa 11-15  4) Waggaa 16 fi isaan oli
5. Barnoota idileen duraa leenjitani Jirtu? Eeyyeen  Lakkii
6. Yoo hin leenjinee maaliin leenjitani jirtu?

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## II: Akka Barsiisaa Barnoota Idileen Duraatti “Tapha Ijoollee” akkamitti hubbattu?

**Ajaja 2:** Kabajamoo barsiisaa himoota 1-10 jiraniif Iskeelota shanan kennaman keessaa kan filattan jallatti mallattoo “X” gochuun agarsiisaa.

5 = Ciminnaan itti waligala;  4 = Itti waligala;  3 = Hin murteessuu;  2 = Itti wali hin galu;  1 = Ciminnaan itti wali hin galu;

T.L	Yaadota barsiisaan ni qaabaata jedhamee yaadamu	Iskeelii Fillannoo				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Taphini ijoolleef gammachuudha.					
2	Taphini filannoo bilisaati.					
3	Taphini fedhiirratti hunda’a.					
4	Taphini uumamaadha.					
5	Taphini miira gaarii fi hirmaannaa ho’aa of keessatti hammataa.					
6	Taphini adeemsa ofi qaba.					
7	Taphini hirmaannaa qaamaa barbaada.					
8	Taphini fedhii keessaatiin qajeelfama.					
9	Taphini uumamaan daa’imman keessatti kaka;umsa uma.					
10	Taphini ijoolleef hojiidha.					

**III: Akka Barsiisaa Barnoota Idileen Duraatti “Faayidaa Mala baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda’ee daa’immaniif qabu ” akkamitti hubbattu?**

**Ajaja 3:** Kabajamoo barsiisaa himoota 11-15 jiraniif Iskeelota shanan kennaman keessaa kan filattan jallatti mallattoo “X” gochuun agarsiisaa.

5 = Ciminnaan itti waligala;  4 = Itti waligala;  3 = Hin murteessuu;  2 = Itti wali hin galu;  1 = Ciminnaan itti wali hin galu;

No	Yaadota barsiisaan ni qaabaata jedhamee yaadamu <input type="checkbox"/>	Iskeelii Fillannoo				
		5	4	3	2	1
11	Daa'imman tapha ofitiin barachuu ni danda'u.					
12	Malli baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee dagaagina sammuu daa'immaniif faayidaa qaba.					
13	Malli baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee dagaagina miira hawaasummaa daa'immaniif faayidaa qaba.					
14	Malli baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee dagaagina afaanii daa'immaniif faayidaa qaba.					
15	Malli baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee dagaagina qaamaa daa'immaniif faayidaa qaba.					

**IV: Akka Barsiisaa Barnoota Idileen Duraatti “Gahe keessan Mala baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda’ee keessatti akkamitti ilaaltu ” akkamitti hubbattu?**

**Ajaja 4:** Kabajamoo barsiisaa himoota 16-23 jiraniif Iskeelota shanan kennaman keessaa kan filattan jallatti mallattoo “X” gochuun agarsiisaa.

5 = Ciminnaan itti waliigala;  4 = Itti waliigala;  3 = Hin murteessuu;  2 = Itti wali hin galu;  1 = Ciminnaan itti walii hin galu;

No	Yaadota barsiisaan ni qaabaata jedhamee yaadamu <input type="checkbox"/>	Iskeelii Fillannoo				
		5	4	3	2	1
16	Barachuu barattootaaf gochaalee taphaa karoorsuu irratti ogummaa barbaachiisuu nan qaba.					
17	Mala baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee keessatti gahee koo akka amala daa'immani qajeelchuutti ilaala.					
18	Mala baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee keessatti gahee koo akka nama fakkeenyuummaa gaarii daa'immaniif agarsiisuutti ilaala.					
19	Mala baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee keessatti gaheen koo waldhageetti fi walkabaju daa'imman gidduutti akka uumamuu					

	gochudha.					
20	Mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee keessatti gaheen koo daa'imman akka hiriya ofitti na fudhatan gochudha.					
21	Mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee keessatti gahee koo akka hala mijeessaa daa'immanitti ilaala.					
22	Mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee keessatti gahee koo akka nama isaan daawwatutti ilaala.					
23	Mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha irratti hunda'ee keessatti gahee koo akka nama daa'imman madaalutti ilaala.					

**V. Manneen barnootaa idileen duraa keessatti wantoonni hojiirra oolmaa mala baruu barsiiisuu tapha irratti hunda'etiif danqaa ykn gufuu ta'an maal fa'i?**

**Ajaja 5:** Kabajamoo barsiisaa himoota 24-33 jiraniif Iskeelota lamaan kennaman keessaa kan filattan jallatti mallattoo "X" gochuun agarsiisaa. Eeyyeen  Lakkii

No	Yaadota barsiisaan ni qaabaata jedhamee yaadamu	Iskeelii Fillannoo	
		Eeyyen	Lakkii
24	Yeroo mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf yaaluu danqaalee baay'eettu na mudata.		
25	Yeroo mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf yaaluu dhiphinni teessoo dareen alaa jiru danqaa natti ta'e jira.		
26	Mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf hanqinna dandeetti nan qaba.		
27	Mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf hanqinna dandeetti meeshaalee taphaa fayyadamuu irratti nan qaba.		
28	Mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf hanqinni deeggarsaa bulchiinsa mana baruumsa na mudatee jira.		
29	Mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf hanqinni yeroo na mudatee jira.		
30	Mala baruu-barsiiisuu tapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf hanqinna leenjii nan qaba.		
31	Mala baruu-barsiiisuutapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf haalli mijataan hin jiru.		
32	Mala baruu-barsiiisuutapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf hanqinni meeshaalee deeggarsaa ni jira.		
33	Mala baruu-barsiiisuutapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuuf dhiphinni daree barnootaa danqaa natti ta'e jira.		

## Gaaffii Afaanii Barsiisotaaf

### Kutaa I: Odeefannoo Dur-duubee

Kabajamoo barsiisaa waa'ee keessan fkf sadarkaa barumsaa, baay'ina yeroo barsiiftanii, baay'ina daa'imman barsiiftanii, muuxannoo hojii barsiisummaa irratti qabdan fa'a natti himtuu?

**Kutaa-II:** Yaada isin yad-rimee “Mala baruu-barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'e” irratti qabdan:

1. Akka barsiisaa oolmaa daa'immanitti mala baruu barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'e akkamitti ibsitu?

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**Kutaa-III:** Yaada isin gahe barsiisaa mala baruu barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'e keessatti qabu irratti qabdan:

2. Akka barsiisaa oolmaa daa'immanitti mala baruu barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'e keessatti gahe keessan akkamitti ilaaltu?

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**Kutaa-IV:** Yaada isin faayidaa malli baruu barsiisuu daa'immaniif qabu irratti qabdan:

3. Akka barsiisaa oolmaa daa'immanitti daa'imman gocha taphaa irraa barachuu ni danda'u?

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4. Faayidaa malli baruu barsiisuu dagaagina daa'imman wajjin walqabate;

a) Dagaagina sammuu daa'immanitiif faayidaa qaba? fakkeenyaaf?

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b) Dagaagina miira hawaasummaa daa'immanitiif faayidaa qaba? Fakeenyaaf?

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c) Dagaagina afaanii daa'immanitiif faayidaa qaba? Fakeenyaaf?

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d) Dagaagina qaamaa daa'immaniif faayidaa qaba? Fakeenyaaf?

**Kutaa-V:** Yaada isin danqaalee mala baruu-barsiisuu tapha ittatti hunda'e hojiirra oolchuu irratti mudatan qabdan.

5. Akka barsiisaa oolmaa daa'immanitti mala baruu barsiisuu hojiirra oolchuuf yoommuu yaalatan danqaaleen isin mudate jira? Fakeenyaaf?

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6. Danqaaleen kun hagam hojiirra oolma baruu barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'e irratti dhiibbaa uuman?

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7. Yaada dabalataa danqaalee hojiirra oolma mala baruu barsiisuu tapha irratti hunda'e irratti jiran yoo jiraatan nu ibasaa?

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Thank you!

## Annex C Observation Checklist

Addis Ababa University

College of Education and Behavioral Studies

Center for Early Childhood Care and Education

Name of Kindergarten \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Observation \_\_\_\_\_

1. A checklist for implementation of the teaching method in the classroom

No	Items	Clearly evident	Needs attention	Remarks
1	Teaching-learning activities are organized around central themes			
2	All children are included equally in all activities to the best of their interests			
3	The teacher uses different strategies to guide children's learning			
4	The teacher lovingly guide children, show respect and cooperation			
5	The classroom run smoothly with order and clear purpose			

2. A checklist for classroom and outdoor spaces, materials and equipment organization in sample kindergarten.

No	Items	Clearly evident	Needs attention	Remarks
	Classroom Aspects			
1	The classroom space provides an orderly			

	arrangement of well defined work areas			
2	The centres are well equipped with necessary materials and equipment according to specific purpose			
3	Children's books are displayed at child-eye level			
4	Materials and equipment are accessible, easy to use and invite self-serving approach			
5	The arrangement enhance the use of materials, methods and time			
6	Tables, chair/benches and shelves are all child-sized and comfortable to use			
7	The classroom is clean, pleasant and stimulating			
8	The windows, doors, walls and decorations are all suitable			
	Outdoor Aspects			
1	Adequate outdoor space is provided per child			
2	The space is safe and secure			
3	The supply of materials and equipment provides ample opportunity for play			
4	Play materials and equipment are selected to suit children's developmental level			
5	Play materials and equipment are durable			
6	The arrangement of play materials and equipment enhance children's individual cooperative play activities			

3. A checklist for adequacy of materials in the activity centers

No	Materials	Adequate	Inadequate	Remarks
1	Literacy materials(various books)			

2	Construction materials (block, building, sets,etc)			
3	Self expressive materials (toys, musical, instrument, dress up closes, dolls,etc)			
4	Exploratory materials (puzzles, matching games, playing cards,etc)			
5	Manipulative materials (markers, pencils, etc)			
6	Natural materials (leaves, sands, rock, water, etc)			

4. A checklist for the availability of some basic outdoor play equipment

No	Equipment	Available	Not available	Remarks
1	Balance			
2	Merry-go-round			
3	Swinging			
4	Slide			
5	Climbing frame			
6	Crawling tunnel			
7	Tricycle			

5. Number of teachers, Children and Sections

1. Total number of teachers \_\_\_\_\_

2. Total number of children \_\_\_\_\_

3. Total number of section \_\_\_\_\_

**Observer's comments:**

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