

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**• • COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Preschool Teachers' Perception and Practices about the  
Psychosocial Needs of Early Childhood**

**Selamawit Tesfaye**

June 2015  
Addis Ababa

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN SOCIAL WORK TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

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## ABSTRACT

*This study aimed at investigating the perceptions and practices preschool teachers have to the psychosocial needs of early childhood, the strategies they apply for supporting the children, and challenges encountered not to give support. The study took on qualitative design and a case study research methodology. Data were collected from multiple sources that included 11 preschool teachers who were purposefully selected from two preschools through in-depth interview, observation, and document review. Then the qualitative data content analysis was conducted. The results indicated that teachers had awareness on the different psychosocial problems of early childhood from their experience, not from the training. But teachers did not know how to help the children in organized way and some of the problems that children have are beyond their capacity to help. The teaching strategies that most teachers raised to give psychosocial support are play, stories ,extra care and extra work, counseling the student and partnership with parents. The challenges for not to give support to early childhood that the teachers said were lack of time, knowledge and motivation. And the result of this research implies the recruitment of other professionals like social workers and special need educators and also the training of early child hood teachers in preschools. The findings of this study implied for social work research on having longitudinal studies on the psycho social support that should be made to early childhood*

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

#### Background of the study

At birth an infant's brain has about 100 billion nerve cells -nerve cells that have not yet formed the critical connections that determine a child's emotional, social and intellectual makeup. Research shows that these critical connections are primarily formed by attentive care and nurturing stimulation from the outside world (*How Are the Children,1999*)? Since parents are a young child's first teachers, they can deeply affect the "wiring" of the brain through interaction with their infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Other primary caregivers, including teachers, grandparents, or other family members, also deeply affect the young child's brain development through their interactions ( Winter, 2010).Repetitive, positive experiences like singing, cooing, touching, holding, talking and reading are essential expressions of love that positively affect the way a young child's brain develops.

According to a guide produced by the Michigan department of community of health the other essential thing to the young child is the experience of communicating a need or a want – for example, to be picked up or played with – and having that need or want promptly met. Simple interactions such as these help young children to learn that they can have a positive impact on their world. Young children are encouraged to communicate through these interactions and begin to learn the basics of "cause and effect" thinking. The foundation for understanding the consequences of choices and action in the preschool years begins with these simple interactions between the young child and his or her primary caregivers.

Erikson's theory of psychosocial development is one of the best-known theories of personality. He has eight stages of life. Each stage in Erikson's theory is concerned with becoming competent in an area of life. If the stage is handled well, the person will feel a sense of mastery. If the stage is managed poorly, the person will emerge with a sense of inadequacy. In each stage, Erikson believed people experience a conflict that serves as a turning point in development. In Erikson's view, these conflicts are centered on either developing a psychological quality or failing to develop that quality. During these times, the potential for personal growth is high, but so is the potential for failure. (Life span development, n.d)

Erikson described early childhood as a period of "vigorous unfolding." Once children have a sense of autonomy, they become less contrary than they were as toddlers. Their energies are freed for tackling the psychological conflict of the preschool years: **initiative versus guilt**. As the word *initiative* suggests, young children have a new sense of purposefulness. They are eager to tackle new tasks, join in activities with peers, and discover what they can do with the help of adults. And they also make strides in conscience development. The preschool years are, indeed, a time when children develop a confident self-image, more effective control over their emotions, new social skills, the foundations of morality, and a clear sense of themselves as boy or girl. (Life span development, n.d)

Woodhead, (2009) found that teachers have major roles in creating their student's positive socialization, academic curiosity, rigor and their emotional well being. Teachers can communicate lifesaving messages to children, model caring adult behavior and have the potential to create classroom climates that help children thrive and develop. As Hattie(2003) explained teachers account for about 30% of the variance in students' achievement. It is what teachers

know, do, and care about which is very powerful in the learning equation of specially that of early childhood.

Modern early childhood education in Ethiopia is predominantly provided by the private sector followed by non-government organizations, religious institutions, etc. (ILO, 2012, Woldehanna, 2011) the government has a very little involvement in this level of education. Preschool education and the budget fixed by the government for it is not enough, although it's dominated by fee charging nursery schools and kindergarten which is set in the needs of middle class parents. Due to this cause enrollment rate has been very small. For example, in 2008/09, the gross enrollment rate of the country was only about 4.2% and concentrated in urban areas, mainly in Addis Ababa (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2010).

Though there isn't enough public awareness on the importance of pre-school education, its development nationwide is very rife, it has shown change. For instance, in 1994 E.C, some 341,315 children were enrolled in kindergarten education. Of which, 118,986 were male and the rest 165,738 were female as compared to the result in the year 2003 E.C. 382,741 children enrolled to K.G. of which 197,671 male and 185,070 female.(Woldehanna,2011)

As a social work student on child concentration I looked back the years when I was a teacher and the perception and practices that I have with the children. I now understand that some of the behavioral problems that I perceived were caused by development or were due to many reasons that are not solely related to the students. But I even remember some students sent home due to these problems. Since what I have experienced is on elementary public school by which the age of the children able them at least to tell what they wanted and what they meant to do. And I wonder how teachers perceived the psychosocial problems of those preschoolers who

have a hard time in speaking and expressing their feeling. And that motivated me to explore preschool teachers' perception about the psychosocial problems of early childhood.

### **Statement of the problem**

Teaching is a unique occupation in its emphasis on establishing long-term, meaningful connections with the “clients” of the work environment (i.e., students) at a depth that may not be found in other professions. Workers in health professions (e.g., physicians, nurses, psychologists) or in business settings (e.g., sales representatives) may form deep and meaningful relationships with patients or clients, but rarely do workers in these fields spend the number of hours that most teachers spend with their students. Considerable research has shown that perceptions of teachers' autonomy supportive behaviors influence students' intrinsic motivation at elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels (e.g., Daniels & Shumow, 2002, Kagan, 1999 ).

What early teachers believe about psycho social support (i.e., teacher belief systems) has important implications for their practice .For example, teacher belief systems have been shown to be a major determinant of teacher classroom decision making (Daniels & Shumow, 2002) and are responsible for classroom climate and socialization processes (Birch & Ladd, 1997). This qualitative case study is important and needed for several reasons. First, a gap exists in the psycho social need of early childhood literature where the perspectives of the teachers are integrated to understand the preschool teachers' psycho social support. Second the available literature has only focused on the needs to strengthen early childhood education (e.g Kasahun,2013, Woldehanna, 2011) Literatures that relate teachers' perception and psycho social support are based on high school and middle age school (Abeba, Misganaw, & Solomon, 2006)

Third those studies that deal with preschoolers deal with those children that were thought to have behavioral problems (Teshome ,2012).

### **Research Question**

This study has addressed the following research questions:

- How do pre-school teachers perceive the psychosocial needs of early childhood?
- How does pre-school teachers' perception about the psychosocial needs of early childhood influence their teaching practices?
- What successful teaching practices of pre-school teachers can be identified regarding to the psychosocial support of early childhood?
- What are the challenges of pre-school teachers with regards to the psychosocial support of children of early childhood?

### **Objective of the study**

#### **General objective**

This study explores preschool teachers' perception and practice about the psychosocial need of children at early childhood in Addis Ababa Bole sub-city.

#### **Specific objective**

The study more specifically addresses the following specific objectives

1. To investigate how pre-school teachers perceive the psychosocial needs of early childhood.
2. To explain how pre-school teachers' perception about the psychosocial needs of early childhood influence their teaching practices.

3. To identify successful teaching practices of pre-school teachers can be identified regarding to the psychosocial support of early childhood.
4. To investigate challenges of pre-school teachers with regards to the psychosocial support of children of early childhood.

### **Significance of the study**

This study aimed to contribute to the literature by analyzing early childhood teachers' perception and practice on psychosocial needs to their students through interviews and observation of the teachers. The data from this research may underscore the need to recruit other professionals e.g school social workers in schools having early childhood education. Educators may also use this data to improve teacher education programs and professional development. The finding of this study will also help as a baseline data for those who are interested to make further research in this regard.

### **Delimitation of the study**

This study was delimited to the private school since the researcher wanted to consider only the psychosocial problems of children apart from the socio economic status. And also preschool education is largely occupied by the private sector. The other delimitation of this study was only teacher's perception and practice of students from three to six is researched and didn't include children's experience before three.

### **Definition of terms**

*Preschool Teachers:* Teachers who teach between 3 and 6 years-olds children

*Early childhood:* children who are between 3 and 6 years

*psychosocial* emotion personality and social expectation and interaction

*Psychosocial problem*: it is a crisis that children face due to their psychological(e.g. thought, emotion and behavior)and also the social experience(e.g. *relationship, tradition and culture*).

*Psychosocial support*: it is a support system that the teachers give for psychosocial problems.

*Perceptions*: teachers' understanding.

*Developmental change*: biological, psychological and emotional changes that occur in human beings from 3 -6.

*Psychosocial need*: *needs* that are useful for the well being of children.



## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature review

#### Introduction

This chapter consists of reviewed literatures about early childhood, teachers' beliefs or perceptions, psychosocial needs and developmental changes of preschoolers, psychosocial support and strategies and early childhood teaching in Ethiopia.

#### Early Childhood Education

Early childhood care and education vary in meaning around the world (Swiniarski, Breitborde, & Murphy, 1999, cited in Odongo. 2008) and be a sign of, to some degree, the governmental position to afford to begin providing education. The more industrialized nations consider early childhood to be the period from birth through age 8 (UNESCO & UNICEF, 2012), while developing nations focus on birth through age 6 (Spotlight 2012; UNICEF, 2002). The general interest in early childhood education reflects specific cultural attitudes towards childhood and children (Graves et al., 1996cited on Mwonga &Wanyama 2012). Children may be viewed as growing plants that need nurturing or as natural and national resources that need investments to ensure the future of a society and its ability to compete in the global economy (Spotlight ,2012).

#### The Importance of Early Childhood Education

Recent studies showed that babies and young children are born with the capacity to understand (Nutbrown, 2006). In other words, their brains are ready to learn when they came to the world and during this process; both the environment and genes take an important role which in turn, builds the brain (*The Science of Early Childhood Development*, 2007). This view

regarding children, perceiving them as competent learners rather than empty slates changed the disciplines' way of looking to the education of children or early childhood education. The readiness of the children to learn even when they are just born triggered the ideas of necessity of early childhood education both for the individual child and for the society as a whole, in broader sense. Longitudinal studies have showed that early childhood education is the period when children's development was rapid and when children were affected more from the environmental factors. In addition, two thirds of the brain development was completed between the years of 0-4 (Nutbrown, 2006). Therefore, education in this crucial period creates significance for the development of children.

In a study conducted by *The Science of Early Childhood Development*, (2007) and National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2007) it was found out that getting an early childhood education provided an increase in the IQ level of children in the short term and in the long term; it increased the child's school achievement. Early childhood education becomes more beneficial especially, for the children coming from low socio-economic background. Loeb & Rumberger (2007) identified benefits of being exposed to early education for the children coming from low-income families as cognitive growth and school readiness. Besides children from low socio-economic background, good quality of early childhood education provides early reading and math skills to children from high and middle socio-economic status. Early education cultivates children in terms of socialization rather than purely academic enhancement such as math and reading. As Vegas & Santibáñez.(2010) elaborated that children learn cooperation through education in child care centers and such skills help them to obey rules and stay safe in a society. Regarding socialization, parents also share the same perspective.

In terms of children, in addition to social emotional and academic benefits, early education provides them a better future in the long term such as preparing them for school and increase in high school graduation rates. Inevitably, knowing the benefits of early education for the individuals in the short and long term brings the discussion of early childhood necessity in society as a whole.

Governments start to put early childhood education into their agendas, especially, after it was proved that good quality of early education has long lasting effects on the children's later life productivity for the society. To illustrate, Association for the Development of Education in Africa, ( 2009) distinguished that children received early education are less likely to involve in crime and more likely to complete their high school education and get into a college education.

Similar to the above study, others describe that the Cost, Quality and Child outcome study indicated that getting high quality early childhood education makes children become successful students and citizens in their later lives (Currie 2000, Chase et al 2009). On the other hand, according to the World Bank Report (2005), between 0-6 years of age, each 1 dollar invested on children will be returned back as 7.6 dollars in the future as a result of the productivity gained through early childhood education. Parallel to this study, Association for the Development of Education in Africa,( 2009) indicated that rate of the return of the investment in people in early childhood period is higher compared to investment in other periods of human life.

In addition, research results supporting that earlier the children are exposed to good quality of experience, the more the connections in their brains develop, triggered early childhood education to gain greater importance in the society. Such results opened the way to start education of brains as early as possible. In one of the study conducted by Thomas & Knowland (2012), it was elaborated that developmental flexibility of brain wiring or its ability to change

due to influences of experience were affected by both genes and early environmental factors. So, the necessity occurs for educators, policy makers and others in the society helping children to construct their initial brain architecture by providing education for them in their early ages. Findings of the longitudinal and cross-sectional studies (Lory E.etal(no date) related the benefits of early childhood education provided logical reasons to emphasize on early education for a better society. Besides all, in the last twenty years, socio-cultural changes such as getting into the information age and changes in the world order through globalization triggered early childhood education to be concern of many societies.

That early learning facilitates later learning and success; just like early failure leads to later failure is largely validated in economic and educational research (Boocock, 1995; Heckman, 1999). Jaycox (1992) argues that education and economic development are positively correlated, making education intrinsic to development. Thus, the potential long-term social and personal benefits of children's cognitive and social development (Barnett, 1995; Gonzalez-Mena, 2000) have inspired greater interest in early childhood education and care.

### **Roles of Teachers in Early Childhood Education**

Of course, all of those working in the early years whatever their job title and role must be care givers as well as educators, providing the warmth and love children need to develop emotionally alongside and as part of planned and spontaneous learning opportunities. Overall, practitioners must bring these aspects of care and education together to provide the very best experience for each and every child. In other words, care and education must not be mutually exclusive all learning can take place in a caring atmosphere that responds to children's all round needs, and a caring atmosphere can also be one in which young children learn and develop. (Nut brown 2006 P.39)

~~~~~ There are multiple roles of the early childhood educators and these roles are not exclusive of each other, but are complex, varied and interdependent (Kline, O'Connor, Vakil & Welton, 2009). To illustrate, knowing how children develop and learn, building family and community relationship, using assessment responsibly, teaching to promote children's learning and

becoming a professional in the field are among the roles (Hyson, Morris & Tomlinson, 2009).

According to NAEYC (2001) standards, for serving a good quality of education to children, there is a need to meet those standards. Mastery of how to deliver the subject matter is only one of the teacher's tasks. Knowing the subject matter and being able to facilitate its learning by the learners are two different things. Learning and developing occur in the same person. The developing person has basic needs as well as learning and developmental needs. The teacher's alert responsiveness to how the various needs converge to influence development and learning is vital.

### **Teachers' perception about early childhood**

Smith & Shepard (1988) found that most kindergarten teachers referred to either maturational or environmental influences; only a few explained student development as a complex interaction between the psychological nature of the child and the educational environments provided. A simplistic or restricted view of development may limit teachers' consideration of alternative ways to educate and intervene with children.

Other studies suggest that rather than stressing individual differences in intelligence or personality as a factor in development, teachers believe that family influences are the factor in development. Results of a study showed that parents often explain individual differences in achievement in terms of interactions between genetic and family influences; in contrast, teachers mainly attribute differences to family support (NISACA, 1999 cited on Erden, 2010).

In contrast, several studies have shown that parents embrace multiple theoretical perspectives on child development (ex., constructivist, social learning, psychoanalytic). For example, in one study, mothers accepted more than one possible explanation of a child's described behavior (e.g., McGillicuddy-De Lisi, 1992). That might be important because mothers

who provide more complex explanations of child development have children with higher levels of intelligence (Sameroff, Seifer, Barocas, Zax, & Greenspan, 1987).

In contrast to parents, teachers' developmental perspectives are often simple, inaccurate, and become more stereotyped and pessimistic with experience. However, a few studies indicate that educational programs designed to enlighten teachers can succeed (e.g., teacher's profession; Camilli & Kelley, 2004; Zaslow & Clifford).

Studies indicate that novice teachers' views of children are often inaccurate because they assume that their students possess learning styles, aptitudes, interests, and problems that are similar to their own (Hollingsworth, 1989; Kagan, 1992).

### **Psychosocial needs of early childhood**

The child's experience in the first six years of life has a critical bearing on later development. Young children require good health care, nutrition, warm and sensitive human interactions (particularly with those who care for them) and opportunities for stimulation and learning if they are to thrive and benefit from the opportunities provided in school (Alderman and Engel, 2008). The critical importance of the years three to six years of life for children's development are given different names by educators and psychologists, as briefly presented below, based on their respective areas of emphasis. (life span development)

#### **Names Used by Educators for the age 3 to 6**

The early childhood years is referred as *preschool* age to distinguish it from the time when children are considered old enough, both physically and mentally, to cope with the work they will be expected to do when they begin their formal schooling. Even when children go to nursery school or kindergarten, they are labeled *preschoolers* rather than *schoolchildren*. In the home, day-care center, nursery school, or kindergarten, the pressures and expectations young

children subjected to are very different from those they will experience when they begin their formal education in the first standard. The early childhood years, either in the home or in a preschool, are a time of preparation.

### **Names Used by Psychologists for the age 3 to 6**

A number of different names are used to describe the outstanding characteristics of the psychological development of children during the early years of childhood. One of the most commonly applied names is the *pregang age*, the time when children are learning the foundations of social behavior as a preparation for the more highly organized social life they will be required to adjust to when they enter first standard. Since the major development that occurs during early childhood centers around gaining control over the environment, many psychologists refer to early childhood as the *exploratory age*, a label which implies that children want to know what their environment is, how it works, how it feels, and how they can be a part of it. This includes people as well as inanimate objects. One common way of exploring in early childhood is by asking questions: thus this period is often referred to as the *questioning age*. Imitation of the speech and actions of others are more pronounced during early childhood. For this reason, it is also known as the *imitative age*. However, in spite of this tendency, most children show more creativity in their play during early childhood than at any other time in their lives. For that reason, psychologists also regard it as the *creative age*.

### **Developmental changes during preschool period**

According to Davis (2011) Preschoolers can classify information, and they become aware of cause-and-effect relationships. It is about time they begin to understand the concepts of the past, present, and future. By the end of the preschool years, children may comprehend days of the week. Their vocabulary continues to increase. Preschoolers can speak in sentences and

identify colors, and they enjoy talking. Mistaken perceptions of reality coupled with misconceptions in thinking lead to active fantasies and fears. The greatest fear is that of bodily harm, resulting in fear of the dark or animals. Sex-role identification is occurring. In general they develop in different ways. (Davis, 2011)

### **Psychosocial Development**

The stage of psychosocial development for preschoolers, according to Erikson, is initiative versus guilt. Preschoolers may take on many new experiences, despite not having all of the physical abilities necessary to be successful at everything. Guilt may occur when preschoolers are unable to accomplish a task and believe they have misbehaved. Guiding preschoolers to attempt activities within their capabilities while setting limits is appropriate (Davies, 2011).

### **Moral Development**

Preschoolers continue in the good-bad orientation of the toddler years, but they begin to understand behaviors in terms of what is socially acceptable.

### **Self-Concept Development**

Preschooler feels good about themselves with regard to mastering skills that allow independence (dressing, feeding). During stress, insecurity, or illness, preschoolers may regress to previous immature behaviors or develop habits (nose-picking, bedwetting, thumb-sucking).

### **Social Development**

Preschoolers generally do not exhibit stranger anxiety and have less separation anxiety. However, prolonged separation, such as during hospitalization, can provoke anxiety. Favorite toys and appropriate play should be used to help ease preschoolers' fears. Pretend play is healthy and allows preschoolers to determine the difference between reality and fantasy. Sleep



disturbances frequently occur during early childhood, and problems range from difficulties going to bed to night tremor. On average, preschoolers need about 12 hr of sleep per day.

Young children begin to explore, try out new activities and ask lots of questions. It is normal for children this age to be quite selfish and to fight a lot as they learn to relate to other people. Temper tantrums are still common, and normal. Young children are open to magical ideas and may have imaginary friends.

For the above mentioned psychosocial development teachers are expected to do the following. Allow young children to explore their surroundings within set limits. Give praise rather than criticism. Give honest answers to questions. Encourage creativity and openness and the expression of feeling, including negative feelings like anger and disappointment – but in an acceptable way. Encourage time to play alone and with friends. Organize games together with adults and other children. Encourage children when they show care towards other children.

### **Psycho social support**

Early childhood educators are expected to give psychosocial support to the children they teach integrating the psychological state of the child and the social influences on the children. As Hattie (2003) express effective early childhood teachers attend to the emotional part of teaching and learning.

They respect students as people of worth. They really care about them. They see possible barriers to learning and look for ways of overcoming these barriers. They don't need to dominate the situation. They see themselves as adult guides. The excellent teacher wants to support students to be more and more independent. They find satisfaction in helping students make connections between things. They see students holistically. They take pride in each student's work and their sense of self-efficacy as learners and as persons. They know that the student's life at school is only part of his or her life. Out-of-school events and experiences profoundly influence what the student is able to do in school. (Hattie, 2003 p7)

Effective teaching must be based on understanding the child and the vision of children as active agents in their own education. Understanding the psychosocial needs of children will help teachers to get to know learners as individuals and start to recognize the kinds of tasks that can promote their individual growth and development. Teachers make many decisions that can be informed by an understanding of the context in which children live.

## **Teaching strategies that help as a psychosocial support**

### **Teacher–Child Interactions and Relationships**

American educator, philosopher, psychologist, and theorist John Dewey explored education as a social process and thought that children learn best when they interact in a rich environment with other people (Dewey, 1897 cited on creative curriculum 2010). Supportive relationships with teachers and other adults can also help children overcome the challenges of living in circumstances that put them at risk developmentally and the effects of early negative relationships.(Davies ,2011) Teachers’ verbal directions, physical assistance, and probing questioning help children figure out how to approach learning tasks, improve skills, and acquire knowledge. As a child discusses a problem or task with an adult, the adult supplies language to assist the child. The child gradually internalizes the language, and more mature thinking develops.( Beitchman &Brownlie,2005). High-quality social interactions benefit all children, regardless of family or economic background, and they are associated with the positive development of literacy and other academic skills (Beitchman &Brownlie,2005). Close teacher–child relationships seem to encourage the development of children’s prosocial skills (Birch and Ladd, 1997) . Children who have secure attachment relationships with primary caregivers and teachers have an easier time interacting with peers, forming positive relationships, and being a part of a group. (Birch & Ladd, 1997)

### **Social–Emotional Competence**

Well-known psychologist Erik Erikson explored the cultural and social aspects of development that influence a person's actions and interactions throughout life (Erikson, 1950; Erikson, 1994; Hamre & Pianta, 2001 cited on creative curriculum). Erikson's psychosocial theory, called the "Eight Ages of Man," begins at birth and continues through old age. Each stage builds on the resolution of conflict during earlier stages. During the first six years, children are challenged by the conflicts of *trust vs. mistrust* (infancy), *autonomy vs. shame and doubt* (ages 1–3), and *initiative vs. guilt* (ages 3–6). Erikson described what adults need to provide at each stage in order to help children confront challenges. *Trust* develops when a child's experiences show that the world is safe, reliable, and responsive to his or her needs. Infants who receive consistent and loving care learn to trust. Mistrust develops when infants cry and get inconsistent responses, are not always fed when they are hungry, and are not comforted when they are hurt. *Autonomy*, or independence, is acting with will and control. It involves a sense of one's power that is built on the foundation of trust described in Erikson's first stage of development. Children develop autonomy when adults give them a chance to do things on their own. When adults make excessive demands or criticize in ways that devalue children's efforts, children learn to doubt their abilities. Developing *initiative* means responding positively to challenges, taking on responsibilities, enjoying accomplishments, and becoming purposeful. In this stage, children direct their energy toward tasks and begin to develop a sense of future possibilities. Children with initiative are eager to try new materials and ideas. Guilt can set in when adults belittle children and their work.

Teachers play a key role in helping children develop positive peer relationships. Creative learning activities, such as dramatic play, block play, and open-ended art activities, provide

opportunities for children to build positive relationships with peers (Odongo, 2007). Children are more likely to use prosocial behaviors when their teachers use positive guidance strategies and a curriculum that emphasizes the value of community. Emotional understanding is critical to positive social relationships and peer acceptance. The more adults acknowledge children's emotional reactions and explain emotional signals, the better children become at interpreting them. (creative curriculum , n.d)

### **Constructive, Purposeful Play**

Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist and developmental theorist, recognized the importance of play and its role in the development of logical thinking (Piaget, 1972 cited on creative curriculum). According to Piaget, play serves many purposes and provides an excellent vehicle for learning. By handling many different materials, children learn to observe, compare, sort, and sequence. Their knowledge grows as they experiment, make discoveries, and modify their current thinking to incorporate new insights. A recent study supports Piaget's theory that play is linked to learning. When 4-year-olds were provided opportunities to engage in high amounts of child-initiated, free-choice activities supported by a variety of equipment and materials to explore, the study showed that at age 7 those children outperformed their peers who did not have such opportunities on cognitive and language tasks (Montie, Xiang & Schweinhart, 2006 cited on creative curriculum). As children play, they make rules, use symbols, and create narratives. found that children who engaged in high levels of sociodramatic play in preschool performed better in later school years than peers whose preschool play was less mature (Kim, 1999). Complex sociodramatic play is linked to the development of self-regulatory competence and may be particularly beneficial for children who are impulsive or less advanced in self-regulatory development (Elias & Berk, 2002 cited on ceartive curriculum).

Private speech, or self-talk, is an important part of developing self-regulation skills. Playing with story-related dolls during children's enactment of stories was found to aid narrative development and narrative recall (Kim, 1999). Play also is associated with children's positive social skills and approaches to learning.

Play is linked to oral language development (Davies, 1998). When adults enter children's play thoughtfully, they can scaffold children's learning and promote more advanced levels of cognition and language (Odongo, 2007).

### **Interacting With the Environment**

Teachers must observe carefully in order to plan engaging educational experiences that help children develop new skills and learn more about the world. Piaget theorized that children construct knowledge through action. (creative curriculum, 2010). Their knowledge grows as they experiment, make discoveries, and modify their earlier way of thinking to incorporate new insights. High-quality physical environments may be especially important for children who experience social and economic risks and may serve as a protective factor for these children. (Andershed & Farnigton, 2012) Over the past 20 years, scientists have studied the neurological aspects of how children learn. These studies confirm that early experiences affect brain development. Nurturing, stable relationships and linguistically and cognitively rich environments contribute positively to healthy brain development and learning. (Thomas & Newland, n.d)

By handling materials of different sizes, shapes, and colors, children eventually learn to sort, classify, compare, and sequence. While more recent research shows that child development is more fluid and more tied to specific content knowledge than Piaget's stages suggest, it confirms that learning takes place through positive interactions between and among children and

adults as children interact in their physical environments. The layout of the physical environment helps children know what is important, what they are to do, and how they might do it. It can support or undermine children's attention and persistence. It can contribute to children's self-regulation when it is arranged so that children can function independently as they select activities and obtain and put away materials

### **Partnerships with Families**

Dewey wrote about how the values and cultures of children's families and communities extend into life at school (Clifford, et al., 2005; Hamre & Pianta, 2001 cited on creative curriculum). To ensure continuity and give meaning to what is learned at school, teachers must become very familiar with children's everyday lives. Dewey thought that children's home lives must be considered when teachers plan their curriculum.

Positive teacher-family relationships are reciprocal and characterized by mutual respect and the exchange of ideas (Fagbeminiyi ,2011 ). Reciprocal relationships are crucial in helping families support their children's enthusiasm for and engagement in learning (Mooney, 2000 cited on creative curriculum). A positive relationship is particularly important when a family's home culture and socioeconomic background differ from that of the teacher (Nye ,Turner ,&Schwartz 2006).

Family participation involves both formal and informal connections between families and their children's educational programs. Families are not likely to be open to parent education or other involvement unless teachers establish positive relationships and engage families in supportive and culturally responsive conversations Family-school bonds can enhance children's problem-solving skills and social competency, and reduce aggression at home and at the educational program (Mooney, 2000 Cited on creative curriculum).

## **An Overview of Early Childhood Education in Ethiopia**

In Ethiopia there is a saying “yezare abebawoch yenege firewoch” which means to say that early childhood is a period that children are like flowers and at the end they will be just like fruits. Unfortunately, there are major risks to sound child development in Ethiopia as a whole Africa, largely as a consequence of low levels of productivity and economic development, structural inequality, political mismanagement and conflict. The risks include child stunting, iodine and iron deficiencies, as well as low levels of cognitive and socio-emotional stimulation (Walker et al., 2007).

Formally, compulsory education in Ethiopia starts at age seven in primary schools. Nevertheless, children can join pre-primary schools between age three to six depending on the availability of the program in their areas. Early childhood education is structured in the form of kindergartens and predominantly provided by the private sector, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), communities and faith-based organizations. The government has very limited intervention on this regard. To be precise, in its 2007 report, the Ministry of Education (MOE) states that the government does not run preschool education program essentially for two main reasons. While one explanation, as stated in the document, is to enhance the involvement of the private sector in the education sector, the second justification is to maximize the government’s effort in the other levels of the sector. The report concludes that as the result of government’s limited intervention, enrollment rate for preschool education has remained very low, especially in rural areas of the country.

In addition, primary education is currently taken as a substitute for preschool education in most parts of the county. That is, majority students are enrolled to primary education without having any exposure to preschool program.

### **Preschool teachers in Ethiopia**

In Ethiopia about a quarter of teachers are not qualified for the level at which they are expected to teach and the available qualified teachers are not evenly distributed across regions. (ILO, 2012)

Preschool teacher education in Ethiopia is a shared responsibility between the government, NGO and private sectors (ILO 2012) .According to Kasahun(2013) Preschool teachers training started in 1986 in Addis Ababa with three month training and a short practicum period. And he said that still this field is in question about the quality of the training starting from the beginning. As a result, the government is making an effort to shift away from private colleges and focus instead on expanding and capacitating state-owned training colleges in various regions of the country to train early years professionals at the diploma level, both in regular and in-service training schemes. However, this is just a plan, and has not yet been put into effect (Kasahun, 2013). ).

Policy gaps in turn have an impact on access and quality issues ,as for example in Ethiopia which lacks a national framework of policy and support and where less than 5 percent of the appropriate age group has access to preschool education which is exclusively limited to major towns.(ILO,2012)

During their service time, teachers are given in-service training to upgrade themselves during summer time. And also other in-service programs are designed for those teachers who are teaching in public schools by the government. But private school teachers are not entitled. ( Kasahun,2013)

Taking teacher qualification as one of the quality indicators the 2004/05 data shows that 21.2 % of teachers are not trained to teach at this level. The share of untrained teachers was 26%



in 2003/04, which shows an increase of 4.8 percentage points in the share of trained teachers in one year ( MOE,2010).

The study by Kasahun (2013) revealed that the current kindergarten educational practices seem to promote ideology and practices from outside the country, with very little attention to traditional and cultural child-rearing the situation in Ethiopia, where long-standing indigenous realities, cultures, beliefs, thoughts, practices, events, and images are not being sufficiently valued. An example here would be the prevalence of the English language as a medium of instruction in most kindergartens in Addis. In line with this thinking, while discussing the notion of early childhood professionalism in Africa, Nsamenang (2010) has pointed out that it is important not to overlook culturally relevant and readily available indigenous values. Elaborating on his argument, Nsamenang (2010) stated that early childhood professionalism in Africa can be meaningful and respectful of children's rights if they are viewed in the context of the local culture and with proper consultation of primary and natural stakeholder's parents and the children themselves.

According to Kasahun (2013) & Woldehanna (2011) early childhood as a sector which has a base from long period of time, has been overlooked. The trainings that are given to the teachers, the recruiting of the preschool teachers, and the curriculum are among the many asked questions about preschool. Relevant ministries should work together to reform kindergartens, moving away from being only a "business enterprise" toward becoming a center for child development.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Research methodology

#### Research design

This study utilized a case study design. The ontological assumption for this study lied within the interpretive paradigm, suggests that qualitative researchers believe in the subjectivity of the reality. Qualitative research approach emphasizes on inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study such problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in the natural setting sensitive to people and places under study and data analysis that is inductive and establish patterns or themes Yin(2002). Therefore, this approach was preferred due to the intension to understand teachers' perception and practice in detail by directly talking to them, exploring their feeling about the issue under investigation, by going to school and understanding the context/setting in which participants' work.

The case in this study is teacher's perception and practice about the psychosocial support of childhood and it is bounded by their participation in teaching preschoolers. Stake (1995) explains that case studies are investigated because;

We are interested in them [case studies] for both their uniqueness and commonality. We would like to hear their stories. We may have reservations about some things the people tell us, just as they will question some of the things we will tell about them. But we enter the scene with a sincere interest in learning how they function in their ordinary pursuits and milieus and with a willingness to put aside many presumptions while we learn (p. 1).

## **Case Selection**

In order to gain multiple perspectives in the area of teachers' perception, this study used the maximum variation purposeful sampling strategy (Creswell, 1998). To achieve this, eleven, kindergarten teachers were recruited to participate. The teachers were selected from two schools in Bole sub city of Addis Ababa. The first school was from Woreda 13 and the second from Woreda 4. This sub-city was selected because it was the sub city that the researcher is living in and the two schools were selected because of the willingness of the administration units in the two schools. The total number of students in the two schools is 520 and total number of teachers is 43 and two principals. All teachers and principals were females.

The teachers were identified with the assistance of a gatekeeper. The gatekeeper was selected based on prior acquaintance. The gatekeeper and researcher had several conversations about the teachers necessary for this study. The gatekeeper got in contact with the school and the teachers that met the criteria, and asked them if they would be interested in participating in the study. After the school and the teachers agreed, the gatekeeper scheduled a visit with the teachers where the researcher explained to them the purpose of the study and what participating in this study entails. The gatekeeper was also present during this meeting. The eleven teachers were purposefully selected based on the composition of four dimensions: age of the children they are teaching, years of experience of the teacher, Amharic teacher since they join different sections and in contact with many children and principals. Thus, teachers one to three were composed of teachers who are teaching children of ages from 3 to 4 and with at least two years experience in teaching. Teacher four to six were composed of teachers who were teaching children of age from 4 to 5 and with service experience of at least 2 years including one Amharic teacher. Teachers from six to nine were composed of teachers who are teaching children of ages from 5 to 6 and

with at least 2 years experience and including Amharic teacher. Teachers 10 and 11 are principals of the two schools.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection procedures included making appointments with each individual case after consent forms were signed. Each case was interviewed, probed, and encouraged to discuss his or her perceptions and practices regarding psychosocial support. The interview questions described below guided the interview process and led to additional discussion during each interview session with each case.

To make the interview process friendly and interactive, note taking by the interviewer was minimized. Since it would have been useful to have a note taker, a third person was included in the interview sessions after the permissions of the participants and also with their permission tape cassettes are used to record the interviews. The interview was held at the school in available empty class when the children were out for play on May1, 4, and5, 2015.

The observation was conducted by a non-participant observer (i.e., researcher) and take place two days after the interviews. It was carried out in the classroom and play ground which lasted two hours for three days. The researcher took notes during and after the observation.

For this study, data were collected in the forms of semi-structured interviews, a non-participant observation, and a field note.

### **Interviews**

An interview guide was developed for this study. And it consisted of demographic questions about the teachers, questions that are answered by teachers by simply referring to a number that characterize their feeling and questions that need the explanation and elaboration of the teachers.

### **Non-Participant Observation.**

The purpose of the observation was to gain additional information about the psychosocial support to the children in their classroom and on play grounds. The observation also allowed documenting the psychosocial needs of the children and the support that took place when the teacher was in contact with the children. The last form of data collection was keeping field notes. The field notes have provided additional data for the analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

Before the data were analyzed, the researcher transcribed all interviews, observations, and field notes. The process of transcribing allowed the researcher to become acquainted with the data (Patton cited on Yin 2003). After transcribing all the data gathered through interview translation was done by the researcher. Then the translated data and the transcribed were rechecked by the advisor and peer debriefers who are graduate students of social work and counseling psychology. The researcher created Microsoft Word files for the interviews, observations and field notes. All files were protected by setting a password. All files were saved in the researcher's portable computer for which she only had access to. The researcher used the meaning of analysis context as the unit of analysis for coding and also looked for description. This means that the data is not coded sentence by sentence or paragraph by paragraph, but coded for meaning.

This study followed the case study design where the data is analyzed case by case through thematic analysis and later by cross-case analysis (Stake, 2006). Thus, interviews, observations, and field notes were analyzed for each case first. Following the case by case analysis, all themes were used to conduct the cross-case analysis. Themes salient across all cases were kept as well as those that were extremely different.

Organizing the data; coding the data; immersion in the data; generating categories and themes; offering interpretations through analytic memos; searching for alternative understanding; and presenting the study were the steps followed (Patton, cited on Yin 2003).

### **Trustworthiness of the Study Results**

As the area of qualitative research increases, social and behavioral scientists critique on the validity of studies that use such methodology. Thus, qualitative researchers utilize various validation strategies to make their studies credible and rigorous (Creswell, 2002).

Credibility for this study was achieved using the validation strategies of triangulation, researcher Reflexivity, thick rich description, and peer debriefing. The data was triangulated with the various forms of data that were collected in this study (i.e., interviews, observations, and reflective field notes).

Thick rich description was achieved by presenting the participants' voices under each theme and by providing detailed description of each of the cases. Finally, the researcher inquired the assistance of the advisor and peer de-briefers; graduate students from social work on child concentration and counseling psychology. Using Stake's "critique checklist", the researcher relied on it to assess the quality of the report (1995, p.131). This twenty criteria checklist was used to assess the quality of case study reports and they are:

1. Is the report easy to read?
2. Does it fit together, each sentence contributing to the whole?
3. Does the report have a conceptual structure (for example, themes or issues?)
4. Are its issues developed in a serious and scholarly way?
5. Is the case adequately defined?
6. Is there a sense of story to the presentation?

7. Is the reader provided with some vicarious experience?
8. Have quotations been used effectively?
9. Are headings, figures, artifacts, appendixes, and indexes used effectively?
10. Was it edited well, then again with a last minute polish?
11. Has the writer made sound assertions, neither over-nor under-interpreting?
12. Has adequate attention being paid to various contexts?
13. Were sufficient raw data presented?
14. Were the data resources well chosen and in sufficient number?
15. Do observations and interpretations appear to have been triangulated?
16. Are the role and point of view of the researcher nicely apparent?
17. Is the nature of the intended audience apparent?
18. Is empathy shown for all sides?
19. Are personal intentions examined?
20. Does it appear that individuals were put at risk?

### **Ethical Considerations**

The study was conducted after getting support letter from Addis Ababa University to respective school. In addition informed consent was obtained from study participant to confirm willingness for participation after explaining the objective of the study. The respondents were notified that they have the right to refuse or terminate at any point of the interview. The information provided by each respondent was kept confidential.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Finding**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the data obtained using the methods described in Chapter Three. Nine preschool teachers and two principals were interviewed. These teachers were asked to share their perceptions and practices about psychosocial support to early childhood. Upon completion of the interviews and integration of the data, five themes emerged: perceptions of teachers psychosocial supports to early childhood, psychosocial needs of early childhood, psychosocial support strategies, and challenges that are faced by the teachers not to support. This chapter begins with an explanation of teachers' perception of psychosocial support. Then it will continue about the psychosocial needs of early childhood which includes the descriptions for psychosocial problem caused by students themselves, family, teachers, media and technology. The third that will be discussed is the teacher's successful teaching strategies which include play, stories, counseling, and partnership with parents. The last one to be discussed is the challenges that teachers face in giving psychosocial support that are lack of time, motivation and knowledge. Description of the interview participants precedes the presentation of the data.

#### **Demographic characteristics of Participants**

The interview participants involved in this study were nine preschool teachers and two principals in two schools. Participants will be described according to teaching experience, class size, and level of education. Pseudo names are used for the preceding section for the sake of confidentiality.



*Participant #1: Roza*

Roza is a 25 year old woman. She has 4 years of teaching experience. She joined school at which she is currently teaching as a KG teacher before two years and her student's age range is 4 to 5.

Roza has 29 students in her class. She has a degree in sociology.

*Participant #2: Meklit*

Meklit is a pre KG teacher. She has 10 years of teaching experience. Her class sizes are 29 students. She is currently situated at school one. She has a diploma in teaching. Currently, she is learning to hold a bachelor degree in teaching English.

*Participant #3: Honey*

Honey has been teaching for 7 years. She is a KG teacher in school one. Her class size is 28 students. She has a degree in Literature.

*Participant #4: Beza*

Beza is a 38 year old woman. She has been teaching for 12 years. She is a pre KG teacher in school one. She has preschool training and a degree on business education. Her class size is 26 students.

*Participant #5: Beti*

Beti is a 24 year old woman. She has been teaching for two years. She is a preparatory/Kg3 teacher in school one. She teaches four classes holding approximately 29 students in each class. She has a degree in literature. She also has training for teaching high school students.

*Participant #6: Almaz*

Almaz is a 24 year old woman. She has 2 years of teaching experience. She is a preparatory/KG3 teacher in school one. She has 27 students in her classroom. She has a degree in psychology.

*Participant #7: Tigist*

Tigist is a 32 year old woman. She has 11 years of teaching experience and a diploma in teaching. She is a pre KG teacher in school two. She has 19 students.

*Participant #8: Selam*

Selam is a 30 year old woman. She has been teaching for 10 years. She is a KG teacher in school two. She has 20 students. Selam has a degree in management.

*Participant#9: Nebiyat*

Nebiyat is a 28 year old woman. She has 3 years of experience on teaching. She is a KG teacher in school two. She has 16 students in her classroom. She has a certificate in teaching.

*Participant#10: Misrak*

Misrak is a 35 year old woman. She has an experience of 13 years on teaching. Now she is a principal and a teacher of preparatory students in school two. She has a degree in teaching.

*Participant#11: Nardos*

Nardos is a 43 year old woman. She has an experience of 24 years on teaching and managing.

Nardos is a principal in school two. She has Masters in EDPM.

## **Perceptions of teachers psychosocial support to early childhood**

All teachers express their duties including psychosocial supports except one. Nebiyat listed her duties as only teaching the students. Except for her, all of the teachers express psychosocial support as one of the duties of a teacher of early childhood. They also have similar perceptions about the psychosocial need of early childhood. Again Nebiyat a little different from the others said that she believes, the students in private setting have a little psychosocial need than those students she used to teach before. In her words “These students that I am teaching have no financial problems. Even they are better than me.” The other teachers agree that most of their students have psychological and social problems that they, the teachers, help every day. Almaz said “To tell you the truth, all students have psychosocial needs.”

In the individual interviews, teachers indicated that they had understood and experience psychosocial support to the children they were teaching. However, based on classroom observation, there was little indication that the teachers were able to integrate the psychosocial support into their day-to-day subject teaching. Their way of addressing psychosocial issues was generally to lecture the students on virtuous living and studying hard from the observation..

Except for three cases, the teachers agree that the awareness they had about the psychosocial needs of early childhood was not enough. The teachers said that the course they took while training was insufficient when they compare it to the real psychosocial needs of early childhood. Misrak expressed that “most of my awareness about the psychosocial needs of early childhood come from the experience that I have, not from the training.”

## Psychosocial Support

### Procedure

Almost all the teachers have the same procedures. The first way to help the children that the teachers suggest is observation.

All the teachers said that loneliness, hitting, crying ,moan, not listening while teaching, not playing with other children, being aggressive, restlessness, vomiting, sleepiness, peeing on themselves were some of the behaviors that children showed when they faced psychosocial problems. Meklit said that “Children with these kinds of problems are identified easily, when you call their names they wouldn’t reply even to the extent that you doubt that it’s their name”. And it was identified that children with psychosocial problems are observed easily by the observation held at the class Meklit was teaching. The table was broken when she got into the class and it was Robel (pseudo name) that she mentioned in the interview who beat his own mother that broke it. During the whole observation Robel was touching his shoe though she made him sit in front. But he listened to her because he gave an answer immediately when she asked him.

After observation, all the teachers agree to follow the next step that is talking to the child. Beza said that “children are open, whatever happens to them they will tell you, if you give them any type of attention.” And Selam said that

I have a 4 years old girl in my class I found her peeing many times unknowingly and when I talked to her I realized that she does this whenever she remembers previous night’s fight, dad biting her mom.(personal interview,May1)

Nebiyat also said that “When you talk to the children you may get something from them and we talk to them after we think that there could be problem.” During observation in Almaz’s class during play time, some of the children were not playing. And Almaz talked with one girl (5 year old) the reason why she was not playing and just wanted to sleep. But also it was observed that the first thing that the teacher does was also beating because during the observation with Meklit’s class , there was a boy(3 and half year old) who was restless and trying to stand all the time the teacher asked, the reply was heating his hand to make him sit properly. And there was also another boy who peed on himself and dressed in a cloth that is prepared for children who peed. The teacher asked him in front of the whole children ‘what happened’ and he bent his head with a feeling of shame.

The third procedure differs with the different teachers Almaz, Hanna and Roza has said that they talk to the children deeply. Almaz said that “I take them to that place [square that is full of green] and try to make them tell me what’s wrong with them.” But Nebiyat said that “I don’t talk to the children that much since they have little to tell me. I’ll directly call the parents” And Misrak said that

When a child shows aggressive behavior, it’s not recommended to beat him. I usually make the child play. I even tickle him so that he could laugh. After that I’ll talk to him if there is anything wrong. When you do that children cry because they feel like you are the only one that can understand them and that makes them tell you there problems.

(Personal interview, on May 4)

Nardose Beza and Meklit said that they will make the children busy with a lot of work but calling the parents would be after a repeated time of observation.

Talking to the parents is the next step for those teachers that said they will try to investigate from the children. This also differs with teachers. Roza has said that “I’ll not tell what I’ve found from the students to their parents.” But the other teachers say that they will tell whatever is going on with the children to the parents. Nardos said that

Before a few years I even have an incident, there was a child who could not cope up with his parents divorce. So to help him I talked to the parents to think over their decisions for his sake. With a very hard work and a lot of intermediaries they got back together.

(Personal interview, on May5)

### **Psychosocial needs of early childhood**

All the teachers strongly agree that early childhood psychosocial need is love. Children like to be recognized by their teachers, they need to be reinforced for their good deeds, and they need to be heard. Meklit said that “if you kiss one girl every child in the class will come to you looking for that kiss”. But all the teachers said that these needs will be intensified and become psychosocial problems if the children are under a crisis. And the teachers express four origins that are basis for the problem.

### **Student**

According to Nardos and Misrak there are problems that occur due to biological or psychological problems of the students. Autism, ADHD, Down’s syndrome and other physical and mental disabilities are the problems that cause children to have the psychosocial support of teachers. During observation there were children with autism and Down’s syndrome that the parents hired a special need educator for them. Even without any disability students can also have psychosocial problems. Betelhem said that there are children who totally lost their motivation to learn. And she said that

Some children do not have interest with their lesson though they don't have any home related problem. And I think that it is due to the fact that some children wanted to show off. And the others wanted to copy that and that in turn made them lose their motivation.

(Personal interview, on may1)

## **Parents**

Except for two teachers, the rest emphasize on parents as a major source for the psychosocial problems of early childhood. But Betelhem de emphasized that, "we can not only blame parents whenever anything wrong went on the child, because there are children who are completely changed after they join school." But all agree that children are the reflection of their homes. Hanna said that "you can easily differentiate a child who is given love and affection at home from the other one."

The teachers explained that there are a lot of things that are related to parents. Divorce takes the first position than the others by causing psychosocial problems on children. Misrak said that not only the children but we are also the one who are facing the problem she explained this by an example

Last year I had a student of 4 year old whose parents got divorced and I got a call from his father that he shouldn't eat his lunch that he brought from home, because he would be taking him out. One day he brings him a big Iphone and the next day he was not attending well. And I asked him what happened, he said, *'my mom took the phone and told me that she would give it to me back when I got big but my father gave it to me so that I can play.'*

(Personal interview, on may4)

Next to divorce, separation from both parents and one of the parents whether by work or death is the second repeatedly raised issue by the teachers. When parents are not together, the children miss the other parent that they are not living together with. Selam has mentioned that “some children even want us to call the parents that don’t live together with them.” The problem gets exacerbated when it is a death of a parent. Almaz gave an example.

I have a student who lost her father recently; she doesn’t like to talk about him. Even when she is asked for her full name ,she only tells everyone her first name .Death of a parent always leads the children to be distressed. (Personal interview, on may1)

The third factor that all of the cases mentioned was the conflict between parents. Children always remember parent’s conflict when they are learning. Nardos explained this saying “even some of them pee on themselves without knowing it, due to the conflict they saw the previous night.” Roza gave an example of a boy who said that his father beat his mom with a stool. And he said that “it’s because my mom and me have a small stick that we can’t beat him up.” Tigist also said that the children usually say “last night my mom cried because my dad beat her”. Selam said that parents should not do whatever conflict they have in front of their children. “Though the parents are living together, conflict in front of the children makes the children, to get worried and that in turn cause the psychosocial problems.”

The fourth thing that 10 of the cases mentioned was not giving the appropriate quality time for their children by their parents. The teachers agree that the children in both schools have rich parents that are busy in their works. As Roza expressed

The parents put the child in school at 8 o’clock and the child stays here till 3. Then he spends time here: in the after school. Most parents even say, “*I don’t have time to meet him*”



*because he fell asleep when I usually get home*". The parents do not help their children with the home works that were sent by us.

But Beza refused on having limited time. She referred it as losing interest by saying "it's not about not having time, if you have interest, you will try your best to have a little help to your child....." and Nardos emphasizes on this by saying that "for whom are you working that much if you are not able to give whatever you have to give for your child."

In relation to the above finding the other thing that most of the cases raise is the overlooking of parents by letting them spend time with other adults without their supervision. Nardos said that

Parents' not spending too much time with their children makes the children to spend their time with maids. And the maids, teaches them many inappropriate things. For example they might teach them about stealing, irrelevant words, wrong answers, cheating, and complaining. Besides that, to minimize their work schedule, they make the children to watch movies. She opens Tom and Jerry for them so that they would not disturb her.  
(Personal interview, on may5)

The other adults that parents let their children stay with teenage cousins or siblings. This has also a big effect on the psychosocial being of early childhood. The teenagers watch movies that might be suitable for them but not for early childhood. So as Nardos expresses it the children would want to show that behavior in a school and that lets them face the psychosocial problems because their characters are not acceptable at the school community

The fifth thing that Hanna and Misrak raised about family is parent's background and lack of knowledge on how to raise a child. Beza also agrees on this point that not knowing how

to raise a child is one of the factors that cause the child to have a psychosocial problem. Misrak explained that parents' having their own background of being raised in a strict family wants to raise their children in the same manner. But this would be one of the causes of psychosocial problems since the children need to be heard and get their parents attention.

## **Teachers**

Nardos and Misrak agree that teachers are also one of the factors that children face the psychosocial problems. As Misrak explained that even the touch and the look that we give for early childhood matters. In her own words "Our holding style and our eyes tells the children how much we love them and care for them". But there are teachers that do not want to give the care that is expected from them. They just only focus on giving them academic knowledge and other things that are found on their job description. This creates a big problem on children. Most of the teachers agree that the children need to be attached to them. Almaz expressed that

I had once a student that his teacher told him that he was ugly. And when he comes to this school he doesn't want to approach me because he thought that I'll treat him like her. And I found out one day when I taught the opposite words ugly and beautiful. He bent his neck and started to cry. (Personal interview, on may4)

Betlehem said that "children take us as their role models". And Misrak said that teachers having a problem with the management took every feeling they have on the children. Nardos who is a principal said that the major problems that the teachers have is they want to bring the whole class to one kind of behavior that is accepted by the teacher which can never be true. There are lots of differences in early childhood behavior and also in their academic performance because there are different learning styles, some children want only to touch, others to listen,

others to play, so bringing all together to one; leads the children to face the psychosocial problems. She explained by giving the following example

For example there is a teacher in this school who is so brave in English and also in her way of teaching. But her behavior is very difficult. She doesn't want to have a student who is weak. And last week she brought me her student holding his cloth very tight and shouting in front of him that he is not doing anything. But doing these kinds of things in front of the child will make the child to suffer from inferiority thinking and will lead the child to say that '*I can't*'. Education comes second; it is their behavior that matters.

Setting the mind of a child to say "*I can't!*" for his whole life, is killing him. (Personal interview, on may5)

### **Technology**

Three of the cases mentioned technology as one of the factors that let children to have psychosocial problems. The movies they watch on TVs made them to imitate the characters that they love at most. Regarding this Meklit explained the imitative behavior of early childhood. "If you observe them on the playground they want to act like Spiderman or Ben...." The other thing that Hanna raised is the children use bad words that they see on the movies. "The movies should be selected for that specific age."

About technology bringing the psychosocial problem on early childhood Nardos said that Though technology is useful in many ways its destroying the children's' behavior. Most of the children are baby seated by technology and these children are identified easily due to their language difficulty.( personal interview,May5) and she also expressed the media in a way that "The advertisement and the programs that we see on TV is not recommended to small children and is full of junk."

Most of the teachers believe that the above reasons described by them, let the children to be problematic and in need of psychosocial support.

## **Teaching strategies that promote early childhood psychosocial support**

### **Play**

All the teachers agree that play is one of the most important things in giving psychosocial support for early childhood. The teachers said that they use play for educational purposes. During the observation time, the children have been playing especially in the afternoon play in both schools. About play, each teacher has a saying. Nardos said “during play you can clearly see their true behaviors, especially those who are addicted to movies.” And Hanna said “preKG students love to play on the swing and slide but not those in KG who love to play more the chasing and the running part.” Betelhem said “I have a student whom I recently found out that during play he talks like he is chatting with someone.” Nebiyat said that even those who don’t speak very well change after play.” Tigist said that “one of the behaviors that you observe with those children who has psychosocial problem is that they don’t play as the other children do.” Meklit said that “girls of this age love to play ‘eka eka’ or use materials to imitate as their mother, talking with a phone and boys love to play with fake gun saying ‘ I will kill you’”. Almaz said “play is my reinforcement.” But Selam said that “I use play for punishing those who disturb. I punish them with not letting them play”. Misrak said “it is not only the students that are advantaged with plays but also us, the teachers also refresh by playing with the children. Play is very effective in decreasing depression from the children and also she said that the kind of play differs with each age. Children when they get older they start keeping rules and get used to take turns but not the ones in pre KGs.

Also during observation it was observed that the teachers use different kinds of playing activities during their teaching. In PreKG and KG lessons were started using songs that lead the children into jumping, clapping and moving round. The children were so energetic in singing the songs that lets them move. Then in preKG for example the children were forced to sit on the mat folding their hands and crossing their legs. And there was an assistant to keep them still in this position as soon as they forget and start stretching

### **Story**

Four of the cases mentioned that stories help children to be supported psychosocially. These teachers mentioned that children love stories and it can be a good tool for helping the children.

I had a student whose father died; she totally ignores him as if he is never been there. Academically she was getting weaker and weaker as the time goes on. So I intentionally create a story and tell the whole class that all the dead people that we love are on the sky like the stars and watch us down to check whether we are doing good or not. She followed me that day and asked me whether what I said is true or not. And I said her 'yes' the story is true. Then she said oh I miss my dad. Is he really watching me? And I told her that he wants her to be successful in her academics. Starting from that day she never got a lower mark". (Personal interview, May4)

Hanna ,Roza and Selam said that when children don't want to play, they sit together with them and tell them stories. Meklit and Nebiyat mentioned about the power of story in easing the language difficulty.

### **Caring**

All teachers said that talking to the children is one of the supports that they give to early childhood. They all say that showing love and special attention is what children like. The teachers say that the children took teachers as role models and talking to children helps to make them listen to whatever the teachers tell them.

### **Rewarding**

All the teachers except Misrak agreed on giving rewards for children to develop good behaviors. Tigist said that if the children don't eat due to some problem we told them that they will be given prize and most of the children are deceived by that. But Misrak refuses on giving prizes because she said, "you cannot explain for those who are not given why" showing a pity in her face. " you know it is not only the children that cry but also their parents, so I would disagree on giving gifts rather making stars on their hands is easy and affordable to all children without hassle."

### **Partnership with the parents**

All the teachers said that working with parents help children to solve the psychosocial problems that children face. The teachers stress on the point that if parents do not collaborate with them their support alone could not have any change on the child. Nardos said that working without parents is like 'clapping with one hand'. I had a student whose twin sister died and became very depressed. He cried the whole day and asked for her. His parents took him to the psychiatrist and told us everything they were told to do. Though it took us a year he eventually got over it. And he regained his motivation to learn and become a clever student.

## **Challenges that are faced by the teachers not to support**

### **Lack of time**

There were seven teachers that rose time as one of the challenges not to give the psychosocial supports. Roza, Tigist and Misrak said that it's by their lunch time or break that they give this support to the children. And Almaz said that "I have a lot of lesson to finish so I can't reach everyone. Nardos explained that time could be taken as one of the constraint not to give help.

But Tigist and Misrak disagree that time cannot be taken as a challenge since the children spend the whole day with them. Misrak said that "we are self contained teachers, and spend our whole time with them and it is very easy to do on this time whatever we wanted to do".

### **Lack of knowledge and skills**

All teachers except Beza and Meklit mentioned that lack of knowledge about the preschool period made them not to help the children with psychosocial problem. For example Betelhem mentioned that the boy in her class who seems to talk to someone where he is talking alone might be helped if she had the knowledge. And Hanna expresses that

because I told the father of a boy so many times that the boy is not coping with the children equally, I lasted up on taking a training that I should never label children as those with problems which by the way was a very important training for me. But the father found out that his boy has a learning difficulty later and apologized to me. The boy's father is a professional and the boy is now showing progress, but me, I could not do anything for him since I don't have the knowledge. (Personal interview, on may1)

The other thing that was found during observation is the lack of skill in how to give the psychosocial support. And Nardos support this idea saying that "there are teachers but limited

who can treat children though they don't have their own but those who have child know how to give psychosocial support.”

### **Lack of Teachers' motivation and commitment**

Only Nardos ,Misrak,and Beza mentioned lack of teachers' motivation as one of the challenge for teachers' not to give psychosocial support. Beza mentioned that “being a preschool teacher means that keeping the children clean, (nose, face and also their hands, and if they vomit washing them.) Being patient to hear since their language is weak, reading their faces etc. So it needs motivation and a lot of patience when you deal with children”. And Meklit said that “ it needs sacrifice to help the children because you have to deal with everything they do .You have to feed them ,care for them ,keep them clean and be with them all the time putting yourself on their shoe,( jumping, playing sitting on the mat) etc”. Misrak said that

some teachers reflect their own problems on the students” weaving her head side to side “I feel sorry for the children ,you know when the teachers got sad and feel bad they took it on those innocent children that do not have anything to do with their problem. (Personal interview, on may5)



## CHAPTER FIVE

### Discussion

#### Introduction

This part of the report discusses the findings that were found through interview and observation in accordance with the literature review. And it starts with teachers' perception on psychosocial support.

#### Perceptions and practices on psychosocial support

All the study participants were female because all the staff members are women. Findings' regarding teaching without training and the minimal intervention of the government with preschool education are consistent with previous studies (ILO 2012, Kassahun 2013). The finding also shows that out of the 10 teachers only four of them are trained in teaching and only one was trained in preschool training. Teachers are from different backgrounds that are not related to teaching and also to preschool education. Kasahun (2013) said that the teachers should have a preschool training but the results showed that half of the teachers are not only preschool trained but they are also not trained to be teachers. And also the teachers said that there is no training that they took in terms of preschool teaching except one.

Results from the interview and the observation show that the job of teachers of early childhood is not only teaching solely. Teachers help the children in eating their meals, clothing, training them how to use a toilet, giving them their shoulders to cry at, hugging them, being patient in listening and many others. As (Nut brown, 2006) said, their work is not only with their students but also with their parents and possible stakeholders. But from the findings of the current research, teachers only try to communicate with those parents whose children have only

academic problems. From the observation and the interview it is observed that teachers only talk to parents only when they got results of students that don't seem good. Meklit said

There was one boy in this school before 2 years. The whole three years, the boy didn't communicate with anyone, didn't play and never talked anything outside his lesson. But the boy was very good in his lesson. He did whatever he was told to do. And he was a very smart boy. But when it was time for him to join grade one his father asked us seriously about his condition and we told him that he is very silent. Then he told us the history of the boy. *'After me and his mom got divorced he stayed with me and I raised him with a maid. I now recognize that the maid used to lock him up and didn't let him play.'* But I felt sorry, because if it had been known before, this boy might have got help.

(Personal interview, on may4)

As literatures explain early childhood is also filled with changes that are caused by development. So the teacher is also expected to have awareness on the problem whether it is from developmental changes or psychosocial problem before proceeding to the psychosocial support. Results from the finding and observation shows that most of the teachers have little perception on the children's behaviors which rose from psychosocial problems. Because most of the time when they were asked about learning disability and language problems, they understood it in a mixed way. For example when Tigist was asked about language impairment, she said that she had one child in her class and who doesn't know one word to speak. She referred to her as the most disturbing girl in her class. She also said that "though the policy said that the children should pass, I am struggling so that she learns in my class again next year." And from the observation and the informal interviews that were made, it was found that the girl's parents were divorced and the child only lives with her mother who doesn't have any educational background.

Most of the teachers have awareness on the symptoms and signs preschool children have due to psychosocial problems, but not on how to give the psychosocial support.

Woods (1996) also argued that what teachers do in their classroom practices is shaped by what they think, and that teachers' perceptions and beliefs serves as filters through which instructional judgments and decisions are made. And the finding of this research also agrees with Woods (1996) in that, the teachers' perception of psychosocial support that let them to observe the children' need and help them accordingly., Also literature say that teachers' practices are less than their perception, is also true. Because the observation in the classroom showed that teachers' perception of psychosocial support does not necessarily mean that they are practicing it.

The multiple roles of the early childhood educators which are not exclusive of each other, but are complex, varied and interdependent as Nut brown (2006) said, are also listed roles from the teachers in the interviews. The finding in this study shows that teachers of early childhood are not only solely teachers of academy but also teachers of how to behave, care giving and psychosocial supporters to early childhood. The other finding that this research found is that from what all the teachers said about their experience; that their experience let them to have their current perception about the psychosocial support of early childhood this finding goes with the study by (McMullen, 1997; Hollingsworth, 1989; Kagan, 1992 ) that have found experience in the care setting becomes important because teachers, particularly those with low efficacy, find it difficult to maintain discipline using the child-centered practices they attest to believe in.

The result of the present study goes with the studies by Smith and Shepard (1988) cited on danielsa & shumow 2002 who found that most kindergarten teachers referred to either

maturational or environmental influences, only a few explained student development as a complex interaction between the psychological nature of the child and the educational environments provided. From the principals and the teacher's interviews: it is found that the teachers only focus on the parents and the principals integrate each factors contributing to the child.

### **Psychosocial needs of early childhood**

The teachers in the study readily agreed with the concept that preschool children need love, affection and a warm nurturing environment: just like in the existing literatures (Alderman & Engel, 2008). Davies (2011) said that if children are not given what they expect they show behaviors that are an outcome of stress. And this research has found that what is written in the literature is true. Children bed wetting, clinging, crying and vomiting are some of the behaviors that the teachers say they observe. The agents for the psychosocial problem in preschool are self, teachers, the environment and the parents.

Consistent with previous research (Smith and Shepard 1988, cited on Daniels & Shumow 2002) participants in this study, with the exception of one, all viewed parents to be the main cause for the psychosocial problem in early childhood. The teachers mention that most of the negative cases that are occurring in the classroom are caused by parents not living together. Only one of the cases mention family separation as, it's not the only major cause, but also the student's attitude has a big effect on him or her selves. The literatures agree that the multiple factors that the child passes through are the one that cause the psychosocial problems. Davies said that preschoolers felt about good on doing things by their own but the teachers said that they all love to be taken care of by someone. Only one teacher expressed that when she was asked for

an uncommon psychosocial need of early childhood, a boy was found who does not want to be fed.

## **Common psychosocial problems**

### **The student**

As it was found in the literature children's own behaviors and physical ability is one of the protective factors that hold the child from suffering from psychosocial problems. And also some of the teachers raise students' individual reasons as one of the causes for psychosocial problems. Lack of motivation and mental disability are reasons that are raised by some of the teachers.

### **Parents**

Many literatures agree that parents are the main causes for the psychosocial problems that occur within a child. Davies (2011) said that preschool children imitate adult roles so if the parent that he /she is considering her real model is in distress the child also imitates that. That is also what the teachers say about the problems raised in their homes. Hanna said

I had once a girl who is 4 years old she is the boss of the class. She doesn't want to play with the rest of the children because she thinks that they don't go with her status, underestimating them. If anything happens in class she just raise her voice and say who did this, so the boy she is staring at will automatically say I am sorry though he is not the cause. So I tried to contact her mother because the children are very afraid of her, and the mother admitted that it is her behavior towards the maids in the house and that was the girl coping. (Personal interview, on may1)

Also these children have still their attachments with their parents and losing one parent leaves them with a very frustrating event. The teachers agree that the major factor for psychosocial problems of children in that school is divorce. And the other thing that most of the teachers raise is conflict between parents in front of their children. This also is true according to (NISACA cited on Hattie 2003).

Though the literature put it in a different factor parental death is also another factor for children to have psychosocial problem. Children of this age are in pre operational stage that they think death as a temporary thing and thought that the person who died might come one day to live with them. The findings also assure that parental death or the death of sibling were the causes for significant number of children.

The other thing that most of the teachers raise is not giving quality time for their children. And also the parenting style that parents follow. And the previous studies also illustrate that family conflict, unsupportive or neglectful relationship; harsh or inconsistent parentings are the risk factors for children to develop psychosocial problems.

### **Teachers**

Teachers are one of the causes for children to face psychosocial problems since children spend most of their time with them. They are other adult role models that the children focus. Once when the famous worldwide actress Julia Roberts was asked what she would have wanted to be if she wasn't an actress she said that she would become a teacher, since her children could not stop talking about their teachers. Whatever the teachers do it goes directly to children's mind and the findings though it was raised by 5 of the teachers are true and go with the previous literatures (Deepak & Chamundeswari, 2014, Hattie 2003).

## **Psychosocial Support**

### **Strategies**

All the teachers said that giving ears to the children is the first and basic step that they use in giving psychosocial support to early childhood. One of the support system for the children is to let them express themselves but except for three teachers, they don't let the students to do what the children feel like to do. (Creative curriculum, 2010).

### **Play**

The children in both schools have a play time inside and outside the class. From the observation and the interview with the teachers it was found that the teachers use play as one of the teaching strategies. Most of the teachers said that they use play also for the psychosocial support to early childhood. The results from the observation when compared to the literatures are not satisfactory. According to Davies (2011) Children of preschool have imaginative play and if someone wanted to help a child, he or she should have time to observe during play times. In both schools the teachers do their own work while the children are out to play. Odiengo (2012) found that teachers do not use play for the psychosocial support which correlates with this study. And it was observed that those who do not want to play are asked or treated why they were not joining the children at play.

### **Story**

Stories are one of the supporting mechanisms the teachers raise. The teachers said that children if they could not communicate very well, they will be bullied. And most of the teachers said that children with poor language skill are aggressive and felt bad about them. And it was also observed that the children laughed at the boy who was mistaken with the word. So teachers

said that, stories are the best way to help the children to develop their language skills. Since language development is the basis for all development. (Davies, 2011 creative curriculum,2010)

### **Caring**

According to Davies (2011) an effective preschool teacher is the one who have relation with his or her student. And some of the teachers suggested that caring for the student is one of their support systems they have for their students. The teachers said that when children are given caring attitude they felt happy and forgot whatever happens at home.

### **Partnership with the parents**

Almost all the cases believe on partnership with parents have an impact on the child's psychosocial problem. All the teachers said that without the parent's involvement they cannot go one step ahead. (Nye , Turner , &Schwartz 2006)



## CHAPTER SIX

### **Conclusions, Recommendations and Implications**

#### **Conclusions**

The main focus of this study was to explore the teachers' perception and practice of psychosocial support to early childhood. Psychosocial support to early childhood is a base for children to grow in a suitable environment and let the children to be healthy and resilient in their later lives. The study shows that teacher's perception and practice of psychosocial support is comparatively good in relation to their practice. Teachers in the study had the awareness on the symptoms and signs of psychosocial problems of early childhood. Teachers while in observation do not practice what they said they do. And this study found out that teachers perception and practices are relatively different and this might be due to lack of training in preschool education. The teacher's perception and practice of psychosocial problems and the principals were different. The teachers focus on the family as a psychosocial problem causing agent and the principals on the multifactor that are related to the child, parents, self, teachers practice and technology. Children who have psychosocial problems can be treated by early childhood professionals from different disciplines are suggested by the teachers.

#### **Recommendations**

- Schools should recruit professionals with different academic backgrounds since the children who care to school have different backgrounds and their problems also vary with all the different backgrounds. If having all the professionals worth a lot, it is possible to recruit a social worker and make relations with possible stakeholder through the social workers.

- Teachers should include the multiple perspectives of early childhood development into early childhood teaching settings. They should employ play in preschool children so as to assess and intervene with the psychosocial needs of early childhood.
- The school should also use incentive for early childhood teachers since the profession requires a lot of patience and persistence. Effective teachers in giving psychosocial support should be encouraged using incentives.
- The Ministry of Education should focus on early childhood education and should support the private sector with all the help that is expected from the government. As it is pointed in the literature early childhood education plays a vital role in cost effective, decreasing crimes and at last developing country. So the government should set rules and supervise the rules especially on the early childhood teachers training.
- Early childhood should be researched with longitudinal studies. Teacher's perception and practice also should be evaluated including the children and parents view

### **Implication to social work**

The findings of this study, when combined with past research have significant implications to social work. The findings indicate that teacher's perception and practices of early childhood is affected by many factors one of which is lack of knowledge, and the teachers have said that the children who are facing the psychosocial problems need to be helped with professions that have knowledge of the psychosocial need of early childhood.

Researches have been made globally about the psychosocial needs of early childhood including the risk and protective factors. But there is no or limited study on early childhood on Psychosocial need and the risk and protective factors in Ethiopia. This paper will help to be the

base for further research on early childhood and early childhood settings. Longitudinal studies should be done to acknowledge children needs.

As social workers being caught in the middle owes to the fact that social work is located at the intersection of personal troubles and public “ills” social work should also focus on the policies of child rearing. One of the roles of social workers is advocacy. The results from the findings help to see the problems that children face are caused mainly by adults; teachers and parents. Social workers should advocate the rights of children as Ethiopian constitution article 36 say, social work practice should be the voice for children in a crisis situation. Teachers should be given training on how to solve psychosocial problems, and researches should be made in integrating social work in a school setting.

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## **ANNEX I**

**Addis Ababa university**

**School of social work**

### **Informed Consent Form**

#### **Pre-School Teachers' Perception and Practices About the Psychosocial Needs Of Children at Early Childhood Ages: Case Study**

Dear Participant:

You are invited to participate in a research study that will attempt to explore preschool teachers' perception and practices about the psychosocial support of children at early childhood. You can decide not to participate. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision whether or not you would like to participate. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask. You are eligible to participate in this study because you have been teaching preschool for at least more than a year.

**Project:** explore preschool teachers' perception and practices about the psychosocial support of children at early childhood: A Case Study

**Purpose of the Project:** This study will investigate preschool teachers' perception and practices about the psychosocial support of children at early childhood

**Procedures:** You will be asked to participate in an interview and allow the primary investigator to observe you during a time when you are teaching and any time you are with the children. The interview will take approximately one hour to one hour and a half

of your time. The interview will be audio recorded and will take place at school or any convenient place for you. During this interview you will be asked a series of questions. These questions are designed to allow you to share your experiences as a teacher of early childhood. Additionally, you will be asked to fill out a demographic sheet that will include demographic information and questions about what you feel about the psychosocial support. The observation will take approximately 3 to 4 hours of your time and will take place two days after the interview for three days. The observation will take place wherever you are with the children.

**Risks:** There are no known risks or associated with this research.

**Benefits:** The information gained from this study may help us to better understand the preschool teachers' perception and practices about the psychosocial support of children at early childhood.

**Confidentiality:** During the interview, you will be asked to provide a pseudonym to insure that your identity is covered. The audio-recording will be assigned the pseudonym that you pick during the interview. The demographic sheet will not identify you. The demographic sheet will only have the pseudonym that you picked during the interview. You will not be asked to write your name on the anonymous demographic sheets. Once all demographic sheets are entered in a database, they will be destroyed. The information obtained during this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be prepared as aggregated data.

**Compensation:** You will not receive any type of compensation for participating in this study.

**Opportunity to Ask Questions:** You may ask any questions concerning this research

and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate or during the study.

**Freedom to Withdraw:** You are free to decide not to enroll in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting their or your relationship with the investigator or Addis Ababa University. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Consent:** If you wish to participate in this study, you will be interviewed, observed, and filled out a demographic sheet .You are voluntary making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

---

Signature of Participant Date

I hereby give consent to audio record my interview.

---

Initials of Participant Date

In my judgment I am voluntary and knowingly giving informed consent and possess the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study.

---

Signature of Investigator Date

Selamawit Tesfaye: (251) 935987535

## **ANNEX II**

### **Addis Ababa University**

#### **School of social work**

#### **Interviews for teachers**

##### **Introduction**

**My name is Selamawit. I am a second year psychosocial student in Addis Ababa university.**

**This interview is done to investigate the perception and practice of preschool teachers about the psychosocial support to early childhood. The interview will take from thirty minutes to one hour. Now I will pass to the questions.**

##### **Interview Guideline**

###### **Introduction**

- Introduce yourself
- Discuss the purpose of the study
- Provide informed consent
- Provide structure of the interview (audio recording, taking notes, and use of pseudonym)
- Ask if they have any questions
- Test audio recording equipment
- SMILE-make the participants feel comfortable

**Demographic Information-teachers**

Pseudo name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Gender

\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_ Female

2. Age

\_\_\_\_\_ Years

3. Highest Educational Level

\_\_\_\_\_

1. Years of teaching

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which grade are you teaching currently?

---

6. How many years did you teach in this grade

\_\_\_\_\_

7. How many students do you have?

---

8. Which subject do you teach?

1. How do you understand the psychosocial needs of early childhood?

From school training

From experience

From reading

2. How do you rate your training in terms of its effectiveness to understand the psychosocial needs of early childhood?

Very Good

Good

Satisfactory

Other

3. Do you have enough time to consider the psychosocial support in your class?

Yes

No

4. Do you think that other professionals are needed in preschool settings like counselors

Yes

No

Questions

1. Can you tell me your duties as an early childhood teacher whenever you are in a school?

(look for psychosocial support in the answer)

2. What do you think are the psychosocial needs of children in your class?

what is psychosocial support for you?

3. What is your understanding of the relationship between play and childhood development?

4. Having your perception of psychosocial support of early childhood in mind, what teaching strategies do you employ during your practice?

5. And how effective were you until now? Explain with an example(s).

6. What challenges did you face during your teaching practice? Explain with an example(s).
7. Is there anything else you would like to add or share about this topic that you feel is important for me to know?

#### Concluding Statement

- Thank them for their participation
- Ask if they would like to see a copy of the results
- Record any observations, feelings, thoughts and/or reactions about the interview

**ANNEX III**

## Observation Protocol

Pseudoname: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

| Observation | Reflection |
|-------------|------------|
|             |            |
|             |            |
|             |            |
|             |            |
|             |            |
|             |            |



ANNEX IV

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

ሶሻል ዎርክ ትምህርት ቤት

ቃለ መጠይቅ ለአስተማሪዎች

ስሜሰላ ማዊት ተስፋዬ ይባላል፡፡ በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የሁለተኛ አመት የሶሻል ዎርክ ትምህርት ስኞት፡፡ ይህ ቃለ መጠይቅ ስለ ልጆች ስነ ልቦናዊ እና ማህበራዊ እርዳታ አስተማሪዎች ያላቸው አመለካከት እና ተግባር የሚጠይቅ ነው፡፡ ሙሉ ቃለ መጠይቁ ቢበዛ ከሰላሳ ደቂቃ እስከ አንድ ሰአት የሚወስድ ነው፡፡ አሁን ወደ ጥያቄዎቹ አልፋለሁ፡፡

ቀን .....

1.ጾታ

.....ወንድ.....ሴት

2. አድሜ

.....ዓመት

3. የ ትምህርት ደረጃ .....

4. የ ማስተማር ዐመታት .....

5.የ ሚያስተምሩበት ክፍል .....

6. በዚህ ክፍል ምን ያህል ዐመት አስተምረዋል .....

7. የ ተማሪዎች ብዛት .....

.....ወንድ.....ሴት

8. የ ማያ ስተምሩት የ ትምህርት ዐይነት.....

9. የ ልጆችን ስነ ልቦናዊ እና ማህበራዊ ፍላጎቶችን እንዴት ተረዱት

ከተማሩበት ትምህርት ቤት ስልጠና .....

ከስራ ልምድ.....

ከንባብ.....

10. ከ ትምህርት ቤት ያገኙት ስልጠና ስለ ልጆች ስነ -ልቦናዊ እና ማህበራዊ ፍላጎት ለመረዳት ምን ያህል ወጤታማነት ወብለ ወያ ስባሉ.....

እጅግ በጣም ጥሩ.....

በጣም ጥሩ.....

ጥሩ.....

በቂ.....

11. የ ልጆችን ስነ -ልቦናዊ ማህበራዊ ችግር ለመፍታት በቂ ግዜ አሎት ...

አዎ አለኝ.....

አይ የለኝም.....

12. የ ልጆችን ስነ -ልቦናዊ ማህበራዊ ችግር ለመፍታት በቂ እወቀት አሎት ...

አዎ አለኝ.....

አይ የለኝም.....

13. በመዋለ ህጻናት ወስጥ ሌሎች ባለ መያዎች ለምሳሌ ሶሻል ዎርከሮች ያስፈልጋሉ ብለው ያምናሉ...

አዎ አምናለሁ.....

አይ አላምንም.....

14. እንደ ህጻናት አስተማሪነቶ በትምህርት ቤት ወስጥ ያሉትን የስራ ድርሻዎች ቢገልጹልኝ

15. ህጻናት ስነ ልቦናዊ እና ማህበራዊ ፍላጎቶች ምን ድንናቸው

16. በልጆች ሁለንተናዊ እድገት እና በጨዋታዎች መካከል ስላለው ትስስር ምን አይነት ግንዛቤ አለህ/ሽ?

17. ስለ ህጻናት ሳይኮ ሶሻል እገዛ በአንተ/ቺ ዘንድ ያለህ/ሽ ግንዛቤና መረዳት እነዳለህ/ሽ ምን አይነት የማስተማር መንገዶችን በመማር ማስተማር ሂደት ወስጥ ተግብረህ/ሽ/ሻል?

18. እስካሁን ባለህ/ሽ ተሞክሮ ምን ያክል ውጤታማነት በርህ/ሽ?

19. በመማር ማስተማር ሂደት ወስጥ በነበረህ/ሽ ተሞክሮ ያጋጠመህ/ሽ ተግዳሮቶች ካሉ ግለፅ ልኝ/ጭልኝ? በምሳሌ?

20. ሌላ ከዚህ በላይ ከተጠቀሱት ውጭ ሌላ በጥናት ባለ መያዎ ይጠቅማል የምትለው/ይውሁሳብ በዚህ ዙሪያ ካለ?