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Social skills of kindergarten learners of San Juan District: Basis for cooperative play activities



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Abstract

Education plays a vital role in developing individuals who can function effectively in society. In kindergarten, the development of social skills is essential in fostering positive relationships, communication, and socio-emotional growth. This study assessed the social skills of kindergarten learners in San Juan District, Division of La Union, during School Year 2025–2026, as a basis for developing cooperative play activities. Specifically, it determined the profile of 16 kindergarten teacher-respondents in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, length of service, and relevant trainings attended. It also assessed learners' social skills in terms of interaction and socio-emotional development. The study employed a quantitative descriptive research design, using a questionnaire to gather data analyzed through appropriate descriptive statistical tools. Findings revealed that most teachers were aged 31–40, all were female, and the majority had bachelor's degrees with master's units. Most had 6–10 years of teaching experience and attended district- and division-level trainings. Generally, learners demonstrated moderately to highly developed social skills. Strengths included participation in group activities, listening, cooperation, empathy, sharing, and establishing positive relationships. However, sustaining conversations, expressing ideas clearly, resolving conflicts verbally, adapting to new situations, demonstrating self-control, and taking responsibility for personal belongings needed further improvement. The study concluded that social skills are essential to the holistic development of kindergarten learners. It recommended developing structured and developmentally appropriate cooperative play activities to strengthen communication, collaboration, empathy, self-regulation, and positive peer interaction.

Keywords: social skills, kindergarten learners, interaction, socio-emotional development, cooperative play activities

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1. Introduction

Education plays a crucial role in national development and in preparing learners to cope with the demands of globalization. One of the major concerns in contemporary education is the development of social skills, which are essential for effective communication, interaction, and relationship-building. In the Philippine educational system, schools are expected not only to provide academic knowledge but also to develop learners' social and emotional competencies, particularly during the early years of schooling. Kindergarten is a critical stage for developing social skills such as sharing, cooperation, empathy, communication, and conflict resolution. These skills help children adjust to the school environment, establish positive relationships, and achieve academic and personal success. Learners with strong social skills generally demonstrate better classroom behavior, higher self-esteem, and improved peer interactions, while those with limited social skills may experience difficulties in socialization and learning.

Research emphasizes that social skills can be strengthened through meaningful interactions and structured learning experiences. One effective strategy is cooperative play, where children work together toward common goals, communicate with peers, assume roles, negotiate responsibilities, and resolve conflicts. Cooperative play provides authentic opportunities for developing interaction and socio-emotional skills that are essential for holistic child development. Furthermore, this study supports Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by promoting inclusive and meaningful learning experiences and Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by fostering empathy, cooperation, and peaceful conflict resolution among young learners. Recognizing the importance of social skills in early childhood education, this study sought to determine the social skills of kindergarten learners in the San Juan District as a basis for developing cooperative play activities that will enhance their interaction and socio-emotional development.

Statement of the Problem - The main objective of this study is to assess the social skills of the kindergarten of San Juan District, Division of La Union, during the school year 2025-2026 as a basis for crafting a cooperative play activity for kindergarten learners. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

- What is the profile of the kindergarten teachers as to Age, Gender, Educational Attainment, and Trainings attended related to kindergarten
- What is the level of social skills of the kindergarten learners as to interaction and socio-emotional
- What intervention may be proposed to develop the social skills of the kindergarten learners?
- What is the level of validity of the proposed cooperative play activities?

Framework of the Study- This study adopted the Input-Process-Output (IPO) design of research. The input variables include the survey results of the following: (1) The profile of teachers; (2) The level of social skills of the kindergarten as perceived by the teachers. The process variables include the (A) Analysis and interpretation of the: (1) Profile of teachers; (2) level of social skills of the kindergarten. (3) The development of a cooperative play activity, and (4) the level of validity. The output of this study is a cooperative play activity that can be proposed to address the social skills of the kindergarten learners of San Juan District, Division of La Union.

Study Design - The descriptive method of investigation was used in the study. This design aimed at gathering data about the existing conditions. Calmorin (2005) describes the descriptive design as a method that involves the collection of data to answer questions regarding the present status of a certain study. Further, Deauna (2013) defines

such a design as one that includes all studies that purport to present facts concerning the nature and status of anything. This design was employed in this study since it aims at collecting data necessary to describe the level of social skills of the kindergarten learners of the schools of San Juan district, for the school year 2025-2026. of the kindergarten learners of San Juan district, Division of La Union. It is also used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomenon to describe "what exists" with respect to variables and conditions in a particular situation. Furthermore, according to Sevilla (2020), this involves gathering data that describes events and then organizing, tabulating, depicting, and depicting the data collection.

Study Size and Setting - The respondents of this study shall be the total enumeration of kindergarten teachers in the public elementary schools in the San Juan District, Division of La Union. This study shall be conducted in the public elementary schools in the San Juan District, Division of La Union. Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents, Kindergarten teachers in the San Juan District.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents by School

Name of School	Number of Kindergarten Teachers
Caagraoan Elementary School	1
Balballosa Elementary School	1
Cabaroan Elementary School	1
San Felipe Elementary School	1
Bacsayan Elementary School	1
Legleg Elementary School	1
Sta. Rosa Elementary School	1
Bugbugcao Elementary School	1
Nadsaag Elementary School	1
Sto. Rosario Elementary School	1
Lubing Elementary School	1
San Juan Central School	1
Naguituban Elementary School	1
Urbiztondo Elementary School	1
Taboc Elementary School	2

Investigative Materials and Instruments - This study utilized an adopted questionnaire with permission from the author. The questionnaire for teachers is composed of three (3) parts, namely: Part I the profile of the kindergarten teachers; Part II delved into the level of social skills of the kindergarten learners., and Part III the validity of the proposed cooperative play activity. The items included in the questionnaire were adopted from the book (Opena,2022) and other materials related to the social skills of learners.

Data Collection Procedures - Before the administration of the questionnaire to the target respondents, the researcher asked permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of La Union, with the recommendation of the District Supervisor of the San Juan district, and endorsement of the Dean of the Graduate School. The questionnaires for kindergarten teachers were personally distributed in the different schools of the San Juan district. Retrieval of the questionnaires for teachers were personally retrieved by the researcher.

Data Processing - The level of social skills among kindergarten learners was assessed through frequency count and percentage analysis. The data was measured using a scale with numerical values that corresponded to specific descriptive ratings (DR) as outlined below: Numerical values ranging from 4.21 to 5.00 indicate that the social skill is "Very Highly Developed" (VHD). Values between 3.41 and 4.20 are categorized as "Highly Developed" (HD). Scores falling within the range of 2.61 to 3.40 denote a level of "Moderately Developed" (MD) social skills, while scores from 1.81 to 2.60 indicate that the skill is "Slightly Developed" (SD). Lastly, numerical values between 1.00 and 1.80 are classified as "Not Developed" (ND). All statistical computations were conducted using the Microsoft Excel Data Analysis Tool Pack.

2. Results and Discussion

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of the data from the study conducted. A discussion on the

profile of the respondents followed by the level of social skills of the kindergarten learners and the level of validity of the developed cooperative play activities.

The profile of kindergarten teachers includes several demographic and professional details. In terms of age distribution, 5 teachers (31.25%) are between 20-30 years old, 6 teachers (37.5%) are between 31-40 years old, and another 5 teachers (31.25%) are between 41-50 years old. No teachers fall into the age categories of 51-60 years or above. Regarding gender distribution, all 16 kindergarten teachers identified as female, representing a full 100% of the sample. In terms of educational attainment, the majority of teachers have completed different levels of education:

- Three teachers (18.75%) hold an M.A. with doctoral units.
- Five teachers (31.25%) hold an M.A. in Education.
- Six teachers (37.5%) hold a BEED/BSED degree plus additional master's units.
- Two teachers (12.5%) have only a bachelor's degree.

None of the respondents had completed a Doctor of Education or Doctor of Philosophy program. The frequency and percentage of in-service trainings attended by kindergarten teachers are as follows:

- Two teachers (12.5%) participated at the national level.
- Five teachers (31.25%) have attended regional-level training sessions.
- All 16 teachers (100%) have participated in division-level trainings.
- Additionally, all 16 teachers (100%) have attended district-level trainings.

Lastly, the length of service distribution among kindergarten teachers is:

- Four teachers (25%) have been teaching for 0–5 years.
- Five teachers (31.25%) have 6–10 years of experience.
- Another four teachers (25%) have been in service for 11–15 years.
- Three teachers (18.75%) have more than 15 but less than or equal to 20 years of teaching experience.
- No teachers fall into the categories of 21–25 years or above.

The data revealed that among the sixteen (16) kindergarten teachers of the San Juan district, the largest group belongs to the 31-40 years old age bracket, 6 or 37.5 percent. This indicates that a considerable portion of the teachers are in their early mid-career stage, possessing both youthful energy and accumulated teaching experience. The same table revealed that the 20-30 years old and 41-50 years old age brackets were represented equally, with five (5) teachers each, or 31.25. This would mean that the teaching force is balanced between younger and more experienced teachers. Notably, there were no teachers aged 51 years old and above; this means that most kindergarten teachers in the San Juan district are relatively younger and within the active service age.

In terms of sex, it shows that all (100%) of the respondents are female. This finding is consistent with the study of Dingayan (2020) that kindergarten teaching is predominantly occupied by women, often attributed to the nurturing, patient, and maternal qualities expected in early childhood education. With respect to the education attainment, the highest portion of teachers, six (6) or 37.5%, are BEED/BSED graduates with MA units, followed closely by five (5) or 31.25% who hold a Master of Arts in education degree. It was also noted that three (3) teachers or 18.75% have a master's degree with doctoral units, while two (2) or 12.5% hold a baccalaureate degree at the time of this study. None of the respondents has attained a full doctorate degree. This means that the majority

of the kindergarten teachers are academically qualified, which indicates their commitment to professional development and improving instructional competence. This academic preparation of teachers is necessary for nurturing foundational learning and social development among kindergarten learners.

As to the number of training attended, the data revealed that all sixteen (16) respondents representing 100% have attended the division level and district level in-service training. This finding highlights the strong commitment of the Department of Education to provide continuous professional development for kindergarten teachers. Moreover, participation in division and district training ensures that teachers are consistently updated with instructional strategies and best practices relevant to teaching kindergarten learners. At the regional level, five (5) teachers or 31.25% attended. This means that not all teachers have the chance to attend regional training, which provides them with exposure to a wider range of perspectives and innovations in teaching. Only five (5) or 12.5% have participated in national-level training. This relatively low percentage may be attributed to limited slots. The overall data emphasize that kindergarten teachers are highly engaged in professional development, particularly at the district and division level, where access is greater.

With regards to the length of service, 5 or 31.25% have been in the service for 6-10 years. This indicates that many kindergarten teachers are in the stage of their career, both the 0-5 years and 11-15 years groups are equally represented, with four (4) teachers each, 25%. The presence of teachers in the 0-5 years bracket is new in teaching, which can bring fresh ideas and energy to the profession. On the other hand, those with 11-15 years of experience reflect more seasoned individuals who have likely mastered classroom management, three (3) or 18.75% have served 16-20 years, representing the most experienced group. These teachers serve as valuable assets to their schools as they embody professional maturity and expertise in the field of education.

Social Skills - The results on the level of social skills of the kindergarten learners covering forty-one (41) indicators reveal that most of the learners' social skills are rated as either moderately developed (MD) or highly developed (HD). This indicates that learners are in the process gradually mastering important social skills needed for interaction and cooperation in school.

Table 2
Social Skills of Kindergarten Learners

Social Skill	WVM	DER Rank
Collaborating and working well with classmates	3.35	MD, 25
Awareness of self and others	3.32	MD, 29
Participating appropriately in group situations	3.3	MD, 31
Ability to begin and continue communication without too many distractions	3.36	MD, 24
Willingness to join an activity with peers and other people	3.45	HD, 11
Caring about other people	3.37	MD, 23
Interact freely with other children	3.3	MD, 31
Share responsibilities with others	3.27	MD, 35
Actively participate with others	3.39	MD, 19
Learners prefer to work alone	3.34	MD, 28
Learners share learning responsibilities with each other	3.42	HD, 14
Actively participate in groups	4	HD, 2
Demonstrate strong social skills	3.32	MD, 29
Listen carefully and speak clearly	3.3	MD, 31
Uses words to solve problems or conflicts	3	MD, 40
Uses words like please, thank you, and excuse me	3.4	MD, 16
Adjust to new situations	3	MD, 40
Attempts new tasks, knowing it's okay to make mistakes	3.12	MD, 38
Show pride and accomplishments	3.45	HD, 11
Follow a simple direction	3.46	HD, 10
Stays with an activity to completion	3.1	MD, 39
Ask for help	4.12	HD, 1
Interacts appropriately (listens, shares, takes turns)	4	HD, 2
Demonstrate increasing self-control	3.16	MD, 36
Take responsibility for one's own belongings	4	HD, 2
Is able to dress themselves	3.39	MD, 19

Adheres to a routine and schedule for hygiene, meals, and sleep	3.35	MD, 25
Uses good hygiene habits and table manners	3.39	MD, 19
Uses simple safety rules	3.49	HD, 8
Tries to regulate emotions and articulate feelings in words	3.15	MD, 37
Ability to work independently	3.4	MD, 16
Willingness to join an activity with other people	3.45	HD, 11
Learn to share and be assertive	3.5	HD, 7
Know how to communicate differently with others	3.3	MD, 31
Ability to work under pressure	4	HD, 2
Ability to understand and show empathy to others	3.35	MD, 25
Can express their own ideas	3.42	HD, 14
Willingness to develop positive rapport	3.49	HD, 8
Want people with a friendly and positive demeanor	3.59	HD, 6
Remain calm and civil	3.4	MD, 16
Matches/groups objects by size, experiments with new games and toys	3.38	MD, 22

Note. The social skills of kindergarten learners were rated using a scale where scores between 4.21 and 5.00 indicate "Very Highly Developed" (VHD), scores between 3.41 and 4.20 indicate "Highly Developed" (HD), scores between 2.61 and 3.40 indicate "Moderately Developed" (MD), scores between 1.81 and 2.60 indicate "Slightly Developed" (SD), and scores between 1.00 and 1.80 indicate "Not Developed" (NA).

The learners were generally rated as moderately developed in the following skills, with a rating that ranges from 3.00 to 3.40. "Collaborating and working well together with classmates; awareness of self and others; participating appropriately in group situations; caring about other people; ability to begin and continue a communication without too many distractions; interact freely with other children; share responsibilities with others; actively participate with others; learners prefer to work alone; demonstrate strong social skills; listen carefully and speak clearly; uses words to solve problems or conflicts; uses words like please, thank you and excuse me; adjust to new situations; attempts new task knowing its okey to make mistakes; stays with an activity to completion; demonstrate increasing self-control; is able to dress self; adheres to a routine and schedule for personal hygiene, eating meals and going to bed; uses good hygiene and table manners; tries to regulate emotions properly and articulate feeling in word; ability to work independently; know how to communicate differently with other people; ability to understand and show empathy to others; remain calm and civil and matches or groups object according to size experiment enthusiastically with new games and toys sometimes in a trial and error manner.

These imply that while learners can already demonstrate these skills, they still need guidance to strengthen cooperation and group responsibility, and still need reinforcement through modeling, structured activities, and continued practice. Moreover, these highlighted areas still require encouragement and teacher scaffolding. The findings imply that kindergarten learners possess a foundation in social skills. However, skills related to empathy, flexibility, and independence still require further development. Gascon (2019) underscores the importance of continuous teacher support and cooperative activities to help learners fully develop the social competencies necessary for academic readiness and positive social relationships.

Highly developed ratings were noted such as; willingness to join an activity with peers and other people 3.45, learners share learning responsibilities 3.42, actively participate in groups 4.00, show pride and accomplishment 3.45, follow a simple direction 3:46; ask for help 4.12, interact appropriately 4.00, take responsibility for own belonging 4.00, use simple safety rules 3.49, willingness to join an activity with other people 3.45, learn to share and also to be assertive 3.50, ability to work under pressure 4.00, can express their own ideas 3.42, willing to develop some sort of a positive rapport 3.49, and want people with a friendly and positive demeanor 3.59. The findings reflect positive progress in social skills and self-management. These would mean that learners show confidence, responsibility, and emotional control. The findings also show that kindergarten learners' social skills are mostly moderately developed to highly developed, which strongly supports that the social skills of learners are a vital foundation for literacy and academic readiness of kindergarten learners.

Interaction skills of kindergarten - Each child in the classroom is a unique individual; they have their own needs and interests, different from those of the other learners in the classroom. Because of this, the teacher should vary his techniques to be able to cater to his learners 'various needs and interests. Table 3 presents the data on the

perception of the kindergarten teachers of the interaction skills of the kindergarten learners. Interaction development shows how children think, explore, and figure things out. It is the development of knowledge, skills, problem-solving, and dispositions that help children to think about and understand the world around them. Brain development is a part of cognitive development.

Table 3
Interaction Skills

Variable	WM	DER Rank
Can express their own idea	3.59	HD, 12
Describe how objects are the same or different	4	HD, 8
Ability to begin and continue a communication without too many distractions	3.2	MD, 18
Participate during recitations	4.15	HD, 2
Learners show a preference for individual tasks	4	HD, 8
Learners share learning responsibilities with each other	3.22	MD, 16
Actively participates in group works	4.15	HD, 2
Listen carefully during class discussions	4.12	HD, 4
Mediates conflicts through speech	3.22	MD, 16
Uses words like please, thank you, and excuse me	4	HD, 8
Responds to simple commands	3.59	HD, 12
Complete the assignment independently	4.51	HD, 1
Talks in sentences	3.25	MD, 15
Use sentences that include two or more ideas	3	MD, 22
Use descriptive language	4.01	HD, 6
Knows by heart and recites some common nursery rhymes and songs	4.11	HD, 5
Create and make up songs and stories	4.1	HD, 7
Tells or retells and/or everyday experiences	4.1	HD, 7
Ask questions and express curiosity	4	HD, 8
Expresses ideas so that others can understand	3.08	MD, 20
Pretend to read books by reading the pictures	3.59	HD, 12
Recognizes rhyming words	3.52	HD, 14
Blend common words to print	3	MD, 22
Recognize lower-case and upper-case letters	3	MD, 22
Recognize letter sounds	3.12	MD, 19
Describe characters' actions and feelings in a story	3	MD, 22
Correctly counts four to ten objects	3.02	MD, 21
Recognize numbers 1-10	3.45	HD, 13
Can distinguish letters from numbers	3.02	MD, 21
Recognize numbers 11-20	4.01	HD, 6
Can distinguish shape from color	3.02	MD, 21

Note. The social skills of kindergarten learners were rated using a scale where scores between 4.21 and 5.00 indicate "Very Highly Developed" (VHD), scores between 3.41 and 4.20 indicate "Highly Developed" (HD), scores between 2.61 and 3.40 indicate "Moderately Developed" (MD), scores between 1.81 and 2.60 indicate "Slightly Developed" (SD), and scores between 1.00 and 1.80 indicate "Not Developed" (NA).

It is clearly shown in the table that kindergarten learners were rated by their teachers as highly developed in the different aspects. Foremost were: "can express their own idea" 3.59; "describe how objects are the same or different" 4.00; "participate during recitations" 4.15; learners show preference for individual tasks" 4.00; "actively participates in group works" 4.15; "listen carefully during class discussions" 4.12; "uses words like please, thank you and excuse me" 4.00; "responds to simple commands" 3.59; "complete assignment independently" 4.51; "use descriptive language" 4.01; "knows by heart and recites some common nursery rhymes and songs" 4.11; "create and make up songs and stories" 4.10; "tells or retells and/or everyday experiences" 4.10; "ask questions and expresses curiosity" 4.00; "pretend to read books by reading the pictures" 3.59; "recognizes rhyming words" 3.52; "recognize 1-10" 3.45; recognize 11-20" 4.01.

On the other hand, the following indicators received, which range from 3.00-3.25 described as moderately developed. "Ability to begin and continue a communication without too many distractions" 3.20; "learners share learning responsibilities to each other" 3.22; "mediates conflicts through speech" 3.22; "talks in sentences" 3.25; "uses sentences that include two or more ideas" 3.00; "express ideas so that others can understand" 3.08; "blend common words to print" 3.00; "recognize lower case and upper case letter" 3.00; "recognize letter sounds" 3.12; "describe characters' action and feelings in a story" 3.00; "correctly counts four to ten objects" 3.02; "can distinguish letter from numbers" 3.02; and "can distinguish shape from color" 3.02. This would mean that

interactive skills and knowledge involve the ability to acquire factual information, often the kind of knowledge that can easily be tested, so cognition should be distinguished from social, emotional, and creative development and ability (https://www.meriam-webster.com). Moreover, it is essential that teachers get to know their learners, learn their passions, and help them find out how they can engage them in their own learning. Teachers must ensure that they can engage them in their own learning and differentiate learning and work to meet the needs of each learner and understand how they learn.

Table 4

Level of Socio-Emotional Skills

Variable	WM	DER Rank
Learn to share and also to be assertive	3.41	HD, 15
Ability to understand and show empathy to others	3.5	HD, 12
Willing to develop some sort of positive rapport	4	HD, 5
Want people with a friendly and positive rapport	4.11	HD, 2
Remain calm and civil	4.01	HD, 4
Collaborating and working well together without others	3.5	HD, 12
Willingness to join an activity with a peer-sibling and other people	4.05	HD, 3
Caring about other people	3.57	HD, 9
Share responsibilities with others	4	HD, 5
Demonstrate strong skills	4	HD, 5
Adjust to new situations	3.22	MD, 18
Attempts new tasks, knowing it's okay to make mistakes	4	HD, 5
Show pride and accomplishments	3.51	HD, 11
Ask for help	4.12	HD, 1
Interact appropriately (listen to others, share, and take turns)	3.57	HD, 9
Demonstrate increasing self-control	3.4	MD, 16
Take responsibility for one's own belongings	3.4	MD, 16
Tries to regulate emotions properly and articulate feelings in words	3.5	HD, 12

Note. The socio-emotional skills of kindergarten learners were rated using a scale where scores between 4.21 and 5.00 indicate “Very Highly Developed” (VHD), scores between 3.41 and 4.20 indicate “Highly Developed” (HD), scores between 2.61 and 3.40 indicate “Moderately Developed” (MD), scores between 1.81 and 2.60 indicate “Slightly Developed” (SD), and scores between 1.00 and 1.80 indicate “Not Developed” (NA).

Level of socio-emotional - The level of the socio-emotional domain is one of three domains in blooms taxonomy. It involves feelings, attitudes, and emotions. It includes the ways in which people deal with external and internal phenomena emotionally, such as values, enthusiasm, and motivation. This domain is categorized into five levels, which include receiving, responding, valuing, and characterization. The socio-emotional domain refers to the tracking of growth in feelings or emotional areas throughout the learning experience. In order to be most effective, learning objectives labeled using this domain need a very clear instructional intention for growth. These domains describe the way learners react emotionally and their ability to feel other conditions. It targets the awareness and growth in attitudes, emotions, and feelings.

The result presents the data on the level of socio-emotional aspects among the kindergarten learners as perceived by the kindergarten teachers. It is clearly shown that kindergarten learners were rated as highly developed in the different aspects, which range from 3.41-4-12. It is clearly shown in the table that kindergarten learners looked at themselves or were described as highly developed. “Learn to share and also to be assertive 3.41; ability to understand and show empathy to others 3.50; willing to develop some sort of positive rapport 4.00; want people with a friendly and positive rapport 4.11; remain calm and civil 4.01; collaborating and working well together without others 3.50; willingness to join an activity with peer - sibling and other people 4.05; caring about other people 3.57; share responsibilities with others 4.00; demonstrate strong skills 4.00; attempts new tasks knowing it is okay to make mistakes 4.00; show pride and accomplishments 3.51; ask for help 4.12; interact appropriate (listen to others, share and take turns) 3.57; tries to regulate emotions properly and articulate feelings in word 3.50.

On the other hand, kindergarten learners describe themselves as moderately developed on the following aspects: adjust to new situations 3.22; demonstrate increasing self-control 3.40; and take responsibility for their belongings 3.40. The finding implies that learners often develop moderately in socio-emotional learning (SEL)

due to a combination of factors. Firstly, SEL is inherently complex, involving the acquisition of skills such as self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills. Many learners may struggle with these concepts without consistent practice and guidance. Secondly, the varying environments in which learners exist play a significant role. Factors such as family dynamics and cultural norms can influence a child's emotional intelligence and social skills. For instance, learners from supportive environments may show stronger SEL competencies compared to those from less nurturing backgrounds.

3. Conclusions and implications

The development of social skills among kindergarten learners is crucial for their overall growth and future interpersonal competence. Structured activities, guided play, and teacher modeling are highly effective methods for fostering these essential skills. Social skills contribute not only to positive classroom dynamics but also to emotional growth and lifelong learning. Integrating cooperative play activities into daily instruction is essential for promoting learners' social development and holistic well-being.

For teachers, the implications are clear: they must prioritize incorporating group activities and collaborative play in their daily routines. This approach enhances students' social skills while supporting their emotional and cognitive development. Teachers need to be trained in socio-emotional learning strategies to effectively guide their students through these activities. Schools should provide training programs, instructional materials, and adequate time for planning and implementing cooperative play activities. For learners, engaging in cooperative play provides valuable opportunities to practice essential social behaviors such as cooperation, communication, empathy, and conflict resolution. These activities help them develop the skills necessary for navigating interpersonal relationships both inside and outside the classroom.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made: Teachers should incorporate daily group activities to foster social skills; Parents and guardians should reinforce social behaviors at home through collaborative play; Schools may consider training programs for teachers on socio-emotional learning strategies; Further research can explore the link between social skills and academic achievement; School administrators may support teachers by providing training, instructional materials, and adequate time for planning and implementing cooperative play activities; and Curriculum developers may consider strengthening the inclusion of structured cooperative play activities in early childhood education programs to promote holistic learner development, particularly in the social domain.

In conclusion, the effective development of social skills among kindergarten learners through structured activities and guided play is imperative for their overall growth and long-term success. By integrating cooperative play into daily instruction and providing ongoing support to teachers, we can create an environment that promotes holistic development in both teachers and learners. This approach not only enhances classroom dynamics but also supports the emotional and cognitive well-being of students, setting them up for future academic and personal success.

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