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**ORGANIZING PLAYING ACTIVITIES FOR 5–6 YEAR OLD CHILDREN
AT NURSERY SCHOOLS OF PECK DISTRICT, XIENG KHOANG PROVINCE,
LAO PDR**

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Abstract. Infant education is the first level of the national education system, with the goal of forming and developing the personality, preparing the basis for children to participate in school education and lifelong learning. In order to develop personality for 5–6 year old children in kindergartens teachers must organize many activities for them, in which playing activity is the dominance. This article generally presents the results of the research on the status quo and suggests four measures to improve efficiency of organizing playing activities for 5–6 year old children in nursery schools of Peck district, Xieng Khoang province, Lao PDR.

Keywords: pre-school; teacher; 5–6 year old children; playing; playing activity; organizing playing activities; teaching method.

To carry out this study the research team surveyed 15 administrators, 30 teachers and 600 nursery children aged 5–6 at 5 nursery schools of Peck district, Xieng Khoang province, Lao PDR in the period from April 2017 to April 2018. The study used a combination of theoretical research methods and questionnaire survey methods, observation methods, pedagogical product research methods. Results of the study were analyzed by mathematical statistics methods.

Organizing playing activity for 5–6 year old children in kindergartens is the process in which teachers select, organize and apply knowledge, systems of measures, methods and conditions of activity so that children show their actions to satisfy playing demand and thereby implementing educational goals for the child.

1. The current situation of organizing playing activities for 5–6 year old children in nursery schools of Peck district, Xieng Khoang province, Lao PDR.

The results are as follows:

- Perceptions of managers and teachers about organizing playing activities for pre-school children: 87 % of the interviewed managers and teachers are aware of the concept of playing activities of kindergarten children; 93 % of managers and teachers believe that playing activities are important for the development of 5–6 year old children and they are the means of education that develops physical, intellectual, cognitive, emotional, social and aesthetic skills for children.

- About the need to organize games for children: 96 % to 100 % of managers and teachers think that it is necessary to organize for children role-playing games by topic, building games, action games, folk games, learning games. It is necessary to enhance the exploitation and use of games software to organize children to play, thereby promoting activeness, initiative and creating a modern educational environment through organizing games for children.

- About the types of games: teachers have to organize children to participate in a variety of games. Specifically:

Table 1

The current state of the games that are held for 5–6 year old children

№	Name of game	Level of holding game				Total marks
		Very often (4 marks)	Often (3 marks)	Sometimes (2 marks)	Never (1 mark)	
1	Role-playing by topic	30	10	5	0	160
2	Play-acting	0	0	0	0	0
3	Assembly construction	25	15	5	0	155
4	Action game	35	9	1	0	169
5	Learning game	34	9	2	0	167
6	Folk games	32	12	1	0	166
7	Other games	15	10	20	0	130

Using observation and direct interviewing method, we found that the level of game organization was not even among schools. Basically, kindergartens in Peck district, Xieng Khouang province have organized a variety of games for children. Survey data and interviews also confirmed that many teachers actively consulted and searched on the internet new games to apply in the process of educating children to develop the needs and ability to explore, so that they will like attending school. However, a few teachers are not active. These teachers only organize a few traditional and stereotypical games, making children bored and uninterested.

- About the form of organization: 78 % of the interviewed managers and teachers trust that kindergartens have organized children to play in many combinations, including: personal playing, group playing, whole class playing; playing under the direction of teacher and free playing of children; combining the classroom playing and outdoors playing. Teachers have carried out the process of organizing children to play at different time of day. It includes steps:

a) Preparation (building up organizational plan, preparing physical and psychological environment for children).

b) Organizing the process (guiding, controlling, regulating and promoting the playing process of children).

c) Finish.

About 22 % of interviewers said that they have not well implemented the forms of organizing playing activities for children in daily manner. Some teachers have not well prepared the children's playing activities. As a result success of children in playing has not been encouraged by teachers. Teachers still do the tasks of children such as picking and storing toys and tools. Children are not allowed to play on their own interest because most of the games are organized from the needs of the teacher. The method of organizing and evaluating the development of children has not yet been implemented according to the child-centered viewpoint in education [2].

- About the environment to organize playing activities: administrators and teachers have paid attention to the environment to organize playing activities for children. Specifically:

Table 2

The current situation of building and using environment to organize playing activities for children in nursery schools of Peck district, Xieng Khoang province

№	Content	Level of holding				Total marks	Level of holding
		Very often (4 marks)	Often (3 marks)	Sometimes (2 marks)	Never (1 mark)		
11	Building an outdoor environment of facilities and toys for children	30	10	5	0	3,55	5
22	Building an indoor environment of facilities and toys for children	33	9	3	0	3,66	1
33	Building a positive psychological environment for children	31	12	2	0	3,64	2
44	Using the indoor environment of facilities and toys for children	32	10	3	0	3,64	2
55	Using the outdoor environment of facilities and toys for children	29	15	1	0	3,62	4
66	Using the positive psychological environment to promote children's playing activities	30	9	6	0	3,53	6

The survey data in table 2 shows that kindergartens have developed and used the active environment for children, focusing on the following contents:

a) Building an indoor environment of facilities and toys for children (the average mark is 3.66 and is ranked the first in terms of performance level);

b) Using the positive psychological environment to promote children's playing activities (Good pedagogical relationships between children and children; between teacher and children, between teacher and teacher) and using the indoor environment of facilities and toys for children (the average mark is 3.64 and is ranked the second in terms of performance level);

c) Using the outdoor environment of facilities and toys for children (the average mark is 3.62 and is ranked the fourth in terms of performance level);

d) Building an outdoor environment of facilities and toys for children (the average mark is 3.53 and is ranked the fifth on performance level);

e) Using the positive psychological environment to promote children's playing activities (Good pedagogical relationships between children and children; between teacher and children, between teacher and teacher). The average mark is 3.55 and is ranked the sixth in terms of performance level).

- About implementing the role of teachers in organizing playing activities for children. Most of the teachers have well performed the decisive role, so that implementation levels should include the following:

a) The organizer of playing activities for children (the average mark is 3.57; is ranked the first).

b) The planner for playing activities for children and the guide for children to carry out their own playing activities (the average mark is 3.44; is ranked the second).

c) Appropriate psychological creators of activity for children (the average mark is 3.37; is ranked the third).

d) The person that helps children to evaluate their own playing results (the average mark is 3.35; is ranked the fourth).

e) The person creating opportunity for children to adjust their playing behavior when they do not have proper actions (the average mark is 3.28; is ranked the fifth).

f) The person evaluating playing result of children (the average mark is 3.24; is ranked the sixth).

g) The person handling the situation occurs during the game (the average mark is 3.22; is ranked the seventh).

Thus, when organizing playing activities for children, the teachers have fulfilled their leading role to help children to participate in and perform playing activities.

- Evaluating the performance level of the game types in order from high to low as follows: *Assembly – construction game* (76 % rated good; is ranked the first); *Action game* (72 % rated good; is ranked the second); *Role-playing game* (69.6 % rated good; is ranked the third); *Learning game* (68 % rated good; is ranked the fourth); *Folk game* (62.4 % rated good; is ranked the fifth); *Play-acting* (0 % rated good; is ranked the sixth). Play-acting is the game that children have not taken part in since the teacher did not organize this game for them. Through interviews with teachers and administrators, we learned that this is a difficult game because of the limited awareness of the children, lack of tools and facilities, narrow classroom and limited skill to organize this game for children.

The development of children in playing activities is influenced by eight factors, in order of impact level from the highest to the lowest are:

- “The direction of the Communist Party and the Government of Laos on preschool education”;
- environment of material facilities to organize playing activities is limited;
- content, program, methodology, form of organization;
- competence and pedagogical virtue of teachers in organizing playing activities for children;
- characteristics of children, the capacity to organize playing activities for children;
- collaboration with families and socialization in preschool education is not effective.

2. Some suggested measures

To organize playing activities for preschool children of 5-6 year old in kindergartens teachers need to organize and manage to improve the effectiveness of organizing playing activities to meet the comprehensive personality education goals for children according to the general preschool education goals and the goal for age in particular [1].

In order to improve the effectiveness of personality education for children for 5–6 year olds through organizing playing activities in kindergartens of Peck district, Xieng Khoang province, Lao PDR, we suggest the following measures:

Measure 1: Developing the content of playing activities for children.

Aim: Games content development is to change inappropriate and repetitive contents into new contents in accordance with the real life of children and educational requirements, which helps to organize better playing activities for children in preschools.

Content:

- Developing the content of the games that currently organized for children.
- Building and using play-acting to organize children. This kind of game is not currently available at the preschools for the survey. Build and using well play-acting game, especially the games with contents coming from literary works which are suitable for children of 5–6 years old and organizational conditions will help children to deeply understand the content of literary works, develop their fund of language, capacity to understand the diverse and attractive folk language, develop play-acting skill, creativeness and artistic potential in language and acting. Playing well the game is also a means to educate morals and personality for children.

Mode of measure implementation: The kindergartens set up a plan to develop games for children and disseminate to teacher. Basing on the plan of nursery school, teachers add and adjust the content that has been organized for children in the direction of practice and follow the educational topics. Building and organizing games according to topics and events for children. Organizing play-acting games for children to be familiar with literary works. In outdoor activities, playing activities should follow the stories and plays that are appropriate to children's age, the plays that have their favorite characters. Evaluating the results and frequently learn

from experience will make the implementation of the game effective according to innovative contents.

Measure 2: Developing and organizing playing activities for children from a child-centered perspective.

Aim: Developing and organizing playing activities for children from a child-centered perspective will promote the leading role of the teacher and ensure that the playing process of children is derived from their needs and experience. So children are respected for their personalities and abilities, thereby it helps them to maximize the potential of each individual in playing activities.

Content: Establishing and organizing playing activities for children in learning activities, activities of picking up children to school and returning home, indoor activities in classrooms, outdoor activities, child-centered activities.

Mode of measure implementation: Training for teachers skills in designing and organizing playing activities for children from a child-centered perspective; Organizing the leaders of professional groups and teachers to develop the plan and organize playing activities for the children from the child-centered perspective at school level and group, class plan level; checking, revising, promulgating the plan and organizing the implementation; evaluating implementation results and apply corrective measures to improve the plan.

Measure 3: Making utensils and toys for use in play activities of children.

Aim: The physical environment in general, utensils and toys of various types of games, and the forms of organization and educational tasks play an important role in the quality of children's playing activities. In reality, the source of utensils and toys of the nursery schools in Peck district, Xieng Khoang province is limited. When teachers make a lot of utensils and toys, this will increase the prerequisite for the quality of children's playing activities [5].

Content: Making utensils and toys with different shapes, colors and usage from a

variety of materials sources, including: utensils and toys using in outdoor activities such as natural area, sandy and watery area, action game area, folk game area, free play area with materials made from gravel and sand, utensils and toys in classrooms used to organize playing activities in corners, games are organized in the learning activities of children from simple, easy to find and easy to collect materials such as cardboard cover, old calendar cover, color paper.

Mode of measure implementation: The schools plan to organize teachers to make utensils and toys for children by school year; teachers actively check the source of utensils and toys available in classes; making a list of missing utensils and toys; identifying utensils and toys can be added according to making toy capacity of teachers (including indoor and outdoor toys); collaborating with families, mobilizing the children's parents take part in the creation of utensils and toys for playing activities of children in class by appealing to their donations for materials, time and participation with teachers to make utensils and toys for each class; organizing activities for children to practice with open materials such as leaves, gravel, newspapers, sand, chalk, etc., to create plastic products that children like and these products in playing activities. For example:

Story-book corner: Taking salvage of waste paper, old calendars, teacher helps children to form story-books, then the children collect pictures and cut or tear them according to the topic of learning games, each child will feel the beauty of the book that they made on their own with the assistance of teachers

Role-casting corner: Cake boxes, milk boxes, cosmetics boxes with beautiful colors are used as cooking toys: cooker, bowl, and to display for grocery store; creating dishes from soil: beef, sticky rice; making spring rolls from plastic bags (making wrapping rolls), paper shreds, foam shreds (making the core of rolls); making cakes from white and yellow soil (drift cake and donuts); making

pictures from drawing paper, colored pens of beautiful, attractive colors by teaching children to cut and paste to decorate the corner and by playing with the children.

Construction corner: Making flower (cutting the sponge into petals, then stick them to the jelly cover and take the straws to be the branches, or use wrinkled paper and sponges wrap around the steel wire); making coconut trees and cycad (using old cardboard to make the tree-trunk, sponge to make leaves);

Learning corner: Using the pictures that children drew and painted about clothes to decorate the corner. This gives to children a sense of excitement as it is the product that they made themselves, they play with it and performs the decoration according to their teacher's instructions.

Organizing competitions to make utensils and toys for children at school level, or teacher competitions to make utensils and toys at school and district level and use directly the products for playing activities of children [4].

Measure 4: Designing and using playing environment for 5–6 year-old children from a child-centered perspective.

Aim: To help children satisfy their needs to play, develop curiosity and activity in learning, promote positive creation, through which the personality of children is formed and comprehensively developed.

Content: Designing and using material environment: the playing space needs to be arranged appropriately to enable children to actively take and use the toys; promoting positive emotional expression in activities and development of the individual's virtue of children; the arrangement of utensils and toys should be diverse, open, and attractive to stimulate the activity of children; utensils and toys need to be complemented appropriately with each topic; organizing for children to use playing environment toward they are subjects of the game, meet their needs and ability according to the type of game and the form of organization.

Building and using psychological environment: Children share and cooperate with teachers and friends when they are living in a comfortable environment. Teachers let children participate in arranging utensils and toys, present products in corners, this gives to children the feeling of being a member of a class, so they are more excited, ready to share their ideas and evoke the need for communication, show their beautiful behavior with everyone; creating discipline of the class in playing activities and the self-discipline practice of children; teachers do not make for children, respect the individuality of each child in every activity and especially in playing activities.

Mode of measure implementation: Planning for the construction and organization of the psychological environment and the material environment in holding playing activities for 5–6 year old children within the school and the classes; teachers co-ordinate with children and families to develop appropriate playing space to facilitate children to actively take and use toys; arrangement of utensils and toys should be diverse and open; utensils and toys need to be complemented appropriately with each topic and children's activity; basing on the pedagogical requirements, teachers develop and implement the internal rules of the class and rules of playing activities for the children; organizing measures in order for children to actively share and cooperate with teachers and friends when playing; practicing listening skill and respect; actively fulfilling the teacher's requirements, encour-

aging self-reliance and self-confidence for children [3].

Conclusion: Based on the results of the study, we believe that different measures should be taken to help administrators and teachers in preschool institutions and parents to comprehensively develop and implement measures of impact. Creating and effectively using a synchronous mechanism between the families and the kindergartens in accordance with the local practical conditions in organizing the preschool educational program in general and organizing playing activities for children will promote the educational quality for 5-6 year old children in nursery schools of Peck district, Xieng Khoang province, Lao PDR.

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