PLAY AND SOCIAL COMPETENCE: PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTS' AT HAATSO

THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MPHIL HOME SCIENCE DEGREE

BY

JEAN AKWELEY SAI

(10271720)

FEBRUARY, 2019

DECLARATION

I, Jean Akweley Sai, hereby declare that except for the references which have been duly cited, the work in this dissertation, "Play And Social Competence: Perceptions Of Parents' At Haatso" was done entirely by me in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, College of Basic and Applied Sciences, University of Ghana, Legon. This work has never been presented either in whole or in part for any other degree in this University or elsewhere.

.....
JEAN AKWELEY SAI
(STUDENT)

.....
DR. VIVIAN TACKIE – OFOSU
(SUPERVISOR)

.....
DR. SHERIFFA MAHAMA
(SUPERVISOR)

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to analyze the association between parents' perceptions of children's play and its relationship with children's social competence development. The objectives of the study were to (1) Understand parents' perceptions of play (2) Determine whether there were differences in parents' perceptions of children's play when analyzed by parents: gender, age, and level of education (3) Determine whether there were differences in parents' perceptions of children's play when analyzed by child's gender, and age (4) Assess parents rating of children's emotional and behavioral problems and (5) Examine if there were relationships between parents' play perceptions and their children's emotional and behavioral problems.The study was carried out at Haatso in the Ga East Municipal District of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Purposive sampling was used to select two schools, one private and one public. A sample of 200 parents with children aged 4–7 participated in this study. The parent's belief play scale and the strengths and difficulties questionnaire (parent and teacher version) were used for data collection. The Predictive Analytic Software version 21, (PASW21) was used for the analysis and the ANOVA tests, and Pearson correlation was used to test the hypotheses. It was hypothesized that: H_O1: There is no significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and children's social competence; H_O2: There is no significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and parent's level of education. H_O3: There is no significant relationship between parent's level of education and emotional and behavioral problems of children. The results were as follows: Ghanaian parents valued the significance of play to children's growth and therefore supported playing with their children. Parents' perceptions of child's play differed by age, and educational level, but there was no difference by parents' gender. There was no significant difference in parents' perceptions of children's play when examined by child's gender and age. Significant difference was found for parents rating of their children's emotional and behavioral problems

when analyzed by children's gender. Boys were assessed by their parents as having advanced levels of total difficulties and hyperactivity problems, than girls. With regards to children's age, differences were found for only emotional problems, children aged 6-7 years had higher levels of emotional problems when compared to 4-5 year olds.Parents' play support was positively correlated to children's pro social behaviours and academic support was negatively correlated with total difficulties, emotional, conduct, hyperactivity and peer problems. The Pearson correlation test revealed there was a statistically significant relationship between parents play beliefs and children's development of social competence ($r = 0.194$ $p = 0.006$, $r = 0.188$, $p = 0.008$). It also revealed there was statistically significant relationship between parents play beliefs and level of education ($r= 0.145$, $p = 0.040$, $r = -0.410$, $p = 0.000$). Finally, there was a significantly negative relationship between parent's level of education and emotional and behavioral problems. In conclusion the findings in this study indicate that parents play perceptions had a positive relationship with children's development of social competence. It is therefore recommended that parents be sensitized by teachers on the developmental role of play in child development.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents Mr. Reginald Sai and Mrs. Margaret Sai, my siblings Miriam, Sharon, and Joan for their encouragement and support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Almighty God for all the great things he has done. My appreciation goes to my supervisors; Dr. Vivian Tackie- Ofosu and Dr. Sheriffa Mahama for their guidance, advice and useful suggestions that led to the successful completion of this thesis. Lastly, I wish to thank my parent's Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Sai and my siblings for the care and encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
NAEYC	National Association of Education of Young Children
PASW 21	Predictive Analytic Software Version 21
PPBS	Parent Play Belief Scale
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

This section gives an overview of chapter one. It includes: the background of the study, statement of the problem, aim of the study, objectives of the study, hypotheses, and significance of the study.

A plethora of studies have demonstrated that the development of social competence is important to the well-being of children throughout their life span (Broidy, *et al*., 2003; Denham & Brown, 2010). Social competence is the capacity to function socially with peers and adults, such as attaining social goals, maintaining friendships, achieving peer acceptance, these contribute to emotional development, self-esteem, and school achievement (Landy, 2009; Tomlinson & Hyson, 2009). Social competence during childhood is seen as the capacity to achieve social objectives, enter set up play gatherings, start play and to react suitably to peers (Howes, Hamilton, & Matheson, 1994).

The significance of social competence has been well documented by a lot of investigators. For example, social competence has been connected to children's readiness to enter school, positive adjustment in school, psychological welfare, social associations as well as accomplishments in tests (Birch & Ladd, 1996; Broidy, *et al*., 2003;Denham, 2006; Duncan, Dowsett, Claessen, Magnuson,Huston, Klebanov,Japel, 2007; Kupersmidt, Coie, & Dodge, 1990; Malecki & Elliott, 2002; Welsh,Bierman & Pope, 2000). Failure to build up a portion of the essential elements of social competence, for example, focusing and doing what is normal, has been connected to later withdrawn conduct, peer-dismissal, and academic issues

(Eisenberg, et al., 1997). The life- long dangers for children who cannot cooperate well with their peers may consist of poor psychological wellness, poor employment history, low scholastic accomplishment, and other school problems (Katz & McClellan, 1997;Juvonen, 1997; Pearson & Rao, 2003; Thompson, Goodvin, & Meyer, 2006).

Numerous studies (Howes, 1992;Kentel, 2007; Singer & Singer, 2005; Swartz, 2005) have explored the relationship between play and social competence development. According to Fromberg (2002), toward the start of play, social techniques are required to enter play gathering. Playing with peers advances social knowledge and networks. As children build networks and experience disputes, they augment their aptitudes by discovering systems that work and those that do not, how to maintain networks, and take care of disputes(Glover, 1999).Different types of play help children acquire social skills, for an example make-believe play has been observed to be related with children's awareness of other individuals' sentiments, it supports dialect and vocabulary development, builds memory capacities, improves thinking and critical thinking capacities, particularly in circumstances when conflicting truths are viewed (McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007) and cultivates adaptable and creative thinking (Isenberg & Jalongo, 1997; Lindsey & Colwell, 2003; Pellegrini, 1984a; Piaget, 1962a).

Farmer- Dougan & Kaszuba (1999) stated that children who occupied themselves with make-believe play are more socially skillful with companions and grown- ups, than those who do not. Rough-and-tumble play empowers children to practice point of view taking, express their feelings, and recognize genuine and play-related feelings of others (Pellegrini, 1995). Rough-and tumble play is consequently imperative to forming of friendships and social skills (Scott & Panksepp, 2003). Socio dramatic play helps in emotional development and sentiments that outcome a more noteworthy sentiment of control, feeling of joy, positive peer acceptance,

and social skills (McArdle, 2001; McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007 ; Saracho & Spodek, 2003 ; Smilansky & Shefatya, 1990).

From the above literature one can deduce that, play is crucial to children's growth however not all parents have positive perceptions of play, and its value to child development. Parents who have no knowledge about child developmental theories may have difficulties recognizing how play fosters learning. Elkind (2005) talks about how parents are not able to recollect what it was like for them to learn about their general surroundings when they were youthful, Elkind (2005) named this as adolescence amnesia. This clarifies how parents may experience serious difficulties in comprehending the advantages of play as a learning tool.When parent's value the contribution of play to the development of their children, the addition of play into children's every day exercises increases in quality and amount (Sigel & McGillicuddy-De Lisi, 2002).As revealed in other studies, the extent to which parents believe play to be important, affects how they plan their children's every day activities, like the items such as toys, play structures found in their home to their day by day schedules, social communications (Caldera, Huston, & O'Brien, 1989;McGillicuddy- De Lissi, 1985; Palacios, Gonzalez, & Moreno, 1992; Rheingold & Cook, 1975), and participation in out-of-school activities (Eccles, 1993; Howard & Madrigal, 1990; Jacobs & Eccles, 2000; Jacobs, Vernon, & Eccles, 2005).

Play frequently conveys diverse implications crosswise over various societies (Johnson *et al*., 2005). For an example Fogle and Mendez (2006) andHolloway, Marylee, Rambaud, & Costanza, (1995), found that African Americans and Latina mothers acknowledge that play may have particular developmental benefits but still choose academic activities for children. Whiles Yucatec Mayans and East Indian parents view play as something children do normally, (Gaskins & Miller, 2009). Ladd, (1992) found the link between parental play beliefs and the advancement of children's social competence. Fogle and Mendez (2006)

affirmed it when they found that African-American mother's assessment of play support was positively correlated to of their assessments of children's peer interactive play.

A lot of importance has been placed on academic achievement in today's society that there is a move to educate young children in more advanced skills like reading and writing (Golinkoff, Hirsh-Pasek, & Singer, 2006). As such, because parents want their children to succeed they may be driven to choose early childhood programs that are mainly scholastic centered (Hirsh Pasek & Golinkoff, 2003).Despite the growing interest in the influence of parental beliefs on child development a lot of researchers studied only parental perceptions of play without investigating the link between their play perceptions and the development of children, and the studies conducted were mostly on academic benefits of play ignoring the other aspects of child development. Also, most of the research was conducted in the Western and Eastern worlds whiles little is known of the African parent's perceptions of play. The aim of this study therefore was to analyze the connection between parents' views on play and children's social competence.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There is so much emphasis on academic achievement in the Ghanaian society that many parents certainly need their children to be successful and to be at the highest point of their class. This tends to push parents to pick schools that are mainly academic centered with little regard to the development of social competence. It is the common view of most parents that academic success in school is essential for future achievement. Emerging research however, proposed that in the information age, achievement would rely on children having a wide range of aptitudes that incorporate joint effort particularly social competence, communication, creativity, and self-confidence. This study therefore sought to study the

beliefs of parents on children's play and how it relates to the development of children's social competence.

1.3 Aim of the Study

This study aimed to discover the connection between parent's perceptions' of children's play and social competence development.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

To attain this aim, the ensuing objectives were identified: The objectives were to:

1. Understand parents' perceptions of play
2. Determine whether there were differences in parents' perceptions of children's play when analyzed by parents:
    a) Gender
    b) Age
    c) Level of education
3. Determine whether there were differences in parents' perceptions of children's play when analyzed by child's:
    a) Gender
    b) Age
4. Assess parents rating of children's emotional and behavioral problems.
5. Examine if there were relationships between parent's play perception and their children's emotional and behavioral problems.

1.5 Hypotheses

H_O1: There is no significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and children's social competence.

H_O2: There is no significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and parents level of education.

H_O3: There is no significant relationship between parent's level of education and emotional and behavioral problems of children.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1. This study would foster an understanding of the importance of parent's perceptions to child's play and its relationship to social competence. It is expected to help parents understand and also know the impact of play on their children's social competence and serve as a guide for future decisions, if results reveal a relationship between parents play perceptions and social competence.
2. Many studies, back the fundamental role that parent's perceptions of play, influences their engagement in children's play and in providing play materials. Nonetheless, few investigations of this nature do exist in Ghana and in that capacity this research will go far to add to, and fill gaps in the literature on parental beliefs of play in the Ghanaian and African context.
3. Given that the social setting of Ghana is not the same as that of the Western world where the vast majority of research had discovered parental play beliefs to affect development of social competence, it is essential for studies to be done to determine if the findings support those views.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to present a review and discussion of relevant literature on children's play and social competence.

2.1 Social Competence

Social competence is seen as a multifaceted notion consisting of social affirmation, recurrence of communication, good self-thought, social psychological aptitudes, and acceptance among peers (Dodge, 1985).This multiplicity makes social competence difficult to define, however over the years many researchers have come out with various definitions for it. For an example Wentzel (2005) stated that "social competence reflects this balance between the achievement of positive outcomes for the self and adherence to context-specific expectations for behavior" (p. 280).Social competence works along a spectrum and is impacted by various components such as, social opportunities, settings in which social collaborations happen, and familial, social and peer qualities (Guralnick, 2010; Odom, McConnell, & Brown, 2008).

Semrud-Clikeman (2007) defines social competence as an intricate, multidimensional thought involving social, emotional (i.e. impact direction), cognitive (i.e. store of data, aptitudes for handling/securing, point of view taking), and behavioral (i.e. communication abilities, good social conduct) aptitudes, and in addition motivational and expectancy sets (i.e. moral advancement, self-efficacy) required for effective social adjustment. Social competence additionally reflects having a capacity to take other's viewpoints regarding a circumstance, learn from previous encounters, and apply that knowledge to the adjustments in social

interactions. Social competence is the framework whereupon wishes for future correspondence with others are framed, and whereupon individuals become aware of their own conduct (Semrud-Clikeman, 2007).In childhood, social competence is seen as the capacity to meet social objectives, enter set up play gatherings, start play, and to react fittingly to companions (Howes, Hamilton, & Matheson, 1994).Children's social skills are impacted by how well they talk with other children and with grown-ups. Children's perspectives of themselves in association with their families, peers, and society, also impact their social capability.

2.2 Importance of Social Competence during Childhood

Young children's capabilities to develop relationships with peers, contributes a lot to their social and mental development and, how well they will function effectively as adults (Hartup, 1992). Hartup, (1992) further indicated that "the single best childhood predictor of adult adaptation is not school grades, and not classroom behavior, but rather, the adequacy with which the child gets along with other children. Children who are generally disliked, aggressive and disruptive, unable to sustain close relationships with other children, and who cannot establish a place for themselves in the peer culture are seriously at risk" (Hartup, 1992, p. 1).Researches over the years(Blandon, Calkins, Grimm, Keane, & O'Brien, 2010; Ladd, 2000; Parker & Asher, 1987), indicates that children who are unable to acquire the basic level of social capabilities by the time they enter elementary school may have problems with relationships during adulthood. The long term problems for children who cannot collaborate well with their peers comprises of poor emotional health, low scholarly accomplishments, and poor work ethics (Katz & McClellan, 1997).

However, children who have had opportunities to practice and develop social competence through playing and interacting with peers and adults are likely to have stronger relationships, good academic achievements and good mental health. It is not essential that children be "extroverts." Quality is more important than amount with respect to children's companionships. A child who has

at least one cherish companion typically tends to have a positive attitude towards school after awhile (Ladd, 1999). A few children may basically be more bashful, repressed, or mindful than others. Forcing such a child to collaborate with companions can make them really awkward. Unless a child is very bashful and not able to relish the "great things of life" (get-togethers, family trips, among others), she will presumably outgrow her bashfulness if grown-ups around, handle it with quiet thoughtfulness.

2.3 Development of Social Competence

Promoting social competence and averting issues caused by maladaptive development is unmistakable vital to people and to the world. Social competence skills development starts with the connections children form with parents, caregivers, teachers and their peers.(Boyd, Barnett, Bodrovic, Leong, & Gomby, 2005)

2.3.1 The Role of Parents

Parents assume a huge part in a child's social competence development. Early bonds with parent's builds that ground work on which social competence and peer associations are developed. Parents, who promote good emotional development, associate with their children adoringly, exhibit concern for their emotions, yearnings, show eagerness for their everyday exercises, regard their perspectives, show pride in their successes and give comfort and care amidst periods of anxiety. This support hugely raises the possibility that children would develop social competence earlier in life, would be school ready and less prone to exhibit conduct issues at school and home. (Sammons,*et al.*, 2003)

2.3.2 The Role of Early Childhood Educators

Most children spend numerous hours every day being looked after by somebody other than their parents. These caregivers, like parents assume a similar part in advancing social competence in

young children. Similarly, as parents who are loving and approachable will possibly encourage social competence in young children, so too are early childhood educators, this indicates that the school settings must allow educators the chance to concentrate on children individually. It is vital for a connection to be formed between teachers and children (Thompson, 2003).

2.3.3 The Role of Peers

Socially competent children participate in positive play practices, develop common friendships, and are generally liked by their peers. During play children, figure out how to function in groups and participate with others. Their conduct and interactions impact the way they are dealt with by their peers and perceived by their teachers. The connections children form in preschool can lastingly affect their academic accomplishments, since they add to more positive sentiments about school and energy to take part in classroom exercises, which can, prompt higher levels of academic accomplishments (Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999). Early dismissal by peers has been related with low academic accomplishments and social troubles in primary school (O'Neil, Welsh, Parke, Wang, & Strand, 1997). It is therefore essential to have gifted early childhood teachers who can intercede when they see children encountering issues with peers, assist children to find ways to resolve conflict, understand their feeling, and how to react to the emotions of others (Barnett, 2002).

2.4Selected Approaches to Social Competence

The peer regard or status approach characterizes social competence in view of how one is well liked by with his or her peers (Stump, Ratliff, Wu, & Hawley, 2009). According to Rose-Krasnor (1997), the more popular one is, the more socially competent they are. This suggests that once a child’s popularity among his or her peer’s builds up that child’s social capabilities develops quicker than the inverse. Social skill approach utilizes conducts as a rule, conducts that exhibit social abilities are aggregated and recognized as social competence (Rose-Krasnor, 1997). A child's social abilities are a contributing element in their social

competence development. According to the relationship approach social competence is evaluated by the nature of one's interactions and the capability to form connections. Competence relies on the abilities of both individuals in the relationship; children might seem all the more sociable if associating with a socially competent peer (Rose-Krasnor, 1997). Lastly the functional approach focuses on identifying social objectives and tasks. It is concerned with the results of social behaviors, and the procedures prompting those results. The social information model, data handling models of social aptitudes are imperative here, in view of the fact that social competence comes about because of social-cognitive processes (Rose-Krasnor, 1997).

2.5Social Competence Models

The early models of social competence places importance on the role of context and circumstance specificity in operationalizing the competence construct (Goldfried & D'Zurilla, 1969). These models likewise take into consideration the association and combination of the different component abilities, conducts, and perceptions related with social competence. While worldwide definitions concentrate on the "ends" instead of the "means" by which such ends are attained, (Goldfried & D'Zurilla, 1969) various models straightforwardly attend to the conjectured processes underlying competence (Goldfried & D'Zurilla, 1969; Crick & Dodge, 1994; Felner, Lease, & Phillips, 1990). These procedure models are context particular and try to recognize basic social objectives and tasks related with social competence.

2.5.1 Behavioral–Analytic Model

Goldfried&D'Zurilla (1969), established a five-stage behavioral-analytic model that outlines the meaning of social competence. The five stages include:

1. Situation analysis – a critical context is considered on the idea of a specific standard, which ensues with some repetition, presents a troublesome reaction choice, and results in a wide range of conceivable reactions in a given populace (Goldfried & D'Zurilla, 1969).

   Circumstance identification and examination can be done through an assortment of techniques, including direct perception independent from anyone else or others, meets, and studies.
2. Response enumeration –testing of conceivable reactions to every circumstance is gotten. Systems for producing reaction options include direct perception, pretend plays, and reproductions in video as well as writings.
3. Response evaluation –the listed reactions are adjudicated for viability by "significant others" in the environs. A critical component is that an accord among the judges must develop or the specific thing is expelled from future thought
4. Measure development
5. Evaluation of the measure

In stages four and five a measure for estimating social skill is produced and measured

2.5.2 Tri-Component Model

This approach describes social competence as comprising of three components (Cavell, 1990).

1) Social Adjustment–It is the highest point of the order incorporates and the most exceptional level. It is characterized as the degree to which a person accomplishes society's developmentally suitable objectives (Cavell, 1990). The objectives are thought about as various "statuses" to be accomplished by individuals from a general public (i.e., wellbeing, lawful, scholastic, financial, social, emotional, familial, and social statuses).
2) Social Performance or how much a person's reactions to important social circumstances meet socially accepted criteria

3) Social Skills- is characterized as particular capabilities (e.g. plain conduct, social cognitive aptitudes, and emotional control) taking into account the skillful execution within social projects.

2.5.3 The Quadripartite Model

The main components of competence are hypothesized to comprise of four super ordinate sets of aptitudes, abilities, and capacities:

1) Cognitive skills and abilities– cultural and social awareness fundamental for successful working in the world (e.g. scholastic and work related aptitudes and capacities, basic leadership capacity, and handling of data).
2) Behavioral skills – awareness of behavioral reactions and the skill to perform them (e.g., point of view taking, confidence, conversational abilities, and pro-social abilities).
3) Emotional skills–influence control and emotional aptitudes with respect to encouraging socially competent reactions and developing connections.
4) Motivational and anticipation sets – a person's esteem structure, moral growth, and feeling of adequacy and control (Felner, Lease, & Phillips, 1990).

2.5.4 Social Information-Processing Model

The social information-processing model is generally used for understanding social competence (Crick & Dodge, 1994). It concentrates on the mental processes fundamental to reaction determination, enactment, and assessment. It describes a six-stage nonlinear process with different criticism circles connecting a child's social cognition and conduct. Challenges that emerge at any of the stages mean social capability shortfalls.

Crick & Dodge, (1994) six steps are:

1) Observation and encoding of important stimuli – going to and encoding non-verbal and verbal social gestures, internally and externally.

2) Interpretation and mental portrayal of signals – comprehending what has occurred amid the social experience and also the reasoning behind the interaction.
3) Clarification of objectives – making sense of what ones objective figuring out what one's goal is for the connection and how to advance a comprehension of those objectives.
4) Representation of circumstance is produced by retrieving long term memory. The interaction is contrasted with past circumstances kept in long term memory and the past results of those interactions.
5) Response choice or determination
6) Behavioral enactment

2.6 Factors Contributing to Social Competence

2.6.1 Temperament

Temperament is a concept that depicts an individual's natural reaction to their environs (Semrud-Clikeman, 2007). The construct is made up of issues like soothability, rhythmicity, friendliness, and excitement (Semrud- Clikeman, 2007). Amiability promotes the growth of social competence.

2.6.2 Attachment

Social encounters establish the framework on which parent–child connections are built, and are essential in the growth of social abilities and behaviors. Attachment of a newborn child to a caregiver is critical for the growth of later social skills and behaviors (Ainsworth, 1979). Attachment enables the baby to find out that the world is unsurprising and dependable or sometimes unpredictable and harsh. Ainsworth (1979) outlines four type's attachment styles during infancy, and these are (1) secure attachment, (2) avoidant attachment, (3) preoccupied attachment, (4) disorganized attachment. The establishment of the attachment bond enables children to wander out from caregivers to attempt novel encounters. Children who are securely attached tend to

demonstrate high levels of social competence when compared to children who are insecurely attached, (avoidant, preoccupied and disorganized) (Semrud-Clikeman, 2007).

2.6.3 Parenting style

Parent's socialization practices impacts on growth and development of their children's social competence. Parenting styles identifies two critical components of child rearing: parental warmth or responsiveness and parental control or demandingness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parental responsiveness alludes "to the degree to which parents deliberately encourage distinction, self-direction, and self-declaration, being compassionate towardspeers" (Baumrind, 1991). Parental demandingness alludes to "the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts, and willingness to confront the child who disobeys" (Baumrind, 1991). Grouping parent's level on parental demandingness and responsiveness (i.e. high or low) is categorized into four child nurturing styles: permissive, authoritarian, authoritative, and uninvolved. These child rearing styles reveals parental ideals, practices, and conducts (Baumrind, 1991). Child rearing style promotes a child's development in the areas of social skill, scholastic achievement, psychosocial growth, and conduct problems (Baumrind, 1991). Previous studies based on parent observations, interviews, and child reports found out that:

1) Children and teenagers whose caregivers were authoritative were rated by a legitimate scale and by themselves as being more socially skilled than those who had non-authoritative caregivers (Baumrind, 1991; Miller, Cowan, & Hetherington, 1993; Weiss & Schwarz, 1996).
2) Children and teenagers who performed inadequately in all the domains of child development had parents uninvolved. (Weiss & Schwarz, 1996)

3) Other variables such as peer and teacher relationships, community and the neighborhood promote social competence development. (Baumrind, 1991)

2.7 Concept of Play

The meaning of play is both perplexing and challenging and has for quite some time been the subject of social and academic level headed discussion. The expansion in "structured play sessions" and rise of "technology based play" has facilitated the perplexity over the significance and nature of play (Lester & Russell, 2008). Rubin *et al* (1983) characterized play as an action that is innately persuaded, and concerned with means instead of ends, child directed, free from external rules. The rules that occur can be altered by players, and it necessitates dynamic engagement of players.

2.8 Types of Play that Enhance Social Competence Development in Children

2.8.1Pretend Play

Pretend play as indicated by Pellegrini, (1984a,1984b) promotes vocabulary and language development, builds memory capacities, upgrades thinking, problem solving skills and critical thinking capacities, particularly in circumstances when there are conflicting facts (McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007), and encourages adaptable and imaginative thinking (Isenberg & Jalongo, 1997; Peplar, 1986). Pretend play helps children to express their sentiments in these ways as explained by Piaget, (1962a):

1. Simplify situations by making a nonexistent character, plot, or setting to coordinate their emotional state. Children scared of darkness, for instance, may exclude night time from their play scenes.
2. Compensate for circumstances by adding prohibited acts to imaginative play. Children may, for instance, have dessert for breakfast in play, while actually this would not be acceptable in real life situations.

3. Control emotions by reenacting awful or startling encounters repeatedly. For instance, a child may profess to have a mishap in the wake of seeing a car crash on the road.
4. Avoid undesirable results by envisioning that another person, existent or fictional, confers wrong acts and bears the outcomes. A child, whose television watching time is controlled, for example, will allow a doll to watch television without control and after punish the "disobedient child" for watching TV without guidance.

It has likewise been recommended that “popularity” is an early sign of a child's capacity to perceive mental states in others (Bailey, 2002). Generally, children below age four are not capable of identifying deliberateness in other people, yet children from eighteen months engage in make-believe play which requires the acknowledgment of deliberateness in other people (Bailey, 2002). In this way, it gives the idea that through play children firstly come to comprehend self awareness, and then are able to distinguish between imaginative play and reality, then finally the motives of others (Bailey, 2002). According to Farmer-Dougan and Kaszuba (1999) a child who engages in make-believe play will probably be more socially skilled with peers and grown-ups than those who do not engage in it.

2.8.2 Rough and Tumble Play

Rough and tumble play has been characterized as physically vivacious practices, like play fighting chase among others, that is joined by positive sentiments among players. It empowers children to learn to take the point of view of others, to learn to express and control their emotions, to recognize actual and play-associated sentiments of others (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998), in spite of the fact that this impact relates more to boys than girls (Lindsey & Colwell, 2003). Rough and tumble play is therefore vital for the growth of pro-social skills and forming relationships with peers (Scott & Panksepp, 2003).

2.8.3 Socio-dramatic Play

Socio-dramatic play involves carrying out scripts, scenes, and plays adapted from books and cartoons. Children take up or accept roles using themselves or potential characters like figures and, dolls among others, as they act out common themes. A caregiver may help in coming out with ideas for the characters, set up props, and formulate story lines from the children's ideas. Socio- dramatic play normally happens between the ages 3 to 4 year olds. The themes, characters, sequences problem solving skills, plans among others increases in quality as the children grow. As indicated by Hughes, (1999) socio-dramatic play, performs a significant part in the growth of children's social competence since it expects children's to have capacities with regards to thinking before acting, emotional understanding, and detecting the point of view of others (McArdle, 2001). Socio-dramatic play provides opportunities for children to figure out how to relate positively with their peers, learn to solve problems in a sheltered or safe setting, develop abstract thinking, refine how they understand the world, and have a feeling of control over what they encounter or are doing(McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007; Piaget, 1962b; Saracho & Spodek, 2003; Smilansky & Shefatya, 1990).

2.9 Selected Theories of Play

Bronfenbrenner's *bio ecological systems theory*" gives an understanding of the different components within an environment, for example, the family, school, religion, group, society, culture, and universal influences which impacts children's growth and development.

Bronfenbrenner, (2000)developed five systems that contain principles, standards, and roles that impact children's growth. He called these*the micro-system,the meso -system, t*he *exo-system, the macro-systems*, and *thechrono-system.*The interaction between the systems fuels the growth and development of the child. Conflicts in any of the systems will cause a ripple effect throughout the other systems.

2.9.1 Bronfenbrenner's Structure of Environment

The Micro-system: Incorporates the connections and interactions children have with their immediate environment (Berk, 2000). The immediate environment comprises of the family, school, peers, and neighbors. It is the system nearest to the child and therefore contains the structures with which the child has direct contact. In this system, connections have influence in two ways – both far from the child and toward the child. For instance, a child's parent may influence his convictions and conduct; notwithstanding, the child likewise influences the conduct and convictions of the parent. Bronfenbrenner calls these bi-directional impacts

The Meso-system: This system incorporates the association among the structures of the child's micro-system (Berk, 2000). For instance: the association among the child's parents and teachers.

The Exo-system: This system characterizes the bigger social environment in which the child does not function directly. The structures in this system affect the child's growth by interrelating with some structures in the child's micros-system (Berk, 2000). Care givers work calendars or group based family assets are some illustrations. Children might not be involved directly in this system but are affected by the outcomes of the interactions.

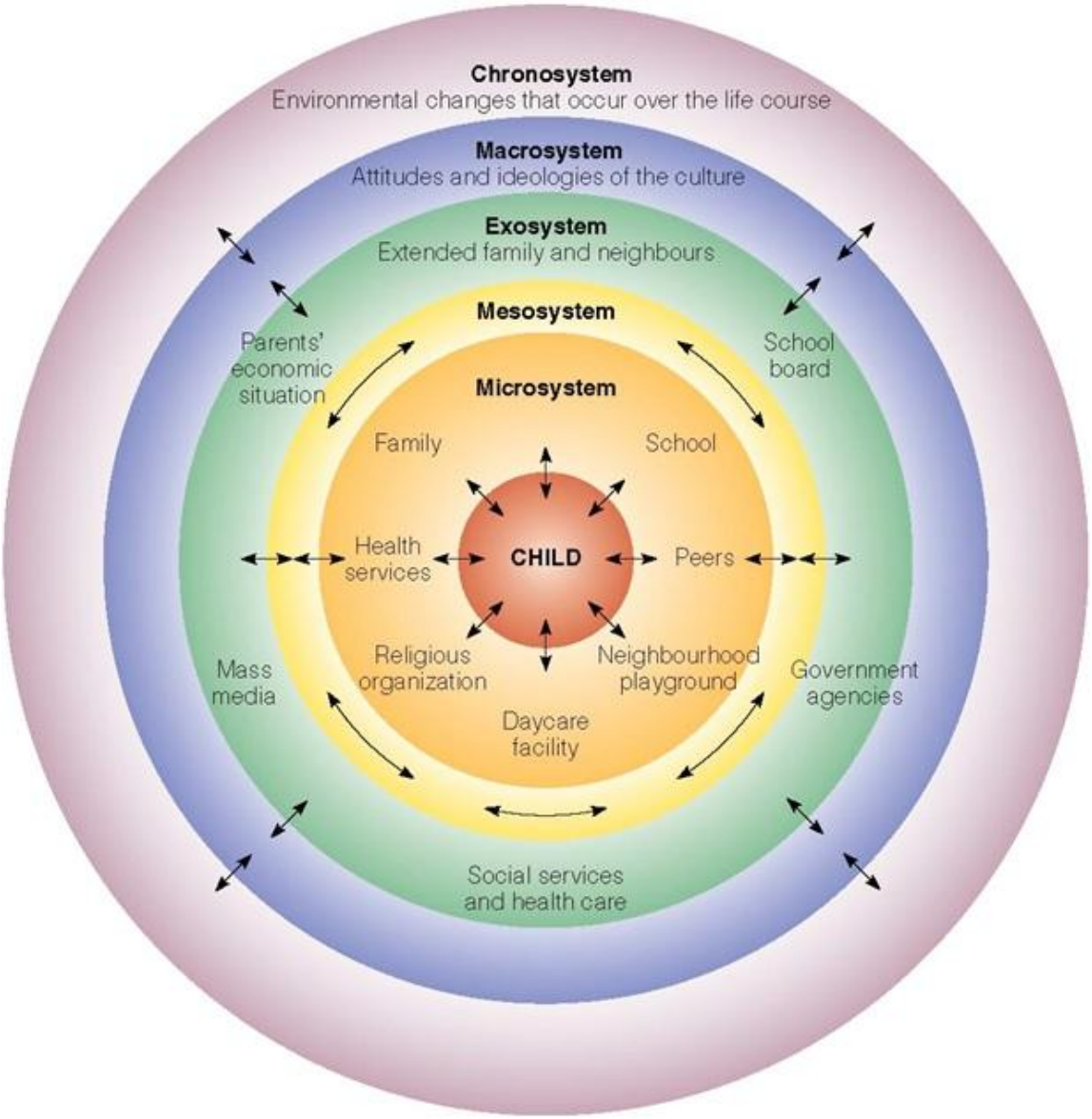
The Macro-system: This system may be viewed as the fringe system in the child's environs. This system includes laws cultural beliefs and, traditions (Berk, 2000). The influences of bigger standards characterized by the macro- system have a rippling effect all throughout the interaction of all other systems. For instance, on the off chance that, it is the conviction of the lifestyle of the people that play is not essential to child development, then parents and the community will not put the necessary infrastructures necessary to promote child's play.

The Chrono- system: This system combines the estimation of time as it pertains with a child's environs. Segments in this layer can either be internal, that is the physical changes that happen with the developing child or external for an example the death of a parent. As children grow up they

might respond contrastingly to biological changes and may be more prepared to choose all the more how that change will impact them.

Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory gives a comprehension of why a child's surroundings have such an effect on his or her development and play conducts. Children construct some imaginative conditions with respect to real experiences they may have observed (Berk, Mann, & Ogan,2006;Rogers & Sawyers, 1988). Children who have just gone to the hospital may mimic that same encounter with their friends. Make-believe play provides children the chance to mirror and learn diverse roles (Berk, Mann, & Ogan,2006) Components of the macro-system similarly affect play. For instance, a child from a low socio economic background participates less in make-believe play than a child from a high socio economic background (Rogers & Sawyers, 1988). This study will focus on the micro-system and the macro-system. In Figure 2.1 is a diagram depicting the various systems.

Figure 2.1 Bronfenbrenner BioEcological Systems Theory



2.9.2 Social Cognitive Theory

Vygotsky theory emphasizes the importance of interactions among adults, educators and peers, and how it has direct influence on a child's development. Vygotsky's socio-cultural hypothesis expresses that social cooperation and creative play promotes intellectual skills in children. He trusted that the social cooperation's that children take part in encourage them to find and make importance from the things that they find. Especially, he trusted that the absolute most essential

learning a child could experience is in the social connections they have with a talented coach that is mostly a grown-up, for example, a parent or educator. Vygotsky (1978) trusted that children's learning happens inside the zone of proximal development, and that play, through making a zone of proximal development, encourages children to accomplish achievements outside their normal range without grown-up's help (Vygotsky, 1978). Amid play, children might outperform their peers and practice propelled aptitudes. Vygotsky (1978) made a solid claim that play makes the Zone of Proximal Development, in which children act parts that are out of their range in actuality. He suggested that pretend play in the preschool years is indispensable for the advancement of social and psychological capabilities. He proposed that through pretend play, children get to develop abilities that empower them to make rules that must be followed, practice self - direction, participate in critical thinking, and purposely enact earlier memory. Pretend play likewise compels a child to control her whims and subject herself to the tenets of play besides. Vygotsky (1978) trusted that every single make-believe circumstance concocted by children take after social guidelines. Through pretend play, children build up a comprehension of social standards and attempt to maintain those social desires.

2.9.3 Jean Piaget

Though Piaget (1962b) assumes play has an essential part in children's growth and advancement, heset little accentuation on play as an element in a child's reactions to the social settings. As indicated by him, contentions and conflicts with associates enable children's to notice that individuals can hold alternate points of view from their own. Play, for Piaget (1962b), gives a child the chance to improve his or her socialability through continuing exchanges with peers.

2.9.4 Psychoanalytic Theory

Sigmund Freud depicted play as a method for communicating socially unsatisfactory practices. Play is helpful, enabling one to vent undesirable sentiments and activities in a more worthy way. He

proposed that play makes a basic commitment to children's emotional improvement by empowering children to carry on instabilities, nerves, evacuate negative sentiments and enable them to deal with dissatisfactions originating from upsetting encounters (Freud, 1959).Erickson acknowledged and extended Freud ideas on play, as indicated by him pretend play gives children the vehicle to get some answers concerning themselves, a method for confronting reality and acing abilities required for living , it gives preschoolers a chance to experiment with new aptitudes with next to zero danger of disappointments and feedback(Erikson, 1950).Pretend play additionally enables youngsters to coordinate socially acknowledged standards into their identities by watching and copying parts of imperative grown-up figures in their general environment. Both therapists highlighted the basic commitment of play in children's internal advancement.(Erikson, 1950)

2.10 The Benefits of Play

Play enables children to utilize their inventiveness while building up their imaginative capacity, physical, psychological, and emotions. Play is essential to sound cognitive growth (Shonkoff & Phillips,2000; Tamis-LeMonda, Shannon, Cabrera, & Lamb, 2004). During play children at an early age connect and associate within their general surroundings. Play enables children to generate and investigate a world they can control, overpowering their feelings of trepidation while rehearsing grown-up roles sometimes with other children or grown-ups (Hurwitz, 2002; Tsao, 2002). As children ace their world, play enables children to nurture new capacities that prompt upgraded confidence, and the resiliency they will require to go up against future difficulties (Band &Weisz, 1988; Erickson, 1985; Hurwitz, 2002). Undirected play enables children to make sense of how to work in social get-togethers, to share, to solve problems, and to learn self-advocacy aptitudes. (Erickson, 1985; Hurwitz, 2002; McElwain and Volling, 2005; Pellegrini and Smith, 1998) When play is permitted to be child determined, children rehearse basic leadership abilities, learn at their own pace, locate their

own domains of interest, and finally pursue their passions (Erickson, 1985; Hurwitz, 2002; Pellegrini and Smith, 1998).

Ideally, a considerable amount of play incorporates a grown person, yet when play is controlled by grown-ups, children submit to grown-ups tenets and fears, and miss a bit of the favorable circumstances play offers them, mainly increasing innovativeness, initiative, and social gathering abilities (McDonald, 1993). It has been recommended that engaging in unstructured play could be an outstanding method to increase physical activity levels in children, which is one imperative way in resolving the stoutness (Burdette & Whitaker, 2005; American Academy of Pediatrics, 2006).

Perhaps in particular, play is a basic euphoria that is an esteemed piece of childhood. Children's formative direction is essentially facilitated by reasonable, emotional attachment with caring and dependable parents as they identify with their children during play (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). When parental figures either watch or join in child directed play, they are given a novel chance, to understand the world from the child's perceptive, as they explore a world impeccably made to suit their desires.

Relationships that are formed between parents and children during play, communicate to children that their parents are completely focused on them and, also helps in developing lasting connections among them (Cohn, 1990; Henry, 1990; Smith, 1995; Tamie-LeMonda *et al*, 2004; Tsao, 2002).Caregivers who have the chance to glimpse into their children world find ways to relate more efficiently with their children and, are given some other avenue to offer delicate, sustaining direction. Through play less verbal kids might have the capacity to articulate their perspectives, encounters, and disappointments, enabling parents a chance to pick up a more full comprehension of their point of view. Simply, play offers guardians an awesome chance to connect completely with their youngsters. Play is indispensable to the

scholastic setting. It guarantees that the school environment deals with the emotional, mental, and social advancement of children.

Play has been revealed to enable children to adapt to the school environment, improve children's learning status, learning conduct, and critical thinking aptitudes (Coolahan, Fantuzzo, Mendez, & McDermott, 2000; Fisher, 1992). Socio-emotional learning is best fused with scholastic learning. It is aggravating if a part of the forces that improve a child's capacity to learn are lifted to the disservice of others. Unplanned play times that consider peer interactions are essential elements of socio-emotional learning (Elias and Arnold, 2006; Zins, 2004). Play exercises give socio-emotional advantages when youngsters play together. Social play encourages children to figure out how to lower yearnings to societal tenets, collaborate with peers enthusiastically, and take part in socially fitting conduct (Berk, Mann, & Ogan,2006).

2.11 Play and Social Competence

Play and its role in the socialization process has been important to children therapists, teachers, and researchers for years. The relationship amongst play and the advancement of social competence has been discovered (Howes, 1992; Singer and Singer, 2005). Amid play, children increase their social skills and emotional advancement. According to Smilansky & Shefatya, (1990) school achievement to a great extent relies on a child's capacity to collaborate strongly with their friends and grown-ups. Play is imperative to a child's social advancement. It empowers a child to do the following:

1. Practice both verbal and nonverbal conversational capacities by negotiating parts, endeavoring to enter progressing play, and esteeming the sentimentalities of others (Spodek & Saracho, 1998).
2. Trying out the roles of individuals in their homes, schools, and neighborhood by coming into contact with the necessities and desires of others (Creasey, Jarvis, & Berk, 1998).

3. Experience others' perspectives by resolving clashes about materials, space, etc. (Smilansky & Shefatya, 1990; Spodek & Saracho, 1998).

2.12 Parents' Perceptions of Play

A lot of research adopting an alternative way to defining children's play has stemmed from parent reports who, while less coherent about the components that encompasses their definition of play, "know it when they see it" (Fisher *et al*, 2008; Rothlein & Brett, 1987).Parents have fundamental convictions about the benefits of play, and about whom, how and when, their children should play. These convictions and suppositions about play impact how they associate with their children, which thus, influences the child's formative direction (Fisher *et al*, 2008). The degree to which parents perceive and see play affects how they sort out their children's day by day living setting, from the items found in their households such as toys, to their day by day schedules, social interactions (Caldera, Huston, and O'Brien, 1989; Rheingold and Cook, 1975), and investment in out-of-school exercises (Eccles, 1993; Jacobs *et al*, 2005).

When parent's trust that specific components of play will benefit their children, the incorporation of play into the child's day by day exercises increases in amount and quality (Sigel and McGillicuddy, 2002). In Haight, Park & Black's (1997) study, working class Caucasian parents were interviewed on their convictions about their children's engagement in rough-and-tumble play, pretend play, the significance of reading to them, and whether all the three play types contributed to children's advancement. They discovered that, parents believed both make-believe play and reading books contributed to children's intellectual growth. Make-believe play was imperative to their children's comprehension of social roles and associations, and reading books was vital for their future academic achievement.

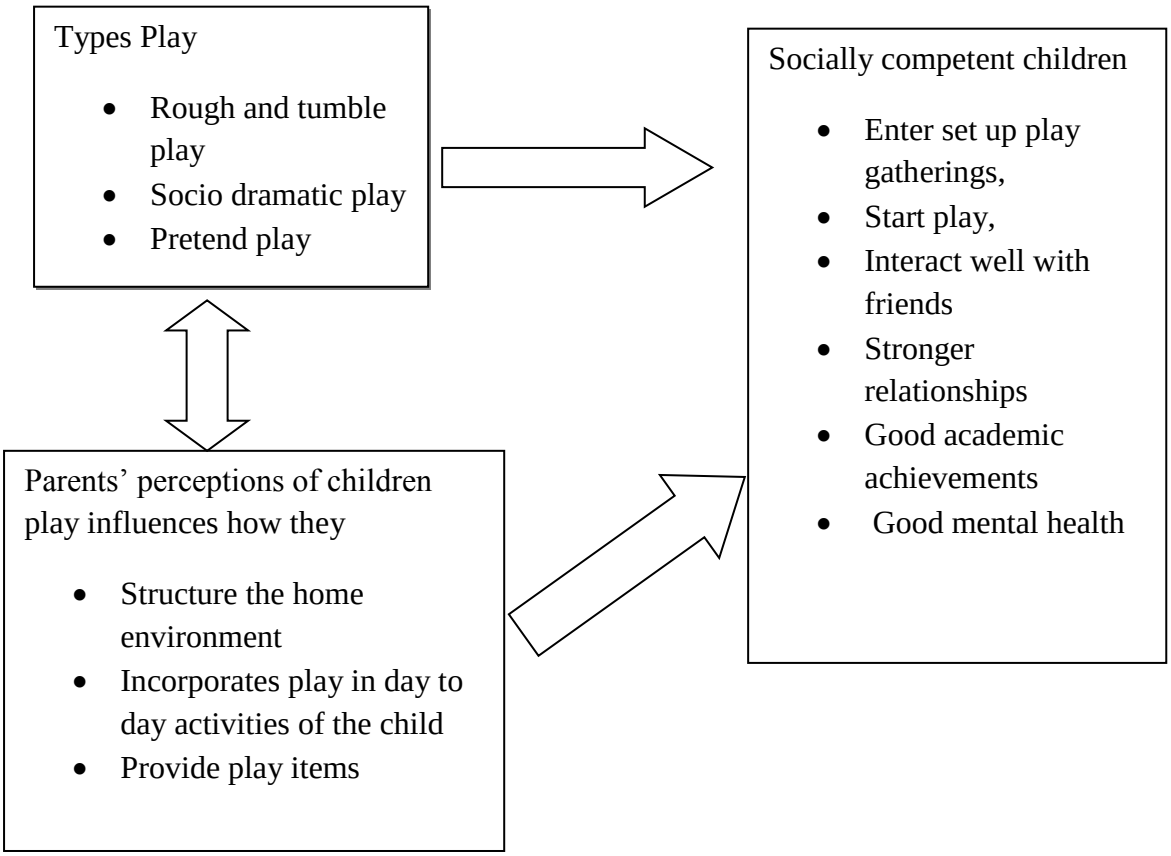
The few researches that have analyzed parents play perception usually find a difference in opinions, that play is either seen as imperative for children's growth in different ways, or perceived as a waste of time that should be given to other essential things, like studying (Fogle & Mendez, 2006;

Parmar, Harkness, & Super, 2004).For instance, Fogle & Mendez, (2006) developed a scale to measure the play perceptions of African American mothers whose children attended head start. They discovered that "play support" appeared differently in relation to "academic focus" in their two-factor solution. Also, in Warash, Root and Doris (2016) comparative study of parents play perceptions, even though both parents supported play, mothers relatively had a higher score in play support than fathers, whiles fathers had a higher score on academic support than mothers. This shows that mothers supported play more than fathers and fathers had a lot more support for academics than mothers. In a study of 112 Taiwanese parents, Lin and Yawkey (2014) found that most parents valued play but some also preferred academics over play. They also found out that parent's views of their youngsters' play were related to their children's development of social competence.

Parents who held these convictions appeared to take an interest and also encouraged their children's play. However, not all parents belief in play as important to children's development, for an example Parmer, Harkness and Super (2004) interviewed parents of 3-6 year olds of Euro American and Asian parents (Nepal, India, China, Korea and Pakistan) about their beliefs towards play and learning, their initiation of play practices and children's behavior in preschool. Results revealed that Euro- American parents valued the importance of play, and therefore provided toys and played with their children, whiles Asian parents valued the importance of academics and therefore acted as teachers for their children. They also provided educational toys to help in learning. Similarly, Farver, Kim and Lee's (1995) study on Anglo-American and Korean- American parents revealed a similar pattern with Korean- American parents engaging in less pretend play with their children because they placed more importance on academic than play. In Ghana very, little research has been conducted on the perceptions of play. In a study examining Ghanaian stakeholders' beliefs about the role and importance of play in early years (3 to 5years), Avornyo & Baker, (2018) found that head teachers and teachers perceived play as a form of learning more favorably than parents.

The above literature demonstrates that parents' play perceptions determined their interactions with their children, and this was seen in how they either encouraged or discouraged play, based on whether they viewed play as important to child development. While there is a plethora of researches (example Haight, Parke, & Black, 1997; Farver, Kim, & Lee, 1995) that depend on parent reports as a measure of their children's play, there has been an absence of information that examines how parents perceive play; therefore, the current study examines how parents perceive children's play. In Figure 2.2. below is a diagrammatic representation of the literature discussed.

Figure 2.2Conceptual Framework



2.13 Explanation of the Conceptual Framework

Rough and tumble play, pretend play and socio dramatic play promotes social competence in children. Rough and tumble play empowers children to learn to take the point of view of others, to learn to express and control their emotions, to recognize actual and play-associated

sentiments of others (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998), whiles pretend play has been found to promote vocabulary and language development, build memory capacities, upgrade thinking, problem solving skills and critical thinking capacities, particularly in circumstances when there are conflicting facts (McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007). Socio-dramatic play provides opportunities for children to figure out how to relate positively with their peers, learn to solve problems in a sheltered or safe setting, develop abstract thinking, refine how they understand the world, and have a feeling of control over what they encounter or are doing (McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007; Piaget, 1962b; Saracho & Spodek, 2003; Smilansky & Shefatya, 1990).

When parent's trust that specific components of play will benefit their children, the incorporation of play into the children's day by day exercises increases in amount and quality. (Sigel and McGillicuddy, 2002). When children are allowed to play it promotes social competence. Social competence has been connected to children's readiness to enter school, positive adjustment in school, psychological welfare, enter set up play, social associations as well as accomplishments in tests (Birch & Ladd, 1996; Broidy, *et al*., 2003; Denham, 2006; Duncan, Dowsett, Claessen, Magnuson, Huston, Klebanov, Japel, 2007; Kupersmidt, Coie, & Dodge, 1990; Howes, Hamilton, & Matheson, 1994; Malecki & Elliott, 2002; Welsh, Bierman& Pope, 2000).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The procedures used to conduct research are regularly alluded to as methodology. This incorporates information gathering instruments, sampling methods and measurable strategies for arranging and translating the information (Bryman, 2008). This section provides information on the procedures used in conducting this study.

3.1 Study Design

A cross sectional design was employed for use in this research. This allowed the researcher to study the entire or a snapshot of the population in a moderately brief time frame, with a specific end goal to assemble truths that identify with the area under review. (Olsen & George, 2004). This involved the collection of quantitative data, which was analysed using quantitative techniques, to understand the influence of parental perspectives of play on social competence development. Previous studies (Jian & Han, 2015; Lin & Yawkey, 2014): on parents play beliefs employed the quantitative approach in their research, thus its use in this research.

3.2 Study Area

The study was carried out at Haatso in the Ga East Municipal District of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The Ga East Municipal District is situated at the northern part of Greater Accra Region. It is one of the sixteen (16) Districts in the Greater Accra Region and spreads a land area of about 85.7 square kilometers. The capital of the Municipal is Abokobi. It shares boundaries with the Ga West Municipal to the West, the La - Kwantanang Municipal to the

East, Accra Metropolitan to the South and the Akwapim South District to the North. The towns in the district are Adenta West, Ayi Mensa, Ashongman, Bansa, Pantang, Dome, Haatso, Kwabenya, Oyarifa, Taifa and Ogbojo. There are 31 Public basic schools made up of Kindergarten, Primary and Junior high schools and 109 Private schools (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Purposive sampling was used to select two schools, one private and one public. These schools were selected to bring variety to the samples since public schools mostly have children from low income families and private schools have middle to high income families. Haatso was chosen for the study because the researcher is familiar with the town and also because of its proximity to the researcher.

3.3 Population

According to (Henderson, 2002), a population is the total number of persons living in a country, city or any other specified place as well as items from which samples are drawn for statistical study or research. The target population again according to Creswell, (2009) is a gathering of people with some basic characterizing trademark that research can distinguish and study. The target population for this study comprised of parents of students between the ages of 4 – 7 years attending Calvary Presbyterian School (public school) and Anacilla Basic and Junior High School (private school) in Haatso. Both Private and Public schools where selected in order to identify more variability in parents' background. The total population of Calvary Presbyterian School was 102, the breakdown was as follows, Class One: 42 and Class Two: 60. Anacilla School has a total population of 281 made up of KG1: 61, KG2:68, Class One: 72 and Class Two: 80

3.4 Sample Size & Sampling Procedure

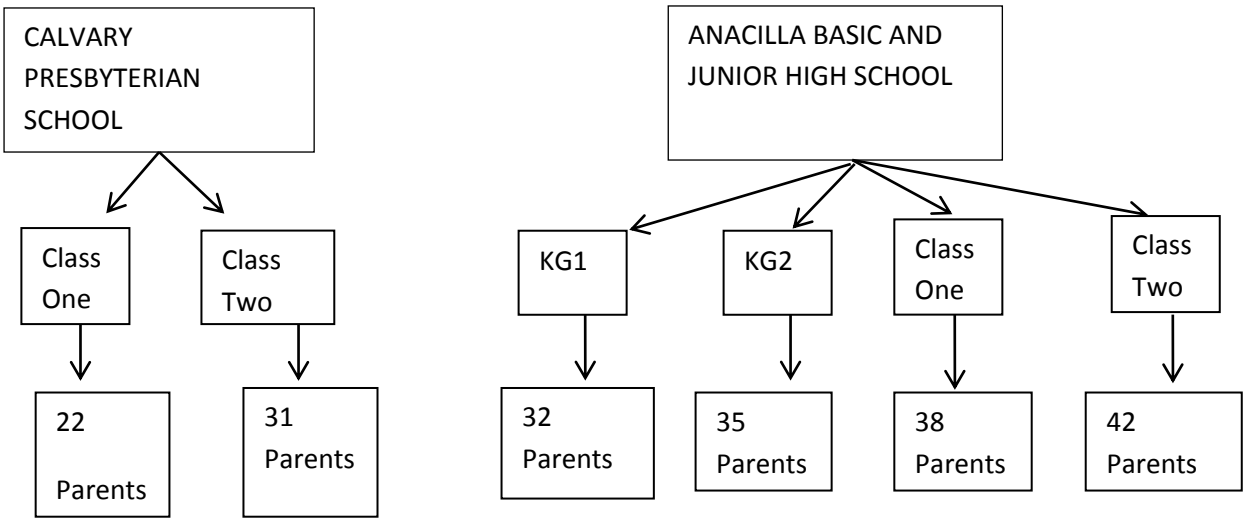
Sample size determination is an important but difficult step in planning an empirical research. A sample is a subset of a populace component, where a populace is a hypothetically indicated total of a component. In this way a sample size is a subset of a populace(Agresti & Finlay,

2009). Again, as indicated by Sarantakos (2005), a sample consists of a cautiously selected unit of the population for a particular study.

To determine the sample size for the study, the researcher used the Sample Size Determination Table of a given Population developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The suitable sample size was one hundred and ninety one (191) parents. The researcher then rounded it up to two hundred (200). Based on the population of the two schools a sample size of (53) was selected from Calvary Presbyterian School and (147) from Anacilla Basic and Junior High School.

The researcherusedmulti-staged sampling to identify the study sample. The pupils were stratified into KG1, KG2, Class One and Class Two. Stratified sampling was used because it guarantees equal and specified chance to every sampling unit to be picked. Then the quota system was used to determine the number of pupils from each strata.Finally simple random sampling was used in selecting respondents from the various strata. According to Oso and Onen, (2008) simple random sampling is a procedure that is utilized as part of choosing a sample without bias from the target accessible population. Figure 3.1 shows a diagrammatic representation of the sample selection and size.

Figure 3.1 A Diagrammatic Representation of Sample Selection and Size



3.5 Data Collection Instrument

Structured questionnaires were utilized to request the views and opinions of respondents.The questionnaires used were close ended questions to keep respondents within the specified subject area. The questionnaire wasused in this research since it wasaffordable, could reach countless respondents, gave adequate time to the respondents to answer the questions, and offered more noteworthy namelessness as there was no up close and personal connection (Kumar, 2005). The Parent Play Beliefs Scale (PPBS) **(**Fogle and Mendez, 2006) and the Parent and Teacher Version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman ,1997) questionnaires were used for the study. Refer to Appendix One and Two for samples of the questionnaires.

Demographic questions

The reason for gathering this data was to pick up a comprehension of parents' experience for use in conducting statistical analysis for the research. This section included five questions: parent's sexual orientation, age, and educational level, sex of the child, and age of the child.

Parent Play Beliefs Scale (PPBS)

The Parent Play Beliefs Scale (PPBS)(Fogle & Mendez, 2006)was used to assess parents' behaviours toward the importance of child play and their behaviours connected to play. The PPBS consisted of 25 items, assessed on a five point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = agree; and 5 = strongly agree). It was divided into two categories (1) "play support" and (2) "academic support."

Play support consisted of seventeen (17) questions on parents' attitudes regarding the developmental contributions, parents' engagement, and enjoyment of play. An example of a question was*"play can help my child develop thinking abilities"; "I can help my child control his or her emotions during play"*. (2) Academic support consists of eight (8)

questions on the value parents' place on play compared with academic activities. Questions included "*play time is not a high priority in my home," and "it is more important for my child to have good academic skills than play well with others"*. Refer to Appendix One for the questionnaire.

The PPBS has been used reliably by other researchers to test parents of preschoolers play beliefs with the Cronbach Alpha of the following variables being as follows play support = 0.90, academic support = 0.73 (Fogle & Mendez, 2006), play support = 0.90, academic support 0.71 (Warash, Root & Doris. 2016).

In this study the Cronbach Alpha for the variables were, play support =0.771 and academic support = 0.810. This shows that the PPBS was a reliable tool to test parents perception of child's play. An adapted version of the scale has been used in Ghana to analyze preschool and kindergarten teacher's beliefs about play

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

The Goodman, (1997) Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), (parent's and teacher version) was used to assess parent's views on their child's social competence. The SDQ is a 25 item survey with subscales of Emotional problems, Conduct Problems, Hyperactivity problems, Peer Problems and Pro social behavior. All questions were rated on a three-point reaction scale (0=not true to 2=certainly true; two questions in peer and hyperactivity problems, and one question in conduct problems was reversed scored). Emotional, Conduct, Hyperactivity, and Peer problems were added to generate the total difficulties. Emotional, Conduct, Hyperactivity, Peer problems, and Pro-social behavior scores ranged from 0-10, whiles total difficulties ranged from 0-40. The original three band cut- off points was used in grouping children into 'normal', 'borderline' and 'abnormal. Refer to Appendix Two for the questionnaire.

The Cronbach Alpha for the subscales were as follows; total difficulties = 0.738, emotional problems = 0.637, conduct problems = 0.573, hyperactivity problems = 0.418, peer problems = 0.159, and pro social behavior = 0.595which were consistent with other studies that used the SDQ (Theunissen, Vogels, de Wolff, Crone, & Reijneveld, 2015). The SDQ has reported good reliability, with most of them reporting cronbach alpha of above 0.70 for total difficulties, but low cronbach alphas for conduct and hyperactivity problems (Becker, Hagenberg, Roessner, Woerner , & Rothenberg, 2004; Capron, Therond, &Duyme, 2007; Goodman, 2001; Mellor, 2004; Koskelainen, Sourander, & Vauras, 2001). Even though the SDQ parent form has reported low cronbach alpha for some of its subscalesit is a useful aid for the early detection of psychosocial problems in preschoolers (Theunissen, Vogels, de Wolff, Crone, & Reijneveld, 2015).

3.6 Pre-test

To ensure that the questions, and instructions of the questionnaire were well understood by parents, and suited the purpose of the study, the instrument was tested on 10 parents in each school, these parents were excluded from the final sample. The questionnaires were well understood by parents therefore no changes were made to it.

3.7 Data Collection Approach

The researcher sent a letter to the selected schools to seek permission to conduct the research and explain why their schools had been selected to be part of the research. With assistance from teacher's, copies of the consent forms and questionnaires was placed in the bags of pupils to be filled by parents and brought back to school after a week. The researcher went to the schools each week for four weeks until all questionnaires were returned. In the first week about 50% of the questionnaires were collected. By the end of the third week about 80% of the questionnaires had been collected. Realizing that not all pupils where likely to return the questionnaires additional questionnaires were given out to other pupils, excluding the first

group of pupils who had already been given questionnaires. By the end of the fourth week the target sample of 200 parents was reached. When pupils brought back their questionnaire the teacher then filled the teacher version of the SDQ for each student, and attached it to the returned questionnaire from the parents.

3.8. Ethical Consideration

Sullivan (2000) indicated that social researchers are bound to ethical considerations in their studies. He said that researchers are duty bound to observe ethical tenants such as people's right to privacy, right to self-determination, fairness and equality in social relations. Newman (2006) also recognized six prescriptions and these include, seeking consent and disclosing all aspects of the research to the respondent; not deceiving the respondent by withholding information, safe guarding information's whose disclosure might affect respondent, protect vulnerable groups, not withholding treatment of research purpose from respondents. To abide by the ethical principles:

(1) Ethical Clearance was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the College of Basic and Applied science (ECBAS)

(2) Permission was obtained from the Heads of selected schools

(3) Consent forms explaining study objectives, procedure, confidentiality, benefits and voluntary nature of study and that the information requested was merely for academic purposes was stated.

3.9 Data Analysis Approach

Data was hand coded and entered into the Predictive Analytic Software Version 21, (PASW 21). Data was presented using frequency tables, percentage distribution, tables, and graphs and examined using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient to find the connection between parent's beliefs about play on children's social competence. One Way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) was used to find differences in parents play perceptions when examined

by parent's sex, age, educational level and child's sex and age. It was also used in finding differences in parents rating of emotional and behavioral problems when examined by children's gender and age.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

The objective of the study was to understand parents' perceptions of children's play and to examine how parents' perceptions of children's play relate to their children's social competence both at home and at school. The findings are summarized in the following sections: Demographics of respondents, Analysis of parents' perceptions of children's play, Analysis of differences in parents' perceptions of children's play when analysed by parents' background (gender, age, and level of education), Analysis of differences in parents' perceptions of children's play when analysed by childs' gender and age, Analysis of parents' perceptions of children's strengths and difficulties and correlations between PPBS and strengths and difficulties. The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics, One- Way ANOVA, and Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

4.1 Socio-demographic Characteristics of Parents

The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in this section. These are information about the: Parent's gender, age and educational level, Child's gender and age.

Table 4.1 Gender distribution of parents

Gender	Frequency	(%)
Male	87	43.5
Female	113	56.5
Total	200	100.0

4.1.1 Gender Distribution of Parents

Table 4.1 represents the gender distribution of parents. The study revealed that a little over half (56.5%) of the respondents were female.

4.1.2 Age Distribution of Parents

In Table 4.2 respondents aged 30-39 years recorded the highest (43.5%) number of respondents in the study. Whiles 20-29 age group recorded the lowest (6.5%) of the respondents. The implication is that most of the parents are youthful and energetic to work and take care of their children. A possible explanation for the low percentage of 20-29 year old respondents is due to women's increased interest in pursuing higher education such as university degrees or higher and this has resulted in a significant shift in childbearing to later ages (Rindfuss, Morgan, & Swicegood, 1988; Martin, 2000).

Table 4.2 Age distribution of parents

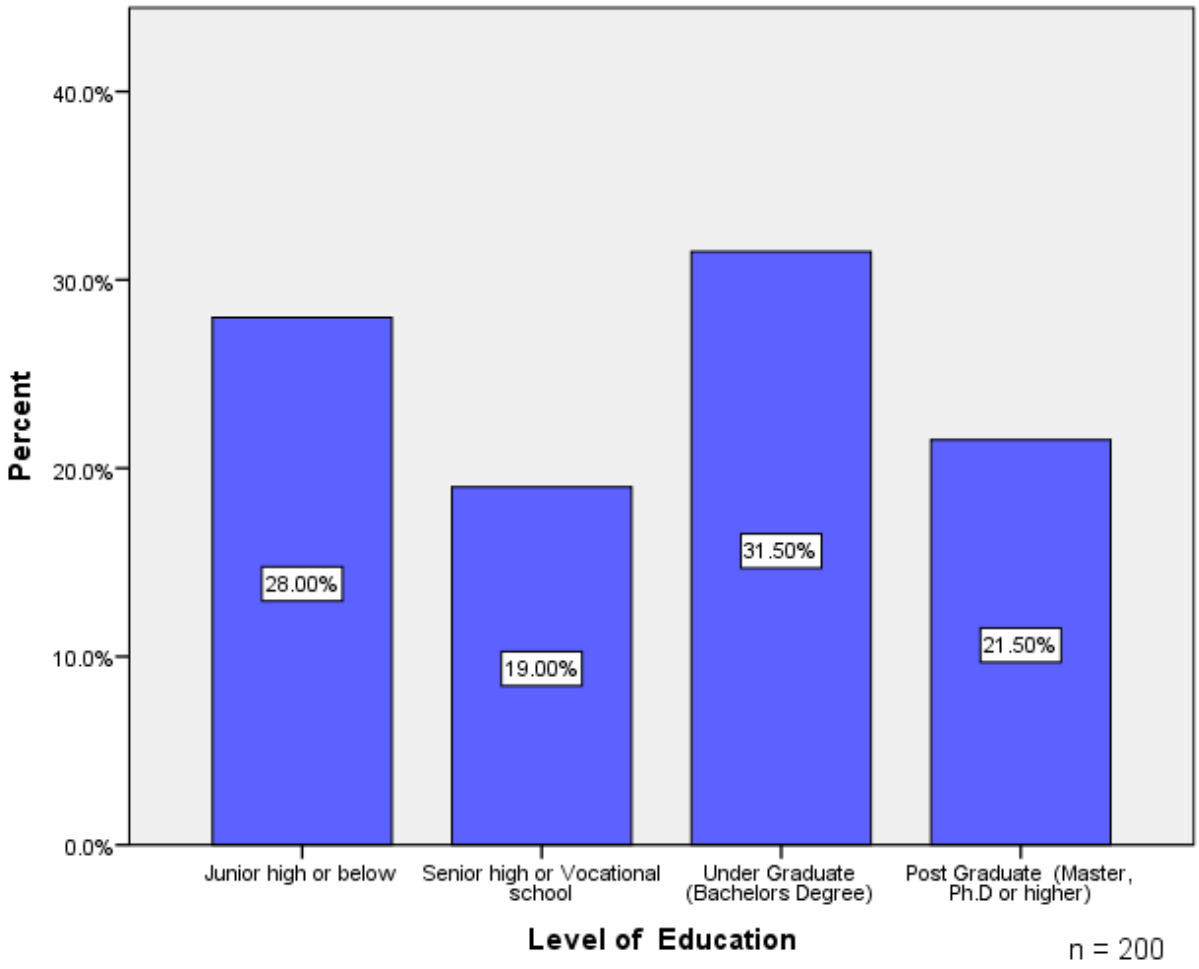
Age	Frequency	(%)
20-29	13	6.5
30-39	87	43.5
40-49	72	36.0
50-Above	28	14.0
Total	200	100.0

4.1.3 Level of Education of Parents

In Figure 4.1 below respondents had varied levels of education ranging from basic to tertiary level of education. About one third of respondents (31.5%) had undergraduate level of education. About 47% had basic and senior level education while 53% had undergraduate and postgraduate education. According to the 2010 population census, the number of people

attending JHS, SHS, vocational and tertiary in the Ga East Municipal District was 17.2%, 12.0%, 0.7%, and 9.1% respectively. Also, those who had attended school in the past were as follows: JHS 25.5%, SHS 13.9%, vocational 5.7% and tertiary 16.6%. From the study results it implies that a lot of respondents had attended tertiary education, but there is still a considerable lot more with only JHS certificates.

Figure 4.1 Educational levels attainted by parents



4.1.4 Gender and Age Distribution of Children

In Table 4.3boys formed 48.5% of the study with 46% between the ages of 4-5 years, and 51%between 6-7 years. Girls on the other hand formed 51.5% of respondents' child. 54%girls were between the age range of 4-5 years and 49%girls between 6-7 years. Girls in both age

groups had a high level enrolment. From this study it, implies that a lot more girls are being sent to school.

Table 4.3 Gender and Age distribution of children

Gender of Child	Age of child				Total	
	4-5	%	6-7	%		%
Male	42	46.0	55	51.0	97	48.5
Female	50	54.0	53	49.0	103	51.5
Total	92	100	108	100	200	100

4.2 Parents' Perception of Child's Play

A 25 question questionnaire with five point Likert-scale responses was used to determine parent's perception of child's play. This questionnaire was separated into two groups, play support and academic support. Based on the Likert-scale responses, the study determined that a higher mean score refers to a strong positive agreement of parent's perception of child's play. Table 4.4 shows the mean and standard deviation of parents' perceptions of child's play. The total mean was 3.60(SD= 0.29). In separating the scale into play support and academic support, the mean was 3.99 (SD= 0.47) for play support, and 2.79 (SD= 0.80) for academic support, this indicates that parents rated the value of play as higher than academic focus. This finding is reassuring given the connection between parent's perception of play and children's play behaviours (Roopnarine & Jin, 2012).

Table 4.4 Mean and standard deviation for parents' perceptions of child's play

Parents Perception	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total	3.61	0.29
Play Support	3.99	0.47
Academic Support	2.79	0.80

The mean values were further grouped into five agreement levels (a) 0- 1.49 = very low (b) 1.50 - 2.49 = low (c) 2.50 – 3.49 = moderate (d) 3.50 – 4.49 = high (e) 4.50 – 5.00 = very high by the researcher to see the distribution of parents agreement about the impact of child's play.

Table 4.5 Frequency and percentage of parents' agreement on children's play

Agreement Levels	Frequency	(%)
Very low	0	0
Low	0	0
Moderate	74	37.0
High	124	62.0
Very high	2	1.0
Total	200	100.0

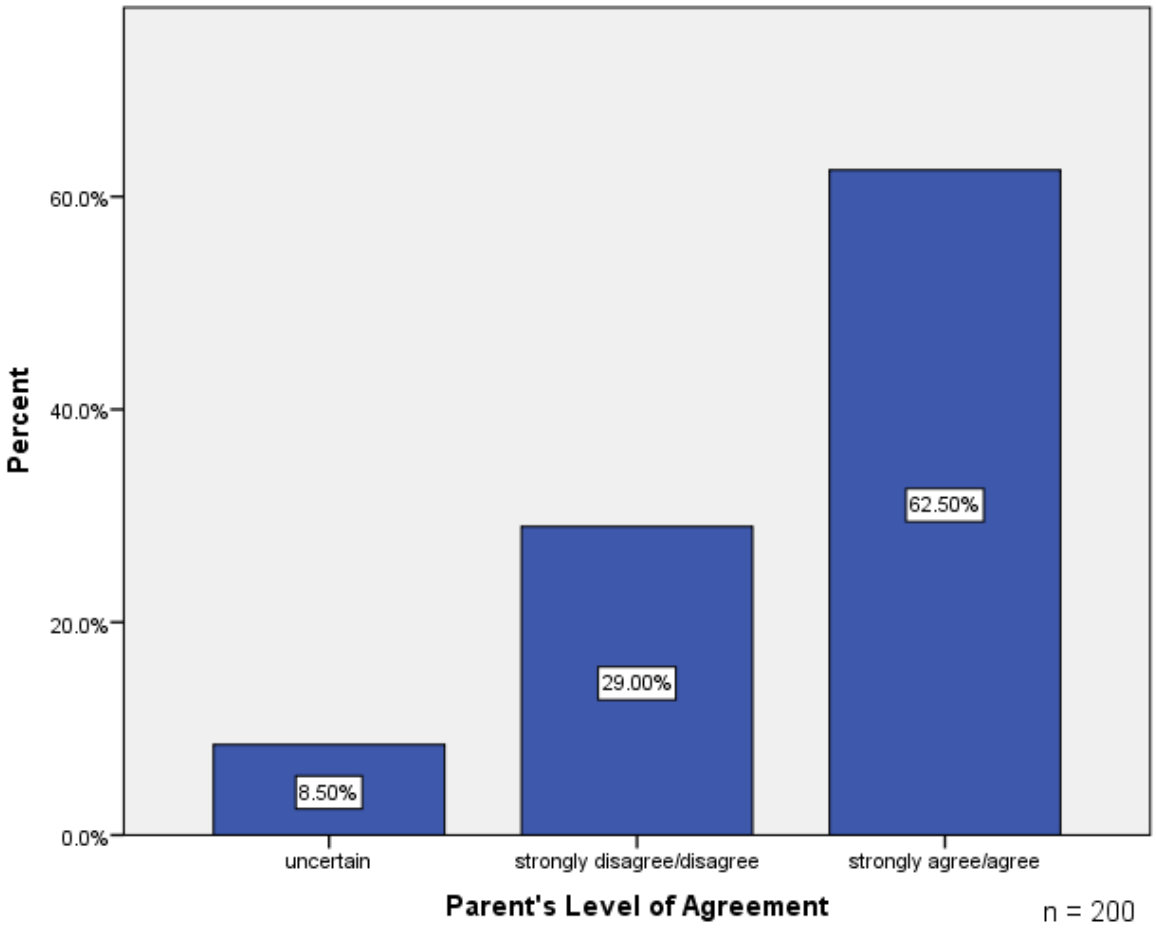
Table 4.5 depicts that more than half (62%) of parents had high agreement level, 37% moderately agreed with only 1% in very high agreement level category; none of the parents had very low and low agreement levels. This result reveals that Ghanaian parents in this study value the contribution of play to the development of children's cognitive, physical and socio-emotional, skills. Lin and Yawkey (2014) reports similar findings that Taiwanese parents valued the significant role of play in their children's development and therefore supported children's play. Also, Fogle and Mendez (2006) study of low income African American mothers whose children were attending head start draws same similarities but they only studied mothers perceptions. Warash, Root, & Doris (2016) study on parental perceptions of play a comparative study of spousal perspectives, found both, mothers and fathers had positive views of play. Learning through play has become a well-known concept in child development and this may have possibly been the reason for the positive play

support. “Play is an important vehicle for children’s social, emotional, and cognitive development as well as a reflection of their development” NAEYC (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 14)**.**However, with the emphasis on academic achievement by parents in this era the study found that not all parents supported play. As shown in Table 4.6 below questions relating to reading, the importance of acquiring academic skills and play not being a high priority in the home scored high means. The question *“it is more important for my child to have good academic skills than play well with others”* scored the highest mean 3.61 and standard deviation of 1.35.This is consistent with Belfield & Garcia (2014) study which used a national data set to analyse data from a 14 year period, their findings revealed that parents in 2007 had higher expectations of their preschool children to know their letters and count compared to 1993.

Table 4.6 Mean and standard deviation for each item on academic support subscale

Academic Support Subscale	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would rather read to my child than play together	3.10	1.15
It is more important for my child to have good academic skills than play well with others	3.62	1.35
I do not think my child learns important skills by playing	2.32	1.22
Reading to my child is more worthwhile than playing with him or her	3.06	1.21
Play does not help my child learn academic skills	2.57	1.29
I do not think it is important for other family members to play with my child	1.86	1.01
Play time is not a high priority in my home	3.10	1.27
Play does not influence my child's ability to solve problems	2.72	1.27

Figure 4.1 Parents level of agreement on the importance of acquiring academic skills



Furthermore, in Figure 4.2, over half (62.5%) of parents agreed with the statement that *"it is more important for my child to have good academic skills than play well with others"*. It therefore shows that majority of parents in this study even though support play still preferred academics over play, parents would rather prefer to see their children reading than playing. Lin and Yawkey (2014) found that even though Taiwanese parents generally valued play, some also paid attention to academic learning. Similarly, Fogle and Mendez (2006) also found that low income African American mothers generally found play to be important in child development but some also thought academic learning was more important. Parmar, Harkness and Super's (2004) work with Euro- American parents and Asian parents showed that Asian parents believed that getting an upper hand in academics was better for the future

and therefore, placed a lot of importance on children's academic learning. Consistent with, Farver, Kim, and Lee (1995) research, it was revealed that in comparing Anglo-American parents with Korean-American, Korean-American parents placed more value on academics over play and therefore participated less in pretend play with their children. This indicates that though parents generally had positive views on children's play they still believed play was not the greatest method to acquire academic skills.

4.3 Differences in Parents' Perceptions of Children's Play when Analysed by Parents' Gender, Age and Level of Education

4.3.1 Parent's Gender

In Table 4.7 a One Way ANOVA conducted showed no statistically significant difference between parents perception of play and parents gender (F=3.839, p =0.051). This finding is consistent with Haight, Parke, & Black's (1997) findings on parent's views on the developmental significance of toddlers and early pre-schoolers pretend play. This study therefore reveals that Ghanaian parents in this study play beliefs did not differ by gender

Table 4.7 One- Way ANOVA for difference in parent's perception of child play analysed by: parents gender

Gender	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		F	Sig
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Male	87	3.65	0.32	0.03	3.59	3.72	3.839	.051
Female	113	3.57	0.27	0.03	3.52	3.62		
Total	200	3.61	0.29	0.02	3.57	3.65		

However, in their studies, Lin and Yawkey (2014) study of Taiwanese parents play beliefs, they found gender differences in parent beliefs about play. Mothers had a more positive view of play than fathers. Gleason (2005) also found mothers to value pretend play more when compared to father and were also more involved in children's play. When mothers and fathers were compared in Warash, Root and Doris (2016) study, findings revealed that mothers held a higher view on play than fathers, and fathers placed higher value on academic support than mothers. These differences were explained to be due to the different roles mothers and fathers play at home. Studies have shown that mothers spend a considerable amount of time caring for children than fathers (Pleck, 1997). Therefore, mothers were more likely to value the importance of play than fathers in the development of the child. This is also similar to what happens in Ghana, where mothers are the primary caretakers of children, so the reason why this study recorded no significant difference is surprising and therefore further research needs to be conducted. Another reason is that mothers are equally now taking responsibilities outside the home and therefore not involved in the lives of their children as they once did, and this accounted for there not being any differences in their value of play.

4.3.2 Parents Age

In Table 4.8 below the One Way ANOVA showed a significant difference in the mean for PPBS when examined by parent's age (F= 6.244, p = 0.000). In Table 4.9 a post hoc test revealed that parents aged 50 and above had significantly higher mean (Mean = 3.80, SD = 0.40) on the PPBS than those aged 30-40 (Mean = 3.61, SD = 0.26) and also those aged 40-49 (Mean =3.43 SD= 0.28). There was no statistically significant difference among the other age groups

Parent's age in this study was related to their views on play. Findings of this study differs from Lin and Yawkey (2014) study and Fogle and Mendez (2006) who found no significant

difference in the ages of parents and their views on play. The difference may be due to the fact that in Lin and Yawkey (2014) study when analysing the ages they reduced the age groups to two 20-39 and 40-50 above.

Table 4.8 One- Way ANOVA for difference in parent's perception of child play analysed by: parents age

Age	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		F	Sig
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
20-29	13	3.56	0.14	0.04	3.48	3.64	6.244	0.000**
30-39	87	3.62	0.26	0.03	3.56	3.67		
40-49	72	3.53	0.28	0.03	3.47	3.60		
50-above	28	3.80	0.40	0.07	3.65	3.95		
Total	200	3.61	0.29	0.02	3.57	3.65		

In addition, the researcher discovered that older aged parents (50-above) in this study placed more importance on the value of play than the younger parents in this study did. The reason for the difference could be that, this generation of parents are moving towards academic achievements in their young children and may therefore consider play just for amusement, and not an important tool for learning.

Table 4.9 One -Way ANOVA with post-hoc tests for differences in parent's age and parents perceptions of children's play.

Age		Sig.
20-29	30-39	0.917
	40-49	0.981
	>50	0.064
30-39	20-29	0.917
	40-49	0.219
	>50	0.017
40-49	20-29	0.981
	30-39	0.219
	>50	0.000**
>50	20-29	0.064
	30-39	0.017
	40-49	0.000**

4.3.3 Level of education

In Table 4.10 the One Way ANOVA showed a significant difference in the mean of the PPBS when examined by parent's highest level of education (F = 3.257, p =0.023). In Table 4.11 a post hoc test revealed that Senior High School or Vocational School (Mean = 3.68, SD = 0.37) and Junior High School or lower (Mean = 3.66, SD = 0.32), had significantly higher means than Post Graduate (Masters, PhD or higher) (Mean = 3.51, SD = 0.19). Ghanaian parents with Senior High School or Vocational School Certificate and Junior High Certificate held a higher view on children's play than those with Post Graduate (Masters, PhD or higher) Degrees.

Table 4.10 One – Way ANOVA results for difference in parent's perception of child play analysed by: level of education

Level of Education	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		F	Sig
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Junior high or below	56	3.66	0.32	0.04	3.58	3.75	3.257	0.023
Senior high or Vocational school	38	3.68	0.37	0.06	3.56	3.80		
Under Graduate (Bachelors Degree)	63	3.58	0.26	0.03	3.52	3.65		
Post Graduate (Master, Ph.D or higher)	43	3.51	0.19	0.03	3.45	3.57		
Total	200	3.61	0.29	0.02	3.57	3.65		

This findings is however different from other studies which found that parents with higher educational certificates placed higher value on play than those with lower educational certificates (Lin and Yawkey, 2014) and (Fogle and Mendez, 2006). Stipek, Milburn, Clements, and Daniels (1992) found that less-educated parents were more likely to regard didactic teaching methods as early educational goals than were parents with higher education levels, but withthe constant information about the benefits of play to children's development,(Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). Less educated parents are now well informed about the benefits of play and are therefore encouraging play in children as found in this study.

Table 4.11 One - Way ANOVA with post-hoc tests for the difference among educational level on parents' perceptions of children's play

Level of Education		Sig.
Junior High or below	Senior High or Vocational School	.995
	Under Graduate (Bachelors Degree)	.448
	Post Graduate(Master, Ph.D. or higher)	.044
Senior High or Vocational School	Junior High or below	.995
	Under Graduate (Bachelors Degree)	.398
	Post Graduate(Master, Ph.D. or higher)	.045
Under Graduate (Bachelor Degree)	Junior High or below	.448
	Senior High or Vocational School	.398
	Post Graduate (Master, Ph.D. or higher)	.546
Post Graduate (Master, Ph.D. or higher)	Junior High or below	.044
	Senior High or Vocational School	.045
	Under Graduate (Bachelors Degree)	.546

4.4 Differences in parents' perceptions of children's play when analysed by child's gender and age.

Table 4.12 One –Way ANOVA for difference in parent's perception of children's play analysed by child's gender

Child's Gender	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		F	Sig
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Male	97	3.61	0.30	0.03	3.55	3.67	0.046	0.831
Female	103	3.60	0.29	0.03	3.55	3.66		
Total	200	3.61	0.29	0.02	3.57	3.65		

4.4.1 Child's Gender and Age

In Table 4.12 and Table 4.13 One Way ANOVA showed no statistically significant difference between mean PPBS, gender and age of the child ($F = 0.046$, $p = 0.831$), and ($F = 0.001$, $p = 0.971$), respectively. The findings revealed that parents play beliefs were not related to the gender and age of the child, and therefore believe that play is important to the development of both boys and girls as suggested in literature (Hughes,1999; Saracho & Spodek, 1995; Tsao, 2002). A reason for this is that in answering the questionnaires parents didnot think of play in relation to gender or age of the child. This is similar to studies by Lin and Yawkey, (2014) and Fogle and Mendez (2006). However, other studies found that mothers of girls held a more positive support for pretend play than mothers of boys (Gleason, 2005). With regards to age Warsah, Root and Doris, (2016) found parents support for play decreased as children grew older. This implies that parents in this study believed play was important to the development of their children irrespective of their age and gender.

Table 4.13 One- Way ANOVA for difference in parent's perception of children's play analysed by child's age

Child's Age	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		F	Sig
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
4-5	92	3.61	0.28	0.03	3.55	3.67	0.001	0.971
6-7	108	3.61	0.30	0.03	3.55	3.67		
Total	200	3.61	0.29	0.02	3.57	3.65		

4.5 Parents Perceptions of Child's Strengths and Difficulties

Table 4.14 below depicts the mean, standard deviation and the original three-band categorisation (cut–off points for the categorisation into normal, borderline and abnormal) of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire. Data in Table 4.14 reveals the percentages of children rated as abnormal were: total difficulties 17.0%, conduct problems 10.0%, hyperactivity problems 14.5%, peer problems 25.0% and pro social skills 5.5%. Interestingly none of the children were recorded as having abnormal emotional problems. This research is consistent with other studies,(Cury & Golfeto, 2003; Mohammadi, *et al*., 2014; Slobodskaya, Akhmetova, & Ryabichenko, 2007).The total abnormality rate obtained in this study (17%) is closer to previous studies 16.7% in Iran (Mohammadi, et al., 2014), 18.7% in Brazil (Cury & Golfeto, 2003), and 15-20% in Siberia (Slobodakaya *et al.,* 2007). As indicated, by this study, peer problems (25%) were the highest rated problem compared to other problems. The high standard deviations showed variability in how parents answered questions relating to their children's emotional and behavioural problems.

4.5.1 Strengths and Difficulties Scores and the Original Three-Band Categorisation Scale

Table 4.14 Mean, standard deviation and original three-band categorization of strengths and difficulties of children

Problems			Rated abnormal		Original three-band categorization		
Subscale	Mean	Standard Deviation	**n**	**%**	Normal	Borderline	Abnormal
Emotional Problems	2.35	2.228	**0**	**0**	0-3	4	5-10
Conduct Problems	1.67	1.782	**20**	**10.0**	0-2	3	4-10
Hyperactivity Problems	3.95	2.061	**29**	**14.5**	0-5	6	7-10
Peer Problems	2.33	1.579	**50**	**25.0**	0-2	3	4-10
Pro- Social Behaviour	7.62	1.885	**11**	**5.5**	6-10	5	0-4
Total Difficulties	10.30	5.531	**34**	**17.0**	0-13	14-16	17-40

This findings differs from other studies, for instance in Bangladesh, Gaza, Brazil, Siberia and Norway, where emotional problems were the most common problem, (Cury & Golfeto, 2003; Heiervang *et al.*, 2007; Mullick & Goodman, 2001; Slobodskaya *et al.*, 2007; Thabet *et al.*, 2000). In Iran conduct problems, was the prevalent problem (Mohammadi *et al.*, 2008;

Mohammadi *et al*., 2014; Rabbani *et al*., 2012), with hyperactivity being the most predominant problem in a study conducted in Britain (Glazebrook *et al*., 2003).

4.5.2 Gender Effects

A One Way ANOVA test was conducted to find whether there were differences in emotional and behavioural problems when examined by children's gender. Results revealed statistically significant differences in total difficulties (F (1,198) =3.977, p = 0.047, partial n^2 = 0.020); Hyperactivity problems (F (1,198) =3.980, p = 0.047, partial n^2 = 0 .020). Boys were rated by their parents as having higher levels of hyperactivity and total difficulties problems than girls. Given that boys externalise their behaviours whiles girls internalise theirs (Leadbeater, Kuperminc, Blatt, & Hertzog, 1999), this results was not surprising. Hyperactivity was found to be more prevalent in boys than girls in studies conducted in Britain and Brazil and Iran (Cury & Golfeto, 2003; Glazebrook *et al*., 2003; Mohammadi *et al*., 2014). However, what was surprising (F (1,198) = 4.483, p = 0.035, partial n^2 =0.022) was that boys in this study were also rated by their parents as having higher levels of emotional problems than girls which is contrary to Leadbeater, Kuperminc, Blatt, & Hertzog's, (1999) study, which found that girls were more likely to have emotional problems than boys. The reason for this difference was the cultural differences in parental beliefs concerning some of the questions in relating to emotional problems. No statistically significant differences were found for conduct problems, peer problems and pro social behaviour.

4.5.3 Age Effects

A One Way ANOVA test was conducted to find whether there were differences in emotional and behavioural problems when examined by children's age. A significant difference was found for emotional and behavioural problems when examined by children's age. (F (1,198) = 6.744, p= 0.010, partial n^2 = 0.033). Here older children (6-7) were rated by their parents as

having higher emotional problems than younger children (4-5). This was inconsistent with previous works which showed that emotional and behavioural problems decreased with age (Cury &Golfeto, 2003; Heiervang *et al.*, 2007; Mohammadi *et al.*, 2008; Mohammadi *et al*., 2014). This situation runs through all the problems except hyperactivity problems even though not significant, therefore it needs further investigation. No significant differences were found for total difficulties, conduct problems, hyperactivity problems, peer problems and pro social behaviour.

Table 4.15 Proportion (%) and Frequency (n) of SDQ subscales based on gender and age group

Problems	**Gender and Age**							
	Boys				Girls			
	4-5		6-7		4-5		6-7	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Emotional Problems	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conduct Problems	3	7.1	9	16.4	6	12.0	2	3.87
Hyperactivity Problems	11	26.2	10	18.2	7	14.0	1	1.9
Peer Problems	9	21.4	17	30.9	14	28.0	10	18.9
Pro-Social Behaviour	0	0	0	0	5	10.0	6	11.3
Total difficulties	6	14.3	15	27.3	10	20.0	3	5.7

4.6 Correlations between Parents Play Perception and Child's Social Competence

4.6.1 Correlations between PPBS and Strengths and Difficulties.

In Table 4.16 below PPBS subscales and the strengths and difficulties subscales were correlated. The study revealed play support had a significant positive correlation with pro-

social behaviour (r = 0.270, p <0.001) but no significant correlation with the other subscales of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire. Also, there was a significant positive correlation between academic focus and emotional and behavioural problems but was negatively correlated with pro social even though not significant.

Table 4.16 Correlations between PPBS subscales and SDQ subscales

Subscales	Total Difficulties	Emotional Problems	Conduct Problems	Hyperactivity Problems	Peer Problems	Pro-Social Behaviour
Play Support	-.048	.088	-.008	-.132	-.111	270**
Academic Support	.344**	.252**	.242**	.260**	.238**	-.114

** Correlation is significant at the level .001 (2-tailed).

This shows that there is a correlation between Ghanaian parents in this study sample, play support and their children's pro social behaviours. Also, there was a correlation between parent's academic focus and children emotional and behavioural problems. This shows that Parents who value play support were likely to have children who are socially competent whiles those who supported academics are likely to have children with emotional and behavioural problems. This is similar to Fogle and Mendez (2006) study on African American mothers play beliefs and their children social competence. They discovered that mother's assessment of play support was positively linked to children's peer interactive play and negatively linked to disruptive play. Maternal rating of academic support was positively linked to child disruptive play and negatively linked to interactive play. A study of Anglo-American mothers whose children attended play oriented preschools and believed in the

developmental importance of play had children who were more socially competent than Korean American mothers whose children attended academic oriented preschool and believed play was just for amusement (Farver, Kim & Lee, 1995). The degree to which parents perceived and saw play determined how they sort out their children's day by day living setting, from the items found in their home like toys, to their day by day schedules, and social cooperation's (Caldera, Huston, and O'Brien, 1989; Rheingold and Cook, 1975).When parents trust that specific sorts or components of play would benefit their child, the incorporation of play into the child's day by day routine increases in amount and quality (Sigel and McGillicuddy, 2002).Since play has been found to be instrumental to children's development and learning in different domains (Hughes, 1999; Saracho & Spodek, 1995; Tsao, 2002) it can be assumed that parents who support play are likely to have children who will develop pro social behaviours during play.

4.7 Test of Hypotheses

Three null hypotheses were postulated for the study.

H_O1: There is no significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and children's social competence

H_O2: There is no significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and parent's level of education

H_O3: There is no significant relationship between parents level of education and child's emotional and behavioural problems.

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and children's social competence

A Pearson moment correlation coefficient was used to find out whether there was a relationship between parents perceptions of play and children's social competence. Table 4.17 shows the relationship between parent's perceptions on play and pro social behaviour. The results showed there was significant relationships between parents play perceptions and children's social competence, therefore null hypothesis one was rejected.

Table 4.17 Correlations between PPBS, parents rating of pro social skills and teacher rating of pro social skills

Variables		PPBS	Parent rating of pro social skills	Teacher rating of pro-social skills
PPBS	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Parent rating of pro-social skills	Pearson Correlation	.194**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006		
Teacher rating of pro social skills	Pearson Correlation	.188**	.984**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This result showed that parent's perception of child play had a statistically significant relationship with children social competence. Parents who support their children's play had children who were rated by both teachers and parents to be socially competent. Lin and

Yawkey (2014) also found similar results parents and teachers rating of children's social competence was positively related to parents play beliefs.

H_O2: There is no significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and parent's level of education

A Pearson moment correlation coefficient was used to find out whether there was a relationship between parents' perceptions of play and children's social competence. Table 4.18 shows the relationship between parent's perceptions on play support, academic support and level of education. The results revealed significant positive relationship between play support and level of education and a significant negative relationship between academic support and level of education, therefore the null hypothesis two was also rejected. This shows that highly educated parents were more likely to support children's play, when compared to low educated parents**.** The reason for this was that highly educated parents were likely to be influenced by Western educational philosophy and therefore had a wider understanding of children's learning (Pan, 1994)

Table 4.18 Correlations between level of education, play support, and academic support

Variables		Level of Education	Play Support	Academic Support
Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Play Support	Pearson Correlation	.145*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.040		.
Academic Support	Pearson Correlation	-.410**	-.499**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Also, low educated parents were more likely to support academics over play when compared to highly educated parents. This was confirmed by Stipek, Milburn, Clements, & Daniels (1992), who found that less educated parents in comparison with highly educated parents prefer didactic teaching methods over non- didactic methods. "Low income and minority parents view the non-didactic and class-initiated activity characteristics of a developmentally appropriate classroom as inimical to their children's success; these parents believe that work sheets and other evidence of information and skills were more appropriate than the 'messing around' characteristic of informal classroom" (Bowman, 1992, p. 132).

As level of education increased play support increased while academic support decreased.

H_O3: There is no significant relationship between level of education, emotional and behavioural problems

Table 4.19 depicts the Pearson correlation between level of education and children's emotional and behavioural problems. The results revealed a significant negative relationship between level of education, emotional and behavioural problems Therefore the null hypothesis three was rejected. This means that highly educated parents were likely to have children with low levels of emotional and behavioural problems, whiles low educated parents were likely to have children with high emotional and behavioural problems. This results is comparable to other studies conducted in Siberia and Iran which revealed that high level of education of parents contributed to low levels of emotional and behavioural problem (Mohammadi *et al.*, 2014; Slobodakaya *et al.*, 2007). Highly educated parents were more likely to pay attention to their children behaviours and more likely to detect these behaviours than low educated parents.

Table 4.19 Correlations between parents' level of education and children's emotional and behavioural problems

Variables		Level of education	Emotional problems	Conduct problems	Hyperactivity problems	Peer problems	Pro-social behaviour	Total difficulties
		1						
Emotional problems	Pearson Correlation	-.399**	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000						
Conduct problems	Pearson Correlation	-.238**	.403**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000					
Hyperactivity problems	Pearson Correlation	-.173*	.254**	.492**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	.000	.000				
Peer problems	Pearson Correlation	-.203**	.455**	.260**	.292**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.000	.000	.000			
Pro-social behaviour	Pearson Correlation	.033	.078	-.271**	-.287**	-.044	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.643	.274	.000	.000	.537		
Total difficulties	Pearson Correlation	-.360**	.757**	.742**	.717**	.661**	-.176*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.013	

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a brief summary of this study. It also draws conclusions and gives recommendations for future research.

5.1 Summary

The study was conducted to find out parents perceptions of children's play and its relationship to social competence at Haatso in the Ga East District of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The specific objectives of the study were to: to understand parent's perceptions of play, identify differences in parent's perceptions of play when analysed by parent's gender, age, highest level of education, identify differences in parents perceptions of play when analysed by child's gender and child's age, assess parents rating of their child's strengths and difficulties, identify differences in parents rating of children's emotional and behavioural difficulties when examined by children's gender and age and where there is a relationship between parents perceptions of play and its relationship to social competence. Three null hypotheses were tested namely, H_O1: there is no significant relationship between parents' perceptions of play and children's social competence; H_O2: there is no significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and parent's level of education; and H_O3: there is no significant relationship between parent's level of education and children's emotional and behavioural problems.

Multi- stage sampling technique was utilized to choose respondents from two schools. The parent's belief play scale and the strengths and difficulties questionnaire were used for data

collection. The Predictive Analytic Software (PASW 21) was used for data entry and analysis. One Way ANOVA was used to calculate differences in parents play beliefs when analysed by their gender, age, highest level of education, child's gender and age. Also, an ANOVA test was used to find differences in parents rating of children's emotional and behavioural problems when examined by child's gender and age. Finally, Pearson correlation was utilized to determine relationships between subscales of the parent belief play scale and the subscales of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire and also to test the three null hypotheses. The data was presented in the form of frequency, percentage distribution tables, and graphs.

More than half of the parents were female (56.5%). The highest age range was 30-39 (43.5%) with the lowest been 20-29 age range (6.5%)**.** 31.5% of the parents had a Bachelor Degree with 19.0% having a Senior high school certificate. A little over half (51.5%) of the children were female**,** also (54.0%) of children were in the 6-7 age group.

Parents in this study generally supported play and its benefits to their children's cognitive, physical, emotional and social competence development. However more than half (62%) of the parents also preferred academics over play. Differences were found in parents perceptions of play when examined by parent's age and level of education. With regards to parents age, parents aged 50 and above had a significantly higher perception of play than those aged 30-39, and 40-49, for parents educational level, senior high school or vocational and junior high school or lower certificate holders had a significantly higher perception of play than those with graduate (masters, PhD-above) and bachelor degrees. No significant differences were found by parent's gender. Furthermore, no differences were found for parent's perceptions of play when examined by child's gender and age**.**

In assessing parent's perception of children's emotional and behavioural problems, percentage of children who fell in the abnormal category were as follows: total difficulties (17.0%), conduct problems (10.0%), hyperactivity problems (14.5%), peer problems (25.0%) and pro social skills (5.5%). None of the parents rated their child as having abnormal emotional problems**.** Significant difference was found for parents rating of their children's emotional and behavioral problems when examined by children's gender. Boys were evaluated by their parents as having higher levels of total difficulties and hyperactivity problems, than girls. With regards to children's age differences were found for only emotional problems, children aged 6-7 years had higher levels of emotional problems when compared to 4-5 year olds Lastly there was a positive correlation between play support and pro social behavior, and a negative correlation between academic support, emotional and behavioral problems.

The results revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between parent's perceptions of play and children pro social behaviors rated by both parents and teachers, therefore the first null hypothesis was rejected. Positive significant relationship was found between play support and level of education, whiles a negative relation was found between academic support and level of education, therefore the second null hypothesis was rejected. There was a significant negative relationship between level of education and children's emotional and behavioral problems, and showed a positive relationship between parents level of education and children's pro social behaviors therefore null hypothesis three was rejected, for parent's level of education and children's emotional and behavioral problems.

5.2 Limitation of the study

A limitation of the study was that the data could not be generalized, to the population described within the study but could still be useful in understanding parent's perception of play and the development of social competence among children.

5.3 Conclusion

Ghanaian parents in this study valued play's impact on children's development and promoted playing with their children. From the study parents rated their children as having abnormal behavioral problems. None of the parents rated their child as having abnormal emotional problems. Parents' play support was positively correlated to children's pro social behaviours and academic support was negatively correlated with total difficulties, emotional, conduct, hyperactivity and peer problems. Parents play perceptions had a positive relationship with children's social competence. More over parent's level of education also had positive relationships with children's emotional and behavioural problems. Level of education also determined parents support for play or academics.

5.4 Recommendation

In light of the results of the study, the following recommendations are made

1. Some children were observed to be in the abnormal or clinical range of having emotional and behavioral problems. It is therefore recommended that Public Health Workers and other relevant stake holders should educate parents on children's emotional and behavioral problems. Since low educational level was found to be related to children's emotional and behavioral problems, parents with low educational level should be prioritized in these emotional and behavioral problems educations.
2. The study revealed that parents play perception had a relationship with children's social competence development. It is therefore recommended that parents be sensitized on the importance of play in child development by teachers.
3. Further research should be conducted on the emotional and behavioral problems of children since in this research boys were found to have more emotional problems than girls. Also, emotional and behavioral problems increased as children got older instead of decreasing with older children.

4. Future studies should be conducted to investigate parents with lower or limited education play perceptions.
5. Future studies should be conducted to investigate whether older aged (>50) parent's perceptions on children's play differ from that of younger aged parents.

REFERENCES

American Academy of Pediatrics. (2006). Council on sports medicine and fitness and council on school health active healthy living: Prevention of childhood obesity through increased physical activity.

Agresti, A., & Finlay, B. (2009). *Statistical Methods for the social sciences* (4th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

Anisworth , M. (1979). "Infant - mother attachment". *Amercan Psychologist, 34* (10), 932-7.

Avornyo, E. A., & Baker, S. (2018). The role of play in children's learning: The perspective of Ghanaian early years stakeholders. *Early Years, DOI: 10.1080/09575146.2018.1473344* .

Bailey, R. (2002). Playing social chess: Children's play and social intelligence. *Early years, 22*, 163-173.

Band, E. B., & Weisz, J. R. (1988). How to feel better when it feels bad:Children's perspectives on coping with everyday stress. *DevPsychol, 24*, 247-253.

Barnett, W. S. (2002). Early childhood education. In A. Molnar (Ed.), *School reform proposals:The research evidence* (pp. 1-26). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Baumrind, D. (1991). "The influence of parenting style on adolescent competence and substance use". *Journal of Early Adolescence, 11*, 56-95.

Becker, A., Hagenberg, N., Roessner, N., Woerner , W., & Rothenberg, A. (2004). Evaluation of the self- reported SDQ in a clinical setting: do self reports tell us more than ratings by adult informants? *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 13* (2), 17-24.

Belfield, C., & Garcia, E. (2014). Parental notions of school readiness: How have they changed and has preschool made a difference? *The Journal of Educational Research, 107*, 138-151.

Berk, L. E. (2000). *Child development* (5th ed.). Boston: Alllyn and Boston.

Berk, L. E., Mann, T. D., & Ogan, A. T. (2006). Make-believe play: Wellspring for development of self-regulation. . In D. G. Singer, R. M. Golinkoff, & K. Hirsh-Pasek (Eds.), *Play = learning: How play motivates and enhances children's cognitive and social-emotional growth* (pp. 74-100). New York: Oxford University Press.

Birch, S. H., & Ladd, G. W. (1996). Interpersonal relationships in the school environment and children's early school adjustment: The role of teachers and peers. In J. H. Juvonen, & K. W. Wentzel (Eds.), *Social motivation: Understanding children's school adjustment* (pp. 199-225). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Blandon, A. Y., Calkins, S. D., Grimm, K. J., Keane, S. P., & O'Brien, M. (2010). Testing a developmental cascade model of emotional and social competence and early peer acceptance. *Development and Psychopathology, 22*, 737-748.

Bowman, B. T. (1992, November). The challenge of diversity. *Phi Delta Kappan* , 218-224.

Boyd, J., Barnett, W., Bodrovic, E., Leong, D., & Gomby, D. (2005). Promoting Children's Social and Emotional Development through Preschool Eduation.

Bredekamp, S., & Copple, C. (1997). Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Broidy, S., Nagin, D., Tremblay, R., Bates, J. E., Brame, B., Dodge, K. A., et al. (2003). Developmentalt trajectories of childhood disruptive behaviors and adolescent delinquency: A six- site, cross- national study. *Developmental Psychology, 39* (2), 222-245.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2000). Ecological theory. In A. Kazdin (Ed.), *Encyclopedia psychology.* Washington, DC & New York: American Psychological Association and Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. (2008). " Of methods and methodology", Qualitative reserach in organisations and management. *An international journal, 3* (2), 159-168.

Burdette, H. L., & Whitaker, R. C. (2005). Resurrecting free play in young affect. *Arch PediatrAdolesc Med, 159*, 46-50.

Caldera, Y. M., Huston, A. C., & O'Brien, M. (1989). Social interactions and play patterns of parents and toddlers with feminine, masculine, and neutral toys. *Child Development, 60*, 70-76.

Capron, C., Therond, C., & Duyme, M. (2007). Psychometric properties of the French version of the self- report and teacher strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ). *European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 23*, 79-88.

Cavell, T. A. (1990). Social adjustment, social performance, social skills: A tri-component model of social competence". *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 19*, 111-22.

Cohn , D. A. (1990). Child-mother attachment of six-year-olds and social competence at school. *Child Development, 61*, 152-162.

Coolahan, K., Fantuzzo, J., Mendez, J., & McDermott, P. (2000). Preschool peer interactions and readiness to learn: Relationships between classroom peer play and learning behaviors and conduct. *Journal of Education Psychology, 92*, 458-465.

Creasey, G. L., Jarvis, P. A., & Berk, L. (1998). Play and social competence. In O. N. Saracho, & B. Spodek (Eds.), *Multiple perspectives on play in early childhood education* (pp. 116-143). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Creswell, J. (2009). *Educational reserach: Planning, conducting and evaluation quantitative and qualitative research* (1 ed.). Prentice Hall.

Crick, N. R., & Dodge, K. A. (1994). "A review about reformulation of social information-processing mechanisms in children's social adjustment". *Psychological Bulletin, 115*, 74-101.

Cury, C. R., & Golfeto, J. H. (2003). Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ): A study of school children in Ribeirao Preto. *Revista Brasileira de Psiquiatria, 25*, 139-145.

Denham, S. A., & Brown, C. (2010). "Play nice with others" : Social-emotional learning and academic success. *Eary Education and Development, 21* (5), 652-680.

Denham, S. (2006). Social-emotional competence as support for school readiness: What is it and how do we assess it? *Early Education and Development* (17), 57-89.

Dodge, K. A. (1985). Facets of social interaction and the assessment of social competence in children. In B. Schneider, K. H. Rubin, & J. Ledingham (Eds.), *Children's peer relations: Issues in assessment and intervention* (pp. 3-22). New York: Springer-Velag.

Duncan, G J; Dowsett, C J; Claessens, A; Magnuson, K; Huston, A C; Klebanov, P; Japel, C. (2007). School readiness and latter achievement. *Developmental Psychology, 43* (6), 1428-1446.

Eccles, J. S. (1993). School and family effects on the ontogeny of children's interests, self-perceptions, and activity choices. In J. E. Jacobs, & R. Dienstbier (Eds.), *Nebraska symposium on motivation: Developmental perspectivies on motivation* (Vol. 40, pp. 145-208). Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press Lincoln.

Eisenberg, N., Fabes, R. A., Shephard, S. A., Murphy, B. C., Guthrie, I. K., Jones, s., et al. (1997). "Contemporaneous and longitudinal prediction of children's social functioning from regulation and emotionality". *Child Devlopment, 68* (4), 642-664.

Elias, M. J., & Arnold, H. (2006). *The educator's guide to emotional intelligence and academic achievement:Social-emotional learning in the classroom.* Thousand Oaks CA: Corwin Press.

Elkind, D. (2005). Viewpoint.Early childhood amnesia: Reaffirming children's need for developmentally appropriate programs. *Young Children, 60* (4), 38-40.

Erickson, R. J. (1985). Play contributes to full emotional development of the child. *Education, 105*, 261-263.

Erikson, E. (1950). *Childhood and Society.* New York: Norton.

Farmer- Dougan, V., & Kaszuba, T. (1999). Reliability and validity of play- based observations:Relationship between the play behaviour observation system and standardized measures of cognitive and social skills. *Educational Psychology, 19*, 429-439.

Farver, J. A., Kim, Y. K., & Lee, Y. (1995). Cultural differences in Korean and Anglo- American preschoolers' social interaction and play behaviors. *Child Development, 66*, 1088-1099.

Felner, R. D., Lease, A. M., & Phillips, R. S. (1990). Social competence and the language of adequacy as a subject matter for psychology: A quadripartite trilevel framework. In T. P. Gullota, G. R. Adams, & R. Montemayor (Eds.), *The development of social competence in adolescence* (pp. 254-264). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Fisher , K. R., Hirsh-Pasek, K., Golinkoff, R., & Gryfe, S. (2008). Conceptual split? Parents' and experts' perceptions of play in the 21st century. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 29*, 305-316.

Fisher, E. P. (1992). The impact of play on development: a meta-analysis. *Play and Culture, 5* (2), 159-181.

Fogle, L. M., & Mendez, J. L. (2006). Assessing the play beliefs of African American mothers with preschool children. *Early Childhood Research, Quarterly, 23*, 507-518.

Freud, S. (1959). *Collected papers* (Vol. 5). Oxford, England: Basic Press.

Fromberg D, P. (2002). *Play and meaning in early childhood education.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Gaskins, S., & Miller, P. J. (2009). "The cultural roles of emotions in pretend play". In C. D. Clark (Ed.), *Transaction at play* (Vol. 9, pp. 5-21). Lanham, MD: University Press of America (Play and Cultual Studies Series).

Ghana Statistical Service. (2014). 2010 Population and Housing Census: District Analytical Report, Ga East Municipality. 1-83.

Glazebrook, C., Hollis, C., Heussler, H., Goodman, R., & Coates, L. (2003). Detecting emotional and behavioural problems in paediatric clinics. *Child Care Health Development, 29*, 141-149.

Gleason, T. R. (2005). Mothers' and fathers' attitudes regarding pretend play in the context of imaginary companions and of child gender. *Merrill Palmer Quarterly, 51* (4), 412-436.

Glover, A. (1999). The role of play in developmental and learning. . In E. Dau, & E. Jones (Eds.), *Child's play:Revisting play in early childhood settings* (pp. 5-15). Baltimore: Paul H.Brooks Publishing Co.

Goldfried, M. R., & D'Zurilla, T. J. (1969). Current topics in clinical and community psychology. In C. Spielberger (Ed.). New York: Academic.

Golinkoff, R. M., Hirsh-Pasek, K., & Singer, D. G. (2006). Why play = learning: A challenge for parents and educators. In D. G. Singer, R. M. Golinkoff, & K. Hirsh-Pasek (Eds.), *Play = Learning* (pp. 3-12). New York,NY: Oxford University Press, Inc.

Goodman , R. (2001). Psychometric properties of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 40* (11), 1337-1345.

Goodman, R. (1997). The strengths and difficulties questionnaire: A research note. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 38*, 581-586.

Guralnick, M. J. (2010). Early intervention approaches to enhance the perr-related social competence of young children with developmental dalays : A historical perspective. *Infants and Young Children, 23*, 73-83.

Haight, W. L., Parke, R. D., & Black, J. E. (1997). Mothers' and fathers' beliefs about and spontaneous participation in their toddler's pretend play. *Merrill Palmer Quarterly, 43*, 271-290.

Hartup, W. W. (1992). *Having friends, making friends, and kepping friends: Relationships as educational contexts.* ERIC Digest Champaign IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Heiervang, E., Stormark, K. M., Lundervold, A. J., Heimann, M., Goodman, R., Posserud, M. B., et al. (2007). Psychiatric disorders in Nowegian 8- to -10 year olds: An epidemiological survey of prevalence risk factors, and service use. *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry, 46* (4), 438-447.

Henderson, V. (2002). "Urbanization in developing countries". *World Bank Research Observer, 17* (No 1), 89-112.

Henry, M. (1990). More than play:The significance of mutually directed adult child activity. *Early Child Dev, 60*, 35-51.

Hirsh- Pasek, K., & Golinkoff, R. M. (2003). *Einstein never used flah cards: How our children really learn- and why they need to play more and memorize less.* Rodale Inc.

Holloway, S. D., Marylee, F., Rambaud, F. B., & Costanza, E. P. (1995). "What is 'Appropriate Practice' at home and in child care? Low income mothers' view on preparing their children for school'. *Early Childhood Research, Quarterly 10*, 451-73.

Howard, D., & Madrigal, R. (1990). Who makes the decision: The parent or child? *Journal of Leisure Research* (22), 244-258.

Howes, C. (1992). *The collaborative construction of pretend: Social pretend play functions.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Howes, C., & James, J. (2002). Children's social development within the socialization context of childcare and early childhood education. In C. Hart, & P. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of social childhood development* (pp. 137-155). London: Blackwell.

Howes, C., Hamilton, C. E., & Matheson, C. C. (1994). Children's relationships with peer: Differential associations with aspects of the teacher- child relationship. *child development, 65*, 253-263.

Hughes, F. P. (1999). *Children, play, and development* (3rd ed.). Needham Heights MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Hurwitz, S. C. (2002). To be successful- Let them play! *Childhood Education, 79* (2), 101-102.

Isenberg, J., & Jalongo, M. (1997). *Creative expressions and play in early childhood* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice- Hall.

Jacobs, J. E., & Eccles, J. S. (2000). Parents' task values, and real-life achievement- related choices. In C. Sansone (Ed.), *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation:The search for optimal motivation and performance* (pp. 405-439). San Diego: Academic.

Jacobs, J. E., Vernon, M. K., & Eccles, J. S. (2005). Activity choices in middle childhood:The role of gender,self- beliefs and parents' influence . In J. L. Mahoney, R. W. Larson, & J. S. Eccles (Eds.), *Organized activities as contexts of development:Extracurricular activities,afterschoolandcommunity programs* (pp. 235-254). Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Jian, S., & Han, M. (2015). Parental beliefs on children's play: comparison among mainland chinese, chinese immigrants in the USA, and european-americans. *early childhood development and care* .

Johnson, J. E., Christie, J. F., & Wardle, F. (2005). *Play, development and early education.* Boston: Alllyn & Bacon.

Juvonen, J. (1997). Peer relations . In G. Bear, K. Minke, & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Children's needs II:Development, problems and alternatives* (pp. 65-74). Washington DC.

Katz, L. G., & McClellan, D. E. (1997). *Fostering children's social competence: The teacher's role.* Washington ,DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Kentel, J. (2007). The literate mover: Strategies for developing movement understanding in learners. *Physical & Health Education Journal, 72* (4), 20-25.

Koskelainen, M., Sourander, A., & Vauras, M. (2001). Self- reported strengthns and difficulties in a community sample of Finnish adolescents. *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 10*, 180-185.

Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and psychological measurement, 30*, 607- 610.

Kumar, R. (2005). *Research methodology a step - by- step guide for beginners* (2nd ed.). Australia: Perason Education.

Kupersmidt, J. B., Coie, J. D., & Dodge, K. A. (1990). The role of poor peer relationships in the development of disorder. In S. R. Asher, & J. D. Coie (Eds.), *Peer rejection in childhood* (pp. pp. 274-305). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ladd, G. W. (1999). Peer relationships and social competence during early and middle childhood. *Annual Review of Psychology, 50*, 333-359.

Ladd, G. W. (2000). The fourth R: Relationships as risks and resources following children's transition to school. *American Educational Reserach Association Division E Newsletter, 19* (1), 7, 9-11.

Ladd, G. W. (1992). Themes and theories:Perspectives on process in family-peer relationships. In R. D. Parke, & G. W. Ladd (Eds.), *Family-peer relationships:Modes of linkage* (pp. 1-34). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ladd, G. W., Birch, S. H., & Buhs, E. S. (1999). Children's social and scholastic lives in kindergarten:Related spheres of influence? *Child Development, 70* (6), 1373-1400.

Landy, S. (2009). *Pathways to competence: encouraging healthy social and emotional developemt in young children* (2nd ed.). Baltimore: MD: Brookes.

Leadbeater, B. J., Kuperminc, G. P., Blatt, S. J., & Hertzog, C. (1999). A multivariate model of gender differences in adolescents', internalizing and externallizing problems. *Developmental Psychology, 35*, 1268-1282.

Lester, S., & Russell, W. (2008). *Play for a change - play, policy and practice: A review of contemporary perspectives.* London: Play England.

Lin, Y. C., & Yawkey, T. ,. (2014). Parents' play beliefs and the relationship to children's social competence. *Education* (135), 107-114.

Lindsey, E. W., & Colwell, M. J. (2003). Preschoolers' emotional competence:Links to pretend and physical play. *Child Study Journal, 33*, 39-52.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. A. (1983). Socialization,personality, and social development. In P. H. Mussen, & E. M. Hertherington (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology* (4th ed., Vol. 4, pp. 1-101). New York: Wiley.

Malecki, C. K., & Elliott, S. N. (2002). Children's social behaviors as predictors of academic achievement: A longitudinal analysis. *School Psychology, Quarterly 17* (1), 1-23.

Martin, S. P. (2000). Diverging fertility among U.S. women who delay childbearing past age 30. *Demography, 37*, 523-533.

McArdle, P. (2001). Childre's play. *Child: Care, Health and Development, 27*, 509-514.

McCain, M., Mustard, F., & Shanker, S. (2007). *Early years study 2: Putting science into action.* Toronto, ON: Council for Early Child Development.

McDonald, K. B. (1993). *Parent- child PLAY: Descriptions and implications.* Albany New York: State University of New York Press; Burdette HL.

McElwain, E. L., & Volling, B. L. (2005). Preschool children's interactions with friends and older siblings: Relationship specificity and joint contributions to problem behaviors. *Journal of Family Psychology, 19*, 486-496.

McGillicuddy- De Lissi, A. (1985). The relationship between parental beliefs ans children's cognitive level . In I. E. Sigel (Ed.), *Parental beleif systems: The psychological consequences for children* (pp. 7-24). Lawarence Erlbaum: Hillsdale NJ.

Mellor, D. (2004). Furthering the use of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire: Reliability with younger child respondents. *Psychological Assessment, 16,* 396-401.

Miller, N. B., Cowan, P. A., & Hetherington, E. M. (1993). "Externalizing in preschoolers and early adolescents: A cross-study replication of a family model". *Developmental Psychology, 29,* 3-18.

Mohammadi, M. R., Alavi, A., Mahmoudi-Gharaei, J., Tehranidoost, M., Shahrivar, Z., & Saadat, S. (2008). Children mental health problems: Parent report form of strength and difficulties questionnaire. *Iranian Journal of Psychiatry, 4,* 26-31.

Mohammadi, M. R., Salmanian, M., Ghanizadeh, A., Alavi, A., Malek, A., Fathzadeh, H., et al. (2014). Psychological problems of Iranian children and adolescents:Parent report from strengths and difficulties questionnaire. *Journal of Mental Health, 23* (6), 287-291.

Moore, S. G. (1992). *The role of parents in development of peer group competence.* Urbana IL: ERIC Digest.

Mullick, M. S., & Goodman, R. (2001). Questionnaire screening for mental health problems in Bangladeshi children: A preliminary study. *Social Psychiatry Psychiatric Epidemiology, 36* (2), 94-99.

Newman, W. L. (2006). *'Social research methods- quantitative and qualitative approaches'* (6th ed.). USA: Pearson Education Inc.

Odom, S. L., McConnell, S. R., & Brown, W. H. (2008). Social compentence of children: Conceptualizations assessment, and influences. In W. H. Brown, S. L. Odom, & S. R. McConnell (Eds.), *Social competence of young children : Risk, disability, and evidence-based practices* (2 ed., pp. 3-29). Baltimore MD: Brookes.

Olsen, C., & George, D. M. (2004). *Cross sectional study design and data analysis.* College Entrance Examination Board.

O'Neil, R., Welsh, M., Parke, R. D., Wang, S., & Strand, C. (1997). A longitudinal assessment of the academic correlates of early peer acceptance and rejection. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 26* (3), 290-303.

Oso, W. Y., & Onen, D. (2008). *Writing research proposal and report.* Makerere university:Printhall.

Palacios, J., Gonzalez, M., & Moreno, M. (1992). Stimulating the child in the zone of proximal development: The role of parents' ideas. In I. E. Sigel, A. V. McGillicuddy-De Lissi, & J. J. Goodnow (Eds.), *Parental belief systems: The psychological consequences for children* (2nd ed., pp. 71-94). Hillsdale, New York: Erlbaum.

Pan, H. W. (1994). Children's play in Taiwan. In J. L. Roopnarine, J. Johnson, & F. Hooper (Eds.), *Children's play in diverse cultures* (pp. 31-50). Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.

Parker, J. G., & Asher, S. R. (1987). Peer relations and later personal adjustment: Are low- accepted children at risk? *Psychological Bulletin, 102*, 357-389.

Parmar, P., Harkness, S., & Super, C. M. (2004). Asian and Euro-American parents' ethno theories of play and learning: Effects on preschool children's home routines and school behavior. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 28* (2), 97-104.

Pearson, E., & Rao, N. (2003). Socialization goals, parenting practices, and peer competence in Chinese and English preschoolers. *Early Child Development and Care, 173*, 131-146.

Pellegrini, A. D. (1995). Boys' rough - and tumble - play and social competence: Contemporaneous and longitudinal relations . In A. D. Pelligrini (Ed.), *The future of play theory: A multidisplinary inquiry into the contribution of Brian Sutton-Smith* (pp. 107-126). Albany State: University of New York Press.

Pellegrini, A. (1984a). Identifying casual elements in the thematic- fantasy play paradigm. *American Research Journal, 21* (3), 691-701.

Pellegrini, A. (1984b). The effect of dramatic play on children's generation of cohesive text. *7*, 57-67.

Pellegrini, D., & Smith, P. K. (1998). The development of play during childhood: Forms and possible functions. *Child Psychol Psychiatry Rev, 3*, 51-57.

Peplar, D. (1986). Play and creativity. The young child at play: Reviews of research. In G. Fein, & M. Rivkin (Eds.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education og Young Children.

Piaget, J. (1962b). *Play, dreams and imitation.* Norton New York: National Association for the Education for Young Children.

Piaget, J. (1962a). *Play, dreams and imitation in childhood.* New York: W.W. Norton and Co.

Pleck, J. H. (1997). Father invovlement: Levels, sources, and consequences. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (pp. 66-103). New York: Wiley.

Rabbani, A., Mahmoudi-GharaeiJ, Mohammadi, M. R., Motlagh, M. E., Mohammad, K., Ardalan, G., et al. (2012). Mental health problems in Iranian female adolescents and its association with pubertal development: A nationwide study. *Acta Medica Iranica, 50* (3), 169-176.

Rheingold, H. L., & Cook, K. V. (1975). The context of boys' and girls' rooms as an index of parents' behavior. *Child Development, 46*, 459-463.

Rindfuss, R. R., Morgan, S. P., & Swicegood, G. (1988). *First births in Ammerica. Changes in the timing of parenthood.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Rogers, C. S., & Sawyers, J. K. (1988). *Play in the lives of children.* Washington DC.

Roopnarine, J. L., & Jin, B. (2012). Indo carribbean immigrant beliefs about play and its impact on early academic performance. *American Journal of Play, 4*, 444-463.

Rose-Krasnor, L. (1997). The nature of social competence: A theoretical review. *Social Development, 6*, 111-135.

Rothlein, L., & Brett, A. (1987). Children's teachers and parents perceptions of play. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 2* (1), 45-53.

Rubin, K. H., Fein, G., & Vanderberg, B. (1983). Play. (pp. 693-774). In P. E. Mussen, & E. M. Hetherington (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: vol.4. Socialization, personality, and social development* (Vol. 50, pp. 104-108). New York : Wiley: Australian Occupational Therapy Journal.

Sammons, P., Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Siraj-Blatchford, I., Taggart, B., & Elliot, K. (2003). *Measuring the impact of pre-school on children's social/behavioural development over the preschool period (Technical paper 8b).* London: Institute of Education ,.

Saracho , O., & Spodek, B. (2003). *Contemporary perspectivies on early childhood curriculum.* Greenwich CT: Information Age Publishing.

Saracho, O. N., & Spodek, B. (1995). Children's play and early childhood education: Insights from history and theory. *Journal of Education, 117* (3), 129-149.

Sarantakos, S. (2005). *Social research* (3rd ed.). Melbourne: Macmillan Education.

Scott, E., & Panksepp, L. (2003). Rough- and- tumble play in human children. *Aggressive Behavior, 29*, 539-551.

Semrud-Clikeman, M. (2007). *Social competence in children.* New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media.

Shonkoff, J. P., & Phillips, D. A. (Eds.). (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Sigel, I. E., & McGillicuddy-De Lisi, A. (2002). Parent beliefs are cognitions: The dynamic belief system model. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Being and becoming a parent* (2nd ed., Vol. 3, pp. 485-508). Erlbaum,Mahwah NJ: Handbook of parenting.

Singer, D., & Singer, J. L. (2005). *Imagination and play in the electronic age.* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Slobodskaya, H. R., Akhmetova, O. A., & Ryabichenko, T. I. (2007). Siberian child and adolescent mental health: Prevalence estimates and psychosocial factors. *Alaska Med, 49*, 261-266.

Smilansky , S., & Shefatya, L. (1990). *Facilitating play : A medium for promoting cognitive, socio-emotional and academic development in young children.* Gaitherburg MD: Psychological and Educational Publications.

Smith, D. (1995). How play influences children's development at home and school. *Journal of Psychology Education Recreation Dance, 66*, 19-23.

Spodek, B., & Saracho, O. N. (1998). *Multiple perspectives on play in early childhood education.* Albany: State University Press.

Stipek, D., Milburn, S., Clements, D., & Daniels, D. (1992). Prents' beliefs about appropriate education for young children. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 13*, 293-310.

Stump, K. N., Ratliff, J. M., Wu, Y. P., & Hawley, P. H. (2009). *Social competence.* (J. L. Matson, Ed.) New York, NY, US: Springer + Business Media; US.

Sullivan, T. J. (2000). *Methods of social research.* Cengage Learning.

Swartz, M. I. (2005). Playdough:What's standard. *Young Children, 60* (2), 100-109.

Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Shannon, J. D., Cabrera, N. J., & Lamb, M. E. (2004). Fathers and mothers at play with their 2- and 3- year olds: Contributions to language and cognitive development. *Child Development, 75* (6), 1806-1820.

Thabet, A. A., Stretch, D., & Vostanis, P. (2000). Child mental health problems in Arab children; Application of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry, 46* (4), 266-280.

Theunissen, M. H., Vogels, A. G., de Wolff, M. S., Crone, M. R., & Reijneveld, S. A. (2015). Comparing three short questionnaires to detect psychosocial problems among 3 to 4 year olds. *BMC Pediatrics* , 15:84.

Thompson, R. A. (2003). The legacy of early attachments. *Child Development, 71* (1), 145-152.

Thompson, R. A., Goodvin, R., & Meyer, S. (2006). Social developmrnt: Psychological understanding, self-understanding, and relationships. . In J. Luby (Ed.), *Handbook of*

preschool mental health: Development, disorders and treatment (pp. 3-22). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Tomlinson, H., & Hyson, M. (2009). Developmetally appropriate practice in the preschool years-ages 3-5. . In C. Copple, & Bredekamp (Eds.), *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8* (3rd pp 111-148 ed., pp. 111-148). Washington DC: National association for education of young children.

Tsao, L. (2002). How much do we know about the importance of play in child development? *Child Education, 78*, 230-233.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind and society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Warash, B. G., Root, A. E., & Doris, M. D. (2016). Parents' perceptions of play: a comparative study of spousal perspectives. *Early Child Development and Care* .

Weiss, L. H., & Schwarz, J. C. (1996). " The relationship between parenting types and older adolescents' personality, and academic achievement, adjustment and substance use". *Child Development, 67*, 2101-14.

Welsh, J. A., Bierman, K. L., & Pope, A. W. (2000). Play assessment of peer interaction in children. In K. Gitlin-Weiner, A. Sandgrund, & C. Scheaefer (Eds.), *Play diagnosis and assessment* (2nd ed., pp. 517-543). Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.

Wentzel , K. R. (2005). Peer relationships, motivation and acdemic performance at school. In A. J. Elliot, & C. S. Dweck (Eds.), *Handbook of competence and motivation* (pp. 279-296). New York: Guilford Press.

Zins , J. E. (2004). *Building academic success on social and emotional learning: What does the research say?* New York, NY: Teachers Collage Press.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Parents' Perceptions of Child's Play Questionnaire

Title of Project: **PLAY AND SOCIAL COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT:**

PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTS' AT HAATSO

I am a student at the University of Ghana Legon; I will appreciate it a lot if you could provide answers to the following questions. The purpose of the research is to gain an understanding of parents' perceptions of child's play and to see if their perceptions are related to children's development of social competence. If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to fill out three parts of questions. The first part is background information. The second part is your perception of child's play. The third part is the evaluation of your child's social competence. Your answer and personal data will remain confidential and will be used for this research only. Your decision in this research is voluntarily. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.

Part I: Parents' Background Information

1. Your gender:

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Your age:

☐ 20-29 ☐ 30-39

☐ 40-49 ☐ 50 or above

3. Your highest education level:

☐ Junior high or below ☐ Senior high school or vocational school

☐ University (Bachelor degree) ☐ Graduate school (Master, Ph.D. or higher)

4. The gender of your child who studies in this class:

☐ Boy ☐ Girl

5. The age of your child:

☐ 4-5 ☐ 6-7

Part II: Parents' Play Belief Scale

The following items are related to your perceptions of child's play and your behaviors related to child's play. **Child's play indicates some activities that children usually engage in, including constructive play (block play), social-dramatic play, pretend-play, and free-play.**

Please mark a check (√) in the box according to the level of your agreement in terms of each item.

1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= Uncertain, 4 =Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

Example: "Playing helps my child practice language and communication abilities."

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

If you strongly agree that playing helps your child practice language and communication abilities, please mark a "√" on the box of number 5

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Uncertain 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
1. Play can help my child develop better thinking abilities					
2. Playing at home will help my					

child get ready for kindergarten					
3. I can help my child to learn to control his or her emotions during play					
4. I teach my child social skills during play					
5. I would rather read to my child than play together					
6. Playing helps my child to express his or feelings					
7. Through play my child develops new skills and abilities					
8. It is more important for my child to have good academic skills than play well with others					
9. If I take time to play with my child he or she will be better at playing					
10. Playing at school will help my child get ready for kindergarten					
11. I do not think my child learns important skills by playing					
12. Reading to my child is more					

worthwhile than playing with him or her					
13. Play can improve my child's language and communication abilities					
14. Play can help my child develop social skills					
15. Play does not help my child learn academic skills					
16. Playing together helps me build a good relationship with my child					
17. Playing with my child is one of my favorite things to do					
18. I do not think it is important for other family members to play with my child					
19. I have a lot of fun with my child when we play together					
20. It is important for me to participate in play with my child					
21. Play time is not a high priority in my home					
22. Play is a fun activity for my					

child					
23. My child will get more from play if play with him or her					
24. Play does not influence my child's ability to solve problems					
25. My child has a lot of fun when we play together					

Part III: Evaluation of Your Child's Social Competence (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire)

This section is to evaluate your child's social competence at home or other occasions when interacting with others (e.g., playing).

For each item, please mark the box for **0= Not True, 1= Somewhat True, 2= Certainly True**

Example:"Cooperates with peers (friends or playmates)"

If your child always cooperates with peers at home or other occasions when interacting with others (e.g., playing), mark a "√" on the box of number 3.

0 1 2

☐ ☐ ☒

Item	Not True 0	Somewhat True 1	Certainly True 2
1. Considerate of other people's feelings			
2. Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for			

long			
3. Often complains of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness			
4. Shares readily with other children (treats, toys, pencils etc.)			
5. Often has temper tantrums or hot tempers			
6. Rather solitary, tends to play alone			
7. Generally obedient, usually does what adults request			
8. Many worries often seems worried			
9. Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill			
10. Constantly fidgeting or squirming			
11. Has at least one good friend			
12. Often fights with other children or bullies them			
13. Often unhappy, down hearted or tearful			
14. Generally liked by other children			
15. Easily distracted, concentration wanders			
16. Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence			
17. Kind to other children			
18. Often lies or cheats			

19. Picked on or bullied by other children			
20. Often volunteers to help others (parents, teachers, other children)			
21. Can stop and think things out before acting			
22. Steals from home, school or elsewhere			
23. Gets better with adults than with other children			
24. Many fears, easily scared			
25. Sees tasks through to the end, good attention span			

Appendix 2

Evaluation of the Child's Social Competence (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire Teacher Version)

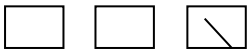
This section is to evaluate the child's social competence at school (e.g., playing).

For each item, please mark the box for **0= Not True, 1= Somewhat True, 2= Certainly True**

Example: Cooperates with peers (friends or playmates)

If your child always cooperates with peers at home or other occasions when interacting with others (e.g., playing), mark a "√" on the box of number 3.

0 1 2



Item	Not True 0	Somewhat True 1	Certainly True 2
1. Considerate of other people's feelings			
2. Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long			
3. Often complains of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness			
4. Shares readily with other children (treats, toys, pencils etc.)			
5. Often has temper tantrums or hot tempers			
6. Rather solitary, tends to play alone			
7. Generally obedient, usually does what adults request			

8. Many worries often seems worried			
9. Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill			
10. Constantly fidgeting or squirming			
11. Has at least one good friend			
12. Often fights with other children or bullies them			
13. Often unhappy, down hearted or tearful			
14. Generally liked by other children			
15. Easily distracted, concentration wanders			
16. Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence			
17. Kind to other children			
18. Often lies or cheats			
19. Picked on or bullied by other children			
20. Often volunteers to help others (parents, teachers, other children)			
21. Can stop and think things out before acting			
22. Steals from home, school or else ware			
23. Gets better with adults than with other children			
24. Many fears, easily scared			
25. Sees tasks through to the end, good attention span			

Appendix 3

Ethical Clearance

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

Official Use only Protocol number

COLLEGE OF BASIC AND APPLIED SCIENCES

Ethics Committee for Basic and Applied Sciences (ECBAS)

PROTOCOL CONSENTFORM

Section A- BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of Study:	Play and Social Competence: Perceptions of Parents' at Haatso
Principal Investigator:	Jean Akweley Sai
Certified Protocol Number	

Section B–CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

General Information about Research

- The purpose of the research is to gain an understanding of Ghanaian parents' perceptions of child's play and to see if their perceptions are related to children's development of social competence.
- If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to fill out three parts of questions. The first part is background information. The second part is your perception of child's play. The third part is the evaluation of your child's social competence.
- It will take about 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Benefits/Risk of the study

- There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this study, nor are there any costs for participating in the study. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but what I learn from this study will provide general benefits to government, parents, teachers, and researchers.

Confidentiality

- This study is anonymous. We will not be collecting or retaining any information about your identity. Your answer and personal information will remain confidential and will be used for this research only. The records of this study will be kept strictly confidential. Research records will be kept in a locked file and all electronic information will be coded and secured using a password protected file.
- Only the researcher and supervisors will have access to the records.

Compensation

- There is no compensation for participation in this study.

Withdrawal from Study

- The decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time; your decision will not result in any loss or benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may skip any question that you do not want to answer.
- You or your legal representative will be informed in a timely manner if information becomes available that may be relevant to your willingness to continue participation or withdraw.

Contact for Additional Information

- You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have any further questions or concerns about the study please contact:

Jean Akweley Sai

P.O Box OS2825, Osu.

Tel: 0202728679, 0246333953

Email: akweley71@gmail.com

If you have any issues on your rights as a participant you can contact the address below:

Administrator, Ethics Committee for Basic and Applied Sciences

College of Basic and Applied Sciences

University of Ghana

P. O. Box LG 68

Legon – Accra

Tel: +233244692728

Email: saddo@staff.ug.edy.gh / saddo@ug.edu.gh

Section C-VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

"I have read or have had someone read all of the above, asked questions, received answers regarding participation in this study, and am willing to give consent for me, my child/ward to participate in this study. I will not have waived any of my rights by signing his consent form. Upon signing this consent form, I will receive a copy for my personal records."

_____

Name of Volunteer

_____ _____

Signature or mark of volunteer Date

If volunteers cannot read the form themselves, a witness must sign here:

I was present while the benefits, risks and procedures were read to the volunteer. All questions were answered and the volunteer has agreed to take part in the research.

_____

Name of witness

_____ _____

Signature of witness Date

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the above individual.

_____

Name of Person who obtained Consent

_____ _____

Signature of Person who obtained Consent Date

Appendix 4

Correlations

Table 4.16 Correlations between PPBS subscales and SDQ subscales

Subscales		Play Support	Academic Support	Emotional Problems	Conduct Problems	Hyperactivity Problems	Peer Problems	Pro-social Behavior	Total Difficulties
Play Support	Pearson Correlation	1	-.499**	.088	-.008	-.132	-.111	.270**	-.048
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.215	.908	.062	.117	.000	.498
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Academic Support	Pearson Correlation	-.499**	1	.252**	.242**	.260**	.238**	-.114	.344**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.001	.000	.001	.108	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Emotional Problems	Pearson Correlation	.088	.252**	1	.403**	.254**	.455**	.078	.757**

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.215	.000		.000	.000	.000	.274	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Pearson Correlation	-.008	.242**	.403**	1	.492**	.260**	-.271**	.742**
Conduct Problems	Sig. (2-tailed)	.908	.001	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Pearson Correlation	-.132	.260**	.254**	.492**	1	.292**	-.287**	.717**
Hyperactivity Problems	Sig. (2-tailed)	.062	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Pearson Correlation	-.111	.238**	.455**	.260**	.292**	1	-.044	.661**
Peer Problems	Sig. (2-tailed)	.117	.001	.000	.000	.000		.537	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Pro-social Behavior	Pearson Correlation	.270**	-.114	.078	-.271**	-.287**	-.044	1	-.176*

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.108	.274	.000	.000	.537		.013
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Pearson Correlation	-.048	.344**	.757**	.742**	.717**	.661**	-.176*	1
Total Difficulties	Sig. (2-tailed)	.498	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.013	
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. 17 Correlations between PPBS, parents rating of pro social skills and teacher rating of pro social skills

Variables		PPBS	Parent rating of pro social skills	Teacher rating of pro social skills
PPBS	Pearson Correlation	1	.194**	.188**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006	.008
	n	200	200	200
Parent rating of pro social skills	Pearson Correlation	.194**	1	.984**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006		.000
	n	200	200	200
Teacher rating of pro social skills	Pearson Correlation	.188**	.984**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000	
	n	200		200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.18 Correlations between level of education, play support, and academic support

Variables		Level of Education	Play Support	Academic Support
Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.145*	-.410**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.040	.000
	n	200	200	200
Play Support	Pearson Correlation	.145*	1	-.499**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.040		.000
	n	200	200	200
Academic Support	Pearson Correlation	-.410**	-.499**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	n	200	200	200

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.19 Correlations between parents' level of education and children's emotional and behavioral problems

Variables		Level of Education	Emotional Problems	Conduct Problems	Hyperactivity Problems	Peer Problems	Pro-social Behavior	Total Difficulties
Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	1	-.399**	-.238**	-.173*	-.203**	.033	-.360**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.001	.014	.004	.643	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
EmotionalProblems	Pearson Correlation	-.399**	1	.403**	.254**	.455**	.078	.757**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.274	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
ConductProblems	Pearson Correlation	-.238**	.403**	1	.492**	.260**	-.271**	.742**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Hyperactivity Problems	Pearson Correlation	-.173*	.254**	.492**	1	.292**	-.287**	.717**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
PeerProblems	Pearson Correlation	-.203**	.455**	.260**	.292**	1	-.044	.661**

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.000	.000	.000		.537	.000
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Pro-social Behavior	Pearson Correlation	.033	.078	-.271**	-.287**	-.044	1	-.176*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.643	.274	.000	.000	.537		.013
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
TotalDifficulties	Pearson Correlation	-.360**	.757**	.742**	.717**	.661**	-.176*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.013	
	n	200	200	200	200	200	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.5.2 Gender Effects

One Way ANOVA for differences in emotional and behavioral problems when analyzed by childs' gender

SDQ Subscales		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Emotional Problems	Between Groups	21.866	1	21.866	4.483	.035
	Within Groups	965.634	198	4.877		
	Total	987.500	199			
Conduct Problems	Between Groups	3.388	1	3.388	1.067	.303
	Within Groups	628.832	198	3.176		
	Total	632.220	199			
Hyperactivity Problems	Between Groups	16.661	1	16.661	3.980	.047
	Within Groups	828.839	198	4.186		
	Total	845.500	199			
Peer Problems	Between Groups	.123	1	.123	.049	.825
	Within Groups	495.752	198	2.504		
	Total	495.875	199			

Pro-social Behavior	Between Groups	9.995	1	9.995	2.838	.094
	Within Groups	697.360	198	3.522		
	Total	707.355	199			
Total Difficulties	Between Groups	119.877	1	119.877	3.977	.047
	Within Groups	5967.718	198	30.140		
	Total	6087.595	199			

Descriptives

SDQ Subscale	Gender	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Emotional Problems	Male	97	2.69	2.333	0.237	2.22	3.16	0	8
	Female	103	2.03	2.084	0.205	1.62	2.44	0	7
	Total	200	2.35	2.228	0.158	2.04	2.66	0	8
Conduct Problems	Male	97	1.80	1.795	0.182	1.44	2.17	0	7
	Female	103	1.54	1.770	0.174	1.20	1.89	0	7
	Total	200	1.67	1.782	0.126	1.42	1.92	0	7
Hyperactivity Problems	Male	97	4.25	2.131	0.216	3.82	4.68	0	9
	Female	103	3.67	1.962	0.193	3.29	4.05	0	9
	Total	200	3.95	2.061	0.146	3.66	4.24	0	9
Peer Problems	Male	97	2.35	1.646	0.167	2.02	2.68	0	6
	Female	103	2.30	1.520	0.150	2.00	2.60	0	6
	Total	200	2.33	1.579	0.112	2.10	2.55	0	6
Pro-socialBehavior	Male	97	7.85	1.752	0.178	7.49	8.20	5	10
	Female	103	7.40	1.987	0.196	7.01	7.79	1	10
	Total	200	7.62	1.885	0.133	7.35	7.88	1	10
Total Difficulties	Male	97	11.09	5.692	0.578	9.95	12.24	1	25
	Female	103	9.54	5.293	0.522	8.51	10.58	1	24
	Total	200	10.30	5.531	0.391	9.52	11.07	1	25

5.5.3 Age Effects

One Way ANOVA for differences in emotional and behavioral problems when analyzed by childs' age

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Between Groups	32.529	1	32.529	6.744	.010
Emotional Problems	Within Groups	954.971	198	4.823		
	Total	987.500	199			
	Between Groups	.003	1	.003	.001	.977
Conduct Problems	Within Groups	632.217	198	3.193		
	Total	632.220	199			
	Between Groups	13.192	1	13.192	3.138	.078
Hyperactivity Problems	Within Groups	832.308	198	4.204		
	Total	845.500	199			
	Between Groups	.169	1	.169	.068	.795
Peer Problems	Within Groups	495.706	198	2.504		
	Total	495.875	199			
Pro-social Behavior	Between Groups	.134	1	.134	.038	.847

	Within Groups	707.221	198	3.572		
	Total	707.355	199			
	Between Groups	5.913	1	5.913	.193	.661
Total Difficulties	Within Groups	6081.682	198	30.716		
	Total	6087.595	199			

Descriptives

SDQ Subscale	Age	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Emotional Problems	4-5	92	1.91	2.141	0.223	1.47	2.36	0	8
	6-7	108	2.72	2.242	0.216	2.29	3.15	0	7
	Total	200	2.35	2.228	0.158	2.04	2.66	0	8
Conduct Problems	4-5	92	1.67	1.840	0.192	1.29	2.06	0	7
	6-7	108	1.67	1.740	0.167	1.33	2.00	0	7

	Total	200	1.67	1.782	0.126	1.42	1.92	0	7
	4-5	92	4.23	2.071	0.216	3.80	4.66	0	9
Hyperactivity	6-7	108	3.71	2.033	0.196	3.33	4.10	0	9
Problems	Total	200	3.95	2.061	0.146	3.66	4.24	0	9
	4-5	92	2.29	1.867	0.195	1.91	2.68	0	6
Peer Problems	6-7	108	2.35	1.292	0.124	2.11	2.60	0	5
	Total	200	2.33	1.579	0.112	2.10	2.55	0	6
	4-5	92	7.59	2.034	0.212	7.17	8.01	1	10
Pro-socialBehavior	6-7	108	7.64	1.759	0.169	7.30	7.97	3	10
	Total	200	7.62	1.885	0.133	7.35	7.88	1	10
	4-5	92	10.11	6.050	0.631	8.86	11.36	1	25
Total Difficulties	6-7	108	10.45	5.070	0.488	9.49	11.42	1	22
	Total	200	10.30	5.531	0.391	9.52	11.07	1	25