

# An investigation of Early Childhood Educators' Perspectives Towards Outdoor Play

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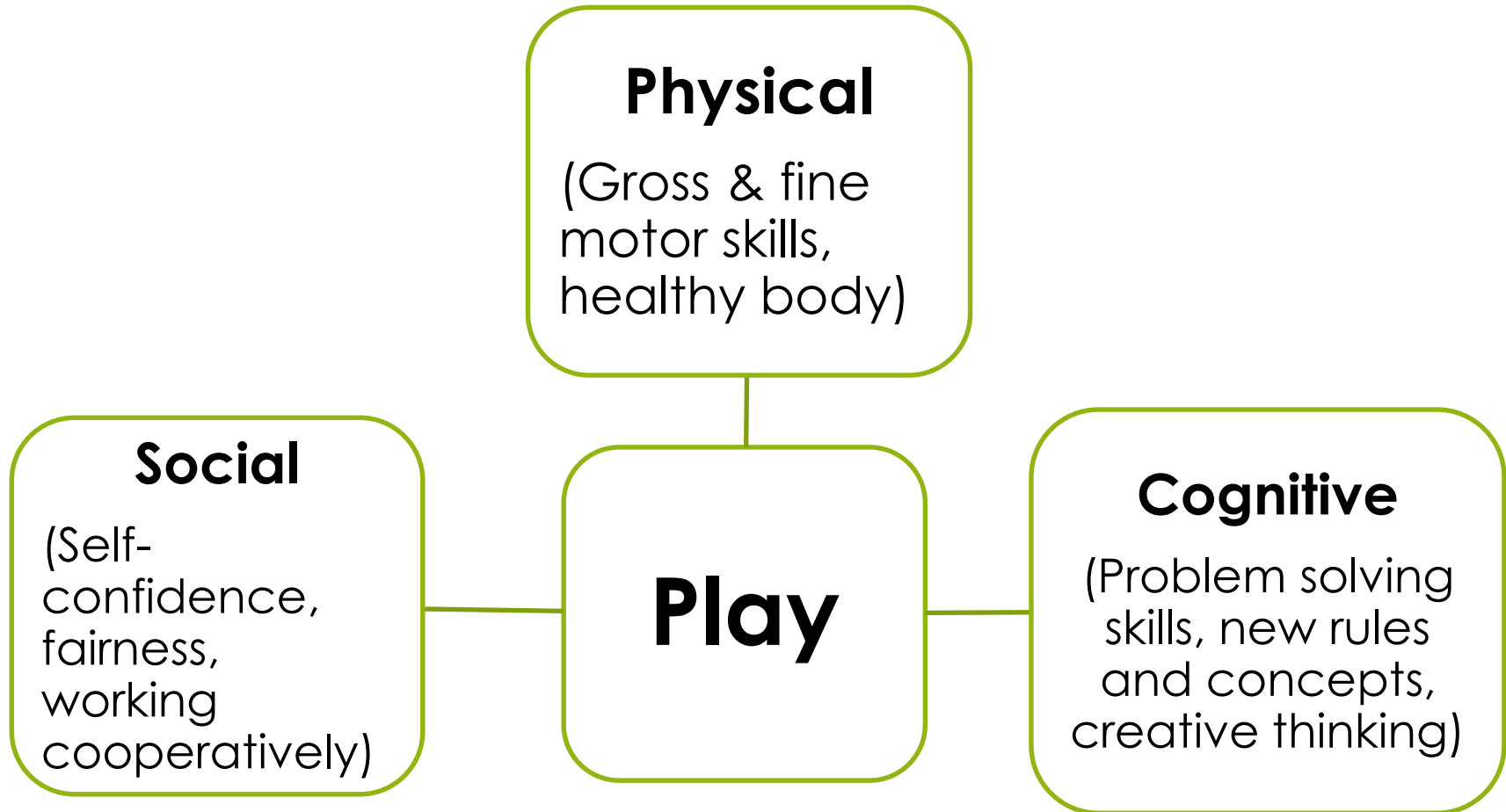


# Play

- Positive Effect
- Self-replicated
- Instinctive
- Enjoyable
- Process Oriented

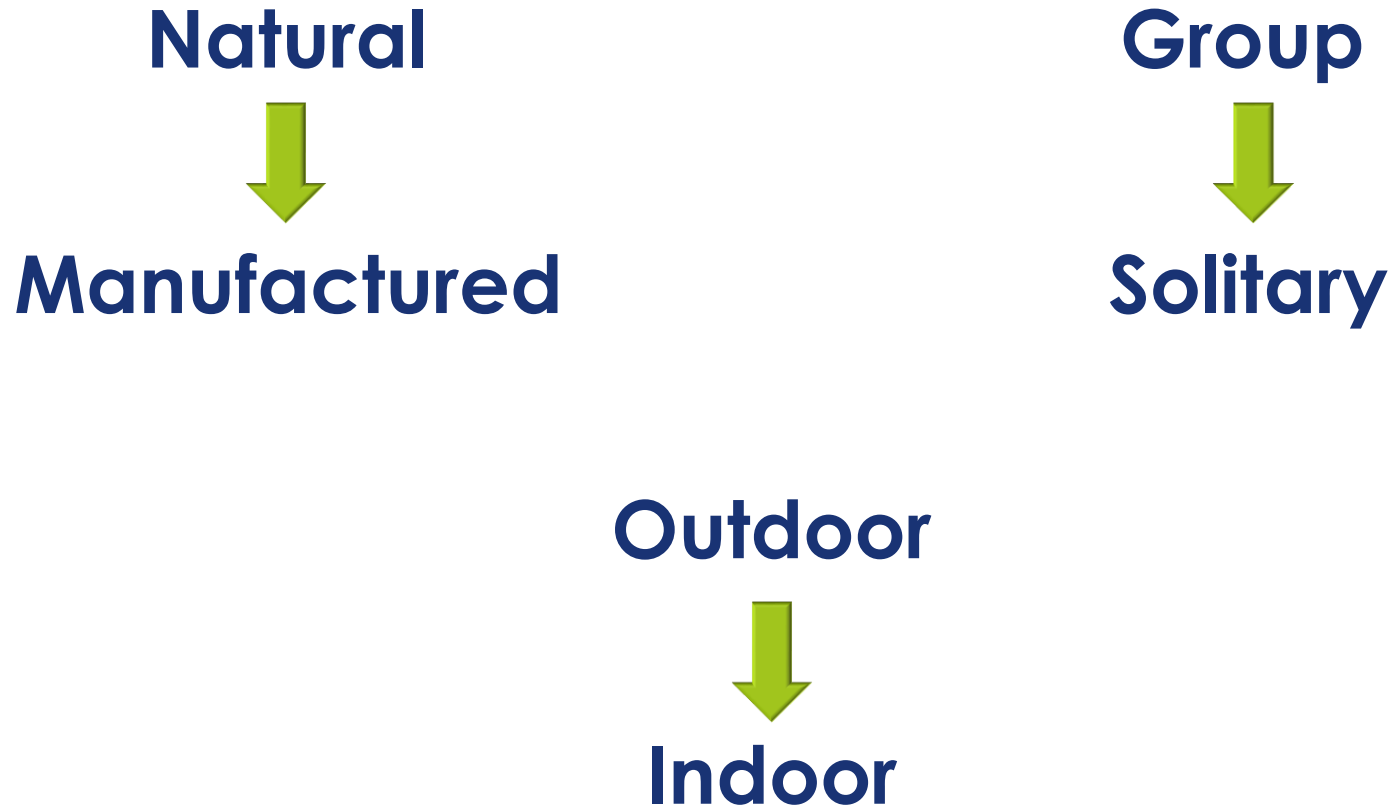
(Anderson-McNamee & Bailey, 2010 ;Johnson, Christie & Wardle, 2005)

# Play and Developmental Domains



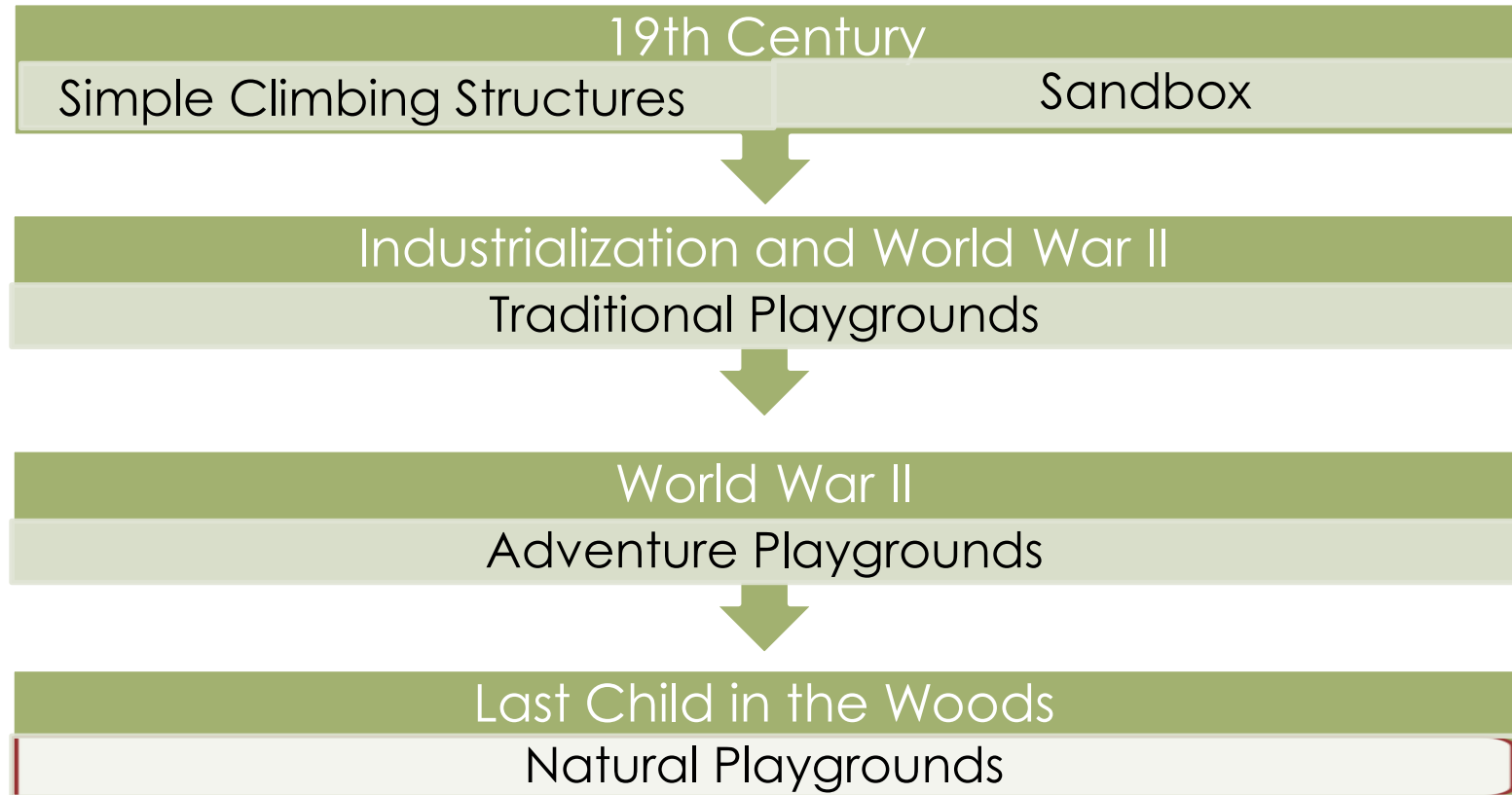
(Ahern, Beach, Leibke, Proud, Spencer, & Strickland, 2011; Anderson-McNamee & Bailey, 2010; Burriss K. & Burriss L., 2011).

# Play: Then and Now



(Ahiloğlu-Lindberg, 2012; Clements, 2004; D'agostino, DeLong, Singer & Singer, 2009).

# Outdoor Play Environments



(Clandaniel, 2009; Frost, 2012; Moore, 2006)

# Outdoor Play Environments (Cont.)

- Traditional (standardized) playgrounds are common which have large, open areas equipped with monkey bars and swings so children's play preferences are limited.

(Frost, 2012; Olgan & Kahriman-Öztürk, 2011)

# Parental and Teacher's Attitudes Toward Outdoor Play

## Parental Attitudes Toward Outdoor Play:

- Parents believe:
  - chance to make children their physically active. They can observe and determine children's abilities.
  - Not satisfied with outdoor playgrounds



safety, design of play areas, the lack of green spaces, traffic, dangerous strangers  
and possibility of children get dirty

(Clements, 2004; Cevher-Kalburan, 2014; Erbay & Durmuşoğlu-Saltalı, 2012)

# Parental and Teacher's Attitudes Toward Outdoor Play

## Teacher's Attitudes Toward Outdoor Play:

### ▣ Teachers believe:

- ▣ Supervision and guidance have key role
- ▣ Design important: climbing equipment, shade, open space and fewer obstruction
- ▣ Limited outdoor play: weather conditions, parental concerns, environmental features, lack of knowledge and equipment

(Alat, Akgümüş & Cavalı, 2012; Davies, 1997; McClintic and Petty, 2015)



# Purpose

- To investigate early childhood educator's
  - attitudes,
  - practices,
  - experiences towards outdoor play.

# Method

## *Participants:*

- 30 early childhood educators (between 23 & 50 years of age)
- 6 preschools

# Data Collection

- *Semi-structured questionnaire*

*(13 questions)*

- *Outdoor place*

- *Teacher roles*

- *Outdoor play and materials*

- *School equipment*

- *Children's preferences*

- *Analysis:*

- Content and Descriptive

- Spring Semester

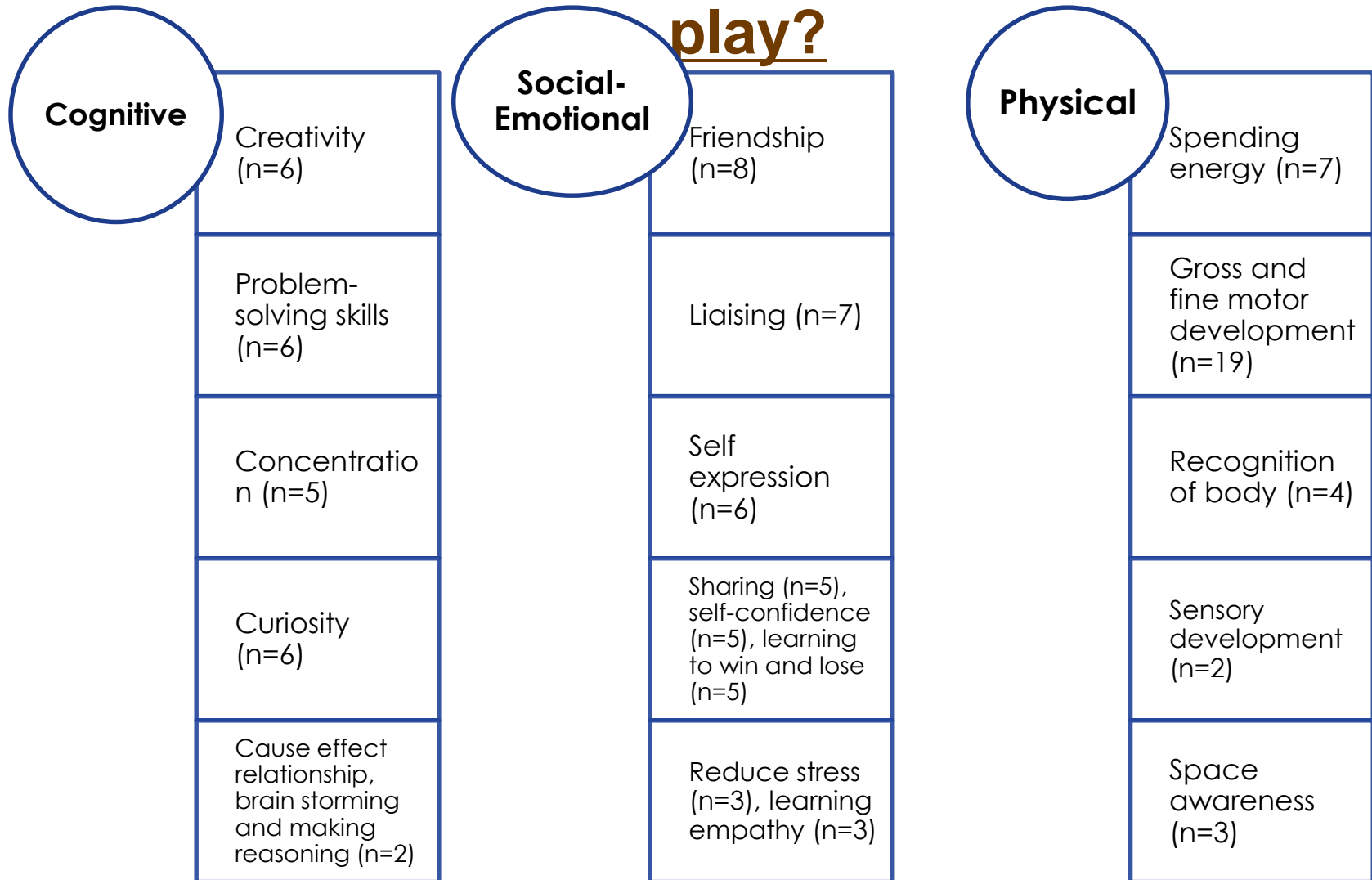
# Results

## What are the features that distinguish outdoor play from indoor play?

- Large area (n=30)
- Recognition of nature (n=27)
- Material diversity (n=23)
- Health (n=15)
- Physical development (n=15)
- Creating play and love of nature (n=1)

# Results

## What are the developmental benefits of outdoor play?



# Results

## What are the teacher roles and participation status in outdoor play?

**Table 3.**  
**Teacher roles during outdoor play**

Roles	Number
Security Guard	24
Play Leader	28
Stage Manager	29
Coplayer	13
Onlooker	16

**Table 4.**  
**Teacher participation status in outdoor play**

Participation Status	Number	%
Not Participate	0	0
Partially Participate	21	70
Totally Participate	9	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

# Results

## What Time Devoted for Outdoor Play in Teachers Daily Program?

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**Table 6.**  
**Time Devoted for Outdoor Play in**  
**Teachers Daily Program1**

Number of Schools (n=6)	Time
1	60 min.
1	35-40 min.
4	10-15 min.

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❖ Seasonal differences (n=21), cold weather (n=19)

# Results

- **Teacher Preparations for Outdoors (n=17)**  
Related with educational program, environmental education, traditional games
- **Materials Taken to Outdoor (n=25)**  
ball, ropes, balloon, puzzles, magnifying glass, playdough, no loose materials
- **No Preparations for Outdoors (n=13)**  
mostly have specific time for outdoor play



# Results

## Which Types of Outdoor Play, Materials and Equipment Children Prefer?

**Table 5.**

### **Play Types**

<b>Structured Play</b>	<b>Semi-structured Play</b>	<b>Unstructured Play</b>
Football,	Playing tag	Play house
Basketball,	Tumbling	Digging
Volleyball	Climbing	Snowman
Hopscotch	Bike	Snowball
Hide and seek	Hula hoop	Playing with mud
Blind man's bluff	Swinging	Playing at sand pit
Dodgeball	Playing with rope	
Others	Playground equipment	
	Circle games	

# Results

## *Open-ended Materials:*

- blocks
- natural materials
- latches
- cups

## *Closed-ended Materials:*

- playground equipment
- scooter
- Bicycle
- roller skate
- magnifying glass

# Results

## What Are The Outdoor Play Materials and Equipment in Schools?

### *Materials schools (n=6) have:*

- Swing
- Climbing equipment
- Balls
- Slides
- Trees
- Seesaw
- Hula hoop
- Sand pit (n=2)
- Cardboard box (n=1)
- Plastic box (n=1)
- Shovel / rake (n=1)
- Shed (n=1)
- Water (n=1)
- Playing house materials (n=1)



# Conclusion

□ Positive attitudes  lack of information for practices.

□ Cold weather

□ (Norway, Finland, Waldorf schools, forest schools)

  
‘There is no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing.’

Alfred Wainwright

# Conclusion

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention-CDC – at least an hour physical activity
- Ministry of Education – educational programs
- Equipment and materials
- Teacher roles:
  - stage manager
  - play leader
  - security guard

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**THANK YOU**