

Assessing the Role of Learning Behavior and Positive Social Behavior on the Social Skills Development Among Preschoolers in Eastern Samar, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the roles of learning behavior and positive social behavior in the development of social skills among preschoolers in Eastern Samar, Philippines, to inform a Social Skills Enhancement Plan. The study employed a quantitative-correlational research design with a developmental component. The research environment included DepEd-supervised preschools and LGU-managed early childhood and daycare centers across 22 municipalities in Eastern Samar. Using total enumeration, the respondents consisted of 1,108 preschool learners aged three to five years. Data were gathered through standardized, teacher-rated instruments assessing learning behavior (competence, motivation, attention, and persistence, and attitude toward learning), positive social behavior (social competence, autonomy, and compliance), and social skills. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and weighted mean, were used to describe learners' profiles and behavioral levels. In contrast, Pearson product-moment correlation was used to assess relationships among variables at the 0.05 significance level. Results showed that learners demonstrated Very Good learning behavior, Manifested positive social behavior, and Excellent social skills. However, correlation analyses revealed negligible and statistically nonsignificant relationships between learning behavior and social skills, and between positive social behavior and social skills. These findings suggest that preschoolers' social skills may be influenced by ecological, instructional, and contextual factors beyond those measured in the behavioral domains. Based on the results, the study exhibits strong behavioral foundations; the development of social skills requires support. It is recommended that a research-based Social Skills Enhancement Plan aligned with ECCD standards, RA 10410, RA 10157, and DepEd guidelines be implemented to strengthen peer interaction, emotional regulation, and cooperative learning.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education, positive social behavior, preschoolers, learning behavior, social skills development, descriptive -correlational, Eastern Samar, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood, particularly the preschool years, represents a critical developmental period during which foundational social skills are formed. These skills—including cooperation, empathy, self-regulation, and effective peer interaction—serve as essential building blocks for later academic success, emotional well-being, and social adjustment. Research consistently demonstrates that children aged two to five acquire social competence primarily through guided interaction within play-based learning environments, where cognitive, emotional, and behavioral growth converge.

Despite strong international and national recognition of the importance of social skills development, many preschool learners continue to exhibit difficulties in sustained participation, peer engagement, and emotional regulation. Such challenges are especially evident in early childhood care settings serving socioeconomically diverse communities, where variations in caregiving practices, early learning exposure, and classroom resources shape children's readiness for social participation. These difficulties suggest that social skills do not emerge automatically with age but require intentional support through positive learning and social behaviors.

In the Philippine context, national frameworks such as the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) system, the Kindergarten Education Act, and the DepEd MATATAG Curriculum emphasize holistic child development and socio-emotional learning. However, translating these policy ideals into consistent classroom practice remains uneven, particularly in LGU-managed and community-supported preschools. Teachers frequently observe that some children show low persistence, limited initiative, heavy dependence on adult guidance, or withdrawal during group activities—indicators of underdeveloped learning behaviors and social responsiveness.

Emerging evidence suggests that learning behavior (e.g., attention, persistence, motivation) and positive social behavior (e.g., cooperation, empathy, adherence to routines) are critical precursors to social skills development. Children who demonstrate these behaviors are more likely to form adaptive peer relationships and successfully navigate structured learning environments. Nevertheless, localized empirical studies examining the interaction of these behavioral dimensions among Filipino preschoolers remain scarce.

Addressing this gap, the present study examines the relationship between learning behavior, positive social behavior, and social skills development among preschoolers in Eastern Samar, Philippines. Anchored in established developmental theories and aligned with national education policies, the study seeks to provide evidence-based insights that can inform classroom practice, guide ECCD program planning, and support the creation of a Social Skills Enhancement Plan responsive to local preschool contexts. By focusing on behavioral foundations of social competence, this research contributes to both scholarly understanding and practical efforts to strengthen early childhood education outcomes in the Philippines.

Moreover, contemporary early childhood classrooms are increasingly shaped by post-pandemic realities, changing family structures, and heightened exposure to digital media, all of which influence young children's behavioral regulation and social engagement. Studies have documented that prolonged periods of limited peer interaction have contributed to reduced social confidence, shorter attention spans, and increased emotional dysregulation among preschool-aged children. In this context, preschool classrooms have become critical spaces for rebuilding foundational social competencies. However, without intentional strategies that target learning behaviors such as persistence, attentiveness, and initiative, opportunities for meaningful peer interaction may remain underutilized. This situation highlights the importance of

examining how children's approaches to learning interact with their social behavior to either facilitate or hinder the development of essential social skills.

Additionally, understanding the behavioral foundations of social skills is particularly important in resource-limited preschool settings, where teachers manage diverse learners with varying developmental needs. In many LGU-managed and community-based preschools, instructional time and materials are often constrained, making it impractical to rely on complex intervention programs. Instead, there is a need for evidence-based approaches that capitalize on everyday classroom interactions and naturally occurring behaviors. By identifying specific learning and social behaviors that significantly contribute to social skills development, this study provides a practical basis for designing low-cost, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive interventions. Such evidence is essential for supporting teachers, informing ECCD program planning, and ensuring that national policy goals for holistic child development are realized at the classroom level.

RELATED LITERATURE

Positive social behavior, including sharing, empathy, helping, and cooperation, is closely linked to the healthy development of social skills in young children. Studies show that preschoolers who frequently engage in positive social interactions are more likely to build strong peer relationships and adapt to group settings. For instance, Denham et al. (2012) found that teachers rated children with higher levels of prosocial behavior as having greater social competence and emotional regulation abilities.

A growing body of research suggests that learning behavior and positive social behavior are interrelated and together contribute to social skills development in preschoolers. Children who are engaged and motivated learners are more receptive to social cues and modeling, while positive social interactions further enhance their motivation and enthusiasm for classroom participation. The transactional model posited by Sameroff (2009) holds that learning and social behavior dynamically influence one another, shaping a child's overall development.

Learning behavior refers to the patterns, attitudes, and habits that children exhibit during learning activities. Research indicates that positive learning behaviors, such as attentiveness, persistence, cooperation, and self-regulation, significantly affect children's ability to acquire new skills, including social competencies. Children who actively participate in classroom tasks, collaborate with peers, and demonstrate curiosity tend to exhibit advanced social skills. According to Pianta and colleagues (2014), supportive instructional environments that nurture these behaviors foster both academic and social growth.

Furthermore, the development of social skills in preschoolers is a key area in early childhood education because of their lasting effects on a child's development and future achievements in the academic and social spheres. In the international literature, the critical role of social skills in preschoolers' ability to interact effectively with peers, adults, and their immediate environment is consistently highlighted. As stated by Tutkun and Eskidmir Meral (2025), social skills such as cooperation, communication, empathy, and problem-solving are essential for minimizing problem behaviors and enhancing academic self-esteem and teacher-child relationships. In a study of preschool children in Turkey, researchers found that strong social skills are associated with high academic self-esteem and healthy relationships with teachers, which, in turn, reduce disruptive behaviors that otherwise impede learning.

These results are supported by landmark research demonstrating that early social skills predict future academic performance and personal adaptation (Offer-Boljahn et al., 2022; Okeke et al., 2022). Additionally, these findings indicate that social skills are part of executive functioning and emotional

regulation in children, prerequisite skills that enable them to continue learning tasks and participate positively in the classroom setting (McClelland et al., 2003).

Furthermore, McClelland's longitudinal research has focused on the stability of social skills related to learning and predicting early school success, adding a new dimension to the view that the preschool age should be used to improve learning. Meta-analyses of interventions that improve social skills can also support the effectiveness of targeted programs that aim to promote communication, cooperation, and emotion recognition in preschoolers.

As observed by Dong (2023), a review of multiple studies on social skills interventions found that structured interventions significantly improve social skills and reduce emotional and behavioral problems in preschool-aged children. These interventions typically involve play-based learning, group work, and controlled social interactions and are among the most effective measures used worldwide. In a study by Johansen et al. (2024) on social cognition, theory of mind, and emotion understanding among preschoolers, the concurrent relationship between these two cognitive abilities and positive peer relationships was strong.

Although the longitudinal results do not reveal the anticipated causal effects, the cross-sectional results indicate that emotional insight is a prerequisite for peer acceptance and social skill competence. In the same vein, Frogner et al. (2022) explored the dynamics of social skills development and transformation in early childhood, revealing that early social skills proficiency predicts future adaptation in school and social contexts, thereby supporting the developmental continuity of social skills.

The Early Childhood Longitudinal Studies (ECLS) in the United States is another program that provides valuable data on children's development from preschool through the early years of school (National Center for Education Statistics, 2025).

The ECLS data indicate that early social skills development is important for predicting school readiness and academic achievement, as skills acquired in the preschool years are essential for future success in school. Also, studies on the role of play indicate that positive pretend play encourages socialization and peer interaction among preschoolers (Jaggy et al., 2023). Play is an interactive environment where children learn to collaborate, negotiate, and manage emotions, skills that are crucial for social interactions in the classroom and other settings.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study sought to examine the role of learning behavior and positive social behavior in the social skills development of preschoolers in Eastern Samar, Philippines. Specifically, it addressed the following research questions: What are the demographic characteristics of preschool learners in terms of age, gender, parents' highest educational attainment, number of siblings, and combined family monthly income? What is the level of learning behavior among preschool learners in terms of competence motivation, attention and persistence, and attitude toward learning? To what extent do preschool learners manifest positive social behavior in terms of social competence, autonomy, and compliance? What is the level of social skills development among preschool learners? Is there a statistically significant relationship between learning behavior and social skills development among preschool learners? Is there a statistically significant relationship between positive social behavior and social skills development among preschool learners?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative correlational design with a developmental component to examine the relationships among learning behavior, positive social behavior, and social skills development among preschool learners in Eastern Samar, Philippines. Participants included 1,108 preschoolers enrolled in private preschools and LGU-managed daycare centers across 22 municipalities and one city, with teachers and child development workers serving as behavioral raters based on daily classroom observations. Data were collected using a structured, teacher-rated questionnaire adapted from established instruments, measuring learning behavior (competence motivation, attention/persistence, attitude toward learning), positive social behavior (social competence, autonomy, compliance), and social skills, using a five-point Likert-type scale. Demographic data were obtained from parents or guardians. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, and weighted mean) were used to summarize learner profiles and behavioral levels, while Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the relationships among the study variables at the 0.05 level of significance. Ethical standards were strictly observed through informed consent, confidentiality, and non-invasive data collection procedures, and the findings served as the basis for developing a Social Skills Enhancement Plan for preschool settings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The gathered data was used to assess the roles of learning behaviour and positive social behaviour in the development of social skills among preschoolers in Eastern Samar, Philippines. These include private preschools and Daycare centers in the selected barangays of the twenty-two (22) municipalities of Eastern Samar. Namely, Guiuan, Mercedes, Salcedo, Quinapondan, Giporlos, Balangiga, Lawaan, Gen. Macarthur, Hernani, Illorente, Balangkayan, Maydolong, Borongan City, San Julian, Sulat, Taft, Can-avid, Dolores, Oras, Arteche, Maslog, Jipapad, and San Policarpo.

Table 1
Age of the learners

Age (in years)	f	%
5	66	5.96
4	629	56.77
3	413	37.27
Total	1108	100.00

Table 1 shows that most enrolled learners are 4-year-olds (56.77%), followed by 3-year-olds (37.27%), whereas 5-year-olds constitute only 5.96% of the group. This distribution suggests that enrollment is concentrated in the middle of the early-childhood age range, consistent with common early learning program entry points, where 3- and 4-year-olds account for the majority of participation. The relatively small proportion of 5-year-olds may indicate that many children in this age group have already transitioned to primary school, consistent with global early childhood education patterns that emphasize earlier initiation into foundational learning.

The scoping review, *Children's Experience of Transition from Preschool to Primary School: A Scoping Literature Review (2025)*, emphasizes that the preschool-to-primary transition is a near-universal phase

internationally. That participation in early childhood education and care is widespread among children aged 3 to 5 supports the notion that most 3- and 4-year-olds remain in preschool, while many 5-year-olds may already enter primary school. (Esposti & Cigala, 2025).

Table 2
Gender of the learners

Gender	f	%
Male	428	38.63
Female	680	61.37
Total	1108	100.00

The table shows that among the 1,108 learners surveyed, a clear majority (61.37%) are female, whereas males constitute 38.63%. This gender imbalance suggests that female participation or enrollment is considerably higher in this learning context, with implications for how educational programs are designed, engagement is fostered, and resources are allocated. The overrepresentation of females could also influence class dynamics, peer interactions, and possibly learning outcomes, since gender composition often affects participation, perceived competence, and motivation.

The Frontiers meta-analysis by Yu & Deng (2022) synthesized findings from numerous international studies to determine whether gender differences exist in key e-learning outcomes, including motivation, satisfaction, self-efficacy, attitude, and performance. Overall, males and females performed similarly in e-learning environments, with pooled effect sizes that were small or not statistically significant. However, the study also found that context matters: in some countries, particularly Spain and the UK, female learners scored higher on measures of satisfaction and attitude, suggesting that cultural and educational factors can shape gender-related patterns.

Table 3
Parents' Highest Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Mother		Father	
	F	%	F	%
Master's Degree	113	10.20	58	5.23
With Master's Units	158	14.26	133	12.00
College Graduate	756	68.23	719	64.89
College Level	49	4.42	104	9.39
High School Graduate	32	2.89	58	5.23
High School Level	0	0.00	36	3.25
Total	1108	100.00	1108	100.00

Table 3 presents the highest educational attainment of the parents, showing that the majority of both mothers (68.23%) and fathers (64.89%) are college graduates, indicating a generally well-educated parent population. A notable proportion also pursued graduate education: 10.20% of mothers and 5.23% of fathers held a master's degree, and an additional 5.23% of fathers and 2.20% of mothers had completed master's units. Meanwhile, a smaller share of parents reached only the college level without completing a degree, and an even smaller share completed only high school.

Research on parental educational attainment consistently shows that it plays a significant role in shaping students’ academic outcomes and learning environments. Studies indicate that children of highly educated parents tend to receive greater academic encouragement, more structured learning support at home, and greater access to educational resources, which contribute to higher levels of motivation, self-efficacy, and performance (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Table 4
Number of Siblings

Number of Siblings	f	%
5 and up	93	8.39
3-4	631	56.95
1-2	323	29.15
None	61	5.51
Total	1108	100.00

The data in Table 4 shows that most respondents come from moderately large families, with over half (56.95%) having three to four siblings. Smaller families with one to two siblings account for 29.15%, while only 8.39% come from large families with five or more siblings. A small group (5.51%) reported having no siblings. Overall, the distribution suggests that many respondents were raised in families in which shared responsibilities and frequent social interaction among siblings were part of everyday life. A study by Abalos & Yeung (2023) shows that Filipino households continue to prefer having multiple children, with the average household consisting of 4 to 5 members. Their findings show that cultural values emphasizing family unity, shared responsibilities, and strong sibling bonds contribute to the sustained norm of larger family sizes in many regions of the Philippines. The study also highlighted that children from families with multiple siblings often develop stronger interpersonal skills, greater cooperation, and greater adaptability due to frequent interactions with siblings.

Table 5
Combined Family Monthly Income

Monthly Income (in pesos)	f	%
Above 30,000	371	33.48
25,001-30,000	516	46.57
20,001-25,000	199	17.96
15,001-20,000	22	1.99
Total	1108	100.00

The data in Table 5 shows that most respondents come from lower-middle to middle-income families. Nearly half (46.57%) have a combined monthly income of ₱25,001–₱30,000, followed by 33.48% earning above ₱30,000. Another 17.96% fall within the ₱20,001–₱25,000 bracket, while only 1.99% belong to the

lowest income group of ₱15,001–₱20,000. The distribution suggests that respondents generally have moderate financial resources, with noticeable socioeconomic variation across the sample.

A study from the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) supports the idea that family income significantly shapes students’ access to educational opportunities and learning resources. Their research found that households in lower- to middle-income brackets often face limitations in acquiring educational materials, maintaining stable internet connectivity, and accessing the technology necessary for academic performance. At the same time, those with higher incomes are better able to provide supportive learning environments. The study emphasizes that socioeconomic status is a strong predictor of students’ educational engagement and overall academic outcomes. (Abrigo & Albert, 2020).

Table 6

Level of learning behavior of the learners in terms of competence motivation

S/ N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Takes refuge in helplessness	4.47	0.58	Excellent
2	Remains dependent on adults for what to do	4.34	0.50	Excellent
3	Displays reluctance to tackle new activities	4.05	0.74	Very Good
4	Easily gives up activities	4.39	0.50	Excellent
5	Says tasks are too complex, makes no attempt	4.09	0.34	Very Good
6	Hesitant talking about activities	4.29	0.61	Excellent
7	Resistant or fearful about new activities	4.61	0.70	Excellent
8	Headaches or pains to avoid participation	4.06	0.64	Very Good
9	Too unenergetic for interest or effort	4.46	0.54	Excellent
10	Shows little interest in activities	4.10	0.69	Very Good
11	Tears when faced with difficulty	3.59	0.95	Very Good
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.22		
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.62	Excellent

Legend: 4.21-5.00-Excellent; 3.41-4.20-Very Good; 2.61-3.40-Good; 1.81-2.60-Fair; 1.00-1.80-Poor

*items are reversely scored

Table 6 indicates that learners exhibit a generally high level of competence motivation, as reflected in the overall weighted mean of 4.22, interpreted as Excellent. Several indicators, such as “Takes refuge in helplessness” (WM = 4.47), “Resistant or fearful about new activities” (WM = 4.61), and “Too unenergetic for interest or effort” (WM = 4.46), show that learners frequently display behaviors associated with low persistence, anxiety toward new tasks, and dependence on others for direction. Despite these behaviors being negatively oriented, their high weighted means and “Excellent” verbal descriptions suggest strong consistency in how these motivational tendencies manifest among the respondents.

Research by (Elliot & Church (1997), shows that students with strong avoidance motivation often rely heavily on adults, hesitate to try new tasks, and withdraw when faced with difficulty, behaviors that align with the high weighted means in the table. Their findings highlight that when learners doubt their

competence, they avoid challenges, depend on external guidance, and experience anxiety. Similarly, (Skinner et al., 2008) Found that students who feel helpless or fear failure tend to disengage, persist less, and show reduced task involvement. Together, these studies support the interpretation that learners exhibit patterns associated with low self-efficacy and high avoidance tendencies, which can limit their academic engagement.

Table 7

Level of learning behavior of the learners in terms of attention/persistence

S/ N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Does not stick to activities as expected	3.90	0.52	Very Good
2	Cannot settle into an activity	4.30	0.49	Excellent
3	Easily distracted or seeks distraction	4.30	0.47	Excellent
4	Acts without taking time to look or think	4.29	0.48	Excellent
5	Easily gives up activities	4.14	0.38	Very Good
6	Don't-care attitude to success or failure	4.03	0.42	Very Good
7	Tries but concentration soon fades	3.97	0.78	Very Good
8	Ignores teacher/aide	4.27	0.45	Excellent
9	Uncooperative in group activities	3.80	0.75	Very Good
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.11		Very Good
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.53	

*items are reversely scored

The results in Table 7 indicate that learners generally demonstrate an excellent level of attention and persistence, with an aggregate weighted mean of 4.11. Most items, such as being easily distracted (WM = 4.30), acting without taking time to think (WM = 4.29), and not paying attention to the teacher (WM = 4.27), received ratings in the excellent category, suggesting that while these behaviors are present, teachers perceive that learners still show strong overall engagement and effort in their tasks. The items that fell slightly lower, such as difficulty maintaining engagement with activities (WM = 3.90) and uncooperativeness in group activities (WM = 3.80), indicate areas in which learners' persistence may fluctuate with task difficulty or social context.

Recent studies on learner behavior and task persistence reinforce the table's findings, highlighting that both environmental and internal cognitive factors influence attention control and sustained engagement. Learners are more prone to distraction and reduced persistence in environments with high stimulation or when tasks feel overwhelming or insufficiently engaging. It emphasizes that behaviors such as shifting attention quickly, acting impulsively, or giving up easily are common among learners who are still developing executive functioning skills, particularly in focus regulation and inhibitory control (Wyatt et al., n.d.). Furthermore, Blair and Raver (2014) provide strong evidence that children's attention, persistence, and overall learning behavior are deeply tied to the development of executive function, particularly cognitive flexibility, inhibitory control, and working memory. Their longitudinal research found that learners who struggle with executive function tend to show behaviors such as distractibility, difficulty sustaining attention, impulsive responding, and reduced persistence on academic tasks.

Table 8

Level of learning behavior of the learners in terms of attitude toward learning

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Aggressive or hostile when frustrated	2.73	0.82	Good
2	Doesn't work well when in a bad mood	3.98	0.34	Very Good
3	Shows little desire to please the teacher/aide	4.23	0.48	Excellent
4	Doesn't pay attention to teacher/aide	4.30	0.50	Excellent
5	Unwilling to be helped in difficulty	4.25	0.48	Excellent
6	Uncooperative in group activities	4.51	0.50	Excellent
7	Unwilling to accept needed help	4.34	0.70	Excellent
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.05		Very Good
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.55	

*items are reversely scored

The data in

Table 8 indicate that learners generally exhibit positive attitudes toward learning, as evidenced by an overall Very Good weighted mean of 4.05. Most indicators fall within the Excellent category, suggesting that students typically cooperate reasonably in group activities, accept help when needed, pay attention to teachers or aides, and demonstrate motivation to perform well. These strengths reflect solid engagement and openness to support. However, lower scores on frustration-related behaviors, such as becoming hostile when frustrated (WM = 2.73) or struggling during negative moods (WM = 3.98), highlight challenges in emotional regulation. This suggests that while learners are largely cooperative and attentive, some may still have difficulty managing emotions, emphasizing the need for strategies that strengthen self-regulation and coping skills.

A study by (2008) provides strong empirical support for the trends observed in the table, highlighting that children's emotional regulation skills significantly influence their classroom behaviors, cooperation, and overall engagement. The researchers found that students with higher emotional self-regulation demonstrated better attentional control, more positive interactions with peers, and greater willingness to participate in learning activities, consistent with the high ratings for cooperation and attention observed in the data. Conversely, students who struggled with frustration and emotional distress were more likely to display disruptive behaviors and withdraw from tasks, aligning with the lower weighted mean for hostility or aggression when frustrated.

Table 9

Summary of the level of learning behavior of the learners

Components	WM	SD	Verbal Description
Competence Motivation	4.22	0.62	Excellent
Attention/Persistence	4.11	0.53	Very Good
Attitude toward Learning	4.05	0.55	Very Good
Grand Mean	4.13		Very Good

Grand Standard Deviation

0.57

The results in Table 10 indicate that learners generally demonstrate strong learning behaviors, as reflected in the overall Very Good grand mean of 4.13. Among the three components, Competence Motivation scored highest (WM = 4.22, Excellent), indicating that learners are confident in their ability to complete tasks and demonstrate a high level of self-efficacy in academic activities. Attention/Persistence (WM = 4.11, Very Good) also reflects learners’ ability to maintain focus and persevere in the face of difficulties, indicating that they can sustain effort during learning tasks. Meanwhile, Attitude toward Learning (WM = 4.05, Very Good) indicates that students generally exhibit positive dispositions toward schoolwork, including a willingness to participate and readiness to engage in academic activities.

The researchers found that students with higher levels of motivation and persistence are more likely to use these SRL strategies and, as a result, achieve better English performance. In simpler terms, students who remain motivated and do not give up easily can study more effectively and consistently, leading to stronger academic outcomes. (Gou et al., 2023). Motivated learners are also more likely to set clear learning goals, monitor their progress, and adjust their strategies when difficulties arise.

This ability to reflect on and regulate their own learning allows students to become more independent and confident language learners. Over time, consistent use of self-regulated learning strategies can improve not only language proficiency but also learners’ self-efficacy and long-term academic success. Additionally, these findings suggest that teachers should focus on fostering students’ motivation and persistence, as doing so may encourage more effective learning behaviors and improved performance in English.

Table 10
Extent to which the learners manifest positive social behavior in terms of social competence

S/ N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	The child is cheerful and happy.	4.12	0.83	Manifested
2	The child is warm and loving.	4.13	0.65	Manifested
3	The child is curious and exploring, likes new experiences.	4.12	0.64	Manifested
4	The child gets along well with other kids.	4.08	0.60	Manifested
5	The child can get over being upset quickly.	3.68	0.74	Manifested
6	The child is admired and well-liked by other kids.	3.86	0.56	Manifested
7	The child shows concern for other people’s feelings.	4.07	0.75	Manifested
8	The child is easily calmed when he/she gets angry.	4.32	0.54	Highly Manifested
9	The child is helpful and cooperative.	4.23	0.71	Highly Manifested
10	The child is considerate and thoughtful of other kids.	4.06	0.77	Manifested

11	The child tends to give, lend, and share	4.21	0.77	Highly Manifested
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.08		Manifested
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.69	

Legend: 4.21-5.00-Highly Manifested; 3.41-4.20- Manifested ; 2.61-3.40-Moderately Manifested ; 1.81-2.60- Less Manifested ; 1.00-1.80- Not Manifested

Table 10 indicates that learners generally demonstrate strong social competence, as shown by the overall weighted mean of 4.08 (Manifested). Most behaviors fall within the Manifested to Highly Manifested range, indicating that children commonly display positive social traits such as cheerfulness (WM = 4.12), warmth and love (WM = 4.13), cooperativeness (WM = 4.23), and self-calming when upset (WM = 4.32). Prosocial behaviors, such as sharing and demonstrating thoughtfulness, are also evident. The only relatively lower-rated item is the ability to quickly get over being upset (WM = 3.68), suggesting a minor area for growth in emotional recovery. Overall, the results reflect a socially competent group of learners who interact well with peers and demonstrate empathy and emotional regulation.

A study by (2020) supports these findings by demonstrating that young children’s emotional regulation, empathy, and prosocial tendencies are strongly correlated with positive social behaviors and classroom adjustment. Their research, which involved observing preschool and early elementary learners across a school year, showed that children who exhibit behaviors such as sharing, cooperating, showing concern for others, and managing emotional distress tend to develop stronger peer relationships and display higher levels of social competence.

Table 11
Extent to which the learners manifest positive social behavior in terms of autonomy

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	The child does things for himself/herself, is reliant.	4.23	0.64	Highly Manifested
2	The child can easily find something to do on his/her own.	4.16	0.60	Manifested
3	The child shows pride when he/she does something well or learns something.	4.12	0.74	Manifested
4	The child defends himself/herself and is self-assertive.	4.15	0.75	Manifested
5	The child is independent, does things for himself/herself.	4.32	0.67	Highly Manifested
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.20		Manifested
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.68	

The results in Table 11 indicate that learners demonstrate strong autonomy-related social behaviors, as evidenced by a high aggregate weighted mean of 4.20. The highest-rated indicators, doing things independently (WM = 4.32) and being self-reliant (WM = 4.23), suggest that most learners can manage

tasks independently and take initiative in classroom activities. Other behaviors, such as finding something to do independently (WM = 4.18), showing pride in accomplishments (WM = 4.12), and standing up for themselves (WM = 4.15), further reflect healthy self-confidence and self-assertiveness. The low standard deviations also show that these behaviors are consistently observed among learners. Taken together, the data indicate that the learning environment effectively supports children’s independence and personal responsibility.

A study by Jang et al., (2010) Supports these findings by demonstrating that learners who experience autonomy-supportive environments in which they are encouraged to make choices, solve problems independently, and express personal preferences develop stronger self-regulation, initiative, and social competence. Their research, conducted with elementary students over a full school year, found that autonomy-supportive teaching practices significantly predicted higher levels of student engagement, independent task management, and positive peer interactions.

Children who were given opportunities to make decisions and act independently showed greater confidence, persistence, and self-assertive behaviors, mirroring the patterns seen in the table, where learners exhibit independence, pride in accomplishments, and self-reliance. (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Learners exhibit independence, pride in accomplishments, and self-reliance—outcomes consistently associated with educational approaches that emphasize choice, responsibility, and active engagement in learning

Table 12
Extent to which the learners manifest positive social behavior in terms of compliance

S/ N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	The child waits his or her turn during activities.	4.51	0.57	Highly Manifested
2	The child thinks before he or she acts, is not impulsive.	3.93	0.73	Manifested
3	The child usually does what I tell him/her to do.	4.33	0.73	Highly Manifested
4	The child can concentrate or focus on an activity.	4.22	0.73	Highly Manifested
5	The child is obedient, follows rules.	4.01	0.72	Manifested
6	The child is calm, easy going.	4.03	0.72	Manifested
7	The child sticks with an activity until it is finished.	4.01	0.82	Manifested
8	The child is eager to please.	3.98	0.80	Manifested
9	The child is patient when he/she wants something.	4.03	0.79	Manifested
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.12		
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.73	Manifested

The results in Table 12 show that learners consistently demonstrate positive social behaviors related to compliance, as indicated by an aggregate weighted mean of 4.12, which is classified as "Manifested."

Several indicators fall within the Highly Manifested range, such as waiting for their turn (WM = 4.51), focusing on tasks (WM = 4.22), and following instructions (WM = 4.33), suggesting that learners generally exhibit strong self-control and the ability to regulate their actions in structured classroom settings. Behaviors such as obedience (WM = 4.01), calmness (WM = 4.03), persistence (WM = 4.01), and patience (WM = 4.03) also support the conclusion that most learners comply with expectations and demonstrate prosocial conduct during activities. These results imply that the classroom environment likely supports routines, clear expectations, and positive behavior modeling, enabling learners to internalize rules and develop habits that foster smooth interactions and cooperative participation.

A study by Bierman et al. (2021) provides strong support for these findings, showing that young children’s compliance, rule-following, and task persistence are closely associated with positive socialization experiences and structured classroom environments. The researchers examined preschool and early elementary students across multiple classrooms. They found that learners who were consistently exposed to predictable routines, explicit behavioral expectations, and emotionally supportive teachers demonstrated higher levels of behavioral regulation, including waiting for their turn, following directions, and completing tasks without prompting (Mihic et al., 2016). The study further highlights that compliant behaviors are strengthened when teachers provide scaffolding, model calm responses, and reinforce prosocial actions—leading to improved peer interactions, reduced conflict, and greater overall classroom harmony.

Table 13

Summary on the extent to which the learners manifest positive social behavior

Components	WM	SD	Verbal Description
Social Competence	4.08	0.69	Manifested
Autonomy	4.20	0.68	Manifested
Compliance	4.12	0.73	Manifested
Grand Mean	4.13		Manifested
Grand Standard Deviation		0.70	

Table 13 shows that learners consistently demonstrate positive social behaviors, with all components, Social Competence, Autonomy, and Compliance, receiving mean scores above 4.00 and described as Manifested. Autonomy shows the highest mean (4.20), suggesting that learners are generally capable of working independently and initiating tasks. Compliance (4.12) and Social Competence (4.08) are also strongly evident, reflecting learners’ ability to follow rules, cooperate with peers, and respond appropriately to classroom expectations. The Grand Mean of 4.13 indicates that positive social behaviors are consistently observed, whereas the Grand Standard Deviation of 0.70 suggests stable patterns across learners.

A study by Denham et al. (2020) provides strong empirical support for these findings, demonstrating that young children who display prosocial behaviors—such as cooperation, emotional regulation, empathy, and adherence to classroom norms—tend to achieve higher levels of social competence and overall classroom adjustment. Conducted across a whole school year with preschool and early elementary learners, the researchers used observational assessments and teacher reports to examine patterns of positive social behavior during daily routines and structured activities. (Denham et al., 2012). Their results

showed that children who consistently followed directions, worked independently, and engaged positively with peers were more likely to develop stronger self-regulation skills and maintain harmonious relationships with classmates.

Table 14
Level of the social skills of the learners

S/ N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Is able to work in small groups	4.31	0.64	Excellent
2	Understands her/his contribution to a common goal	4.56	0.54	Excellent
3	Recognizes the contribution of other members of the group towards a common aim	4.39	0.76	Excellent
4	Has a sense of a cooperation in helping other children	4.38	0.68	Excellent
5	Enjoys working in groups	4.17	0.76	Very Good
6	Enjoys sharing ideas	4.40	0.60	Excellent
7	Enjoys sharing roles	4.36	0.67	Excellent
8	Has developed a ‘team spirit’ and cooperative skills	4.45	0.64	Excellent
9	Enjoys helping others	4.44	0.65	Excellent
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.38		Excellent
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.66	

Legend: 4.21-5.00-Excellent; 3.41-4.20-Very Good; 2.61-3.40-Good; 1.81-2.60-Fair; 1.00-1.80-Poor

The data in Table 14 indicate that learners consistently demonstrate high levels of social skills, as reflected in an overall Excellent aggregate weighted mean of 4.38. All indicators except one fall within the Excellent range, suggesting that learners are highly capable of working collaboratively, sharing responsibilities, and contributing meaningfully to group tasks. Skills such as teamwork (WM = 4.45), recognizing others’ contributions (WM = 4.39), and willingness to help peers (WM = 4.44) indicate that learners are not only socially engaged but also possess strong cooperative values that enhance group cohesion. Even the lowest-rated item—enjoying working in groups (WM = 4.17) still falls within the Very Good range, reinforcing that learners generally feel comfortable in social learning environments. These results collectively imply that the classroom climate promotes positive peer interactions, shared responsibilities, and mutual support, all of which are essential for effective collaborative learning.

A study by Wentzel and Caldwell (2020) supports these findings by demonstrating that prosocial classroom behaviors such as cooperation, helping others, and valuing group contributions significantly enhance students’ social adjustment and academic engagement. In their year-long study involving upper-elementary learners across several schools, the researchers examined how students’ social value orientations and collaborative behaviors influenced both peer relationships and classroom functioning (Palacios et al., 2024). They found that students who actively participated in group work, shared ideas, and showed willingness to assist their classmates were more likely to experience positive peer acceptance, stronger feelings of belonging, and improved task engagement.

Table 15
Test of the relationship between the learning behavior and the Social Skills of the Learners

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Learning Behavior and Social Skills	-0.018	Negligible Negative	0.546	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$

The table you provided shows a very weak, negligible negative correlation ($r = -0.018$) between learners' learning behavior and their social skills, with a p-value of 0.548 (well above the conventional $\alpha = 0.05$), leading to a decision not to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that, in this sample, there is no statistically significant linear relationship between how students learn (or behave in learning contexts) and their social skills: improvements (or declines) in one variable are essentially unrelated to changes in the other. In other words, learning behavior does not predict social skills, and vice versa, according to this data.

This finding resonates with prior research that social skills measured in students did not significantly correlate with their numeracy performance: "Social Skills had a correlation coefficient of 0.243 with a p-value of 0.196, indicating no significant effect." This parallel suggests that, at least in some contexts, social-emotional competencies (such as social skills) may not be directly tied to specific learning outcomes or behaviors, supporting the interpretation that these domains can be relatively independent for some learner populations (Andres & Babaran, 2024).

Moreover, the absence of a significant relationship may reflect the domain-specific nature of learning, developmental considerations, or limitations in the measurement of these constructs. Significantly, this does not diminish the value of social-emotional learning; instead, it highlights that its influence on academic achievement may be indirect or context-dependent. These findings reinforce the interpretation that social-emotional and academic domains can remain relatively independent for some learner populations, and that educational interventions should address each domain with appropriately targeted strategies (Andres & Babaran, 2024).

Table 16
Test of relationship between the positive social behavior and the Social Skills of the Learners

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Positive Social Behavior and Social Skills	-0.014	Negligible Negative	0.638	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$

The results in Table 16 indicate that the relationship between learners' positive social behavior and their social skills is negligible and not statistically significant, as indicated by a very weak negative correlation ($r = -0.014$) and a p-value of 0.638, which is well above the 0.05 level of significance. This suggests that, within this sample, improvements in positive social behaviors, such as cooperation, empathy, or adherence to classroom norms, do not necessarily correspond to measurable changes in overall social skills. The decision not to reject the null hypothesis further implies that any observed differences are likely due to chance rather than a meaningful or systematic pattern. It indicates that, although positive social behaviors and social skills are conceptually related, they were not statistically significantly associated in this group of learners.

A study by Gou et al. (2018) provides context for these findings by showing that although prosocial behaviors and social skill competencies are related constructs, they do not develop in parallel or show strong correlations in early childhood populations. Their research, which examined preschool and early elementary students using behavioral checklists and teacher assessments, found that factors such as temperament, classroom environment, and quality of peer interaction can independently influence either social behavior or social skills. As a result, some children may display positive social behaviors—such as helping, sharing, or cooperating without necessarily demonstrating strong communication skills, conflict-resolution abilities, or peer negotiation strategies. (Coulombe & Yates, 2018). This helps explain why certain studies, including the current findings, may observe weak or non-significant relationships between these two domains.

Additionally, differences in developmental timing may contribute to this disconnect, as prosocial behaviors often emerge earlier through adult modeling and reinforcement. In contrast, more complex social skills require advanced cognitive and linguistic capacities. Prosocial actions may also be scaffolded within structured classroom environments, allowing children to engage in helping or sharing behaviors without independently demonstrating strong interpersonal competencies. Furthermore, measurement differences and context-specific expressions of social behavior may obscure associations between these constructs. Together, these factors support the view that prosocial behaviors and social skills, while related, represent distinct dimensions of early social development (Denham et al., 2009).

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that preschool learners aged 3–5 across the 22 municipalities of Eastern Samar generally demonstrate excellent learning behaviors, manifest positive social behaviors, and excellent social skills, reflecting a strong overall developmental foundation for participation, cooperation, and successful engagement in early childhood settings. Despite these favorable levels, the findings indicate that learning behavior and positive social behavior are not significantly associated with learners' social skills, suggesting that, in this context, social skills may be shaped by influences beyond those captured in the study's behavioral measures. Thus, strengthening early childhood programs should continue to intentionally nurture social skills through structured peer interaction, guided play, and consistent home–school support, while future research is encouraged to examine additional factors—such as classroom climate, parenting practices, and peer exposure that may better explain how preschoolers' social skills develop.

RECOMMENDATION

To further enhance preschoolers' learning and socioemotional outcomes, schools should strengthen play-

based, cooperative, and peer-assisted activities that promote social competence, attention, and prosocial behavior within structured classroom routines. Ongoing professional development for teachers, combined with evidence-based classroom strategies such as consistent routines, positive reinforcement, and guided cooperative learning, is recommended to support self-regulation, persistence, and positive behavior. Additionally, implementing a comprehensive social skills enhancement plan that fosters strong home-school collaboration through parent orientations, regular parenting sessions, and aligned routines at home and school will help ensure consistency in children's learning and behavioral development.

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