

# Play and Emotion in Childhood and Adolescence

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*Abstrak. Children need to play, because playing will give them positive emotion experience, however some children do not have a chance to play and feel negative emotion experience such as sadness or fear. These feelings come up because of their past experience or leastwise of children who play with their family at home. The purpose of this study is to describe a variety and setting of playing that able to give an emotion experience in childhood and adolescence. This study use approach layout of descriptive with 217 respondences in 12 – 13 years old children at Malang. Cluster random sampling is used as a sample technique in this study. Moreover, questioner is used to determine this study, the questioner consists of play and emotion in school setting, home with family setting and home with friends setting. The result of this study is setting of play in childhood gives a positive emotion experience in childhood and adolescence. Otherwise, the setting of play in home with family, children tends to play with their siblings than their parents. Thus, playing at home with friends is mostly done in childhood than in adolescence.*

**Keywords:** *Play and emotion, at school, home, with family and friends*

## Introduction

Children need to play, because they can provide a happy emotional experience, which will give a positive aura to children. The results of Keltner & Kring's (1998) study explain that positive emotions will direct individuals to interact and form positive social bonds. Similarly, the results of the study of Baumgardner and Crothers (2009) in *Positive Psychology* reveal that positive emotions are also related to success, positive behavior, and mental health. Positive emotions such as happiness, also encourage individuals to help others, avoid harmful actions, and be more pleasing to other individuals (Isen & Myers in Schwarz, 2000).

Conversely explained in schema theory (Beck in Martono and Hastjarjo, 2015) argues that people in certain emotional states will have a general framework or scheme that matches those emotions. For example, a sad person will have a sad or depressive scheme for organizing information. That person will perceive and remember his negative experience, sad episodes and tend to interpret the world of his environment from a negative perspective. Someone who is in a state of sadness will have a scheme that encourages him to take back memories that contain sadness.

Playing is an important thing for a child, the game can provide an opportunity to practice his skills repeatedly and can develop ideas according to his own ways and abilities. Playing opportunities are very useful in understanding the complex stages of child development.

According to Moeslichatoen (in Simatupang, 2005), playing is an activity that is fun for everyone. Playing will satisfy the demands of motoric, cognitive, language, social, values and life attitudes. Children play in various types and game settings.

Based on the meta-analysis study conducted by Iswinarti (2017), shows that play has a positive relationship with social competence. There are aspects in social competence, for example, problem solving, self-control, empathy and cooperation. Iswinarti concluded that various forms and types of play have benefits for children's social development.

Traditional games are one of the local cultures, which have many meanings and values. One example of a traditional game is *angklek*. *Angklek* is a type of game by jumping on flat planes drawn on the ground and floor by throwing a bullet. According to Achroni, this game provides excitement to children, nourish the physical, train body balance, teach children how to be discipline in complying with regulations and develop social skills.

*Gadgets* are a type of game that is popular with children. Playing on a device called a *gadget* is chosen by many children with various purposes. The game console became popular after launched several types of consoles such as *Nintendo*, *Xbox from Microsoft*, or *Play Station* from *Sony*. In the Console Game there are many types of games that can provide high resolution graphic display. The use of gadgets has positive and negative effects on children. The positive impact is to train creativity in children. With the presence of sophisticated and

varied features creating a creative and challenging game. While the negative impact is causing addiction to play in children and disrupt health because of the radiation effects of technology (Prasetyo, 2013).

Along with the proliferation of traditional game socialization and family involvement in developing children's character education, the researchers wanted to examine whether the type of play activity uses gadgets, traditional games or other types of games that can cause certain emotional experiences in children? and whether the settings play alone or do they play with friends / partners who can label certain emotions in children?

The aim of the study was to describe the types and settings of play that can provide emotional experiences in childhood and adolescence. The benefits of this study are expected to be useful for the development of developmental psychology concepts and theories and educational psychology as well as providing scientific discourse on psychology, especially about play and emotions in childhood.

### Theory

#### The Concept of Playing

According to Herbert Spencer (Catron & Allen, 1999), defining play is an activity carried out by children because it has excessive energy that encourages children to play which can make children away from depressed feeling. If energy is not channeled, the child will experience serious problems. According to Erikson (1963) playing is the way children think and solve problems. By playing children learn direct experience in interacting with others. Furthermore, playing helps children to develop self-confidence, because playing can explore the ability to master their bodies, understand objects and social skills. According to Freud (1920) playing as an effort to release painful memories and feelings that have ever been experienced by children. Mating is a mechanism for repeating traumatic events and as an effort to improve the experience.

Types of play according to Santrock (2007) **Sensorimotor games:** baby behavior gets pleasure through their sensorimotor (scheme) development. **mock / symbolic game that** is a form of transformation of a child's physical environment into a symbol. **Social games** are forms of games that involve peers in social interactions. **constructive** game which is a game that occurs when a child is able to make product creation or construction. Children learn how to solve problems from their own creations.

**Games** namely activities carried out in the form of competition with one or more people and involving rules

There are 4 stages of development playing Hurlock (1993) *first*, exploration, (*explatory stage*) stages of the age of three months baby. Playing activities are limited to seeing people and things. At the next stage the baby learns to reach out and reach for objects that are around him. When the baby is crawling and walking, the baby will pay attention to what objects are around him. *The second* stage is imagining. At this stage the child imagines that the toy has the nature of life, can move, talk and feel. As children's intelligence develops, children no longer consider toys as living things so that interest in toy items decreases. This stage occurs at the peak age of 5-6 years. *Third*, the stage of play (*Play stage*) stages of development when children start entering elementary school. At the beginning the child is still continuing to play with toy items, especially if the child is alone. Then children begin to be interested in various games such as games, sports and other forms of play. *The fourth* stage of daydreaming (*Daydream stage*) is the stage where children begin to lose interest towards games that were previously liked. At this stage many children spend their time daydreaming about unfair treatment from others. In addition, this stage occurs when the child approaches the age of puberty.

#### Concept of Emotion

In terms of etymology, emotion comes from the Latin word '*movere*' which means moving. Then add the prefix "e" to give the meaning of moving away. This meaning implies the impression that the tendency to act is absolute in emotions. People who are happy, tend to take action, such as approaching, hugging, indicating acceptance like smile. Someone who is embarrassed will try to cover his face, turn his head or look down as an expression that he does not want to see, as well as people when they are afraid to try to do something to protect themselves, for example running around or sitting around so they don't get caught. Predisposition acts as one of the characteristics of emotion not necessarily easy to define emotions in terms of terminology.

In the biopsychological approach to emotions James-Lange explains that emotions include cognition, actions and feelings. Cognitive aspects appear first, assessing something good or bad, frightening or disturbing, and the process often takes place very quickly. An assessment of something will lead to actions that are aspects of feelings from

emotions, such as running away, attacking, or just being stunned with a heartbeat (Kalat, 2007).

While Frijda from the social psychology approach defines emotions is the readiness to act to change, in response to danger. In this connection there are two important things, namely delay and flexibility.

From the description above, it can be concluded that emotion as a condition is usually caused by an important event in an individual, namely a conscious mental state that can be recognized for the quality of his feelings, shows changes in physiology and the body, with recognizable facial expressions and gestures and readiness to Act.

### **Components of Emotion**

Every experience that involves emotions, whether in the form of positive or negative emotions, primary or mixed, basically occurs because of some basic components underlying it. Experts have different opinions about the essential components of emotion, Planalp (1999) tries to compile the five components used in most theories in one form or another. The five essential components that underlie the process of emotion are: (1) objects, causes, sudden occurrences, (2) assessment, (3) physiological changes, (4) action trends, (5) regulations / supervision / constraints.

First, the object of emotional awakening in humans is very multidimensional, can be in the form of anything from the concrete to the abstract, there is a reciprocal relationship between the object and the subject, which is direct (simultaneous) or indirect (non-simultaneous). Emotional arousal is very complex, so that the objects are relative, meaning that the object can be a trigger for someone's emotional awakening, while others do not experience it, or at certain times emerge emotions, whereas at other times it does not.

Second, assessment of an object that can arouse emotions is very personal, influenced by subjective emotional experiences or relationships between people (motives, beliefs, boundaries and so on) with the environment (cultural diversity).

Third, emotional events are always accompanied by physiological changes in our body. This is caused by the presence of biological instincts due to the stimulation of an object that triggers emotion. Various physiological changes can occur when emotions peak. Physiological changes due to instability in the body's mechanism, commonly known as GAS (*general adaptation syndrome*), are an attempt by the body to adapt to changes that

occur while maintaining the normalization of conditions.

Fourth, emotional expressions in the form of real actions such as radiant smiles are expressions of emotions that are easily predictable types of emotions. However, if it is only in the tendency to act or it may not be manifested in the form of behavior, it is very difficult to know the type of emotions experienced. Although there are still opportunities to assume or find an indication of what emotions are actually experiencing at that time, for example through changes physiological appearance.

Fifth, emotions can occur in intrapersonal relationships, interpersonal relationships and even metapersonal relationships, with different intensities which sometimes mild, severe or disintegrative.

A person can stop or regulate emotions that arise before taking action in certain events. Controlling emotions before doing stupid actions is not an easy one, but it is an integral process besides the other four components. In daily life, we often control emotions automatically or spontaneously (unconsciously). Controlling emotions can be done in many ways, such as regulating assessment, regulating and reducing physiological reactions by doing relaxation or breathing long (Hude, 2006).

### **Factors affecting Emotional**

Emotions are influenced by (a) biological basis (b) past experience and (c) culture. Charles Darwin in his book entitled *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals* (in Santrock, 2007) states that human facial expressions are something that is innate and not the result of learning. This expression is universal in various cultures throughout the world, and is the result of the evolution of emotions in the community. Emotions, especially facial expressions of emotions, have a strong biological basis (Goldsmith, 2002; Goldsmith & Davidson, 2004).

Biological factors are only part of emotions. A caregiver has a greater role in the neurobiological setting of a baby's emotions (Thompson, Easterbrooks, & Walker, 2003). By calming a crying or anxious baby, a caregiver helps babies regulate their emotions and reduce their stress hormone levels (Gunnar, 2000; Gunnar & Davis, 2003).

Emotions are also influenced by cultural factors, related to when, where and how emotions are expressed. *Displaying rules* of emotions are not universal. Communities with individualistic cultural characters usually show a long and intense display of emotions, such as

North America, Europe and Australia, compared to Asian people and other cultures usually tend to cover their emotions, if there are other people near them. But the rules regarding when emotions are displayed depend on what emotions are exposed. Asian people tend to have characters that focus on social relationships, emotions, more often display sympathy, respect and shame, meanwhile the negative emotions that can interfere with communication will be very rarely displayed.

### Emotion Development

Understanding children's emotional development is very necessary, precisely is understanding how children overcome emotions in their lives. Children must learn how to send and receive emotional messages, learn to use their knowledge about emotions, and be able to regulate their emotions, so that they can successfully interact with interpersonal relationships, create relationships, and maintain their curiosity and enthusiasm for the world (Halberstadt, Denham & Dunsmore, 2001).

Emotional development is not only important for oneself, but also gives positive results to the social environment. Components of emotional development will help children to create effective social interactions, which contain certain skills, such as listening skills, working together, seeking help, willingness to join other children or small groups, and negotiate.

### Research Results

Table 1 Period of Children

Setting	Type of play			Partner playing				Emotions		
	Gadgets	Traditional	Others	Main	Supporters	Positives	Negatives	Mixed		
<b>Schools</b>	3.45%	68.17%	23.87%	Friends 83.48%	Others 16.52%	Friends 41.59%	Others 58.41%	38.14%	3.75 %	54.6 5%
<b>Home-Friend</b>	7.80%	56.30%	18:31 %	Friends 68.01%	others 31.99%	Friends 32.58%	Others 67.42%	63.21%	4.05 %	14.4 1%
<b>Home-Family</b>	20.57	42.19%	8.38% %	Sister and brother 15.92%	Other 84.08%	Parents 12.46%	Others 87.54%	48.05%	2.55 %	41.8 9%

Children who are socially successful, have a good position to advance. Successful self-interaction with peers is an important predictor of the health and well-being of children for a future age, starting from preschool, continuing at the elementary school level, where the reputation among friends begins to strengthen, and finally leaves school (Denham & Holt, 1993 in Denham et al. 2013). Emotional development also supports cognitive development, pre-academic achievement, school readiness and school adjustment, both directly and indirectly (Blair, 2002 in Denham et al. 2013).

### Methodology

This study used a quantitative descriptive design approach. The research subjects were 222 junior high school students and Islamic junior high school students in Malang. The number of subjects were 103 male students and 119 female students. Then, the age ranges from 11 to 15 years. In addition, the technique sampling was *random sampling* where the researcher provides a questionnaire about playing experience in various *settings* and questionnaires about emotional labels. Data analysis in this study was descriptive analysis with *Microsoft Excel*.

Table 1. explains that the type of playing that is most in demand by the subject during childhood is traditional play. Traditional forms of play are hide and seek, *gobak sodor*, *bentengan*, snake ladders, *dakon* and role playing. The main partner of the subject when playing at school and at home is the majority of friends, as well as the majority supporting partners are friends.

When playing at home with a family of subjects often spend time playing with older siblings and supporting partners. The form of emotion that is shown by the subject when playing at school is mixed emotions, such as subjects showing happy emotions but being afraid and feeling happy meanwhile feel disappointed. When at home with friends and family the form of emotion that is shown is positive emotions like, happy and enthusiastic.

Table 2. Adolescence

Setting	Type of play			Partner playing				Emotions		
	Gadget	Traditi onal	Other	Main		Supporters		Positive	Negati ve	Mixed
<b>Schools</b>	16.97%	9.46%	59.46%	Friends 75.68%	Others 24.32 %	Friends 43.54 %	Others 56.46%	44.59%	4.20%)	36.24 %
<b>Home-Friend</b>	21.17%	18.61%	12.16%	Friends 54.35%	Others 45.65 %	Friends 29.27 %	other 70.73%	55.55%	1.65%	6.99%
<b>Home-Family</b>	28.08%	9.16%	52.25%	Brother and sister 12.16%	Others 87.84 %	Parents 12.46 %	Others 87.54%	65.77%	3.90%	8.86%

Table 2 describes the picture of play that is often done by subjects during adolescence. From the data obtained shows that the most popular type of play the subject is playing *gadgets*. The forms of playing *gadgets* that are in demand are *mobile legend*, *game console*, *truth or dare*. The majority of the main partners and supporting playing partners are friends. When at home with the family the main partner is an older sibling and support partner. Moreover, the form of emotion that is often shown by the subject when playing is positive emotions that are happy, enthusiastic and courageous.

**Discussion**

In childhood, the most popular type of play in school is traditional play. Emotions shown by children are mixed emotions. Where children feel happy but are afraid to lose, children feel happy but anxious and children feel happy but sad. The tendency of children to feel mixed emotions as a result of emotionally complex situations (Larsen et al., 2007). Interestingly children tend to report that certain emotional partners tend to occur together in the same situation, for example: happy and sad, happy and angry and sad and angry (Harter & Buddin, 1987).

Complex emotions are influenced by the play setting, when school children spend time playing with friends, so a sense of competition arises between friends. Children do not get protection from parents or family. When playing with family at home the child shows

positive emotions. Children tend to get support from the family and a little sense of competition so that children feel protected and safe. Early to middle age is an important time in developing social and emotional competencies. During this time the child is involved in interacting with the peer group. And the child needs to connect new social experiences, especially in the social environment. Therefore, when children grow, the social situation they experience becomes increasingly complex.

As well as cognitive approaches about emotions that someone's assessment of situations that arouse emotions is a critical determinant of emotional response. Emotion is a function of the interaction of cognitive factors and the state of physiological awakening.

Determination of labels is a cognitive process, individuals use information from past experiences and perceptions about current circumstances to interpret their feelings.

Researchers choose the playing experience and the emotional form shown to children when they are 8-10 years old to be the target to be studied, because children at the age of 8-10 are children who are facing changing, namely knowing the rules and demands - demands in the school environment and at home, also along with the task of developing emotions to be able to use rules in displaying emotions, understanding complex emotions (ambivalent, unique), and starting independently using cognitive strategies to regulate emotions (Denham, 2005), so to achieving the child's ability to adapt to these changes requires a conducive environment with a figure that provides security.

When teenagers often spend time playing with friends, because at this time the subject is often interacting with peers. Emotions shown by subjects tend to be positive emotions because the subject has learned a lot about how to regulate emotions from experiences during childhood.

Playing according to Smith and Pellegrini (2008) an activity carried out on the basis of one's own desire to please oneself, not others, is not oriented towards the end result carried out flexibly, actively and positively. In playing children, the process and the final goal are more important than the final results. Playing is flexible so children can use new and not rigid ways. Playing is also positive so playing can have a positive effect because children can enjoy what they do making their players smile, laugh and be free to express emotions.

From the description above shows that the emotional development of school-age children contributes greatly in developing academic progress, personality and character of children, therefore fostering emotional development of children needs attention from parents.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

In the age of subject children who prefer traditional play and group with situations to play at home or school, the type of emotion shown is mixed emotions. The existence of complex emotional effects that occur in children, then playing serves as a therapy in improving children's development. In adolescence the subject prefers to play *gadgets*, but the subject still prefers group games. Then, the types of emotions shown are positive

emotions. The limitations of the study are limited sampling time, only during counseling lessons. So that small groups need to be formed to optimize the time of data collection. Suggestions for future researchers, it is necessary to correlate the type of play with emotional competence.

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