



Perceptions and Practices of Early Childhood Development in Tigray, Ethiopia

SATLAJ DIGHE

Ethiopia

Population : 102 million

Area : 1.13 million sq. km

Major religions : Christianity

Life expectancy : 65

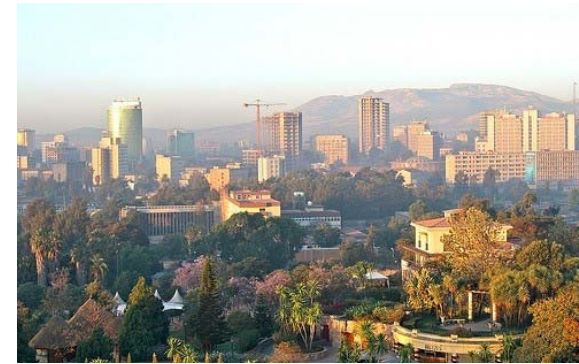
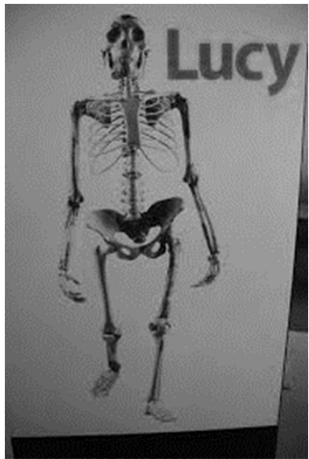
HDI : 0.396 (Low Human Development category)

Primary enrollment rate : 100%

Secondary enrollment rate : 36%



Ethiopia



Tigray region

Population : 4,316,988

Area : 41,409 Sq. km

Religion: Christianity

Languages : Tigrinya



Save the Children Ethiopia



**Save the
Children**

Emergent Literacy and Math (ELM) program by Save the Children is operational in Ethiopia since 2012.

The program aims to develop literacy and numeracy skills of pre-school children.

Includes a class-room based instruction program and parental trainings.

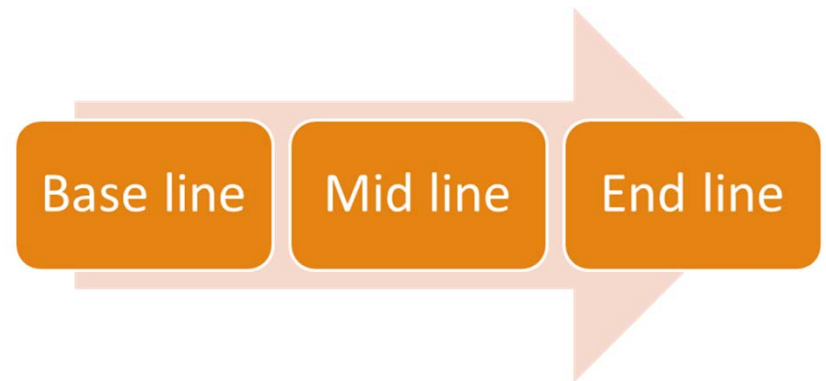
Ethiopia longitudinal study

Aim of the study is to understand the impact of the early academic skill development on the school success in later years.

Two cohorts :

- Children age 4 years
- Children below 12 months

Cohorts will be followed for next ten years.



Research questions for qualitative baseline

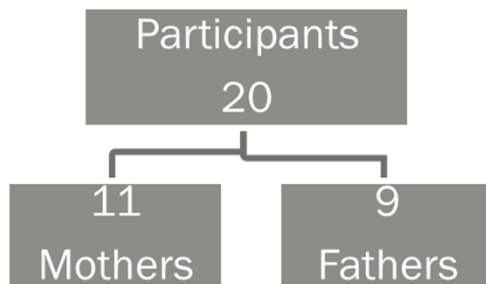
What are parental perceptions and experiences of early childhood development?

What are parental perceptions towards early academic skill development?

What challenges and barriers are perceived by parents for participation in Save the Children's early childhood development program?

Methods

Data collection : In-depth interviews of participants



Participant occupations: Farm workers, village clergies, small farmers, teacher.

Location: Towns near the city of Axum, Tigray.

Interviews were conducted in Amharic, transcribed in verbatim.

Data collectors : 2 men, 2 women

Received 3 days of training before interviews



Findings

Parental perceptions of childhood development

What children need for physical development?

1. Balanced diet
2. Hygiene and cleanliness
3. Good health care service



What children need for cognitive development?

1. Learning letters
2. Singing songs
3. Playing with children not understood as learning



Who according to parents are experts in child-care in the community?

Village health nurses

Other government health officials

Very few mentioned mothers, sisters, or neighbors.



What according to parents are the challenges and barriers in early childhood development?

Limited resources to play and interact with children

Poverty

Difficult childhood of parents



Limited Parental engagement in children's play and learning activities

“I don't know any of them (stories or songs) and I don't sing for them. Do you know, I never thought of singing. The stories may be a good thing if I have some pictures; but I never thought about it”



Poverty

“There might be a lot of things that I should have done for my daughter, but I couldn’t. The thing I do remember is that I couldn’t buy her a mosquito-net.”



Difficult childhood of parents

“ when I was child, me and my sister tried to escaped to Sudan. But we were caught and we came back. I lost my leg in that journey”



Follow up actions

Save the Children will be collaborating with village health nurses to co-facilitate parent education groups

Pre-school centers will be providing baths for children attending the program.

Limitations of study

Limited number of interviews

Translation challenges

Thank you
