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Scaling Impact of a Play-Based
Child-to-Child Approach to
Make Pre-School to Primary School
Transition Fun and Inclusive



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Baseline Qualitative Analysis Report Sri Lanka

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Qualitative Analysis and Baseline Survey Report

Parents' Views, and the Readiness of Teachers and Young Facilitators in Implementing the Child-to-Child Approach in Preschools in Sri Lanka

Introduction

The Child-to-Child (CtC) model is grounded in the principle of peer learning—children learning from and with each other. In the Sri Lankan context, a group of Grade Six students from formal schools facilitate and support 325 preschool children in 10 preschools through activities adapted from the preschool curriculum. This initiative actively involves three primary stakeholder groups: parents, teachers, and the older children (young facilitators YFs). For the successful implementation of the CtC project, it is essential to assess the existing knowledge, attitudes, expectations, and readiness of parents and teachers, as well as the competencies of the older children who will serve as facilitators. Accordingly, structured interviews were conducted with all three groups. This report presents a qualitative analysis of the data collected, offering an overview of stakeholder perceptions, preparedness, and anticipated challenges.

Analysis of Parents' Interviews

Parents play a pivotal role in early childhood education—as nurturers, educators, role models, and advocates. Their engagement shapes children's learning trajectories and social-emotional development. In Sri Lanka, many parents naturally encourage learning within the family context, a principle closely aligned with the CtC model.

A total of 31 parents (29 females, 2 males) aged 27–53 years, with educational backgrounds ranging from Grade 8 to university level, participated in the baseline survey. Most were housewives, though a small number were professionals.

Parents' responses were analyzed across five thematic areas:

1. Knowledge about the CtC approach
2. Views towards the CtC approach
3. Practical usage at home
4. Expected benefits
5. Foreseen challenges

Thematic analysis revealed that 29 of the 31 parents recognized that children can support the learning of their peers, drawing from both prior exposure to similar methods and cultural traditions of sibling-assisted learning.

Perceived benefits—53 distinct advantages were identified and grouped under three categories:

- Cognitive/academic: peer explanations improving understanding, better academic

performance, Enhanced reading access, and more efficient learning

- Emotional- increased motivation, enjoyment, reduced stress, improved self-confidence, and reduced shyness;

Social - stronger relationships, mutual respect, trust, and emotional regulation.

- Behavioral/character: greater responsibility, teamwork, cooperation, communication skills, and conflict resolution; improved listening/speaking abilities; reduced sibling rivalry; more supportive family environments.

Challenges identified by parents included risks of negative behavior modeling, inaccurate knowledge transfer, unsuitable teaching methods, and suppression of younger children's independence. Resource-related disputes were also a concern. While many parents already encouraged older siblings to assist younger ones, these interactions were typically short, structured, and closely supervised to prevent conflict. Parents emphasized that adult supervision and guidance are critical for ensuring quality peer learning.

Analysis of Teachers' Survey

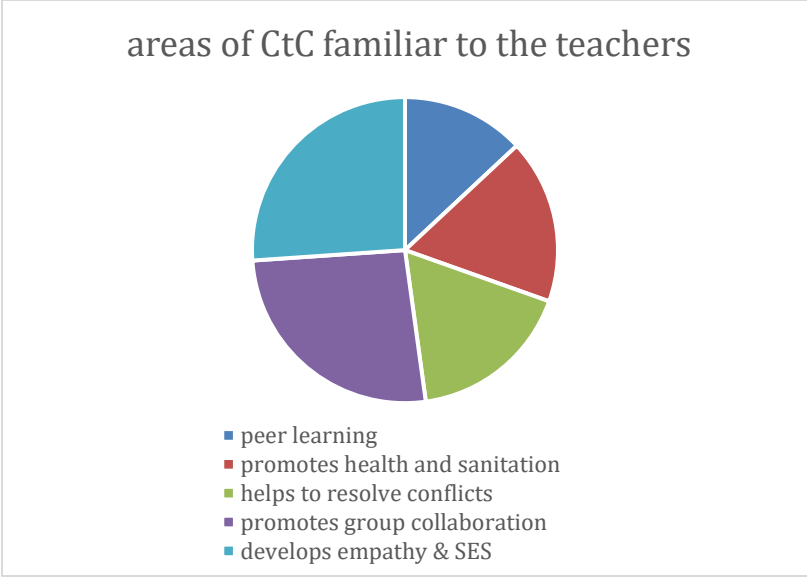
Ten preschool teachers from the selected CtC implementation sites participated in the survey. Data collection was structured into three sections:

1. Teachers' knowledge in terms of their familiarity of CtC
2. Teachers' perception of CtC
3. Teachers' awareness and confidence level to apply CtC in the classroom

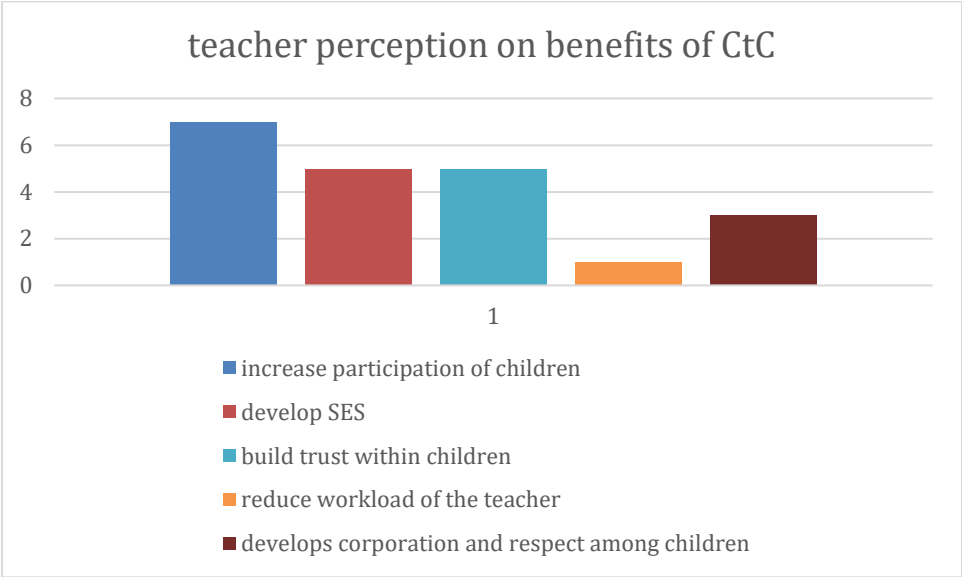
Findings:

Three teachers reported high familiarity with CtC, while others had moderate knowledge, primarily from limited training sessions.

Highest number of teachers identified CtC as an approach to promote group collaboration and develop socio emotional skills such as empathy. Many of them did not realized that CtC will help peer learning. They were not familiar with the area of health and sanitation as an advantage of CtC.

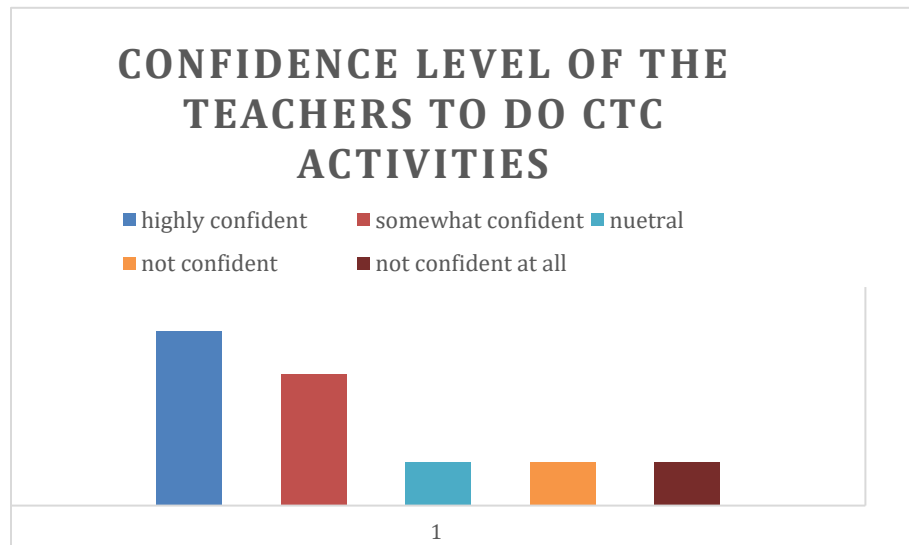


Teacher perception on benefits of the CtC was also verified through structured interviews.
 -- Most teachers associated CtC with promoting group collaboration and socio-emotional skills, with only one highlighting its potential to reduce teacher workload.



- Teachers valued CtC for encouraging mutual support and positive peer interaction, but many lacked a deep understanding of its direct academic applications.

Survey could find out the level of confidence of the teachers before CtC started and four out of ten teachers expressed high confidence in applying CtC.



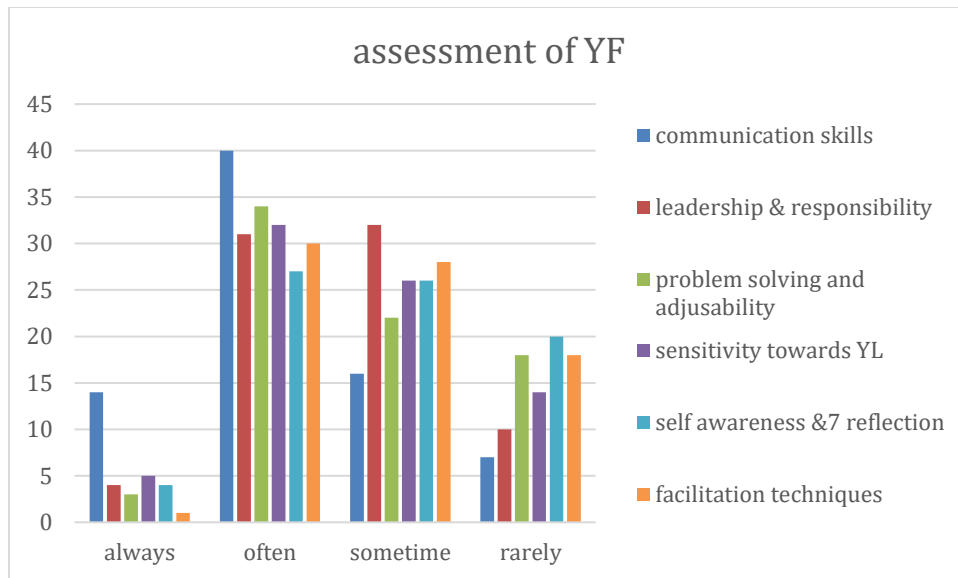
Implementation readiness and challenges:

- Teachers emphasized the importance of a conducive learning environment, supervision, and openness to new teaching methods.
- Parental feedback was seen as essential, yet no teacher explicitly linked CtC with the national curriculum’s emphasis on play- and activity-based learning.
- All teachers requested further training and resources such as teaching materials and visual aids as the additional support they required.
- Reported challenges included time constraints, neglect of some learners, difficulties with special needs children, potential peer conflicts, and resource limitations.

Analysis of Young Facilitators’ Survey

The baseline survey of 77 Young Facilitators (YFs), assessed across six competency domains, indicated that **communication skills were the most prominently demonstrated**. High ratings for the communication skill were consistently observed for subcomponents such as the use of age-appropriate language to explain concepts, active and patient listening, and the clear articulation of ideas.

In addition to communication, YFs exhibited competencies in leadership, responsibility, empathy, problem-solving, adaptability, self-reflection, and the application of facilitation techniques, though these varied in strength across individuals.



It is noteworthy that the selection of YFs did not prioritize only those with the highest initial skill levels. Rather, the process was designed to identify potential facilitators whose competencies could be further developed. Consequently, the baseline assessment not only validates the appropriateness of the selection process but also establishes a foundation for monitoring and supporting the progressive development of YFs throughout the implementation phase

Conclusion

The baseline findings reveal strong parental support and moderate teacher readiness for the CtC approach, alongside a motivated but inexperienced group of young facilitators. Parents see significant academic, social, and emotional benefits, though they emphasize the need for supervision to mitigate behavioral and instructional risks. Teachers acknowledge the potential of CtC but require targeted training, resource support, and stronger integration with curriculum goals. Young facilitators bring enthusiasm and foundational skills, yet structured training will be crucial to building their facilitation capacity.

The successful implementation of CtC in Sri Lanka will depend on:

- Continuous training and mentorship for teachers and young facilitators
- Parental engagement in reinforcing peer learning at home
- Adequate resource provision for play-based learning
- Ongoing monitoring to address challenges and adapt strategies

If these conditions are met, the CtC approach holds strong potential to enhance preschool education, foster community-based learning support, and revive cultural traditions of sibling-assisted development in early education.

