



THE CONNECTED ECOSYSTEM: ECOLOGICAL THEMATIC SOCIODRAMA FOR YOUNG CHILDREN'S SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL READINESS

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ABSTRACT

Young children's social-emotional readiness develops through recurring social interactions, but early childhood curricula seldom connect role play, ecological contexts, and relational learning within ordinary classroom routines. This qualitative case study examines how ecological thematic sociodrama and classroom-based ecological activities relate to emotional regulation, peer engagement, and cooperative participation. Data comprised classroom observations, semi-structured teacher interviews, focus group discussion, and documentation associated with ten children aged five to six and four teachers. A seven-week period of engagement was explored through iterative thematic analysis informed by ecological systems and sociocultural perspectives. Three themes were identified: gradual social-emotional change through sustained routines; teacher-mediated interactions and home-school communication as relational supports; and the feasibility of simple, adaptable practices within everyday learning. Teachers described increased peer communication, turn-taking, emotional expression, and shared activity, while emphasizing that change was gradual rather than immediate. The findings illuminate contextual learning processes rather than causal effects or population-level outcomes. Ecological thematic sociodrama offers a promising, relational pedagogical orientation for integrating social-emotional learning into sustainability-oriented early childhood education.

Keywords: *ecological thematic sociodrama; social-emotional readiness; early childhood education; ecological pedagogy; qualitative case study*

INTRODUCTION

The early years constitute a consequential period for learning to regulate emotions, interpret others' needs, participate in group activities, and resolve everyday disagreements. These competencies matter not only for school transitions but also for the quality of children's participation in their communities. In early childhood settings, social-emotional learning is often addressed through structured lessons or behavioral reminders; however, children develop these capacities while engaging in ordinary relationships, negotiating shared materials, observing adult responses, and testing social roles. The pedagogical question is therefore not simply which competencies should be taught, but how the learning environment can organize sustained opportunities to enact them.

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A growing body of research supports the educational importance of authentic and nature-related experiences. Johnstone et al. (2022), in a mixed-methods review of nature-based early childhood education, examined associations between nature-oriented provision and children's social, emotional, and cognitive experiences. Such work highlights the possibility that environmental experiences provide settings for relationship building, self-regulation, and cooperation rather than operating only as content about the natural world. Meanwhile, children's contributions to environmental stewardship can be understood through practical participation in local activities (Contreras & Krasny, 2022). These strands suggest that the ecological dimension of pedagogy may encompass immediate classroom relationships, links between families and schools, and shared responsibility for places and resources.

Sociodramatic play offers an embodied means of engaging these dimensions. When children adopt roles, jointly imagine situations, and negotiate rules, they can try out alternative perspectives and experience the consequences of collective decisions. Yesil et al. (2024) emphasize the relevance of sociodramatic play to children's agency and play culture. Lehtonen et al. (2020) show how educational drama can make interdependence and sustainability questions more tangible through embodiment and dialogue, while Ødegaard (2021) positions collaborative exploration as a promising signature pedagogy for sustainability in early childhood education. These works converge on active participation but do not by themselves explain how ecological sociodrama becomes part of regular classroom routines and relational practices.

The use of embodied activity in sustainability education deserves particular attention. Lehtonen et al. (2020) describe how drama can open dialogue across personal, social, and ecological perspectives by inviting participants to inhabit situations instead of only discussing them. Within early childhood education, this embodied dimension may be observed when children take the position of a family member, neighbour, classmate, or caretaker of living things. Yet role-taking alone does not guarantee empathic action. Teachers must decide when to allow the story to continue, when to assist peers experiencing exclusion, and when to help children discuss the consequences of an action. These moment-by-moment choices connect play to social-emotional pedagogy.

Research also identifies a professional dimension. Ferreira et al. (2023) examine how future kindergarten teachers learn to orient teaching toward ecological action, while Spiteri (2022) documents early childhood educators' perceptions of environmental sustainability. Together with the environmental education approaches reviewed by Lasino et al. (2023), these studies highlight that sustainability-oriented curricula depend on teachers' confidence, curriculum interpretation, and practical opportunities. The present study addresses a related but narrower issue: how available routines were experienced by a small group of practitioners already working within one classroom context.



The ecological framing adopted here treats development as situated in interactions among children, educators, families, classroom materials, and surrounding practices. At the classroom level, a consistent teacher response, a predictable social routine, and shared play materials together shape opportunities to practice self-regulation and prosocial conduct. From a sociocultural perspective, role negotiation and supported participation similarly provide occasions for children to learn with more capable partners. Ecological thematic sociodrama play (ETSP) combines these assumptions by locating role-based activity in recognisable contexts such as family life, classroom cooperation, social care, and environmental responsibility. Its purpose is not to replace spontaneous play with prescriptive instruction, but to build occasions for children to make meaning together.

Within this research, ecological thematic sociodrama refers to role-based and collaborative classroom activities linked to everyday social and environmental contexts. Such activities bring together children's participation, adult guidance, materials, and routines rather than treating emotional skills as isolated outcomes. The strongest empirical evidence concerns children's social–emotional interactions, while direct measures of environmental knowledge or long-term stewardship were not collected. The proposed Ecological Thematic Sociodrama Play (ETSP) framework is therefore developed as an interpretive pedagogical synthesis, rather than asserted as an independently validated intervention or a measure of environmental impact.

A parallel conversation concerns the pedagogical environment itself. Defi and Aulina (2026) foreground how early childhood learning environments relate to social–emotional development, and Nakato et al. (2025) discuss efforts to combine programmes across developmental domains. Mora et al. (2024) connect play with cognitive and socio-emotional development during early education. At the broader sustainability level, McNaughton (2010) frames educational drama as ecopedagogy that can move learners toward participatory engagement. These contributions reinforce the rationale for integration, but none removes the need for direct evidence about the enactment of a particular classroom model. Specifically, the present case cannot establish that ecological thematic sociodrama is superior to either other play-based approaches or well-implemented conventional social–emotional guidance. Its value is in describing which relational conditions adults identified as supporting children's participation.

The study addresses three related questions: (1) How do children's social–emotional interactions change during sustained classroom-based ecological and role-play activities? (2) How do teachers and families mediate these learning experiences? and (3) Which activities are viewed as workable and sustainable in daily early childhood routines? The contribution

is a contextual account of process, interaction, and feasibility, linking classroom evidence to a pedagogical framework that integrates socio-emotional and ecological considerations.

METHOD

Research design and setting

A qualitative case study design was adopted to examine social–emotional learning processes in a bounded early childhood classroom. The case-oriented approach allowed attention to how activities unfolded, how teachers interpreted children's participation, and how routine practices supported or constrained interaction. The inquiry did not compare experimental and control groups. Instead, it examined behavioral change described during sustained classroom engagement, using repeated observations, educator reflections, and group discussion to interpret the significance of relational and ecological contexts for children's everyday learning.

The documented case involved a Group B classroom serving children aged five to six at a participating early childhood education institution in West Java, Indonesia. The broader project description refers to multiple institutional settings; however, the available participant records and detailed findings relate most clearly to this bounded classroom. Consequently, the classroom was treated as the unit of case analysis, with no cross-institutional claims derived from the available evidence. This decision preserves the depth and boundaries of the qualitative material while making the scope of interpretation explicit.

Participants and sampling

Purposeful sampling involved ten preschool children (five girls and five boys) and four teachers (three women and one man). Six children were five years old and four were six; all belonged to Group B, with nine to twelve months of enrollment. Teaching experience ranged from eight to fifteen years. Three educators held bachelor's degrees and one held a master's degree. Parents and school leaders appear within the wider ecological framing, while the detailed participant register does not separately enumerate these groups. Consequently, accounts of family–school coordination in this article are interpreted principally through teacher interviews and FGD records (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the participating children and teachers

Participant group	Number	Documented characteristics
Preschool children	10	Ages 5–6; 6 aged five and 4 aged six; 5 female, 5 male; Group B; 9–12 months enrolled
Teachers	4	3 female and 1 male; 8–15 years of teaching experience; 3 bachelor's and 1 master's degree
Parents/school leaders	Not specified	Mentioned as contextual partners, without a separate enumerated sample

Data collection and classroom activities

The study drew upon repeated classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion (FGD), reflective records, and classroom documentation. The



research narrative identifies a seven-week period of observation and interviews; the FGD excerpts are dated December 2025. Portfolio materials, anecdotal notes, and photographs were also mentioned in the documentation. Exact totals for interview sessions, observed episodes, and other materials were not consistently enumerated. By combining observation with educator accounts, the inquiry nevertheless provides an in-depth qualitative view of participation and of adults' interpretations of children's changes within the classroom.

The ecological approach was embedded in familiar activities rather than presented as a discrete standardized test. Reported examples include guided peer interaction, emotional-expression exercises, cooperative group tasks, role-playing, and structured opportunities to share materials or take turns. Educators adapted these practices as children displayed different levels of confidence and emotional readiness. Family contact was reported as a way to reinforce comparable expectations between home and school. The manuscript does not provide an independently replicable week-by-week ETSP lesson sequence; therefore, the activities are described here at the level documented in the case narrative.

Observation focused on observable participation and interaction: solitary or collaborative engagement, initiation of communication, capacity to wait, reactions to frustration, expressions of feeling, and responsiveness to peers. The interviews and FGD explored teacher perceptions of children's change, strategies used in everyday routines, and home-school communication. Participant quotations are retained selectively below because they illustrate the mechanisms proposed by the analysis rather than quantifying the magnitude of development.

Analysis and trustworthiness

Analysis followed an iterative thematic process: material was reviewed, episodes and interview statements were coded, related codes were organized into provisional categories, and categories were refined into integrative themes. The study reports the use of MAXQDA, researcher dialogue, member checking, attention to discrepant evidence, and records of coding decisions. The account was synthesized across observations, teacher interviews, and FGD statements to examine convergences and differences. Three themes represent recurring patterns concerning behavioral transformation, ecological relationships and adult mediation, and the feasibility of context-sensitive classroom practices.

The findings are interpreted as contextual accounts, not numerical estimates of treatment effects. Although the wider analysis reports an inter-coder agreement statistic, no single agreement threshold can substitute for demonstrating how an interpretation was developed from its underlying qualitative material (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Credibility in this case thus rests particularly on the correspondence between interview quotations,

observational descriptions, and claims within each theme. Neither a standardized pre–post assessment of children's behavior nor a comparison group was described. The analysis therefore avoids causal language and distinguishes observed participation from educators' perceptions of developmental change.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The thematic synthesis generated three interrelated findings: (1) gradual behavioral change associated with sustained ecological routines, (2) teacher–child interaction and communication across home and school, and (3) practical, context-sensitive strategies that teachers considered sustainable in everyday implementation. Table 2 relates each theme to its primary data and conceptual interpretation. Interview quotations are attributed to participants using the teacher identifiers recorded in the study, preserving a transparent connection between descriptive accounts and analytical claims.

Table 2. Thematic synthesis of the case study evidence

Theme	Illustrative observations or accounts	Interpretation
1. Progressive readiness	From solitary participation to communication, sharing, turn-taking, and less reactive peer responses	Development described as gradual and connected to repeated guided activity
2. Relational mediation	Teacher scaffolding, predictable expectations, communication with families	Social–emotional conduct supported by continuity across classroom and home interactions
3. Contextual sustainability	Role-playing, emotion-expression routines, flexible, low-resource group tasks	Everyday, adaptable practices perceived as more feasible than complex, externally imposed routines

Theme 1. Gradual transformation in children's social–emotional readiness

Observations and educators' accounts contrast some children's initial preference for solitary play, reluctance to join groups, and frustration during activities with later participation in shared tasks. Teachers described increasing willingness to initiate communication, take turns, and negotiate the use of materials. These changes were portrayed as gradual rather than immediate, developing through familiarity, repeated opportunities, and adult guidance. Classroom records similarly described greater cooperation and peer-directed communication in structured group activities, although individual developmental trajectories were not quantified using a standardized scale.

One teacher offered a concrete contrast between earlier avoidance of social play and later peer engagement:

“I observed that before the intervention, several children preferred to play alone and avoided interacting with others, but over time they began initiating communication, sharing materials, and showing empathy during structured activities consistently implemented in the classroom” (T1, 38)



The report from T1 indicates the kinds of behavior educators considered meaningful: initiating contact, sharing, and noticing others. These are situated signs of social engagement rather than independently scored indicators. T2 described similar progression in emotional demands during joint tasks, especially patience and waiting for a turn:

“At the beginning, I saw that children struggled to manage their emotions during group tasks, often becoming frustrated or withdrawn, but after repeated guided activities, they gradually showed better emotional control, including patience, turn-taking, and more positive responses to peers” (T2, 41)

Two further teachers highlighted communication and participation. T3 connected confidence in expressing feelings with opportunities provided by daily routines, whereas T4 noted that previously passive children participated more actively in collaboration. The convergence of these accounts strengthens an interpretation that the recurring routines provided opportunities to practice different aspects of social-emotional readiness. Nevertheless, observations reported by educators should not be interpreted as evidence that ETSP alone caused developmental gains; maturation, classroom familiarity, and other ongoing experiences remain plausible influences.

In the FGD, participants stressed that behavioral differences became visible over time through repeated guided interaction. This temporal interpretation is important because a single classroom observation might conflate a child's momentary cooperation with an enduring competence. Through sustained routines, the child encountered comparable social expectations in several situations: waiting for access to resources, asking to join a task, verbalizing disagreement, or offering help. The recurrence of these demands appears central to the teachers' interpretation of developmental movement.

The ecological character of this theme lies in the organization of interactions within the child's immediate environment. Sociodrama gave familiar social scenarios a performative form, while the classroom supplied materials, peers, and predictable adult responses. In contrast with skill instruction detached from everyday activity, play required children to coordinate interests in real time. Such a reading complements studies of agency in sociodramatic play (Yesil et al., 2024) and the relational affordances of immersive learning experiences (Ødegaard, 2021).

Figure 1 illustrates the classroom context of small-group participation and shared activity. It complements the observational narrative but does not independently establish before-after behavioral change; that interpretation rests on the qualitative records and educator testimonies.



Figure 1. Small-group classroom interaction during routine-based activities (research documentation).

Theme 2. Teacher–child interactions and alignment between home and school

The second theme concerns the relational conditions through which children were helped to participate. Teachers described setting expectations, adjusting interactions in response to children's behavior, and supporting the emotional demands of collective activity. The routines were structured enough to be recognizable but flexible enough for teachers to respond to hesitancy, conflict, and differences in emotional expression. This combination of predictability and responsiveness positioned the educator as a mediator of social experiences rather than only a transmitter of behavioral rules.

Communication with families emerged as an additional dimension of continuity. Although parent participation is not quantified in the participant table, all four teacher accounts refer to coordination between classroom expectations and home practice. Their emphasis is not that the two environments were identical, but that similar language and responses helped adults guide children through recurring situations. For instance, T1 reported the following:

“I maintained regular communication with families to ensure consistency between home and school practices, which helped children receive similar guidance in managing emotions and interacting with others, and this consistency improved their ability to adapt their behavior across different situations”
(T1, 38)

T2 likewise associated shared expectations across settings with more stable emotional responses. T3 described collaboration as a way to understand children's needs and respond to difficulties, while T4 emphasized consistency in interpersonal guidance. In the FGD, participants discussed communication and shared reflection as mechanisms through which families and teachers could recognize children's progress and adapt support. The evidence thus identifies home–school coordination as a **perceived support** for developing competencies, rather than a measured mediation effect.



This interpretation can be understood ecologically: classroom relationships form an immediate setting for experience, while communication between family and school helps connect separate daily environments. Children need not receive identical instructions at home and school to benefit from continuity; a shared emphasis on naming emotions, using words during disagreement, and allowing time to try again can provide recognizable principles. These supports may be especially relevant in early childhood because the child's expression of emotional competence varies across relationships and situations.

The classroom interactions also reveal the significance of scaffolding. Role play can present a manageable version of a social challenge: deciding who performs a role, negotiating materials, helping another character, or dealing with an imagined conflict. Adults can prompt perspective-taking and then gradually reduce support as children respond to peers. The source documentation does not isolate these mechanisms experimentally, but the combination of teacher descriptions and activity narratives illustrates how co-constructed social learning may occur within ecological sociodrama.

It is important not to equate reported consistency with uniformity or control. The strengths of child-centred practice arise when educators listen to children's ideas and adjust rules to their developmental needs. In a practical ETSP framework, the teacher prepares a socially meaningful context, observes spontaneous engagement, and supports reflection without overriding the child's agency. The classroom may then become a site for both everyday care and critical participation in shared decisions.

Figure 2 illustrates adults supporting children during a collaborative classroom activity. Although the image gives a sense of the learning setting, evidence of sustained home-school coordination comes from interviews and group discussion rather than from the photograph alone.



Figure 2. Adult-supported collaborative activity in an early childhood classroom (research documentation).

Theme 3. Contextually relevant and sustainable classroom practices

The third theme focuses on the feasibility of activities within the daily realities of early childhood education. Educators favored approaches that did not require an elaborate external program, extensive equipment, or inflexible scheduling. Examples included guided interaction, opportunities to name feelings, role-playing, and group routines that could be modified for different levels of readiness. The central claim is therefore practical: relational learning may be sustained when educators can integrate it into routines already meaningful to children.

T1 emphasized the usefulness of simple, repeated activities:

“I implemented simple and routine-based activities such as guided interaction and emotional expression exercises, and I found them more effective because they were easy to integrate into daily classroom practices without requiring additional resources, allowing consistent implementation over time” (T1, 38)

T2 similarly described role-playing and structured social tasks as sustainable because they could be adapted to different classroom situations. T3 interpreted familiarity as important for children's natural engagement, and T4 connected the relevance of daily experiences with active participation. FGD participants added that practical, adaptable activities were easier to sustain without disrupting existing schedules. The thematic pattern is not an endorsement of a single activity type; rather, it highlights the pedagogical advantages of routines that can be revised in response to an actual group of learners.

This finding is consistent with the argument that sustainability in educational innovation depends on compatibility with local practice and implementers' capacity, not simply on the novelty of an intervention (Prenger et al., 2022). In early childhood settings, the same cooperative challenge may be enacted through role play, shared materials, a nature-related task, or daily classroom responsibilities. Educators can revisit these experiences without requiring a scripted programme to be delivered exactly as designed. The relevance of place and relationships accords with collaborative exploration as a sustainability-oriented pedagogy (Ødegaard, 2021) and with early childhood educators' attention to environmental practice (Spiteri, 2022).

Figure 3 presents an example of an ordinary low-resource classroom task. Its pedagogical significance lies in opportunities for independence, concentration, shared expectations, and responsive guidance. The photograph situates the discussion within everyday teaching practice but does not independently document improvements in emotional regulation.

Sustainability has two distinct meanings in the present discussion. Teachers perceived simple practices as feasible to repeat within regular classroom routines, suggesting practical sustainability of implementation. However, no follow-up assessment examined how long any social-emotional changes persisted. Environmental sustainability is also a wider curricular orientation than the observed social interactions; direct gains in ecological knowledge,



conservation behavior, or stewardship were not measured. Accordingly, this case supports claims about the perceived feasibility of relational classroom pedagogy, while ecological outcomes and the durability of developmental change require further investigation.



Figure 3. Low-resource classroom task illustrating context-sensitive pedagogy (research documentation).

Integrative discussion: Towards an ecological thematic sociodrama framework

Taken together, the themes suggest that ecological thematic sociodrama can be organized around three mutually reinforcing principles. The first is repeated participation: children encounter social dilemmas through accessible activities that require sharing, communication, or cooperative action. The second is relational mediation: teachers offer language, encouragement, and predictable responses, while families may support continuity across settings. The third is contextual adaptability: activities must fit everyday routines, classroom materials, children's interests, and available adult support. These principles are interpretive implications of the case, not independently tested components of a validated model.

The connected ecosystem metaphor refers to the relationships among learning activities, social partners, and environments. A child's readiness is not treated as an isolated trait displayed identically in every situation. Instead, emotional regulation may become visible when a child has the opportunity to wait with adult support; empathy may emerge while helping a peer in a dramatic role; and cooperation may develop through negotiating shared purposes. Such moments are easier to recognize when the curriculum deliberately notices the social demands embedded in play. This conception connects social-emotional development with sustainability-oriented education through participation and care rather than through abstract ecological information alone.

The synthesis is compatible with prior research on dramatic embodiment and connectedness (Lehtonen et al., 2020), children's agency in sociodrama (Yesil et al., 2024), and the wider developmental opportunities of nature-based early education (Johnstone et al., 2022). It extends those conversations at the level of classroom description by foregrounding how sustained routines and home-school guidance are perceived to support children in practice. At the same time, the findings are not grounds for claims of comparative effectiveness against other pedagogical models. The small, bounded sample and reliance on adult accounts support depth of interpretation, not generalization to all centres or age groups.

The findings suggest a provisional implementation sequence: begin with a familiar ecological or social theme; invite children to co-create roles and a shared dramatic situation; observe negotiation, participation, and emotional responses; offer sensitive scaffolding when needed; and revisit the interaction through discussion or subsequent routine play. Teachers may connect classroom experiences to home through reflective communication with families. This sequence synthesizes the practices described in the case and offers a possible structure for subsequent studies; it should not yet be represented as a standardized, experimentally validated ETSP program.

For teachers, the contribution is a practical account of how learning opportunities can be designed without imposing a heavy new curriculum. For researchers, it suggests that future evaluation should distinguish changes in child behavior from teachers' perceptions, specify the unit of analysis, and document the actual dosage and enactment of sociodrama. For education for sustainable development, it proposes a pathway from lived interdependence and care toward children's participation in social and environmental responsibilities, while acknowledging that the latter outcome was not directly measured in this case.

The framework furthermore offers a way to connect culturally meaningful activities with broad sustainable-development commitments without importing abstract objectives wholesale into preschool classrooms. Educators can begin with familiar relationships and responsibilities: caring for classroom plants, negotiating the use of shared resources, responding to a peer's distress, or asking how a story character might act fairly. These experiences can bridge care for people and care for places. The literature on dramatic play and social awareness (Agustina et al., 2025), children's environmental stewardship (Contreras & Krasny, 2022), and educational drama on environmental themes (Bakkaloğlu & Şimşek, 2021) offers potential connections. Yet the classroom evidence here should remain central: the research does not provide direct measurement of environmental attitudes or knowledge gains.

A related implication concerns documenting process rather than relying solely on celebratory accounts of play. Researchers could follow specific episodes in which a child initially rejects a group invitation, observes a partner's reaction, and re-enters the interaction with teacher support. Attention to moments of conflict, exclusion, or non-participation would also help challenge assumptions that every child benefits in the same way. A stronger record



of such contrasting cases could refine the model and avoid defining success only through the frequency of visible cooperation. This is particularly valuable in qualitative inquiry, in which the persuasive quality of the interpretation depends upon the relationship between analytical claims and contextual evidence (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

An ecological programme also requires attention to the preparation of educators and the character of physical places. Hughes (2023) considers professional learning through action research in nature-play settings, while Roussou et al. (2025) discuss links among theatre, creativity, and early childhood environmental education. Their emphases help clarify why environmental themes should be meaningfully enacted, rather than merely mentioned as decorative story settings. Similarly, the workshop orientation of Şahin (2023) illustrates drama as a vehicle for deliberating possible sustainable futures, and Rust and Rust (2024) locate innovation within place-based human systems. These perspectives are conceptual comparators, not evidence that the participating children in this case acquired measurable sustainability competencies. The classroom observations reported here primarily address social engagement and teacher-guided emotional activity.

Across the case material, teachers' accounts also invite critical reflection about who participates and whose development becomes visible. A child's silent but attentive engagement may be overlooked when adults prioritize verbal confidence as progress. Conversely, repeated group performance can conceal a child's fatigue or discomfort if invitations to participate are treated as obligations. A responsive pedagogy therefore calls for flexible degrees of participation and observation of emotional cues before interpreting a successful role-play scene as evidence of an acquired skill. This conceptual caution is consistent with the study's reliance on qualitative interpretation: the most defensible result is an account of perceived changes and contexts that supported them, rather than a uniform score of readiness.

Limitations and future research

Interpretation is constrained by the small purposive sample and the bounded classroom evidence. Although a broader three-institution context was mentioned in the study overview, the detailed participant and thematic records did not permit a credible cross-site comparison. The material also did not consistently distinguish specific sociodrama episodes from other ecological classroom activities or provide a session-by-session intervention schedule. Much of the change narrative derives from teacher interview accounts, observation summaries, and group reflection. Without independent pre-post measurement or a comparison design, the patterns should not be described as causal treatment effects.

Future research should document sampling and the boundaries of every participating setting; systematically record the frequency and characteristics of role-play episodes; analyze

children's own perspectives as well as adult accounts; and trace social–emotional participation over longer periods. Outcomes specifically related to environmental responsibility would help evaluate the ecological dimension of the framework. The research report would also benefit from more explicit documentation of informed guardian permission, child assent, anonymization procedures, and consent for photographs. Such details are particularly consequential when publishing images or quotations involving young children in an international journal.

CONCLUSION

The condensed case study indicates that young children's social–emotional readiness was described as emerging gradually through repeated, familiar classroom interactions. Teachers observed increasing communication, shared participation, emotional expression, and responsiveness to peers; they also perceived consistent adult guidance and home–school contact as supportive conditions. Activities that were simple, adaptable, and connected with routine experiences were regarded as the most feasible to continue in ordinary early childhood practice.

The study's principal contribution is an interpretive account of ecological thematic sociodrama as a relational and context-sensitive pedagogical orientation. It connects role play, adult mediation, and the ecology of everyday childhood with the wider aspiration of sustainability-oriented learning. The evidence justifies a promising framework for further development, not a claim of proven causal effectiveness. Strengthening the account through fuller methodological documentation, direct child evidence, and evaluation across settings would be necessary for subsequent validation.

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