

The Role of Nursery Rhyme Exposure on Emotional Regulation in Early Childhood Learners

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Publication Date: 2025/05/02

Abstract: This study investigates the impact of nursery rhyme exposure on the emotional regulation of early childhood learners. Recognizing early childhood as a foundational period for emotional and cognitive development, the research explores how nursery rhymes' rhythmic and repetitive nature can aid children in managing emotions and navigating social situations. Utilizing a quantitative, descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 100 preschool teachers across various educational settings in Valencia City through structured surveys. Results indicate that nursery rhymes are regularly incorporated into classroom activities and are perceived as highly effective in enhancing classroom engagement, language acquisition, and emotional development. Emotional regulation indicators, such as improved patience, verbal expression of emotions, and empathy, were consistently rated as "Mostly True" or "True" by respondents. Statistical analysis revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.800$, $p < 0.01$) between nursery rhyme exposure and emotional regulation, underscoring nursery rhymes' significant role in fostering emotional intelligence and social skills. The findings align with existing literature, highlighting the multifaceted benefits of nursery rhymes in early childhood education. The study recommends integrating nursery rhymes into curricula, promoting parental involvement, and encouraging diverse, culturally relevant selections to maximize developmental outcomes. Overall, nursery rhymes are affirmed as powerful educational tools that contribute to cognitive and linguistic growth and the emotional resilience and well-being of young learners.

Keywords: Nursery Rhyme, Emotional Regulation, Early Childhood Learners.

How to Cite: Ramon S. Escabusa; Alice D. Salbupera; Relyn B. Monsanto; Judith M. Cinco; Jackielyn B. Sernicula; Danica V. Hassan; Jessie S. Acosta (2025) The Role of Nursery Rhyme Exposure on Emotional Regulation in Early Childhood Learners. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(4), 2221-2227. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/25apr1385>

I. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is an exceptionally critical period for both emotional and cognitive development, serving as the foundation for skills that significantly influence a child's future learning capabilities and social interactions. During these formative years, children acquire abilities supporting their emotional well-being and cognitive growth. Among the various methods employed to foster this development, nursery rhymes have emerged as a particularly significant tool. Their value extends beyond mere entertainment; nursery rhymes

enhance emotional regulation, language acquisition, and cognitive skills in young children.

This study explores the impact of nursery rhyme exposure on emotional regulation among early childhood learners. The focus will be on how these rhythmic and repetitive verses can aid children in managing their emotions and navigating social situations. In this context, the independent variable is the exposure to nursery rhymes, while the dependent variable is the emotional regulation in early childhood learners. Although existing literature has established that nursery rhymes contribute to various aspects

of child development, including language skills and cognitive abilities, there is a notable gap in research linking nursery rhyme exposure to emotional regulation outcomes. While studies have indicated that music and rhythmic patterns can influence emotional states and social bonding, the direct correlation between nursery rhyme engagement and improved emotional regulation skills remains underexplored.

A study by [9] Williams and Berthelsen (2017) investigated the impact of musical activities, including nursery rhymes, on emotional and social development in preschoolers. Their findings suggested that regular engagement with music, particularly nursery rhymes, enhanced children's ability to regulate emotions and improved social interactions. Another study by [1] Hallam, Cross, and Thaut (2016) examined the role of music in early childhood education. They highlighted that musical activities like singing nursery rhymes contribute to emotional stability and cognitive development. The study emphasized the importance of rhythm and repetition in nursery rhymes, which align with children's natural learning processes and emotional needs.

Ref. [2] 2019, Gordon, Fehd, and McCandliss explored the effects of rhythmic training on emotional regulation in young children. Their research demonstrated that rhythmic activities, similar to nursery rhymes, significantly improved children's emotional regulation abilities. This study supports the hypothesis that nursery rhymes can be crucial in developing emotional skills. Additionally, a survey by [8] Trehub and Cirelli (2018) focused on the calming effects of music and rhythm in infants and toddlers. They found that nursery rhymes, with their familiar rhythmic patterns, provided a sense of security and comfort, aiding in emotional regulation and reducing anxiety.

Beyond the primary variables of nursery rhyme exposure and emotional regulation, other factors may influence this relationship. Parental involvement is crucial as it plays a significant role in engaging children during nursery rhyme activities. This involvement enhances emotional connections and provides a supportive environment for emotional expression. The social context in which nursery rhymes are shared—one-on-one with a caregiver or in a group setting—may also affect how children regulate their emotions. Additionally, cultural background can influence children's emotional responses and regulatory strategies. Variations in nursery rhymes across cultures may shape children's understanding of emotions, as different cultural contexts provide unique narratives and emotional frameworks.

Research supports the notion that nursery rhymes play a vital role in emotional development. For instance, singing nursery rhymes has been shown to have a calming effect on infants, helping them regulate their emotions effectively during distressing situations. The rhythmic nature of these rhymes resonates with infants who have been exposed to consistent rhythmic patterns even before birth, as they experience their mother's heartbeat. This familiarity with rhythm can create a sense of security and predictability, which are crucial for developing emotional stability. The comforting effect of nursery rhymes is often observed as infants and

young children respond to soothing patterns and melodies, which can help them manage emotions and reduce anxiety.

Furthermore, studies indicate that engaging with nursery rhymes fosters social connections between caregivers and children. This bonding experience enhances children's ability to express their feelings and understand others' emotions. As children participate in singing or reciting nursery rhymes, they learn new vocabulary and practice turn-taking and sharing attention, skills essential for effective emotional regulation. The repetitive structure of nursery rhymes aids memory retention and cognitive processing; children learn to anticipate outcomes within the narrative structure of the rhymes, paralleling their experiences in managing emotions. This predictability helps children develop a sense of control over their emotional responses as they learn to anticipate and react to emotional cues in a structured manner.

The connection between emotion regulation and academic success has also been documented. Research has shown that children with better emotional regulation perform better academically. This suggests that fostering emotional skills through activities like nursery rhyme exposure could have long-term benefits beyond immediate emotional responses. Children adept at regulating their emotions are more likely to engage positively in learning environments, as they can focus better, manage stress, and interact more effectively with peers and educators. The skills acquired through nursery rhyme exposure—such as patience, attention to detail, and the ability to follow narratives—contribute to a child's overall academic and social success.

Exploring nursery rhyme exposure to enhance emotional regulation in early childhood learners presents an intriguing area for further research. While existing literature highlights the multifaceted benefits of nursery rhymes—including language development, cognitive skills, and social bonding—the specific impact on emotional regulation requires more focused investigation. By addressing the gaps between independent and dependent variables while considering additional influencing factors such as parental involvement and cultural context, this study aims to contribute valuable insights into early childhood education practices.

Understanding how nursery rhymes can support emotional development will enable educators and caregivers to implement more effective strategies for fostering resilience and emotional intelligence in young learners. As we delve deeper into this research, we anticipate uncovering how nursery rhymes contribute to emotional regulation, offering practical applications for enhancing early childhood education. The findings could inform curriculum design, parental guidance, and intervention strategies, ensuring children receive a holistic education that nurtures emotional and cognitive growth.

Nursery rhymes hold significant potential as a tool for emotional regulation in early childhood learners. Their rhythmic and repetitive nature, combined with the cultural and social contexts in which they are shared, makes them a powerful medium for emotional and cognitive development.

By exploring the direct impact of nursery rhyme exposure on emotional regulation, this study seeks to bridge the gap in current research and provide actionable insights for educators and caregivers. The ultimate goal is to enhance young children's emotional well-being and resilience, equipping them with the skills needed for successful social interactions and academic achievement.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study will determine the role of nursery rhyme exposure on emotional regulation in early childhood learners. Precisely, this will aim to:

- Describe the level of the role of nursery rhyme exposure on emotional regulation in early childhood learners.
- Describe the level of emotional regulation in early childhood learners.
- Assess the relation between the role of nursery rhyme exposure on emotional regulation in early childhood learners.

III. METHODOLOGY

➤ Research Design

This study will employ a quantitative research design using a descriptive-correlational approach. The goal is to assess the relationship between nursery rhyme exposure and emotional regulation in early childhood learners.

➤ Research Setting

The research will be conducted in various urban, suburban, and rural educational settings across multiple districts. This variety aims to capture a broad spectrum of teachers and early childhood learners.

➤ Participants of the Study

The study will involve a random sample of public schools in the Valencia City division. Participants will comprise approximately 100 preschool teachers. Data will be collected through structured surveys to capture diverse perspectives on nursery rhyme exposure and emotional regulation to the study's key variables.

➤ Sampling Procedure

The study will use a random sampling technique to ensure representation from different school environments. Schools will be categorized based on their environment, and then participants will be randomly selected from each category to ensure proportional representation.

➤ Data Gathering Procedure

A structured questionnaire will be developed, consisting of sections on nursery rhyme exposure and emotional regulation. The questionnaire will be pilot-tested with a small group of preschool teachers to ensure clarity and reliability. The finalized questionnaire will be distributed to the selected participants via email or an online survey platform. Participants will be given two weeks to complete the survey. To maximize response rates, reminder emails will be sent to non-respondents one week after the initial distribution.

➤ Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the nursery rhyme exposure and emotional regulation. Pearson correlation coefficients will be calculated to determine the relationship between nursery rhyme exposure and the emotional regulation of early childhood learners. All data analysis will be performed using statistical software such as SPSS to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data presented in Table 1 shows that Nursery rhymes are regularly incorporated into daily classroom activities, as indicated by a high mean score of 4.73. This suggests that teachers frequently use nursery rhymes as a learning tool and a method to transition between activities, keeping children engaged and attentive. The effectiveness of nursery rhymes in capturing children's attention and interest is further supported by a mean score of 4.67, highlighting their role in enhancing classroom engagement.

Table 1. Nursery Rhyme Exposure

INDICATOR	MEAN	QUALITATIVE DESCRIPTION
Nursery rhymes are regularly incorporated into daily classroom activities.	4.73	Mostly True
Nursery rhymes are used to transition between activities in the classroom.	4.73	Mostly True
Nursery rhymes are effective in capturing children's attention and interest.	4.67	Mostly True
Nursery rhymes are used as a tool for teaching language skills in my classroom.	4.60	Mostly True
I incorporate cultural variations of nursery rhymes in my teaching.	4.57	Mostly True
Nursery rhymes are an essential part of my teaching strategy for emotional development.	4.57	Mostly True
I observe positive changes in children's behavior after engaging with nursery rhymes.	4.53	Mostly True
Children in my class enjoy participating in nursery rhyme activities.	4.50	True

INDICATOR	MEAN	QUALITATIVE DESCRIPTION
Parents are encouraged to engage with their children using nursery rhymes at home.	4.37	True
Children often request specific nursery rhymes during activities.	4.37	True
Total Mean	4.54	Mostly True

Legend:

4.51- 5.00	Strongly Agree	Mostly true
3.51- 4.50	Agree	True
2.51- 3.50	Neutral	Somewhat true
1.51- 2.50	Disagree	Untrue
1.00- 1.50	Strongly Disagree	Mostly Untrue

Moreover, nursery rhymes are used to teach language skills, with a mean score of 4.60, indicating that teachers view them as a valuable resource in promoting language development. The consistent use of cultural variations of nursery rhymes, with a mean score of 4.57, points to an appreciation for cultural diversity and its importance in education. This approach enriches the learning experience and supports emotional development, as nursery rhymes are essential for fostering emotional growth in young learners.

Teachers also observe positive behavioral changes in children following nursery rhyme activities, with a mean score of 4.53. This suggests that nursery rhymes significantly impact children's emotional and behavioral development, making them an integral part of early childhood education strategies. The enjoyment children derive from participating in nursery rhyme activities, with a mean score of 4.50, further underscores their effectiveness in creating a positive and engaging learning environment.

The findings suggest a substantial perceived benefit of looking at these results; it is clear that nursery rhymes are essential in early childhood education. They are appreciated because they can capture children's interest and help them grow in many ways. Teachers help children learn about and appreciate different cultures by including different cultural versions of nursery rhymes. This also helps kids develop emotional intelligence, which means understanding and managing their feelings and those of others. Starting this learning early is essential for their overall development.

The findings of this study are well-supported by the literature, which corroborates the educational benefits associated with using nursery rhymes in early childhood learning. [6] Smith (2018) provides a detailed exploration of how nursery rhymes contribute to language development. His research highlights that rhythmic and repetitive nursery rhymes enhance phonemic awareness, vocabulary acquisition, and overall linguistic skills in young children. This reinforces their value as an educational tool that effectively aids in the foundational stages of language learning.

Ref. [3] Johnson and Lee (2020) delve into the impact of cultural variations in nursery rhymes on the development of emotional intelligence. Their research underscores that when children are exposed to nursery rhymes from diverse cultures, they gain cultural awareness and improve their ability to empathize and understand different perspectives. This exposure aids in emotional development as children learn to navigate and appreciate a variety of cultural contexts, which is crucial in our increasingly globalized world.

Furthermore, [9] Williams (2022) emphasizes integrating technology into traditional teaching methods, aligning with this study's positive outlook on digital tools. Williams argues that technology can enhance the learning experience by providing interactive and engaging ways to present nursery rhymes, complementing traditional approaches. This integration allows for a more dynamic classroom environment where digital tools and nursery rhymes work together to reinforce learning objectives.

These studies affirm the multifaceted role of nursery rhymes in supporting language development, fostering emotional intelligence, and embracing technological advancements to enrich early childhood education.

Table 2. Emotional Regulation

Indicator	Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
Children show improved patience and turn-taking skills after nursery rhyme activities.	4.57	Mostly True
Nursery rhymes help children express their emotions verbally.	4.53	Mostly True
Nursery rhymes help children understand and empathize with others' emotions.	4.53	Mostly True
Children in my class can identify their emotions effectively.	4.50	True
Children can articulate how they feel using language from nursery rhymes.	4.50	True
Emotional regulation skills have improved in my class since incorporating nursery rhymes.	4.47	True
Children are more cooperative during group activities after nursery rhyme exposure.	4.43	True
Children can focus better on	4.40	True

Indicator	Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
tasks following nursery rhyme activities.		
I notice a decrease in conflicts among children after engaging in nursery rhyme sessions.	4.37	True
Children demonstrate the ability to calm themselves when upset.	4.30	True
Total Mean	4.40	True

Legend:

4.51- 5.00	Strongly Agree	Mostly True
3.51- 4.50	Agree	True
2.51- 3.50	Neutral	Somewhat True
1.51- 2.50	Disagree	Untrue
1.00- 1.50	Strongly Disagree	Mostly Untrue

Table 2 comprehensively examines how nursery rhymes positively influence emotional regulation in early childhood learners. With an overall mean score of 4.44, the data reflect a consensus among teachers regarding the beneficial impact of nursery rhymes on various aspects of emotional development. Notably, the highest-rated indicator, with a mean of 4.57, shows that children demonstrate improved patience and turn-taking skills following nursery rhyme activities. This improvement can be attributed to the structured and rhythmic nature of nursery rhymes, which often require children to participate in a shared activity, thereby practicing patience and learning to wait for their turn.

Moreover, nursery rhymes are highly effective in helping children articulate their emotions verbally and understand the feelings of others, both scoring a mean of 4.53. This ability to express and empathize is foundational to emotional intelligence, as nursery rhymes often incorporate storytelling elements that depict various emotional scenarios. Children learn to identify and label their feelings through these narratives, enhancing their emotional vocabulary and understanding. This skill is crucial for fostering empathy as it allows children to recognize and relate to the emotions of their peers, promoting a more harmonious classroom environment.

The data also indicates that nursery rhymes contribute to decreased conflicts and increased cooperation during group activities as children become more adept at managing their emotions and interactions. The calming and centering effects of nursery rhymes are evident in children's improved focus and self-calming abilities, as reflected by mean scores of 4.40 and 4.30, respectively. These findings highlight the multifaceted role of nursery rhymes in enhancing emotional regulation and promoting overall classroom harmony and cooperation.

Supporting literature further validates these observations. [7] Thompson and Goldstein (2017) emphasize the role of nursery rhymes in enhancing emotional expression and empathy, aligning with the improvements noted in patience and kindness. [5] Parker and Riley (2019) discuss the importance of musical activities, including nursery rhymes, in developing emotional intelligence, reinforcing the link between nursery rhyme exposure and emotional regulation. Additionally, [4] Miller (2021) explores the calming effects of rhythmic activities like nursery rhymes, paralleling the observed decrease in conflicts and enhanced focus in the classroom.

Collectively, these studies and the data from Table 2 affirm the significant impact of nursery rhymes on emotional regulation and social skills development. They underscore the importance of integrating nursery rhymes into early childhood education as a valuable tool for nurturing emotionally intelligent, empathetic, and socially adept learners. By leveraging nursery rhymes' engaging and educational nature, educators can provide children with essential skills for emotional growth and successful social interactions.

➤ Relationship between Nursery Rhyme Exposure and Emotional Regulation of Early Childhood Learners.

Pearson's product-moment was used to assess the degree of relationship between the continuous variables explored. Pearson (r) was mainly run to find out the relationship between the dependent variable, the Nursery Rhyme Exposure of early childhood, and the independent variable, Emotional Regulation.

Table 3 presents the correlation between nursery rhyme exposure and emotional regulation among early childhood learners. The results reveal a strong positive correlation, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.800, which is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed test). This indicates a robust relationship between the extent of nursery rhyme exposure and the development of emotional regulation skills in young children. The probability value (p) of .000 confirms the statistical significance of this correlation, suggesting that the relationship is not due to random chance. With a sample size (N) of 100, this analysis underscores the consistency and reliability of the findings.

Table 3. Correlation Analysis of Nursery Rhyme Exposure and Emotional Regulation

INDICATORS	CORRELATION COEFFICIENT (r)	PROBABILITY (p)
Nursery Rhyme Exposure	.800(**)	.000
Emotional Regulation	.800(**)	.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

b. listwise N=100

The strong positive correlation of 0.800 between nursery rhyme exposure and emotional regulation among early childhood learners underscores nursery rhymes' significant role in emotional development. This correlation suggests that

as children are increasingly exposed to nursery rhymes, their ability to regulate emotions improves markedly. This relationship is rooted in the structured, repetitive, and engaging nature of nursery rhymes, which provide an excellent medium for children to explore and express emotions. The rhythmic and predictable patterns of nursery rhymes make them memorable, helping children internalize and apply the content to real-life situations.

Nursery rhymes frequently incorporate storytelling elements that present various emotions and scenarios. Through these narratives, children learn to identify emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, and empathy, often personified through the rhymes' characters or situations. This exposure helps children articulate their feelings and develop empathy by understanding how others might feel in similar situations. The ability to empathize and communicate feelings is a cornerstone of emotional intelligence, a critical component of emotional regulation.

Supporting literature corroborates these findings by highlighting the educational value of nursery rhymes in fostering emotional and social development. [7] Thompson and Goldstein (2017) emphasize that nursery rhymes enhance children's emotional expression and empathy, reinforcing the correlation observed in the study. Furthermore, [5] Parker and Riley (2019) discuss the significance of musical activities, including nursery rhymes, in cultivating emotional intelligence. Their research supports the idea that engaging with nursery rhymes helps children develop the skills necessary for emotional regulation.

These studies affirm the multifaceted impact of nursery rhymes on emotional development, emphasizing their importance in early childhood education. By integrating nursery rhymes into educational curricula, educators can provide children with valuable tools for emotional growth, preparing them for future social interactions and personal challenges.

V. CONCLUSION

The study underscores the profound impact of nursery rhymes on the emotional regulation of early childhood learners, as evidenced by the strong positive correlation of 0.800 observed in the data. This finding highlights the significant role nursery rhymes play in enhancing emotional development, suggesting that increased exposure to these rhymes is closely linked with improved emotional regulation skills in young children. The structured, repetitive, and engaging nature of nursery rhymes provides an effective medium for children to explore and express emotions, with their rhythmic and predictable patterns making them easy to remember and internalize.

Nursery rhymes often incorporate storytelling elements that present a variety of emotions and scenarios, allowing children to identify and articulate their feelings while fostering empathy for others. This exposure is crucial for developing emotional intelligence, a key aspect of emotional regulation that helps children understand and manage their

emotions and those of others. Children learn to navigate their emotional landscape by engaging with nursery rhymes, developing the skills necessary for effective communication and social interaction.

Literature corroborates these findings, emphasizing the educational value of nursery rhymes in fostering emotional and social development. [7] Thompson and Goldstein (2017) highlight the role of nursery rhymes in enhancing children's emotional expression and empathy, reinforcing the observed correlation in this study. Additionally, Parker and Riley (2019) discuss the significance of musical activities, including nursery rhymes, in cultivating emotional intelligence, further supporting the idea that engagement with nursery rhymes aids in developing emotional regulation skills.

Integrating nursery rhymes into educational curricula is essential for equipping children with the tools necessary for emotional growth. By providing a structured and engaging way for children to explore emotions, nursery rhymes help to create a foundation for emotional intelligence that will serve them well throughout their lives. This study demonstrates that nursery rhymes are not just simple songs or poems but are powerful educational tools that contribute to the holistic development of children.

The findings of this study affirm the multifaceted impact of nursery rhymes on emotional development, highlighting their importance in early childhood education. Educators and parents should recognize nursery rhymes' value in developing emotional regulation skills and incorporate them into daily learning activities. By doing so, they can help children become well-rounded, emotionally intelligent individuals who are better prepared for the challenges of social interaction and personal growth. This research underscores the need for continued exploration of the benefits of nursery rhymes and supports their ongoing use as a critical component of early childhood education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations are proposed for various stakeholders to enhance the positive impact of nursery rhymes on emotional regulation and overall development in early childhood learners.

For school administrations, it is crucial to integrate nursery rhymes into the early childhood curriculum, ensuring that they are a regular part of daily learning activities. This can be supported by providing professional development opportunities for educators, equipping them with practical strategies to utilize nursery rhymes for enhancing emotional and social skills.

Schools should allocate resources to build a diverse library of nursery rhymes, encompassing traditional, cultural, and contemporary variations to cater to different learning needs and backgrounds. Encouraging collaborative learning environments where nursery rhymes are used in group activities can further support social interaction and cooperation among students.

Teachers are encouraged to creatively implement nursery rhymes through movement, music, and storytelling, making learning more engaging and reinforcing emotional and social skills. Regular assessment of the impact of nursery rhyme activities on students' emotional regulation and providing feedback can help students understand and manage their emotions better.

Learners should be encouraged to actively participate in nursery rhyme activities, which build confidence and improve emotional expression and regulation. Facilitating peer interactions through nursery rhymes promotes empathy, patience, and cooperation.

For parents, engaging with children using nursery rhymes at home is essential. Providing resources and guidance on incorporating nursery rhymes into daily routines can reinforce school learning. Parent workshops highlighting the benefits of nursery rhymes in emotional and social development can empower parents to support these activities effectively.

Community stakeholders can play a role by supporting early childhood programs, emphasizing nursery rhymes, and partnering with local libraries, cultural organizations, and music groups. Encouraging further research and development into the impact of nursery rhymes on various aspects of child development can also be beneficial, exploring new and innovative educational uses. By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can enrich the educational journey of early childhood learners, fostering their emotional, social, and cognitive development through the effective use of nursery rhymes.

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