

The difference between Educate Me preschoolers and their counterparts of traditional schools in the socio-emotional development domain

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Abstract: The Socioemotional development is considered as an important factor in child development. This study aims to compare the scores of (KG1, and KG2) between Educate Me preschoolers (treatment) and their counterparts of traditional schools (control) in socio-emotional development domain in the International Development & Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) in the Talbyia district, which is one of the marginalized areas in Giza Governorate in Egypt. The results show that in the Baseline results, there is no significant difference between Educate me and non-Educate me. However, after implementing the multiple student assessment strategies that educate me adopted in Sep. 2017, the Endline result shows that there is a statistically significant difference between Educate me and non-Educate me in the domain of social-emotional development. The paper also suggests to complete the assessment and to search for alternatives to ensure the sustainability of the fund.

Keywords: Socioemotional- Educate Me- Giza- IDELA-Baseline-Endline- Egypt

I. INTRODUCTION

Educate Me (EM) Foundation is one of the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) that does work in the field of Early Childhood Development (ECD). It has done so by opening its community school where it employs its unique curriculum in Talbyia district, which is one of the marginalized areas in Giza Governorate in Egypt. EM has started to measure the effectiveness of its program on EM preschoolers in comparison with its counterparts, traditional schools, by using International Development Early Learning Assessment (IDELA). This paper aims to show the difference between the treatment and control group scores in the socio-emotional development in the Baseline (Fall 2016) and Endline (Spring 2018). This study will help Educate Me foundation to develop their paradigm and improve the skills of their children's capabilities.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a vast and growing body of literature around the pivotal role that social-emotional development years play in setting the foundations for children's mental development and ensuring success later in life (Anderson et al., 2003). Children develop across multiple domains simultaneously (physical, cognitive, language, socio-emotional) and all domains are interdependent on their rate of progress. Although past research had consistently focused on children's cognitive

development, more recent studies have emphasized the significant impact of non-cognitive domains on an individual's long-term success and well-being (Gokiert et al., 2014).

The definition of Socio-Emotional Development varies across the literature, and the socio-emotional development is defined as the emerging ability of young children (ages 0–5) to “form close and secure adult and peer relationships; experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways; and explore the environment and learn - all in the context of family, community, and culture” (Yates et al., 2008, p. 2). Social and emotional skills embrace emotional regulation; developing skills to communicate about emotions, resolve conflicts, show sympathy, show positive interactions and collaboration in the classroom, be able to take directions and adjust to expected behavior standards. Children learn self-monitoring and deliberate discouragement of unwanted behaviors (Denham, 2006; Denham & Brown, 2010; Konold & Pianta, 2005). Among the various social and emotional skills and departments, researchers constantly integrate emotional expression and management into action, taking into account perspective, empathy, inhibitory control, self-confidence, and therefore the ability to develop and support relationships with others. (Denham, 2006; National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2007; Yoder, 2014).

There are several studies that look at the effects of socio-emotional development as one of the most significant factors in Early Childhood Development (ECD). In early childhood, social and emotional well-being predicts many aspects related to social, behavioral and academic adjustment in middle and early childhood. Helps children discover new environments, assists the relationships with their peers and adults and supports their ability to participate in learning activities. Children with emotional or behavioral challenges are likely to receive less support for adults for development and learning and are more isolated from their peers.

Decades of research show that high-quality ECD programs are associated with greater social and emotional efficiency. Children entering school are now expected to have the necessary skills for literacy, numeracy and social maturity to be in line with school procedures. Some of them enter school

with all these skills and activities to use them. Others do not. Studies of "uninspiring" behavior in childhood show that once such behavior is formulated by adults, it is learned at an early age (Save the Children, 2016). A two-year-old can be mixed up to show empathy for others, change their responses to others' emotional expressions, and try to make others feel better after a negative event (Save the Children, 2016). Preschool children (four or five years) should acquire an understanding of emotions and be able to manage their feelings.

Although there exists a long-standing debate around which factors or domains are more influential on children's development and learning, there is general agreement that significant interplay occurs between factors and across domains emphasizing the unequivocal need to shift educational programming towards more holistic approaches to ensure children's life-long ability to thrive (Farrington et al., 2012). Further, numerous studies have documented that gaps in both cognitive and non-cognitive abilities between individuals and that socio-emotional development occur early on (Arnold et al., 2007).

In recent years, socio-emotional programs have been found to positively enhance children's development and learning during their early years (UNESCO, 2007). Various studies reported the positive outcomes at both the individual and society level resulting from different types of early childhood initiatives, particularly those working with vulnerable populations (Barnett & Nores, 2012). Examples of these positive outcomes include higher academic performance, strong peer and adult relationships, and decreased engagement in high-risk behaviors (Nores & Barnett, 2010). Although there is increasing evidence on the positive effects of various early childhood interventions in the United States, Europe, and Latin America, there is little research documenting the effects of these programs in the Arab world (UNESCO, 2007). This is partly due to the absence of rigorous evaluation studies being conducted on early childhood interventions in the MENA region. This, in turn, has created a wide gap in the availability of contextualized evidence around effective design, implementation and resource management that can be used to inform early childhood interventions serving the multitude of underprivileged children in the region.

These children who are late in developing social and emotional skills face academic and behavioral problems (Denham, 2006; Denham & Brown, 2010; Konold & Pianta, 2005). Over the past twenty years, research has shown that the emotional and social skills of children are linked to their early tutorial standing (UNESCO, 2007).

High-quality programs are outlined as those within which children learn several social skills that help them participate during a cluster as a cooperative member and find out how to use adults for information and assistance. Most pre-school curricula focus totally on building cognitive skills for the child. However, the shortage of social and emotional skills affects

student tutorial performance and remains a trait sometimes overlooked in the transition of young children to primary school (Denham, 2006; Denham & Brown, 2010; Konold & Pianta, 2005).

A significant reason for these variations in social competency lies within the quality of pre-school children's experiences. The Acquiring of unimagined friendship skills (such as Facilitate, participation, and rotation) during preschool predict preschool and later primary school engagement and academic success (Howes et al., 1998). Also, Positive social behavior can also foster positive relationships with teachers and colleagues, stimulating school cohesion and creating social-emotional security and comfort in the classroom that supports exploration and thus promotes learning (Nores & Barnett, 2010).

Relevance

This paper aims to compare the scores of two groups (control, treatment) in the social-emotional development domain measured from the international development and Early Assessment (IDELA) developed by SAVE the Children. The current paper anticipates testing whether if there are any differences between the control and treatment groups in the socio-emotional development scores for preschools (KG1, and KG2) between the Baseline and Endline assessments to answer the research question.

How different are the socio-emotional development domain scores between the treatment and control group in the Baseline, and at the End line?

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Source of data

EM began implementing its new community school model in 2015. During this time, RISE Egypt a think tank was simultaneously working with EM on finalizing their Theory of Change (ToC) and developing the survey instruments that would be used in the study to capture the outcomes outlined in the ToC. The 2016/17 academic year was EM's first year as an official, full-time community school.

RISE Egypt worked with EM to establish a new admissions process to ensure randomized selection of students as intervention or control group. This took place between June and August 2016. Baseline data were collected at the beginning of the school year in October 2016. In May 2018, the second round of follow-up data as endline was collected on the same intervention and control groups.

EM recruited an independent field team (PHI) to work with the RISE Egypt researchers leading the study on location in Talbaya during the data collection process. The PHI team was briefed on the purpose of the study and before each data collection period training was provided to the fieldworkers on the various instruments to be used. The fieldworkers are all graduating students or recent graduates of the Early

Childhood Education Institute at Cairo University (some are also primary school teachers themselves). All the fieldworkers have experience dealing with children in an assessment environment.

3.2 Data structure

International Development and Learning Assessment (IDELA) – A global early childhood assessment tool that was developed by Save The Children in 2011 and validated in both developed and developing countries (including Egypt). All children were assessed using the IDELA assessment, which was translated into Arabic, the mother tongue of the participants, the study summarizes the content of socio-emotional domain and describe it.

IDELA measures four domains: fine-gross motor development, literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills. It is used to assess children in their early ages of development “KG1, KG2”. Items assessing executive function were also added as a supplement to the IDELA tool. The Social-Emotional domain consists of 14 items grouped into 5 subtasks: Emotional Awareness (2 items), Perspective Taking (3 items), Conflict Solving (2 items), and Personal Awareness (6 items), and Names of Friends (1 item; 11 categories). For example, each Conflict Solving item asks the child to decide what he/she would do if he/she were playing with a toy and another child wanted to play with the same toy. “1” answers, as agreed upon with field workers, included talking to the child, taking turns, and sharing.

The overall score is calculated by adding the weighted score of each domain and dividing it by the total number of the domain so that all the four contribute equally to the total score. While each domain score is computed by adding the weighted score of each item in the domain so all items contribute equally to the domain score. Literally, the average percentage correct for each item was calculated by dividing the total points correct by the total number of possible points for that item. Domain scores were calculated by adding the percentage correct for each item within a domain and dividing by the total number of items. The grades of social-emotional development from 0-1 as mentioned in the survey questions in the Appendix.

3.3 Sampling method

The control (comparison) group are children attending kindergarten in public schools around the Talbaya area. It is worth noting that the control group cases were not randomly selected from the community but were selected from the sample pool of applicants to EM during the admissions process mentioned above. This is significant for increasing the likelihood of similarity in characteristics between the intervention and control cases so the groups are more comparable.

The involvement of the EM team is limited to coordination purposes only (since data collection takes place at the EM’s

community school) to ensure the independence of the research study. Table(1) outlined descriptive statistics on the sample. From which data were collected during baseline and endline periods. At baseline (N=133), 48% were female, at endline (N = 70), 51% male.

Table (1): Students’ Sample

Students – Baseline (October 2016)									
Grade	Educate Me			Control Group			Total		
	N	Male %	Female %	N	Male %	Female %	N	Male %	Female %
KG1	36	64	36	20	25	75	56	50	50
KG2	37	54	46	40	52	48	77	53	47
Total	73	59	41	60	39	61	133	42	48
Students – Endline (May 2018)									
Grade	Educate Me			Control Group			Total		
	N	Male %	Female %	N	Male %	Female %	N	Male %	Female %
KG1	2	100	0	6	33	67	8	50	50
KG2	31	48	52	31	55	45	62	52	48
Total	33	74	26	37	44	66	70	51	49

* N is the sample size (number of children)

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Distribution of children’s Score by treatment/ Control Groups in Socio-emotional Development Domain in Baseline.

This section describes Children’s performance on the development and learning assessment of young children in the preschoolers, with a focus on the difference between the two study groups, treatment, and control, in the developmental domain of socio-emotional development in the Baseline. The domain score is computed by adding the weighted score of each item in the domain so all items contributed equally to the domain score. The average percentage correct for each item was calculated by dividing the total points correct by the total number of possible points for that item within a domain and dividing by the total number of items.

As seen in the Tables (2) and(3) below, the domain score amounted 0.48 points for the treatment groups compared to 0.45 for the control group, as shown in Figure (1) the Box Plot shows the distribution of domain scores for both the treatment and control group.

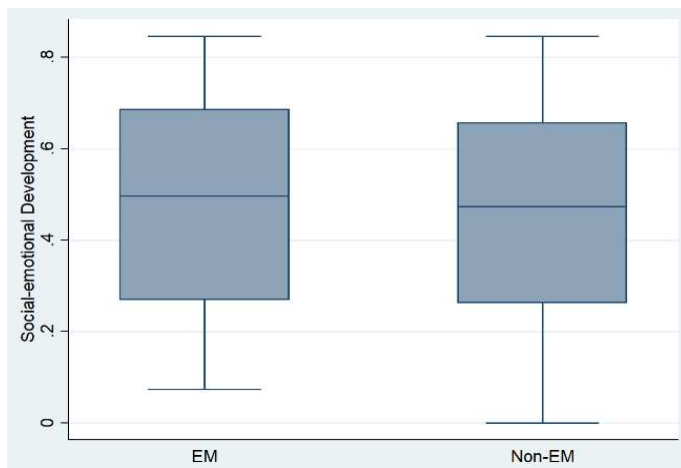
Table (2) the Summary of Social-Emotional Development Treatment Group in the Baseline

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
IDELA-Dom4	73	0.4823288	0.2291508	0.733333	0.8466667

Table (3) the Summary of Social-Emotional Development Control Group in the Baseline

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
IDELA-Dom4	57	0.4581287	0.2283959	0	0.8466667

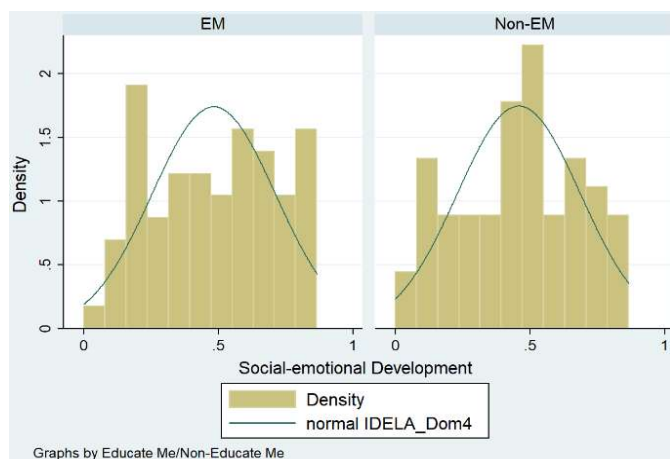
Figure (1) Box Plot of Treatment& Control Groups in the Baseline



4.1.1 Test of Normality for the Treatment/control in Baseline

Before testing the ANOVA, we have to make sure that the assumptions are met. The histogram shows that the dependent variable is normally distributed in each group that is being compared in the one-way ANOVA. This means that if we are comparing the two groups in their scores (dependent variable), it has to be normally distributed for the treatment and normally distributed for the control group. And the below graph illustrates so.

Figure (2) Histogram of Treatment/control in Baseline



The Levene's Test for Homogeneity of Variances shows the testing of homogeneity of variances, and it is considered one of the ANOVA assumptions.

Table (4) shows that there is homogeneity of variances. According to the value of $F=0.58 > 0.05$, the variances of the two groups are not spastically significant. This means that the

population variances in each group, the control and treatment are equal.

Table (4) the test of Homogeneity of Variances between EM and Non –EM in the Baseline

Educate Me Non-Educate Me	Mean	Std. Dev.	Freq.
EM	.48232877	.2291508	73
Non-EM	45812866	.22839591	57
Total	.47171795	.22825075	130

W0 = 0.29928794 df (1, 128) Pr> F = 0.58528169
 W50 = 0.28800184 df (1, 128) Pr> F = 0.59243538
 W10 = 0.28375250 df (1, 128) Pr> F = 0.59517573

The one-way ANOVA compares the means between the groups' treatment and control groups and determines whether any of those means are statistically significantly different from each other in scores of interest. The below ANOVA Table shows there is no significant difference between the two groups in the domain score of socio-emotional development. The P-value of =0.5507, which is greater than 0.05 then, means there are no significant differences between the treatment and control group in the mean scores.

Table (5) Analysis of Variance in the Baseline

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Prob> F
Between groups	.018745157	1	.018745157	0.36	0.5507
Within groups	6.70194902	128	.052358977		
Total	6.72069417	129	.052098404		

*Bartlett's test for equal variances: $\chi^2(1) = 0.0007$ Prob> $\chi^2 = 0.979$

4.2 Distribution of children's Score by treatment/Control Groups in Socio-emotional Development Domain in Endline.

This section describes the performance on the development and learning assessment of Educate Me preschoolers, with a focus on the difference between Educate Me preschoolers and Non –Educate Me, in the developmental domain of socio-emotional development in Endline. In this part, the domain score is computed the same as the Baseline by adding the weighted score of each item in the domain so all items contributed equally to the domain score. The average percentage correct for each item was calculated by dividing the total points correct by the total number of possible points for that item within a domain and dividing by the total number of items.

As seen in the Tables (6), and (7) below, the domain score amounted to 0.59 points for the treatment groups compared to 0.48 for the control group, as shown in figure (3) the Box Plot shows the distribution of domain scores for both the treatment and control group.

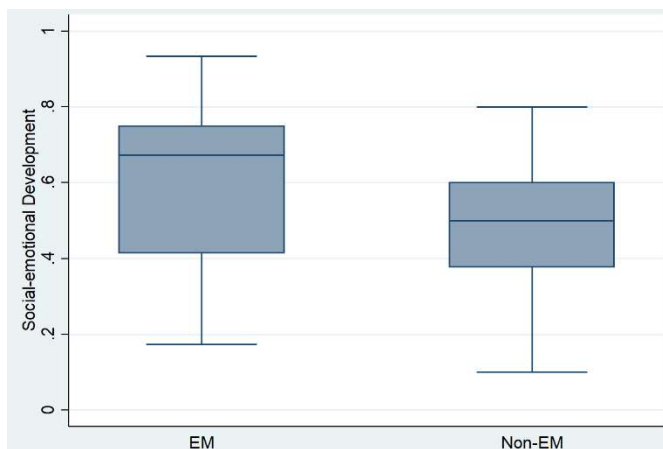
Table (6) the summary of Social-Emotional Development Treatment Group in the Endline

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
IDELA-Dom4	33	0.5973737	0.2213355	0.1733333	0.9333333

Table (7) the summary of Social-Emotional Development Control Group in the Endline

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
IDELA-Dom4	38	0.4840351	0.1774327	0.1	0.8

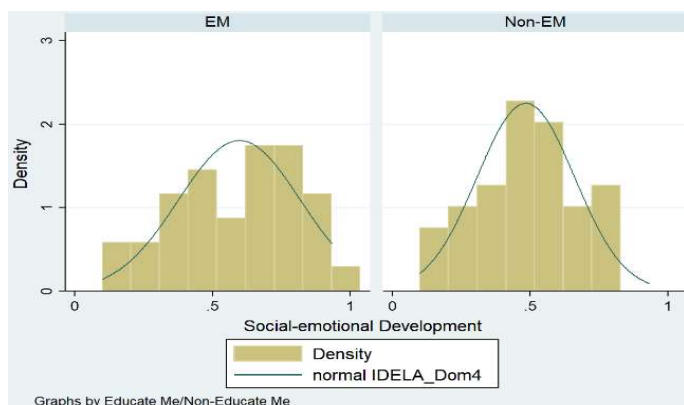
Figure (3) Graph Box of the Treatment& Control Groups in the Endline



4.2.1 Test of Normality for the Treatment/control in Endline

The histogram shows that the dependent variable is normally distributed in each group that is being compared in the one-way ANOVA. It has to be normally distributed for the treatment and normally distributed for the control group. And the below graph illustrates so.

Figure (4) Histogram of Treatment/control in Endline



Test of Homogeneity of Variances between EM and Non –EM in the Endline as shown in Table(8) there is the difference in variances, F Test: 0.58>0.05, this means there is a difference between Educate Me and non-Educate Me in the means of

variances. This means that the population variances in each group, the control and treatment are unequal.

Table (8) the Test of Homogeneity of Variances between EM and Non –EM in the Endline

Educate Me Non-Educate Me	Mean	Std. Dev.	Freq.
EM	.59737374	.22133553	33
Non-EM	.4840351	.17743274	38
Total	.53671362	.20561367	71

W0 = 3.6998888 df (1, 69) Pr> F = 0.05854278

W50 = 2.5179192 df (1, 69) Pr> F = 0.11713149

W10 = 3.5054207 df (1, 69) Pr> F = 0.06540634

Table (9) ANOVA one way, shows there is a significant difference between the two groups in the domain score of socio-emotional development, on average in the endline as P-value =0.0194 which is smaller than 0.05 then, there are statistically significant differences between the treatment and control group in the mean scores.

Table (9) Analysis of Variance in the Endline

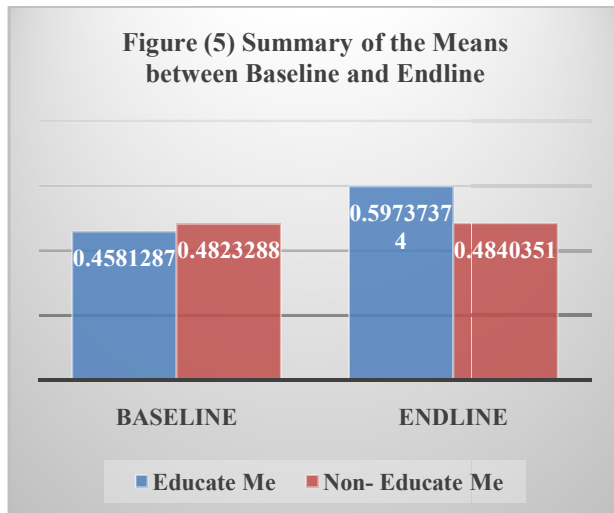
Source	SS	df	MS	F	Prob> F
Between groups	.226879487	1	.226879487	5.73	0.0194
Within groups	2.73250926	69	.039601584		
Total	2.95938875	70	.052098404		

*Bartlett's test for equal variances: chi2 (1) = 1.6576 Prob>chi2 = 0.198

P-value < 0.05 then, there is significance difference between the control and treatment in the Endline in the socio-emotional Domains.

V. RESULTS

1. According to Baseline result, there is no significant difference between Educate me and non-educate me as $P(0.5507) > 0.05$, for both groups. The mean of the scores in the domain of socio-emotional in Baseline is very close and there is no difference between the control and treatment as shown in Table (6).
2. According to Endline result, there are statistically significant differences between Educate me and non-educate me both $P(0.0194) < 0.05$, the mean of the scores in the domain of socio-emotional in Endline is different and there is a statically significant difference between the control and treatment as shown in Table (9).
3. There is a significant difference in means between Educate Me and Non-Educate me from the Baseline and Endline and this clear after the intervention program that adopted by Educate Me.



VI. CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

We can conclude that EM's preschool seeks to provide an empowering educational experience that places a high emphasis on children's ownership of their learning process.

The model invests in building a holistic learning environment for children and equipping facilitators with the needed skills to create such an environment. This belief is translated into engaging educational programs through which children can develop socio-emotional. Perhaps what is most notable about EM is their strong commitment to the research process that this impact study engenders as a means of discovering what is or is not working and improving their programs utilizing evidence-based decision-making.

in Sept. 2017 Educate me started the Multiple student assessment strategies, the assessment covers all aspects of learning and developing - formative - summative - and socio-emotional assessment, the program target preschool - grades one, two and three a Variety of activities for example student profile, weekly quizzes, monthly exams, and annual exams. The evaluation of the assessment was done quarterly through student evaluation.

In the preschool program (comprised of KG1 and KG2), the average age range for students is four to five years old. EM's preschool adopts a play-based approach to child learning and development whereby facilitators introduce different topics through engaging children in diverse interactive games and activities.

VII. DISCUSSIONS

EM received its government license to operate as a community school during the 2016/2017 academic year, the same time as the impact study was starting. In previous years, EM had been providing a range of informal services including remedial classes, parenting workshops, extra-curricular activities, etc., but none of which were under a clear model or

structure. Further, during this time EM was undergoing the process of gaining government permissions and approvals which posed several challenges for them to consolidate their model. EM underwent a particularly volatile period lasting for six months from September 2016 to February 2017, namely the majority of the 2016/2017 academic year. Moreover, once EM finally received its license, they underwent another major transitional phase to meet the Ministry of Education criteria for community schools which included introducing the multi-grade model, adjusting class schedules, recruitment of teachers and staff aside from frequent monitoring visits by government officials. Added to this, the exit of the EM community manager at the time resulted in negative consequences at the school and community level all of which created a large degree of instability preventing normal school operation.

Due to the various adjustments that were taking place during the 2016/2017 academic year, EM was unable to sufficiently invest in the professional development of curriculum and program development. However, in the Spring/Summer of 2017, EM was finally able to recruit a full-time school principal, counselor, and professional development specialist as well as additional facilitators. This shifted EM to a new phase during which several structural and programmatic adjustments, in addition to a couple of interventions, were made at both the pre-school in preparation for the 2017/2018 academic year. The commitment by EM's leadership to learning and growth is a unique and rare quality that is often missing from educational initiatives in Egypt.

Limitations of the study

This study has a number of limitations related to the research sample and the score the individual domains that we hope will be addressed in future research on the socio-emotional domain and similar assessments. **First**, while the sample was representative of a single region (Talbyia district) in Giza governorate in Egypt, the results cannot be assumed to generalize to other districts in Giza as the population at large, and, of course, cannot be assumed to generalize in Egypt. All of the reported findings are therefore quite preliminary, although we hope the analyses illustrate some useful strategies for researchers addressing similar questions across a range of country contexts.

Second, the limitation is that we have not broached the subject of how to score the individual domains (e.g., using the total score within the domain, using averages over subtasks). The factor structure of the IDELA is certainly quite complex, and relatively simple scoring procedures based on the raw data are not likely to perform as well as model-based scoring procedures commonly used in the psychometric literature.

Third, the limitation has related the characteristic of household playing a role to affect the socio-emotional domain the study look forward to including it to as a variable to measure the effect on the data. Last limitation related to measuring the

effect of other domains in the study.

Policy implications

Educate Me foundation should start to search for a partnership with other NGOs which are working in the field of Early Childhood Development in Giza governorate to share with them the model as a successful one and to secure their financial support to continue the study to measure the impact on the long term.

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APPENDIX

Socio-Emotional Questions from IDELA Assessment Instrument

Item 9: Friends

999			Please tell me the names of some of your friends who you like to play with? Are there any other friends who you like to play with? (0-10) the number of friends named
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Item 10: Emotional Awareness Regulations

999	0	1	Q10-1) Now I have some question about feelings. Think for a moment and tell me what makes you feel sad? The child identifies something that makes them sad.
999	0	1	Q10-2) what do you do to feel better when you are feeling sad? The child gives one response to dealing with a sad feeling.
999	0	1	Q10-1) Now I have some question about feelings. Think for a moment and tell me what makes you feel sad? The child identifies something that makes them sad.
999	0	1	Q10-1) Now I have some question about feelings. Think for a moment and tell me what makes you feel sad? The child identifies something that makes them sad.

Item 11: Empty/Perspective Taking Social-Emotional

999	0	1	Q11-1) Now let's look at this picture. How do you think this is child feeling right now? The child identifies that a friend is feeling sad/Upset.
999	0	1	Q11-2) What would you do to help her feel better? The child gives one response for how to make a friend feel better
999	0	1	Q11-3) Is there anything else you would do to make her feel better? The child gives a second response on how to make a friend feel better.

Item 12: Solving Conflicts

999	0	1	Q12-1) Now I will ask you to imagine a situation where you are playing with a toy that you like when another child wants to play with that same toy, but there are only one toy .what would you do? The child gives one response on how to solve the conflict.
999	0	1	Q12-2) Is there anything else you would do? The child gives a second response on how to solve the conflict
999	0	1	Q12-3) Is there anything else you would do? The child gives a third response on how to solve the conflict

Item 13: Short Term Memory

999	0	1	Q13-1) Okay, now let's do some more. Just listen carefully, and do your best 1,6
999	0	1	Q13-2) Okay, now let's do some more. Just listen carefully, and do your best 5,2,9
999	0	1	Q13-3) Okay, now let's do some more. Just listen carefully, and do your best 1,4,3,8
999	0	1	Q13-4) Okay, now let's do some more. Just listen carefully, and do your best 2,1,4,7,3

*This question Quoted from the survey that used in the assessment of Educate ME