

Children's Active Play during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Jakarta

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Abstract

This research describes active play among children in Jakarta during the COVID-19 pandemic. Active play is necessary for optimal child development, yet there is a lot of restriction amidst the pandemic. Therefore, it is important to understand how children are allowed active play while being restricted spatially. Primary data were collected using semi-structured online interviews and analyzed using a qualitative descriptive approach. Four mothers of children from three to four years old participated, chosen purposively as typical samples. All four children are involved in active play and show that the domain of locomotor, object, social, and pretend play is present. The intensity of children playing outdoor seems less than usual. Since most of the activities are home-based, children often feel annoyed, outraged, and cry easier than they usually do. However, the problem can be solved if a supportive environment is available; that is, parents are involved in active play every day during the pandemic.

Keywords: active play, early childhood, COVID-19 pandemic, parental role.

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Introduction

Since COVID-19 was detected in Indonesia on 2 March 2020, the total confirmed cases and death rate increased rapidly (Djalante et al., 2020). COVID-19 in Indonesia took 36.618 accumulated deaths over 1.374.026 total confirmed cases on 2 March 2021. The highest positive number rose to 342.371 instances that took place in Jakarta's capital city, according to the Corona Virus Disease Intervention and National Economy Recovery Task Force (KPCPEN, 2021). The Jakarta local government enacted lock-down policy that is termed as large-scale social distancing (*Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar – PSBB*, that later was changed into *Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat* or PPKM). The government instructed that people stay home to study and work from home (Ansori, 2020, in Sari et al., 2020).

The PSBB or PPKM policy was aimed to reduce the escalation of virus infestation, hence protecting the population. However, the PSBB/PPKM policy had an extensive impact on many aspects of societal lives, such as health, economy, socio-cultural, politics, law, and education (Rohita, 2020). One of the impacts on education was long-distance/online learning (*Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh/PJJ*) or learning from home, which applied to all educational levels (Arifa, 2020). PJJ conduct in Indonesia was officially an instruction referred to the Ministry of education's official letter to organize online learning and teaching (Dewi, 2020, in Sari et al., 2020).

Most indoor and outdoor public facilities were closed. Therefore, individual activities were conducted online; working, learning, and even shopping. Children were included in this government instruction; they also performed online activities and interactions. COVID-19 pandemic indeed restricted individual physical activity for all age groups with no exception (Shahidi et al., 2020). Furthermore, the pandemic restricted young children who, principally, could not be separated from physical activities.

Physical activity is an essential aspect of early childhood development, especially for three to five-year-old children. Every physical activity that a child does would influence their skeletal growth, body form, and immunity from diseases (Graham et al., 2013, in Santrock, 2013). Physical activity also helps a child develop their ability to improve emotional control and cognition (Tandon, 2016, in Pujiyanto & Darmawan). The World Health Organization (WHO) recommended children and youth get at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily. The physical activity options may range from play, sports, or recreation. Physical activity is considered significant for muscles' fitness and the bones' healthiness, for healthier weight, metabolism, and movement coordination and control. Moreover, physical activity gives psychological benefits for children because it reduces anxiety and depression syndrome (WHO, 2010). It is, therefore, imperative for children to partake in physical activity that, in turn, will also improve their skills in other areas of development (Shahidi et al., 2020).

Play may afford physical activities for children. It emphasizes a child's most essential and basic need, specifically in early childhood (Latif, 2014, in Pratiwi, 2017). Play is a significant mediator of physical, social, cognitive, and language development (Bergen, 2002; Garvey, 1993, Vygotsky, 1976, in Smith,

2018). Play activity provides young children an opportunity to explore and build fine and gross motor skills, problem-solving skills, self-regulated skills, and social interaction skills (Belsky & Most, 1981; Pellegrini & Smith, 1998; Russ, 1998, in Kennedy-Behr et al., 2011).

Active play is often understood as physical activity. Physical activities involved in active play are described in gross-motor movement, unstructured activity, freely chosen, and taking place in an outdoor setting (Truelove et al., 2017). In the current study, we defined active play as an activity with energetic body movement performed by children, carried out in a fun way, and freely chosen. Active play consists of several dimensions, namely, the four domains (locomotor, object, social, pretend), structural category (structured and unstructured play), and spatial aspect (indoor and outdoor play) (Pellegrini, 2012, in William, 2018; Australian Capital Territory [ACT], 2015).

The locomotor domain involves physical movement and gross-motor muscles from one location to another (Sport Singapore, 2018). The object domain in active play utilizes objects or materials and may involve fine and gross motor movement (White, 2015). Objects, in this case, including both traditional toys/materials and electronic ones (Sosa, 2016, in Yogman et al., 2018). In the social domain, active play is described as in the stage of social play, that is, unoccupied play, solitary play, onlooker play, parallel play, associative play, and cooperative play (Drown, 2014; Biddle et al., 2013). The interaction may be between a child with adults or children/peers (White, 2015). Lastly, the pretend domain is performed in role plays, in which children act as another person/entity, in a place and time context that may be purely imagined or mimicking realities (Fein, 1981; Lilard, 2011, in White, 2015).

Active play contributes to all aspects of child development, namely physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development (Burdette & Whitaker, 2005, in Brockman et al., 2011a). Active play stimulates movement coordination skills, resulting in better and more physical movements (Pujianto & Darmawan, 2018). As such, children would get additional benefits from playing actively in an outdoor setting as they can freely jump, run, and climb at different speeds. Active play also stimulates cognitive aspects related to children's curiosity to develop physical and social skills. Through active

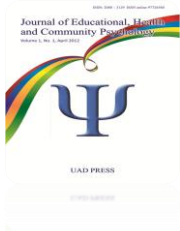
play, children also get benefits for improving thinking, emotional, and social interaction skills and encouraging self-esteem (ACT, 2015).

The COVID-19 cases earlier described had been up and down, with few escalations like early 2021, July/August 2021, and nowadays, a situation called-out lockdown policy. All early childhood education facilities, public playgrounds, and recreational facilities are closed during the lockdown. Children spend all their time practically at home. COVID-19 pandemic stopped the activities of young children of face-to-face schooling activities, interaction, play, and outdoor activities and restricted young children's socio-emotional experience (Pattnaik et al., 2020).

A study in Canada explained that COVID-19 impacted reducing social and cognitive stimuli in young children because they stayed at home all the time. In addition, some parents also reported difficulties in achieving a healthy mental state and behavioral problems in their children (Yoshikawa et al., 2020). This is also supported by research in Spain, Italy, and China (Orgiles et al., 2020; Pisano et al., 2020; Jiao et al., 2020, in Warmansyah, 2020) which showed that being at home alone harmed a child's life. Children experience changes in behavior, emotions, and difficulty concentrating. Children also felt lonely and uncomfortable and showed worried expressions (Warmansyah, 2020).

Similar to the impact that occurs after a disaster situation causes young children to be unable to move freely, the lack of social relationships tends to make young children feel anxious and difficult to connect with other people. Children's mental health also tended to be disturbed due to stress and might show symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Children's brain and physical development might also become less optimal; children tend to be obese due to reduced mobility opportunities (Kinoshita & Woolley, 2015).

The highest COVID-19 positive rate nationally took place in Jakarta (KPCPEN, 2021). The crisis had been very challenging for young children who could not play actively outside the constriction of their house for more than a year. There is no certainty about the end of the pandemic. Therefore, the significance of physical activity for early childhood urged us to understand how young children in this pandemic era conduct active play. Yet, there has been no research undertaken ever about it in



Indonesia. Such understanding will be needed to recommend support for healthy child development amidst the situation. So, this study was aimed to describe young children's active play in Jakarta.

Method

Participants

As a qualitative study, participants were recruited purposively to achieve the study's objective in describing the typical population. The family must live in a landed house in Jakarta, in a land that is no more than 200 square meters. One of the parents must fully take care of the child her/himself, not working full or part-time or working from home. The participants were four mothers with children aged 3-4 years old but only have two children. Boys and girls were represented equally.

Data Collection

All data were collected online. As the main data collection techniques, interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with open-ended questions. After all individual interviews were conducted, member confirmation was sought in a focus group discussion with all participants. The discussion triangulated collected data and improved research credibility (Marshal & Rossman, 1995, in Poerwandari, 2017).

Data Analysis

This research utilized a descriptive qualitative approach (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). In doing so, we ensured that the context in which behavior naturally occurred could be represented in the data dan described. The focus was to find attributes of the behavior being studied, i.e., active play. The unit of analysis was children, based on data reported from the mothers. Thematic analysis was conducted twice. The first was after individual interviews as the primary data collection. Secondly, it was after the focus group discussion. The step for each stage was started with coding the verbatim and then categorizing the results into themes (Willig, 2013).

Results

The study aimed to describe active play among children in Jakarta during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the analysis, active play domains were clustered according to the theory, revealing the data. Additional themes such as the unstructured nature of the active play, the important role of parents, and the active play's spatial issue were revealed in the analysis. Lastly, a comparison concerning active play before and during the pandemic was also reported.

Active Play Domains

Looking at the domain of active play, it appeared that all children did active play during the pandemic. It means their play involved locomotor, object usage, social, and pretend activities. Generally, there was no sex difference in the active play; both males and females performed active play involving all four domains.

In the locomotor domain, all children ran, jumped, and played hide-and-seek games. When they ran, these children did not necessarily involve any other party, play materials, or link it to another activity. Children just ran around spontaneously after playing a game or in between activities. Aside from running around aimlessly, children played several similar locomotor activities, including chasing run, moving objects around, and helping domestic chores like cleaning or tidying up in the house. These activities were not stand-alone activities but involved materials or other parties. All locomotor plays performed more with gross-motor movements than with fine-motor skills.

In the object domain, the four children used a similar object such as furniture, e.g., they jumped in/out of, rolled on, and climbed the bed. Some of them also used other objects, namely dolls/soft toys, puzzles, and legos. They did not always use the objects along with the function; they just touched/carried them around, moved, pressed, or manipulated the objects with their fine-motor skills. The boys also used car toys and involved other parties during the play. There were different play activities based on the children's age. For younger children (around three years old), they used objects as they observed adults use them; both genders used a broom and mopping cloth to join the mother or domestic worker cleaning up the house. For older children (around four years old), also

in both genders, balls and musical backgrounds were tools for their gross-motor movement with other children or with their parents. Music stimulated their dance movements.

Ever since the COVID-19 pandemics, the four children spent most of their time with their mothers rather than with their peers. Therefore, they conducted active play in the social domain, mostly with their mothers. Children played with their fathers as well, but only occasionally when the father was not busy working, especially on weekends. There was evidence, however seldom, that children also conducted social play with their peers when their parents permitted them to do so.

Girls tended to play socially at one stage only, i.e., parallel play. This might be due to a limited number of play peers. When they asked other people, mostly adults, to play with them, they just asked the adult to do whatever they requested without any negotiation/discussion or even consent. On the other hand, boys tended to show two stages of social play, namely associative play and cooperative play. The associative play appeared as a result of prior interaction between the child and another person in which they discussed what they would do. During the play, they also use an object and borrow objects from one to another. The cooperative play appeared due to their prior negotiations about roles in their play. The child-directed what the play partner should do and the play sequences, and the partner would agree/disagree.

In pretend play, there were preferred roles that children usually chose. One of them was the role of an older sibling. As a big brother/sister, children used dolls as the baby. In the role, children would feed and bathe the baby and walk around with the baby in a stroller. Sometimes these children also spoke to the baby. The mothers reported that their children liked what they often saw in movies or on YouTube.

“Iyaaa, dia seolah-olah dia jadi kakaknya yang dalem stroller itu dedenya dia dorong-dorong padahal dia simpen boneka, boneka binatang ya kan hahaha” (yeah, he acted as if he was the older sibling of the doll, he put in the stroller and then he pushed it around; despite the doll was actually an animal doll...hahaha...) - Bella (mother of 3:5 old boy)

Active play: structured vs. unstructured

In this play category, the four children mostly performed unstructured play. They played hide-and-seek games. When they role-played, children organized and selected their roles and let the others choose any roles. The role appeared to be randomly chosen and may be switched at any time with no structure involved. Children may ask their play partners to change roles as they wish so. Parents also admitted that they did not provide structures nor boundaries for their children during play, so long as it was safe.

"Iya ga nentu sesuka hati dia, kadang denger Lagu Kalo Lagi seneng dia lompat, 'hore' lompat gitu..." (well, nothing structured...just as he liked, sometimes he listened to the music that he liked and he just jumped up and shouted 'horay') – Anita (mother of 3:11 old boy)

"...suka-suka dia lah...udah susun mainannya atau bonekanya seperti yang dia mau..." (it's up to her...she stacked her toys or played her doll as she liked) – Dinda (mother of 4:2 old girl)

Occasionally children showed structure play such as using lego and puzzle according to its function, but parents never set any target for the result. When they played with friends, it also appeared without rules. Moreover, even for children who attended preschool, there was no strict structures in their activity/play as set by the teachers. According to the mothers, their school-related activity was quite flexible. Therefore, their play was rather unstructured too.

The Role of Parents

The four mothers in this research performed different roles in stimulating child development through supporting their children to play actively. First, the mothers took part as a role model for the children in being active in their daily life. They also showed how to play and even played with the children. Mothers also integrated playing and learning in the hope that their children improve cognitively. In doing so, mothers felt that their children were happier because they have play-friend and supports when they encounter a challenge.

"Kalo main puzzle memang dari Awal Kita ajarin dulu Nanti dia main sendiri, Kalo lego lego Karna kan ada yang merangkai-rangkai ya, Kalo dia bisa, ya udah, Kalo ga bisa ya biasa Marah-Marah, Kalo ga Minta tolong Kita supaya bisa dibantu haha" (When playing with puzzle usually we first showed how to do it and then he will play by himself; but playing lego required assembly, so if he can do it than it's OK, but when he cannot do it by himself he often got angry, or else he would ask us to help him...hahaha) – Bella (mother of 3:5 old boy)

The next role taken by mothers was to provide opportunity for children to be physically active in their play according to their age. Mothers supported such play activity by maintaining the availability of materials/objects needed. In doing so, mothers did not just do simple things as turning on the music, but also buying new play materials or renting materials that their children have never played before. This role is related to another role taken up by the parents, namely, to make sure that their children kept active and spent their energy during the pandemic. Given such provision from the parents, children were less bored. They were free to play and use various objects/play materials. However, parents monitored their children during play, aside from giving them freedom and opportunities. Children tended to play too actively; therefore, parents felt that they needed to monitor, remind, and sometimes prohibit children from doing or playing something when it is dangerous. Along this line, mothers also provided feedback and appreciation for their children.

“Hmm biasanya bilang terimakasih E, kamu hebat gitu...” (Hmm usually I say thank you E, you are a good girl) – Dinda (mother of 4:2 old girl)

Lastly, mothers acted as managers for their children's activities. When needed, they would allow activity variation for the children. When all indoor activities did not work/satisfy the children, or the children got restless and adamant about going outside, mothers sometimes rendered to the last resort, allowing the children to go/playout for a short time. Mothers saw this role as necessary. When most needed, a quick outdoor activity variation was required to keep the children's mood positive. Of course, mothers were responsible for providing extra masks, hand sanitizer, and drinks for their children during outdoor play.

“kalo misalnya dia memang anaknya bener-bener ngerengek minta keluar ya paling saya ke rumah-rumah sodara aja gitu...” (When she is really whining in asking to go out, then I just took her to my family's house...) – Cindy (mother of 3:2 old girl)

The space for active play

As indicated in the results above, during the pandemic, children mostly were indoors, be it in their own house or in a family's house. So, children did active play indoors too. All mothers agreed that active play is needed despite the spatial limitation during the pandemic. Some of them admitted that active play forces children to move physically and sweat and channel out their energy; hence use

gadgets less. Other mothers explained that active play is needed for children's physical exercise, motor development, and agility.

“...dia cenderung bosan kalo cuma nonton doang, dia pasti bosan, terus demi biar aja dia berkeringat, saya lebih suka biar aja dia walaupun dalam rumah lari-lari...” (he tends to get bored when he's just watching, for sure he get bored, so just for the sake of getting active/sweaty I prefer to let him running around the house) – Anita (mother of 3:11 old boy)

Being stated all the above, mothers also admitted that there are limitations in the children's active play during the pandemic. Children naturally need to play outdoor; therefore, being kept indoors even for active play has influenced the children's behavior. Mothers frequently dealt with children being lousy mood, angry, and crying. The children were reported to get bored easily, tend to seek more attention, and be a nuisance to others. To handle the situation, mothers played different roles, as described earlier. Mothers felt that they needed to understand the children's feelings while also trying to explain the situation to the children to tolerate it.

“...Jadi Aku bilangnye e.. ga bisa keluar lama-lama Karna banyak virus, banyak Kuman... Aku bilang kaya gitu sih, ngerti sih...” ...” (So I told her that we could not go out for long because there are virus everywhere, there's a lot of germs out there... I told her that way and she seemed to understand) – Dinda (mother of 4:2 old girl)

Outdoor play is usually performed at the porch/terrace. Only occasionally would parents allow children to play outside the house, such as at the community park. According to mothers, during these rare occasions, it was clear that children appeared happier and more excited because of the variation, and sometimes they also met their peers in the park.

Changes in active play during the pandemic

Table I describes the changes in active play before and during the pandemic according to object usage, space, and plays intensity and involvement of another party/playmates. As summarized in the Table, children's play became more unstructured because they could only use available objects in the house. They also access gadgets more than before the pandemic. Naturally, children play less in the outdoor space, although they still get rare chances to play outside the house but only with their parents and family.

Table 1
Comparative Changes of Active Play Before and During COVID-19 Pandemic

Description	Before Pandemic	During Pandemic
Object	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children play with objects or toys, home furniture, and outdoor play facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very limited usage of outdoor play facility mainly uses of existing objects around the house. More usage of gadget or television
Indoor play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At parents' or extended family's house, friend's house Playground inside of a mall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At parents' or extended family's house
The intensity of indoor play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At home: every day and irregular duration Indoor playground: almost every weekend with 1-3 hours duration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inside the house for most of the day, nearly every day
Outdoor play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The house's yard Community or public park Playing Field Natural open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The house's yard or porch Community Park An open area of rooftop or food court (public)
Intensity of outdoor play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The house's yard or community park: every afternoon with 30-120 minutes durations Playing field: on weekends with 6 hours duration Public park: 2-3 times every month, with 5-6 hours duration Natural open space: usually during a long holiday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The house's yard or community park: 2 times a week with 15-30 minutes duration Public open space: occasionally on weekends with 1-2 hours duration
Involvement of another party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freely chosen, whomever the child wishes to play with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly mother, extended family, and pet

Discussions

In this research, we found that young children in Jakarta still played quite actively despite the pandemic and lockdown. Their active play showed variation, which is mostly a result of parental influence. Although there was very limited opportunity to play outdoor, children had enough space and opportunity to play actively indoors. Of course, as in Australia, concerns over the contagious virus have made the parents restrict their children to play outside even though active play would be more preferred in spacious place (Australian Capital Territory, 2015). At least the indoor space still provided the necessary safe and positive environment for the children to play actively.

Children's active play showed enough variation as conceptualized in the four domains (locomotor, object, social, pretend). Moreover, the objects used also included traditional objects. The variation brought about complex active play behavior as shown in the combined domains as described above. Although this study does not aim to look at the impact of active play in child development, theoretically, the combined domains support various aspects of development and are not limited to just the physical aspect. Przybylsk (2014) stated that when children interactively play with adults and use objects, language development will also be fostered (in Yogman et al., 2018).

During active indoor play at home, children did get bored easily and eventually looked for and played with their gadgets or asked to play outside. To handle the situation, the role and involvement of parents are crucial. When parents are involved in the play, children tended to be happier and easier to be kept inside the house, hence enjoying the longer active indoor play. Parents, in this case, supported children to enjoy and learn physical skills. This is in line with the Department of Health and Human Services (2018); the parental role is a key factor for a healthy child's growth and development. Furthermore, as stated by Harding et al. (1999), activities such as running and jumping improve motoric skills and develop spatial awareness, body balance, and eventually self-confidence in children. And parents in this study were aware of these benefits.

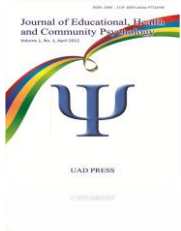
Research in Canada (Moore et al., 2020) showed that the COVID-19 pandemic changed the daily activities of children and families. According to the research, children and young people tended to be less active, especially outdoors. Moreover, they tended to prolong their gadget use, sitting around, or sleeping. Therefore, the recommendation is in line with the current study, namely, parental roles need to be fully exercised; parents need to be creative in providing various activities for their children.

Aside from parental role, another environmental factor that supports active play is, of course, the space. Unfortunately, the current research and other research on this topic are unable to provide a deeper analysis regarding how much space is minimally required to allow active play to take place. Participants of this study came from households residing in a landed house with 100-200m² land. These households came from a middle socio-economic background that is assumed to represent most Jakarta inhabitants. However, we cannot negate the fact that many families with young children

live in much smaller houses in Jakarta. As in the findings presented above, we still cannot explain the spatial element of active play in greater detail. Anecdotal observations indicated that children from low social-economic backgrounds, hence smaller space for active indoor play at home, still played outdoor around their neighborhood. However, the frequency and intensity seemed to decrease. Further study on the spatial element of active play is still needed, especially regarding its consequences for child development.

Boys and girls in this study appeared similar in their active play. In Truelove et al.'s term (2017), they similarly played using a lot of energy, chose the activity freely, and derived a happy feeling out of the activity. Most of the time, their play involved more than two active play domains. Their activity also involved both gross and fine motor movements. According to Clark (1995) and Newell (1986) such skills indeed flourish in children aged three to five years (in Schmutz et al., 2020). Although there were indications from other studies that gender differences were found in children's play activities, including in physical-based of activity (see, e.g., Alanazi, Alghamdi & Alghamdi, 2020), apparently further analysis is needed to explain it. This study and Remiers et al. (2018) prove that boys and girls do not differ significantly. The thesis proposed by Goble, Martin, Hanish, and Fabes (2012) seemed to accord these findings. The social context in play is essential. Children in this study played indoors (with limited space and objects), and with their parents, hence peer factor (existence and interaction) does not influence the behavior. Moreover, the child's age is also a crucial variable, as Schmutz et al. (2020) explained.

Similarly, cultural and environmental factors seemed to affect the stages of social play. Parten stated that parallel play usually appears in younger children aged 2.5-3.5 years, while cooperative play is traditionally performed by older children aged 4.5 years. Children in this study, however, behaved differently. The data showed that a child aged 4 years 2 months still conducted parallel play. In the meantime, our data also showed that children aged 3 years 11 months have already played cooperatively. This study could not pinpoint the cause of such behavior. However, the research of Howes and Matheson (1992, in Xu, 2010) found that young children's frequency of parallel play (or the lower stage of social play) did not change according to age development. The finding was later corroborated by Parten and Xu et al. (2005, in Xu, 2010). They concluded that changes (in this case:



stages) in social play were influenced not so much by chronological development but more so by cultural-environmental factors.

Lastly, the researchers need to discuss the limitations of this research. The data was collected via an online interview with parents without direct observation of the children. Such a technique is common, and it was indeed a viable option due to pandemics. However, it does have its shortcoming as direct observation would allow more authentic data on children's behavior. Indirect observation, a researcher would have more opportunities to collect richer data on the observed behavior in actual/natural settings (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, in Creswell, 2012). It is extremely difficult to conduct direct observation during a pandemic. Even the option of home recording seemed too intrusive, hence unethical, as the pandemic itself already posed many challenges and may have caused considerable strains in family life. This assertion does not negate that direct observation is most likely the most authentic data collection technique to study children's play and must be endeavored whenever possible.

Conclusions

During the pandemic, active play conducted by four young children in Jakarta involved unstructured locomotor, object, social, and pretend activities. There was no extreme distinction of active play regarding indoor activities before and during the pandemic outbreak. Meanwhile, there was apparent contrast in outdoor activities since the pandemic outbreak, mostly due to changes in play intensity.

There were combined domains in children's active plays. Generally, there was no marked difference between gender in their active plays except for the social domain in which girls were slightly more involved in parallel play while boys were involved more in a higher level of social play. Parental roles are vital in facilitating and managing active plays; hence parents need to be supported to take up the role. More parents' education regarding how they can support children's active play indoors is urgently required.

Future research is recommended to explore active play in children with lower socio-economic backgrounds. It is also recommended to employ a direct observation method and/or to study father involvement in active play.

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