



Research Article

THE IMPACT OF MANAGEMENT FACTORS ON THE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES OF SELF-PROTECTION SKILLS FOR 5–6 YEAR-OLD CHILDREN IN PUBLIC PRESCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY IN HOC MON DISTRICT, HO CHI MINH CITY*

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Received: January 14, 2025; Revised: April 15, 2025; Accepted: June 12, 2025

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which management factors influence the outcomes of self-protection skills training for 5 and 6 year-old children in preschools. This analysis is based on a survey of 192 managers and teachers working in Hoc Mon District, Ho Chi Minh City. The study employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The results reveal a moderately strong positive correlation between training outcomes and four management functions: planning, organizing, directing, and monitoring. Among these, planning and directing have the strongest influence, with standardized beta coefficients of 0.263 and 0.188, respectively. The study proposes two key management solutions: (1) improving the organization of training plans by clarifying procedures, defining responsibilities, and promoting collaboration; and (2) strengthening monitoring by using management software, diverse assessment tools, and regular feedback sessions. These measures aim to address management weaknesses and improve the effectiveness of self-protection skills training for preschool children.

Keywords: 5-6 year old children; impact; preschool; self-protection skills

1. Introduction

According to the World Health Organization, over 900,000 school-aged children and adolescents worldwide die annually from injuries, with 90% of these deaths resulting from unexpected, unintentional accidents (MOH, 2020). In Vietnam, accidental injuries are the leading cause of death and severe complications among children, significantly impacting their physical health and mental well-being. Annually, more than 370,000 school-aged children in

Cite this article as: Ho, N. A., & Du, T. N. (2025). The impact of management factors on the educational outcomes of self-protection skills for 5-6 year-old children in public preschools: A case study in Hoc Mon District, Ho Chi Minh City. *Ho Chi Minh City University of Education Journal of Science*, 22(9), 1708-1718. [https://doi.org/10.54607/hcmue.js.22.9.4688\(2025\)](https://doi.org/10.54607/hcmue.js.22.9.4688(2025))

* The geographical names are presented using the administrative divisions at the time the study was conducted (before the merger of provinces and cities in Vietnam in July 2025).

Vietnam suffer accidental injuries, including falls from heights, drowning, traffic accidents, pencil punctures caused by improper sitting on classroom chairs, ingestion of magnetic beads causing intestinal obstruction, aspiration of foreign objects in the respiratory tract, food poisoning, and burns. These issues stem from various causes, such as a lack of self-protection skills among children, negligence by parents, adults, and teachers, and unsafe living and learning environments at home and school (MOH, 2020; MOH, 2022; Nguyen, 2022).

Teaching self-protection skills at this age equips children with positive habits, early awareness of self-protection, and the ability to respond swiftly to adverse and dangerous situations. It also enables them to adapt to and cope with social changes (Le, 2022). Early childhood is a critical period for developing the essential skills and habits needed for a child's future life (Tran, 2018). Early childhood educators have long recognized the importance of teaching life skills, particularly self-protection skills, to children from a young age. Advanced education systems in countries such as the United States, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, and South Korea consider self-protection training for preschoolers a vital task to help children become independent, self-reliant, healthy, well-adjusted, and successful in the future (Tran, 2018). In Vietnam, self-protection training is incorporated into the new preschool education curriculum (MOET, 2021). While most preschools implement life skills education (MOET, 2015), including self-protection skills, the effectiveness of these efforts remains limited due to various influencing factors (Nguyen, 2009; Mai, 2010; Le, 2010; Phan, 2013; Nguyen, 2022).

According to Nong (2023), three primary factors influence self-protection education for 5–6 year-old preschoolers: the family, the school, and society. Tran (2022) and Luong (2018) argue that four factors impact the outcomes of self-protection training for preschoolers: planning activities, organizing and implementing content, directing content execution, and monitoring and evaluating training activities. Nguyen (2022) highlights that self-protection training is affected by various factors, including the children themselves, the family, the school, social networks, media, and the internet, with the children, school education, and family education having the most significant influence. The analysis indicates that the outcomes of self-protection skills training for children remain suboptimal and are influenced by various factors. However, the specific assessment of the impact of school-related factors, particularly the management practices of principals, has not been thoroughly examined. This underscores the need to study the extent to which management factors affect the outcomes of self-protection skills training for children in preschools. Consequently, this study aims to propose management strategies to improve self-protection training outcomes for preschoolers, using public preschools in Hoc Mon District, Ho Chi Minh City, as a case study.

This paper focuses on answering two research questions: (1) Is there a correlation between management practices and the outcomes of self-protection skills training for children in public preschools in Hoc Mon District, Ho Chi Minh City? (2) Do management

factors impact the outcomes of self-protection skills training for children in public preschools in Hoc Mon District, Ho Chi Minh City?

2. Research results

2.1. Fundamental concepts

Self-protection skills refer to a child's understanding of their surroundings and the ability to take appropriate and safe actions within those surroundings. Children with self-protection skills are capable of avoiding dangers and exploring their environment within a safe range (MOET, 2020). Self-protection skills are defined as the ability to ensure one's own safety and avoid potential dangers in the surrounding environment. This encompasses recognizing and assessing risky situations, understanding and implementing preventive measures, and safeguarding oneself from threats to safety and health.

Managing the education of self-protection skills for 5–6 year-old children in preschools involves a structured process of deliberate intervention by the management authority (the preschool principal) toward the management target (professional group activities). This process operates through key management functions, including planning, organizing, directing, and evaluating, with the ultimate goal of effectively teaching self-protection skills to 5–6 year-old children (Nguyen et al., 2015; Luong, 2018; MOET, 2020; Tran, 2022; Nong, 2023).

To improve the management of self-protection skills training in preschools, the principal plays a pivotal role by: developing and overseeing the implementation of the self-protection skills training plan within the school; ensuring the availability of necessary infrastructure and financial resources to support self-protection skills training; assigning management staff, headteachers, and teachers to participate in self-protection skills training; monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of self-protection skills training.

The subject leader contributes by: organizing the implementation of the self-protection skills training plan within their group; providing direction and guidance to teachers on executing self-protection skills training; inspecting and evaluating the results of teachers' self-protection skills training within their group; and reporting the outcomes of self-protection skills training to the principal, aligned with the age group responsibilities of the department.

Based on various definitions, we conclude that the outcome of teaching self-protection skills for 5 and 6 year-old children refers to the level of achievement demonstrated by children in developing skills to protect themselves from potential dangers in life.

2.2. Research methodology

The study design includes the following components: (1) Research process, (2) Development of the survey questionnaire, (3) Sampling, (4) Data collection and data analysis.

2.2.1. Research process

Similar to many other quantitative studies, this process consists of the following steps: (1) Design: Developing the survey questionnaire, determining the sample, and selecting the

sampling method; (2) Sampling: Inviting school leaders and teachers to participate in the research; (3) Data Collection: Administering the survey; (4) Data processing: Analyzing the collected data; (5) Report writing: Preparing the research report.

2.2.2. Developing the survey questionnaire

The study employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods to address the research problem. Methods of document analysis and synthesis are utilized to systematize relevant literature, establish the theoretical basis for the study, and operationalize concepts for developing the survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed based on an analysis of legal documents and previous research, including Official Letter 463/BGDĐT-GDTH (2015) on guidelines for implementing life skills education in educational institutions (MOET, 2015), the Preschool Education Program (MOET, 2021), research on developing content, educational processes, and assessing self-protection skills for 5–6 year old children (Le, 2021 & 2022; Le & Nguyen, 2022; Nguyen, 2020), and studies on managing the training of self-protection skills for preschoolers (Luong, 2018; Nong, 2023). The research tool, a self-assessment questionnaire, examines the impact of management factors on the outcomes of self-protection skills training for 5–6 year-old children in preschools. It comprises 27 observed variables divided into five factors, including four independent variables related to management functions: planning (six items), organizing (six items), directing (four items), and monitoring (four items), and one dependent variable representing the outcomes of self-protection skills training, consisting of seven items. The detailed structure of the research tool is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of reliability and validity testing of the measurement scale

Factors	Items	Reliability Coefficient
Planning the teaching of self-protection skills for children	- Analyze the current state of self-protection skills education for children aged 5-6 - Identify the goals of childcare and education - Determine the preschool education program for 5–6 year-old children - Identify the necessary resources for childcare and education - Select diverse and practical content and activity formats - Anticipate expected outcomes and evaluation criteria	0.912
Organizing the implementation of the plan	- Establish a steering committee - Disseminate the implementation plan - Assign tasks to each department and individuals - Issue regulations, rules, standards, and procedures - Allocate budget and resources - Develop a core team of teaching staff	0.942

Directing the implementation of the plan	- Instruct teachers to develop a plan for self-protection skills education for children aged 5-6. - Encourage departments and individuals to adhere to the plan's schedule - Guide teachers in implementing the preschool education program - Advise teachers on the effective use of teaching equipment and materials.	0.904
Monitoring the implementation of the plan	- Determine the assessment methods - Develop assessment criteria - Evaluate subjective and objective factors for future improvement - Review reward criteria for participants	0.866
Outcomes of self-protection skills education for children	- Self-protection skills against strangers - Skills to avoid physical abuse - Safety skills during play - Safety skills for traffic participation - Self-protection skills in case of fire - Self-protection skills when lost - Skills for seeking help	0.927

2.2.3. Research sample

The study surveyed 192 managers and teachers from 10 public preschools in Hoc Mon District, Ho Chi Minh City, employing a convenience sampling method. The distribution of participants was as follows: School A: 6 managers, 15 teachers; School B: 3 managers, 15 teachers; School C: 3 managers, 15 teachers; School D: 5 managers, 15 teachers; School E: 5 managers, 15 teachers; School F: 3 managers, 15 teachers; School G: 3 managers, 15 teachers; School H: 3 managers, 15 teachers; School I: 6 managers, 17 teachers; School J: 3 managers, 15 teachers. Managers constituted 20.8% (40 individuals) of the participants, while teachers accounted for 79.2% (152 individuals). The sampling process ensured a balanced representation of both favorable and challenging schools, as well as institutions meeting national standards and those not meeting these standards, to provide a comprehensive and objective perspective. Confidentiality was maintained for all personal and institutional information, and the data collection process adhered to ethical research standards, ensuring voluntary participation.

2.2.4. Data analysis

The data were analyzed using R statistical software. Each observed variable was assigned a score, with the lowest value (poor) assigned 1 point and the highest value (excellent) assigned 5 points. The average score range was calculated as follows: $(\text{Max} - \text{Min}) / n = 0.80$. The average score ranges for each performance level are as follows: 1.00 - 1.80 = Poor; 1.81 - 2.60 = Weak; 2.61 - 3.40 = Average; 3.41 - 4.20 = Good; 4.21 - 5.00 = Excellent. Descriptive statistics included frequency, percentage, mean (M), and standard deviation (SD). Inferential statistics comprised analyses such as the reliability coefficient (α), Pearson correlation (r), and multiple regression. Results from reliability analysis indicated that the measurement scales had

high reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.866 to 0.942 (Hair et al., 2010; Hoang & Chu, 2008; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). This high reliability coefficient confirms that the measurement scales used to assess the impact of management factors on the outcomes of self-protection skills education for 5–6 year old children in preschools ensure content validity. The scales demonstrated consistency in measuring the intended factors and were suitable for conducting surveys (Table 1).

2.3. Findings

2.3.1. The current state of managing self-protection skills education for 5–6 year-old children in public preschools

According to Table 2, survey participants rated all four management functions for self-protection skill training for 5–6 year-old children in public preschools at a fairly good level. The functions, ranked in descending order, are as follows: organizing the implementation of the plan ($M=4.17$, $SD=0.85$), planning the education of self-protection ($M=4.15$, $SD=0.83$), directing the implementation of the plan ($M=4.14$, $SD=0.85$), and monitoring the implementation of the plan ($M=4.06$, $SD=0.83$). In contrast, self-protection skills education for children was rated at a good level ($M=4.28$, $SD=0.82$).

Table 2. Results of the current state of managing self-protection skill education

Factors	M(SD)	Ranking
<i>Planning the training of self-protection ($\alpha = 0.912$)</i>	4.15(0.83)	
Analyze the current state of self-protection skills training for children aged 5-6	4.15(0.81)	3
Identify the goals of childcare and education	4.19(0.81)	2
Determine the preschool education program for 5–6 year-old children	4.24(0.83)	1
Identify the necessary resources for childcare and education	4.13(0.83)	4
Select diverse and practical content and activity formats	4.11(0.82)	
Anticipate expected outcomes and evaluation criteria	4.08(0.85)	6
<i>Organizing the implementation of the plan ($\alpha = 0.942$)</i>	4.17(0.85)	
Establish a steering committee	4.12(0.84)	5
Disseminate the implementation plan	4.18(0.83)	3
Assign tasks to each department and individual	4.19(0.84)	2
Issue regulations, rules, standards, and procedures	4.13(0.85)	4
Allocate budget and resources	4.18(0.87)	3
Develop a core team of teaching staff	4.21(0.85)	1
<i>Directing the implementation of the plan ($\alpha = 0.904$)</i>	4.14(0.85)	
Instruct teachers to develop a plan for self-protection skills training for children aged 5-6	4.15(0.84)	2
Encourage departments and individuals to follow to the plan's schedule	4.14(0.84)	3
Guide teachers in implementing the reschool education program	4.16(0.84)	1
Advise teachers on the effective use of teaching equipment and materials	4.12(0.89)	4
<i>Monitoring the implementation of the plan ($\alpha = 0.866$)</i>	4.06(0.83)	
Determine the assessment methods	4.03(0.82)	3
Develop assessment criteria	4.07(0.83)	2
Evaluate subjective and objective factors for future improvement	4.01(0.83)	4
Review reward criteria for participants	4.14(0.85)	1

<i>Outcomes of self-protection skills training for children ($\alpha = 0.927$)</i>	4.28(0.82)	
Self-protection skills against strangers	4.24(0.75)	4
Skills to avoid physical abuse	4.22(0.77)	5
Safety skills during play	4.31(0.74)	2
Safety skills for traffic participation	4.33(0.75)	1
Self-protection skills in case of fire	4.19(0.77)	6
Self-protection skills when lost	4.29(0.74)	3
Skills for seeking help	4.31(0.72)	2

2.3.2. Pearson correlation between management factors and self-protection skills education outcomes for 5–6 year-old children in preschools

Table 3 shows that there is a moderately positive correlation between the outcomes of self-protection skills education for these children and the management factors: planning self-protection skills education, organizing the implementation of the plan, directing the implementation of the plan, and monitoring the implementation of the plan (ranging from $r = 0.538$ to $r = 0.582$, $p < 0.01$; Hinkle et al., 2003). This indicates that the outcomes of self-protection skills education improve as the scores for planning, organizing, directing, and monitoring increase. Conversely, when the scores for these management factors decrease, the training outcomes also decline. These findings have practical significance, particularly when evaluating schools with poor self-protection skills training outcomes, which are strongly associated with deficiencies in the school's management practices.

Table 3. *Pearson correlation results between management functions and self-protection skills education outcomes*

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
1. Planning the training of self-protection	--	0.856**	0.687**	0.739**	0.582**
2. Organizing the implementation of the plan		--	0.792**	0.755**	0.579**
3. Directing the implementation of the plan			--	0.737**	0.557**
4. Monitoring the implementation of the plan				--	0.538**
5. Outcomes of self-protection skills training for children					--

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

2.3.3. The impact of management factors on the outcomes of the self-protection skills education

The multiple linear regression model is statistically significant ($F = 30.123$, $p < 0.001$) and explains 39.2% of the variance in outcomes of self-protection skills education for children ($R^2 = 0.392$) (Table 4). The identified regression model is:

$$\text{Outcomes of self-protection skills training} = 1.652 + 0.263(\text{Planning}) + 0.071(\text{Organizing}) + 0.188(\text{Directing}) + 0.095(\text{Monitoring}).$$

The results indicate that the planning and directing functions have statistically significant predictive power for training outcomes, with Beta coefficients of $\beta = 0.283$, $p < 0.05$ and $\beta = 0.221$, $p < 0.05$, respectively, suggesting that improvements in these functions significantly enhance training outcomes when other variables remain constant. Among these, planning has greater potential to improve educational outcomes than directing. However, the

organizing and monitoring functions were not statistically significant predictors, with Beta coefficients of $\beta = 0.083$, $p > 0.05$ and $\beta = 0.104$, $p > 0.05$, respectively, indicating a need to strengthen these areas to better support teachers and improve outcomes.

Therefore, based on the findings, preschool principals should: (1) Improve the organization of self-protection skills training plans by establishing clear implementation procedures, clearly defining roles and responsibilities among stakeholders, and enhancing collaboration between schools, families, and communities throughout the implementation process. Professional development sessions should also be provided to strengthen teachers' capacity in effectively delivering training activities. (2) Reinforce the monitoring process by integrating educational management software to track progress and quality in real time; developing diverse assessment tools such as observation checklists, activity logs, and evaluation criteria; and conducting regular feedback sessions between school leaders and teachers to make timely adjustments and improvements. These measures aim to address weaknesses in the management process and improve the overall effectiveness of self-protection skills training for preschool children.

Table 4. Results of multiple linear regression on the impact of management functions on the outcomes of self-protection skills education

Model	t	B	β	Ac	VIF	Constant
Planning the training of self-protection	2.462*	0.263	0.283	0.246	4.060	
Organizing the implementation of the plan	0.626	0.071	0.083	0.185	5.405	
Directing the implementation of the plan	2.209*	0.188	0.221	0.326	3.066	1.652
Monitoring the implementation of the plan	1.078	0.095	0.104	0.349	2.867	
F (4.187) = 30.123; $p < 0.000$; $R^2 = 0.392$						

Note: Dependent variable: outcomes of self-protection skills training for children; *= $p < 0.05$. R = Correlation coefficient; B = Unstandardized regression coefficient; β = Standardized regression coefficient; Ac = Acceptability; VIF = Variance inflation factor.

3. Conclusion

Factors related to management functions were rated at a relatively high level. Children's self-protection training outcomes showed a moderately strong positive correlation with principals' four management functions. In particular, the functions of (i) planning self-protection education and (ii) directing plan implementation had significant positive effects on training outcomes—the strongest and second strongest influences, respectively—among public preschools in Hoc Mon District, Ho Chi Minh City. Future research should cover broader settings with larger samples and include additional determinants (e.g., family environment, children's individual characteristics) to build a more comprehensive understanding of factors shaping preschoolers' self-protection education outcomes.

❖ **Conflict of Interest:** Authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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**TÁC ĐỘNG CỦA YẾU TỐ QUẢN LÝ ĐẾN KẾT QUẢ GIÁO DỤC KỸ NĂNG TỰ BẢO VỆ
CHO TRẺ 5-6 TUỔI Ở CÁC TRƯỜNG MẦM NON CÔNG LẬP:
NGHIÊN CỨU TRƯỜNG HỢP TẠI HUYỆN HÓC MÔN, THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH**

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Ngày nhận bài: 14-01-2025; ngày nhận bài sửa: 15-4-2025; ngày duyệt đăng: 12-6-2025

TÓM TẮT

Mục tiêu của bài báo này là xác định mức độ ảnh hưởng của các yếu tố quản lý đến kết quả giáo dục kỹ năng tự bảo vệ cho trẻ mẫu giáo 5-6 tuổi tại các trường mầm non. Phân tích được thực hiện dựa trên khảo sát 192 cán bộ quản lý và giáo viên đang công tác tại huyện Hóc Môn, Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh. Bài báo sử dụng phương pháp kết hợp định tính và định lượng. Kết quả cho thấy có mối tương quan thuận ở mức khá giữa kết quả rèn luyện với bốn chức năng quản lý: lập kế hoạch, tổ chức thực hiện, chỉ đạo và kiểm tra việc thực hiện kế hoạch. Trong đó, lập kế hoạch và chỉ đạo thể hiện ảnh hưởng mạnh nhất với hệ số beta chuẩn hóa lần lượt là 0,263 và 0,188. Bài viết đề xuất hai giải pháp quản lý trọng tâm: (1) Cải thiện việc tổ chức kế hoạch giáo dục bằng cách làm rõ quy trình thực hiện, xác định rõ trách nhiệm của các bên liên quan và tăng cường phối hợp giữa nhà trường, gia đình và cộng đồng; (2) Tăng cường công tác kiểm tra, giám sát thông qua việc sử dụng phần mềm quản lý, công cụ đánh giá đa dạng và các buổi phản hồi định kỳ. Các giải pháp này nhằm khắc phục hạn chế trong công tác quản lý và nâng cao hiệu quả giáo dục kỹ năng tự bảo vệ cho trẻ mầm non.

Từ khóa: trẻ 5-6 tuổi; tác động; trường mầm non; kỹ năng tự bảo vệ