

**INVESTIGATING THE AVAILABILITY AND USAGE OF PLAY MATERIALS
AND EQUIPMENTS IN PUBLIC ECDE CENTRES IN AHERO ZONE, NYANDO
SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

OKEYO A. JUDITH

BEDA/000513/3122/18545

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AS A
REQUIREMENT FOR AWARD OF DEGREE IN BACHELOR OF EDUCATION
(ARTS) OF MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

© 2015

ABSTRACT

Play is important for the child's development and learning. Conscious use of play to promote the development and learning of each individual child should be an omnipresent activity in the pre-school. The purpose of this study will be to investigate availability and usage of play materials and equipment in public ECDE centres in Ahero Zone, Nyando sub-county. This study was therefore guided by the following research objectives; to find out the availability and kinds of play materials and equipment in public ECDE Centers in Ahero Zone; to investigate the usage of existing play materials and equipment in public ECDE Centers in Ahero Zone; and to examine the maintenance of existing plays materials and equipment in public ECDE Centers in Ahero Zone. To achieve these objectives, the study employed a descriptive survey design with qualitative and quantitative methodologies for collecting the primary data. The study was guided by Social learning theory by Albert Bandura and targeted ECDE teachers and Head teachers of the public ECDE centers. A sample size of 30 head teachers and 30 ECDE teachers was involved in the study, where teachers selected through simple random sampling technique was issued with questionnaires while teachers selected purposively was issued with interview schedules. Quantitative data from ECDE teachers was analyzed through descriptive statistics with the help of Microsoft excel, while qualitative data from head teachers was analyzed thematically in line with the study objectives. According to the study findings; Most of the ECDE centres in Ahero Zone do not have adequate play materials and equipments especially the modern materials, despite the vital contribution of these materials on learning and academic performance of the learners. The study also found that mainly toys and play instruments such as swingers were available. The study also established that there was effective usage of the available play materials by learners and this could was found to highly effective in improving the academic performance of the learners and their general growth and development. Finally, it was found that most of the ECDE centres maintained frequently their play materials and equipments. As a recommendation, the government through the ministry of education and other education stakeholders, should provide adequate play materials and equipment through bankrolling purchase of modern play materials and equipments to ECDE centres as this will promote application and utilization of appropriate Play materials and equipment in these centres thus improve academic performance of learners in ECDE. Moreover, the community, the government, NGOs and other education stakeholders should come up with viable and long lasting solution to help in forming specific actions, policies and programs to be undertaken to efficiently and effectively address the inadequacy of play materials and equipments ECDE centers. The parents on the other hand should work closely with the teachers in ECDE centers on providing play materials and equipments. For further research, this study show that there is need to evaluate the relationship between play and academic performance in a study with a larger sample of ECDE centres. There is a need to replicate this study in different setting especially in a more urban area so as to ascertain if the same findings are similar among urban and rural schools.