

**INFLUENCE OF PHYSICAL PLAY ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF
PRESCHOOL
CHILDREN IN KALUNDU ZONE, KITUI COUNTY, KENYA.**

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ABSTRACT

The research project was set to determine the influence of physical play on social development of preschool children in Kalundu Zone, Kitui County. It has been observed that kids in pre-school classes in Kalundu zone have been displaying social deficiencies and social misbehaviors in the last two years. Parents cannot provide essential play materials to their children because most of them are poor due to climatic condition in this area. This study was guided by the following objectives: To find out the types of play activities that influences the social development of preschool children in Kalundu Zone, Kitui County, to establish the adequacy of playtime in relation to social development among preschool children aged 4-6 years in Kalundu zone and to determine which social skills learned from physical play and its benefits on social development among preschoolers aged 4-6 years. The research reviewed related studies on the influence of quality play on social development of preschool children where gaps were identified and was bridged by the present and future researchers have an obligation to fill the gaps further. Social cognitive and moral development theories were conceptualized in this study. The study was based on Descriptive survey design. It involved; 45 teachers drawn from 30 pre-schools (30% of the study population), selected using Simple random. Data was collected by a questionnaire, an interview schedule and a lesson observation schedule. The study found out that: Most teachers integrate relevant types of play activities except numeracy play which seem to be; complicated, not interesting although it was important to teaching and learning of mathematics and science. The relevance of the play activities applied by teachers in ECDE curriculum was found to be ranging from; being used to teach various subjects, for entertainment, refreshment of minds and for social development of the child. The study recommended that: other factors influencing social development among children should be addressed.