

Effect Of Teachers Understanding Of Use Of Play On Pre School Children Oral Literacy Development In Bomet County- Kenya

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Abstract: Early childhood educators are faced with expanded academic expectations that have forced them to devise ways that will enhance effective learning in pre schools. Play is one of the activities adopted to promote effective learning in preschool classrooms. The purpose of this study was to examine the use of play in oral skills development among pre-school children. The main objective of the study was to examine use of play in oral skills development among the pre-school children. The specific objective of the study was to establish the teachers' understanding of the use of play and how it affect the child's oral skills development. The study adopted the surveyresearch design. The target population was 185 ECD centres,with a total population of 370 teachers and managers in Bomet central division. A sample of 30% of the centers was selected to give a sample of 56 centres. All the 112 teachers and centre managers in the selected centres were considered for the study. The data collection instrument included a semi structured questionnaire designed for the teachers and an interview guide for the centre managers. Reliability of the study instrument was computed and a Cronbach's Alpha reliability index of 0.733 obtained. Validity was established using lecturers who are experts in the area of ECD to provide their judgemental opinion. Data collected was organized and summarized with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was organised descriptively using frequencies and percentages. The results were analysed using pearsons correlation analysis and presented using frequency and percentage tables and charts. The study established that play has an effect on the oral skills development of the preschool pupils. The results also indicated that the nature of play was key in oral skills development, based on the factor analysis. The study concluded that use of play has an effect on the oral skills development of the pre school pupils. It was recommended that teachers need to be trained on effective use of play in enhancing literacy development and also there was need to have an effective play environment to ensure that pupils are effectively engaged in most constructive play to enhance their oral skills.

Keywords: Early Child Hood Development, Oral Literacy Development, Play, Pre- School, Teachers

I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Children are growing up in a rapidly changing world characterized by dramatic shifts in what all children are expected to know and be able to do. Higher and tougher standards of learning for all populations of students are focusing on a narrow view of learning. Consequently, students have less time and opportunity to play than did children of

previous generations. A developmental perspective pays attention to signs of maturing, whether of children maturing or, of the maturing of play (Scarlett *et al.*, 2005). In this regard, Fromberg and Bergen (2006) highlight what they describe as the permeable nature of play as it interacts with, parallels, represents and integrates physical, social, emotional, aesthetic and cognitive experiences. Ethnographic studies have illustrated that young human beings play in all societies

although, it is recognised that the types and forms of children's play and the amount of play varies depending upon age, gender, cultural contexts and ecological characteristics of the play settings. An anthropological view of play views it as an activity in its own right, where the main motive for children to come together is 'to be where the action is', while researchers have explored questions such as *What is play in itself?* and *What does it mean for the player?* (Strandell, 2000).

Nursery educators long have recognized the centrality of play to children's development and have provided opportunities for both structured and spontaneous play. Both theory and research supports such a relationship. Play is not only children's unique way of learning about their world, but also their way of learning about themselves and how they fit into their world, building on familiar knowledge and deepening their understanding through the recurring cycle of learning that is essential to what all children can understand and do (Frost et al., 2001). Play-based learning activities provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts. They allow children the opportunities to learn relevant skills and feel competent about their ability to learn (Fromberg, 2002). When children are concerned about their competence or adequacy, they cannot make sense of their learning because emotions drive attention, create meaning, and forge their own memory pathways (Goleman, 1995). Children are more likely to feel successful when they can experience active, meaningful learning; use complex, challenging, and varied materials; learn in a safe, nonthreatening environment; and receive accurate and timely feedback (Isenberg & Jalongo, 2000).

Play is a dynamic process that develops and changes as it becomes increasingly more varied and complex and it is considered a key facilitator for learning and development across domains, and reflects the social and cultural contexts in which children live (Christie, 2001; Fromberg, 2002). Theorists, regardless of their orientation, concur that play occupies a central role in children's lives. They also suggest that the absence of play is an obstacle to the development of healthy and creative individuals. Psychoanalysts believe that play is necessary for mastering emotional traumas or disturbances; psychosocialists believe it is necessary for ego mastery and learning to live with everyday experiences; constructivists believe it is necessary for cognitive growth; maturationists believe it is necessary for competence building and for socializing functions in all cultures of the world; and neuroscientists believe it is necessary for emotional and physical health, motivation, and love of learning (Shore, 1997).

In Malaysian context, the play-based approach has been emphasized in the pre-school curriculum and teachers are encouraged to adopt play-based activities in their teaching and learning process. Manstura (2008) reiterated that play focuses on children's natural characteristics and that learning through play is the most appropriate approach in early childhood curriculum. In Ghana, ECE focuses on learning through play, which Jean Piaget posits that meets the physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social needs of children. Children learn more efficiently and gain knowledge through activities such as dramatic play and social games. Learning through play

has been seen regularly as the most versatile way a child can learn. In Kenya, the Ministry of Education syllabus intended for use in pre-schools places emphasis on the use of play and play materials by teachers during teaching and learning process (KICD, 2008). The schools should ensure that there is equal opportunity for girls, boys, and children with special needs in all aspects of play. However; there is a lot of rote learning with more emphasis on academic achievement depriving the learner time to play. Evidence is seen in schools that have perfected teaching over the weekends even to pre-schools yet what is done is within the confines of classrooms. The school policy requires the adoption of pre-school curricula that emphasize play and child initiated activities yet both parents and teachers who believe in academic achievement hinder this. Makin et al, (2006) noted that oral language can be effectively taught if it is done early, it will make a significant difference. Research has shown that strong oral language development at an early age means that there is likelihood of the child becoming strong in literacy. However the influence of play in the oral development of the child has not been given much attention and thus the purpose of this paper.

A. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although play has long been part of the early childhood curriculum, recent emphasis on accountability in education seems to have led to a decline in the general understanding of the contribution that high-quality play can make to children's cognitive development in the early years. Teachers understanding of the use of play in oral development is limited in literature in most of the pre schools teachers concentrate on class work more than taking the children in the field and playing with them, this has a negative effect on the child's literacy development. Play has been dismally below expectation despite the governments commitment in providing preschool education learning through play. Not only is play rarely used in public pre-school but the quality of play activities has often been hindered by many factors such as inadequate playground, limited play materials, pressure by parents on teachers to meet academic standards. Play as a medium of learning language is not being used well in preschools hence the view upon which this study is based. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to establish the use of play on oral skills development of preschool children.

B. PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this paper was to assess the use of play in oral skills development among the pre school children. The study sought to establish the teachers understanding of the use of play and how this affect the pre school child's oral literary developmen in bomet county.

C. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To establish the teachers understanding of the use of play and how this affect the pre school child's oral literary developmen in bomet county.

D. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How does the teacher's understanding of play affect the child's oral skills development in Bomet county?

E. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study may be important in a number of ways. First, the findings might be important to the teachers at the early childhood education in applying play in oral skills acquisition among the preschoolers. The findings of the study might also be important to the preschool administration in assessing the importance of Child's play and hence provide adequate facilities for play to enhance oral skills development. To the curriculum developers in evaluating the curriculum and putting emphasis on children's play and development of play materials. To the ECDE teacher training institutes in training teachers on the importance of child's play. Teachers may also benefit from this study as the findings may call for in service course to train them on different types of play that promote oral skill development. The community and other stakeholders could provide for children's play by donating play materials in support of play to promote skills development in the pre-school children. Other researchers in the field of early childhood education stand to benefit from this study as it may form a basis for further research in the area of play and oral development.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. TEACHERS UNDERSTANDING OF PLAY AND ORAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

It is common belief that a teacher's knowledge affects what he or she does with the pre school children. As a result, numerous studies have sought to understand if in fact a relationship does exist between teacher knowledge and teacher practice (Waters-Adams, 2006). The early childhood years is a period of important development in children's language and early oral skills. As more children spend these years in pre school programs (Early et al., 2007) the role of the early educators in supporting this early language and oral skills has become increasingly important. A teacher's ability to provide this support depends to a large extent on her knowledge and understanding about how language and oral develops in the early childhood period. Furthermore, the question of whether an adequate knowledge base translates into effective classroom practices remains unanswered. This is particularly true in relation to early childhood settings, because previous studies of teacher knowledge and classroom practices related to language and oral development among pre school children have focused largely on teachers with little evidence of studies focusing on the children themselves (Spear-Swerling, Brucker, & Alfano, 2005).

Providing instruction that supports the development of children's early oral skills and designing a rich classroom oral environment depend upon the knowledge and practices of the teacher. In recent decades, the study of teacher knowledge and its relationship to children's oral development has shifted from the behaviorist models common in the early literature to more

complex studies grounded in cognitive psychology and situated in real life classroom contexts (Guerrero, 2005). The focus is no longer on the sequence of teachers' behavior but rather on their work and thought processes. When considering issues related to teacher practice, this cognitive perspective assumes that knowledge and beliefs are important factors in how teachers teach as well as what they teach (Guerrero, 2005).

According to Guerrero, (2005) the interaction between teacher knowledge, beliefs and practices is very important in enhancing classroom activities. A similar trend should be taken to establish how this interaction of teachers activities could influence the effectiveness of play in enhancing oral development among preschool in the study area. Cutter, (2002) and Guerrero, (2005) identified seven categories. These are subject matter, content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, knowledge of educational contexts, knowledge of the learners and their characteristics, and knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values and their philosophical and historical grounds. Subject matter content knowledge refers to the amount of knowledge a teacher has about a particular subject, including its concepts, principles, and facts. Pedagogical content knowledge refers to a teachers' knowledge of how to best teach the content. This therefore indicates that a teachers familiarity with the subject matter of an activity of a lesson is very critical in enhancing the teaching process. This study seeks to establish whether teachers familiarity with the subject matter and content of the knowledge of preschool play activities enhances oral skills development among the preschoolers in the study area.

Research in the area of oral skills development has caused researchers to take a closer look at various factors such as the home environment, nutrition and the interaction of the children with other people which are thought to have a role in a child's oral skills development (Christie, 1991). Other researchers such as Neuman & Roskos, (1990), established that there might be a relationship between play and the oral development of the pre-school children specially where there is a well designed oral -enhanced play environment. This provides a setting where children can explore the many aspects of oral skills development (Barrat-pugh & Rohl, 2000).

It has been noted that oral enhanced play environments serve to stimulate oral exploration and development by providing the resources and context for children to incorporate oral skills into play. These studies have also examined that it is important to help teachers understand their role and develop play environments. Young children begin to use symbols that represent their ideas, and build the foundation for comprehension of print. They get fewer positive precursor experiences for oral skills in school. It has been noted that as children experiment with reading and writing they develop an understanding of the concepts and features of print (Schickedanz, 1986). The use of play in this development process has not been clearly documented (Christie & Enz, 1992).

According to Bergen and Mauer (2000), the relation of symbolic play to children developing phonological awareness in the early years is noted as a key point of concern. Weir (1992) suggested that Oral language is at the interface of the

relationship between play and children development, that is how children’s language use in play might draw their attention to the sounds of language apart from its meaning. Children’s use of words in the flow of play, for example, has gone unnoticed despite its potential which could certainly benefit developmental research as well as early childhood oral pedagogy. Meaning that as children use different language expressions during play, their language and oral skills are improved.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Vygotsky’s theory is one of the foundations of constructivism. It asserts three major themes. First, social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development. In contrast to Jean Piaget’s understanding of child development (in which development necessarily precede learning), Vygotsky felt that social learning precede development. He states that every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (inter psychological) and then inside the child which he calls intra psychological (Vygotsky, 1978).The developmental theories of both Piaget and Vygotsky support the assertion that play perform an integral role in a child’s developmental process. Piaget believed that all children are naturally inclined to learn and develop by seeking equilibrium in their lives. He asserted that play is an essential element in the development process. He did not view play as a distinct type of behavior that can be clearly defined. Instead, he viewed play as an orientation to development, a manner in which children accomplish assimilation. The current study sought to establish the role of play in relation to the two theories in enhancing oral development skills.

Many people regard Piaget’s and Vygotsky’s developmental theories as opposing views, but Nicilopoulou (1993) suggests that their perspectives to play are complementary. She writes that Piagets research provides an exceptional understanding of the individual nature of children’s development through play. Vygotsky extends this perspective to provide a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of children’s development through play.

Play and oral skills share boundaries in the developing mind of the young child (Whitehurst & Lonighan, 1998). Through engaging in joyful play, children also build meaning and develop skills closely associated with oral development. The idea is not new, it was framed theoretically by Piaget (1962) and Vygotsky (1978), and researched as early as 1974 by wolfgang (Whitehurst & Lonighan, 1998). The issue of play and oral development was considered in the work of Piaget (1962) and Vygotsky (1978) as an aspect of child development. However the theorists did not consider the relationship between play and oral skills development among the children. This makes this as an emergent perspective of the theory. Piaget and Vygotsky’s theoretical frame work supports the existing research in establishing the use of play in enhancing oral skills development among the pre school children.

B. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This study conceptualizes that the child’s oral skills development will be affected by various factors associated with the use of play. These includes; appropriate type of play, the play environment, teachers understanding of the influence of play and ways through which play can be enhanced in the pre schools so as to influence the oral skills development among preschool children. The dependent variable is conceptualized as the child's oral skills development. This conceptual framework is diagrammatically shown in figure 1.

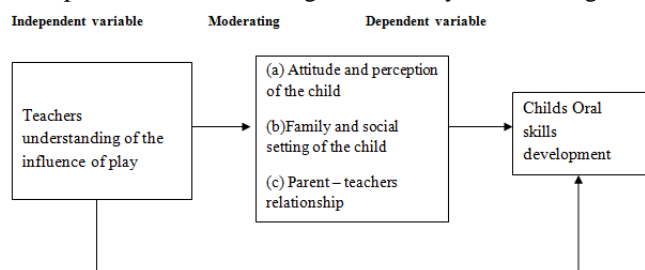


Figure 1: Conceptualization of the use of play in oral development of pre -school childrens’

Play can only be effective if the teachers who are responsible for the play activities understand the subject matter of play. Teachers understanding of the type of play that enhances oral skills development then it will be much easier for them to guide the pupils accordingly to foster oral skills development. This relationship may also be influenced by the attitude and perception of the children, their social and family setting and parent – teacher relationship. The dependent variable as per the conceptual framework was to establish oral skills development. The growth of literacy skills is a vital part of your child’s overall development. It’s central to her future success at school and later in the workplace. But before your child learns to read and write, she needs to develop the foundations for literacy – the ability to speak, listen, understand, watch and draw. With time, and your assistance, children also come to understand the connection between letters on a page and spoken words. For this to happen, he’ll need plenty of experience with: pictures and objects – how you can use words to talk about them. letters and words – their shapes, sounds and names sounds – how words can rhyme, begin and end with the same letters, be broken up into parts (for example, syllables), be formed by blending different sounds, and so on.

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adapted a descriptive survey design. The descriptive survey design is appropriate for the present study, because it sought to gain insight into related phenomenon as a means of providing basic information in the area of study (Gay and Airasian, 2009). This study was conducted in Bomet Central Division, Bomet County, Bomet. Central is one of the divisions of Bomet, with six zones; Township, Silibwet, Merigi, Kiromwok, Ndarawetta and Chesoen. (Bomet County Development Plan 2008-2012). According to the ministry of education statistics, the division has a total of 140 public ECD centers with a population 5,494 of which 2,738 are boys and 2,756 girls, aged between 3-6 years. The study targeted all the

185 ECD centres in the division with a teachers population of 370 who are trained and managers who are 185. The teachers are in constant contact with the pupils and they are in a better position to provide an appropriate records of pupils'. All the managers from the 56 selected ECD centres and all the 112 teachers were selected to constitute the sample for the study. The study used simple random sampling to select the centres and all the centre managers and teachers considered for the study. A total sample of 168 respondents of which 56 were centre managers and 112 were teachers. This sample agreed with the suggestion of Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), that for descriptive study a sample of 30% or more is appropriate for use in analysis and making inference from a sample. The researcher used a questionnaire for the teachers and a interview guide for the managers of the ECD centres in central division of Bomet county. The completed questionnaires were collected and sorted out and cleaned for completeness, accuracy and consistency of the data with other facts gathered. Those that were not completed fully were considered spoilt and hence was not used for the study. The questionnaires were coded and entered in the computer software; Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used as a tool to assist in the analysis. SPSS helps to summarize the data into frequencies and percentages during the data analysis.

III. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

A. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The study sought demographic data of the respondents as they have an effect on the respondent's opinion and views. The variables under consideration were age, gender, academic qualifications and working experience of teachers and managers.

Age	Teachers	Managers
20-30 years	36(37.5%)	15(26.8%)
31-40 years	49(51.0%)	20(35.7%)
41-50 years	11(14.5%)	21(37.5%)
Gender		
Male	21(21.9%)	7(12.5%)
Female	75(78.1%)	49(87.5%)
Academic qualifications		
Certificate	21(21.9%)	11(19.6%)
Diploma	75(78.1%)	45(80.4%)
Years of experience		
Below 5 years	16(16.7%)	5(8.9%)
6-10 years	60(62.5%)	20(35.7%)

11-15 years	20(20.8%)	31(55.4%)
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Source: Field Data 2016

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on age of respondents

Table 4, shows that majority of the teachers 49(51%) were in the age bracket of 31 – 40 years, followed by 36(37.5%) in the age bracket 20-30 years while the rest 11(14.5%) were in the age bracket 41- 50 years. This is because most of the respondents in the Preschools were in their middle age. Of the managers 15(26.8%) were in the age bracket 20-30 years, 20(11%) were in the age bracket of 31-40 years and 21(37.5%) were in the age bracket of 41-50 years. It is clear that majority of the respondents 75(78.1%) were female while men only accounted for 21(21.9%). ECDE was a female related field with men only coming in the profession in the recent past this could explain why the study has many female respondents than male. Of the managers 7 (12.5%) were male and 49(87.5%) were female meaning that most of the ECD centres were managed by women. Majority of the teachers and managers 75(78.1%) in ECD centers were diploma holders with only a few 21(21.9%) having certificate qualifications. At diploma level most of the teachers are expected to have knowledge and skills which should help them to understand how to apply play activities in enhancing children's oral skills development.

Among the managers 11(19.6%) were certificate holders in ECD while 45(80.4%) were diploma holders. It is also important to note that from table 7, there was a higher variation in the years of experience which indicates that most of the respondents 60 (62.5%) had worked at the current ECD centres for between 6-10 years, only 20(20.8%) had worked for 11-15 years. Experience of the teacher is important because it enabled the to provide reliable information related to the study. Teachers with experience are able to handle the children and direct them appropriately than those who are new in the field. Among the managers most of them 31(55.4%) had worked for between 11-15 years, 20(35.7%) had worked for 6-10 years and the rest 5(8.9%) had worked for less than 5 years.

B. TEACHERS PARTICIPATION IN FORMULATION OF POLICIES TO SUPPORT PLAY IN PRE SCHOOLS

It was important to establish whether teachers take part in the formulation of policies for supporting learning with play. The results were presented in table 2.

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
The teachers understand the various types of play to be used in ECE teaching.	0	3 (3.1%)	53 (55.2%)	40 (41.7%)	96
The teachers have appropriate skills and knowledge for enhancing play in children	0	0	33 (34.4%)	63 (65.6%)	96

As teachers we take part in the formulation of appropriate policies to support learning with play in pre schools ?	64 (66.7%)	21 (21.9%)	11 (11.5%)	0	96
Most of the teachers do not have an understanding of how play affects oral development of the children?	0	0	13 (13.4%)	83 (86.5%)	96
As teachers we understand that enough play for children will influence their literacy development	0	0	0	96 (100%)	96

Table 2: Response on whether teachers take part in formulating appropriate policies

It is noted that majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that teachers understand the types of play and how it affects oral literacy development among the pre schoolers. The majority 53 (55.2%) of the teachers agreed while 40 (41.7%) strongly agreed with only 3 (3.1%) disagreein. This clearly indicates that ECD teachers understand the various types of play to be used in ECE teaching. On whether the teachers have appropriate skills and knowledge for enhancing play in children majority of the teachers 63(65.6%) strongly agreed while 33(34.4%) agreed with the statement meaning all the teachers had the skills to use in enhancing oral skills development using play activities.

On whether the teachers were involved in the formulation of the appropriate policies to support learning with play among the pre school children, majority of the teachers, 64(66.7%) strongly disagreed, 21(21.9%) disagreed while only 11(11.5%) agreed. This clearly shows that teachers were not involved in the formulation of policies to support oral skills development. On whether the teachers have an understanding of how play affects oral development among the children, majority 83(86.5%) strongly agreed 13 (13.4%) agreed with statement meaning that though the teachers wervolved in formulating policies on play and children development but they had an understanding of how play affects oral development among the pre schoolers.

Response from the managers were summarized in themes and key issues presented, among the key responses was noted that play activities enhance oral skills development. The managers indicated that; *'Teacher's organization of play and play materials in a meaningful and familiar way assisted children in cognitive development'*.

During the interview another manager had this to remark: *"Children believe so much in teachers that they would always engage in what a teacher does regardless of the circumstances and the outcome therefore they will always be excited at the teacher's involvement in their activities"*.

This supports the findings of Ngecha (2011), who confirmed that lack of teachers participation in children's play leads to low motivation and self-esteem that hinders language acquisition in children. Similarly, Spodeck (2006), confirms that safe environment supervised by adults for children's play facilitate the development of oral listening and speaking skills.

Meaning that teachers role is very critical in the management of children's play.

One of the managers confirmed that the teacher's role was very important by remarking that: *"The presence of a teacher during outdoor play activities prevents Children from injuries and aggressiveness."*

On policy matters, one of the managers had this remark to make: *"There is lack of effective supervision from quality assurance office in implementing policy matters and therefore teachers are bound to ignore the policies and keep children in class instead of giving them time to play"*

Therefore, it was clear from the findings that teachers were in fact not even involved in the policy issues surrounding play as a tool for enhancing oral skills development, reading and writing skills. Vygosty (1967) theory holds that the process of self-development occurs with the guidance of adults and peers in the learning environment hence child development is because of social interaction between children and their social environment. In addition, Vygotsky states that play contain all the development tendencies in a condensed form. This shows that if the teachers are not involved in the play activities then even the argument of Vygosty does not hold.

C. TEACHERS UNDERSTANDING OF USE OF PLAY IN ORAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

On whether teachers understand the influence of play on oral skills development. The study results indicated that teachers understanding of play enhances the use of play in oral skills development among the pre school children. The results show that majority of the teachers lacked the necessary skills needed for using play in oral skills development among the preschool pupils. However, it was noted that teachers understand the use of play in oral skills development of pre school pupils in the study area. The hypothesis that there is a relationship between teachers understanding of the use of play in oral skills development was accepted based on the F value and a significant P-value 0.05. This therefore indicates that teachers understanding of play affects the development of oral skills among preschooler.

D. WAYS OF ENHANCING THE USE OF PLAY IN ORAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Majority of the respondents agreed that play is important in enhancing oral skills development. Curriculum implementation should be done effectively to support the use of play in early childhood development. Change of policy to support the use of play was also indicated as an appropriate means of enhancing use of play in oral skills development. There was also need to enhance the provision of funds to support the purchase of appropriate facilities to enhance play for the ECD centres. ECD Policy was noted to be one of the most important means of enhancing the use of play in oral skills development among preschool, therefore there is need to ensure that policy on ECD is enhanced to incorporate play as a major component in enhancing oral skills development among the preschooler. Teachers indicated that group play was found to be most effective in enhancing oral literacy among the

preschooler. The reason behind this was that, group play involved children taking up different roles and there was constant communication which assisted the children to comprehend language and be able to quickly respond to question posed during the play. Group play was also noted to have a lot of team activities and through these activities there was a lot of oral activities which supported the development of oral skills among the children.

From the simple regression results it can be concluded that at 95% confidence level, the teachers understanding has the highest influence on pre school pupils oral skills development at 18.3%, followed by play environment at 16.9% while the type of play only influence oral skills development by 1.1%. The overall results indicated that the use of play has a positive correlation value $R = 0.559$ with enhancing oral skills development showing that play affects oral literacy development among pre school pupils. The degree of effect caused by this relationship is defined by $R^2 = 0.312$ that is 31.2%. This means that 31.2% of a change in oral skills development among the pre school pupils could be explained by the use of play. The value of F change defines the relationship that exists between the dependent and independent variables of the study while the Sig F change value indicates that the relationship defining the use of play and oral skills development among the pre school pupils is very significance hence it is not just brought about by chance.

IV. CONCLUSION

It was also noted from the open ended questions that play has a direct relationship with oral literacy skills development among the children in pre schools. This was because the play activities ensured that there was constant and consistent communication among the children and this ensures that they develop their skills very fast in order to be part of the team. Therefore it is noted that play is very important in oral skills development among the pupils in preschools.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

- From the results of this study it can be recommended that;
- ✓ Teachers of ECD centres need to understand the different types of play that can be effective not only for physical development of the pupils but also for oral and mental skills development. Understanding the nature of play will help to improve learning in ECD centres.
 - ✓ It is also recommended that teachers for ECD should be assisted by availing the necessary facilities for use to enhance oral skills development of the pupils. From the findings of the study it was noted that teachers have appropriate understanding of play and how it is used to enhance skills development among the pre school pupils.

Therefore teachers should be encouraged to use play and to make them effective for preschoolers.

B. AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This study only focused on three factors affecting the use of play, it is noted that there could be many other factors that can help explain the effect of using play on oral skills development and therefore there is need to have further studies carried out to enhance the outcome of the current study. There is need to probe and understand the ECD teacher training to ensure that play is part of the curriculum so that teachers can have an understanding of the play and their use for skills development among the preschoolers.

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