

# Play Materials Availability and Utilisation for Development of Gross Motor Skills by Pre- Primary School Children

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## Abstract

Various scholars have emphasised the importance of play in the healthy development of young children. It is known that children develop physical fitness through engagement in play activities. It is also known that when children engage in play activities alongside other children, they develop muscular and movement skills and acquire some cognitive learning. This study was carried out to find out the level of availability of play materials, the extent of use of those found and the relationship between availability and utilisation of play materials. A purposive survey research design was adopted in data collection from 20 Early Childhood Education (ECE) centres in one senatorial district of a state in Nigeria. The instruments used for data collection were an inventory sheet as well as questionnaires for Heads of centres, ECE teachers and children. The data analysis revealed that eleven different play materials were found in different quantities in the various establishments. Their utilisations also varied. The data revealed that three play materials were highly available in only three institutions. Five play items were moderately available at 9 centres; while play materials availability was low at eight other centres. The daily utilisation of the items was high for four play materials; moderate for another five and low for three play materials. A high positive correlation ( $r=0.762$ ,  $p<0.006$ ,  $R^2=.581$ ) was obtained for availability and utilisation of play materials. 58 percent of the relationship was accounted for by the experiment. It was recommended that more training and workshops be mounted for ECE teachers and proprietors/head-teachers on early childhood developmental needs and requirements; and that local production of essential early childhood play materials be started in Nigeria. The provision of more play materials was recommended, since the children will make more use of those provided.

**Keywords:** play materials, gross motor, pre-primary, skills, children

## 1. Introduction

Play is central in the requirements for a child's healthy development. It is a major source of learning, and a promoter of orderly growth and development in children. Play provides children the opportunity to explore their environment. Physical activities through play allow children to exercise their bodies, build strong bones, muscles and promote physical fitness. The ability to perform gross motor skills is related directly to physical fitness. When children run, jump and play games such as hide and seek and tag, they engage in physical play which in turn gives them physical fitness. Gross motor skill development play offers children a chance to exercise and develop strength, assist/teach them to take turns and accept outcomes such as winning and losing [Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), 2013].

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme was Nigeria's strategy for achieving Education for All (EFA). The UBE programme was launched by the people and the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1999, to provide for Nigerians a more effective and meaningful basic education for all. The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) was established by law in the year 2004 to monitor and coordinate the UBE programme in the states and Local government areas (LGA's). The UBEC is an intervention and regulatory agency, with scope for programmes and initiative in Early Childhood Care and Education, Six-year primary education and three years of junior secondary education (UBEC 2016).

The objectives of UBEC include the following:

- (i) To provide unfettered access to nine years of formal basic education;
- (ii) To provide free universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school going age;
- (iii) To reduce incidence of drop-out from the formal school and;
- (iv) To ensure the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy communicative and life skills (UBEC, 2016).

Since the establishment of UBEC, It has intervened visibly in the areas of teacher training for the Basic schools as well as in the provision of school buildings and books and other teaching resources. Their moderate effort as can be seen in improvement and provision of school buildings and equipment, has not yet impacted positively in significant achievement of any of the objectives listed above. There are equally no noticeable indicators that early childhood institutions are emphasizing play way strategy in handling children's daily activities.

Oyeniran (2009) reviewed literature on educational benefits of toys and concluded that the Nigerian National Policy on Education 1998 recommended the use of toys to inculcate creativity among children in early childhood education in Nigeria. This is similar to UBEC 2016 prescription. The scholar's literature review showed that children's play activities harboured serious learning processes similar to those of scientists in discovery learning. The author cited support in the works of Horning (2009), Harsh-Pasek and Golinkoff (2008) and The American Toy Institute (1994). The authors cited above by Oyeniran (2009), view children's play as activity that should be supported because play activities promote the physical, intellectual and emotional development of children. Hewes (2006) confirm that "development literature is clear: play stimulates physical, social, emotional and cognitive development in the early years" (2006 p1). This position is also supported by Anderson-McNamee and Bailey (2010) who documented similar research findings. Aderoumu (2014) found that a relation exists between participation in games training and motor skill development.

Oncu and Uluer (2010) believed that play is one of the major activities that promotes children's imagination and creativity through which they can learn basic and social skills. However the authors reveal that several research reports exist that show that most children were unable to exhibit creativity with play materials. They also found that most children were unable to use real objects for creative play. Their finding seem to be supported by the current practice of reducing play periods in early childhood education institutions and introducing in its place such activities as literacy, numeracy and computer skills development. Similarly, Miller and Almon (2009) observed that play is rapidly disappearing from kindergarten and early education as a whole. They believe that stifling play in early childhood education has dire consequences for both the children and the entire nation. This shift in emphasis is the practice in vogue in many "high-brow" early childhood education establishments in Nigeria, where terminal school achievement matters more than the school leaver's well being.

A School with good play environment is expected to have pleasurable playthings which will attract children to get involved with play; thereby promoting their development of gross motor skills. Even when play facilities abound in a school, provision has to be made for the children to use them adequately. Researchers have found that development of gross motor skills by both children and adolescents have positive effect on the way young people view themselves particularly in the area of physical awareness (Nesser 2005; Salakun 2005). According to these researchers training for physical development is an aspect of total fitness which enables an individual to perform daily work or activities without undue fatigue. In children particularly physical development is achieved through play using various play materials. It is therefore important that the observed reduction in play periods in early childhood education facilities be checked.

Play activities and materials are often intended to enhance the social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of children. UBEC (2013) has found that there are different types of play materials available for different skills' development but the organization has not contrived any strategy to ensure that available play materials are put to effective use. Play materials available for social development are balls of different sizes, tricycles, rocking horses while the ones for emotional development include swings, slides, and pull-up ropes. In addition some play materials for cognitive development include counters, building blocks, abacus, clay and plasticine etc; while those for physical development include pull-up rope, slides, merry go round, swings, skipping ropes etc (UBEC 2013). Play materials are not just recreational materials but are designed to help children learn to accomplish specific educational and developmental goals while employing active and pleasurable play.

The importance of play materials in the development of gross motor skills lies in their potential in promoting the development of physical fitness, stable and agile human being while providing satisfaction and joy that are derived

from play. For gross-motor skills development, children run, jump and play games such as those involving hide and seek. Gross motor development gives the children the opportunity to exercise and develop muscle strength. Gross-motor skills development mostly involves physical play such as outdoor plays; such plays that require the child to interact with playthings outside the classroom or home environment. Outdoor activities provide children the opportunity to come closer to nature and have enough space, unlimited natural air and playthings to handle or manipulate in various common and uncommon ways. This position has been supported by Ginsberg (2007) who also found that play helps in maintaining strong parent-child bond.

In order for children to develop gross-motor skills, they must actively participate in physical activities including games, exercises and sports. In early childhood establishments, some of the essential outdoor activities that children require for gross motor skills development include: swinging, sliding on platforms, skipping, jumping, pulling, merry-go-round, running, sand-pit plays, chin-up and others. However because many of the pre-school proprietors and heads of schools do not know the importance of some of these facilities to child development, they don't make them available for the use of children in their schools. Realising the importance of acquiring gross motor skills by children, Obiagwu (2012) pointed out that when children participate in physical plays with these materials, they become healthier and develop lasting resistance to many childhood diseases.

Obiagwu (2012) further listed the following as importance of children's play material or play thing:

- It affords the child free and enjoyable fresh air and sunshine.
- Enhances the development of large muscles coordination during vigorous play which leads to the improvement of small muscle coordination.
- Stimulates vigorous physical activities such as circulation, respiration, which leads to elimination of wastes from the body
- Provides for the release of tension from prolonged sitting, thinking, by creating and meeting the needs of the child especially those with short attention span;
- Provides in the child additional stimuli to meet his/her friends and talk over mutual interests.
- Enhances language acquisition and use
- Drains negative and hostile feelings like fighting and bullying

Other researchers have found that gross motor skills development through play promotes healthy child development (Mulligan 2012; Anderson and Bailey 2010). Also UBEC (2013) recommended that there should be adequate and variety of play materials in preschools which are to be used for children's play for promoting child development and various skills in children. Although there are literature negating the importance of play in early childhood education (Uncu and Uler, 2010; Miller and Almon 2009), many more empirical and qualitative researches affirm the usefulness of play in early childhood learning and development (Hewes 2006; Siddiqi, Irwin and Hertzman 2009; Ginsberg, 2009; Anderson-McNamee and Bailey 2010).

The importance of play in early childhood education has been amply documented in educational literature. However, the provision and utilization of play materials in early childhood education in Nigeria has remained in the main a paper policy. Hence this study set out to find out the types of play materials that are available in the preschools and the extent of their utilization in Ikwano/Umuahia Local Government Areas (LGA's) of Abia Central Senatorial District of Abia State.

### *1.1 Statement of the Problem*

Budget restraints and pressure to make more money in the running of preschools may have caused many of the preschool proprietors and heads of centres to cut down on the purchase of outdoor playthings for the children's gross motor development. This may be why some preschools visited were found to have very few or no playthings at all. The heads of such centres may also be ignorant of the importance of playthings in the development of learning and gross motor skills in children. The problem of this study therefore was to investigate the availability of play materials in selected Early Childhood Education (ECE) schools and the extent of usage of the playthings that they have.

#### *1.1.1 Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to explore the availability and extent of usage of playthings in the development of gross motor skills of preschoolers, in the target Local Government Area preschools.

### 1.1.2 Research Questions

Four research questions were posed for this study. They guided the development of the instruments and method of data analysis for this study. The research questions are as follows:

- i. What is the level of availability of play materials for gross motor skills development in the selected preschools?
- ii. To what extent are the play materials for gross motor skills development used in preschools.
- iii. What are the possible reasons for the level of availability or non availability of such facilities in Early Childhood centres of interest.
- iv. Is there any relationship between availability and utilisation of play materials that are provided in early childhood establishment of interest?

## 2. Methodology

This study is a descriptive survey research.

### 2.1 Population and Sample

The study population consists of all preschools in the Central Senatorial District of Abia state. The sample consists of all the teachers and head teachers in the 20 purposively selected preschools in urban areas of Ikwuano/Umuahia Local Government Areas.

### 2.2 Sampling Procedures

Twenty early childhood education centres were purposively selected from urban areas of the LGA's in the target State. The criteria for the selection of institutions were: that the schools be over three years old, accessible by road and is willing to cooperate with the researcher during the study. One teacher only and the head of school/centre were selected from each of the ECE centres used, to complete the datasheet.

### 2.3 Research Instruments

Three instruments were used for the study. A head teacher's questionnaire (HTQ) used to collect data from the head teacher of centre; a researchers' observational guide (ROG) used by the researcher and assistants for on the spot observation, and to corroborate head teachers submission; and an interview guide used to collect information from pupils, as well as to gather information about the extent of usage from both preschoolers and their teachers and also to collect reasons on why facilities/playthings are not often available or used. The three instruments were constructed by the researcher and trial-tested before use.

### 2.4 Methods of Data Analyses

The data generated in this study would be presented as simple totals, means and percentages as well as correlation. The level of availability of these materials would be evaluated as follows: if the total number of play material is:

- (a) Less than 24 items, it is regarded as low availability
- (b) Between 25 to 39 items, It is regarded as moderate availability
- (c) 40 items or greater numbers, it is regarded as high availability.

The basis of this scale is on the fact that the average enrolment in the centres for each level (yearly age group) is 40, and the group have their play period simultaneously. This scale is supported by Oyeniran (2009) which emphasized the importance of class size in determining the quantity of each material to be provided to enable each child in class to have access to the same as others.

## 3. Result

The results of this study were presented in four research questions which were posed earlier. The research questions guided the development of research instruments and the methods of their analysis.

### 3.1 Research question 1: What is the level of availability of play materials for gross motor skills development in the selected pre schools?

The data for answering this research questions is contained in Table 1.

This rating was based on the observation that the average number of children per stream (one level class group) in the centres was 40. Since all children in a stream go out to play at the same time, each child must have an item, and the teachers must have one each, in addition to a reserve supply. For individual practice, each child must have the same play material to avoid conflicts and undue favouritism. Therefore, any number of play materials less than 24 was considered low. If the number of the material was in the range of 25 to 39 for the use of 40 children, it was considered moderately available. If the number of play materials for individual practice was more than the average number of children per class stream (40), the item was considered highly available.

**Table 1.** Display of Quantities of Located Play Materials and the Level of Availability

Schools	Climbing frame	Children slides	Merry go round	Skipping rope	Balls	Swing	Climbing ladder	Sea-saw	Tyre	Rocking horse	Water boat	Total plaything in school	School level availability
A	3	3	1	10	20	3	1	1	5	0	0	47	H
B	1	2	1	5	15	3	0	0	3	0	0	30	M
C	2	2	0	3	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	19	L
D	1	3	1	5	15	3	1	1	3	1	1	35	M
E	2	3	2	13	20	3	1	0	0	0	0	44	H
F	2	2	2	10	15	3	0	0	2	1	1	38	M
G	2	2	2	15	15	2	0	0	1	1	0	40	H
H	0	1	0	3	10	1	0	0	2	0	0	17	L
I	0	2	0	3	5	2	0	0	1	0	0	13	L
J	1	2	1	3	7	2	0	0	2	0	0	18	L
K	3	3	2	8	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	27	M
L	0	2	1	5	8	1	1	0	1	0	0	19	L
M	1	1	1	7	7	1	1	0	1	1	1	22	L
N	3	2	1	5	10	2	1	0	2	0	1	27	M
O	2	2	1	10	10	2	0	1	0	2	0	30	M
P	1	2	1	10	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	26	M
Q	2	2	2	14	12	2	0	2	0	0	1	37	M
R	1	3	0	5	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	21	L
S	2	2	1	5	10	2	0	0	0	0	1	23	L
T	2	2	1	3	15	2	0	0	0	1	1	27	M

The data in Table 1 for the facilities on ground shows that only three schools among twenty schools observed had up to 40 or more items of play materials for gross motor development. Most of the schools have plenty of balls. From Table 1, only balls, swings, skipping ropes, slides, climbing frames and merry-go-round were commonly found in most of the schools. Playthings like climbing ladder, sea-saw, tyres, and rocking horse and water boats were not common in the schools used.

The data in Table 1 shows that only schools A, E and G or 15% of the sample, show high availability of play materials; nine schools or 45% of the sample, belong to the group with moderate availability of play materials. While 8 schools or 40% belong to the group with low availability of play materials. The implication of this finding is that most of the ECE schools are not catering sufficiently to the development of gross motor skills of the young children in their care. The data from this limited sample is an indication that the playthings for the development of gross motor skills are not sufficient in the schools to cater for the recreational needs of the preschoolers as well as for the

developmental needs of children in the preschools.

### 3.2 Research Question 2: To what extent are the playthings for gross motor skills development used in pre-schools.

The data in Table 2 displays information obtained from completed teachers Questionnaire and interview extract from the children in the various schools on the use of play materials.

**Table 2.** Frequency of Use of Playthings for Gross Motor Skills Development in Sample Schools

Play items	Daily usage (f)	%	1-2 times weekly(f)	%	Never used (f)	%	Total (f)
Climbing frames	100	50%	80	40%	20	10%	200
Children's slides	80	40%	70	35%	50	25%	200
Merry go round	100	50%	60	30%	40	20%	200
Skipping rope	90	45%	60	30%	50	25%	200
Balls	100	50%	70	35%	30	15%	200
Swings	80	40%	100	50%	20	10%	200
Sea-saw	40	20%	60	30%	100	50%	200
Climbing ladder	60	30%	40	20%	100	50%	200
Tyres	60	30%	70	35%	70	35%	200
Rocking horses	40	20%	70	35%	90	45%	200
Water boat's	70	35%	80	40%	50	25%	200

Key: f = frequency of occurrence

Table 2 shows that only climbing frame, balls and merry-go-round have up to 50% usage daily. These three items are the most popular ones that children used daily. There were however other play materials that were also in high demand for daily use such as skipping rope. 45% of the sample indicated that they used skipping rope daily. 40% of the sample used swings and children's slides on daily basis. Yet slides and swing were not found in large quantities in the schools. Head teachers should therefore endeavour to provide more of the items that were found to be in great demands to enable more children benefit from their use. Other items that were utilised daily but not as in demand as those discussed earlier include sea-saw, climbing ladder, rolling tyres, rocking horses and water boats. It is apparent from the data in Table 2, that if more play material were available in greater quantities, more children would use them daily.

It is interesting to note the popularity of balls, climbing frames and merry-go-round among the little children. The data in Table 2 reveals that approximately 50% of the sampled children used these play items daily. About 35 percent indicated that they were limited to use the facilities once or twice weekly while only about 15% indicated that they never used the items at all. This is a serious situation. The implication is that there were many pupils in these ECE establishments who never use the facilities available or perhaps the play materials were not available for use of children at all. Teachers should make sure that each pupil is provided regular opportunity to appropriately use the play materials in their school. Literature on play reveals that regular and appropriate use of physical and other types of play promotes the developmental processes in early childhood (Mincemonger and Horning 2006; DCMS 2004 p 8).

### 3.3 Research question 3: What are the possible reasons for availability or non-availability of facilities in sampled pre-primary schools?

**Table 3.** Possible Reasons for the Level of Availability of Facilities in Sampled Early Child Care Centres

Item S/N	Statements	SA		A		D		SD		Agree	Disagree
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	Some play materials for gross motor development are provided in my school because there was enough money to do so	5	4.7	71	67.6	26	24.8	3	2.9	72.3%	27.7s%
2	There is no point providing gross motor development play materials since children can learn in the classroom	17	16.2	56	53.3	26	24.8	6	5.7	69.5%	30.5%
3	Gross motor development play materials are available because the ministry of Education mandated me to do so	21	20.0	54	51.4	28	26.7	2	1.9	71.4%	28.6%
4	Gross motor development materials are not available because I am not aware of their importance	25	23.8	20	19.9	55	52.5	4	3.8	43.7%	56.3%
5	These playthings for gross motor development are not available in my school because most schools around here do not have them	17	16.4	5	4.8	66	62.9	16	15.9	21.2%	78.8%
6	The play materials are not available as I am presently making available the more important facilities (indoor playthings)	27	25.7	26	24.8	48	45.7	4	3.8	50.5%	49.5%
7	The needed play materials for gross motor development are not quite available because they are too expensive	13	12.3	6	5.7	64	61.0	22	21.0	18.0%	82.0%
8	The play materials are made available as children don't need them for improvement of large muscle coordination	21	20.0	31	29.5	46	43.8	7	6.7	49.5%	50.5%
9	Gross motor development playthings do not enhance language acquisition and use	22	21.0	11	10.6	63	60.8	8	7.6	31.6%	68.4%
10	Gross motor development play materials are available because parents paid for them	16	15.2	9	8.6	68	64.8	12	11.4	23.8%	76.2%

Table 3 shows the summary of the possible reasons which the head teachers of the schools gave for the availability or unavailability of essential play materials in their schools. Item 1 had 72.3% agreeing to the fact that playthings are provided in the schools because the money was available while 27.7% disagreed with that idea. Item 2 had 69.5% agreeing to the idea that there was no use having such playthings since children can also learn in the classroom,

stretch their body and jump inside the classroom while 30.5% disagree. In Item 3, 71.4% agree that gross motor skill development playthings are made available because the Ministry of Education required schools to provide them, while 28.6% disagree. It may be observed that many of the head teachers had wrong ideas of reasons why the children require the use of gross motor skills' play materials.

For Item 4, 43.7% of the head teachers agree that they are not aware that those playthings are necessary for the development of the children's gross motor skills while 56.3% disagreed. This indicates that a large number of head teachers are not qualified to manage ECE establishments for the physical development of young children since they are not aware of the developmental needs of the early childhood years. Item 5 shows that 21.2% of the head teachers agreed that gross motor skill playthings are not made available because other schools around that vicinity do not have them, while 78.8% disagree with that. The data in Item 6 show that 50.5% of the respondents agreed that the more important playthings (indoor facilities) are made available while 49.5% disagree. Item 7 shows that 18% of the respondent agreed that gross motor development playthings are too expensive while 82.0% disagree with that. In item 8, 49.5% of the respondents agreed that the gross motor development playthings are needed for the improvement of large muscle coordination while 50.5% disagree with that.

Item 9 shows that 31.6% agree that gross motor development playthings do not enhance language development while 68.4% disagree with that. In item 10, 23.8% agree that gross motor development playthings are available because parents paid for them while 76.2% disagree with that. All the different views of the head teachers reveal that these heads of centres lack understanding of the requirements for early childhood development and therefore need further training.

#### 3.4 Research Question 4

Is there any relationship between availability and utilisation of play materials that are provided in early childhood education establishments of interest?

**Table 4.** Correlation of Availability of Play Materials and Utilisation of the Play Materials

Variables	N	Means	Std. dev	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Df	p-value
Availability	11	45.18	51.46	.762**	.581	10	.006
Usage	11	71.82	24.83				

Key \*\* = Significant at P<.01 (2-tailed)

Data analysis shows that there is a substantial positive significant correlation ( $r=.762$ ,  $p=0.06$ ) between availability of playthings (N = 11, Mean =45.18, Std. deviation= 51.462) and playthings usage (N=11, Mean =71.82, standard deviation =24.83). The implication of this result is that if more playthings are provided, the ECE enrollees will equally increase their use of the added materials. Increasing the availability of playthings will increase the children's opportunity for the acquisition of and improvement on their essential gross motor skills. Increasing the availability of play materials will therefore be in the overall interest of the young children and their developmental requirements.

#### 4. Discussion

The result of this study on availability and extent of usage of playthings for gross motor skills development has shown that many of the schools have balls in large number, and a few swings, slides, skipping rope, and climbing frame. Other playthings are scarcely available. This situation does not encourage the development of essential gross motor skills in ECE children at these centres. From the responses of both the learners and their teachers those playthings available are used only during the break time otherwise they are always under lock and key. Many of these schools fence the area where the playthings are kept. This finding further corroborates the belief that most proprietors do not understand the importance of play materials in the development of gross motor skills in children.

The Findings include that Playthings are not available for everyday use in some centres, but were used two or three times a week, further goes to indicate the lack of knowledge by teachers and head teachers of ECE establishments on the developmental implications of wilfully denying young children the use of facilities that enhance their ability to develop strong, healthy and flexible body structures. The data further revealed that it is only when proprietors believe that they have 'enough money' that they accommodate the purchase and installation of play materials in their centres. The play materials usually found at the centres were those that the Ministry of education had made compulsory for

the approval of the centres. The observation portrays most of the ECE centres as unworthy of the services that they are supposed to provide. The situation therefore calls for strong intervention by Government through UBEC and other education Agencies including parents and the elite, in order to correct for the disservice of most of the ECE centres which are now in operation.

## 5. Conclusion

Data analysis from this study indicates that both ECE centre proprietors/head-teachers and the ECE teachers themselves have not clearly understood the physical demands of gross motor skills development at the ECE level. This reason might have accounted for their locking up of play materials and making few available only at break periods on some school days.

Heads of centres, teachers, Ministries of Education officials and parents and other stakeholders are to be made to understand the importance of gross motor skills development in the life of the children at the ECE schools. Many of these groups mentioned here are probably not aware of the importance of gross motor skills development among young children. Parents and heads of ECE centres should realise that as children play with peers and others using these playthings that enhance their physical, mental and language development, they learn and apply more skills which both teachers and parents had not taught them. The children develop their bones physically as well as develop large muscle coordination through play. Outdoor activities with such playthings will make them sociable, alert, boredom-free and agile (DCMS 2004).

### 5.1 Recommendation

There is the need for everybody involved with early childhood developmental activity to acquire proper knowledge of developmental needs of these young children especially the head teachers or proprietors. The data from this study reveal that the practitioners sampled do not possess adequate knowledge of ECE developmental needs. It was therefore recommended that periodic training sessions and workshops be mounted for ECE head teachers, teachers and other care givers/teachers to enable them acquire more in-depth knowledge on early childhood developmental needs and global practices. Parents of young children should be made aware of their young children's developmental needs and the importance of regularly playing with their children and encouraging them to play with others.

In addition ECE centres should be encouraged to improve on their provision of essential play materials and games and also increase the number of hours, during which children can have access to the play materials and games facilities. If this is done, the children will have more access to the play materials and therefore improve their gross motor skill acquisition.

The government should intensify effort in the making or manufacturing play materials which are not easily available in schools in order to provide proprietors a new source for obtaining scarce play materials. The Bank of Industries should grant loans to some unemployed graduate engineers who may show interest in building industries to manufacture some of these play materials. This strategy will be a good contribution to employment generation while providing essential service for the developmental needs of early childhood children.

Seminars, workshops and short term training programmes should be held with teachers to make them aware of the importance of playthings and how to use them effectively. The Ministry of Education should insist on the provision of adequate play materials by all schools, whether public or private before granting approval for the establishment of such centres.

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