LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR OPTIMAL OUTCOMES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

by

Ecloss Munsaka, PhD
Bibian Kalinde, PhD

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR OPTIMAL OUTCOMES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Published by UNZA Press
P.O. BOX 32379
Lusaka 10101 Zambia
Fax: +260211-292069
Email: press@unza.zm

ISBN:978-9982-02-099-1

CONTENTS

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to children who hold the promise of a better tomorrow for all of us.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Dr Sylvia Mwanza-Kabaghe and Dr Francis Sichimba for the diligence with which they reviewed this book. Through their comments and suggestions, we have been able to make a number of improvements to the book. We are also heavily indebted to the many Zambian children whom we have been able to interact with in a number of research and educational programmes over the past decades. Through working with these children, we have been able to more meaningfully understand child development and learning. Thus while this book has been written so that children's development and learning can be optimised, the real inspiration for the book are the children themselves. It is, therefore, appropriate that we dedicate this book to the children.

PREFACE

Being a fairly young field in Zambia, Early Childhood Education (ECE) still has a number of challenges that need to be addressed. One of the challenges pertains to the lack of appropriate teaching and learning methodologies. We have had the privilege of observing how children are taught in a number of early childhood education centres, even in some of the so called "good" ones, and we have been horrified, in some cases, at how children are handled. Some teachers simply have no clue on how to stimulate children's learning.

The writing of this book, therefore, is an attempt to try and provide a solution to the desperate situation we have in the several hundreds, if not thousands, of early childhood education centres throughout Zambia. Since parents also play a critical role in the teaching of children, this book has been written so that parents too can become more involved in ensuring children's learning even at home. When parents, teachers and school administrators have adequate knowledge on how to care for and teach children, early childhood education outcomes will inevitably improve.

What has also become clear from our observation of a number of early childhood education lessons, as well as from the surveillance of the literature, is that early childhood education has lost its focus on its core business, namely to provide a safe, playful environment where children can be stimulated to optimally attain their physical, social-emotional and cognitive developmental milestones (Hewes, 2006). Instead, the focus has shifted to providing children with literacy and numeracy skills. Miller and Almon (2009) make the point so poignantly:

> ... kindergarteners are now under intense pressure to meet inappropriate expectations, including academic standards that until recently were reserved for first or second grades. These expectations and the policies that result from them have greatly reduced and in some cases obliterated opportunities for imaginative, child-centred play in kindergarten (p. 23).

The argument in this book, therefore, is that a play oriented teaching methodology has to be restored in early childhood education centres, if children are to benefit from ECE programmes. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that best results in early childhood education are only realised when play, not didactic instruction is at the centre of the teaching-learning process (see Vygotsky, 1978; Miller & Almon, 2009). To this end, this book demonstrates how games, songs and dances that children are familiar with can be used to effectively stimulate their development and learning. We have also observed, and we will still be addressing this in a lot more detail later in the book, that a number of early childhood education centres promoted the use of English as the medium of instruction even in those communities where both the caregivers and the children were not competent users of the English language (see Matafwali, Munsaka, Mweemba & Muleya, 2012; Matafwali & Munsaka, 2011; Mwanza-Kabaghe et al., 2015).

The erroneous view seems to be that the children's ability to speak English at a younger age, is a sign that they had superior mental abilities and any early childhood education centre that could get the children to speak English during the early childhood years, gets high ratings. Nothing could be further from the truth, as no language is superior to another; all languages serve a communication role and each child learns best, especially for the

initial literacy and numeracy, in his or her own mother tongue. In this regard, we argue that children's mother tongues should be used as the languages of instruction in all early childhood education centres. As we will show later, these mother tongues do not necessarily have to be Zambian local languages; there are a number of Zambian children today whose first language is English, even if they carry Zambian names. It would be counterproductive to expect those children to be taught in a local language. Thus, as far as determining the language to be used as the medium of instruction is concerned, the local context in each area will have to be taken into consideration. This is more so considering the multilingual situation that we have in Zambia.

We have also noted, with concern, that there is very little meaningful collaboration between teachers and parents. Early childhood centres are treated as sacred spaces where parents have no role to play except the role of paying their children's school fees, attending Parents' Teachers' Association (PTA) meetings and occasionally attending school sports day when called upon. Conversely, homes are regarded as private spheres where teachers are expected not to have dealings in. A wide range of research findings which we will delve into later in the book, has unequivocally demonstrated that optimal outcomes can only be realised from early childhood education or indeed from any other education level, if there are healthy, meaningful, collaborative relationships between teachers and parents. For this reason, this book will also provide guidelines on how to enhance healthy teacher-parent collaborative relationships.

Structure of the book

This book has a total of seven chapters. The first chapter broadly covers the history of early childhood education in Zambia

with emphasis on policy pronouncements on early childhood education. Worldwide perspectives on the development of early childhood education are also highlighted in the first chapter. The second chapter follows with main developmental domains in early childhood. We feel it is important for teachers and parents to have adequate knowledge about how children develop so that they too can appreciate how to teach and support them. The next chapter is on child play. Play is the hallmark of children's everyday activity and is largely the means through which children learn and develop. To show the relevance of play in the local context, we present suggestions of local play activities which teachers and parents can use to enhance development and learning in children. We also focus more specifically on how a play-based approach can be used in an early childhood classroom. Play is highlighted and infused with song, movement and storytelling.

In Chapter Four, we address the issue of why children should be taught in their mother tongue. In Chapter Five, we discuss effective ways of disciplining children without hurting them. We have decided to include this chapter mainly because there is debate on how to discipline children. There are reports from children in our families and outside about teachers and parents who subject children to unacceptable forms of punishment to correct unwanted behaviours.

In Chapter Six, we deal with teacher-parent collaboration. Unless healthy collaborative relationships are established between teachers and parents, the desired optimal education outcomes for our children will never be realised. The final chapter, Chapter Seven, is a summary of the key aspects that we have discussed in the book.

Since this book is to be used by technical as well as non-technical people, we have as much as possible, used everyday language throughout. Where we have used technical terms

because we needed to do so, we have endeavoured to unpack them for easy understanding.

We wish everyone of you, our readers, the best as you begin the process of making early childhood education optimally beneficial to our children.

Ecloss Munsaka, Ph.D
Bibian Kalinde, Ph.D
June, 2017

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The History of Early Childhood Education in Zambia

The historical development of early childhood education (ECE) in Zambia can be appreciated better in light of ECE advancements on the global and continental scene. Prior to the 20th century, issues of child welfare and learning were insignificant in most parts of the world. This was so until the *Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child* Convention of 1924 made pronouncements that addressed child deprivation and adult responsibilities towards children. This declaration was however not endorsed until 1989, when the *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)* was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (see United Nations, 1989). The CRC became the most universally accepted treaty in the world with 194 signatories out of the 195 of its member states. Following the endorsement of the CRC by the United Nations, all member states adopted it as the guiding principle for the provision of ECE in their various local contexts. In 1990, the World Conference on *Education for All* (EFA) was held in Jomtien, Thailand (UNESCO, 1994). Its focus was on making primary education universal. However, ECE was also topical under the adage "learning begins at birth". Ten years after the Jomtien conference, the *World Education Forum* that resulted in the *Dakar Framework for Action* in 2000 (see UNESCO, 2009), was formed. From the *Dakar Framework for Action*, the EFA goals were translated into Six *Dakar Goals*. The first goal of the six Dakar goals was specifically directed towards improving the access and the quality of ECE for needy children and those considered to be exposed to various forms of danger.

The turn of the 21st century is characterised by significant research on child learning which acted as a catalyst in advocating

for the distinction of ECE as a discipline. Even though long standing disciplines such as developmental psychology had initially provided useful principles for children's development, growth and learning, the science of ECE is evolving as a favoured discipline since it considers a variety of aspects that impact on children's learning such as differences in experiential backgrounds; learning styles; ways of playing; communicating; personality building; and social awareness (Hujala & Niikko, 2011).

Further evidence from research has shown that what happens in the early years of children's growth and development has a lifetime impact. Neurological evidence suggests that there is significant child brain development that happens before the start of school. This evidence is further propagated in developmental psychology in the notion of critical periods which are the times at which certain abilities can be learnt with ease after which it becomes difficult to learn them (see Lenneberg, 1967).

Since early childhood is a period of rapid change and development, it is thus considered the most critical period in a child's learning. However, in as much as critical periods are indeed an important aspect of human growth and development, they do not entirely imply that learning cannot happen at all in older learners. The emphasis is that the earlier the learning starts, the easier it will progress.

International conventions and declarations on the global front, steered action on ECE in Africa as evidenced by conferences on early childhood development in Uganda (Kampala) in 1999; Eritrea (Asmara) in 2002; and Ghana (Accra) in 2005 (UNESCO, 2006). Africa's progress in the provision of ECE has however been beset by challenges of alarming poverty levels and a high number of children orphaned by HIV and AIDS especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Due to a lack of organised systems for the care of orphaned and vulnerable children in most African

countries, children have ended up on the streets. In addition, there is a notable laxity in the formulation of ECE policies and development of curricula in ECE training colleges and ECE centres (Matafwali et al., 2012).

ECE was a component of schooling in Zambia before independence in 1964 under Sub O education. It was offered for one year and it involved learning how to write the letters of the Alphabet on the ground. The *Day Nurseries Act* of 1957 was established by the colonial government to guide the provision of ECE for the local children. When Zambia attained independence in 1964, nurseries were placed under the Ministry of Local Government and Housing in community structures called Welfare Halls. The Zambia Pre-school Association (ZPA) was established in 1972 as a coordinating body separate from government wings. Over the years however, not all ECE training colleges and centres got affiliated to ZPA, hence the diverse provision of ECE in the country.

Thirteen years after independence in 1977, a national document called *Education Reform* was formulated. It defined ECE as any form of organised schooling before entry into primary school for children below the age of seven years old. However, ECE was indicated not as a requirement for entry into primary school. The *Education Reforms* document addressed all aspects of ECE, including its definition, goals, curriculum, nature of learning, materials and equipment, provision and organisation and the role that the government was to play in its provision. The points of strength for ECE in *Education Reforms* which are applicable even today are, firstly; its emphasis on the playful nature of ECE and discouraging the use of didactic methods in teaching content such as reading, writing and

arithmetic. Secondly, it outlined how children's development of language, social, physical, emotional and mental domains should be met through expressive, creative and playful ways using songs, dances and stories. Thirdly, it placed emphasis on the use of locally available and affordable teaching materials and equipment. The weakness noted in the *Educational Reforms,* however, was that the government had detached itself from the running of pre-schools and employing pre-school teachers instead restricted its responsibility to training them.

Revived interest in ECE was again noted when Zambia participated in the *World Conference on Education for All* in 1990. Zambia's participation resulted in the organisation of a *Zambian National Conference on Education for All* in 1991**.** From this conference, a task force was formed to come up with proposals and strategies to address the quality of education in Zambia. It is these proposals and strategies that are reflected in *Focus on Learning of 1992 (*see Ministry of Education, 1992*)*.

Focus on Learning came in the wake of the introduction of plural politics in Zambia. The new government highlighted several deficiencies of education in a bid to improve education standards in the country. Pre-school learning was suggested to include children aged 3-7 year-olds, thus diverting from the initial 3-6 year-olds indicated in the *Education Reforms* of 1977. Just as noted in *Education Reforms of* 1977, the government's 'hands off' stance on the running of pre-schools persisted in *Focus on Learning* with local authorities and individuals taking the responsibility of running all ECE matters. Highlighted in *Focus on Learning* (1992) on ECE is:

1. The need to emphasise the developmental milestone of social, physical, mental and psychological domains in ECE.

2. Provision of ECE as a means to free mothers to participate in economic duties.
3. Government's responsibility in ECE was to train teachers and supervisors and to provide guidance on curricula issues.
4. Registration and administration of pre-schools was to be left to private pre-school proprietors.
5. Subsidising ECE for the handicapped children.

Educating Our Future of 1996 (see Ministry of Education, 1996), is acclaimed as an educational policy document that brought about significant changes in the educational sector in Zambia. It describes ECE as an ordered form of education provision for children between the ages of 3-6 year-olds. It suggests that ways of teaching in ECE should be less formal and should comprise playful activities. Social development is noted as a key goal of ECE by availing children with a wider circle of playmates.

A significant implication made in *Educating Our Future* was that, ECE is a transition between home and school in preparation for primary school. The responsibility to run pre-schools continued to rest upon local authorities and other voluntary agencies. With time, however, local authorities gradually relinquished this responsibility and ECE continued to be provided by individuals, churches and other non-governmental agencies in a variety of settings including day care centres, nursery and reception and/or pre-schools.

Educating the Nation (2005), is a document formulated in order to promote specific strategies in the implementation of *Education for All*. In this policy document, ECE was officially identified as a foundation for human development and lifelong learning in the Zambian education structure. Care is indicated as an important component of ECE, hence the use of the term Early Childhood Care, Development and Education (ECCDE). It is reiterated in the policy document, *Educating the Nation*

that government's role in ECE would be restricted to training teachers and to guide curricula formulation. The local councils, local communities, non-governmental organisations, private individuals and families were still acknowledged as major players in the funding and provision of ECE.

The following were presented in *Educating the Nation (2005)* as a summary of ECE challenges from studies and reviews carried out in 2004:

(a) Lack of uniformity in curricula among providers;
(b) Absence of set standards;
(c) Lack of clear policy;
(d) Lack of monitoring and supervision;
(e) Inadequate trained personnel;
(f) Lack of mechanism for coordinating and collaboration among providers and stakeholders;
(g) Lack of responsible authority for moving forward;
(h) Greater emphasis placed on pre-school and not on the other lower levels; and
(i) Poor infrastructure and inadequate teaching-learning materials.

It was stated in the *Educating the Nation* policy document that government would embark on the provision of ECE by 2006 to children aged 2-6 years. Unlike in previous documents such as *Education Reforms* (1977) and *Educating Our Future* (1996), *Educating the Nation (*2005) recognised ECE as a pre-requisite for primary schooling and noted it as critical in the achievement of *Education for All*.

The renewed emphasis on ECE could have stemmed from the worldwide consensus that the success of schooling in other levels can be greatly enhanced by a more organised ECE sector. ECE is described as the provision of care and education to children of zero to 6 years of age. The common forms of ECE in Zambia are described as Nursery (kindergarten or baby class), pre-school and reception. Day care centres cater for children aged zero to 2 years, while nursery schools offer activities to

children aged 2 to 4 years in order to help develop their language and social skills through playful art works. Pre-school is usually considered a preparatory stage for entry into primary formal schooling.

The Zambian government officially adopted ECE to be part of the mainstream education system in 2012. Before 2012, very little was done to ensure uniformity and consistency in the way ECE was offered in Zambia. Since the identification of ECE as part of the mainstream education, efforts to meet the need for highly qualified teachers (see Nkosha, 2013), were made. This was further demonstrated by recruiting and deploying the first cohort of 1,000 ECE teachers in 2013 (Ministry of Education, 2013) which is in stark contrast to previous years where no teachers were employed by government for the sector.

Apart from existing colleges of education where teachers are trained for ECE such as David Livingstone College of Education (DALICE) and Kitwe College of Education (KCE), the government is considering training ECE teachers at Kasama College of Education (Tukombe, 2014).

While ECE is under the Ministry of Education, components of care and development appear in the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community Development and Mother and Child Health. In as much as the Zambian government is currently providing ECE for children aged 3-6 years, some parents are occupied with other life sustaining tasks but have need for their younger children to be cared for.

Day care services for children are provided by individuals and non-governmental organisations. Care, as an element of early childhood education, refers to a set of practices and actions that are provided by caregivers such as families, community services and institutions in order to ensure the child's survival, growth and development (Ministry of Education, 2007).

Following the designation of ECE as part of the mainstream education, the use of familiar local languages for instruction teaching in the early childhood up to the fourth grade in

primary school, has been made a requirement in order to make foundational education more accessible and more meaningful to all children, regardless of their background (see Ministry of Education, 2007).

Studies conducted in Zambia have revealed that ECE is predominantly an urban phenomenon focused on preparation of learners for primary schooling than for younger children who may need parental care (see Matafwali et al., 2012).

In addition, a more recent study conducted by Mwanza-Kabaghe et al. (2015), revealed that out of the twenty early childhood education centres that were sampled in Zambia's capital city Lusaka, only one was found to be successfully implementing ECE as it should be implemented. From the brief information we have given about the short history of ECE in Zambia, we hope readers can appreciate why Zambia still has a number of challenges in the ECE sector.

Definition of Early Childhood

Let us now turn to the concept of "early childhood." There is no universally agreed upon definition of the terminology, however, early childhood refers to the period of human development that extends from birth to six years old (Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013; Mwamwenda, 2004). Other scholars, however, describe the early childhood period as extending from zero to just below eight years old (see National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009). In order to be more comprehensive and considering the fact that a number of children especially in rural areas do not start Grade One until the age of eight years or after, we shall in this book adopt, the definition which views early childhood as extending from birth to the age of eight years.

CHAPTER 2

Child Development Domains

In this chapter, we are going to discuss child development from birth to early childhood (0-8 years). We will specifically focus on the following developmental domains: physical development; cognitive development; and social-emotional development during the various age categories. As we discuss these developmental domains, however, we need to make our readers aware of some background information about how human development occurs. Firstly, it is important to bear in mind that children develop at different rates. That is, no two children, even if they are closely related, will develop at the same rate. It, therefore, follows that variations in growth rates and development in children should be viewed as normal. Secondly, it is important to realise that human development happens in a gradual manner. Children do not attain developmental abilities of a stage over night, they begin by accomplishing rudimentary abilities before they progress to more complex abilities. Thirdly, it is of great importance that child development is influenced by the environment, which means; depending on whether the environment is developmentally stimulating or not, a child will either develop optimally or will have a stifled development. Thus, the aim in raising children should be to give them an opportunity to develop optimally in all the developmental domains.

What is child development?

In a broad sense, the term development, denotes change from one stage or level to another. Thus, child development refers to the systematic changes that happen to an individual from the time of birth to the time of death (Sigelman & Rider, 2006). These systematic changes in child development happen

in many categories but the following are the major ones: Physical development; cognitive development; and social-emotional development. Through these systematic changes and continuities, children develop the ability to master more and more complex physical tasks, cognitive or metal tasks as well as social-emotional engagements with people and objects. In the next section, we will discuss in detail what each of the developmental domains involves.

Physical Development

Having clarified the few generalities about child development, we will now proceed to discuss physical development from birth to early childhood. In order that we appreciate why physical development progresses the way it does, we need to explain the three general principles that are the basis on which human growth unfolds. These principles are: *Cephalocaudal principle*; *proximodistal principle*; and *orthogenic principle* (see Zemel, 2002, cited in Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013).

The *cephalocaudal principle:* this indicates that human beings develop starting from the head, going down to the tail. This means that before the limbs can develop, the head and the trunk develop first. It is for this reason that in the prenatal stage of development, 25 per cent of the weight of the foetus comes from the head. Even right after birth, 13 per cent of the baby's total weight comes from the head. In relation to this head-to-tail developmental progression, most infants' physical development during the first year is concentrated in the upper body (the trunk and the head). Once the upper body is developed, the development then moves to the arms and legs in the second year after birth.

Proximodistal principle: this is the muscle development. It progresses from the centre going outwards. For instance, the

chest and the internal organs develop before the development of arms, hands, fingers, legs, feet and toes. Similarly, the development of arms will precede the development of hands and fingers. Likewise, legs will develop before feet and toes develop. This is the very reason why children will master the gross motor skills before they master the fine motor skills.

Orthogenic principle: unlike the first two principles explained above focuses on the functioning of the internal cells of the body as opposed to the functioning of the outward body parts. It explains how human development begins with a limited number of cells that do not have any specialised functions. Thus, accordingly, human cells will develop from being general cells to being more differentiated and specialised (see Werner, 1957). With time, therefore, neurons with specific brain functions develop cells responsible for digestion, respiration, muscle movement, eye movement, and so on.

Physical Development During Infancy

The first two months of a child's life are dominated by a number of reflex actions which though largely purposeless, are important to laying the foundation for more purposeful and deliberate physical actions in future. Though many and varied, infancy reflexes, these can be segmented into two broad categories of *Survival Reflexes* and *Primitive Reflexes*. Survival Reflexes which include among others, breathing reflexes, eye blinking reflexes, pupillary reflexes as shown in the Table below for a more comprehensive list of survival reflexes. The main purpose of thes reflexes is to ensure that infants are adequately prepared to adapt and survive in the environment. Primitive reflexes do not have any known purpose, however, their presence is indicative of a normal developmental trajectory in a child. Conversely, their absence is often indicative of an abnormal developmental trajectory in a child (see Schott & Rossor, 2003).

To fully appreciate the variety, developmental course, as well as the significance of the reflexes at various stages during infancy, we present a Table below.

Table No.3 Survival and Primitive Reflexes of Full-Term Newly Born Babies

Reflexes	Developmental Course	Significance
Survival Reflexes		
Breathing Reflex	Permanent	Supplies oxygen; expels carbon dioxide
Eye blinking Reflex	Permanent	Protects eyes from bright light and foreign objects
Pupillary Reflex dilation and contraction of pupil	Permanent	Protects against bright light; adapts visual system to low illumination
Rooting Reflex turning cheek toward touch	Weakens by 2 months, disappears by 5 months	Orients child to breast or bottle
Sucking Reflex Sucking on objects that are put in the mouth	Prominent during first few months and disappears by month 7	Allows child to take in nutrients

Swallowing Reflex	Is permanent, but gets modified by experience	Allows child to take in nutrients; protects against choking
Primitive Reflexes		
Babinski Reflex: Fanning then curling toes when bottom of foot is stroked	Disappears 12-18 months after birth.	Presence at birth and disappearance in first year indicates normal neurological development
Grasping Reflex: curling fingers around objects that touch baby's palm	Disappears in first 3-4 months; is replaced by voluntary grasp	Presence at birth and later disappearance indicates normal neurological development
Moro Reflex: Loud noise or sudden change in baby's position will cause baby to throw arms outward, arch back and then brings arms toward each other	Disappears by 4 months, but child continues to react to unexpected noises or loss of bodily support by showing startle reflex (which does not disappear)	Presence at birth and later disappearance (or evolution to startle reflex) is indicative of normal neurological development

Swimming Reflexes: when placed in water, an infant will display active movement of arms and legs and will involuntarily hold breath (thus stay afloat for sometime)	Disappears in the first 4-6 months	Presence at birth and later disappearance is indicative of normal neurological development
Stepping Reflex: Infants held upright so that their feet can touch a flat surface will step as if to walk	Disappears in first 8 weeks unless infant has regular opportunities to practice it	Presence at birth and later disappearance is indicative of normal neurological development

(*Source*: Adapted from Sigelman & Rider, 2006, p. 120)

As can be seen from the Table shown above, survival and primitive reflexes are an important way through which parents can determine whether their child is developing normally or not. Where certain reflexes are not observed or are not manifested to the expected extent, it is important that qualified medical personnel are alerted so that early intervention can be made on the child. This is critical because some developmental problems can be corrected if they are detected early.

Now that we have presented the various reflexive behaviours that infants engage in, it remains for us to discuss some of the more controlled physical developmental milestones that children attain during infancy.

Major Gross motor skills attained during a child's first two years of life

Gross motor skill	Average age of attainment	Normal age range of attainment
Lifts chin	1 month	0 to 3 months
Lifts head up to chest	2 months	1 to 4 months
Lifts head up to forearms	3 months	2 to 5 months
Rolls front to back	4 months	3 to 6 months
Rolls back to front	5 months	4 to 7 months
Sits with support	5 months	4 to 7 months
Sits without support	6 months	5 to 9 months
Creeps on tummy	7 months	5 to 10 months
Crawls with hands and knees	8 months	6 to 11 months
Pulls self to stand while holding to objects	9 months	6 to 12 months
Stands without holding to objects	11 months	9 to 14 months
Walks	12 months	9 to 17 months
Runs	15 months	13 to 20 months
Jumps on two feet	24 months	17 to 34 months
Kicks ball	24 months	18 to 30 months

(*Source*: Adapted from Dedrick, 2000)

Major fine motor skills attained during a child's first two years of life

Fine motor skill	Average age of attainment	Normal age range of attainment
Unclenches fist	3 months	0 to 4 months
Reaches for objects inaccurately	4 months	3 to 6 months
Transfers objects from hand to hand	5 months	4 to 7 months
Picks up objects with raking or scooping motion	7 months	5 to 10 months
Crudely holds objects between thumb and finger -Primitive pincer hold	8 months	6 to 10 months
Neatly holds objects between thumb and finger- Neat pincer hold	9 months	7 to 10 months
Voluntarily holds and releases objects	12 months	10 to 15 months
Helps with dressing	12 months	10 to 16 months
Feeds self with a spoon	15 months	12 to 18 months
Imitates house chores	18 months	14 to 24 months
Has handedness (left or right handed) established	24 months	18 to 30 months
Helps with undressing	24 months	22 to 30 months

(*Source*: Adapted from Dedrick, 2000)

From the Tables we have just presented above, we can clearly see the developmental principles namely, cephalocaudal and proximodistal principles at work. The accomplishment of activities progresses from the head to the limbs, in line with the cephalocaudal progression of human body development. Similarly, we see congruence with the proximodistal principle as children first master the gross motor skills before they master the fine motor skills.

We decided to include in our tables showing gross and fine motor accomplishments in a column showing the average age range during which various activities are supposed to be accomplished mainly to accommodate expected variations in rates of growth and development among children. Thus, while the middle column which shows the average age of attainment reflects the typical age at which a particular activity is supposed to be accomplished, there is quite a wide range of age when a child can learn and attain a particular developmental milestone. However, as already indicated, where developmental delays are noticed in a child, it is important for the parents to seek medical attention in order for interventional work to start as early as possible.

Physical developmental milestones during early childhood years

Here we present physical developmental milestones pertaining to the early childhood age bracket. As Mwamwenda (2004) indicates, early childhood is an age period that stretches from the age of three to six years old. The readers will remember that the definition of early childhood that we have adopted in this book is one that stretches to eight years as the upper limit. However, since by the age of six years, most of the children have attained adult physical competence, we will end our presentation of physical skills at six years. Again, we will segment the physical activities into gross and fine motor skills.

Gross motor and fine motor skills from age 3 to 6 years

Gross and fine motor skills development from age 3 to 4 years	
Gross-motor Skills	**Fine-motor Skills**
Runs around obstacles	Builds tower of 5 or more small blocks
Walks on a straight line	Copies circle
Balances on one foot for more than 5 seconds	Copies cross
Hops on one foot	Copies square
Pushes, drags, steers objects	Holds pencil using three fingers with difficulty
Jumps over rope at low level	Manipulates clay and makes simple objects (e.g. ball ,snake, biscuit)
Throws ball overhead	Cuts on line with a pair of scissors
Catches a ball	Strings large beads
Gross and fine motor skills development from age 4 to 5 years	
Gross-motor Skills	**Fine-motor Skills**
Walk backwards	Draws and names pictures
Jumps forwards 10 times using both feet without falling	Draws a person with 2 to 4 body parts
Catches a bounced ball most of the time	Usually ties own shoelaces

Gross and fine motor skills development from age 5 to 6 years	
Gross-motor Skills	**Fine-motor Skills**
Runs lightly on toes	Cuts out simple shapes with scissors
Hops over 2 metres	Copies triangles
Skips on alternate feet	Traces diamond shapes
Jumps over ropes	Copies first name
Stands on one foot for 10 seconds or longer	Writes numbers 1-5
Can do a somersault	Colours within lines
Swings and climbs	Holds pencil correctly without difficulty

(Adapted from the Child Development Assessment for Zambia, 2006, pp. 75-83)

It can be seen from the Table above that by the age of six years, a child's fine motor skills, which take longer to develop, are developed sufficiently enough to allow the child to perform all tasks that require dexterity, balance, hand-eye coordination. For this reason, a six year old child has no trouble accomplishing activities such as writing, painting, dressing and feeding. Even though the foundation required for a child to accomplish all physical skills is established by of age six years, it is still important that adults at home as well as at school, continue to create environments that will stimulate children to refine their gross and fine motor skills by allowing them to perform simple tasks.

How does this knowledge of physical development in early childhood help parents, teachers as well as other stakeholders who

handle children in this age bracket? As we will be demonstrating in the later chapter on play, this knowledge will enable parents, teachers and other stakeholders to create suitable and safe environments where children can freely play to allow them to optimally attain their gross and fine motor skills. In addition, through such environments, an important possibility is created for early identification of children who may have developmental abnormalities. When developmental abnormalities are detected early, possibilities of their remediation are high.

Cognitive Development

In this section of the chapter, we are going to discuss cognitive development, which is probably the most important developmental domain in that the normal functioning of a number of other developmental domains depend upon it (Munsaka and Matafwali, 2013). Let us begin by defining cognitive development. Cognitive development, as defined by Woolfolk (2010), signifies the changes that take place in the quality of thinking. In order for a person to effectively deal with the environment they live in, they need to have well developed cognitive functions (Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013).

The world today owes what it knows about cognitive development to the pioneering work of Jean Piaget a Swiss scholar. Through observing his and others' children in the 1920s, Piaget developed a cognitive development theory, which to date still provides the framework for conceptualising how children's thinking capacities develop (see Piaget, 1954; 1963; 1970).

In his work, Piaget discovered that human beings are born with a propensity to want to organise their environment in order to make sense of it. Through organising the environment, human beings are then better able to respond to the demands emanating from the novel situations of life. The quest for adaptation, according to Piaget, lies at the core of what human beings do

from the time they are born to the time they die. At every single moment of their life, human beings constantly adjust and re-adjusting their thinking processes to enable them adapt more optimally to the demands of life. Piaget and his followers (see Lightfoot, Cole & Cole, 2009), argue that adaptation involves two sister processes namely assimilation and accommodation.
We begin by discussing the assimilation process. Assimilation involves an individual using already available schemas in the mind to try and make sense of the unfamiliar situations that he or she is confronted with. Everything that a human being encounters in life, whether an event or object is incorporated in the mind as a unique schema or cognitive structure. Each time a person is confronted with that situation or event or something similar, he/she will not need to learn it anew again, he or she will just need to go to the stored schemas or cognitive structure. For example, when a child encounters a dog for the first time, he or she will capture the features of a dog and store them to form the schema that he or she will be using to define a dog.

As scholars have observed (e.g. Lightfoot et al., 2009; Sigelman & Rider, 2006), sometimes a child in the early stages of cognitive development can over-generalise the application of a schema. For example, a child who has the concept of a dog ingrained in the mind may seek to apply the same conceptualisation to the other four legged animals that he/she is encountering for the first time. In this case, it is not uncommon for a child to use the concept of a dog to refer to a calf, goat, lamb and so on. This over-generalisation happens because the child has an inadequate set of schemas or cognitive structures to define other four legged animals as individuals.

As a result of the limitations of the process of assimilation, the process of accommodation becomes essential. Accommodation involves the expansion or modification of existing schemas to make them more adequately responsive to the novel situations in the environment (Lightfoot et al., 2009; Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013).

Let us use the same example of the concept of dog, as explained above. When a child realises that the other four legged animals have other attributes that set them apart from those of a dog, he or she will begin to change the existing schemas to make it well adept to describe other four legged animals. For example, a child will know that while a goat has four legs like a dog, it is quite different because it has horns, it does not bark, it has a totally different set of mannerisms. Such accommodating distinctions will be applied to all the other four legged creatures.

Piaget (cited in Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013), argues that the processes of accommodation and assimilation do not just happen in children who are establishing schemas or cognitive structures to define the world with, they continue to happen throughout life as human beings constantly seek to attain a state of equilibrium. The pursuit of an equilibrium is comparable to the process of homeostasis in the body. When there are deficiencies of the one or the other sort in the body, the system will automatically send an instruction to the right organs to respond accordingly in relation to the deprivation. For example, when more glucose is required in the blood stream, a message will be sent through the nervous system to the pancreas for glucagon to release stored glucose into the blood stream.

Similarly, when there is too much sugar in the blood stream, insulin will give an instruction for the sugar levels to be lowered to the optimal levels in the blood stream. In a similar manner, as human beings, we are constantly adapting to seek an equilibrium through assimilation and accommodation. We are constantly engaged in the task of assimilating the new information we come across into our existing metal tools (cognitive structures). When the mental tools we have are adequate, the new information can be given interpretation, however, when the current mental tools are found to be inadequate to interpret the new incoming information, adjustments are made through the process of

accommodation. Ironically, though, we only enjoy the state of equilibrium for a limited period, before we start on another quest to expand our existing schemas/cognitive structures to better respond to more advanced challenges. This process goes on until we die and in it lies the opportunity for our growth, development and learning (see Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013).

The Four Stages of Cognitive Development

As already indicated earlier, Jean Piaget is the pioneer scholar in the field of cognitive development. He spent a number of years observing children during play as well as during times when they were engaged in some cognitively challenging tasks. His discovery was that the errors that children made when dealing with various problems, were indicative of the level of the mental tools that they had at their disposal to solve problems. In all the cases that Piaget observed, he found out that the mistakes that children made when solving problems were similar and largely corresponded to their chronological age (Lightfoot et al., 2009).

The more the children's chronological age advanced, the higher their level of thinking developed. Through further investigations though, Piaget discovered that the development in the quality of thinking in human beings was not just determined by biological factors (maturity) but by social experience, activity as well as the desire to attain an equilibrium (Piaget 1970, cited in Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013).

With regard to maturation, Piaget concluded (see Sigelman & Rider, 2006) that the process of cognitive development has to be allowed to naturally unfold in accordance with the chronological age of the child. When a child attains a higher chronological age, everything being equal, it is supposed to also advance in its quality of thinking, to enable it handle more complex challenges. In relation to activity, Piaget argues that children are not passive agents in the environment, they actively operate on

the environment as they try to make sense of the novelties that they encounter. Initially, before adequate cognitive structures are formed, the child will interact with the environment through physical contact with objects. Once adequate schemas are developed, the physical manipulation of the environment will be replaced by internal manipulations of the environment through available cognitive structures. Piaget went further to argue that children's cognitive development also benefited from various social agents that a child comes into contact with in the society where he or she lived. Accordingly therefore, the richer the child's social environment is, the more enriched its schemas or cognitive structures would be. However, paradoxically, as Lightfoot et al. (2009) point out, how much a child benefits from the social interactions depends on his or her level of cognitive development.

The fourth factor, equilibrium, we has already been explained. It simply involves the never-ending, on-going process that human beings engage into for adaptation-equilibration-disequilibration-adaptation-equilibration-disequilibration, from the cradle to the grave.

According to Piaget, the four factors that we have just discussed namely biological maturation, social experience, activity and the inherent desire to attain adaptation, are all needed to ensure that a child attains more wholesome cognitive development (Woolfolk, 2010).

Piaget's work with children culminated into the theory of cognitive development, which has been the basis for interpreting how children reason when solving problems. The theory comprises four stages, each of which corresponds to a specific age category which are: Sensorimotor stage (from birth to about 2 years); pre-operational stage (from about 2 years to about 7 years); concrete operational stage (from about 7 years to about 11 years); and formal operational stage (from about 11 years

onwards) (Sigelman & Rider, 2006, p. 173). Our major interest is in the first three stages because they are the ones that fall in the category of early childhood development, on which this book has focused. As the readers will notice, Piaget does not indicate actual ages when children are supposed to attain the required cognitive developmental milestones instead he indicates age ranges. This is deliberate because not all children develop at the same rate; some children develop faster than others and vice versa. In addition, Piaget argues that when children are exposed to formal schooling at an early stage, their cognitive development is likely to progress more rapidly than that of their peers who start formal schooling much later (see Sigelman & Rider, 2006).

Sensorimotor Stage

As can be seen from the name, the name of this stage of cognitive development is a combination of two words namely; sensory and motor, in fact, some scholars call the stage sensory-motor stage. The reason why Piaget combined the two words to designate the stage is that children make sense of their environment by using their senses and through physical manipulation (see Lightfoot et al., 2009). The stage begins from the time a child is born to about the age of 2 years and comprises six sub-stages that show the progression in the quality of reasoning of children.

The six sub-stages of the sensorimotor stage

No	Sub-stage	Age in Months	Characteristic of Sub-stage
1.	Reflex activity	0-1	Involuntary reflexes: Rooting, sucking, grasping, looking
2.	Primary circular reactions	1-4	Repetition of actions centred on the child's body (e.g. repeatedly sucking a thumb, kicking legs, blowing bubbles with saliva)
3.	Secondary circular reactions	4-8	Repetition of interesting actions centred on objects (e.g. repeatedly shaking a rattle to produce an interesting sound)
4.	Coordination of secondary circular reactions	8-12	Combination of actions to solve simple problems (e.g. push aside an obstacle to gain access to an interesting object)
5.	Tertiary circular reactions	12-18	Experimentation to find new ways of solving problems; varying actions to get more interesting consequences)
6.	Beginning of symbolic representation	18-24	Images and words come to stand for familiar objects, invention of new ways of problem solving

(*Source:* Adapted from Lightfoot et al., 2009, p. 178)

The Table above gives us a fairly good grasp of the cognitive activities that a child engages in during the first two years of its life. During the first month of its life, a child's dealings with the environment are confined to a number of reflexes, most of which occur involuntarily. These reflexes, as we indicated when we discussed physical development, are the foundation on which more deliberate subsequent activities will be anchored. The primary and secondary circular reactions sub-stages have the repetition of actions by an infant as the common feature. Indeed the term, "circular" in the two sub-stages is used to signify the incessant repetition of actions by an infant. During the primary circular reactions, an infant gets fascinated by repeating actions centred on its body. For example, it will repeatedly suck its thumb, kick its legs, blow bubbles with saliva, without getting tired. Piaget used the term "primary" to describe these activities to signify the fact that the activities are done on the self by the infant. Secondary circular reactions on the other hand, involve an infant engaging in repetitive activities directed toward external objects. Infants here are no longer fascinated by repetitive actions focusing on their bodies, but are drawn by the attraction of external objects. For example, it is not uncommon to see an infant repeatedly banging a toy on the floor so that it can produce the desirable sound, nor is it strange to see an infant repeatedly squeezing a soft plastic toy for it to produce some fascinating squeaking sound (see Lightfoot et al., 2009).

Having accomplished the primary and secondary circular reactions, the child now begins to show more purpose and direction in its activities. This happens at the onset of the coordination of secondary circular reactions sub-stage. Here a child is able to figure out that sometimes more than one external activity is required to accomplish a task at hand. For example, a child will understand that to gain full access to a desirable toy that is out of reach, it will need to reach out and pull the toy until

full access is gained. It is at this sub-stage that a child attains the "object permanence" milestone. This ability to understand that objects continue to exist even when they are no longer visible, makes it possible for a child to search for desirable objects that are out of its immediate view. As children progress to the tertiary circular reactions, they show even more ardent pursuit of experimentation with different common objects to see what the consequences will be.

During the sixth and final sub-stage of the sensorimotor stage, the child develops the ability to engage in symbolic representation. Symbolic representation is characterised by the ability to represent the environment in the mind without necessarily having any physical interaction with it. Children develop this ability here because of the language that they are able to use.

As Munsaka and Matafwali (2013) argue, it is important that a rich, stimulating environment is provided to allow children to acquire the skills that are required at each of the six sub-stages. In this respect, teachers and parents need to ensure that appropriate play materials are provided for children in a safe environment.

Pre-operational stage

The pre-operational stage, which covers ages 2 to 7 years, is the second stage in Piaget's four stage theory of cognitive development. It is a landmark stage in that the child graduates from having to depend on the use of physical manipulation of objects and senses to understand its environment. For the first time, the child begins to use its mental processes to deal with its environment. The child develops this ability due to language, which it begins to master at this stage. Most of the activities of the child at this stage are dominated by symbolic or fantasy play, where the child uses play materials to represent things in the real world. For example, it is not uncommon to see a child using a

stick as a gun, a brick as a car, a cob of maize as a baby, a tin as a pot, and so on (see Lightfoot et al., 2009). A lot of activities from the adult world are enacted in the children's world of play.

In spite of the advancements that children make at this stage in their cognitive abilities, they still exhibit a number of inadequacies. Firstly, children are not capable of conservation. Typically, pre-operational children are not able to perceive more than one dimension of a situation at one given moment. For example, if you poured some water into two glasses of the same size and got the child to agree that the two glasses contained the same amount of water and then while the child looks, you poured the water from one of the two glasses into a taller glass, the child would vehemently refuse that the two glasses (a taller one and a shorter one), contain the same amount of water. Most pre-operational stage children will argue that the taller glass contains more water. The reason for this is that children aged between 2 and 7 are not able to understand that the amount of water remains the same even if the container changes, they are not able to conserve (Sigelman & Rider, 2006). They have a problem of centration, that is, they can only focus on one dimension at a given time. In the case of the above example about conservation of liquid, children tend to centre on the height of the glass to the total exclusion of the breadth of the glass. Another example to demonstrate the lack conservation in pre-operational children involves the use of clay. If you rolled two balls of clay to the same size and then right in the presence of the child rolled one of the two balls into a sausage-like shape and then asked which one was bigger, the ball or the sausage clay, the child will indicate the sausage to be the bigger one due to its length.

Aside from the inability to conserve, pre-operational children are also egocentric. Egocentrism manifests itself in children's inability to take in others' perspectives or points of view into consideration. For this reason, it would be futile to try

to get a pre-operational child to change his or her perspective to another (see Ruffman & Olson, 1989, cited in Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013). Thus, the best that an adult can do here is to simply agree with the point of view of the child.With regard to classification, pre-operational children are able to categorise things according to shape, size, colour, function or some other attributes, however, they are not able to understand that objects can belong to more than one category at the same time (Inhelder & Piaget, 1964, cited in Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013). In other words, children here do not yet understand the relationship that exists between classes and sub-classes. A pre-operational child would, for instance, find it difficult to understand that his or her mother can be a chairperson of a local women's club, a wife to his or her father and a head teacher of a school. The idea of the mother belonging to such different categories is as yet incomprehensible to a child at this stage. Thus, in dealing with children at the pre-operational stage of cognitive development, it is important for teachers and parents to ensure that suitable tasks are given to children. It would be frustrating for a child to be given tasks requiring him or her to engage in multi-dimensional thinking at this stage.

Concrete operational stage

The concrete operational stage is the third stage of cognitive development that Piaget developed. It begins at the age of 7 years and ends at 11 years. As can be seen, the onset of the concrete operational stage happens when children are transitioning from preschool into the first grade. The major developmental accomplishment of children at this stage is the ability to see things from others' perspectives. That means children's thought processes are no longer dominated by egocentrism. With this ability, children can handle challenges that require them to classify things in various categories. They can also place things

in series. In addition, concrete operational children are able to solve challenges involving reversibility and compensation (see Sigelman & Rider, 2006). Thus, these children, unlike the pre-operational ones, understand, for instance, that the volume of a liquid remains constant even if the container changes. Similarly, they understand that even when individual items (e.g. floor tiles), are spread out farther apart from each other, so that they seem to occupy a larger surface area, their number does not increase, nor does the surface area they occupy - they remain constant.

In spite of the many developmental accomplishments that concrete operational children are capable of, they still are not able to handle problems involving hypothetical abstract reasoning. They still require to deal with concrete material to solve problems. The ability to solve problems involving abstract hypothetical reasoning only comes during the final stage of cognitive development, the formal operational stage, which starts from age 11 years onwards. Since this book focuses its attention on the preschool years (0-8 years), we are not going into any details explaining what goes on during this stage.

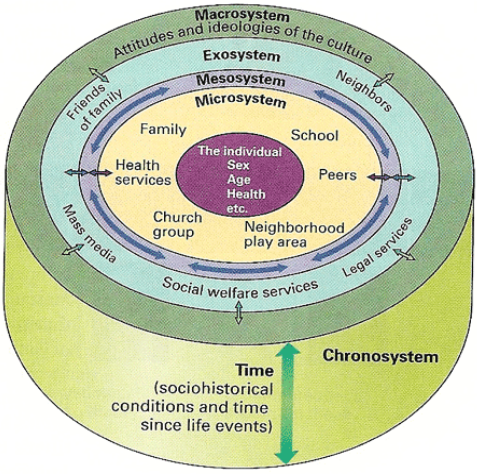
Social-Emotional Development

One may ask the question, "why put social and emotional development together, when they are separate developmental domains?" The question has a valid explanation for it. As readers will appreciate, emotions are never expressed in a vacuum; they are always expressed in social settings where individuals interact with other individuals or groups of individuals. Thus, in this section of the chapter, we will explain how children learn how to socialise with others and express their emotions.

From the time that children are born, they have a natural desire to be attached to another person in order to have a sense of companionship and security (see Bowlby, 1969; 1973, cited in Sigelman & Rider, 2006). In most cases, infants will get attached

to primary caregivers, who in most cases are mothers, in the immediate family. Thus, most of the emotions expressed by an infant tend to be directed toward their primary caregiver. For instance, during the first few weeks of its life, a child will make its demands known through crying. Through crying, a mother or any other caregiver, will know that an infant is hungry, in pain or needs a change of the napkin (Mwamwenda, 2004). Mothers and other primary caregivers are able to know the various demands an infant makes through crying and by reading the emotions expressed therein. Here again the social context provides an avenue for a child to express its emotions.

In trying to explain how a child is socialised into mainstream society, Urie Bronfenbrenner a scholar, came up with what he called the ecological systems theory of development. This theory explains how the five systems namely microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem, influence a child's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Below is a diagram showing how the five systems influence a child's development.



Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model

(*Source:* Adapted from Sigelman & Rider, 2006, p. 22)

Microsystem

Bronfenbrenner lists the microsystem as the first influence that impinges on a child. It comprises the immediate family that a child is born into. Initially, the child will primarily interact with its mother, however, as the child grows, the circle of interaction broadens to other members of the family. The microsystem also includes units such as a school where a child is influenced by teachers, peers and other employees of the school. A church is another example of such units.

The important thing to bear in mind as we seek to understand Bronfenbrenner's model is that while a child's socialisation is influenced by the players at each level, the child also influences the other players it is a two way process. Through that two way interactional process, a child's social and emotional development is shaped.

Mesosystem

In the mesosystem, a child's development is influenced by the interaction that takes place between Microsystems. For instance, a child can be influenced by the interaction that takes place between a family and church. Another example can be the influence that affects a child coming from the interaction between the peer group and the broader community. Similarly, a child's development can be influenced by the relationship that exists between a school and a church. This relationship would be of critical importance in situations where a school is run by a church organisation.

Exosystem

The influence in the exosystem comes from those areas where the child does not have direct participation in, but where the outcomes in those areas affect his or her development. One common example that comes to mind is the parents and/or

guardian's place of work. While a child does not go to work every morning, the parents' type of job influences the way he or she develops. In addition to the parents' type of job, indirect influence on a child's development can come from the dynamics in the extended family or from some financial support agencies the family may be getting such as the social welfare.

Macrosystem

As the name suggests, the macrosystem encompasses the influences that affect a child's development from the broader cultural values and beliefs that govern the nation. The influence here also includes the influence that comes from the national ideologies as well as the economic status of a nation. In other words, at the macrosystem level, the influence is coming from a combination of all the three earlier systems.

Chronosystem

Influences coming from the chronosystem, emanate from the sociohistorical changes that happen over a period of time. Changes in the chronosystem can also be referred to as generational changes. One typical example here is that women are now expected to be in gainful employment, as opposed to staying at home taking care of children, an expectation that was very common in Africa in the 1960s and 1970s. Another example can be that of the increased number of women now able to handle what were viewed as typically male jobs such as mechanics, electronics, engineering, mining, etc), due to the shift that has taken place over the years. These changes that have taken place over the years have seen an increase in the number of females taking up stereotypically male careers.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory that we have just presented above helps us understand that children's social development depends on the types of interactions that they have in the family environment and outside. Indeed if we want to enrich children's social development, we must begin by enriching the places where their interactions take place and homes and schools are critical to this end.

To fully understand social-emotional development in children, we also need to look at another theory that traces children's development from infancy to old age. This theory was developed by Erik Erikson, a renowned American scholar who immigrated from Europe to the United States of America (USA). At the time Erikson moved to the USA, he was already an accomplished scholar having had studied Freudian psychoanalysis (see Friedman, 1999 cited in Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013). While in the USA, however, Erikson departed from most of the teachings of psychoanalysis and developed his own theory explaining how children got socialised. He developed the stages theory of psychosocial development comprising eight stages, initially. Later, his wife published the ninth stage, which Erikson had worked on before he died (Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013). However, as far as social emotional development is concerned in this book, we shall focus on the first four stages that fall under early childhood age category. Even so, for the sake of our readers appreciating the sequence of all the stages, we present below Erikson's nine stages of psychosocial development.

Erikson's stages of psychosocial development

Stage	Developmental Period	Characteristics of stage	Preferred outcome
Trust Vs Mistrust	Infancy (birth to 1 year)	Come to trust or mistrust themselves and others	Develop trust in self, parents, and the world
Autonomy Vs Shame and Doubt	2 to 3 years	With increased mobility, decide whether to assert their will	Develop sense of self control without loss of self esteem
Initiative Vs Guilt	4 to 5 years	Are filled with curiosity and want to manipulate objects	Learn direction and purpose in activities
Industry Vs Inferiority	6 to 12 years	Are curious about how things are made and how they work	Develop sense of mastery and competence
Identity Vs Identity Confusion	Adolescence (12 to 20 years)	Explore the who am I? question	Develop a coherent sense of self and ego identity

Intimacy Vs Isolation	Early Adulthood (20 to 40 years)	Are able to reach out and connect with others	Become intimate with someone and work toward a career
Generativity Vs Stagnation	Middle Adulthood (40 to 65)	Look beyond self to embrace society and future generations	Begins family, develop concern for those outside family
Integrity Vs Despair	Late Adulthood (65 to 80)	Take stock of one's past	Get a sense of satisfaction from looking at the past
Despair Vs Hope & Faith	Very old age (80s and beyond)	Face new sense of failing bodies and need for care	Achieve a new sense of wisdom and transcendence

(Adapted from Sigelman & Rider, 2006, p. 32)

We will now go into detail discussing the first four stages so that we put them in clear perspective in relation to social-emotional development. Before we discuss the stages, it is important that we mention that Erikson postulates that children's personal and social development is shaped by the interaction that takes place between them and the social demands that they meet at various ages. Accordingly, Erikson believes at each stage of development children are faced with social conflicts, which launch them on

a positive or negative social-emotional development trajectory, depending on how the social conflicts are resolved. He argues (see Sigelman & Rider, 2006) that the manner in which the earlier stages are resolved, determines how the subsequent ones are resolved. From this perspective therefore, social-emotional development is incremental in nature-preceding experiences are critical for subsequent development.

Trust Vs Mistrust

When children are born, they experience a tremendous difference between the environment in their mother's womb and the external environment. Coming from the womb where they were safely encased in the amniotic sack and amniotic fluid, requiring nothing to do on their own to survive, their experience of the world, starting from the air, sounds of various types, light, different weather patterns, etc, give them a shocking experience. Thus, all children, without exception, enter this world with a sense of scepticism due to the bewildering initial experiences they encounter. As Erikson indicates, these experiences fill an infant with a sense of mistrust with the feeling that the world is not a friendly place to be trusted. In the midst of this turbulent confusion, an infant depends on the love and care of its mother, who is the primary caregiver to have its sense of trust in the world restored. If the conditions an infant is born into are such that it experiences warm, embracing love from the mother, then the child will have its initial mistrust view of the world corrected and replaced by a sense of trust. However, if the love, care and warmth required by the infant is missing from the primary caregivers, then the initial sense of mistrust developed at delivery will become established and thus usher the infant on a negative social-emotional development route, which will manifest itself even in the other subsequent developmental stages.

Autonomy Vs Shame and Doubt

As can be seen from the Table above, this second stage of development coincides with a child's ability to use a number of gross motor skills and some rudimentary abilities in the fine motor skills domain. As such, children at this stage are filled with an incessant desire to move and explore their environment. To accomplish this movement and physical manipulation of objects, a child requires a safe, permitting environment provided by adults. In this respect, parents as primary caregivers of the child have a pivotal role to play. Their role is to ensure that the autonomy of the child is not overly curtailed by restricting the movements of the child. Emphasis thus should be on providing a non-restrictive and safe environment. Erikson argues that allowing children to exercise their independence at this stage, gives them an opportunity to develop a high self regard or self esteem, which will in turn enable them to have high regard for other people in the family and outside the family. In cases where a child is raised in a restrictive, non-permissive environment, Erikson indicates that such a child will develop a sense of shame and doubt, which will necessarily lead to a low self regard or self esteem as well as a negative regard toward other people.

Before we conclude the discussion of this stage, we need to mention that teachers in early childhood education centres or day care centres, also have a key role to play here. Due to the busy schedules that parents often have in the hustle and bustle of modern times, they rely on day care centres to take care of their children during week days. This means that providers of early childhood education need to be cognisant of the importance of building early childhood education centres that do not hinder

children's optimal social-emotional development. Laying a solid developmental foundation is critical during these formative years because it has a telling effect on how the later stages of development unfold.

Initiative Vs Guilt

This stage is characterised by children becoming excessively curious. No strange thing bypasses them without them asking questions about it. Their curiosity emanates from a deep seated desire to want to know things. For this reason, it is not uncommon for children at this stage to ask questions that unsettle parents. For example, one parent shared with us the following question he was asked by his then 5 year-old son: "*Dad, my balls are moving, is it okay?"* The father to the boy is an educational psychologist and so he knew how to respond to the question. He told his son in a calm voice that it was okay for his balls to be moving. However, what he did not know was that his son was not done with him and so he asked another question: "*Dad, do you have balls?*" Now, that threw him off-balance a little bit, however, as one who had studied developmental psychology, he quickly remembered that "weird questions" from children at this stage were perfectly normal, in fact, they are an indication that a child is developing normally. So, the father only told his son, *"I'm a boy and all boys have balls, son"*. Fortunately for the father, his son did not ask another question thereafter, at least not on that day.

What is important to bear in mind is that children ask these questions not to embarrass parents, but they do so with a genuine desire of wanting to know and why should they not? After all,

they are experiencing everything for the first time. This sense of inquisitiveness or initiative as Erikson calls it, should therefore be met with a lot of understanding from parents and teachers. No child should be rebuffed for asking a question that a parent considers inappropriate. When children's inquisitiveness is met with openness, understanding and love from parents, the spirit of inquiry, which has its origins at this stage, will be nurtured in them. On the other hand, if children are rebuffed for asking such questions, then they will develop a sense of guilt, which will inadvertently kill the spirit of inquiry in them. Accordingly, such children will become withdrawn even in the later part of their life.

Industry Vs Inferiority

As far as the early childhood age bracket is concerned, this is the final stage. The main preoccupation of children here is play as will be seen in the next chapter which will focus on play. Children want to know and understand how objects are and how they work. Most of the play activities that children engage in here are done with their peers and usually peers of their own sex. Children express their creativity through making imitational models of things that they observe in the real world. As they make these items, children value the feedback they get about the quality of their items from the significant others who include their peers, siblings, parents and teachers. If the feedback is usually positive from these significant others, the child will develop a sense of industry, which will manifest itself through more future activities of creativity. If on the other hand, the child receives

negative feedback about what he or she makes, he or she is likely to develop a sense of inferiority, which will result into the child shunning other opportunities of expressing creativity in future. What this implies is that parents and teachers need to ensure that children in this age bracket receive a lot of praise about whatever they do so that their sense of industry, as opposed to the sense of inferiority, gets developed in them. The quality of what children make may not warrant praise at all, however, the focus should not be so much placed on evaluating the quality of the products, but rather on the efforts and intentions of children.

Our discussion of the two theories i.e. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory, has further shown that social-emotional development of children is inextricably interwoven with the social contexts in which they are raised. Early childhood educators as well as parents therefore, have an important responsibility to ensure that children are provided with safe environments in which their optimal abilities will unfold and develop. We have provided in the next chapter on play as well as in chapter six details on how parents and teachers can collaborate to ensure that optimal educational and developmental benefits for children are realised.

CHAPTER 3

Play

Play is an important aspect of child development and learning. It cannot be separated from children's learning activities because it lies at the very core of children's daily activity. Play is what defines children's work as legendary Maria Montessori observes (cited in Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013). There is a common perception among teachers and parents that play in a way deters children's productivity and achievement and is even "sinful" (Norbeck, 1974, p. 3).

At times, a child's underperformance at school is attributed to the fact that he or she is too playful. Children are even punished for being playful. By observing children's involvement in play, one can easily note that they participate in it effortlessly; alone or with others, with tools or without. Modern research has paid particular attention to the positives of play in teaching and learning. In this chapter, we explore some discourses of play, the stages and types of play. Most importantly, we discuss how play contributes to children's physical, cognitive and social or emotional development. Instead of condemning play, teachers and parents can find ways to facilitate play initiated by children and that structured by adults.

What is play?

Despite being part of the everyday life in all societies around the world, play is a difficult phenomenon to define. Among others, the complexity of defining play comes from its multifaceted and interdisciplinary nature in anthropology, biology and psychology. In order to present a broader understanding of play, discourses of it in anthropology and psychology will be highlighted. Firstly,

early anthropological studies of play by Norbeck in 1974, discuss play as a human behaviour that manifests differently in cultures of the world. Given play's universality, it is argued to be a biologically inherited trait necessary for human survival in advanced mammals. The standpoints emphasised by Norbeck are that play encompasses games, sports and the arts. Play is portrayed as exclusive for the young and non-serious (Norbeck, 1974).

Secondly, play has been extensively discussed in psychology by Piaget and Vygotsky (see Woolfolk, 2010). Vygotsky observes that play is the most common activity that gives children opportunities to use language through different role play activities in particular cultural contexts. Piaget argues that play allows children to re-enact the goings on of the real world through symbolic or representational play.

The characteristics of play are particularly seen as contributing factors to children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development. Participation in play is equally explained as a developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) that indicates the level of a child's development (Bredekamp, 2011). As DAP, play has in the recent years become a pedagogical issue. In most cases, play has been used for classroom management and in teaching content in teaching and learning situations. Most attempts made to define play however, end up describing various categories of play such as physical play, construction play, language or symbolic play (see Miller & Almon, 2009). A few scholars attempt to define play using its characteristics as "enjoyable, free and spontaneous" (Bodrova & Leong, 2007, p.130).

In Harris and Park (1983, p. 16), play is described as embracing "imitative, creative activities, exploration, joking and make believe." For instance, Stuart Brown (cited in Miller & Almon, 2009), defines play as anything a person engages in

with spontaneity and without any specific goal, except that of enjoyment and pleasure. Miller and Almon (2009), view play as including "activities that are freely chosen and directed by children and arise from intrinsic motivation" (p. 15). This view depicts play as non-serious and without any positive outcome.

From the definitions that we have cited above about what play is, it seems logical to conclude that play is complete in and of itself. It is not a means to an end. People (children and adults alike), play because they want to play and it makes them feel good. While play is often structured and planned among adults, it is almost always spontaneous among children, especially in their early years. In the next section therefore, we explain how children develop the ability to engage in social play with peers.

Stages of child-peer social play development

When we see children playing various collective games with their peers, we rarely think of how their ability to socialise with others in play came into being. It is almost as if they were naturally born with that ability. Natural as socialised play may seem in older children, it is a difficult activity among infants (0-2 year olds). Let us explore how infants' egocentric play morphs into socialised play. In the early 1930s, Mildred Parten a scholar developed a method which up-to-date is still being used as a tool to classify the play activities that pre-school children engage in at different ages. Parten (as cited in Sigelman & Rider, 2006, p. 403) developed six stages of play beginning with the least social to the most social as follows:

1. *Unoccupied play* - Here children stand idly, look around, or engage in apparently aimless activities such as pacing.

2. *Solitary play* - Children play alone, typically with objects and appear to be highly involved in what they are doing.
3. *Onlooker play* - Children watch others play, taking an active

interest in and perhaps even talking to the players but not directly participating.

1. *Parallel play* - Children play next to one another, doing much the same thing but they interact little for example, two girls might sit near each other, both drawing pictures, without talking to each other to any extent.
2. *Associative play* - Children interact by swapping materials, conversing or following each other's lead but they are not united by the same goal for example, two girls may swap crayons and comment on each other's drawings as they draw.
3. *Cooperative play* - Children join forces to achieve a common goal. They act as a pair or group, dividing their labour and coordinating their activity in a meaningful way.

Parten's argument in her study of pre-school children is that, from the age of two years to about five years, children's play activities become more and more socialised as they interact with a larger circle of friends. In other words, after infancy, children begin to feel more comfortable collaborating with their peers. The above information on how socialised play develops in children is of critical importance to pre-school teachers and parents in that it enables them to know how to facilitate play activities among children of different ages. In addition, teachers and parents will have the right expectations from children as regards what they can and cannot do.

Types of play

There are many types of play that pre-school children can be involved in at home, at school and in other environments. In as much as play is singly listed below, play can combine various

activities. We shall explore 12 types of play as described in Miller and Almon (2009). In describing these 12 types of play, we shall segment them as belonging to either the social play or the object play category, as described by White (2012).

Social play

Social play, as the name suggests, occurs when a child has interactions with other children or with adults. Whether a child interacts with adults or with fellow children, social play still provides developmental and educational benefits (White, 2012). Parents, in particular mothers, are usually the first partners that a child will interact with in social play. Already in infancy, mothers will engage a child in smiling games, where they will exchange smiles. The ability by a child to smile back at a parent or indeed any other caregiver, is one of the first manifestations of social play in a child's life. As the child develops, especially at a stage where it is able to sit on its own, parents will initiate other simple social games such as peek-a-boo. Peek-a-boo is a popular game even in the traditional Zambian society. For instance, among the Citonga speaking people of southern part of Zambia it is called "*waayi, ngooyu*". This game is played by an adult hiding behind an object and suddenly reappearing, while saying the words, "*waayi, ngooyu*". The game usually triggers a lot of laughter and amusement in a child and often than not is repeated many times. The "*waayi, ngooyu*" game may look simple and purposeless, but it helps children solidify one of the most important milestones that they attain at this stage, namely object permanence. By watching another person disappearing and suddenly reappearing, the child comes to consolidate its belief that even when things disappear from one's view, they continue to exist.

At the age of two years, parents regularly involve children in more complex forms of play such as pretending to be a mother

by cuddling and caring for a doll or pretending to be a driver by driving a toy car. During these early stages of child development, parents or caregivers need to take an active role in initiating and directing play in order for them to support the child to be able to initiate its own social play with peers (White, 2012).

Once children get used to playing social games with familiar adults such as parents, they then begin to venture into social play with peers. As Parten (cited in Sigelman & Rider, 2006) has shown, children's ability to socialise with peers is a slow process that passes through a number of stages, up to the age of about four and a half years when the child develops the capacity for fully fledged cooperative play. More recent studies (e.g. White, 2012), however, have been able to demonstrate, contrary to Parten's early 1930s findings, that children are able to engage in cooperative play with peers as early as the age of two years or even slightly before two years. However, even when children have developed the ability to engage in social play with peers, it is important to bear in mind that the responsibility of providing a suitable environment for children to play in, still remains with adults.

Types of social play

According to Miller and Almon (2009), the following are some of the types of social play:

Rule-based play: in this type of play, children enjoy playing games which require them to follow rules. The rules usually guide children on turn-taking; scoring criteria; penalising unacceptable conduct during games. Children have to negotiate the rules with their peers as they engage in such games.

Make-believe play: this category of play comprises a broad array of activities ranging from using language, problem solving, and imagination and creativity. The other name for this form of play is "let's pretend" and can encompass activities that children have observed from the real world as well as those they may have copied from movies or just imagined.

Rough-and-tumble play: in this form of play, children engage

in playing rough games such as full blown wrestling matches, arm wrestling, rugby and other similar ones. While sometimes children do hurt themselves, they mostly know how to rough each other up without necessarily inflicting injuries.

Object play

Object play is the second broad category of play. Children's ability to pick up and grasp physical objects creates in them an ardent desire to manipulate and play with objects. For this reason, Bjorklund and Gardiner (2011) define object play as a physically engaging activity which involves manipulation of objects. Most of the daily activities during childhood are dominated by object play activities (Hughes, 1999; Pellegrini, 2009).

In the initial stages of object play, which generally begins around the age of five months, the child begins by reaching out and grasping any objects within its vicinity. By the time a child celebrates its second birthday, it develops the ability of not only playing with individual objects, but also the ability of combining a number of objects in one play activity. For example, a child can get some stones to represent food and place them on a plate, then serve them on a table and invite peers to come and eat. A child can also get a limited number of building blocks and stake them to create a structure. As the children develop the ability to combine objects to form a complete play activity, they also develop the ability to engage in symbolic play, where they use play objects to represent things in the real world. For example, a piece of a brick can be used to represent a car or a lump of clay can be used to represent a cake (Hughes, 1999).

Types of object play

Miller and Almon (2009) identified nine different types of object play:

Construction play: this is a form of play that children engage in with a lot of imagination and creativity. For instance, children will build houses, castles, cars, boats and other objects using soil or clay, wires or sticks.

Large-motor play or Gross motor play: here children engage in a number of activities which require them to use their large muscles. Activities such as running, climbing, sliding, swinging and others are a common occurrence here.

Small-muscle play or Fine motor play: as the name indicates, these play activities require children to use their small muscles to coordinate activities that demand accuracy, focus and dexterity. Activities such as stringing beads, fitting puzzle pieces, sorting objects according to size, form a common repertoire here.

Mastery play: during mastery play, children persist in repeating an activity with a view to learning it and mastering it. For example, children may repeat an activity of tying shoe laces until they master it or they may repeatedly engage in balancing themselves on a beam until they learn to do so without falling.

Symbolic play: here children exercise a lot of creativity and imagination through using a common object and converting it into a toy. For example, an empty box of tea bags will function as a car; an empty coffee tin will be used as a drum during their play music ensembles.

Language play: children get fascinated with the use of language and it is not uncommon to hear them repeatedly breaking into song, rhymes or even poetry. It is also common for children here to tell stories about their heroes from cartoon

movies and dramatising them. They may even adopt the names of their favourite super heroes and insist on being called by those names. For example, a number of children love to be called Superman, Spiderman, Batman etc.

Playing with the arts: this form of play involves children integrating art activities such as drawing, painting, modelling (fashion industry), creating music into their play activities.

Sensory play: involves children playing with sand, mud, soil, water and other materials with different textures, smells and sounds. Even if sensory play takes place among older children, it is mostly common in children younger than three years old.

Risk-taking play: here children engage in risky forms of play to extend the repertoire of activities they can do. Often than not, risky play activities are engaged in more by boys than girls. For example, at quite an early age, it is not unusual to see boys learning how to flip backwards and/or forwards on the ground. Just as common is a site of boys locked up in a wrestling contest. Generally, children know how far they can dare without hurting themselves, however, it is still important for an adult to ensure that they do not overstep the safety boundaries.

Importance of play in early childhood education and development

In this section of the Chapter, our aim is to demonstrate the important role of play in enhancing early childhood education and in stimulating child development in various developmental domains. To effectively do this, we shall draw from a number of studies that have been conducted around the world on the benefits

of play for children. At the end of each developmental domain, we shall present some local play activities which teachers and parents can use to stimulate optimal development.

Much research has been done, particularly in the developed world, on how play positively influences child development in all the developmental domains namely, physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. For instance, New Foundland Labrador Government (2011), cites the High/Scope Perry Project, which was conducted with three to four year-olds in the 1960s. In this study, children were divided into three categories as follows: One group received a play-based early childhood education; the second group received instruction via a purely academic mode; while the third group of children were instructed using a combination of the play-based mode and the academic mode. The children in all the three categories were followed until the age of 23 years and the results showed that the children who were taught using the play mode, outperformed their counterparts in the other two categories in all developmental and educational aspects.

In another study, similar to the Perry Project, Marcon (2002), followed children who attended a variety of pre-school programmes right to the time they were in the fourth grade. Marcon's findings indicated that those children who attended play-based pre-school programmes academically performed better than their counterparts who attended academic-oriented programmes.

What has come out of most of these and other studies is that play allows children to integrate various types of learning. This is in agreement with Almon's (2007) conclusion that, "research and experience show strong relationships between a child's

capacity to play and his or her overall development physical, social, emotional and intellectual" (p. 3). Hewes (2006, 2010), arrived at similar conclusions.

According to research conducted in the 1990s by Smilansky and Shefatya on play (cited in Bodrova & Leong, 2008), play makes a positive contribution towards the development of, "verbalisation, vocabulary, language comprehension, attention span, imagination, concentration, impulse control, curiosity, problem-solving strategies, cooperation, empathy, and group participation" (p. 50). Other researches (e.g. Roskos & Christie, cited in Bondrova & Leong, 2008), have established a link between play and literacy and numeracy. Specifically, play has been found to improve children's ability to comprehend text and understanding the reasons for learning reading and writing.

In the next section, we will go a step further and show the specific benefits that are realised from play in the different developmental domains namely, physical development; social-emotional development; and cognitive development.

Play and physical development

From the time a child is born to about the end of the early childhood years about eight years; old, the child experiences much rapid physical development. As a child progresses in its physical development, it develops increased strength and dexterity to enable it successfully handle more complex activities. Active play, an activity which dominates the daily activity of children, helps children develop the strength, dexterity, balance and coordination required for them to accomplish various gross motor and fine motor skills. For this reason, parents and teachers ought to be cognisant of the various play activities that can help

children attain appropriate developmental milestones in the physical domain. Activities such as staking building blocks or threading beads, for instance, enhance children's finger dexterity, a fine motor skill. Kicking a ball will help develop children's large muscles, which will allow them to build agility, coordination and balance (New Foundland Labrador Government, 2011; Bergen, 2002; Garvey, 1993).

Research has shown that children who are provided with optimal opportunities to develop their gross and fine motor skills have a higher chance of excelling in more advanced physical activities in adulthood (Stover, 2009; Rees, 2009; Adolph, Vereijken & Shrout, 2003).

In addition, Thelin (2009), points out that outdoor play helps children sharpen their sensory development because when children engage in outdoor activities, they use all their physical senses of touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste. Apart from developing physical senses, Thelin argues that outdoor play activities enhance children's coordination and help them avoid being overweight. Other scholars, for instance, Carlson (2006), have observed that outdoor play activities of a rough and tumble nature support children's cardiovascular health.

Local play activities to enhance physical development

One of the key things we should never forget about early childhood education is that, unlike grade schooling which focuses almost exclusively on teaching content of various subjects, early childhood education also aims at nurturing children so that they can attain optimal development in their various developmental domains. Thus, aside from mastering literacy and numeracy content, early childhood educators must

be conversant with what they must do to enhance children's attainment of developmental milestones. Often times, there is a tendency among early childhood educators to think that only activities imported from abroad or overseas have the potency to enhance child development. Activities emanating from local cultures are taken to have no relevance in helping children attain their developmental milestones. This reasoning is misplaced because children benefit more when they engage in activities which they meaningfully understand. We shall now discuss some of the local activities which teachers and parents can use to help children attain their physical development milestones.

There are a number of local play activities which teachers and parents can use to stimulate and enhance children's physical development. For example, an outdoor game called *"waida"* or *"wider"*, played with a rope tied at both ends and held at two ends by two people (one at each end), using their legs, is good for the development of gross motor skills. Initially, the rope is placed at the calf level and the people playing will be expected to jump over the rope into the centre of the rope. As the game continues, the height of the rope is raised until the people playing begin to struggle and eventually fail to jump over the rope to get in the centre. Children play this game taking turns holding the rope and jumping over the rope. The game may look simple, but it is vital in enhancing children's gross motor skills namely jumping and balancing. Like most games we will be presenting, the benefits of the game of *"wider"* are not only confined to the physical aspect, they also overspill into the social domain as children have to socialise among themselves as they negotiate and interpret the rules of the game.

Another common game is *"skipping"*. As the name suggests, this game involves the act of skipping. It is played with a skipping rope and in traditional Zambian society, the rope is

usually made from local fibrous materials from different kinds of local plants. What is beautiful about this game is that plants from which skipping ropes are made are available in all areas. Children can play this game as individuals with their own short skipping ropes, but they can also play it communally using a much longer rope held by two people (one at each end). As the rope is swung up and down by the two people, the other children take turns jumping over the rope in different motions and styles. For example, hopping with both feet; hopping with alternating feet; hopping and making rotational movements, etc. Teams are made and compete on spending the most time skipping without getting tripped by the rope. It is quite obvious from the description of the hopping and rotation movements made during the game that the "*skipping"* game improves the motor skills of jumping, balancing, as well as the eye-foot coordination. It also helps in their social-emotional development since children usually have to work in teams. As children experience wins and losses in their teams, they learn how to better handle their emotions in social situations.

"Am I?" is another local game that is popular among children. What is beautiful about the "*Am I?"* game is that it does not require any material to play it; all that is required is a drawing of rows and columns of squares on the ground. There is no fixed number of columns required; four columns and six rows; three columns and five rows; four columns and seven rows, are all acceptable common possibilities. However, while the game is open in terms of the number of rows and columns, we should mention that for younger children, it is usually better to lessen the number of rows and columns so that the game does not become stressful as opposed to it being fun.

"*Am I?"* improves children's movement, balance, and coordination. Here is how the game is played. Once the figure of rows and columns has been drawn on the ground, children take turns walking on tip-toes with their eyes closed in the squares without stepping on the lines. As they walk, they will be saying the words *"Am I?"* Each correct step onto the squares will get a resounding *"Yes!"* from the opponents around the figure. However, when a line is stepped on, the "*Am I?"* call will be followed by an emphatic *"No!"* from the opponents. Once at the end of a column, the one playing opens his or her eyes to study the next set of squares they should walk on in a similar fashion.

Apart from improving movement, coordination and balance, *Am I?* also improves children's cognitive skills. To be able to walk on rows of squares with eyes closed without stepping on any line, children need to use the cognitive skills of memory and visualisation. Both these skills are of vital importance for schooling at all levels. In addition, social-emotional skills are enhanced since this is an individual and collective game which involves winning and losing.

The physical games that we have presented thus far, largely involve the use of leg and feet muscles, they have less to do with arms and hands. However, as we know, physical activities also involve the use of arms and hands. Thus, we shall now present play activities that largely focus on arms and hands.

Balls can be made from soft materials such as paper, plastics and pieces of cloth in order for children to play throw and catch games. A pair of children can play a throw and catch game to sharpen their skills to use hands as well as improve their hand-eye coordination. Teachers and parents should ensure that hard materials are avoided to lessen chances of injuries during play. Teachers and parents can work together in making the soft balls

appropriate for children's play. Where money is available, these soft balls can also be purchased.

In addition to games, teachers and parents can arrange opportunities where children are accorded a chance to make various simple objects using clay. Soft clay can easily be sourced even in rural areas. Now, we should emphasise here that the focus of these activities is not on producing artistically beautiful objects, but on the process of children working with the clay using their hands and fingers. As children press, pull, twist and turn the clay, they improve their fine motor skills through enhanced dexterity. Apart from improving dexterity, working with clay to make objects improves children's imagination which is a vital cognitive skill.

Play, particularly the kind that requires children to collaborate with others, helps them develop abilities to harmoniously interact with others and express their emotions in acceptable ways. The New Foundland Labrador Government (2012) report expresses this so poignantly that, "as children interact with each other, they learn concepts and skills in cooperating, listening to others, handling frustration and empathising with others, all of which are important in the development of self-regulation and social negotiation" (p. 30). This then means that teachers and parents need to create play opportunities where children develop their self-regulation and social negotiation skills.

Local play activities to enhance social-emotional development

As we saw above when we presented a number of local games that can be used to enhance physical development, most of the games played with the involvement of more than one person, also necessarily improve children's social-emotional skills. Through interaction with one another during games, children inadvertently improve their ability to get along with others. It

therefore follows that the more children are exposed to games and activities where they have to interact with others, the better they will learn to handle themselves emotionally and socially.

One game which is commonly played in the rural Zambian societies, which can enhance children's social-emotional development is called *"Mbelele Mbelele"*. *Mbelele Mbelele* is the local equivalent of "sheep sheep come home". Basically, this game is played between two groups of people; the sheep and the lions. The two groups stand at two opposite ends of a field and the lions group entice the sheep to cross the field for better pastures. As the sheep make their move to the other side of the field, the lions chase the sheep to capture as many sheep as they can. The sheep that are not captured the first time again have to cross back to where the lions are and once again try to escape being captured. Each time the sheep try to cross the fields, lions capture more and more sheep until the last sheep is been captured. Once all the sheep have been captured, then the sheep cease to be sheep, they become lions as well.

Mbelele mbelele is a fun game, which can enhance children's ability to work as a team. In addition, the game has some physical development benefits because it involves a lot of running, chasing, dodging and grabbing.

As social activities, dances are also an effective means through which social-emotional development can be enhanced. One such dance is called *"Namoonga"*. *Namoonga* is performed by children both males and females going round in a circle singing and dancing. As the song gets to the chorus, boys and girls separate to opposite ends and face each other in preparation for paired dancing between a boy and a girl. While the other boys and girls sing the words, *"two by two catapila"* to the rhythm of the drum, a boy will swiftly dance his way to the girls' side and pick a girl of his choice to dance with him. The chosen girl

will dance in front of the boy as the boy circles around the girl dancing like a cockerel. Each pair will spend about a minute dancing in the middle before they leave for another pair to have their turn.

Play and cognitive development

As earlier indicted, the cognitive development domain is a vitally important area of child development in that the other aspects of child development largely depend on it. By definition, cognitive development is referred to as the process that shows how children develop the ability to think (Woolfolk, 2010). It describes how children develop the ability to use their mental faculties to make sense of the environment around them (see Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013).

Research has shown that active play provides benefits for cognitive development (White, 2012). This means that play lays the foundation for the optimal development of the mind. Diamond and Lee (2011), for instance, have shown that active physical play can improve executive functions in school age children. White (2012) argues that the benefits for executive functions may even be more from organised sports because of their sustained requirement for attention and disciplined action. New Foundland Labrador Government (2011) has argued that play improves children's logical and/or mathematical reasoning through activities involving problem solving. Activities involving such play materials as sand, blocks, water and clay, for instance, have been found to sharpen children's reasoning and divergent thinking. With these abilities developed through play, children come to understand that there is a variety of ways that can be used to solve problems. Blair and Razza (2007) also argue for the positive influence active play has on developing children's executive functions as well as other cognitive abilities.

Another important aspect of cognitive development is language development. Apart from being an effective intercommunication

tool, language is useful for directing an individual's thought processes (see Munsaka & Matafwali, 2013). Thus, language development is inextricably interwoven with mainstream cognitive development. Through pretend play, children improve their vocabulary, sentence complexity and semantics of language (Perry, Hogan & Marlin, 2000). Consequently, New Foundland Labrador Government (2012) argues that pretend play enhances children's preparedness for initial literacy.

Since play is often associated with pleasure, non-serious and other activities that may be termed as oblivious, it is important to describe its cognitive manifestations. In this effort we acknowledge that most ECE settings are pre-occupied with cognitive development which is usually simplified as reading and counting. Parents equally gauge how much a child has learnt if they can read letters and words and count. Duncan and Tarulli (2003) explain that play enables a "decontextualisation of meaning". In play that involves substitute objects for instance, children are able to decontextualise meaning by clearly treating substitute objects as real objects. In daily lives, children can be seen pushing or wagging any object and making the sound of a car. It is clear that whatever object they are using is not a car yet they ignore what they can see and purely engage the mental faculties to treat the object as a real car. In other words, they overcome the external realities that may hinder their play. Another way in which play is a cognitive activity is seen in socio-dramatic play that involves following rules. It is known that children don't willingly submit to rules imposed on them, however when they play, they subordinate their behaviour to the requirements and demands of play.

Local play activities to enhance cognitive development

Everything must be done to ensure that a child receives adequate mental stimulation to permit it to activate and develop all the mental faculties. Again, there is often a misconception among

teachers, parents and many other people that only imported mental activities such as sophisticated video games, puzzles, brain teasers and so on, can stimulate and develop children's mental faculties. Nothing could be further from the truth; children can obtain as much mental stimulation from local games and activities as they do from foreign games. In this section of the Chapter, therefore, we shall present examples of local games and activities that can be used by teachers and parents to stimulate children's cognitive development.

The first game that we shall discuss is called *"Chiyato"*. *Chiyato* is a very common game played in all the ten provinces of Zambia. Like most of the Zambian traditional games, the game does not require a lot of materials to play it. In addition, *Chiyato* can be played by one person, however, to get the full benefit from it, it is often best played with more than two to five people.

Here is how C*hiyato* is played: first, a shallow hole of about 3-4 centimetres deep and about 10 centimetres in wideth is dug in the ground. Once the hole has been dug, it is then smoothened out at the base and on the edges to lessen the amount of loose soil. Thereafter, some smooth round stones usually about 20-30, stones depending on the number of people playing the game. The stones are selected and placed in the hole. To play, each of the players will need an additional smooth, round stone which is slightly bigger than the ones placed in the hole. The players sit in a circle around the hole. One player designated to start playing takes position and throws the stone he or she has in the air about 30 centimetres high and quickly scoops a few stones from the hole and catches the stone before it lands on the ground. Normally the players will start by retaining one stone after scooping a number of stones and take back the rest in to the hole. This continues in a sequence agreed upon to be left outside the hole. The person playing again throws back the stone in the air and swiftly push the other stones back into the hole and catches it before it lands. This sequence of throwing the stone up, scooping some stones

out of the hole, catching the stone midair, throwing the stone up in the air again, pushing some stones back in the hole leaving behind the agreed upon number, catching the stone midair again continues until the person playing either drops the stone or fails to leave the correct number of stones outside the hole. Then that player discontinues and another player takes it up.

Apart from improving the hand-eye coordination and improving the fine motor skills, *chiyato* improves children's cognitive skills. For example, they have to ensure that the correct number of stones is left outside the hole while the others are pushed back in the hole. This may sound simple but it takes quite some skill especially as the game advances to levels where stones to be left outside the hole go to double digit figures. A child has to quickly count the correct number of stones to leave outside the hole to stay in the game. Because of the alertness and precision required in the game, the mental skills of a child are sharpened. Therefore, teachers and parents should not underrate the usefulness of *chiyato* in building children's cognitive skills. What is beautiful about the game is that apart from it being witty, it is also a lot of fun to children.

Another game that stimulates cognitive development in children is called *"Nsolo"*. *Nsolo* is played by digging rows and columns of shallow holes similar to the one described above for *chiyato*. Typically, *nsolo* will have four rows of holes and up to as many as 12 to 20 columns. Each hole will have two to three stones, which players will strive to win from each other. The *nsolo* game does not end until one player has acquired all his/ or her opponent's stones into his or her two rows of holes. Unlike *chiyato*, *nsolo* involves two players. Over the years, however, even in the traditional set up, the *nsolo* holes do not have to be dug in the ground; they can be on smooth permanent concrete blocks or on portable wooden boards (See figure below). The calculation on the number of movements to be made and the number of stones to be won, give the game the cognitive value that it has. As children engage in all the mental processes involved, they inadvertently improve their thinking capacity

which paves their way open for the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills.

Fig 1: The Nsolo Game Board

Draft game boards

We will present one more game that enhances children's cognitive development and this is a game called *"Draft". Draft* is not a purely traditional game; it has some influence of western culture. It is played on a checkered board, similar to the one used for the game of chess (see figure below). The difference with chess, however, is that *draft* does not use chess pieces, it uses bottle tops. Where it is possible, differently coloured bottle tops can be used so that each player can identify his or her own pieces. However, as is the case in most rural settings, getting bottle tops of different colours can be challenging; in such a case, bottle tops of the same colour can be used, except one set can be turned upside down for differentiation.

Core cognitive skills of wit, concentration and alertness are required to successfully play the game of *draft* and children can be encouraged to try their hand at the game. It has to be mentioned though that the game of *draft* is a little complicated and caution must be taken by teachers and parents not to force

all children to play even when they may not be gifted in the game. The game should not be used to trigger fear in learners but rather to create a desire in them to use their cognitive skills in a fun environment. In this regard, children who may not be interested in playing *draft* for whatever reason, should not be forced.

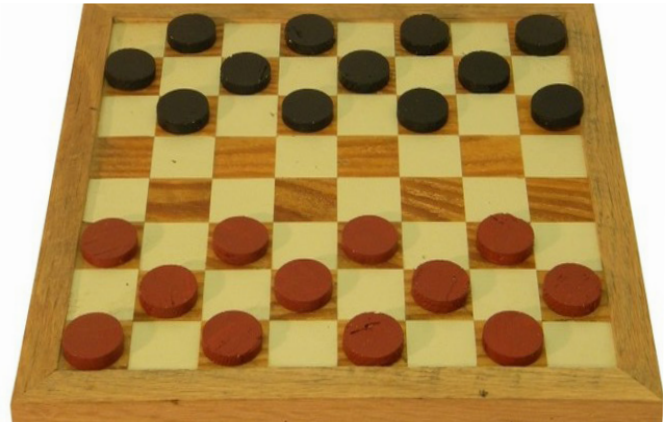


Fig 2: The Draft Game Board

From the presentation we have made of the various local games and activities that can be used to enhance child development, one can see that early childhood education does not always have to be planned around materials drawn from the western world, which are often inaccessible to most early childhood education centres, ECE can still thrive even where local materials are used. What really matters is that children are sufficiently stimulated to optimally attain their developmental milestones and that a solid foundation is laid for literacy, numeracy and later schooling. In saying this, however, we are in no way discrediting what western play activities can do in enhancing early childhood education, all we are saying is that early childhood education has to be meaningfully related to the local context.

In this regard, there are many suburbs in affluent locations of Zambia where it just would be ridiculous to teach early childhood education using local play activities because children in those areas have a western way of life. Our recommendation for such neighbourhoods is that children should be taught using activities which they can more easily relate to.

The issue of western play activities, however, brings us to yet another area of contention and this is the influence of television and other electronic media on child development and learning. Thus, in the next section, we discuss ways in which electronic media especially television, influence child development and learning.

Television viewing and child development

Like most developing countries around the globe, Zambia has experienced an unprecedented increase in the number of people who have access to television particularly in the urban areas. A simple, casual survey of households even in high density townships throughout the country would show that almost all households own a television set, some of them with access to western content through Digital Satellite Television (DSTV). The variety of western and other television channels is even higher in more affluent neighbourhoods. More and more parents are allowing their children an increased number of television viewing hours. Similar observations have been made in the developed world. For example, a study that was conducted by Robert, Folour, Rideout and Brodie 1999 in the United States of America indicated as shown in the American Academy of Pediatrics (2001) that, as many as 32 per cent of children aged 2 to 7 years old and 65 per cent of those aged 8 to 18 years old, had television sets in their rooms. These percentages according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, translate to an estimation

of 3 hours of television per day, per child and more than six and a half hours per day, per child when other forms of media are also factored in. Other studies (e.g. Gavin, 2005; Sparrow, 2007), have yielded similar findings. Even if there is a dearth of studies in Zambia on television viewing among children, these statistics from the western world are a source of worry even for our situation here in Zambia considering how much the western lifestyle has penetrated our societies. Let us therefore now look at what research says about how television viewing by children affects their development.

How television viewing affects development and learning

For a number of years, uncontrolled television viewing among children particularly children younger than 2 years old, has been of a lot of concern among researchers and other professionals who work with children. Findings from a number of studies (e.g. Razel, 2001; Ni Chang, 2000; Christakis, 2006), have indicated that children who are raised in homes with heavy television viewing are more likely to experience the following: Attention disorders; poor academic performance; violent behavioural patterns; and poor health.

Television and attention disorders

Exposure of infants at only a couple of months old to television has somtimes become a common occurrence especially in homes where mothers do not have additional help to handle house chores and the baby. Televisions are used as “electronic babysitters”. Some sobering findings have however, emerged from a number of studies done on the harmful effects of television to infants.

In a study conducted by Christakis (2006), findings indicate that television viewing during infancy is associated with attention disorders later in life. A number of children who were exposed to television viewing between the ages of one and a half to three and a half years old, were diagnosed with attention disorder problems including restlessness, impulsivity, poor concentration, confusion and obsession, when they were tested at the age of seven years. The findings further indicated that a one hour increase in television viewing per day increases the risk of attention disorders by as much as 9 per cent.

According to Healy (2004), early exposure to television viewing may lead to disorders due to the fact that infants do not yet have neuronal connectivity in the brain established which makes them more prone to having their brain formation influenced by environmental experiences. In line with the principles of brain plasticity, repeated exposure of an infant to a stimulus will inadvertently have an impact on the type of neuronal pathways that the child will have formed in the brain. Depending on the type of stimuli an infant is exposed to, the brain will either be enriched or deprived (Healy, 2004). Thus, as Jusoff and Sahimi (2009) observe, the effects of television may not just arise from the length of time that a child spends viewing television, they may also come from the type of content that a child watches.

Television and learning

What about television viewing and learning? Does television have a positive or negative impact on children's ability to learn? Studies conducted in the past on this subject have not been conclusive; there have been mixed findings. For example, Wright, Huston, Murphy, Peters, Pinon et al. (2001) report a consistent negative correlation between television viewing and various aspects of school achievement. In other words,

according to these findings, it seems the more television that a child watches, the more likely they are not to perform well in school.

Other studies (e.g. Anderson, Huston, Schmitt, Linebarger, & Wright, 2001; Razel, 2001; Uchikoshi, 2005), have reported that television viewing leads to positive outcomes in language development, cognitive development and school performance. However, while there are disagreements on how television viewing influences learning and educational outcomes, there seems to be consensus that television programmes, even of educational content, have a negative impact on children younger than two years. For example, two studies; Linebarger and Walker (2005) and Nelson (1973), (cited in Anderson & Pempek, 2005), which evaluated the impact of *Sesame Street*, an educational programme for children, both report that the programme had a negative impact on language development in children below the age of two years. For this reason, the American Academy of Pediatrics (2001) categorically gives the admonition that children aged two years and below should be kept away from all forms of screens, whether those screens present educational content or not television screen and other screens are detrimental to young children. The admonition given by the American Academy of Pediatrics is understandable especially when one considers that children younger than two years old are in the critical period where neuronal pathways are being created.

A study conducted by Razel (2001) yielded an intriguing combination of results. Firstly, among children aged between 5 and 6 years old, Razel reports that there was a positive correlation between television viewing and school performance. However, other findings indicate that the older children got, the higher the negative correlation between television viewing and school performance. For example, among children aged between 7 and 9 years old , an average negative correlation was exhibited

between television viewing and school performance. Among children aged between 10 and 17 years old , an even higher negative correlation was found between television viewing and school performance. The variations in the findings of Razel's study are not clear, however, it seems plausible to conclude that the variations occurred because of differences in the duration of viewing television. It seems older children were exposed to longer television viewing periods than younger children. Findings from a study conducted by Ballard (2003) seem to validate this conclusion. Ballard reports that 75 per cent of children aged between 8 and 13 years, complained that television viewing made it difficult for them to do their homework.

Looking at the findings from research regarding the negative effects that television viewing by children has on their learning, it is important that parents have control on how much time their children spend viewing television. It does not make sense for children to suffer from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder because their parents did not bother to control their television viewing. Similarly, it does not make sense for a child to fail to attain his or her educational goals just because all their time is taken up by television viewing. Teachers also have a part to play here because television sets have found their way to some early childhood education centres where they are used to keep children in day care section occupied.

Television, video games and aggression

With so many children exposed to television content that is violent, we have every reason to worry as a people about the future generation, if we do not proactively do anything about it. It does not even require empirical research to show us that a lot of content that children watch on television, even in some of the cartoon films, is of a violent nature.

One of the pioneers in the field of observational learning, Albert Bandura, conducted an experiment to demonstrate the power of observational learning or modelling in learning violent behaviour. In his famous "*Bobo* doll experiment" (see Bandura, 1965), Bandura observed that when children were exposed to a film that portrayed a model who was violent to the *bobo* doll, they also tended to behave violently towards the *bobo* doll, when they were given an opportunity to play with it in real life. From Bandura's *bobo* doll experiment, we can see that television has a lot of potential to inadvertently teach children violent and other unacceptable behaviour. We should be quick to indicate here that these violent models that children imitate, do not just come from television, they also come from a variety of other forms of electronic media such as video games on broader screens and on mobile phones. This again calls for a lot of control on the part of parents so that children do not have access to video games beyond what is normal. What is the acceptable duration of children playing video games? Readers may ask. We do not have a categorical answer, however, we do have some suggestions.

To begin with, children should not play videos games that are likely to induce them into engaging in violent and other unacceptable behaviour. Thus, the normal period of playing video games we are referring to here only applies to games with quality acceptable content. Since there is no specific stipulation which has been given regarding the amount of time that a child should spend playing video games, we shall use the stipulation given by the American Academy of Pediatrics for viewing television. The American Academy of Pediatrics (2001) stipulates that children who are two years and older should view television of appropriate content for a maximum of 1 to 2 hours per day. Children who are younger than 2 years old should not view any television at all as they are still in the critical period when neuronal pathways are being formed in their brain.

Television and Obesity

Another problem that emanates from excessive television viewing by children is obesity. Because children spend most of their time seated watching television, they have no time to engage in activities such as jumping, running and skipping which would help control their body weight. As the American Academy of Pediatrics (2006) observes, children who watch television for hours are likely to suffer from obesity not only due to inactivity but also because they are more likely to view enticing advertisements about unhealthy fast foods presented during commercial breaks. Fortunately, child obesity is not yet a worrying problem in most developing countries including Zambia. However, with the western lifestyle that is fast becoming a norm, it will not be long before child obesity becomes a vexing concern even for Zambia. It is for this very reason that we have decided to mention the problem, albeit briefly.

To close our discussion of the negative effects of television on child development and learning, we would like to mention that adults, parents, in particular, have a huge responsibility to ensure that children are exposed to the correct content of screen entertainment and for the correct duration. We have shown, through research evidence the various ways in which television can negatively influence children. It now remains for each parent and/or guardian to take it upon himself or herself to ensure that no child of his or hers is unnecessarily exposed to inappropriate television content and other electronic media.

Parents, as Sparrow (2007) advises, need to talk to their children and educate them about why it is important to limit the time they spend viewing television and other forms of electronic media. Children should be made to realise the value of interacting with fellow human beings compared to watching television using mobile phone screens in order to enhance their development and

learning. To this end, studies (e.g. Paul, 2006), have consistently indicated that there is no type of media or toy that can substitute human interactions. It is because of this that we have emphasised in this book the need for children to engage in play activities that encourage them to socialise with others. To further guide parents, present below what we consider to be a viable alternative to television viewing in a home.

The Alternative to television

Having pointed out the dangers that are associated with excessive television viewing, it remains for us to make suggestions of the alternatives that parents can use so that the reduction in television viewing does not create an unhealthy vacuum. As we have indicated already, there is nothing which can be substituted for human interactions. For this reason, parents need to ensure that they create time when they can sit and listen to their children. There are a lot of experiences that children make during and after lessons at school. Often, children crave for an opportunity to share these experiences with anyone who will care to listen to them. How wonderful when parents can create time for their children to share these daily experiences with them. It is during such moments of sharing that a parent can come to learn of any difficulties a child may be experiencing at school. A child experiencing bullying by fellow learners, for instance, may find it difficult to tell his/her parents about it, unless the latter create moments when they can listen to their child. Through such moments of constant sharing between parents and children, chances of problems not being detected early can be drastically reduced.

In addition, by switching off the television, moments can be created when parents can develop the much needed reading culture in their children. In this modern era, one does not need to conduct empirical research to determine that the reading culture has been on the decline, largely due to the increase in the use of technological devices. For children who may not have competently mastered the reading skill, parents can use this time to read to them interesting stories at their level. Over time, children will adopt the culture of reading daily as their own. Through this healthy reading culture, children will not only improve their reading abilities, but will also increase their commitment to school in general. To avoid any form of misunderstanding, we should clarify here that the stories that are read to children by parents should be those that children can easily relate to and should be presented in the language that children are familiar with. Thus, for example, it would not make much sense to read a story about Snow White in English to a pre-school child who lives in a rural setting where English is not the familiar language. We are aware of the scarcity of children's story books written in Zambian local languages, however, parents can still improvise, where they can, by translating the available English stories into the familiar local language. Children who already know how to read can be provided with simple story books for them to read before they retire to bed, instead of watching television. To enhance a child's interest, a parent can even allow the child to read the story aloud while he/she listens.

How to teach early childhood children using the play-based approach

What is meant by play-based approach to teaching ECE? There are several definitions regarding what a play-based approach to ECE is, however, at the core of all the definitions is the emphasis on the use of play activities that are child centred to deliver content. The Newfoundland Labrador government (in press) (as cited in Newfoundland Labrador government, 2016, pp. 36-37), has identified a number of attributes that a play-based approach to teaching and learning is identified with and we present and paraphrase some of them as follows:

(i) A stimulating, rich classroom environment that acts as a 'third teacher' whereby learners are provided with abundant opportunities to express their ingenuity through exploration, imagination, creativity, and problem solving abilities;

(ii) Rather than being viewed as *'gurus'* who know it all, teachers are in partnership with learners to construct, learn and explore in order to generate new knowledge. Accordingly, teachers encourage a sense of curiosity and inquiry in the learners by allowing learners to ask questions, it is not a sign of deviance, but rather it is a vital sign of being deeply engaged in the learning process;

(iii) Teachers do not approach all learners in the the same way; they spend time observing the needs of each and every learner so that they can then plan appropriately for all learners;

(iv) In a play-based classroom, teachers are aware of the expected curricula outcomes and as such they are in a position to execute the curriculum in ways which are relevant and

meaningful to all learners. In other words, their teaching of the curriculum is meaningfully purposeful;

(v) Should the classroom environment prove to be inappropriate in some way along the way, teachers do not shy away from modifying the classroom environment so that it allows all the learners to be actively engaged in the teaching-learning process; and

(vi) Teachers remain active agents even in the unstructured free-play indoor and outdoor activities of children.

As can be seen from the above listed attributes, a teacher in a play-based approach plays a pivotal role in that he or she is responsible for creating the enabling environment required for learners to meaningfully benefit from the teaching-learning process. A teacher is responsible for ensuring that learners are not reduced to being passive receivers of information but that they are and remain active co-constructors, co-explorers, and co-learners and teachers in the pursuit of knowledge. In this respect, Jones and Reynolds (2011, pp. 42-43) view a teacher in a play-based classroom as a, "stage manager, mediator, player, scribe, assessor and communicator as well as a planner". He or she needs to have the required versatility to be able to effectively execute all the required roles for the good of the learner.

Play in an early childhood classroom

We have explained, albeit broadly, how involved a teacher should be in a play-based curriculum, however, it still remains for us to explain exactly how these broad roles that a teacher has translate into the actual extent of involvement in play activities

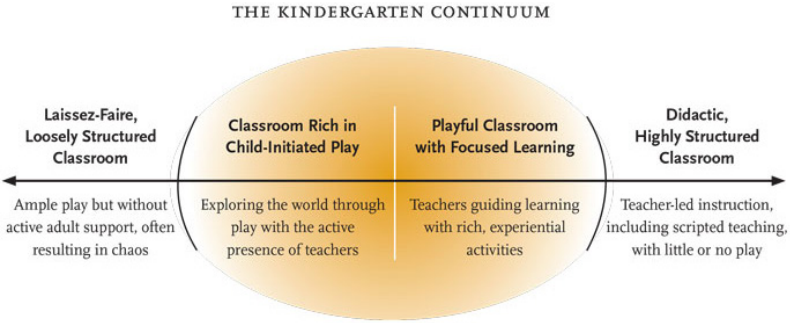
with learners. How much control should a teacher have in the play activities of children? To what extent should a teacher be actively engaged in children's play activities? To answer these pertinent questions, we would like to quote the words of Miller and Almon (2009) when they indicated that;

> In a healthy kindergarten, play does not mean "anything goes". It does not deteriorate into Chaos. Nor is play so tightly structured by adults that children are denied the opportunity to learn through their own initiative and exploration. Kindergarteners need a balance of child-initiated play in the presence of engaged teachers and more focused on experiential learning guided by teachers (p. 12).

Thus, creating a healthy balance between child initiated and adult-initiated play activities will provide an environment in which teachers and parents will not only apply the best practices of teaching children through play but will also learn from children. Through this mutual interaction between parents or teachers and learners through play, optimal outcomes in early childhood can be attained.

At this point, it is only appropriate for us to present the continuum created by Miller and Almon (2009) showing the levels of involvement of a teacher or any adult, for that matter, in children's play activities.

Figure : The play continuum



(*Source*: Adapted from Miller & Almon, 2009, p. 12)

As indicated by Miller and Almon (2009), early childhood teachers should aim at fostering play activities that operate in the four quadrants in the middle of the play continuum. Teachers should deliberately create an environment in the classroom which provokes children to explore. In order to gauge how children are learning from play activities, a teacher needs to actively observe the progress they are making in various play activities. Where it is appropriate, a teacher can get involved to enhance the process of play through making encouraging comments and by asking questions that provoke the children. Each teacher needs to have the sensory acuity to be able to determine how many child-initiated and how many teacher-led play activities to include in his or her class. The key, though, is that there should be a healthy balance between child-initiated play activities and those that are led by teachers (Newfoundland Labrador Government, 2016).

The benefit of placing learners at the centre of the play-based activities in a classroom is that the content they are taught becomes more authentic and meaningful to them. For example, Fortier, a teacher in Saskatchewan, Canada, used this method to teach French vocabulary to her kindergarten class. She observed a remarkable difference and made a poignant comment;

> I recognised that when the demonstration of skill- such as using new French vocabulary- was experienced in an authentic situation and in context with my students' interests, they were far more able to remember and use the vocabulary in authentic ways. My focus was more on the process of learning and the ongoing learning that was happening rather than simply the end result. Yet our end result was wonderful!... This experience was driven by the students, yet I could have easily missed the opportunity. Did the students do it all on their own? Of course not! It was a lot of work on my part but the risk and the work was worth it (Fortier, 2014, pp. 135-36).

Unfortunately, our experience has been that in most of the early childhood education centres that we have been privileged to observe in Zambia, teachers use a highly structured, didactic approach where children do not have any leverage to engage, let alone, initiate their own play. Children are subjected to traditional methods of teaching adults where learners are treated as passive receivers of information. Nicolopoulou, Barbosa de Sa, Ilgaz, Brockmeyer and (2009, p. 43) caution that play-based school programmes should not dismiss children's "enthusiasm, initiative and creativity" found in play in an attempt to meet academic goals.

Play and Music

Children's play is often than not accompanied by songs and other musical activities of movement and dance. In Africa for instance, these activities do not exist in isolation. Most perceptions associated with play such as non-serious, imaginative, creative, enjoyable and fun are also characteristic of music. A common view of anyone involved in music is that they are 'playful.' The most common features between music and play are that they are both social cultural phenomena found almost among most, if not all peoples of the world. Early studies of music and play were discussed in aesthetics, cognitive and social segments

(Littleton, 1998). Pound, (2002) and Van der Linde (1999) saw stimulations of play and music as biologically inherited. We therefore argue that there is an artificial line between play and music. Research has shown that content taught as song is easily recalled by children (Kalinde, 2016). As such, teachers are advised to spontaneously create simple tunes that they can use to teach content. The tunes don't need to be written in notation but can simply involve using expressive vocalisations. For example, a topic on road safely can be taught as a song to be sung as,

> *red is stop, stop, stop, orange get ready, ready, ready to go, green is go, go, go, at the white and black lines cross, cross, cross only if the road is clear*.

We must state here that these are just words not set to any music and the teacher can sing it to a tune of choice. It is also advisable to set these words to popular songs that children already know. In daily life, music is synonymously used with song and in the following discussion songs will be cited as key in the play based approach of teaching literacy and numeracy. Thus, let us now explain how the play-based approach can be applied in the teaching of literacy to early childhood children.

Play-based approach in the teaching of literacy

We indicated in chapter one that play dominates the activity of children, infact, children largely interact with the environment through play. Thus, it makes sense that even their initial literacy should be presented in a play-oriented format. In support of this proposition, Burke (2011) observes, "Play represents a huge opportunity to create a foundation for the future literacy lives of our children" (p. 4). Kontovourki and Siegel (2009) make a similar argument when they indicate that play has a great potential to become an invaluable teaching-learning resource for both teachers and children, if teachers use it to become more cognisant of learners' backgrounds and their literacy needs.

These arguments tie in well with the argument we have been making throughout this book that local play activities (games, songs, stories, dances), which children can easily relate to should be used to enhance the teaching-learning process among early childhood learners.

The teaching of literacy should begin by making reference to materials obtaining in the environments where children reside. It does not, for instance, make any sense for a teacher teaching a literacy class in rural Zambia to make references to things such as snow, oceans, polar bears, dolphins and penguins, which have never existed in Zambia. Such a lesson would be doomed to fail before it even begins because it has no connection with the environment of the learners. Examples of such things as cows, goats, rivers, maize fields, hills etc, which are found everywhere in rural settings in Zambia, would be more effective in teaching literacy to rural children. Just as futile would be a literacy lesson to rural children drawing examples from the capital city or any other major cities. No matter how well a teacher may present the examples from these cities, children would remain lost as the city world is far removed from their reality.

When it comes to introducing the alphabet, teachers also need to use their ingenuity to captivate the attention of the children. One common way of doing this is using a song to teach the alphabet. Unless otherwise, each and every early childhood education teacher should be familiar with the famous "a,b,c,d,e,f,g..." song. The effectiveness of this song may not be so apparent because no one takes time to think how difficult it would have been to teach children the alphabet, if the song technique had not been created. Imagine if children had to struggle to remember all the twenty-six letters of the alphabet as individual segmented units. The task would not only be difficult due to its size, but would also be boring to the children. Thus, the song accomplishes two tasks namely; presenting the alphabet

as one easy-to-remember whole, as opposed to presenting it in fragments, and making the task of learning the alphabet fun and interesting.

Thirdly, teachers can make use of common folklore stories to teach literacy. For our situation here in Zambia, there are a number of traditional local stories that teachers can use to make the acquisition of literacy by children more interesting and more meaningful. For example, borrowing the idea of using stories to teach vocabulary from Fortier (2014), the popular story *"the rabbit and the tortoise in a race",* can be used. Using this story, a teacher can bring out a number of vocabulary items which learners can learn with a high level of interest and inevitably high retention. The success of this technique lies in the active engagement of learners and in arousing their interest. Each of the tribes in Zambia is rich in such folklore stories, which can be applied in the teaching of literacy to children.

Play-based approach in the teaching of numeracy

The play-based approach is also useful in the teaching of numeracy to children. What teachers have to bear in mind is that children apply a number of numeracy skills even before they begin attending any early childhood education centres. Thus, rather than discontinuing with the rudimentary knowledge that children already have in numeracy, teachers need to build on it. The Newfoundland Labrador Government (2016), makes this point so aptly, "Children use various numeracy strategies during the early years. These strategies- classification, seriation, patterning, measurement, geometry, and number concept- can be supported and strengthened in a play-based program throughout the school day and in all areas of the classroom ..." (p. 50).

The concept of classification thus putting things in categories of similarity, for example, can easily be handled in a play-oriented lesson where children can be asked to sort

different play objects according to colour, shape or size. To heighten the excitement and interest, children can be divided in groups of say four or five children, and assigned a task of sorting out objects into one category of similarity. The teacher can be part of the activity, however, caution must be taken not to take over the activity; it must remain child-driven. Where the teacher notices some confusion among children, he or she can give some subtle clues in a jovial manner to put the children back on course in handling the task. It is important for teachers to constantly remember that 'fun' and not 'seriousness' should be the overriding principle as children do these tasks. In order for children to fully understand the skill of classification, they should be constantly exposed to the activity until they are in a position to classify according to different attributes with ease. Hennigar (2013) presents a fundamental argument to this effect, "... children require considerable practice and time to understand classification. Classification skills are fundamental to many mathematical concepts such as understanding higher mathematical skills such as organising sets or understanding groupings of 'tens' and 'ones' (p. 389).

Any teacher can facilitate the tasks of classification in a play-based approach because they do not require any sophisticated materials to execute. In a rural early childhood education centre, for example, a teacher can have objects of different shapes (e.g. squares, rectangles, spheres, cylinders etc) made from clay for children to use in class. To give the objects a longer lifespan, they can be burnt in fire, the same way traditional clay pots are treated. There it is, a teacher can have valuable teaching aids at no cost at all! Yes, no cost because parents in rural areas are always more than willing to volunteer labour to make materials for their children to use in school. To practice the mathematical concept of seriation, similar objects, as described above, can

be made, except they should be of gradual varying sizes so that children can determine the order in which they should be sequenced according to size. In poor urban townships, these objects can easily be made by carpenters at a reasonable price, which parents can be encouraged to get.

Earlier, we cited the games of *"chiyato"* and *"Nsolo"* as examples of local traditional games that teachers can use to enhance cognitive development in children, it turns out that these games can also be used in a play-based early childhood classroom to teach children numeracy skills and the concept of numbers. Through working with stones, concrete objects which they can handle, children will find it much easier to appreciate the mathematical concept of quantity. What's more, the games will maintain the interest of the children because of the fun involved in the games. Again, even the poorest of the poor early childhood centre in the remotest rural area can afford to organise the games of *"Chiyato"* and *"Nsolo"* at no cost at all. The only thing that is required is for the teacher to have the commitment to want to teach the children numeracy using whatever materials that are available.

Other fun activities such as singing, skipping and clapping games can also be used to help children meaningfully understand some aspects of numeracy and mathematics (see Newfoundland Labrador Government, 2016). As the Newfoundland Labrador Government further points out, exposing children to hands-on, concrete numeracy and mathematical experiences, helps them better understand the concepts of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, which are fundamentally vital to the study of mathematics at all subsequent higher levels.

In advocating for the use of a play-based approach to teaching early childhood education, however, we are in no way suggesting that direct methods of instruction should be totally abandoned at this level. What we are suggesting, in

line with research evidence some of which we have been able to present, is that children learn best when the content of their curriculum is packaged and presented in a play-oriented fashion. Play is the natural pre-occupation of childhood and so when learning activities are packaged in line with children's natural predisposition, meaningful comprehension is achieved. On the other hand, when a more serious, didactic pedagogical approach is used, children's meaningful comprehension is hampered because that method of delivery runs counter to the natural way of children's learning. Notwithstanding this, there are times when it is necessary to use more direct methods of teaching. For example, it would be difficult to teach the prerequisites for reading and writing (phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, print awareness, letter knowledge, and phonics) using the play-based approach.

Teachers need to use the direct methods that they know to teach these prerequisites for reading and writing. This is to ensure that a firm foundation is laid for children to learn how to read and write (see National Early Literacy Panel, 2002; Konza, 2014).

Some examples of lessons drawn from the Zambian early childhood syllabus

Having discussed play as a natural activity that children participate in and thus a viable means through which they can learn; we provide some typical examples of 'playful' lessons while taking cognisance that play is not an exclusive activity. It can combine music, movement and storytelling. In the lessons provided, play, song, movement and story-telling are presented as modes of lesson delivery. Story-telling is practiced among many communities in sub-Saharan Africa, if not the whole Africa as a means of socialisation (Okafor & Ng'andu, 2005). Play has been explored as suitable for teaching children especially

because it does so through entertainment and without pressure on the children's brain (Okafor & Ng'andu, 2005). Stories told to children can incorporate songs, dramatisations and points of conversation exchange between the "teller and the audience" (Okafor & Ng'andu, 2005, p.181), in which the adult can assess the level of the children's understanding of subject matter. There are five teaching courses outlined in the Zambia early childhood education teachers' certificate syllabus shown in the Table below. We select one topic from each teaching course on which we base the lessons.

Teaching course	**Lesson topics**
1. Enviromental science	Human body and their function
2. Expressive Arts	a) Motor development (Fine and Gross) b) Music (Elements) c) Art (Elements)
3. Social studies	Family
4. Mathematics	• Number and notation
5. Language development and literacy	• Communication skills

Source: The early childhood education teachers' certificate syllabus (2013)

Lesson I

Environmental science: Human body and their function.

Activity 1: Children draw pictures of the human body and are given an opportunity to explain their drawings.

This activity involves observation, hand control, use of available space to fit in a drawing. By explaining their drawings, children express their understanding of the body and the teacher guides

what may be their misconceptions and incorrect understandings. This is different from a case where the teacher 'tells' the content to the children. In this case, children only learn what they don't know through a teacher's inquiry of what they may or not know. In this lesson, activities of art (drawing) and both gross and fine motor skills are employed.

Activity 2: Create a song on body parts

The teacher creates a song with words that reflect the content of the lesson. A tune from a familiar song can be used to sing the words or a teacher can create an original tune. Children stand in a circle and sing the following while performing the actions of clapping, walking, running (trotting) and pointing at specific body parts.

This is my head, (clap, clap clap)
My eyes can see you
My ears can hear the sound of rain
My mouth can sing, sing, sing
My hands (clap, clap, clap)
My legs walk, walk, walk
My legs run, run, run
My hands clap, clap, clap

This lesson involves children's participation through activities of clapping, walking and running/ trotting to a beat. The combination of song and movement can help children to internalise subject matter (Abril, 2011). Literature has shown that children enjoy activities that involve both song and movement (Campbell, 2002).

Lesson 2
Social studies: Family

Activity1: Perform a role play of a family setup

To start with, children can be divided in groups and plan a meal for the family by suggesting what should be cooked and then taking a journey to a store to buy what is required. With the teacher's guidance, children share tasks as family members. At the end, a meal is set at the table and each child is given a chance to share their experience of the activity. The activities involved in the role play include planning what to serve, basic budgeting, finding what is needed in a store, sharing tasks, setting a table. Children must count how many plates, cups and cutlery needed. Concepts of subtraction can be introduced by making one or two members of the family absent and addition by bringing in two or more visitors. Children get to participate in actual family tasks and share their understanding of what it means to contribute in a family. The teacher can conclude the lesson by emphasising that the success of a family lies in team work.

Activity 2. Communication skills can be taught to children using real life examples. This could involve creating scenarios in which children have to introduce themselves, greet adults and have conversations in a shop or by the roadside. In this way real life usage of communication skills are applied.

The two lessons above include all the five learning areas integrated . In as much as learning areas are divided into lessons, it may be too soon for children to understand their distinctiveness. Besides, it can be argued that children do not see the world as divided as it is presented in different subjects.

As we conclude this chapter, we would like to claim that while direct didactic pedagogical methods can be used to teach children in early childhood settings, their use should be the exception rather than the rule; the bulk of the teaching should be done using the play-based approach. In this respect, play activities that children are familiar with in the contexts where they live should be used as much as possible in delivering the content of the curriculum. To emphasise the issue of using local play activities to make early childhood education more meaningfully effective, we, in the next chapter, discuss the language of instruction in early childhood education.

CHAPTER 4

Language of Instruction in Early Childhood education

The issue of language of instruction is yet another critically important aspect of early childhood education. In this regard, we have dedicated the current chapter to discussing how important it is for early childhood educators to understand the important role that the mother tongue plays especially in the initial stages of schooling when literacy and numeracy are being established. It is a well known fact in educational circles at all levels that learners best understand unfamiliar information by linking it to what they are already familiar with. In other words, learning new material becomes easier if learners are guided from what they know to what they do not know. For this smooth transition to happen, the language of instruction plays a critical role. Language is the means by which people conceptualise and share ideas- it is a means of communication among a group of people. In this respect, we talk of a "mother tongue", referring to the first language that a person learns to communicate with in a particular context. Andre Martinet (cited in Khan, 2014), defines mother tongue as, "the language through which one comes to know the world" (p. 148). This definition of the first language means that the mother tongue helps people to define the world around them. It therefore inevitably follows that the mother tongue plays a huge role in shaping the reality of the world in which each one of us grows up, it determines our world view. In line with this, UNESCO in 1999, declared February 21 of each year as the "Mother Language Day" (see Daniel, 2003). This declaration makes the ability to use a mother language as one of the inalienable rights of children (Ball, 2010).

Already in the early 1950s, UNESCO made a declaration to allow children world over to be taught in their own mother tongue. The declaration underscores the indispensable role that the mother tongue plays in the attainment of effective and meaningful learning among learners, especially young learners:

> Mother-tongue instruction should be the best way for children to learn as it bridges the gap between home language and language of instruction. Every language is sufficient enough to give high cognitive skills to its users and there are no major or minor languages. Therefore, mother tongue instruction should be extended as long as possible... (Khan, 2014, p. 148).

In line with the designation of the important position that the mother tongue occupies in children's learning, Vulli (2014) points out that not only do children have a right to learn in their mother tongues, but that teaching in children's mother tongue is the only way that quality education can be achieved. Early childhood educators, therefore, have an obligation to ensure that no child is denied access to knowledge through the use of an unfamiliar language of instruction. This means that it is not the child to adapt himself or herself to the instruction process but rather it is the instruction process which should adapt itself to the needs of a child.

Aside from the mother tongue being an important avenue through which people learn, it is also a source of identity. Daniel (2003) indicates that the identity of a people is among other things, linked to their mother tongue. In this regard, the mother tongue plays a critical role in establishing a positive self concept and general well being in children. One could therefore argue that, a healthy relationship with one's mother tongue necessarily leads to a healthy or positive self esteem. Conversely, it also means that if one has an unhealthy relationship with one's mother tongue, one is likely to have a low self esteem. For this

reason, it is vitally important that children are not alienated from their mother tongues. Every effort should be made to bring them closer to their mother tongues and using the latter as languages of instruction is a huge step in that direction. When children see that their mother tongues are used as languages of instruction, they will begin to attach even more value and prestige to their languages. Since the mother tongue plays an important role in establishing a people's identity, the use of mother tongues as languages of instruction will also instil in children some positive self identity.

In Zambia, probably due to the multiplicity of local languages approximately 73 languages and dialects, most of the early childhood centres have embraced the English language as the medium of instruction at the expense of local languages. Indeed, a study we conducted on behalf of UNICEF to map all early childhood centres in Zambia, revealed that English language was the medium of instruction in the more than 700 early childhood centres that were visited country wide (see Matafwali, Munsaka, Mweemba & Muleya, 2012). What was puzzling about this finding was that English language was used as a medium of instruction even in those early childhood centres where children did not use English at home or during play with their peers. For example, the predominating language in Western province is Silozi and yet not a single early childhood centre visited was found teaching children in Silozi; the language that children were familiar with. Teachers were noted as struggling with little success to teach in English. Similar observations were made in Southern, Northern and the other provinces that were visited.

Before we explain the problem that the use of English as a medium of instruction in societies where children predominantly use Zambian local languages brings in the transmission of knowledge, we would like to emphasise that the shelving of

mother tongues in early childhood centres and indeed in primary schools, alienates children from their cultural heritage. Such a scenario is regrettable because children's sense of who they are is largely developed during their formative years.

As we indicated earlier, children need to fully embrace their identity by being proud of their mother tongue, in order for them to have a healthy self esteem and thus reach optimal levels of performance academically (Daniel, 2003).

Sadly, by embracing English at the expense of children's mother tongues, teachers in early childhood centres are inadvertently building and encouraging an inferiority complex in children. It is almost as if children are being told, 'your mother tongue is not good enough to be used as a means for teaching you in school'. The inevitable consequence of these unsaid, yet loud and clear messages, is that children begin to feel ashamed of being associated with their mother tongues. Such a scenario should not be allowed to take root or perpetuate in our schools. Our children, from the early childhood years, should be taught to be proud of their mother tongues as a symbol of their cultural, social and personal identity.

Importance of mother tongue in early childhood education

In this section, we focus on explaining why it is important for children in early childhood education to be taught in their mother tongue. There is probably no better way to open this section than with the following statement by one of the ardent scholars, "You can banish the mother tongue from the classroom, but you cannot banish it from the pupils' heads" (Khan, 2014, p. 149). Children do not come to early childhood education centres as blank slates; they come with a lot of information established in their cognition. Each child will develop his or her cognitive abilities in relation to the mother tongue in which they learn

the environment around them. This means that, as Whorf and Saphir argue in their strong linguistic relativity hypothesis, one's language determines the way one thinks (Woolfolk, 2010). It therefore follows in this regard, that, as children begin attending early childhood education centres, they already have foundational cognitive processes established in their mother tongue. Thus, rather than try to alter or delete these foundational cognitive structures, early childhood educators need to use them as anchors on which they can hook the new literacy and numeracy material that they teach to the children.

In relation to this important foundational role that the mother tongue plays, Khan (2014, p. 150), argues that, "... to effectively teach around 221 million children worldwide speaking a different language at home, from the one used as medium of instruction in schools, there is need to teach them first in their home language, while gradually introducing the national or official language". Teachers need to use this key resource of mother tongue as a means to effectively deliver the new content to children. To this end, Phiri, Kaguda and Mabhena (2013), observe that children from remote rural areas who speak local languages at home, but get exposed to a foreign language as a medium of instruction at school, often experience the most problems in comprehending the language used in school. This mismatch between the home language and the language of instruction used in school, inevitably leads to poor quality of education as well as low literacy levels. Phiri et al.'s (2013) findings further indicate that in all the thirty-two African countries where their study was conducted, all the children who were taught in their mother languages did better in reading literacy than their counterparts who were taught in a foreign language, different from the one they used at home. This finding ties so neatly with the following poignant statement made by Khan:

> Children having sound knowledge of their first language can transfer skills from one language to another. The mother tongue opens the door, including its own grammar, to all grammars, in which it awakens the potential for universal grammar that lies within us all. It is the valuable asset people bring to the task of language learning. Because of this, the mother tongue is the master key to foreign languages, the tool which gives us the fastest, surest, most precise, and most complete means of accessing a foreign language..."(2014, p. 149).

Other scholars (e.g. Pflepsen, 2011; Sathiaseelan, 2013), came up with similar findings indicating that effectively learning a first language allows one to have the required cognitive structures established in the mind to enable one to master subsequent cognitive tasks including learning a second language with ease.

Some studies (e.g. Khan, 2014), have shown that an abrupt switch from the mother tongue to a foreign language of instruction led to the mother tongue being heavily hampered or lost completely. The loss in the mother language, Khan further observes, leads to learners losing self confidence, which eventually leads to them losing interest in school. Remilyn (2013) yielded similar findings and observes that when children are forced to learn their school curricula in foreign languages, many of them begin missing school or even stop attending school altogether. Khan (2014) also reports that failure by schools to instruct children in their mother tongue was one of the major reasons why children dropped out of school. In fact, Khan indicates that children who are taught in their mother tongue are three times more likely to be enrolled and to remain in school until completion than their counterparts who are taught using a foreign language. From the research evidence that we have just shared, it is clear that the use of a mother language serves a purpose that is higher than that of effectively delivering a curriculum but it also serves the purpose of helping the children to identify themselves with the school they attend. When children see themselves as part and parcel of the school, they become

more fully engaged and committed to the activities taking place in the school. With such engagement from learners, optimal benefits can be obtained from the teaching-learning process.
Apart from the mother tongue being an important foundation for the other languages that an individual learns subsequently, the mother tongue also plays the role of narrowing the gap between the home environment that a child is familiar with and the school environment that is strange and foreign to the child. When a child attends an early childhood education centre for the first time, he or she experiences a disjuncture with what he or she is used to at home. This disjuncture can be widened further if a foreign language is used as the medium of instruction. Kadel (2010) puts it so aptly by indicating that the big gap between school and home remains, unless the mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction. In that sense, the mother tongue acts as the unifying factor between the unfamiliar school environment and the home environment.

Another reason why the mother tongue is important in the teaching of early childhood education is that familiar knowledge and examples found in the places where children live can be used as examples to make children understand the new material they are presented with. Vygotsky (1978) indicates that a child's language and culture play an important role in determining how the child will learn his or her environment. Vygotsky argues that each culture has a set of tools, language being one of them, which owners of the culture can use to make sense of their environment. However, children do not struggle to make sense of their environment on their own; they do so with the help of parents, caregivers and others who are more knowledgeable than them. Through the scaffolding provided by the more knowledgeable others, children are able to comprehend what they would not otherwise manage to comprehend on their own (see Vygotsky, 1978). Bearing this in mind, early childhood

education teachers and caregivers need to remember that children come to early childhood centres with their cultural backgrounds, in fact, children remain immersed in their cultures even when they progress in their education. Thus, parents and other adults who are key providers of knowledge in children's lives need to be used as an additional teaching resource to make the learning of children a little easier through the scaffolding they provide at home. In this respect, the use of the mother tongue becomes critical because parents and other more knowledgeable adults and older children cannot give children this needed support in the foreign language which is strange to them.

As can be appreciated, a number of parents and guardians of children are not conversant with the English Language; they may never have used English in their life because they have never needed to. This is the case in a number of rural locations in Zambia. Through much sensitisation and the general influence coming from changing times, early childhood education centres are now finding their way to rural areas. For example, as indicated above, we found a number of early childhood education centres in many rural locations not only use English as a medium of instruction but also actively encourage children to use English at the expense of their mother tongues (see Matafwali et al., 2012). We conducted this mapping study four years ago and in this fast developing modern world, one can only imagine how many more early childhood education centres have developed in different parts of rural Zambia. Obviously, it would be foolish to expect the medium of instruction to be English in those rural early childhood education centres as the language would be totally foreign to the children. Local mother tongues would therefore inevitably be the logical languages of instruction to be used.

Following the experience that we had during the mapping research (see Matafwali et al., 2012), where even rural early childhood education centres were forcing children to learn in English and speak English, we need to mention, based on the research evidence we have presented above, that teaching young children or anybody for that matter, in an unfamiliar foreign language, hinders comprehension and meaningful learning. For this reason, each early childhood education centre should use the predominating mother tongue in the area as the language of instruction. This, as Khan (2014) points out, will not only bridge the gap between the home and school environment but also provide the solid foundation that is required to ensure that children grasp unfamiliar concepts more readily. Benson (2005) makes a similar point when he argues that using a mother tongue is beneficial at two levels. Firstly, it allows children to grasp content more easily because it is presented in a language that is familiar to them.

Secondly, it saves teachers the trouble of having to translate the content they teach in order for learners to make the required connections to comprehend. The mother tongue becomes the link that gives the teacher and learners the common ground that is required for meaningful learning to take place. More recently, Kalinde and Vermeulen (2016) conducted a study in Zambia to find out how music in the mother tongue enhanced the attainment of educational objectives. The findings, among others, indicate that the mother tongue plays a pivotal role in improving the communication and interaction that takes place between teachers and learners. The reason for the improvement in the teaching-learning process, Kalinde and Vermeulen (2016) argue, is that learners are already familiar with the meaning of the songs since they are drawn from the contexts in which the teacher and the learners reside. In other words, learners find it easier to understand the songs because they are based on familiar themes from their cultural context. Ironically, Kalinde

and Vermeulen (2016) further argue that, children singing the national anthem even in urban areas do not sing the right words indicating that they do not understand what they sing. It is also noted that when English songs are used, children create their own versions thus distorting the meaning completely.

In Zambia, our mapping study revealed that a number of early childhood education centres, including rural ones where children who attended them never spoke English at home, used English as the medium of instruction. There was a tendency for these rural early childhood centres to determine the prestige of an early childhood centre by its ability to teach children how to speak English. Indeed, the major indictor that parents were looking for to determine that their children were making progress at an early childhood centre was their children's ability to speak English (see Matafwali eta l., 2012). What a misconception! No language is inferior to the other; each language is adequate in its own right to meet the needs of its users. Even when it comes to acquiring literacy and numeracy skills, there is no evidence to show that literacy and numeracy skills obtained through a foreign language, such as English are more solid than the ones obtained through local mother tongues. To the contrary, research (e.g. Pflepsen, 2011; Phiri, 2013) has repeatedly shown that children who are taught in their mother tongue tend to exhibit stronger initial and subsequent academic abilities than their counterparts who are taught in an unfamiliar foreign language.

One of the arguments that have been put forward for advocating the use of English language as the medium of instruction in early childhood education and indeed at the other subsequent levels of education in Zambia is that Zambia is a country with many languages. Even in the Zambian scenario where there are many languages; about 73 languages and dialects, children's mother tongues should still be identified and used as

languages of instruction. Yes, there are the seven major languages namely; *Silozi, Luvale, Lunda, Citonga, Chinyanja, Kiikaonde* and *Cibemba* that have been identified as the major languages to represent all the ten provinces of Zambia. However, there is still need for particular major dialects spoken in specific areas to be identified and used as the medium of instruction. It is not fair to, for instance, assume that all dialects in Northern and North-western provinces can be adequately represented by *Cibemba and Luvale, Lunda,* and *Kiikaonde*, respectively. Nor would it be justifiable to assume that *Chinyanja* can adequately represent all the dialects in Eastern province. The assumption that the seven major languages of Zambia are mutually intelligible with the dialects they represent, does not seem to represent the reality on the ground. The findings from one recent study, in fact, proved wrong the assumption of mutual intelligibility between major languages and other 'minor' languages (see Malambo, 2016).

In her study, Malambo (2016) sought to find out whether the main language *Citonga* was mutually intelligible with *Lenje*, a minor language it is assumed to be completely mutually intelligible with. Malambo's findings indicated that the *Citonga* language could not be substituted for *Lenje* as a medium of instruction; the two languages were largely not mutually intelligible. *Lenje* speaking teachers struggled to make Lenje speaking children understand lessons that were delivered in the *Citonga* language. Similarly, *Lenje* speaking parents found it difficult to help their children with school work as it was delivered in *Citonga*, which they did not use so much at home. The findings from Malambo's (2016) study are of critical importance, particularly in the Zambian situation where a few main languages have been endorsed as being mutually intelligible with the many 'minor' languages they represent, without justifiable empirical evidence from research. Against

this background, therefore, we recommend that more research be done in the area. However, arising from the current findings emerging from the limited studies that have been conducted, it seems that the assumption of mutual intelligibility between the seven main languages of Zambia and the 'minor' languages they represent, should be made with great caution.

As those who believe in the right of every child to be educated in their mother tongue we, unreservedly recommend in this book that every child should be taught initial literacy and numeracy in his or her own mother tongue. In other words, we recommend that all early childhood education content should be delivered in children's mother tongue. It does a lot of disservice, for instance, to teach an *Ila* speaking early childhood learner in *Citonga*, just because *Citonga* is assumed to be mutually intelligible with *Ila*. We established earlier that a child's mother tongue determines its identity and world view, therefore, it follows that no matter how closely mutually intelligible languages may seem to be, their unique idiosyncrasies, no matter how few they may be, should be taken into account as comprehension and meaningful learning may depend on them.

In advocating for the use of mother tongues as the languages of instruction, however, we should not be misunderstood as advocating for the removal of English language as the medium of instruction from all early childhood education centres. Our position is that children should be taught in their first language (mother tongue) or the language that they use at home.

Notwithstanding that the majority of families in Zambia use local languages at home, there is still a large number of Zambian families who use English language as their first language. It would be wrong and unfair to force local Zambian languages to be used as the languages of instruction for children from such backgrounds. They need to be taught in English, their first

language. What we are advocating here, in other words, is not a one-size-fits-all approach, but rather a case by case approach where each early childhood education centre should be viewed in relation to the realities obtaining in the context in which it is located. Bearing this argument in mind, it therefore, should not be strange for some early childhood education centres to have more than one language used as languages of instruction, as long as those languages are not foreign or strange to the children.

In Zambia, the above situation is likely to be found in early childhood centres found in high density urban locations. For example, in most high density areas in Lusaka city, English language and *Chinyanja* are used jointly in homes and as languages of play. Under those scenarios, children need to be exposed to both English and *Chinyanja* as languages of instruction since they are familiar with both. Such children, in fact, need to be regarded as bilinguals who have two mother tongues, even if both their parents and/or guardians may not be native speakers of those languages (see Khan, 2014). In making this point, however, we are not suggesting that these children's identity is not important, no, we are only suggesting that the combined use of English and *Chinyanja* could ease comprehension and meaningful learning. How much of which language should be used as the medium of instruction is a specification which should be gauged by each teacher, based on the composition of the children in the class.

Having discussed the many aspects of teaching early childhood children, we, in the next Chapter focus our attention on discussing how to effectively correct unwanted behaviour in children, without hurting them.

CHAPTER 5

How to effectively discipline children without hurting them

We could not imagine writing a book that focuses on how to effectively teach early childhood children as this one does without touching on issues of discipline. Inevitably, as teachers handle children in various aspects in order to enhance development and learning, they need to instil some level of discipline in them. Thus, the inclusion of this chapter in this book has been done as a proactive move to forearm teachers and parents for the disciplinary challenges that they meet or are likely to meet. The second reason that prompted us to include this chapter is our knowledge that young children are often subjected to cruel forms of punishment in schools and at home. However, we should be quick to point out that we are by no means trying to find fault with teachers or parents. Through this book, we are creating a resource that will help teachers, parents and caregivers alike, become more effective in controlling unwanted behaviour in young children without causing any physical, emotional or psychological harm. Before we go into the details of the behaviour modification strategies that we suggest, we will begin by discussing punishment in its various forms and explain its influence on child development and learning.

Punishment

There are many definitions that can be given regarding what punishment is, however, they all boil down to the definition given by UNESCO (2006) namely that punishment is a penalty that is given to an individual for exhibiting behaviour that runs counter to the set rules. Punishment has its origins in the work of Skinner, one of the most influential behaviourists. Skinner

(1953) argues as do other behaviourists that, reinforcement and punishment are consequences that determine whether or not preceding behaviour will persist or get extinguished. Behaviour that is followed by reinforcement is likely to persist while that which is followed by punishment is likely to diminish or get extinguished altogether. In this regard, punishment is the most widely used method by teachers for controlling learners' unwanted behaviour. According to the principles of operant conditioning, there are two forms of punishment namely positive punishment and negative punishment (see Skinner cited in Munsaka, 2011).

Positive punishment refers to the presentation of an unpleasant consequence following an unacceptable behaviour (see Munsaka, 2011). When a teacher, for instance, shouts at a learner who is disrupting the class, he or she is applying positive punishment because the consequence of shouting is being applied on the unwanted behaviour. Another example might be that of a parent spanking a child for hitting his little sister. The spank is positive, not because it is pleasant, but because it is applied as a measure to eliminate the preceding inappropriate behaviour.

Negative punishment is the very opposite of positive punishment. It involves the withdrawal or removal of consequences to eliminate the preceding unwanted behaviour. The consequence that is removed under negative punishment is a reinforcer (something an individual desires). An example of this might be a parent denying a child a favourite video game because he or she has failed to do the homework. Again, this type of punishment is referred to as negative because the consequence (the video game) is taken away.

As already indicated, punishment is the most widely used means of correcting unwanted behaviour by teachers and parents alike. The reason for this might be that punishment is referred to

in the book of Proverbs 13:24 in the Holy Bible as a necessity in the process of raising children, "spare the rod and spoil the child", says the Bible. Further influence in the widespread use of punishment around the world, originates from the Machiavelli philosophy, which took root several decades ago. Maag (2001) cites Machiavelli's reverence for punishment in the following statement, "it is much safer to be feared than loved ... for they are entirely yours; they offer you their blood, their goods, their life, and their children" (p. 176).

Research has also given another reason why punishment is so widely used, namely that it usually makes teachers feel reinforced. They feel good about emerging victorious over the learner (Maag, 2001). In an earlier study, Maag (1999), argues that punishment is frequently used by teachers because it usually instantly produces desirable results and can be administered without much difficulty.

Sadly, though, one of the most frequently used forms of punishment in schools is corporal punishment. Let us take time to understand what corporal punishment is by looking at what research says about it. Durrant (2005) defines corporal punishment as occurring when a teacher, a parent or a caregiver deliberately decides to inflict physical pain or cause some discomfort on a child in order to eliminate unwanted behaviour and prevent it from happening again in the future. Corporal punishment has been identified by the United Nations (UN) as one of the ways through which the rights of children are violated around the world and the UN has given a framework through which corporal punishment should be understood.

According to UNESCO (2005, p. 14), what constitutes corporal punishment varies across and within cultures including for example the following:

(i) hitting the child with the hand or with an object (such as a cane, belt, whip, shoe, book, ruler, etc;

(ii) kicking, shaking, or throwing the child;
(iii) pinching or hair pulling;
(iv) forcing a child to stay in uncomfortable positions;
(v) forcing a child to undergo excessive physical exercise or forced labour;
(vi) burning or otherwise scarring the child; and
(vii) forcing the child to eat foul substances (such as soap).

As can be seen from the definition given by the UN, corporal punishment is quite broad, which probably explains why many teachers, parents and caregivers are guilty of using it.

Despite its popularity among teachers, parents and caregivers, punishment has been found to have a lot of side effects with far reaching ramifications on children, especially. Firstly, already in his early research, Skinner (1971), found out that punishment was ineffective, as he so succinctly observes, "the trouble is that when we punish a person for behaving badly, we leave it up to him to discover how to behave well, and he or she can then get credit for behaving well ..." (p. 62). For example, a child who is spanked by a teacher for making noise in class does not know exactly what alternative behaviour to exhibit because the teacher only focuses on extinguishing the misbehaviour of noise-making without pointing the child to the more appropriate behaviour. UNESCO (2006) makes a similar argument against punishment. Aside from its vagueness on the required alternative behaviour, punishment also leads to developmental and relational problems in children. We will now delve into citing research evidence showing the problems that emanate from using punishment as a mode of disciplining children.

The negative effects of punishment

Research conducted over several decades has consistently demonstrated that while punishment is frequently used to

correct behaviour that is considered unwanted on the premise that it yields quick results, the little benefit that it is perceived to have is obliterated by the huge number of negative side effects that it leaves behind (Durrant, 2005). Sadly, some of the side effects that come from the use of corporal punishment may lead to irreparable damage in the lives of children. Durrant (2005) observes that corporal punishment leads to a myriad of defects including low self esteem, sadness, anger aggression, disregard for authority, drug abuse, sexual abuse, child delinquency, spouse abuse later in life. ANPPCAN, Kenya (2005) corroborates these findings by indicating that corporal punishment leads to long-term consequences such as anti-social behaviour, violence, which perpetuate an unending cycle of physical punishment and physical abuse. ANPPCAN, Kenya, further observes that corporal punishment leads to social and psychological maladjustment. These maladjustments usually result in children resorting to abusing and/or selling drugs, activities which make them disengage themselves from school psychologically and eventually physically (they drop out).

Sometimes punishment can backfire, in that it can inadvertently strengthen the very behaviour it is meant to diminish. In other words, punishment can become a reinforcer of unwanted behaviour (UNESCO, 2006; Fontenelle, 2001). To this effect, Munsaka (2011), for instance, observes that if a teacher makes a disruptive learner stand in front of the class, as a way of punishing him or her for the misbehaviour but the unwanted behaviour does not diminish, it means that the punishment being administered is a reinforcer and not a punisher. Thus, Munsaka (2011) further argues that punishment is not determined by its noxious nature, but by the effect it has on unwanted behaviour namely, reducing or eliminating it altogether. It therefore follows, as scholars (e.g. Bergh & Theron, 2006; Dembo, 1994) have pointed out, that punishers need to be tailor-made for specific

individual children. What may be a punisher to one child may be a reinforcer to another and vice-versa.

Another negativity associated with punishment is that it often leads to resentment between child and teacher or between child and parent. Sometimes the resentment can even spread to peers making it difficult for a child who is often exposed to punishment to form meaningful relationships with teachers, parents, other adults and peers (UNESCO, 2006). As Fontenelle (2001, p. 53) indicates, "sometimes the resentment aroused by punishment finds its expression through a range of passive aggressive behaviours such as opposition, resistance, stubbornness, defiance and rebellion". What follows this passive- aggression is an emotional chasm between a child and a parent or between a child and a teacher. When that happens, a child will feel a sense of alienation or estrangement from the classroom or from the family. In some unfortunate incidents, corporal punishment has led to serious injuries on children or even death (UNESCO, 2006).

Now, one or the other may be saying to themselves, "wait a minute, does it mean punishment cannot be used as a technique to change unwanted behaviour?" Well, the answer is yes, it can, if it is applied correctly. The one form of punishment that we condemn out rightly, however, due to its harmful side effects as outlined above, is corporal or physical punishment. For this form of punishment, the answer is no, it should never be used as a technique to deal with unwanted behaviour. Therefore, in the next section, we will focus on explaining ways in which punishment can be appropriately used to effectively deal with misbehaviour. We should mention from the outset, though, that punishment is most effective when it is used along with reinforcement, that is, one should not just focus on eliminating unwanted behaviour, but should also point the way to the required alternative conduct (see Munsaka, 2011; Severe, 2004; Fontenelle, 2001).

Discipline Versus Punishment

As we go into discussing effective forms of punishment, it is important that we clarify the meaning of the concept, discipline. Often than not, parents who use punishment, especially positive punishment where punitive measures are delivered onto a child, do so with a view to instilling "discipline" on the child. Let us therefore spend some time exploring the real meaning of discipline.

For most teachers, even parents, to some extent, the term discipline is used as a synonym for punishment (see UNESCO, 2006). It is not unusual, for instance, to hear a teacher say, "Your behaviour is unacceptable, I'm going to discipline you today, you will see!" As can be seen from this assertion, this particular teacher is using the term discipline to mean punishment, it is almost as if punishment subsumes discipline. Nothing could be farther from the truth! Punishment and discipline can be related, however, their meanings are quite distinctly different. Katharine and Eileene (cited in UNESCO, 2006) observe that, "Discipline is the practice of teaching or training a person to obey rules or a code of behaviour in both the short and long terms"(p. 21). In other words, as UNESCO (2006) elaborates, punishment has the narrow focus of controlling a child's behaviour while discipline aims at developing a child's behaviour through appropriate self control and decision making.

Severe (2004) so succinctly corroborates, "Discipline is teaching children how to make better choices about their behaviour. Discipline is teaching children to be responsible. Discipline is teaching children to think for themselves. Discipline is teaching children that they have the power to choose how they behave" (p. 14). Ultimately, the aim when instilling discipline in children is to equip them with tools to help them make the right choices when life demands that they do, as it always does. Discipline helps children realise that they, not their parent or

their teacher, are in charge and responsible for their own lives. This then means that instilling discipline in children should not be perceived as a negative activity to be avoided by those involved but rather it should be openly embraced as a vital process where children and parents or teachers co-operate with each other for the sole purpose of empowering children to make correct choices in life. With this correct perception of discipline, children's misbehaviour becomes a vital opportunity for parents and teachers to teach children how to make appropriate choices.

It is quite clear from the definitions given above for discipline that corporal punishment and all the other forms of noxious punishment, have nothing whatsoever, to do with discipline. Only appropriate forms of punishment, as we will see below, can result into discipline. From this perspective, therefore, appropriately used punishment is a small portion in the larger process of instilling discipline (Severe, 2004).

Effective forms of punishment

Having clarified the difference between discipline and punishment that punishment aims at controlling children through instilling fear in them, discipline involves teaching children self control and decision making so that they are able to independently make correct choices in life, we shall now discuss various forms of appropriate punishment. First, we will discuss negative punishment.

Negative punishment

As we indicated earlier, negative punishment refers to punishment whereby consequences are withdrawn with a view to weakening the preceding misbehaviour. For example, if a child gets his/her friend's toy without permission, a teacher can deal with that misbehaviour by telling the child, "Okay, Dada, since you got your friend's toy without permission, you will not play with your favourite toy from the box". The withdrawal of the favourite toy

will make Dada realise that his bad behaviour (i.e. taking away his friend's toy), resulted into the consequence of losing his own favourite toy. Another appropriate example would be deducting some marks from the total score of a child who is caught cheating in a class test (see Munsaka, 2011). Since marks are something that is so desirable to learners, the concerned child will be forced to rethink his or her behaviour of cheating.

The key thing to remember about negative punishment is that the consequence that is withdrawn should be something that the child values. If you withdraw something that a child does not value, it is likely that the targeted misbehaviour will not diminish. An example of this would be withdrawing a Barbie dolly from a boy who is fond of playing with construction toy trucks and dinosaurs. This would be a futile action as it would not address the needs of the child. Thus, the withdrawal of consequences must be done in relation to the specific preferences of each individual child. The "one-size-fits all" approach cannot work here. In addition, the connection has to be clearly made for the child between the misbehaviour being punished and the consequences being withdrawn (Fontenelle, 2009). Instead of just yanking a favourite toy away from the child, it would be more helpful to say, "because of your bad behaviour of getting your friend's toy, you will lose your favourite toy for 15 minutes". That way, the child will be able to make the connection between his or er misbehaviour and the consequences. Another important point to bear in mind when using negative punishment is that, it has to be administered immediately after the misbehaviour is committed. It would not help, for instance, for a child to be told, "remember, the day before yesterday you spoke to me rudely, so you will lose your 20 minutes of break time today". This would be so ineffective because the child would fail to make the required connection due to the lengthy period of time that has passed. To be really effective, the consequences must be delivered within a few seconds after the misbehaviour is committed.

Time-out

Time-out is an effective alternative to other unacceptable forms of punishment such a screaming, spanking, pushing, pinching, threatening etc. Severe (2004) defines using time- out as placing a child in a dull, boring place, which is isolated from anything positive for a few minutes. Time-out is regarded as punishment because it deprives the offender the desired social company. In this sense then time-out is similar to negative punishment, in fact, it is a kind of negative punishment. We need to say a few things regarding how to effectively use time-out.

The first step in using time-out as Severe (2004) guides, is to identify the place where the time-out will be conducted. This may be a challenge, depending on the practicalities of a home or a classroom. The next step is to identify the misbehaviour that is to be eliminated using time-out. The final step is to explain time-out to the child. In other words, once the time-out spot has been identified and the targeted behaviour selected, what remains is for a teacher or a parent to sit with a child and explain the rules of time-out. Research has shown that time-out is effective with children aged between 2 years and 12 years. Older children do not find time-out as punishing at all, in fact, for adolescents, a moment of isolation from others may be a reinforcement. Children who are younger than 2 years old may just find it cruel, they will not understand it.

When selecting a place to be used for time-out, a teacher or a parent should make sure that safety is taken into consideration first. A room or place that is to be used for time-out purposes should not have any objects that could cause harm to a child. It must be safe in all aspects. In a classroom set up, where it may not be possible to get a separate room for time-out, as would be the case in a home, a teacher can identify a corner in the classroom which will be used as a time-out spot. Since the corner is within the classroom, it is better for the teacher to make the

child in time-out to face the wall so that he/she does not have any contact with the classmates. A spot facing a window should also be avoided as it may provide the offender with an opportunity to watch what is going on outside, a prospect children may find rewarding in itself. In a home situation, a room chosen for time-out should have no items of an entertainment nature. An empty corridor, laundry room, spare bedroom or foyer would serve as a suitable place for time-out in a home.

The next important aspect to consider is the length of time a child should spend in time-out. How much time should a child spend in time-out? Well, there is no clear cut answer to this question, however, we need to indicate that the time a child spends in time-out should be in relation to the age of the child and the type of offense committed. Young children of about two years, for instance, cannot be expected to spend as much time as 10 or 11 year olds in time-out; their time should be much shorter. For two year-old children, two minutes, especially in the initial stages, may be adequate. It has to be borne in mind that the essence of time-out is not to traumatise the child, but to teach him or her to know that all behaviour has consequences. As the child grows beyond two years, towards five years, the time can be extended to five minutes. While following the time is important, however, it is important that it is made clear to the child that the time-out clock will only start ticking when the child cooperates and calms down. As long as the child is still protesting and screaming, the timer should not be set. In that sense, a child can spend a longer time in time out, depending on whether he or she cooperates (Severe, 2004). For children who are older (8, 9, 10, 11 year olds), a time-out period of 10 minutes may be sufficient, excluding the time they do not cooperate.

It is also important that the duration of time-out is related to how serious the misbehaviour is. Less serious offenses, such as arguing, talking back, inappropriate manners, disobedience etc, all deserve a five minute time-out. More serious misbehaviours

such as fighting, cheating, using abusive language, stealing etc, should receive a 10 minute time-out period (see Severe, 2004). If there is a mismatch between the offence committed and the duration in time-out, the child will wonder whether he or she is really being punished for the offence committed or there might be other dynamics at play. Exaggerated time-out periods usually arise when a parent or a teacher administers time-out while angry. Thus, it is important to bear in mind that as with all forms of effective punishment, time-out should not be administered with anger. A teacher or parent should ensure that he or she calms down before proceeding to send a child into time-out. If time-out is done out of anger, its effects can be as bad as those of corporal punishment (see explanation above).

Obviously, if time-out is working for a particular child, its use is supposed to decline in frequency, that is, you should use less and less of it. If, however, it turns out that the frequency of using time-out increases as opposed to it reducing, then there is need to examine what is going on. It may turn out that the time-out room may not be dull or boring enough for the child. If that turns out to be the case, it is important that the reinforcing elements in the room are removed. If the frequency of using time-out increases with children older than eight years, it may mean that time-out may have expired as an appropriate means of eliminating misbehaviour for these children. In that case, a parent or a teacher can use negative punishment (see explanation above), instead.

Ignoring specific misbehaviour

Another effective form of punishment, which can be used to remove misbehaviour from children is ignoring the misbehaviour. It is important to bear in mind that children get two kinds of attention seeking for their behaviour; positive attention and negative attention. Positive attention is given when a child

gets approval for doing something good. For example, a child may receive praise from a parent for doing homework on time, without having to be reminded. Positive attention can also take a form of encouragement, a hug, a pat on the back, and so on. The key here is that a teacher or a parent should catch the child doing something good and then immediately give the reward (Severe, 2004).

On the other hand, negative attention happens when a child misbehaves and gets the attention of the parent or teacher through reprimands, screaming, scolding etc. Attention is something that children, especially, need from time to time and so when they do not get adequate positive attention, they resort to misbehaviour so that they can at least get even negative attention. It is important for a teacher or a parent to be observant to determine whether the child's misbehaviour is emanating from the negative attention seeking impulses or not. Once it has been determined that the child is using misbehaviour to seek negative attention, he/she should be ignored (Fontenelle, 2009).

While ignoring specific misbehaviours is an effective way of teaching children to behave appropriately, it should be used with caution. Not every misbehaviour should be ignored; only attention seeking ones should (Severe, 2004; Fontenelle, 2009). Typical attention seeking misbehaviours that are common in children include throwing a temper tantrum, whining or grumbling, pouting and persistent crying for no reason. All these misbehaviours should be ignored if noticed in children. When you ignore them, it means you starve them and they will get extinguished. The problem with some teachers and parents is that they fail to follow through with ignoring; they give-in midway and the child gets the negative attention he or she wanted. This should never be allowed to happen; once you decide to ignore a misbehaviour of an attention seeking nature, carry through with it, no matter how long it persists. You also need to be consistent,

that is, you need to ignore attention seeking misbehaviour all the time. If you apply ignoring consistently and persistently, attention seeking misbehaviour is sure to become extinguished. If for some reason however, it does not diminish, you can switch to time-out and explain to the child that because he or she does not want to stop whining or grumbling, whatever the misbehaviour, he or she will go into time-out. Once you promise the child time-out, immediately follow through with that action.

Misbehaviour which is a danger to other children, such as fighting, aggression, using abusive language, should never be ignored. Such misbehaviour should immediately be punished using the appropriate forms, as outlined above. Failure to punish such would be deemed as negligence.

Ignoring attention seeking misbehaviour can also be creatively paired with vicarious reinforcement. Vicarious reinforcement is the reinforcement given to someone else and is desirable to those watching the reinforcement being given. Bandura argues that vicarious reinforcement constitutes a critical aspect of observational learning and its effects can sometimes be as strong as when an individual is rewarded directly (see Munsaka, 2011). Now, we have established that most behaviour enacted by children, be it desirable or undesirable, is aimed at earning children some attention from significant others (usually parents and teachers). Thus, a teacher or a parent can strengthen the technique of ignoring attention seeking misbehaviour by shifting the attention to another well behaved child, in full view of the misbehaving child. For instance, as the child grumbles in an effort to get negative attention, a teacher can turn the attention to a well behaved child and tell her, "Wow, Mary I like the way you do your work so quietly and orderly. Keep it up, my girl".

As a teacher, you can even give Mary a pat on the back and spend a little time looking at her work. As the misbehaving child watches Mary being vicariously rewarded, he or she will have a

craving for the same positive reinforcement and he or she will crave to get the same. This is where now as a teacher, you need to be on the lookout for any positive signs in the child's behaviour. Should you spot any positive effort in the misbehaving child, you should immediately reward it with praise. Remember, the idea is to put a misbehaving child on a desirable trajectory of acceptable behaviour and it will not happen in one magical stroke, it requires a step by step gradual process of rewarding efforts moving the child's behaviour towards the desirable end.

Putting good behaviour in the spotlight

One of the most effective ways of diminishing misbehaviour or eliminating it altogether is to focus on good behaviour. As we already indicated, sometimes children misbehave because they desire to get some attention from the teacher or a parent. Why would a child crave negative attention? It is simple. A child who never gets noticed for good behaviour may in the end resort to misbehaving so that he or she can stand out and capture the attention of the teacher or parent (Maag, 1999, 2001). To prevent this from occurring, it is important that teachers and parents develop interest not just in the misbehaviour of children but in the good behaviour as well. In fact, when a shift of focus is made from misbehaviour to acceptable behaviour, often than not, misbehaviour disappears. Let us suppose that a teacher has a five-year old pre-school boy. Let us call this boy Jim. Jim is fond of disturbing the class. However, during certain moments, let's say during creative activities lessons, Jim is able to focus and concentrate. A teacher can focus on those moments when Jim behaves well and reinforce him. The teacher might say something like, "This is so good, Jim, I really like it when you work quietly as you are now. Keep it up, Jim! Very good boy". To strengthen the verbal praise, the teacher can place a golden sticker in Jim's

book. If the teacher consistently looks for such moments when Jim behaves well and reinforces him, the misbehaviour is likely to disappear.

The main problem with most teachers and parents is that they are conditioned to look for misbehaviour in children such that even when a child behaves well, they do not notice the good behaviour. In order to effectively use the technique of spotlighting positive behaviour, teachers and parents need to train themselves to hunt for good behaviour, even in the most badly behaved children. Sometimes the positive behaviour may not be perfect. A start can be made to shape the behaviour that is promising to develop into a perfectly good behaviour. Thus, a teacher or parent can start by spotlighting the efforts of a child in behaving well. For example, a child can be told, "I like the effort you are making Sara in showing respect to your friends. This is good". When a child is acknowledged like that by a teacher or a parent, he or she gets ushered onto a trajectory to more and more engage in acceptable behaviour until behaving well becomes natural for him or her.

As we have seen from the explanations that we have given above, correcting misbehaviour in children is not something to be done haphazardly; it requires well timed methodical application of reinforcement and punishment techniques. To be effective, punishment should not be used as a way of settling scores or gaining control over a child, it should be used as a way of inculcating discipline through which a child develops self control and the ability to make appropriate decisions. In this respect, reinforcing positive behaviour has been found to yield more positive results than punishing unwanted behaviour. For this reason, while well applied punishment should be used, when required, it is important to know that long lasting discipline in children will result more from positive reinforcement than from

punishment. This means that behaviour modification efforts should focus more on spotlighting desirable behaviour and rewarding it than on trying to eliminate unwanted behaviour.

Above everything else, as we deal with children's misbehaviour, we ought to keep it foremost in our minds that children still remain valuable in spite of their misbehaviours. In other words, misbehaviour does not in any way diminish the value and worth of our children. Thus, parents and teachers, alike, should treat all children (including those who misbehave), with unconditional positive regard. The idea of unconditional positive regard was first developed by Carl Rogers, a humanistic psychologist, who along with other humanists, believes that, if well supported, all human beings have the potential to become the best that they can be (see Munsaka, 2011). As parents and teachers, we should never fail to give children this unconditional positive regard, no matter how much their misbehaviour may have hurt us. We have an important obligation to ensure that each child maintains his/her self-worth even after being subjected to our punitive consequences.

Aside from helping children maintain a positive self regard, being treated by a teacher or a parent with unconditional positive regard helps them realise that they have a good shot at changing and becoming better through making better choices in future. Put differently, children realise that misbehaviour does not have to be or remain their identity; their identity rises above their current or any future misbehaviour. It should not, for instance, be strange for a parent to tell a child, "I love you very much. No matter what you do, my love for you will never change, it is only your misbehaviour that I do not like", after punishing him or her. That way, the child will know that my mother or my father loves me unconditionally. Such deep love from a parent is likely to make a child ponder his or her misbehaviour, which can easily lead to a positive turnaround. Just like we do

not hate ourselves permanently when we mess up as adults; we exercise some self compassion, so too we should treat children's infractions with much compassion and understanding. We need to treat children the way Jesus Christ treats us; He hates the sin, but he unconditionally loves the sinner.

Activity 2

Communication skills can be taught to children using real life examples. This could involve creating scenarios in which children have to introduce themselves, greet adults and have conversations in a shop or by the roadside. In this way real life usage of communication skills are applied.

The two lessons above include all the five learning areas integrated . In as much as learning areas are divided into lessons, it may be too soon for children to understand their distinctiveness. Besides, it can be argued that children do not see the world as divided as it is presented in different subjects.

CHAPTER 6

Effective Teacher-Parent Collaboration

In this Chapter of the book, we would like to address yet another important aspect of education and this is teacher-parent collaboration in the education of children. Parent-teacher collaboration has sometimes been referred to as parental involvement. For this reason, in our discussions in this chapter, we shall use the two terminologies interchangeably. We have covered a number of topics all of which are aimed at improving the teaching-learning process of early childhood children and yet if we did not cover aspects to do with how teachers can collaborate with parents in the education of children, our job would only be half done. It is undeniable that optimal outcomes in early childhood education require much more collaborative efforts between teachers and parents than in other levels of education. In various sections of the book, we have indicated the importance of teachers working hand in hand with parents to ensure optimal developmental and learning benefits for children, however, we did not prescribe exactly how this collaboration should take place. Thus, in this chapter, we shall endeavour to make suggestions, based on research and experience, of how meaningful teacher-parent collaborations can be created.

The vital role played by healthy relationships between teachers and parents in education of children has been amply demonstrated by research (see Eldridge, 2001; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2000; Coots, 2007). Research findings have consistently indicated that parent-teacher collaboration in education yields benefits that accrue not only to children, but to parents and teachers as well. Before we go further in our discussion, let us explain what really constitutes teacher-parent collaboration.

What is teacher-parent collaboration?

Parent-teacher collaboration in children's education can be defined in various ways depending on the specific areas one wants to focus on. Generally, parental involvement has been described as constituting school-based, community-based, and home-based activities that address the educational needs of learners, resulting into positive educational outcomes for children (Epstein, et al., 1997; Ertl, 2000; Porter, 2008).

The work of Epstein and colleagues has had a lot of influence on how parental involvement has come to be understood. Epstein et al. (1997), for instance, developed a typology that, to date, is being used as the framework for conceptualising parental involvement in the education of their children. Epstein's typology presents six ways in which parents can be involved in the process of educating their children as follows:

1. Parenting - parenting skills are promoted and supported.
2. Communication - effective home to school and school to home communication on school activities and student progress.
3. Volunteering - parents are made welcome at the school, and their support and assistance are sought.
4. Learning at home - involves parents in the school and helps them to understand their role in supporting their child's learning in the home.
5. School decision-making and advocacy - parents are partners in the decisions that affect children and families through school councils, committees and other parent organisations.
6. Collaboration with the community - community resources. used to strengthen schools, families and student learning.

(Epstein et al., 1997, p. 8).

What we see from Epstein's typology is that parental involvement is an important process that keeps teachers and parents constantly

connected to ensure that the educational needs of learners are holistically attended to. It is precisely for this reason that Amendt (2008) concludes that collaborative partnerships between parents and teachers are not single events but are progressive processes on a continuum, beginning with minimal parental involvement to stages where parents get actively engaged in making decisions that impact the running of the school.

For our purposes in this book, the parental involvement that we advocate is neither localised at home nor in the school; we are proposing active parental involvement in the school as well as at home. What this means is that parents cannot take a passive role by shifting the responsibility of educating their children to the teachers alone. Parents must view themselves as equal partners with teachers in the process of educating their children. Now, what do we mean by parents being equal partners with teachers? Obviously, we are not even remotely suggesting that parents should take over the job of teachers, no. What we are suggesting is that more positive educational outcomes are realised when both parents and teachers work together. Before we look at some of the concrete ways in which parents can collaborate with teachers in the education of their children, let us first discuss some benefits of parental involvement.

Benefits of parental involvement

What are the benefits of healthy parent-teacher collaborations? There are many benefits that are associated with teacher-parent collaboration. For instance, in a study conducted among minority ethnic groupings in the Netherlands, Driessen et al. (2005) report that parental involvement was associated with better educational outcomes such as the improved students' academic performance; better students' social and emotional happiness, and better understanding of children. The Driessen et al. study concluded that learners from minority ethnic groupings who had

a disadvantaged social background tended to get optimal benefits from education when parents were involved in schools. Other studies (e.g. Ertl, 2000; Hughess & Kwok, 2007) yielded similar findings. Porter (2008) also reports that learners' academic performance improves when parents and teachers work together and have a healthy two-way relationship of sharing information between them.

In an earlier study, Reynolds (1992) found that learners whose parents were involved through providing support to learners in school as well as at home performed better academically than their counterparts who only provided peripheral support at home. In one study that Ertl (2000) conducted in Canada, the findings indicate that parents who participated directly in such activities as,

> parent-teacher conferences used to discuss student progress, behaviour, homework, and parent-teacher communication in person or by phone ... had their children ranked near the top of the class. Conversely, students whose parents were not involved in the school, were ranked near the bottom of the class (p. 36).

Similarly, a study conducted by Hughes and Kwok (2007), indicated that children whose parents maintained constant communication with teachers, volunteered to do certain activities in class, assisted children with homework, and attended school functions had the most engaged children in school and their children were academically superior especially in reading tasks. Other studies (e.g. Marcon, 1999; McWayne et al., 2004), report improvements in learners' social skills as a result of parental involvement in school activities. Marcon (1999) further indicates that parental involvement in school and home activities of their children coupled with positive parent-teacher relationships, led learners to achieve higher levels of language, social, motor, behaviour development.

As we can see from the evidence that we have provided above, creating harmonious relationships where parents and teachers can collaborate and freely share information, is vital in ensuring that children get optimal benefits from the teaching-learning process. For this reason, we would like to strongly argue that parents and teachers have no option, but to learn how to have healthy collaborative relationships. Without healthy collaborative relationships between parents and teachers, even the best of teaching-learning resources and infrastructure will not do much to better the education of our children. In view of this indispensable role that parent-teacher collaborations play, we, in the next section, are going to discuss some of the impediments to parent-teacher collaboration.

Impediments to parental involvement

Important though parent-teacher collaboration is in the education of learners, it has not been without challenges. Much research has been conducted in the field and findings have consistently revealed that there are a number of challenges that impede healthy collaborative relationships between parents and teachers. On a broader level, the barriers to parent-teacher collaborations can be categorised into the following two categories: Family barriers and school barriers. Let us begin by discussing family barriers.

Family barriers

As the name suggests, these barriers comprise factors that prevent parent-teacher collaboration within the families and the larger cultural set up where families are located. The first barrier that we shall discuss here is the social class and socioeconomic status. Studies (e.g. Hughes & Kwok, 2007; Crozier & Davies, 2007) have reported that social class differences between parents

and teachers often hinder healthy parent-teacher collaborations. The trend revealed by these studies has been that mostly parents from a low social class and low socioeconomic status do not actively collaborate with teachers as much as their counterparts from a high social class and high socioeconomic status. Mostly, parents of low standing in society tend to view themselves as possessing nothing of value to contribute to the education of their children. Conversely, as Hughes and Kwok (2007) indicate, "parents with high socioeconomic status were noted as having more positive relations with their children's teachers compared to the lower income parents" (p. 39).

Cultural barrier is the second impediment to healthy parent-teacher collaboration in the family impediments domain. The cultural barrier that has been found to hinder healthy relations between teachers and parents is language. As readers will appreciate, language is an important aspect of culture as it determines how people relate with one another and how they share ideas amongst themselves. In most schools, the language used by teachers as the medium of instruction is different from the language used in homes where children come from (see Mwanza-Kabaghe et al., 2015). In most cases, the language of instruction is a foreign language, for instance, English, French, Portuguese, etc. Depending on the level of education that parents have attained, they may not be conversant with these foreign languages. In Zambia for instance, parents who have not completed high school with a few exceptions, may not be adequately competent in the English language to enable them to freely converse with teachers who teach their children. This in itself would not be a big problem for countries with less linguistic diversities because local vernaculars could be used. However, for a multilingual situation as obtains in Zambia, this presents a challenge. Many teachers in Zambia find themselves teaching in areas where local vernaculars spoken are not their mother tongue, hence the communication barrier with parents.

Crozier and Davies (2007) found the language barrier to be one of the biggest barriers to healthy collaborations between teachers and parents.

Another family barrier that Crozier and Davies (2007) report as an impediment to parent-teacher collaboration emanates from the parents' view that academic work is a peripheral role which they do not have to perform. In this regard, parents regard teachers as possessing the responsibility of teaching their children while as parents, their role is merely to provide a supportive home environment and encourage their children to attend school. Parents with such views, thus, do not see the need to collaborate with teachers on the education of their children. In fact, they would be surprised if anybody told them to engage with teachers more because they see that as being outside the sphere of their responsibility.

School factors

In addition to family factors, there are also school factors that prevent parents and teachers from forming effective collaborative relationships. The first among these school factors is lack of time by teachers to bring parents on board and engage them on the education of their children. Plevyak and Heaton (2001) and Miretzky (2004) observe that parents need more time to engage with teachers on a number of issues about the education of their children. However, often, teachers do not make themselves available due to having a number of things requiring their attention in the school.

Another school barrier that impedes healthy relationships between teachers and parents is the power imbalance between parents and teachers in favour of teachers. Lewis and Forman (2002) point out that it is not uncommon for parents and teachers not to see eye-to-eye. Teachers are often territorial

about the school and everything that goes on there. Teachers may explicitly voice this territorial tendency to guard their "turf". However, often than not, this protection of the turf is done through non-verbal but no less powerful messages given to parents during meetings or during face-to-face interactions. Because of the tension that sometimes exists between parents and teachers, Crozier (1999) so poignantly describes interactions between parents and teachers as, "power struggles instead of partnerships" (p. 324). In these power struggle contests, parents often withdraw in the background and leave teachers to do all the work for their children. What an unhealthy situation because, as we have indicated elsewhere in the book, the responsibility of educating a child does not only rest with the teacher, but with the parent as well, in fact, the best education a child can ever get, comes out of healthy collaborative interactions between a teacher and a parent.

Research has also shown that teachers' sense of self efficacy also influences the extent to which they will open up to collaborate with parents (see Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1987). What do we mean by self efficacy? Self efficacy, as explained by Bandura (1977), refers to one's belief that he/she has the ability to accomplish a given task. Thus, when we speak of teachers having a sense of self efficacy, we are referring to teachers having a sense of confidence in effectively delivering lessons to learners. The findings from Hoover-Dempsey et al.'s (1987) study indicate that teachers who have a stronger self-efficacy are more likely to involve parents through parent-teacher conferences, volunteering in the classroom, and helping children with school work at home.

Effective teacher-parent collaboration

In providing suggestions of ways through which parents can collaborate with teachers, it is probably useful for us to make

reference to specific areas where collaborations should happen. By indicating these specific areas of collaboration, we will be in a better position to give concrete guidance on the actual activities that must be done by teachers and which ones by parents. Before we get into the details of this, however, we need to mention that the teacher-parent collaboration that we are suggesting here is not the common one-sided flow of information from teachers to parents announcing events such as PTA meetings, sports days, open days, field trips, etc, what we are suggesting here is a two-way, constant collaborative interaction between teachers and parents about children's learning. For this interaction to yield fruitful results, it should be based on equality and mutual respect- teachers should not feel parents do not know anything to be involved in classroom issues, nor should parents have a condescending attitude towards teachers, no matter how affluent they may be in comparison to the teacher.

As we discuss the specific areas of collaboration, we need to be cognizant of the fact that this book is specifically focused on the education of early childhood children. Thus, the suggestions we make here regarding effective collaboration between parents and teachers will largely focus on the early childhood education sector. Even so, however, other levels of education can still benefit from these suggestions.

Teacher-parent collaboration in class work

We have decided to begin with this area because it is one of the most challenging areas to establish healthy collaborative relationships between parents and teachers. Largely, the difficulty comes in because the classroom is regarded as the "turf" for the teacher (see Lewis & Forman, 2002), where parents do not have any role to play. Often than not, as we explained above in the section on barriers to teacher-parent collaboration, the result is tension between parents and teachers brought about by power

struggles. We would like to suggest that there is absolutely no need for the classroom to be turned into a "private sanctuary" where only teachers should have access. To the contrary, the classroom should be an open place which should be accessible to parents anytime they may wish to.

Naturally, the next question that follows is: Why should parents have access to what is going on in the classroom? This is such an important question because failure to provide a correct answer to it can lead to misunderstandings between parents and teachers which can have detrimental effects on the educational outcomes of children. The reason parents should have access to the classroom is not for them to spy on teachers or to see what teachers are doing wrong, far from it. Parents need to have access to the classroom to offer support to teachers. They are partners. When children see that their parents are involved in classroom activities, they (children) will take school even more seriously. A parent may just sit in the corner of the classroom as the teacher teaches without saying a single word, however, his or her presence raises the importance of the lesson to a much higher level. Because of the presence of the parent(s), the teacher and the learners will be more engaged in the lesson. With this improved engagement between teachers and learners, the learning outcomes will inevitably improve. Of course, even if parents do not attend lessons to "inspect" teachers, their presence will ensure that teachers always give out their best in every lesson. This in itself is a win-win situation because learners will get "first class lessons" and teachers will become better teachers through more thorough preparation and presentation.

What about parents who know a thing or two about teaching? In fact, some of the parents are actively practicing teachers in different institutions. How should these parents conduct themselves during lesson observation? The answer is very simple; these parents are observing the lessons in their capacity

as parents not as teachers or educators. Thus, again their role is that of providing support and not that of fault finding. If such a parent notices a flaw in the teaching-learning process, they, like non-expert parents, should direct their concerns to the teachers as negative comments made in the presence of children may cause a demeaning perception of the teacher involved. It calls for a lot of restraint and discipline on the part of parents who themselves are expert educators. Other parents who are not expert educators should in like manner have a private chat with the teacher on matters that may require intervention. As parents give feedback, however, they have to be cognisant of the fact that teachers are often pressed for time and so observations should be brief and to the point so that other lessons for the day do not suffer. This does not mean teachers should use lack of time as an excuse to avoid feedback from parents; feedback is an important component of parents' participation in classroom activities.

Apart from observing how lessons are conducted, parents need to have access to the classroom so that they can become aware of the challenges that teachers and learners face. With this awareness, parents will be in a better position to collaborate with class teachers and school administrators, if necessary, be able to address those challenges. The need for a parent to know and understand the challenges faced by a child is even more for early childhood children as they are still in their formative years where they are yet to attain full development of many of their developmental milestones. In addition, parents need to be aware of what support their children need for them to acquire the much needed literacy and numeracy skills. Throughout this book, we have emphasised that in order for children to optimally reach the milestones in all the developmental domains, they need to be exposed to a stimulating environment through appropriate play activities and parents have a key role to play for this to happen. While children spend most of their wakeful hours at school during

the week, when you include weekends and holidays, they still spend more time at home than they do at school. Thus, parents have a vital role to play to provide the required play activities and materials to enhance children's attainment of developmental milestones and acquisition of initial numeracy and literacy skills. Teachers being experts in what children require, need to advise parents what play and educational materials they need to buy for children to use at home so that there is continuity during weekends, holidays and after school hours. For this to be successful, there is need to have a cordial collaborative relationship between a parent and a teacher.

Teacher-parent collaboration in Homework

Home-work is an important component of the teaching-learning process because it is not possible for all the classroom exercises to be completed within the time allocated for each subject. At the end of each school day, learners need to be assigned some work to do at home by their teachers in order to consolidate their understanding. Teachers cannot be there to supervise the learners as they do their work at home, so parents must take that role. It is critical that parents should take the homework given to their children by teachers at school seriously. This means that first of all, no child should do his or her homework with the television on; homework must be done in a quiet atmosphere. Thus, before a child begins to do his or her homework, a parent should turn off the television so that the child is able to have concentrated focus on the school work. We do realise that this can sometimes be a challenge because in certain homes parents do not see the need of controlling how much television their children watch. Earlier, we presented the detriments of watching excessive television, and so by switching off the television, parents will not only be allowing their children to concentrate on their homework tasks but will also inadvertently be instilling discipline in their children.

Apart from ensuring that a child does homework in a quiet environment, parents should also ensure that they provide help where it is required. By saying this, we are not suggesting that parents should do the homework for their children, far from it. What we are suggesting is for a parent to provide cues and prompts to help a child remember what the teacher said on the topic. Where a child is completely not able to handle the homework on his or her own, this may be an indication that he or she did not understand the lesson and a parent needs to make the teacher aware of this by indicating a comment in the homework book that the child requires further help. This is important because the teacher and not the parent is supposed to give learners the explanations they need to understand the topics being taught. However, when the homework given, is asking learners to research on a topic which they are yet to learn later, parents should help their children as much as possible. For example, prior to teaching a topic on traditional ceremonies in Zambia, a teacher may ask learners to research on some of the dances found in the different provinces of Zambia as homework. It would be perfectly in order for a parent to help a child conduct such a research by providing the information, if they have it. Even then, however, we should mention that the parent should put the child at the centre of the whole research process; the parent should not write the research project for the child, he or she should only guide the process and provide information where it may be required.

The latter part of pre-schooling requires children to begin to learn how to read an activity which requires a lot of time and personal attention for each individual child. Thus, no matter how diligent and committed a teacher may be, he or she cannot manage to attend to each child individually. Parents therefore need to come in to close-up the gap by helping their children practice how to read at home. In order for parents to

know exactly what to do and how to do it, they need to work closely with their children's teachers. Teachers being aware of the reading strengths and weaknesses of each child should provide the material the children to practice how to read at home indicating the areas where parents should focus on. The teacher should also give clear instructions to parents on how they should provide feedback on how the child is fairing on each reading task. Where teachers know of a helpful reading resource material, which they think parents need to purchase, they should not hesitate to communicate to the parents where that resource can be purchased from. Experience and research (e.g. Mwanza-Kabaghe et al., 2015) have shown that where parents closely get involved with their children's education, better progress is made in reading.

Similar collaborative arrangements can be made in the area of teaching initial numeracy so that children are not limited by the time constraints of the classroom. The good thing about engaging parents in helping their children to do their school work at an early stage is that children from the onset will know that school is a serious matter and must be treated as such.

We are aware of the fact that some parents may not be in a position to help their children with homework due to their low educational levels or complete lack of education. That is alright and it is understood, however, the fact that a parent has a low educational level or did not go to school does not excuse them from taking keen interest in the homework of their child. All parents, regardless of whether they understand the child's homework or not have a responsibility to provide support, supervision and encouragement to their children as they do homework.

Parents who are unable to handle their children's homework, however, can also make use of other people in the home who may

be in a position to help. In Zambia, as is the case in most other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, most families are extended, making it possible for a home where a parent cannot read or write to have other extended family members to offer help to a child. Parents should make use of such family members. However, even where that is done, parents still have to oversee the process of homework completion.

Teacher-parent collaboration in disciplining children

The final area of collaboration that we are going to discuss is that of instilling discipline in children. All children, without exception, require correction from time to time, this is why we have dedicated a whole chapter, chapter five, to discussing effective ways of disciplining children without hurting them. Since we have already covered the details of how to instil discipline in children in the said chapter, we are not going to spend much time here on the technicalities of behaviour modification, our focus will mainly be on discussing how parents and teachers can collaborate to ensure that both at home and at school, children are subjected to acceptable, effective methods of instilling discipline.

Many times we have heard such utterances as, "Ah, you are so rude, I'll tell your parents to discipline you" or "You are so playful; you can't even do your homework, I'll tell your teacher to punish you". On the surface, these statements seem to be okay, and yet when you take a closer look at them, they are flawed. Firstly, what is striking is that neither the teacher nor the parent is taking responsibility of instilling discipline on the child; each one of them is making a promise to the child that she or he will be disciplined by the right person. Parents and teachers need to speak the same language of discipline so that children know that they cannot get away with any misbehaviour whether they are

with their teacher or with their parent. If a child misbehaves at school, a teacher should not refer the matter to the parent; he or she should apply the required behaviour modification techniques for the misbehaviour to be corrected there and then (see chapter five for information on how to apply behaviour modification techniques). Similarly, if a child misbehaves at home, a parent should apply the appropriate behaviour modification techniques. In addition, research (see chapter five), has shown that punishment and reinforcement are most effective when they are administered immediately after the targeted behaviour. If the interval between misbehaviour and the application of consequences is too long, the subject being punished will not be able to make the required connection.

We emphasised in chapter five that corporal punishment does not guarantee discipline; the two are very different. Discipline has nothing to do with inflicting pain or causing embarrassment; it has to do with teaching the person concerned to make better choices in the future. For this reason, we would like to indicate once again that corporal punishment should not be used by either parents or teachers to modify unwanted behaviour in children (see chapter five for detrimental effects of corporal punishment). Here again, parents and teachers should speak the same language because a child who is subjected to corporal punishment at home will not respond well to other forms of behaviour modification. Similarly, when a child is subjected to corporal punishment at school, he or she will not respond well to other alternative behaviour modification techniques at home.

Parents and teachers have to be cautious when correcting unwanted behaviour in children because children's self esteem can easily be damaged, if correction of unwanted behaviour is not appropriately done. Unfortunately, sometimes the damage that is done is irreparable. Children will always make mistakes

because that is their nature and so as adults, we should not punish them with anger and condemnation when they make mistakes; we need to correct them with understanding and love. Ultimately our ability to effectively discipline children will be determined by our ability to restrain ourselves from the emotions of anger- we should not let our emotions control us, but we should control them.

CHAPTER 7

Summary of key aspects in the book

As we indicated in the preface, this book has been written with the intention of discussing foundational issues in the provision of ECE in Zambia. Further, the book is intended as a resource material which parents and other stakeholders can use to enhance children's development and learning. We hope that we have been able to achieve these objectives. As we come to the end of the book, we would like to make a quick recapitulation of the main aspects that we have discussed in the book.

In the first chapter, we provided a brief historical account of ECE in Zambia. We traced the origins of ECE in Zambia to the United Nations' Geneva declaration of the rights of the child of 1924, which, however, only got endorsed in 1989 during the United Nations General Assembly on the rights of children. Shortly thereafter in 1990, the World Declaration on Education for All followed at Jomtien, Thailand. The Jomtien conference mainly focused on providing universal primary education, however, it recognised that the successful provision of universal primary education depended on the meaningful investments in early childhood education.

In the year 2000, some ten years after the World Declaration on Education for All, the Dakar Framework for Action came into being with its six goals. The first goal focused on early childhood education.

The global conventions and declarations on ECE resulted in a number of conferences being held on ECE in Africa such as in Kampala, Uganda in 1999; Asmara, Eritrea in 2002; and Accra, Ghana in 2005.

Being an active participant in all these global and African initiatives on ECE, Zambia has been locally committed, albeit with much challenges, to providing quality ECE. For instance, in 1991, a national conference on education for all was held which culminated into the writing of a national document on education '*Focus on Learning'*. Four years later in 1996, a more comprehensive national document, '*Educating Our Future'* which made more significant pronouncements on early childhood education was published by the Ministry of Education. While not replacing '*Educating Our Future'*, another document entitled '*Educating the Nation'* was published in 2005. Through '*Educating the Nation'*, a number of challenges besetting the provision of quality ECE in Zambia were identified. After many years of advocacy and lobbying, ECE was finally officially adopted in 2012 by the Ministry of Education as part of the mainstream education system.

Chapter Two of this book covered development during the early childhood years. Human development refers to the changes that take place from the time a person is born to the time he or she dies. Child development therefore refers to the changes that take place during childhood years. Our main focus in this book was on the early childhood years. The following are the developmental domains that we covered: Physical development; cognitive development; and social-emotional development. Through the use of a number of theories and examples, we have explained how children develop in these three main categories.

Under the physical development domain, children need to be exposed to rich, stimulating environments where they can have opportunity to exercise and develop their gross and fine motor skills. Parents and teachers have a critical role to play to ensure that children are exposed to age appropriate play materials that will optimise the development of fine and gross motor skills.

In the cognitive development domain, we presented the different milestones that children attain in accordance with the work of Jean Piaget. We indicated that children attain their cognitive abilities in accordance with their age in collaboration with their environment. During the first stage, the sensorimotor stage (0-2years), children's understanding of the world around them is mainly tied to physical manipulation of objects and the use of the senses. Initially, children will use uncoordinated, random reflexes, which give way to more purposeful primary, secondary, coordinated secondary, and tertiary circular reactions as they develop.

Around the age of 2 years, children begin to use symbolic representation because of their acquisition of language. The proper use of cognition by children does not begin until the pre-operational stage (2-7 years), when children engage in a lot of symbolic play. At this stage, though, children are still egocentric in that they are not able to take more than one perspective at a given time. Children only gain the ability to take more than one perspective at a time when they reach the concrete operational stage (7-11 years), however, they as yet cannot handle tasks involving deductive, abstract reasoning. The implication of these stages of cognitive development is that teachers and parents, alike, must ensure that children are given tasks that correspond to their level of cognitive development to avoid frustration with learning.

The final developmental domain that we looked at was the social-emotional domain. In this domain, our main interest was to show how children develop the ability to relate with others and express their emotions. To show this, we used two theories as follows: Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory; and Erik Erikson's psychosocial stages theory.

Bronfenbrenner identifies five systems; microsystem, exosystem, mesosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem, which influence the child's development, but which are also influenced by the child.

Erikson, on the other hand, argues that at every stage of development, children are resolving a social crisis, the resolution of which depends on how the child is handled by the significant others in his or her life. The lesson we learn from these two theories, among others, is that children need to be handled with love and care because their childhood experiences do not end in childhood, but continue to affect them even in the subsequent years of their life. Thus, the early childhood age period is such a key foundational stage when children need to, as much as possible, be exposed to positive social-emotional experiences.

In Chapter Three, we discussed play and its significance to child development and learning. We argued that in order for early childhood education to yield optimal results, it must be play-oriented as play is the predominating activity done by children. Here, we demonstrated how play and local play, in particular, can be used to enhance physical, cognitive, as well as social-emotional development. The recommendation here is that teachers and parents should use as much of local play activities as possible since children more meaningfully connect to them. We suggested a number of local play activities, including songs and dances, however, teachers and parents are encouraged to use their ingenuity and creativity to come up with their own to suit their local contexts.

Seeing how much television viewing dominates the activities of children of modern day Zambia, especially in urban areas, we decided to include a section in the chapter to address the dangers of excessive television viewing by children. We cited a number of current studies done, most of which have succinctly shown that television viewing exceeding two hours per day by children may have adverse effects on their education and developmental outcomes. These adverse effects of television viewing are highest for children aged two years and below. Among other problems, excessive television viewing by children can lead to:

children's failure to concentrate on their school work; attention disorders; aggressive behaviour; and health conditions among which obesity ranks high. To forestall these adverse effects of excessive television viewing, we have recommended that parents should encourage their children to engage more in socialised play where they have an opportunity to connect with their peers. To this end, there is a wide range of local games, songs, and other activities which can be used to keep children occupied as they play with others.

We have also shown repeatedly in this book why it is important for children to be taught using the play based approach. Play is the natural way in which children learn. Thus, early childhood education needs to incorporate play in the teaching of the early childhood curriculum. We have demonstrated in this book how play activities such as songs, games and dances can be used to teach literacy, numeracy, and various other subjects in the early childhood education syllabus.

Chapter Four focused on the language of instruction in early childhood education. Here, we argued that early childhood education classes must be taught in children's mother tongues. Understanding of new concepts being taught becomes easier for children if they are presented in terms they are already familiar with, as opposed to presenting them in a foreign, unfamiliar language. We presented much evidence from current research around the world showing the many benefits that emanate from using mother tongues in the teaching of early childhood education. In making this argument, however, we gave a critically important caution to all early childhood educators and policy makers that in modern day Zambia, there are many Zambian children in the major cities especially, whose mother tongue is not any of the Zambian local languages but English. These children should not be forced to learn in the Zambian local languages that they hardly speak or understand, they should be

taught in the English language, which though being foreign, occupies the mother tongue status.

As indicated earlier in the book, the guiding principle in determining which language of instruction to use in teaching early childhood education should be the obtaining local contexts on the ground. Where due to the multilingual situation obtaining in Zambia, many languages are widely spoken in a location, code-switching (using a combination of languages predominantly used in the area) should be encouraged. We should remember that what really matters ultimately is that children learn in a language or languages that give them an opportunity to experience meaningful learning.

Chapter Five discusses how to effectively discipline children without hurting them. We included this chapter because of a number of complaints we have received from children and other members of families about teachers and parents who subject children to hurtful forms of punishment.

As we clarified earlier in the book, the goal of punishing children is to ensure that they become disciplined in the end. The term discipline is not and should not be used as a synonym for punishment; discipline is a desirable outcome whereby due to the application of certain consequences, following undesirable behaviour, children learn to make appropriate choices of acceptable behaviour. In this respect, punishment is still acceptable as a way of instilling discipline in children. However, all forms of corporal punishment do not qualify as acceptable forms of teaching children discipline. To help teachers and parents, we used concrete examples of how alternative forms of punishment such as withdrawing or withholding what a child values, using reprimands, timeout, and ignoring unwanted behaviour, can be applied to eliminate undesirable behaviour. We also demonstrated how undesirable behaviour in a child can be eliminated simply by focusing on his or her desirable

or positive behaviour and rewarding it. Sometimes children misbehave because we do not focus enough on the good that they do; we need to put their good behaviour in the spotlight. In all forms of punishment, we guided that nobody should punish any child out of anger; punishment should never be used as a means of settling scores with children, but always as a means of instilling discipline.

Finally, in Chapter Six, we discussed ways through which parents and teachers can collaborate to ensure that children get optimal benefits from early childhood education. We indicated that meaningful involvement by parents in the education of their children does not just constitute paying school fees and attending PTA meetings, it involves much more. Using findings from current research, we argued that optimal benefits from early childhood education can only be obtained if parents and teachers form meaningful, collaborative relationships. In order for these meaningful, collaborative relationships to be created between parents and teachers, there needs to be a spirit of openness and mutual respect created so that, regardless of differences in economic status, social standing or level of education, parents and teachers can interact freely. Among the many areas of possible collaboration between parents and teachers, we suggested the following as the main ones: Class work; homework; and instilling discipline in children. Parents should feel free to attend a session of their child's class, upon making arrangements with the class teacher. When teachers give children homework, parents need to ensure that it is done with the seriousness and attention it deserves. Where children need to face some consequences due to exhibiting unwanted behaviour, teachers and parents need to speak the same language, however, even there, the correct forms of punishment, as explained above, should be given.

The Chapter on parent-teacher collaboration is of such great importance in that, as our readers will appreciate, unless parents at home compliment what teachers do with children at school, not much meaningful learning will take place. Similarly, teachers need to compliment the efforts of parents in helping children reach optimal developmental and learning outcomes.

References

Abril, C.R. (2011), Music, Movement and Learning. In R. Colwell and P. R. Webster (Eds.), *MENC Handbook of Research on Music Learning* (Vol. 2, pp. 92-129). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Adolph, K.E., Vereijken, B. and Shrout, P. E. (2003), What Changes in Infant Walking and Why. *Child Development, 74*, 475-497.

African Network for The Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), Kenya Chapter (2005). *From Physical Punishment to Positive Discipline: Alternatives to physical/corporal punishment in Kenya*. Nairobi.

Almon, J. (2007), The Vital Role of Play in Childhood. Retrieved 10 August, 2016 http://www.rudolfsteinerschool.org/pdfs/Mosaic200704.pdf.

Amendt, T. (2008), *Involvement to Engagement: Community Education Practices in a Sub-urban Elementary School and an Inner-city Community School*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Saskatchewan,Saskatoon, SK, Canada.

American Academy of Pediatrics (2001), Children, Adolescents, and Television. *Pediatrics, 107(2)*, 423-426.

Anderson, D.R., Huston, A.C., Schmitt, K.L., Linebarger, D.L. and Wright, J.C. (2001), Early Childhood Television and

Adolescent Behaviour: The Recontact study. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 66 (*1, Serial No. 264).

Anderson, D.R. and Pempek, T.A. (2005), Television and Very Young Children. *The American Behavioural Scientist,48(5),* 505-522.

Ballard, K.D. (2003), Media Habits and Academic Performance: Elementary and Middle School Students' Perceptions.

Bandura, A. (1977), Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioural Change. *Psychological Review, 84*(2), 191-215.

Bandura, A. (1965), Influence of Models: Reinforcement Contingencies on the acquisition of imitative responses. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1*, 589-595.

Benson, C. (2005), *The Importance of Mother Tongue-based Schooling for Educational Quality: EFA Global Monitoring Report.*

Bergen, D. (2002), The Role of Pretend Play in Children's Cognitive development. *Early Childhood Research and Practice, 4,* 1-12.

Bergh, Z. and Theron, A. (2006), *Psychology in the Work Context* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bjorklund, D. F. and Gardiner, A.K. (2011), Object Play and Tool Use: Developmental and Evolutionary Perspectives. In A.D. Pellegrini (Ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Play* (pp. 153-171). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Blair, C. and Razza, R.P. (2007), Relating Effortful Control, Executive Function and False Belief Understanding to Emerging Math and Literacy Ability in Kindergarten. Child Development, 78 (2), 647-63. In E. Bondrova & D.J. Leong. (2008). Developing self-regulation in Kindergarten. Young

Children on the Web. Retrieved on July 17, 2016 from http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200803/BTJ Primary interest.pdf

Bondrova, E. and Leong, D.J. (2008), Developing Self-regulation in Kindergarten. Young Children on the Web.

Retrieved on July 17, 2016 from http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200803/BTJ Primary interest.pdf

Bredekamp, S. (2011), *Effective Practices in Early Childhood Education: Building a Foundation*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979), *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Burke, A. (2011), *Play to Learn: Building Literacy Experiences in Young Learners*. Markham, ON: Pembroke Pub.

Campbell, P.S. (2002), The Musical Cultures of Children. In L. Bresler and M.C. Thompson (Eds.), *The Arts in Children's Lives: Context, Culture and Curriculum* (pp. 57-69). London: Kluwer Academic.

Carlson, F.M. (2006), *Essential Touch: Meeting the Needs of Young Children*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC.

Christakis, D.A. (2006, April), The Hidden and Potent Effects of Television Advertising. Journal of *American Medical Association, 295(14)*, 1698-1699.

Coots, J.J. (2007), Building Bridges with Families: Honoring the Mandates of IDE IA. *Issues in Teacher Education, 16*(2), 33-40.

Crozier, G. and Davies, J. (2007), Hard to Reach Parents or Hard to Reach Schools? A discussion of home-school relations, with particular reference to Bangladeshi and Pakistani parents. *British Educational Research Journal, 33*(3), 295-313.

Crozier, G. (1999), Is It a Case of 'We Know When We're Not Wanted'? The Parents' Perspective on Parent-Teacher Roles and Relationships'. *Educational Research, 41*(3), 315-328.

Daniel, J. (2003), The Mother-tongue Dilemma Education Today No. 6, The Newsletter of UNESCO's Education Sector, July-September 2003, www.unesco.org/education.

Dembo, M.H. (1994), *Applying Educational Psychology*. New York: Longman Publishing.

Driessen, G., Smit, F. and Sleegers, P. (2005), Parental Involvement and Educational Achievement. *British Educational Research Journal, 31*(4), 509-532.

Duncan, R.M. and Tarulli, D. (2003), Play as the Leading Activity of the Pre-school Period: Insights from Vygotsky, Leont'ev, and Bakhtin. *Early Education and Development, 14*(3), 271-292.

Eldridge, D. (2001), Parent involvement: It's Worth the Effort. *Young Children, 54* (4), 65-69.

Epstein, J., Coates, L., Salinas, K. C., Sanders, M. G. and Simon, B.S. (1997), *School, Family and Community Partnership*. California: Corwin Press, Inc.

Ertl, H. (2000), Parental Involvement and Children's Academic Achievement in the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 1994-1995. *Education Quarterly Review, 6*(2), 35.

Fortier, P. (2014), The Ups and Downs of a French Immersion Kindergarten Teacher: My Journey Toward an Inquiry-based Approach to Teaching. *Learning Landscapes, 8*(1), 123-138.

Garvey, C. (1993). *Play*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gavin, M.L. (2005), How TV Affects Your Child. *Nemours Foundation*. Retrived January 10, 2017 from http:/www.kidshealth.org/index.html

Harris, J.C. and Park, R.J. (1983), *Play, Games and Sports in Cultural Contexts*. Illinois: Human Kinetics.

Hennigar, M. (2013), *Teaching Young Children: An Introduction, 5th Edition*, Boston: Pearson Pub.

Healy, J.M. (2004), Early Television Exposure and Subsequent
Attention Problems in Children. *American Academy of Pediatrics*, 917-918.

Hewes, J. (2010), Learning Through Play: A View from the
Field. Retrieved July 17, 2016 from http://www.enfant-encyclopedie.com/pages/PDF/HewesANGps.pdf

Hewes, J. (2006), Let the Children Play: Nature's Answer to Early Learning. Retrieved July 17, 2016 from www.ccl-cca/early childhood learningHirsch-Paseck, K. and Golinkoff, R.M. (2003). Einstein never used flashcards.

Hoover-Dempsey, K.V., Bassler, O.C. and Brissie, J.S. (1987), Parent Involvement: Contributions of Teacher Efficacy, Socioeconomic Status and Other School Characteristics. *American Educational Research Journal, 24*(3), 417-435.

Hughes, J. and Kwok, O. (2007), Influence of Student-Teacher and Parent-Teacher Relationships on Lower Achieving Readers' Engagement and Achievement in the Primary Grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 99*(1), 39-51.

Hughes, F.P. (1999), *Children, Play and Development*. Madison: Allyn and Bacon.

Hujala, E. and Niikko, A. (2011), The Science of ECE-Core Ideas. In M. Veisson, E. Hujala, P.K. Smith, M. Waniganayake and E. Kikas (Eds.), *Global Perspectives in Early Childhood Education: Diversity, challenges and possibilities* (pp. 21-27). Newyork: Peter Lang.

Jones, E. and Reynolds, G. (2011), *The Play's the Thing* (*2nd Ed*). New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.

Jussoff, K. and Sahimi, N.N. (2009), Television and Media Literacy in Young Children: Issues and Effects in Early Childhood. *International Education Studies, 2*(3), 151-157.

Kalinde, B. and Vermeulen, D. (2016), Fostering Children's Music in the Mother-tongue in Early Childhood Education:

A Case Study in Zambia. *South African Journal of Childhood Education 6(*1), a493.http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v6i1.493.

Khan, M.T. (2014). Education in Mother-tongue - A Children's Right. *International Journal of Humanities and Management Sciences, 2* (4), 2320-4044 (Online).

Kontovourki, S. and Siegel, M. (2009), Discipline and Play with and/or in a Mandated Literacy Curriculum. *Language Arts*, Vol. 87 (1). September 2009.

Konza, D. (2014), Teaching Reading: Why the "fab five" Should be the "big six". *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 39*(12). http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2014v39n12.10.

Lenneberg. E.H. (1967), *Biological Foundations of Language*. New York: Wiley.

Lewis, A.E. and Forman, T.A. (2002), Contestation or Collaboration? A Comparative Study of Home-school Relations. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 33*,60-89.

Lightfoot, C., Cole, M. and Cole, S.R. (2009), *The Dvelopment of Children* (6th Ed.). New York: Worth Publishers.

Littleton, D. (1998), Music Learning and Child's Play. *General Music Today, 12*(1), 8-15.

Lunenburg, F.C. and Ornstein, A.C. (2000), *Educational Administration: Concepts and Practices.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Maag, J.W. (1999), *Behaviour Management: From Theoretical Implications to Practical Applications*. San Diego: Singular.

Maag, J.W. (2001), Rewarded by Punishment: Reflections on the Disuse of Positive Reinforcement in Schools. *The Council for Exceptional Children, 67* (2), 173-186.

Malambo, M. (2016), *Use of Intelligiblity in a Multilingual Set-up of Chitonga Vocabulary in Instruction Materials and Lenje to Facilitate Effective Learning of Initial Literacy Skills: The Case of Selected Schools in Chilumba area of Kapiri Mposhi District. Unpublished Masters Dissertation*, University of Zambia.

Marcon, R.A. (2002), Moving Up the Grades: Relationship between Pre-school Model and Later School Success. *Early Childhood Research and Practice, 4* (1), p. 1.

Marcon, R.A. (1999), Positive Relationships between Parent-School Involvement and Public School Inner-city Pre-schoolers' Development and Academic Performance *School Psychology Review 28*(3), 395-413.

Matafwali, B. and Munsaka, E. (2011), Programmes in Zambia: A Case of Four Selected Districts. *Journal of Early Childhood Development, vol v*, 109-131.

Matafwali, B., Munsaka, E., Mweemba, L. and Muleya, G. (2012), *Mapping and Evaluation of Early Childhood Care Development and Education in Zambia*. Lusaka: UNICEF.

McWayne, C., Hampton, V., Fantuzzo, J., Cohen, H. L. and Sekino, Y. (2004), A Multivariate Examination of Parent Involvement and the Social and Academic Competencies of Urban Kindergarten Children. *Psychology in the Schools, 41*(3), 363-377.

Miller, E. and Almon, J. (2009), *Crisis in the Kindergarten: Why Children Need to Play in School*. Maryland: Alliance for Childhood.

Ministry of Education. (1977). *Zambia Educational Reform: Proposals and recommendations*. Lusaka: Author.

Ministry of Education (1992), *Focus on Learning: Strategies for the Development of School Education in Zambia*. Lusaka: Author.

Ministry of Education (1996), *Educating Our Future*. Lusaka: Zambia Educational Publishing House.

Ministry of Education (2005). *Educating the Nation: Strategic Framework for Implementation of Education for All*. Lusaka: Education Sector Ministries.

Ministry of Education. (2006). *Vision 2030 : Zambia a Prosperous Middle-income Nation by 2030.* Lusaka: Ministry of Finance and National Planning.

Ministry of Education. (2007). *Zambia National Implementation Framework 2008-2010*. Lusaka: Author.

Ministry of Eucation (2013), *Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013*. Lusaka: Author.

Ministry of Education (2013), *The Zambia Early Childhood Education Teachers' Certificate Syllabus*: Author

Miretzky, D. (2004), The Communication Requirements of Democratic Schools: Parent-Teacher Perspectives on their Relationships. *Teachers College Record, 106*(2), 814-851.

Munsaka, E. (2011), *Mastering the Psychology of Teaching and Learning*. Lusaka: University of Zambia Press.

Munsaka, E. and Matafwali, B. (2013), *Human Development from conception to adolescence: Typical and atypical trends.* Lusaka: University of Zambia Press.

Mwamwenda, T.S. (2004), *Educational psychology: An African perspective*. Sandton: Heinemann Higher and Further Education (Pty) Ltd.

Mwanza-Kabaghe, S., Mubanga, E., Matafwali, B., Kasonde-Ng'andu, S. and Bus, A.G. (2015), Zambian Preschools: A Boost for Early Literacy? *English Linguistics Research, Vol. 4*(4), 1-10.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (2009), *Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute.

National Early Literacy Panel (2002), Developing early literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel – Executive Summary. https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/NELPSummary.pdf.

New Foundland Labrador Government (2016), *Full-day kindergarten play-based learning: Promoting a common understanding*. New Foundland.

New Foundland Labrador Government (2011), *Developing a provincial early childhood learning strategy*. New Foundland.

Newfoundland Labrador Government. (2010). *Completely Kindergarten – Kindergarten Curriculum Guide – Interim Edition,* Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. New Foundland.

Nkosha, C. (2013), *Validation Workshop for Early Childhood Education*, Kabwe.

Ni Chang (2000), Reasoning with Children About Violent Television Shows and Related Toys. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 28(2),* 85-89.

Nicolopoulou, A., Barbosa de Sa, A., Ilgaz, H. and Brockmeyer, C. (2009), Using the Transformative Power of Play to Educate Hearts and Minds: From Vygotsky to Vivian Paley and beyond. *Mind, Culture, and Activity, 17*(1), 42-58.

Norbeck, E. (1974), *The Anthropological Study of Human Play*. Virginia: The William March Rice University.

Okafor, R. C. and Ng'andu, J. (2005), Musical Storytelling. In A. Herbst, M. Nzewi and K. Agawu (Eds.), *Emerging Solutions for Musical Arts Education in Africa* (pp. 179-214). Cape Town: African Minds.

Pattanayak, D.P. (2003), Mother tongue: The Problem of Definition and the Educational Challenge in Towards a Multilingual Culture of Education. Hamburg: UNESCO institute of education. www.unesco.org/education/uie.

Paul, P. (2006, January), Want a brainier baby? *Time, 167*(3), 104-109.

Pellegrini, A. D. (2009), *The Role of Play in Human Development*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Pflepsen, A. (2011), Improving Learning Otcomes Through Mother Tongue-based Education. North Carolina: MTB-MLE Network. www.mlenetwork.org.

Piaget, J. (1954), *The Construction of Reality in the Child* (M. Cook, Trans). New York: Basic Books.

Piaget, J. (1963), *Origins of Intelligence in Children*. New York: Basic Books.

Piaget, J. (1970). Piaget's Theory. In P. Mussen (ed.), *Handbook of Child Psychology* (3rd Ed.). New York: Wiley.

Phiri, M., Kaguda, D. and Mabhena, D. (2013), The Mother Tongue as Media of Instruction Debate Revisited: A Case of David Livingstone Primary School in Harare, Zimbabwe. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies, 4*, 47-52.

Plevyak, L. and Heaston, A. (2001), The Communications Triangle of Parents, School Administrators and Teachers: A Workshop Model *Education, 121*(4), 768 - 772.

Porter, L. (2008), *Teacher-Parent Collaboration. Early Childhood to Adolescence*. Camberwell: ACER Press.

Pound, L. (2002), Breadth and Depth in Early Foundations. In J. Fisher (Ed.), *The Foundations of Learning* (pp. 9-24). Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Razel, M. (2001), The Complex Model of Television Viewing and Educational Achievement. *Journal of Educational Research, 94*, *6.*

Rees, C. (2009), Importance of Play for Children's Development. Retrieved 10 August 2016 from http://www.ehow.com/about 5245265 importance-play-children s-physical-development. html.

Remilyn, M. (2013), Appropriatenes of Mother-tTongue-based Multilingual Education in Urban Areas: A synthesis study. *International Journal of Science and Research, 2* (1), www.ijrs.net.

Reynolds, A.J. (1992), Comparing Measures of Parental Involvement and Their Effects on Academic Achievement. *Earlyz*Tukombe, C.H. (2014), *Early Childhood Curriculum Development.* Paper presented at the 3rd Curriculum Development Workshop, Kabwe, Zambia.

Uchikoshi, Y. (2005), Narrative Development in Bilingual Kindergartners: Can *Arthur* Help? *Developmental Psychology, 41(3),* 464-478.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (1990). *World declaration on Education for All*. Paris: Author.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2000a), *Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All*. Dakar: Author.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2000b), *The right to education for all throughout life.World Education Report*. Paris: Author.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2007), Education For All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report. New York: Author.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2009), The Six Dakar goals. Retrieved on 11 January 2017 from :http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/six_goals.shtml

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2006), *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007: Strong Foundations*. Paris: Author.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (1994), World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs: New York: Author.

United Nations (1989), *Convention on the Rights of the Child* Retrieved on 11 January 2017 from www.hri.ca/uninfo/treaties/index.shtml.

Van der Linde, C. (1999), The Relationship Between Pay and Music in Early Childhood: Educational Insights. *Education, 119*(4), 610.

Vulli, D. (2014), English and Medium of Instruction: Dalit discourse in Indian Education. *Research Journal of Educational Sciences, 2* (2), 1-6.

White, R.E. (2012), *The Power of Play: A Research Summary on Play and Learning*. Minnesota: Minnesota Children's Museum.

Woolfolk, A.E. (2010), *Educational Psychology (10th Ed.)*. New Delhi: Pearson Education.

Wright, J.C., Huston, A.C., Murphy, K.C., Peters, M.S., Pinon, M., Scantlin, R. and Kotler, J. (2001), The Relations of Early Television Viewing to School Readiness and Vocabulary of Children from Low-Income Families: The Early Window Project. *Child Development, 72(5),* 1347-1366.

Zemel, B. (2002), Body Composition During Growth and Development. In N. Cameron (ed.). *Human Growth and Development* (pp. 271-293). New York: Academic Press.

Author Index

Subject Index