

Abstract

This study investigated the views of parents and toy library service providers on play and how they provided or limited the play opportunities of children. 162 parents were surveyed, 14 in-depth interviews and 5 interviews were conducted with parents and service providers respectively and a toy assessment was made with each of the 5 participatory toy libraries.

The study indicated that the opportunities for play drastically decreased when children transitioned to primary school. Moreover, children played less socially than physically and intellectually. Lastly, children lacked playmates of similar age and parents were their key playmates.

Furthermore, parents tended to make decision for their children on the choice of toys according to the educational value of the toys. Lastly, it was found that the instrumental value of play was shared between parent users and the service providers.

Recommendations were made to parents, service providers and schools for improving children's play opportunities.