

# PLAY FACTOR AS A PREDICTOR OF RESILIENCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE EARLY YEARS OF CHILDREN IN ABEOKUTA, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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## **Abstract**

*Play is life and it is natural to children; it is found to be integral in developing positive psycho-social, emotional as well as intellectual prowess of children. Play as a factor is sine qua non to the development of resilience skills among children in the early years as lifelong learning starts with play upon which further learning is built. Therefore, the study was designed to determine play factor as a predictor of resilience development in the early years of children in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. The study was anchored on the theory of resilience. Two research questions and two hypotheses were generated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The two instruments used were teacher-made, titled: (i) Play and Effectiveness of Play in Development of Resilience in the Early Years for Teachers and (ii) Play and Effectiveness of Play in Development of Resilience in the Early Years for parents where reliability for both was 0.87. Data collected were analyzed using Regression analysis for the research questions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the hypotheses. The findings of the study showed that play positively and significantly predict the development of resilience with Regression, ( $\beta=0.733$ ,  $t=2.749$ ,  $P<0.05$  while ( $r =.360$ ,  $N=131$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) using PPMC and the extent to which resilience is developed in the early years with Regression ( $\beta=0.392$ ,  $t=2.470$ ,  $P<0.05$  while ( $r =.360$ ,  $N=131$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) using PPMC. Based on the findings, it was concluded that play is prerequisite to the development of resilience in children in the early years and therefore, it was recommended that children should be given ample opportunities to play both at home and in the school in order to acquire the resilience skills needed to overcome immediate and future challenges.*

**Keywords:** Play factor, Resilience Development, Children, Early Years

## Introduction

Play as a factor is an integral component to man's existence, As soon as a child is born, the stakeholders begin to play with that child, hence, both young and old engage in play and it was found that a man becomes old as soon as he stops to play. It is free, gives fun and is acquired mainly during recreation or entertainment activities. It is a dynamic and active part of childhood, infancy and spans adolescent period and in adulthood; it is used to ward off stress or prevent boredom, Quisenberry (1988). It is an activity that is intrinsically motivated, freely chosen and personally directed which is commonly used by children. It surpasses ordinary life experience although it is a non-serious phenomenon which intricately absorbs the player. It cannot be said to be a particular behaviour but it is any activity undertaken with the intention to play without a particular goal other than to play. According to Sutton-Smith (1997) and Goldstein (2012), play is full of wonder whose opposite is not work but depression. Moreover, children learn both academic and social skills through play (Brewer, 2007). To reiterate this, play is learning by trial and error to cope with the actual world for instance children usually play out their fears and concerns. Teachers map out the strategies to teach the children effectively and they usually attract the attention of these young ones through play. It is virtually the foundation of discovery or what we regard as a ground breaking invention leading to civilization (Aguh, Ogwazu and Harry, 2018; Brown, 2009).

To corroborate this, Sutton-Smith (1997) opined that human child is endowed with an abundant neuronal capacity that is responsible for problem solving, language and creativity which if not adequately

manipulated, will be exterminated. For instance, a child who is not stimulated by being played with and does not have the opportunity to play or rarely explores his or her environment may not fully link up the neural connections and pathways he needs for further educational enterprise or learning because play is said to enhance brain development and growth as play seems to be more frequent during the period of rapid brain growth in children.

More so, when children play, new neural connections are made and this makes the playing child to be more inquisitive, adventurous and intelligent. Furthermore, children learn while they play, for instance, they understand how to calibrate their muscles and bodies, how to: relate with others, think in abstract terms and restructure their thought or action, among others. In addition, play helps to improve the child's perception of others emotional state and increases the child's ability to adapt or cope with the ever changing condition because life itself is dynamic. Through play, children learn the valuable skill of how to entertain themselves (American Academy of Paediatricians, 2011). Play in the playing field promotes fairness as justice starts with healthy fair social play (Azar, 2002).

There are different types of play ranging from dramatic play, guided play, solitary play, directed play among others but Cooper and Dever (2001), found that socio-dramatic play was an excellent vehicle for integrating the curriculum. Brezinka (2007) added that play has been used as a routine part of assessment, training and therapy with children because how children play reveal their talents or abilities, interests, desires and fears. However, children gain immediate benefit of cardiovascular fitness, fine tuning motor skills, increasing the level of joy and

cheerfulness from play because it improves immediate physical health and mental well-being and at the long term, it helps them to exhibit a sense of morality and emotional intelligence while the child is being prepared indirectly for the unexpected through play. Play is linked to development because it assists in the promotion of physical, emotional, social and cognitive well-being of the child. During play, parents engage closer and fully with their children during which they can easily spot any abnormality in their children's behaviour or social skill while the parents are equally relieved of stress. It also maximizes a child's potential by improving his or her creativity and imagination ability (Goldstein, 2012). According to Panksepp (2003), two hours a day of play with objects increases the brain weight and its efficiency.

Therefore, globally, every child should be allowed to participate in outdoor play because play in the formative or early years is germane if humans are to reach their full potentials in life. It is natural to children, and it represents the lens through which they experience their world and the world of others and this is usually possible, healthy and functional through the active support of adults in providing safe and stimulating environment with adequate play space coupled with assorted age-appropriate play materials or equipment (Goldstein, 2012). With this in mind, children can have the chance to become happy, healthy, empathic and productive member of the society from the early years. Apart from the above, through play, maximum learning and effective social functioning develop properly because during play, a child can best imagine situations he or she has never encountered before and also learn from them in order to solve future problems that they may encounter (Goldstein, 2012).

Parents should introduce and share the common play materials of their native communities or countries and of their own childhoods with their children and their own friends. They should demonstrate some games that they are conversant with in their native countries to their children. Playing these games will help the child to appreciate that cultures all over the world, share some similar games and play activities even though their names differ with the difference in culture and language (Goldstein, 2012).

Association of Childhood Education International (ACEI) in Brewer (2007), advocates that play in school setting is different from play in the home setting. Teachers should inspire children to play by incorporating it into their school activities because play is more restricted at homes where they engage in passive behaviour most of the time by watching television or video instead of swinging, jumping, skipping, tumbling, pushing, pulling, running, climbing, hopping, walking among others which can help them to gain a full control of their bodies and their environment. Therefore, play and resilience are interwoven because children develop most of the resilience skills during play, especially, in the early years. Play that support the development of resilience in children can be planned and achieved in school if teachers provide space, time, materials and guidelines or support for play activities (Brewer, 2007).

To expatiate further, resilience, also known as grit, self-control and character are terms that have been consistently used in the context of education, health and well-being and as the inter-related components to enhance an individual's positive self-development. Resilience refers to the capacity of an individual to restore good mental and emotional health after

undergoing a challenging and an adverse situation (Brewer, 2007). In the same vein, resilience is the capacity of an individual to 'bounce back' from an unfavourable condition and move on to manage positive resources and skills, such as 'character' and 'grit', that can minimize negative outcomes of adverse circumstances (ADEPIS, 2015).

When one is exposed to adverse condition or an undesirable event, resilience enables the person to navigate his or her way to the available social, cognitive, cultural, emotional and physical resources that strengthen his or her well-being, and also develop the capacity to negotiate these resources individually or in collaboration with significant others in his or her cultural setting (Ungar, 2015). Furthermore, Luther et al 2000 postulated that resilience is known as reparative mechanism, or an adaptive response to serious trauma, while Center on the Developing Child, (2017) defined resilience as a dynamic process comprising of a positive adaptation during the period of harsh conditions e.g. illness, , death of loved one, depression or any other form of misfortunes. It is also an innate characteristic that enables a person who is at risk to adjust and continue to live a normal life in spite of the challenge.

To substantiate this, Rutter (1999) and Richardson (2002) supported this definition that resilience is a process of coping with a difficult circumstance which may affect the emotional and social functioning of a child while the child indirectly develops protective factors needed for subsequent adversities. According to Rutter (2006), the concept of resilience is useful in supporting transitions, specifically from primary to secondary school by ensuring social adjustment, institutional adjustment, curriculum interest and continuity in other endeavours in life.

Pointedly, Evangelou et al, (2008) supported the above by stating that positive experiences of transition from primary to secondary school have been proven to strengthen the health and well-being of individuals later in life. Nevertheless, transitions, if not supported accordingly, may represent a time of risk and emotional distress for children, which can also undermine resilience, and increase the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviours.

According to Pearson and Hall (2017), resilience is positively significant to a meaningful living because people who respond to hardships with resilience are: healthier and live longer, happier in their relationships, more successful in school and work, less likely to get depressed. In addition, many of the things that support healthy development in young children also help build their resilience, for example, having: a secure bond with a caring adult, relationship with positive role models, opportunities to learn skills and privilege to participate in meaningful activities through play. However, Werner, 1990; Turliuc, Mairean & Danila, 2013 found that during these sensitive periods of development, the child has to be supported by at least one caring and empathic adult in order to overcome that particular challenge and move on in life.

In another development, it was found that young adults that were resilient had some peculiar characteristics in childhood like excellent attention skills, good intellectual ability, agreeable personality, conscientiousness, self motivation to achieve, positive self concept, good parenting background, lower stress reactivity among others as a result of nature and nurture effects on their personality (Masten, 2001; Turliuc, Mairean & Danila, 2013).

For this cause, it is imperative to understand that human beings are endowed with the special capacity for developing resilience but they have to build on it throughout their life time starting from the early years. Care givers, especially, parents are found to be the best people to assist in building resilience in children from the early years. It is observed that children learn a lot by watching their parents noting how they cope with everyday stress and indirectly teaching the children how to cope with life issues the same way they do either positively or negatively. Therefore, it is very important to develop resilience because it makes a great mark in a person's life in that those who respond to challenges with resilience are less likely to be depressed, they are more successful in school and career later in life, they are happier in the relationships now and later and to crown it up, they are healthier and live longer because of the ease with which they face life's problems (Pearson and Hall, 2017).

According to Center on the Developing Child (2017), some children may demonstrate resilience because they are not affected by cruel harm created by adverse early experiences. However, it is pertinent to reduce the impact of significant adversity on the path of children's healthy development in order to maintain a peaceful advancement and well-being of an ideal society. More research is needed in order to study and understand the reason behind the development of coping strategy in some children in spite of experiencing adversity in the early years so that it can assist policy makers to design policies and programmes that will enable distressed children cope with life and still reach their full potential.

Masten (2001), in his longitudinal study with 205 children and families, identified that children that demonstrated

resilience had the following characteristics in childhood: good intellectual and attention skills, agreeable personality, achievement motivation and conscientiousness, lower stress reactivity, parenting quality and positive self-concept. These are a combination of nature and nurture phenomena. Rutter (1987), Masten and Powell (2003) revealed that resilience factors in children is associated with high intelligence, self mastery, internal locus of control, easy temperament, planning skills, excellent coping skills including an easy going temperament. Garmezy, Masten and Tellegen (1984) studied children with behavioural disturbance and children of mentally ill parents for a period of ten years and found that three factors in those children that promote resilience are temperamental disposition of the child, the type of family ties and external support systems.

To support this, in many scholarly writings, they have reported that the following consistently correlate with the development of resilience: sufficient cuddly and affectionate status during infancy and beyond, a higher level of intelligence, having no sibling born within 20-24 months after one's birth, achievement orientation in and outside school, capacity and skills for developing intimate relationships, the ability to develop productive meanings for events in their world that enhances their understanding of these events, absence of serious illness during adolescence, being able to selectively disengage from home and engage with those outside, in addition to having internal orientation plus internal locus of control (Barnard, 1994).

In line with the above, Hosier (2014) in his write up, gave six vital factors which make children to be more resilient to the effects of trauma: attachment or bonding with the care giver, especially, the mother;

self-regulation of emotions; affiliation or integration within groups; empathy or attunement; tolerance of others and respect or worth in self and others. This was corroborated by the findings of Turliuc, Mairean and Danila (2013) who stated that the factors that may help children to develop the ability to gain a positive life style in spite of difficult circumstances are personality traits, family resilience skill, inherited coping strategies, as well as external supportive relationship from the concerned others e.g. parent, teacher, care givers, siblings, school mates among others.

More essentially, for resilience to occur, there must be an exposure to adversity and there must a positive developmental outcome gained from the effect of the adversity (Masten, 2001). According to Pearson and Hall (2017), external support like a secured bond with a caring adult, having a relationship with a positive role model(s), opportunities to learn new skills and participate in meaningful and interesting activities like play usually assist in enhancing the development of resilience in children in the early years. Furthermore, children need inner strengths like self control, thinking skills, confidence, positive outlook, responsibility and participation in order to be resilient in life.

Significantly, many scholarly research findings support the fact that there is positive relationship between play and development of resilience among children in the early years because when a child is given ample opportunities to play and exercise the body, he will be more intelligent and be able to improve on his ability to adapt to ever changing circumstances due to the experience gained indirectly during play in the early years. For instance, social rough and tumble play may be used to improve the performance of children with Attention

Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) who have problem of inability to concentrate on one task, hyperactivity and impulsivity (Panksepp, 2003; Goldstein, 2012).

The myriads of the benefits of resilience include: assisting children in enhancing the action-motivation pathway; ability to build mastery in spite of the challenge due to intrinsic motivation; intense feeling of self control (pdresources.org, 2018). To the adult, resilience helps them to: bounce back to life after facing serious challenge; be courageous, it helps the man to either flee or fight; collapse or engage constructively; power to connect within and without oneself; be creative after bouncing back courageously; reduce depression; improve physical well being, enhance cognitive functioning and reduce the direct effects of stress on an individual (Hook, 2018). Relating to an employee, resilience benefits them in the highlighted ways: adequate protection against mental health crises; it gives them the ability to overcome daily hassles and major stressors in their daily endeavours; it makes them to be more emotionally stable in the course of performing their duties; it allows them to develop the mindset to manage setbacks and challenges as they crop up in their life (Teamscales Learning, 2018).

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research is hinged on the theory of resilience. The major construct of resilience theory are risk factors (vulnerability factors) and protective factors. Risk factors are conceptualized as the states of adversity while protective mechanism is the reduction of negative reactions to risk factors or the ability to promote resiliency traits that is the opposite of vulnerability traits by exploring new opportunities for success. The type of adversity or challenge, type of resilient outcome and stage of life

under investigation can influence the protective and risk factors or mechanisms because what is the protective factor in one period or context can be vulnerability in another state or context Rutter, 1999; Turliuc, Mairean and Danila, 2013).

According to Kobasa, 1979, there are three psychological attitudes: commitment, challenge and control. Commitment is the power to make a positive re-interpretation of critical situations whereas control means the belief that individuals can influence the course of his or her life while challenge is seen as the belief that fulfilment in life results from wisdom gained from difficult experiences or risky experiences in the past (Maddi and Khoshaba, 1994; Rutter, 1999; Turliuc, Mairean and Danila, 2013).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The rate at which the amount of public space devoted to playground and sports field in schools is diminishing is worrisome and this is reducing children's privilege or opportunities for active and social play. The result is the sedentary lifestyle of children and the attendant problems of obesity, attention deficits, heart problems, weak bones, inability to endure and withstand stress, among others. The world is becoming increasingly intricate to reside due to the activities of the unscrupulous elements in the global society. For instance, the media is replete with series of bizarre occurrences like child soldier, insurgency, re-insurgency, war, kidnapping, drug addiction, incessant smoking, natural disasters like fire outbreak, tsunami, earth quake, volcanic eruption, high rate of occultism leading to gruesome murder of individuals including children irrespective of their gender or age, domestic violence, sudden death of a parent or parents, child trafficking, ebola virus attack, HIV AIDS, prevalence of immoral acts within and

outside the home due to pornography and other forms of injustice against children among others due to their vulnerable state in the early years. Therefore, play has been found to be central in the life of children in terms of developing positive psycho-social emotional developments as well as enhancing their intellectual performance in order to withstand the dynamic and puzzled world. Play is sine qua non to the development of resilience skills among children in the early years as lifelong learning starts with play upon which further learning is built. Therefore, encouraging active play in order to develop resilience from the early years in this time of high incidence of insecurity is imperative. Hence, the study was designed to determine play factor as a predictor of development of resilience in children in the early years in Abeokuta, Ogun state Nigeria.

### **The following research questions and research hypotheses were raised for the study.**

**RQ<sub>1</sub>:** Does play predict the development of resilience in children in the early years?

**RQ<sub>2</sub>:** To what extent does play predict the development of resilience in children in the early years?

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between play and the development of resilience in the early years.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between play and the extent to which resilience is developed in the early years.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted descriptive survey research design using the ex-post facto type. In this type of design, the researcher does not

have control over the variables of interest and cannot manipulate them.

### Population and Sampling Procedure

One hundred and thirty one respondents were used for the study, comprising of sixty- six parents and sixty-five teachers of Federal College of Education Staff School, Osiele, Abeokuta (nursery section).

### Instrumentation

Two teacher-made instruments were used to collect data, titled: (i) Play and Effectiveness of Play in Development of Resilience in the Early Years for Teachers and (ii) Play and Effectiveness of Play in Development of Resilience in the Early Years for Parents where reliability for both was 0.87. The instrument was divided into three (3) sections. Section A solicited for responses based on the personal characteristics of the respondents while

section B was to get information about the forms of play used by the teachers in the school whereas, section C was used to elicit responses on the effectiveness of play in the development of resilience in children in the early years.

### Data Analysis

The research questions were analyzed, using regression analysis in order to find the relative and joint contributions of the independent variable on the dependent variable while the hypotheses were analyzed with Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine if the relationship between the variables is statistically significant in order to reject or accept the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

### Results

#### Research Questions

**RQ<sub>1</sub>:** Does play predict the development of resilience in children in the early years?

**Table 1: Summary of regression on joint prediction of play in the development of resilience in children in the early years**

| R=.380<br>$R^2=.144$<br>Adj. $R^2=.131$<br>Std. Error=2.252 |                |     |             |        |                |        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|----------------|--------|
| Model                                                       | Sum of Squares | Df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig. (p value) | Remark |
| Regression                                                  | 109.271        | 2   | 54.636      |        |                |        |
| Residual                                                    | 649.049        | 128 | 5.071       | 10.775 | .000           | Sig.   |
| Total                                                       | 758.321        | 130 |             |        |                |        |

As indicated in Table 1, it was found that the linear combination of the joint prediction of prevalence of play and Effectiveness of play on development of resilience was significant ( $F_{(2,130)} = 10.775, p < 0.05$ ). The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regression of  $R=0.380$  and multiple R-square of 0.144. The result also revealed that Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.131$ ; indicating that about 13.1% of variance was accounted for by the independent variables. This implied that there is joint prediction of play and effectiveness of play in the development of resilience.

**RQ<sub>2</sub>:** To what extent does play predict the development of resilience in children in the early years?

**Table 2: Summary of regression on relative prediction of play and effectiveness of play on development of resilience**

| Variable                                           | Unstandardized coefficients |            | Standardized coefficients | T     | Sig. (p value) | Remark |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|----------------|--------|
|                                                    | B                           | Std. Error | Beta ( $\beta$ )          |       |                |        |
| (Constant)                                         | 6.803                       | 1.273      | -                         | 5.343 | .000           |        |
| Play                                               | 1.222                       | .445       | .733                      | 2.749 | .007           | Sig.   |
| Effectiveness of play in development of resilience | .676                        | .460       | .392                      | 2.470 | .044           | Sig.   |

Table 2 showed personal factors, the unstandardized regression weight ( $\beta$ ), the standardized error of estimate ( $SE\beta$ ), the standardized coefficient, the t-ratio and the level at which the t-ratio are significant. As indicated in the table play ( $\beta = 0.733$ ,  $t = 2.749$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and effectiveness of play ( $\beta = 0.392$ ,  $t = 2.470$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) were tested

significant predictor of development of resilience in children in the early years. This implied that play factor is germane in the context of developing resilience because when children are endowed with the equipment and the opportunity to play, the tendency to develop resilience skills is very high in the early years.

### Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between play and the development of resilience in the early years.

**Table 3: Result of PPMC showing the significant relationship between play and development of resilience**

| Variable                  | Mean  | Std. Dev. | N   | r      | P    | Remark |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------|-----|--------|------|--------|
| Play                      | 8.82  | 1.449     | 131 | .360** | .000 | Sig.   |
| Development of Resilience | 11.56 | 2.415     |     |        |      |        |

\*Sig. at .05 level

Table 3 above showed that there was a positive significant relationship between play and the development of resilience in the

early years ( $r = .360$ ,  $N = 131$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The result rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis which

states there is a significant relationship between play and the development of resilience in the early year. The implication is that the extent to which resilience is developed among children is largely determined by their exposure to different types of play, using different age appropriate

equipments as at when due, especially in the early years.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between play and the extent to which resilience is developed in the early year.

**Table 4: Result of PPMC showing the significant relationship between play and the extent to which resilience is developed in the early years**

| Variable                                                               | Mean  | Std. Dev. | N   | R      | P    | Remark      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|-----|--------|------|-------------|
| Play                                                                   | 8.92  | 1.401     | 131 | .306** | .000 | Significant |
| Extent to which resilience is developed in children in the early years | 11.56 | 2.415     |     |        |      |             |

\*Sig. at .05 level

Table 4 above showed that there was a positive significant relationship between play and the extent to which resilience is developed in the early years ( $r = .306^{**}$ ,  $N = 131$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The result rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis which states there is a significant relationship between play and the extent to which resilience is developed in the early years.

### Discussion of Findings

Research question one is in line with the findings of Sutton-Smith, (1997) who opined that play is said to enhance brain development and growth as play seems to be more frequent during the period of rapid brain growth because human child is endowed with an abundant neuronal capacity that is responsible for problem solving, language and creativity which if not adequately manipulated will be decimated. He added that a child who is not stimulated by being played with does not have or rarely

explores his or her environment may not fully link up the neural connections and pathways he needs for further educational enterprise or learning.

Also, hypothesis one ( $Ho_1$ ), corroborates the findings of Quisenberry, (1988) who found that play is integral to man's existence as it gives fun and is acquired mainly during recreation or entertainment activities. It is a dynamic and active part of childhood, infancy and spans adolescent period.

In addition, in hypothesis one ( $Ho_1$ ), the study supports the findings of American Academy of Paediatricians, (2011), that suggested that children learn while they play. For instance, they understand how to calibrate their muscles and bodies, how to think in abstract terms, how to restructure their thought, or action, and how to relate with others among others. They also added that play helps to improve the child's perception of others emotional state, and increases the child's ability to adapt or cope

with the ever changing circumstances because life itself is dynamic. Through play, children learn a valuable skill of how to entertain themselves. Azar, (2002) aligned with the work in that he found that play in the playing field promotes fairness as justice starts with healthy fair social play.

Also, in research question two, the study is in alignment with the findings of Panksepp, (2003), Goldstein, (2012) that support the fact that there is positive relationship between play and development of resilience among children in the early years because when a child is given ample opportunities to play and exercise the body, he will be more intelligent and be able to improve on his ability to adapt to ever changing circumstances due to the experience gained indirectly during play in the early years. For instance, social rough and tumble play may be used to improve the performance of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) who have problem of inability to concentrate on one task, hyperactivity and impulsivity.

The study in hypothesis two, (H<sub>02</sub>) is in line with the work of Block and Block, (1980) and Rutter, (1885) who found that play which enhances resilience skills enables a child to develop a desirable emotional and social functioning despite exposure to an undesirable situation. Richardson, (2002) supported that resilience is a process of coping with adversity that gives the child the opportunity to develop protective factors needed in times of adversity. According to Werner, 1990; Rutter, (1999) and Turliuc, Mairean and Danila, (2013), the concept of resilience depicts the ability of a child to build resistance to psycho-social risk experiences while continuing with life successfully.

To this effect, the amelioration of the effects of [significant adversity](#) on children's

healthy development is a prerequisite to achieving the progress and prosperity of any nation. Studies have confirmed that some children develop resilience to overcome a severe condition of living, while others find it difficult to cope with such a state of living. Therefore, it imperative for the society to understand why some children do well despite adverse early experiences in order to promulgate more effective policies and functional programmes that will enable children to aspire, endure hardship and invariably reach their full potential (Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2017).

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings in the study, it was inferred that play to children is like water to a fish. It is sine qua non to obtaining skills for survival in a challenging or puzzle-like world hence, play is prerequisite to the development of resilience in children in the early years.

## **Recommendations**

From the findings in this study, it was recommended that children should be exposed to varieties of play with age-appropriate materials or equipment both at home and in the school in order to acquire the resilience skills needed to overcome challenges now and in the future. However, during sensitive periods of development in a child's life, he or she has to be supported by at least a caring and empathic adult in order to overcome that particular challenge and move on in life. Moreover, teachers, parents and significant others should note that it is during play that children's intelligence increases greatly. For instance, they learn to control their emotional outbursts, take turns, manipulate their environment and the objects including human beings around them, more so their social collaboration skills and

physical well-being are being enhanced and more especially, they are well able to resist obstacles or challenges.

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