

The unfinished business': Exploring teachers' views on gender and pedagogical practices in public preschools in Nairobi county

Kenya Juliet Njeri Muasya and Teresia Wakesho Kazungu

Abstract

Early years of a child, especially during Early Childhood Education (ECE), is a critical period facilitating the formation of gender identity and stereotypes, which could affect the appropriate development of a child. Yet, to date, most studies on gender and pedagogy in ECE have been done outside Africa, and so far, none in Kenya. The aim of this study was to explore the views of preschool teachers in regard to gender and pedagogical practices in their teaching of English language through the use of in-depth interviews. Data analysed from interviews transcripts with 15 (14 females and 1 male) preschool teachers shows that in their use of role play, songs, poems, storytelling, group work to teach English language, there are visible aspects of gender stereotypes, more emphasis on masculinity status as compared to femininity. Although preschool teachers encourage children to work in groups of boys and girls, parents seem to be influencing children's choice of their role play. Further, the findings show that although preschool teachers are to some extent gender sensitive, they tend to have limited knowledge on how to use gender responsive pedagogy when teaching boys and girls English language, which confirms the yet 'Unfinished Business of 21st Century'. There is need to train preschool teachers on how to effectively use gender pedagogical practices for purposes of achieving equality as postulated in the 2016 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Keywords: Gender and pedagogy, gender, gender roles, Early Childhood Education, preschool education.

Full text:

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