

The Influence of Preschool Teachers' Gender on Strategies to Scaffold Socio-Emotional Competence (SEC) in Children in Eldoret Town, Kenya

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Abstract

Gender equality is a recurring theme in international conventions on education and social development. Relatively, little information exists regarding gender differences among teachers and their strategies to scaffold Socio-Emotional Competence (SEC) in preschool children. The information available has so far provided a mixed picture with some studies mainly focusing on the influence of teachers' gender on children's achievement. Some of these studies show that women have greater influence on children's achievement, while others find no significant differences. This mixed methods study provides supplementary evidence on the influence of teachers' gender on children's achievement, but specifically, on SEC which is non-cognitive. From a total of 98 public and private preschools in Eldoret town, purposive sampling was used to select 301 preschool teachers out of which 6 participated in an interview while 2 classrooms were placed under observation. From these data, despite women being nurturers, there was no statistical significant influence of gender on strategies used by preschool teachers to scaffold SEC in children. Both men and women used the same strategies to scaffold SEC in children and this has been explored in detail. Efforts should be made to encourage preschool teachers regardless of their gender to intentionally scaffold SEC in children.

Key words: Socio-Emotional Competence, Strategies, Preschool teachers, Teachers' gender.

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