

Influence of Parental Participation on Academic Performance among Children in Early Childhood Development and Education Centres in Waldai Zone, Kericho county, Kenya.

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Abstract

Parental participation in young children's education is a fundamental right and obligation. It is a family involvement process that includes the attitudes, values and practices of parents in raising young children. Nurturing warm, and responsive parent-child relationships in Child-centered activities related to positive learning outcomes in early childhood. The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of parental participation on academic performance among children in Early Childhood Development and Education Centres in Waldai Zone, Kericho County, Kenya. The objectives that guided the study included; assessing the influence of parental encouragement of their children to learn at home, on academic performance, investigating the effect of parental guidance on academic performance of ECD children, examining the influence of parental communication with the school, on children's academic performance and establishing the effect of parental support of educational activities on children's performance in school. The theory that underpinned this study was the Structural Functionalism Theory. The theory postulates that the human society is like an organism made up of structures known as social institutions, which are specially structured to perform various functions on behalf of the society. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and was carried out in Waldai zone, Kericho County. Purposive sampling and simple random sampling were used to select participants who comprised of a target population of 155 respondents, 35 headteachers, 70 preschool teachers and 50 parents, to get the sample size of 10 headteachers, 19 preschool teachers and 13 parents. The instruments that were used in collection of data included use of questionnaires, interviews, documents analysis and observations. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Quantitative data was coded and analysed using the SPSS. Data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages and presented in pie charts, tables and bar graphs. The findings revealed that majority of the parents believed that the responsibility for their preschool children's learning depended on the shared participation between them and the school. The findings also showed that there is a strong correlation between parental monitoring of school work and performance (0.7752). The study concluded that parental participation influences the academic performance among children in ECDE centres and recommends the Ministry of Education to ensure the presence of a functional Partnership between parents and teachers as an important aspect of a child's academic and social achievement. Preschool teachers should be well trained and paid so that they have the ability and time to invite parents' participation and the knowledge to provide parents with clear strategies for rich relationship with their children. This is done through nurturing and having warm parent-child relationship.

Keywords: Parental Participation, Early Childhood Education, Academic Performance

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