

Investigating the Level of Expertise of the Staff Implementing Policy on the Management of Public Early Childhood Development Education Centres in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya.

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Abstract

In Kenya, the County governments, through the county education boards are tasked with the responsibility of overseeing the operation and management of Pre-primary education programs. Despite the growing importance of Early Childhood Education programme, there is lack of schemes of service for ECDE teachers, low and irregular remuneration of pre-school teachers thus adversely affecting the morale of these teachers. Teacher qualification is instrumental for quality learning, not only in pre-primary education but also in other levels. The study sought to examine the level of expertise of the staff implementing the policy on the management of public ECDE centers in Elgeyo-Marakwet County. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design and anchored on systems theory. The target population for this study comprised ECDE officials, all the head-teachers and teachers in all the public ECDE's in Elgeyo-Marakwet County. The study used stratified sampling to stratify Elgeyo- Marakwet County into sub-counties that form 155 ECDE schools from Keiyo North, 144 ECDE schools from Keiyo south, 118 ECDE schools from Marakwet East and 156 ECDE schools from Marakwet West. Simple random sampling was used to select the respondents for the study from the strata. Thus, 344 ECDE teachers and 172 head teachers participated in the study. The 5 ECDE officials were purposely included in the study sample. Data collection was done using a combination of sets of questionnaire, interview guides and checklists. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Chi-square test was used to find the relationship between the variables investigated. Data was presented using tables. The study established that majority of ECDE teachers had attained diploma qualification with a few who had attained master's degree. Majority (67.4%) of the respondents said that there was no implementation policy on level of expertise in the policy. Similarly, the study established that there existed a relationship between the level of expertise of the staff in implementing policies and the management of public ECDE centers in Elgeyo-Marakwet County government($\chi^2=762.066$, $df=45$ and $sig=0.001$). The study recommends on the need for individual and collective efforts on the part of teachers to keep themselves abreast of any new development regarding pedagogy and any relevant aspects of teaching and learning so as to remain relevant in their career. This can be done by way of professional development through in servicing.

Key Words: Level of Expertise, Public Early Childhood Development Education Centres Elgeyo Marakwet County

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