

Selection of Developmentally Appropriate Technology in Early Childhood Education Environments, Serving Ages 4-6 in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

Effective selection and use of technology in early childhood environments involve the application of developmentally appropriate tools and materials for enhancing learning, interaction, communication and collaboration. Since the influence of computers, iPods, mobile devices, digital cameras and video have increasingly found a way in Early Childhood Education (ECE) environments, teachers require guidelines for informed and intentional selection, use and evaluation of developmentally appropriate technology. However, gaps exist in research on parameters for selecting developmentally appropriate software for teaching and learning in pre-schools. Thus, the study assessed selection of developmentally appropriate technology in early childhood education environments serving ages 4-6 in Nairobi County. It was designed as a two-phase exploratory mixed methods study. The design allowed collection of data from two groups of ECE educators: case study and survey teachers. Case-studies of two ECE centres (low and high technology) involving 11 ECE teachers were compared in order to examine similarities and differences in selection of digital technologies. Similarly, teachers (n=508) in two education zones were surveyed and drawn in terms of similarities and differences in selection of technologies. Findings indicate that ECE teachers' selection of developmentally appropriate technology was influenced by professional training as well as type of ECE setting. The study recommends for further research and guidelines in selecting appropriate technologies for teaching and learning.

Keywords: Developmentally Appropriate Technology, Early Childhood Education, Selection, Teaching/Learning Environment.

Full text:

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