

Influence of Quality of Early Childhood Education on Primary School Readiness in Preschool Pupils in Nairobi County, Kenya.

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Abstract

This study sought to explore the influence of quality of early childhood education on primary school readiness in preschool pupils in Nairobi. A correlational research design was used. A combination of purposive, stratified and random sampling techniques were used to obtain a sample of 39 preschools, 156 pupils, 150 parents and 39 teachers. Three instruments were used to measure the quality of early childhood education. These were: Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale; Teacher-pupil Interaction Rating Scale; and Parent Involvement Questionnaire. A fourth instrument, the Primary School Readiness Test, was used to measure school readiness in the pupils. The findings of this study have great significance for the practice of ECE. The insights from the findings are useful for policy formulation and beneficial to teachers and parents, and would lead to maximization of benefits accruing from ECE for young children. The findings also contribute to knowledge in the area of early education. Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple regression analysis were utilized in data analysis. The findings indicated that quality of the early education setting has an influence on primary school readiness in preschool pupils. The findings indicated a significant relationship between the physical and social environment and primary school readiness. Of the four dimensions of teacher-pupil interaction, a significant relationship was indicated by the findings between three of them and school readiness. These three dimensions are positive-relationship, harshness and detachment dimensions of teacher-pupil interaction. No significant relationship was found between the fourth dimension of teacher-pupil interaction, permissiveness, and school readiness. No significant relationship was established between parental involvement and school readiness. Collectively the six dimensions of physical and social environment account for 29.7% of variance in school readiness. The four dimensions of teacher-pupil interaction in combination explain 32.2% of variance in school readiness. The study recommended that stakeholders ensure preschool are well-resourced to attain high quality, as well as being adequately staffed with qualified and trained teachers. Parents were encouraged to volunteer more at their children's preschool since volunteering was found to exert the highest positive influence among the six levels of parental involvement. It also recommended that measures which will encourage greater cooperation between preschools and parents be put in place. The study also recommended further research on relationship between parental involvement and child outcomes.

Key words: Quality of Early Childhood Education, Primary School Readiness, Preschool Pupils, Nairobi County

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