

Effects of Emotional Needs on Participation of Children Aged 4-6 with Learning Disabilities in Early Childhood Centers in Starehe Division, Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

During early childhood, the foundations for emotional, social and spiritual well being of children with learning disabilities (CWLD) are laid. The CWLD emotional well being is influenced by all the experiences they go through. It is essential to provide warm, trusting relationships, predictable and safe environment, affirmation and respect for all aspects of children's emotional, physical, social, cognitive and linguistic well being of CWLD. There is need to actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation, meet emotional needs in a positive and pro-active way and engender a sense of community in an inclusive Early Childhood Education (ECE) environment. The study assesses the effects of emotional needs on participation of (CWLD) in (ECE) centers in Starehe division in Nairobi County. In its methodology the study uses structured interview and observation as the principle data collection instruments. Likewise, it employed a descriptive research design to gather data. The target population was 5 head teachers, 35 teachers, 20 children aged 4-6 with learning disabilities and 20 parents of children with learning disabilities. Purposive sampling and simple random sampling were used for this study. Analysis was obtained through editing, coding, classifying and tabulation processes. It was established that emotional needs of (self concept, social competence and respect) which teachers effectively engaged yielded encouraging results in an inclusive ECE learning environment. However, the findings draw attention to inadequacies in the current ECE system of identifying emotional needs for CWLD.

Keywords: early childhood education; emotional needs; inclusive learning environment; learning disability; participation

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