

# Influence of Teacher's Qualification on the Quality of Education in Pre-Primary Schools in Nairobi City County, Kenya

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**Abstract**— The issue of quality education is very critical when it comes to overall performance of pre-primary schools. Despite this tremendous increase in access rate in the sub-sector, provision of quality pre-primary education remains a challenge across the country. The main purpose of this study was to find out whether teachers' qualification influences quality of Pre-primary school education in Nairobi City County. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study targeted ninety (90) ECDE teachers and fifteen (15) principals. Random sampling procedure and purposive sampling procedure will be used to sample 40 ECDE teachers and 14 principals. Validity of research instruments was measured through content validity. Reliability of the research instruments was determined by carrying out a pilot test of the instruments using another similar group with the same characteristics as the one targeted in the study. The collected data was analyzed using quantitative data analysis approach. Descriptive analysis such as frequencies and percentages was used to present quantitative data collected from teachers and principals. The collected data was analysed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21.0. Findings indicated that teachers who were well motivated performed their duties with minimal supervision. The study recommended that head teachers should try as much as possible to recruit qualified staff for effective curriculum implementation and encourage the stakeholders to motivate the ECDE teachers to increase their efficiency.

**Index Terms**— Quality of Education, Pre-Primary Schools.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Highlight Various reports have demonstrated the significance of teachers as key determinants of quality Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) across the globe (Raikes, 2015, UNESCO, 2014). Studies also indicate that pre-primary teachers who are properly trained and equipped with the suitable and right skills, knowledge and conditions are more likely to support rich reciprocal interactions and content teaching that directly influence children's socio-emotional development, language development and cognitive skills (Naudeau, Kataoka, Valerio, Neuman & Elder, 2011; Yoshikawa & Kabay, 2015).

It is evident that improvement in programme quality and learning outcomes are often correlated with better educated and trained (Behrman, Engle & Fernald, 2013; Rao et al.,

2014)). A study conducted in the USA by Spodek (2007) on teacher qualifications indicated that there was a positive connection between teacher qualifications and pupil's achievement. Therefore, the exploration of evidence on distinctions between the effects of teacher's qualifications in education and the impact of content knowledge on teacher performance is a persistent theme in the quality of early childhood education in USA.

In Kenya, learning in primary schools and early childhood learning centers has raised concerns since the commencement of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 (UNESCO, 2012) and introduction of community support grant that was aimed at improving learning in ECE. While there is a consensus that FPE coupled with community support grant are appropriate policies in addressing the problem of declining primary school access in Kenya, a serious concern has been raised on the effects on provision quality of education (Sun, Rao & Pearson, 2015).

A study conducted by Abagi (2008) among 181 ECD centers in 18 Counties in the country indicated that the quality of care and education in most of these pre-primary schools was very poor with some children learning under trees and sitting on stones. In the same vein, MoE Report (2011) acknowledges that quality of services provided in most of pre-primary schools was poor across the country characterized by shortage of trained teachers. Regardless of the poor quality of services provided among pre-primary schools, parents continue to enroll their children in the pre-primary schools (UNESCO, 2012). It is evident that the data with regard to implementation of ECDE programmes in public preschools by devolved pre-schools by devolved units is limited since the management of the same was devolved to the 47 counties in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2014). At the same time, the professional qualification of ECDE teachers who have been deployed is not well documented.

The situation in Kenya is that the National Government has been disbursing funds to devolved systems meant to cater for but not limited to education, including ECDE, which has been put under the management of County governments. Nevertheless, it is about five years since County Governments were established in Kenya, and it is envisioned that the counties have put in place steps to enhance the quality of ECDE in their respective areas of jurisdiction. This led to the question as whether the country government is doing something to address the issue of quality of ECDE with respect to teachers' qualifications. This study therefore sought to find out the status of ECDE teaching and learning in

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pre-primary schools in the light of teacher factor of qualification

## II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of teacher's qualification on the quality of education in pre-primary schools in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

To find out whether teachers' qualification influence quality of Pre-primary school education in Nairobi City County

## III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Influence on Teachers' Qualifications and quality of Education in Pre-primary Schools

Teacher's qualification to some extent does not necessarily translate into a better teacher with relation to delivering quality education among learners. A study conducted by Jepsen (2005) established that teaching experience might be expected to make a difference in being prepared to manage classrooms because this area of expertise may be particularly problematic for beginning teachers. In Indonesia, Jung and Hasan (2014) noted that ECCE institutions were usually staffed by volunteer teachers with little or no training since very few institutions provided training for early childhood teachers. But in even in cases where there were adequate training institutions, the transfer of knowledge into the classroom was unclear and there was lack of quality assurance systems. Rao, et al (2014) observed that teacher beliefs and perspectives about children's development and quality learning environments can influence the organization and practices in an early childhood setting and affect quality and learning outcomes among pupils. In the US, Pianta, et al., (2005, in Raikes, 2015) found that effective teachers hold "child-centered" beliefs that emphasize the child's role in decision-making and de-emphasize obedience and adult control.

In the African region, studies focusing on quality of ECDE seem not to have assessed provision of quality ECDE under the lenses of training, competencies, as well as knowledge and ability. Gina, Chowa, Masa, Ramos, and Ansong (2013) used Youth Save Data in Ghana to obtain a sample of 4,993 youths and 89 schools to investigate how students and school characteristics influence youth academic performance. It was found that student traits, including academic self-efficacy and commitment to school, were positively associated with Math and English scores. Another study was conducted by Olabode, (2012) in Nigeria on the effects of teachers' qualifications on the performance of senior secondary school physics students: implication on technology. Ndani and Kimani (2010) used a sample of 40 centres and 46 ECDE teachers to investigate factors influencing early childhood development teachers' motivation in Thika District, Kenya. This study aimed at investigating the influence of teacher's qualification on the quality of education in pre-primary schools in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study used a descriptive research design which involved describing, recording, analyzing and interpreting

conditions that exist. Survey research design was used mainly because it was useful in describing the characteristics of a large population and makes use of large samples.

### Study Population

This study targeted a total of 105 respondents comprising of 90 ECDE Teachers and 15 Head teachers from 15 Pre-primary schools in Nairobi City County.

### Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Simple random sampling strategy was used to select 14 public pre-primary. Census method was used to arrive to all the class teachers in all the selected schools. Three teachers were picked from each of the fourteen schools selected to participate in the study leading to a total of 40 ECDE teachers. Purposive sampling procedure was used in the study to sample 14 principals.

### Data Instruments

Questionnaires comprising of both open-ended and closed ended inquiries structured in accordance with the study objective were used. Questionnaires were used simply because they could reach a large number of respondents within a short time, gave the respondents adequate time to respond to the items and were easy to administer.

### Data Collection Procedures and Analysis

The researcher made a visit to the sampled schools to brief the heads of schools about the research and set date for data collection. The researcher personally administered questionnaires to the respondents on a drop and pick-later method. After data had been collected using the instruments the completed questionnaires were assembled, edited for completeness and consistency, coded using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and interpreted in relation to the objectives of the research study. The respective questionnaires were assigned numerical codes and then the analysis of the received data was done by comparing all the received responses from the questionnaires administered then presented in a descriptive manner. Data was analyzed descriptively using frequency and tables. Inferential statistics was used to generalize the findings related to the influence of teacher's qualifications on the quality pre-primary education. This was based on a 5-item Likert scale of: Strongly Agree (SA)=5, Agree (A)=4, Undecided (UD)=3, Disagree (D)=2 and Strongly Disagree (SA)=1.

## V. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This section presents the data collected from the field and the data analysis procedures done to achieve the purpose of the study.

### Teacher's Qualifications on the Quality Pre-primary Education

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with various statements pertaining teacher's qualifications on the quality pre-primary education. Table 1 summarizes the respondent's responses.

The table below presents data on play materials available in the classrooms.

**Table 1: Teacher’s Qualifications on the Quality Pre-primary Education**

Statements	SA		A		UD		D		SD	
	F	(%)	F	%	F	%	F	(%)	F	%
Unqualified teachers have influenced quality of pre-primary school	20	66.7	10	33.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Traditional teachers provide quality education to children	-	-	-	-	20	66.7	-	-	10	33.3
Trained teachers provide quality education to children	20	66.7	10	33.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professional teachers provide quality education to children.	30	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A well trained teacher is important to a quality academic ECD education program	10	33.3	20	66.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
The teachers allow children participate actively in the teaching learning process	20	66.7	-	-	10	33.3	-	-	-	-
The teachers make allowances for individual differences while teaching					10	33.3	10	33.3	10	33.3

Majority (66.7%) of the respondents who participated during the study ‘strongly agreed’ that unqualified teachers had influence on the quality of pre-primary school education. The statement was also supported by a third (33.3%) of the respondents. On whether traditional teachers provided quality education to children, a good number (66.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while the remaining percentage 33.3% of them agreed as well. With reference to whether trained teachers provided quality education to children two thirds (66.7%) of the respondents ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement while the remaining a third (33.3%) further supported the statement.

Professionalism of teaching was another aspect that respondents were asked to give their responses. All the respondents strongly agreed that professional teachers provided quality education to children. When asked whether a well-trained teacher was important to a quality academic ECD education program, two thirds (66.7%) of the respondents agreed with the statement. The remaining a third (33.3%) further strongly agreed with the statement.

Two thirds (66.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that teachers allowed children to participate actively during teaching learning process while the remaining percentage 33.3% of them were undecided. With reference to whether teachers were making allowances for individual differences while teaching, a third (33.3%) of the respondents were undecided, another 33.3% of them strongly disagreed followed by the remaining percentage 33.3% which disagreed with the statement.

Barnett (2014) asserts that children’s learning and development, which thrives in a positive classroom climate, depends on the educational qualifications of their teachers This is based on research studies done in the US where

preschool teachers with a college education have been shown to be more effective. Teacher education was found to be related to the quality of preschool education and the development of children in preschool classrooms. Both general education and specific preparation in early childhood education predict teaching quality. Better educated teachers have more positive, sensitive and responsive interactions with children, provide richer language and cognitive experiences, and are less authoritarian, punitive and detached. The result is better social, emotional, linguistic, and cognitive development for the child. Higher education was associated with better teaching and better language acquisition. Also, children whose teachers had four-year degrees engaged in more creative activities.

For instance, a study conducted in Scotland by the government that involved 336 preschools in order to ascertain the effects of teacher qualifications on the preschool children found out that when a teacher has a background in early years methodology this contributes to making a positive difference to children’s learning whereas the impact on the quality of children’s experiences was less where staff had no higher level qualifications. It also showed that the best experiences for children were found where there was a range of staff with complementary skills and relevant higher level qualifications (Scotland, 2012).

In Italy, Preschool teachers are trained using innovative techniques such as the Montessori Method or Regio Emilia approach which were developed within the country. Preschool teachers trained in the Montessori philosophy create a classroom climate that is characterized by an emphasis on child independence, freedom within limits, and respect for a child’s natural psychological development and is transacted through specialized sensorial material (Schmidt & Schmidt, 2009). Hence, it is clear that teacher qualifications is

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a significant factor in determining quality of education.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that education stakeholders have a perception that teachers' qualification contributes a lot by influencing the quality of pre-primary education. A well-trained teacher improves the quality of teaching, improves teaching methods and ensures a friendly environment. These are paramount elements and pillars of learners' performance.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendation of the study was need for early childhood teacher training to focus on improving of pre-school teaching approaches to improve on quality outcomes.

The study further recommends that teachers training colleges should incorporate courses that equip teachers with skills to handle pupils transiting from ECD classes. This would ensure seamless learning process when pupils transit to the next level of education teachers handling lower primary classes should be equipped with skills of handling pupils transiting from ECD classes

1. School head teachers should try as much as possible to recruit qualified staff for effective curriculum implementation. This implies that ECDE teacher should provide original certificates from recognized institutions and must have trained as an ECDE teacher. Head teachers should motivate the teachers for quality education to be realized in public and private institutions the head. They should make sure they get necessary promotions and appreciate them when their learners achieve credible results.

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