

Influence Of Curriculum Practices On Learners' Acquisition Of Psychomotor Skills In Public And Private Pre-Schools In Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract: Children are better able to think critically about and make sense of the world around them if they have a solid foundation in information, skills, the ability to solve problems, and attitudes. Teaching and learning materials help children grow cognitively, socially, and physically. The main objective of the study was to explore the influence of curriculum practices on learners' acquisition of psychomotor skills in public and private preschools in Uasin-Gishu County Kenya. The study employed a descriptive Survey design that utilized both quantitative and qualitative research approaches targeting preprimary II learners, Quality Assurance and Standards Officers, Preprimary II teachers and Grade one teachers. A lesson observation checklist, a questionnaire for teachers, a focus group discussion with teachers of grade one, a questionnaire for instructors and an interview schedule with sub-county quality assurance officials were used as data collection instruments. Analytical methods such as comparison analysis, theme analysis, content analysis, and fast impressionistic summaries were utilized to examine qualitative data. When compared to private low-cost preschools, which had 62.5% of the studied preschools without playfields. Private high-cost preschools reached acceptable levels of playfield availability. This is in contrast to private low-cost preschools. Majority (97%) of learners in public preschools were found to have acquired the skill of climbing and sliding on playing objects, while in Private High-Cost preschools, 85% of the learners had acquired the same skills, and in Private Low-Cost preschools, 61% of the learners had acquired the same skills. Learners attending private preschools with high tuition costs were fulfilling expectations, while those attending public preschools were getting closer to reaching them. The children who attended private low-cost preschools fell short of what was expected of them. It is recommended to educate parents about the need of supplying preschools with sufficient playfields and play supplies by holding Annual General Meetings.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is generally agreed that a child's preschool years are the most formative years of their life. The activities that take place in preschool are very important to the growth of a kid (Siddiqi, Irwin and Hertzman, 2007). The growth and knowledge that children get prior to entering formal schooling creates a solid foundation for them as they become ready to enter that level of education. Early preschool education, according to research, may compensate for any deficiencies and vulnerabilities, independent of the underlying circumstances in the community. Psychomotor education is the "starting point" for the children's learning process. Commonly, if your child has a learning disability is a result of any deficiency in the psychomotor development (GARCIA, 2016). psychomotor

skills are also important determinates of children's ability to participate in their culture, and develop and maintain a physically active lifestyle. "The child who presents the psychomotor development barely constituted may present problems in writing, reading, towards graphics, in distinction of letters, on ordering of syllables, in abstract thinking and logical, grammatical analysis, among others (ROSSI, 2012). In early childhood, it is necessary to provide children with a variety of motor experiences, so that the brain keep such actions and, subsequently, make them more complex and refined (HELL, etal 2010). The term "curriculum practices" refers to different methods of instruction, as well as the availability of play areas and physical amenities. Children are able to gain skills that will aid them in meeting the

requirements of grade one education as a result of children participating in good curricular practices (Barnett, 2017).

Early childhood education, as stated in the Preschool Education (2000) report, contributes to the overall growth and development of children. Due to a lack of school preparation among preschoolers, there is a high rate of dropout and an increase in the amount of repetition in grades one through three (Nyamwanya & Mwaura 1995). There is evidence suggesting the percentage of children in Kenya who moved on from preschool to primary school was 56.5% in 2004, with 13.8% dropping out of school and the remaining children repeating a grade (Mwaura, 2014). In addition to this, the average test scores for students in Kenya's first grade in English, numeracy, and Kiswahili were 6%, 4%, and 7% correspondingly (UWEZO, 2013). There is a significant gap in the ways in which public and private preschools prepare their students for elementary school. In Kenya's preschool sector, there has been a chronic shortage of reliable, complete, and comparable statistics, which makes it impossible to draw conclusions on whether public or private preschools are superior in terms of educating children to be ready for school (Gronlund, 2014).

The preparation of students for elementary school is directly related to the instructional methods used in the preschools they attended. The instructional methods used in the children's preschools that the children attend have an effect on their levels of physical, social, cognitive, and linguistic development. Learners may be less prepared for elementary school if they attended a preschool that had poor pedagogical approaches. The majority of parents recognize the need of providing their children with a quality preschool education in order to better prepare them for elementary school. However, UWEZO (2013) found differences in school preparedness, showing that just 24 percent of the learners who were sampled were prepared for school

II. METHODS

This research used a Systematic Area Study Approach to Comparative Education, which was consistent with the Descriptive Survey Design that utilized both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The study targeted preprimary II learners in public and private Preschools in Uasin-Gishu County Kenya. The Quality Assurance and Standards Officers, Preprimary II teachers and Grade one teachers were also involved in the study. Stratified random sampling was utilized to collect data. The use of stratification helped guarantee that each stratum was adequately represented in the sample relative to the overall population. 374 were stratified and randomly selected from 576 preschools, 193 of which were public preschools and 383 of which were private preschools. a total of five different instruments, including a lesson observation checklist, a questionnaire for teachers, a focus group discussion with teachers of grade one, a questionnaire for instructors, and an interview schedule with sub-county quality assurance officials. Approval was sought from Kenyatta University Ethics Review Committee (KU-ERC). Analytical methods such as comparison analysis, theme analysis, content analysis, and fast impressionistic summaries were utilized to

examine qualitative data. The transcribed interviews were analyzed, and the observational notes were played again and listened to. The data served as the basis for the development of the subthemes.

III. FINDINGS

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS		PUBLIC		TEACHERS HIGH COST		LOW COST	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
GENDER	Female	17	89	30	97	08	100
	Male	2	11	1	3	0	0
TOTAL		19	100	31	100	08	100
AGE	20 – 29	4	21	1	3	6	75
	30 – 39	7	37	10	32	2	25
	40 – 49	5	26	11	35	0	0
	Above 50	3	16	9	29	0	0
	U.T	0	0	0	0	4	50
TRAINING	Certificate	15	79	18	58	4	50
	Diploma	4	21	7	23	0	0
	Bachelor's Degree	0	0	4	13	0	0
	Master's Degree	0	0	2	6	0	0
EXPERIENCE	1 – 5 years	2	11	2	6	8	100
	5 – 10 years	6	32	12	39	0	0
	11 – 15 years	7	36	11	35	0	0
	Over 20 years	4	21	6	19	0	0

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The vast majority of preschool instructors were female (94,8 percent), while male teachers made up just 5.2 percent of the workforce. that 63.8% of the preschool instructors had Certificates, 19.0% had Diplomas, a quarter (6.9%) had Bachelors' Degrees, and 3.4% had Master of Education certification, while 6.9% did not have any professional credentials in education at all

In terms of their years of work experience, 11% of instructors in public preschools had worked for five years or less, 32% had worked for five to ten years, 36% had worked for 11 to 15 years, and 21% had worked for more than twenty years.

GENDER	PUBLIC SCHOOLS		PRIVATE SCHOOLS			
	f	%	HIGH COST		LOW COST	
MALE	59	49	99	49	27	53
FEMALE	61	51	104	51	24	47

Table 1: Demographic Characteristic of Learners

Majority of the students who took part in the research were graduates of public preschools, whereas just 13.6% were graduates of private preschools. Girls made up 51% of students enrolled in public preschools, while males made up 49% of those spaces.

Materials	Public				Private High Cost				Private low cost			
	None	Few	Adequate	Plenty	None	Few	Adequate	Plenty	None	Few	Adequate	Plenty
Playfield	0(0)	0(0)	5(26)	14(74)	0(0)	0(0)	23(74)	8(26)	5(62.5)	2(25)	1(12.5)	0(0)
Balls	1(5)	3(16)	1(5)	14(74)	0(0)	2(6)	24(77)	5(16)	4(50)	3(37.5)	1(12.5)	0(0)
Skipping ropes	2(11)	4(21)	13(68)	0(0)	1(5)	12(39)	18(58)	0(0)	7(87.5)	1(12.5)	0(0)	0(0)
Bean bags	8(42)	5(26)	6(32)	0(0)	3(10)	13(42)	15(48)	0(0)	8(100)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Pair of scissors	1(5)	2(11)	13(68)	3(16)	1(5)	9(29)	17(55)	4(15)	6(75)	1(12.5)	1(12.5)	0(0)
Paints and pencils	0(0)	3(16)	14(74)	2(11)	0(0)	0(0)	10(32)	21(68)	0(0)	3(37.5)	5(63.5)	0(0)

Table 3: Availability of playfields and play facilities for psychomotor skills

The preschools that had appropriate and plentiful resources had reached the acceptable standards. When compared to private low-cost preschools, which had 62.5% of the studied preschools without playfields. Private high-cost preschools reached acceptable levels of playfield availability. This is in contrast to private low-cost preschools.

A Comparison of Frequency Distribution of Acquisition of Psychomotor Skills by School Type

Acquisition of psychomotor skills	PUBLIC		PRIVATE			
	f	%	High Cost f	%	Low cost f	%
1. Can climb and slide on playing objects	116	97	173	85	31	61
2. Can throw and catch objects freely (balls, bean bags).	85	71	107	53	9	18
3. Can turn and twist parts freely.	101	84	124	61	11	21.6
4. Can bounce and kick a ball.	113	94	118	58	33	65
5. Can stretch, bend and shake well.	93	77.5	129	63.5	12	23.5

According to the data that is presented in table above, 97% of learners in Public preschools were found to have acquired the skill of climbing and sliding on playing objects, while in Private High Cost preschools, 85% of the learners had acquired the same skills, and in Private Low Cost preschools, 61% of the learners had acquired the same skills.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The "Public" and "High Cost Private" preschools that were visited all featured playfields that were either adequate or plentiful. Gagen Getchell, 2006, Robinson et al., 2012) had shown that many preschools in poor countries lack suitable playfields for the development of psychomotor skills among learners. This conclusion contradicted the findings of (Gagen Getchell, 2006, Robinson et al., 2012). The author said that this was because of financial restrictions, which in turn had an effect on the quantity of play area that was accessible. The findings suggest that private preschools with higher tuition fees had a greater quantity of play resources than public preschools did. This conclusion was reinforced by (Chow & Louie, 2013), who conducted comparison research comparing privately owned preschools and publicly owned preschools with regard to the development of psychomotor abilities in young children. Learners in High-Cost Private Preschools were found to be better at acquiring psychomotor skills because they had adequate play materials, whereas those in

Low-Cost Preschools were found to lag behind in performance of this activity. This finding was made after comparing learners from both sets of preschools. This conclusion agrees with Eke, Butcher, and Lee (2009), who discovered that the accessibility and use of play materials had direct effects on the psychomotor, cognitive, and social development of a kid. This discovery was further confirmed by (Shonhoff and Philips, 2000), who had shown that Play activities which increased a child's psychomotor development should be part of learning and teaching in preschools. This finding was further supported by (Shonhoff and Philips, 2000). And it's possible that instructors at private preschools with high tuition were already aware of this. Learners attending private preschools with high tuition costs were fulfilling expectations, while those attending public preschools were getting closer to reaching them. On the other hand, when it came to their cognitive ability, the children who attended private low-cost preschools fell short of what was expected of them.

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