

# INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVED GOVERNMENTS FUNCTION OF TRAINING ON PERFORMANCE OF ECDE TEACHERS IN LAIKIPIA EAST SUB-COUNTY, LAIKIPIA COUNTY, KENYA

Geoffrey Mbugi Kithaka Dr. Peter Kimanthi Mbaka (PhD) & Prof Nelson Jagero (PhD)

Chuka University, KENYA

Corresponding Author: **Geoffrey Mbugi Kithaka**

Email. geoffreymbugi@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

The study was carried out in public ECDE centres in Laikipia East Sub County of Laikipia County, Kenya. The objective of the study was to assess the Influence of Devolved Government's Function of Training on Performance of ECDE Teachers in Laikipia East Sub County of Laikipia County, Kenya. The research adopted correlational research design. The population of study was 293 which was made up of 198 ECDE teachers, 91 head teachers and four ECDE supervisors. A simple random sampling was used where a sample size of 214 was used. The sample comprised of 137 ECDE teachers and 76 head teachers were used as respondents. Purposive sampling was used to get one supervisor for interview. Piloting of the study was done in the neighbouring sub county of Laikipia North which had similar characteristics with the location of the study. The study used questionnaires and interview schedule as the research instruments. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The analysed data was presented in percentages, frequencies, figures, tables, means and regression models. The qualitative data obtained from interview schedule was discussed and analysed through Narrative Analysis. The study established that the County Government employs trained teachers from various ECDE teachers training colleges but there were little or no in-service trainings done through workshops and seminars to help improve the performance of ECDE teachers. The study recommends that the County Government to establish bills through the county assembly that will ensure there is regular capacity building of the ECDE teachers through seminars and workshops to equip them with skills required to handle the new Competency Based Curriculum.

**Keywords:** Training, Devolved Government, Performance of ECDE Teachers.

## INTRODUCTION

UNESCO, 2010; Garcia & Neuman (2010) asserts that Early childhood is an important period of development of the human mind that influences individual's personality, intelligence, health and attitudes for learning and ones behaviour throughout an individual's life. Accordingly, there is a consideration by Developed countries for this period as being a period from birth to eight years. According to Mustard, 2013 Stephen (2014), ECDE is recognised worldwide to be an important intervention in the life of children whose major objective is maximising the optimal and holistic brain development for proper learning in later stages (UNESCO, 2010). Shore, 2013; emphasises the six years of life as being very important due to environmental experiences during this period in influencing one's life.

In view of the world conference that took place in Dakar, Senegal in the year 2000 to mark its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for Education for All, the conference indicated that early childhood and education is a priority of the six Dakar EFA goals (Mbiti, 2014). Care for early childhood and

education has not been put in the fore front in public policy and in addition the governments have very little capacity for coming up with policies and systems in most developing countries including Kenya. Further according to Ojala (2013), it is noted that lack of enough policy options and programmes to enhance the promotion of child's holistic development affects their development. The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) that took place in March 1990 greatly emphasised on the importance of early years to be the base for the life of an individual.

According to Darling et al., 2000, Quality training of ECDE teachers is taken to be an important factor that together produce overall quality early childhood education across the world. Further, White book (2003) concurs that qualified teachers are an important component of ECDE programs whose outcome result to improved learning of ECDE children. The performance of teachers is acquired through teacher preparation (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2005 & Darling- Hammond, 2000). (UNESCO, 2004) affirms that Children who are taught by teachers who are well equipped with teaching pedagogies have been found to perform better in acquisition of the required skills and attitudes. There exists challenges of teacher training institutions bringing out teachers who do not perform well in several countries across the world. The training obtained during the initial training from their initial teachers training colleges is regarded not sufficient to prepare teachers to develop teaching skills that are required. This calls for the need to have further trainings while in the service through seminars and workshops. (UNESCO Global Monitoring Report, 2010).

A study by Stephen (2002), asserts that most of the early learning institutions in Tanzania are characterised by shortage of learning facilities which are also not appropriate for learning. This negatively affected the performance of learners and ECDE teachers. Further research findings by Ejuu asserted that ECDE training in Uganda is largely carried out in private owned institutions (Ejuu, 2012). These institutions operate with little or no control by the government. These colleges have their own teaching and evaluation curriculum which lead to differences in quality of ECDE teachers and also the certificates awarded (Ejuu, 2012). The researcher recommended that the government should have a common training with a common curriculum across the country to improve their performance by having similar quality of ECDE teachers.

According to (Smith, 2004), acquisition of appropriate knowledge, skills and professional values that bring about effective professional teaching is offered through pre-service and in-service mode of instruction. This ECDE teacher training programme is expected to equip teachers with competent skills required to enable the ECDE teachers have proper curriculum delivery. This programme is well known as capacity building and is done through seminars, workshops and by benchmarking for the ECDE teachers who are already trained to keep them equipped with current changes in curriculum and other educational issues (MOE, 2006).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Kenya constitution of 2010 shouldered the management of ECDE to the devolved governments. Further, Kenya gazette supplement number 108, the senate bill number 32 of senate Bills of 2014 described the County Governments to be responsible for the training, registration, staffing and supervision of the early childhood education, development personnel in the county, provide the necessary infrastructure and funds necessary for the development of education centres and for the administration of early childhood education within the county; All the 47 devolved units are required to put up infrastructure, train and

recruit qualified ECDE teachers, supervise and in addition provide teaching and learning resources to the public ECDE centres. It is assumed that the County Governments should have put enough mechanisms in place to improve the ECDE teacher's performance through proper in-service training. Devolved government being a new dispensation, their constitutional roles on Early Childhood Education have continued to undermine the performance of their ECDE teachers. The onset of the new Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) demand for thorough training of ECDE teachers to equip them with necessary skills required to deliver content of the new system and help them shift from the old 8.4.4. Curriculum. The question is, to what extent has the role of Training been able to influence the performance of ECDE teachers in these governments in order to maximize performance of ECDE teachers. This study sought to establish the influence of devolved government's functions of training on the performance of ECDE teachers in Laikipia East Sub-County of Laikipia County.

### **Research Objectives**

The objective of this study was to assess the influence of training on Performance of ECDE teachers in Laikipia East sub county, Laikipia County, Kenya.

### **Research hypothesis**

The study sought to test the following hypothesis at significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

H<sub>01</sub>. There is no statistical significant influence of training on Performance of ECDE teachers in Laikipia East sub-county Laikipia County, Kenya. The researcher empirically tested the hypothesis. The decision to reject or accept the hypothesis depended on the result of the p value. The hypothesis was to be rejected if the p- value was less than  $\alpha = 0.05$  while it was to be accepted if the p-value was equal or greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$  level of significance.

### **Literature Review**

A study conducted by Ackerman (2004) in the United States of America affirms that the process of training of ECE teachers is an important element in improving their performance. According to the researcher, improvement of the teacher's performance through training is enhanced by provisions of teacher's scholarships and provision of financial assistance to boast different trainings and career progressions of the teachers while in the service through in service training. According to the researcher this is conducted through seminars and workshops. This enable the teachers to keep on toes with the curriculum requirements and upgrade their teaching methodologies. (Ackerman, 2004). The study was however based in a national government set up and further under a different system of education while this study targeted to investigate the situation in a devolved unit and a completely new curriculum known as Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya.

A study conducted by Whitebook (2003) on Higher Qualifications for kindergarten Teachers and Learning Environments for Children in developing countries, concurs that qualified teachers are an essential component of ECDE programs that result in improved learning outcomes of ECDE children. The performance of the teachers is mainly acquired through teacher preparation (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2005) & Darling- Hammond 2000).

The researchers asserts that the children who are taught by well-trained teachers who are well-prepared are found to portray achieving more academically. The teachers have more refined use of teaching methodologies in Early Childhood Development and Education. They were found to be more sociable and perform well on cognitive tasks (Bowman et al 2001). It

is a common challenge for teacher training colleges to bring out incompetent teachers after the training. This problem is rampant and common in many countries (UNESCO, 2008). UNESCO Global Monitoring Report (2010) affirms that, in many countries, initial training is not just enough to prepare teachers to develop teaching skills. Due to the way the teacher preparation is organized, many teacher trainees shy away from joining teaching profession in western countries like Denmark. Further the report affirms that there is need to have to have refresher trainings even after the training is done in teacher training colleges to equip the teachers with appropriate teaching methodologies. This gives then motivation and confidence in their work which leads to increased performance.

Studies in In Africa, affirms that Early childhood teacher education and professional enhancement was reported to be neglected (Dakar Framework for Action, 2000). In countries such as Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi and South Africa challenges of the trainings of teachers has been witnessed since 2003 when Multi-Site Teacher Education Research (MUSTER) on teacher education published a report on the low quality of teacher trainees (Mattson, 2006). The study further revealed that there was poor quality of early childhood teacher training that was further illustrated in Namibia where more than three-quarters of the sampled teachers did not demonstrate use of appropriate teaching methodologies while handling the learners in the classes. The study also concurred with the findings by (Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), 2007) in Nigeria where pre service training of the teachers was perceived to be unsatisfactory and hence causing for a demand for further training thereafter.

In a comparative study by Nafungo (2015) on issues surrounding success performance of teachers in ECDE programme in Nigeria, Lesotho and Gunea Bissau, it was noted that trained teachers were seen to perform well in their work and therefor being the major determinants of excellent performance of pupils. The finding found that the performance of these teachers was determined by their educational background and training (Nafungo, 2015). There are great efforts that were put by the Nigerian government where several strategies were put in place to facilitate the performance of the ECDE teachers. Such strategies involved improvement of the teacher's performance by having various training which were to be taken up by the ministry of education. The government put up funds that targeted institutions of for higher learning that introduced ECDE training courses in universities and colleges. These funds ensured there was training of quality teachers who were deployed in various centers making the whole exercise a success (Nafungo, 2015). This study was a comparative study among countries and may not be generalized to County Government. The current study seeks to investigate the influence of trainings to the performance of teacher in a different set up of devolved government.

The Nigerian governments put in the forefront the need to have for qualified early childhood teachers which is the basis of achieving its national development objectives as well as meet its commitments to such international initiatives as Education for All (EFA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Egbo, 2013). To put more emphasis of the training of ECDE teachers, the Nigerian government recognizes the importance of appropriate ECDE teacher training in coming up with appropriate educational system. According to the National Policy on Education (2004) it is emphasized that all teachers in educational institutions should be professionally trained based the existing curriculum and on specified goals and objectives. Egbo (2013), expresses that building teacher capacity means that the government and policy makers must provide the necessary resource materials and 'tools' of the ECDE teachers and the teachers are required to teach effectively. The researcher states that since

there are changes that occur in education sector often, then it is impossible to deliver 21st Century Education with 19th century tools. It therefore calls for constant trainings.

In reference to a study that was conducted by Kurebwa (2010) on factors that affect the implementation of early childhood development programmes in Zimbabwe, the study reveals that the needs for teacher qualification on the implementation of effective ECD programmes was a logical requirement to undertake that required to be achieved by subjecting the teachers into in-service trainings through workshops and seminars. Further this study affirmed that unqualified teachers did not have the prerequisite knowledge and skills required for implementing ECDE programmes hence hindered their performance. These ECDE teachers who lacked the training during the service were seen to be in shot of the basic skills to enable them have accurate interpretation of ECD syllabus therefore resulting to formal teaching. Smith (2004) maintained that continuous indulging in the capacity building of the ECDE teachers boasted to a great extent the performance in curriculum delivery and implementation thus helping the learners to achieve more in the learner's wholesome development.

Ejuu(2012) studying implementation of the Early Child Hood Development Teachers Training Frame Work in Uganda found the initiative attracted inadequate funding from the donor Agencies towards Ugandan government. This affected the implementation of ECDE programmes. Further, the challenge affected ECDE teacher's trainings. The study established that improvement in the ECCE teachers training was paramount in attaining quality ECDE teachers. In Uganda most of the ECDE teachers training colleges are privately owned except Kyambogo University (Ejuu, 2012). The privately owned teacher training institutions were mostly conducted and operated with little government control and regulation. This resulted to having different training pedagogies. The outcome resulted to teachers who were trained in varying methods thus creating varying quality of their qualification certificates due to differences in curriculum for teaching and examining their own students. Such variations and differences lead to differences in quality of their certificate awarded by these colleges Ejuu (2012).

According to a study in Kenya by Sitati and Bota (2014) on teachers' professionalism, there was little address made on the ECDE teachers needs as required by the current constitution. The study further established that the ECDE teachers took their own initiative to undergo training in various training institutions across the country and used their own resources to acquire their training. Despite this effort there was minimum role of subsidizing their training cost that was done by the County Governments. This meant these the County Government is put into consideration the funding of professional development of teachers and thence forcing the ECDD teachers to individually fund their professional development. The findings also concur with the MoEST (2003) report which found out that seminars, workshops and in-service courses were not organized at any given time. This resulted to lack of competence among the teachers especially when there were changes made in the curriculum.

A study by Wangari, (2003) on Quality of Learning Environment at Early Childhood Education Level, found that the QASOs can support the curriculum implementation by working closely with teachers to establish problems and needs for learners. This was to be done by organizing workshops assisting new teachers to translate theories learnt in colleges, provision of guidance and advisory service in all schools on issues related to curriculum, review the teaching and learning materials and advice on quality in-service training programmes for ECDE teachers whenever curriculum is revised.

In a study by Kabiru & Njenga, (2009) on Foundations of Early Childhood Development and Education Curriculum Development on factors that hinder males from teaching ECDE classes in Eastern zone of Nakuru Municipality, the study established biasness in the uptake of the teaching in terms of gender in the uptake of teaching job in the ECDE sector. The study found out that despite male teachers having gone for trainings and graduated successfully, they do not uptake the teaching jobs in ECDE centres. The study was in support by the data of results where the findings revealed that 93.33% were found to be females while only 6.67 were the only males who were teaching ECDE centres in this zone. The study attributed this with the societal stereotypic tendency where females are taken to only being able to deal with young children. It is therefore viewed as an extension of the female role of giving birth and rearing of children.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted Correlational Research Design which is a quantitative research method where two or more variables from the same group of participants are used by the researcher to determine whether there is a relationship or co variation. In correlational research designs, the researcher used the correlation statistical test to describe and measure the degree of association (or relationship) of variables or sets of scores. The design gave empirical evidence showing how variables relate to each other. Correlation design was used to show the relationship between the independent variable of the devolved government's functions of training and the dependent variable of the performance of ECDE teachers.

### **Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

Simple random sampling technique was used to select head teachers and ECDE teachers as the respondents to fill in the questionnaires. A sample size above 30% was obtained which according to Gay (2002) was adequate sample in social sciences to be used in a study. In addition, in reference to Kathuri and Pals table of determining sample sizes, 137 ECDE teachers and 76 head teachers was recommended to be sufficient sample for this study. To obtain the sample for the respondents, names of all the ECDE centres were written in pieces of papers and folded. The researcher randomly picked 69 ECDE where each consisted 2 ECDE teachers apart from one centre which had one teacher. The required sample of 137 ECDE was therefore obtained. Further, from the sampled ECDE centres, the names of the selected ECDE centres were written and folded. The researcher again picked 76 centres where the Head teachers from those centres were used as respondents in the study. This was to give equal chances of being selected from the wide population. Accordingly, Purposive sampling was used to select one out of the four supervisors to be used as a respondent in the interview schedule. This was intentionally done because the supervisor was deemed to have the required information.

### **Data Analysis**

After the data was collected, cross-checking of all instruments was done to determine inaccurate, incomplete data and then their quality was improved through correction of detected errors and omissions. Data coding was then done as per objectives of the study and then entered in a computer for analysis. A statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 25) for windows was used to analyse the data. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse single variable in terms of means, frequencies, standard deviations and percentages. Linear regression was used to show or predict the relationship between the two variables while correlation was used to describe the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The obtained data was presented using frequencies, means, percentages figures,

and tables for the purpose of making interpretations clearer. The qualitative data obtained from the interviews was analysed through Narrative Analysis to analyse content from the interview of respondent by highlighting critical points found in the research.

## Results and Discussion

The researcher made an empirical test to ascertain whether there is significant relationship the performance of ECDE teachers and the devolved government function of training. The outcome was presented in tables and discussed.

### Testing Hypothesis

The hypothesis in this study was “There is no statistical significant influence of training on the performance of ECDE teachers in Laikipia East sub-county Laikipia County, Kenya.” The Null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 significance level using regression analysis. The model summary generated was presented in Table 1.

### Model Summary

**Table 1: Model Summary**

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted Square	R-	Std error of the estimate
1	0.503 <sup>a</sup>	0.253	0.250		0.92302

a. Predictors: (Constant). Devolved Government Function of Training

The results in Table 1 shows R as 0.503. This is the correlation coefficient of training and performance of ECDE teachers in devolved government. The value of 0.503 in model indicates that there was high relationship between the two variables. R square (0.253) is the coefficient determination of the proportion of variance in the dependent variable performance of ECDE teachers that can be explained by the independent variable devolved government function of training. This implies that 25.3% of variation of the performance of ECDE teachers is explained by the devolved government function of training.

### Estimated Model Coefficients

The analysis further produced the estimated model coefficients presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Estimated Model Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std error	Beta	t	Sig
1 (Constant)	1.372	0.185		7.425	0.000
Devolved government function of training	0.633	0.075	0.503	8.456	0.000

Dependent Variable: Performance of ECDE Teachers

The general form of the equation from the above coefficient table to predict is:

$$Y = a + bx$$

Where:

Y is performance of ECDE teachers

x is government training

1.372 is the constant and

0.633 is the unstandardized coefficient B

$$Y = 1.372 + 0.633 x$$

This indicates how much performance of ECDE teachers varies with the devolved government function of training. In this case the unstandardized coefficient B for the devolved government function of training is 0.633. This means that an increase in one unit of devolved government function of training leads to 0.633 increase in the performance of ECDE teachers. This similarly means 10% increase in devolved government function of training leads to 6.33% increase in performance of ECDE teachers. The p value was 0.00 which is less than 0.05 while the t value was 8.456 greater than 2.00. Since the p-value is < 0.05 and t is > 2.00, the null hypothesis was rejected at 95% level of confidence ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). The researcher concluded that there was statistical significant influence of devolved government function of training on the performance of ECDE teachers in Laikipia East, Laikipia County - Kenya.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that there was statistical significant influence of devolved government function of training on the performance of ECDE teachers in Laikipia East, Laikipia County – Kenya. The County Government should prioritize training for ECDE teachers in various capacities to enhance their performance. Teachers thereafter require in-service trainings through workshops and seminars which was not satisfactorily done to help improve the performance of ECDE teachers hence there is poor implementation of the new CBC curriculum in Laikipia East Sub County Laikipia County Kenya.

## RECOMMENDATION

In view of the findings of the study and the conclusion reached, the following recommendations are made:

- i. That the County Government establish bills through the county assembly that ensure there is regular capacity building of the ECDE teachers through seminars and workshop to fully implement the CBC curriculum.
- ii. The County Government establishes a mechanism of helping the ECDE teachers upgrade their studies.

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