

Determinants of Standard One Pupils' Achievement in Literacy and Numeracy in Gucha District, Kisii County Kenya.

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Abstract

Pre-primary school learning experiences plays a critical role in laying a strong foundation for pupils' later academic progression and achievement. The experiences equip learners with the requisite competencies and abilities for managing formal and life-long learning including basic literacy and numeracy skills. In Kenya, the entry criteria for joining standard one is six years irrespective of whether one has gone through pre-primary school or not. This means that pre-primary school is not compulsory. In a typical standard one classroom in Kenya, pupils may have varied pre-primary school learning experiences. The purpose of this study was to establish standard one pupils' academic achievement in literacy and numeracy. The study further investigated the influence of pre-primary school learning experiences, teachers' self-efficacy, pupils' gender, and type of school on standard one pupils' literacy and numeracy achievement. Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy and the Ecological Systems Theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner theories guided the study. Ex post facto research design was used. The independent variable of the study was standard one pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy, while dependent variables were; pupils' pre-primary school experiences, gender of pupils, teachers' self-efficacy and type of school. The study was conducted in Gucha District of Kisii County, Kenya. The target population was both public and private primary schools in the District. All standard one pupils and their teachers participated in the study. Purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were employed. The study sample consisted of 154 pupils and eight teachers. Descriptive and inferential techniques were employed to analyze data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized in data analysis. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that pupils performed better in numeracy compared to literacy. Pre-primary school learning experiences, teachers' self-efficacy, and type of school attended influenced pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy. The study underscored the crucial role played by pre-primary school experiences in promoting academic achievement. The main recommendation is that, in order to improve pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy, parents and head teachers should ensure that children have quality pre-primary school experiences so that they may have adequate school readiness skills to help them to cope with standard one syllabus. Further it was recommended that the government should put policies in place to make pre-primary school mandatory to enhance academic performance at primary and subsequent levels.

Key words: Determinants of Standard One Pupils' Achievement, Literacy and Numeracy, Gucha District, Kisii County Kenya

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