

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON LEARNING ACHIEVEMENTS IN STD 1 BY ATTENDEES
AND NON-ATTENDEES OF PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL IN MAKUYU DIVISION
MURANG'A COUNTY.**

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ABSTRACT

The early years of a child comprise the most impressionable and crucial period in his or her life. The foundation for the maximum mental development is most laid during the early formative years which enables the child to progress smoothly when they enter standard one. It is likely to have a long lasting impact on their class achievements. Therefore pre- primary schools play a significant role in preparing children for the elementary education. It was against this background that the current study wished to compare the participation and performance of attendees and non- attendees of pre- primary education when they enroll in standard one in Makuyu Division, Murang'a county. The study adopted descriptive survey design utilizing both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The target population was the public primary schools in Makuyu Division, Murang'a South District, Murang'a County, their headteachers, teachers and pupils. Due to their disproportionateness, schools were stratified according to education zones and then randomly sampled using a lottery technique. The study involved 15 headteachers, 60 teachers, 150 pupils including 2 MOE officers and 9 opinion leaders making a total of 234 participants. Questionnaires were the research tools in data collection for headteachers, teachers and MOE officers, interview schedule and focus group discussion guide for pupils and opinion leaders and observation of the current situation. Reliability and validity of the research instruments were determined by pilot study while descriptive statistics were used in data analysis whereby quantitative data were analyzed using statistical package for social sciences while qualitative data were analyzed inductively. From the study, importance of pre-primary and its relevance to primary education, methods and techniques applied in pre-primary schools and the role of school administrators and the government in provision of quality education in both pre-primary and lower primary schools were established. Based on these findings, it was recommended that the Ministry of education employ all the ECDE teachers to minimize fees payment so as to cater for the less privileged children. NACECE in liaison with DICECE make recommendation on feeding programmes for all ECDE centres. The Government to consider early childhood education as a requirement for a child admission to class one. The Government of the Republic of Kenya in collaboration with Voluntary development parties enhance sustainable economic activities to alleviate poverty, ignorance and poor parenting practices.