

EFFECTS OF MALNUTRITION ON LEARNING AMONG PRE- SCHOOL CHILDREN IN  
KABETE ZONE, KIAMBU COUNTY.

AGNES NJERI MWANIKI

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF  
BACHELOR'S OF EDUCATION (ARTS) OF MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to find out the effects of malnutrition on learning among pre-school children in Kabete zone, Kiambu County. The objectives of the study were : To find out from both pre-schools teachers and parents if malnutrition affected learning among pre-schools; To find out how malnutrition contributed to poor performance in school among the pre-schools and if it hindered concentration in class ; To find out causes of malnutrition in the zone and possible solutions that would help avert cases of malnourished children in the zone ; To find out whether the children whose performance had been affected by lack of sufficient nutrients and diet , whether their performance could be improved by feeding properly. The researcher used descriptive survey using quantitative and qualitative research design. The target population was the pre-school children between ages three to six years, their teachers and parents in Nyathuna and Ndururu sub-zones. Purposive and stratified random sampling was used to get the samples. On methods of data collection the researcher used questionnaire for the teacher, interviews for the parents and children and observational checklist to gather more information, data analysis procedure involved putting all the data collected in tables, graphs and pie charts for easier interpretation. The main findings were: According to both pre-schools teachers and parents malnutrition affects learning among pre-schools in that it contributes to poor performance and hinders concentration in class. Most pre-school teachers also thought poverty, negligence and lack of knowledge greatly lead to malnutrition. According to both pre-school teachers and parents, effects of malnutrition on education are reversible. Using cheap and locally available food and educating parents on proper feeding was thought as perfect solution to effects of malnutrition on learning among pre-scholers by pre-schools teachers. Parents on the other hand thought that involving the community, Non-governmental organization and the government in donating food for the pre- children and also educating parents on proper feeding would be a better solution. According to the pre-schools the researcher interviewed, the food they ate was not balanced. It lacked in one nutrient or the other. It is therefore the researcher recommendation that children be feed on well balanced meals. The researcher also learnt from the children that their parents were the ones who prepared their food. She therefore recommends that parents should be encouraged to keep up and prepare balanced meals. The study also recommends that seminars be held to educate parents on proper feeding, preparation of balanced meals, the importance of proper nutrition in earlier years of their children and the use of cheap and locally available food.