

**A RELATIONSHIP ANALYSIS BETWEEN ECDE POLICY DYNAMICS AND
QUALITY OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN ECDE CENTERS IN MAARA SUB-COUNTY,
THARAKA NITHI COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship between ECDE policy dynamics and quality of service delivery in ECDE centers in Maara Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County. The objectives of this study were; to determine the effects of the ECDE policy on management, play, materials, parental involvement, and Home to school transition on the quality of services delivered in private preschools in Maara sub-county. This study was guided by multiple stream theory and social dynamic theory. This study entailed mixed methodology and embedded research design. The target population for this study was 96 pre-school teachers 1522 pre-schoolers and 1522 parents. Preschool teachers and headteachers were purposively sampled. The parents of the children were randomly sampled for the study. The study made use of questionnaires and interview guide. Piloting of research instruments was done in 2 preschools in Maara sub-county. Prior to data collection, the questionnaires were administered only once to a sample of 2 teachers, 2 parents and 2 pre – school children in two schools. Cronbach Alpha was used to compute the instruments reliability. The reason for reliability was to test the stability of scores whether they was the same or similar scores were obtained with repeated testing with the same group of respondents. A correlation coefficient of 0.79 was obtained and the instruments were deemed reliable. Credibility of the instruments was tested during piloting where the supervisor enhanced the instruments credibility through paradigm-based preferences which involved objectivity versus subjectivity, truth versus perspective, and generalizations versus extrapolations. To ensure validity of the research instruments, the instruments were developed under close guidance of the supervisors. Pearson product moment was computed to establish if there was relationship and the nature of the relationship. Qualitative data obtained from the interview schedule was analysed and discussed thematically. This data was used to reinforce the quantitative findings, and to elaborate on the concepts obtained. The information obtained was presented in tables, bar graphs and pie charts. It can be concluded that the private preschools applied the school management policies stipulated by the ministry of education. These policies were effective in improving the services delivered in the preschools. The study further concludes that the teachers who taught in the private preschools did thorough inspection of the playgrounds to ensure that they were safe. This ensured that the children were safe in their playgrounds. The majority of the private preschools in Maara had enough instructional materials and this had a positive impact on the quality of the services delivered. The study concludes that the schools did involve the parents in the decision making and education of their children. This had a positive impact on the quality of services offered. The study further concluded that the private preschools applied different learner assessment methods to assess the children school readiness that had an effect on the services delivered in the preschools. The researcher recommends that the school management should mobilize the parents to provide more funds so that the school can buy the teaching and learning resources. The school management should also source for the funds from the well wishers and other donors to help in acquiring of the resources. The government should also set the minimum standards for the playgrounds and the basic requirements for the private preschools. The government should also set the minimum standards for the schools learning resources to the ECDE centres. The school management should also set strategies to enhance the effectiveness of the parental involvement and create follow up plan to enhance the learners involvement.