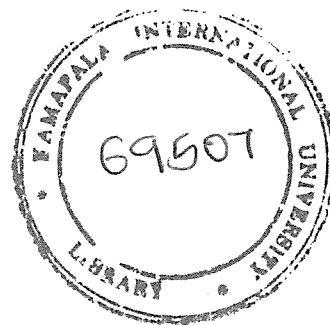


**CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION IN MARION PREPARATORY
SCHOOL NAIROBI, KENYA**

**MUIRURI MARION NJERI
BED/10688/61/DF**



**A RESEARCH REPORT PRESENTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF
CONTINUING AND DISTANCE STUDIES IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
THE DEGREE BACHELOR OF EDUCATION
(ECPE) KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY**

AUGUST, 2008

DECLARATION

I, MUIRURI MARION NJERI declare that this project is my original work and has never been presented to any other university for award of any academic certificate or anything similar to such. I solemnly bear and stand to correct any inconsistency.

Signature



MUIRURI MARION NJERI

DATE:


29/8/08

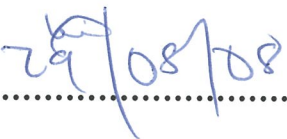
APPROVAL

This is to acknowledge that this Report has been under my supervision as a university supervisor and is now ready for submission.

Signatures

Date


.....


.....

MR. KIMWISE ALONE

DEDICATION

This work is affectionately dedicated to my beloved Mother Mrs. Muiruri Mary Anne and My Father Mr. Muiruri Stephen for their support patience and understanding during this period of study not forgetting all those who constantly wished me success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My gratitude first goes to God who has given me the strength and courage to undertake this research.

I also owe a lot of appreciation to all those who assisted me in carrying out this research. I am grateful to my supervisor Mr. Kimwise Alone who tirelessly went through my work and inspired me to dig deeper into the core of the matter. His kind criticism, patience and understanding, assisted me a great deal.

I am indebted to my friends Muthoni, Sali and James who gave me encouragement in time of difficulties. Thanks also go to all those lecturers who impacted professionalism into my work.

I wish to thank my family for their especially my brothers Wainaina, Gitau and Mbugua love, financial support and inspiration during my stay in Kampala International University (K.I.U).

Finally, I would like to thank all my respondents and those within a short notice without which this work would not have been possible.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the problems of early childhood care and education in Marion preparatory school Nairobi, Kenya.

The specific objectives of the study were to investigate some factors responsible for poor early childhood care and education in Marion preparatory school.

The methods used for data collection was questionnaires to the teachers in the school who were involved in the study.

In chapter four, the findings were presented and interpreted in relation to the study objectives and research questions. While linking to the existing literature, results included demographic characteristics, frequency and percentages. Based on the findings it was observed early childhood education was faced by a number of challenges.

In chapter five, development of solutions to the problem, summary of the findings and conclusions were attempted. The findings suggested recommendations on areas pertaining to the problem of early childhood education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the background of the study, statement of the problem, scope of the study the objectives of the study, the research questions, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

The term early childhood development refers to the continued process of positive change in the young child from the time he or she begins to live to the initial years of formal schooling around 8 years of age, development involves physical and mental growth, emotional and social adjustment as well as learning from the immediate surrounding. During this period, especially the first three years of life, a child's potential as a human being is built physically, intellectually, socially and spiritually Scroufe; (1997).

In Kenya, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Institutions are known by a wide range of terms, which include day care centre, nursery school, kindergarten and preschool. In this research the term nursery schools will be used to refer to all institutions catering to children aged below six years. The first institutions were started in Kenya in the 1940's, in urban areas for both European and Asian children. The first nursery schools for African children were started in African locations in urban areas, coffee, tea and sugar plantations. Later, in the 1950's, during the Mau struggle for independence, the pre-schools were started in the emergency villages in Central Province.

These centers provided custodial care to the children while their mothers were involved in forced labor.

After independence, the pre-school education programme expanded greatly countrywide. This was in response to the intensification of socioeconomic changes and other forces of development and also to late President Kenyatta's call for "*Harambee* ", that is, self help, in nation building. Since independence, the programme has continued to grow in terms of enrolment, and in the number of teachers, schools and sponsors. For example, in 1986, 657,688 children were enrolled in 12,186 schools with 16,182 teachers. By 1991, these numbers had risen to include 908,966 children, 17,650 schools and 24,809 teachers. For enrolment this is a significant growth of 38.2%. The coverage has, however, remained relatively small as only about 30% of the children aged 3-6 Years are benefiting from the service. ADEA NEWS LETTER (2003). Despite the development of pre school education there are still many serious challenges facing its development. The purpose of this research there for is to investigate the problems of early childhood care and education in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The existing system of providing for early childhood education in Kenya is community based, in the sense that it is managed and run by the communities through their committees. Seventy-five percent of the preschools in Kenya are community owned. Kenyan communities are diversified, and therefore, so are the preschools. There are many different types of preschools in Kenya established by different groups or organizations, such as religious organizations, employers, estates or parastatal bodies, women's groups, voluntary organizations (e.g., Rotary Club, Red Cross, etc.), private communities, individual foundations, and local authorities. Because this diversity in the management of early childhood education centers, there are a lot of problems that they face hence the need for this study.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General: This study is to find out the problems of early childhood care and education in Marion preparatory school Nairobi, Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific: this study sought to

1. Determine the profile of respondents as to;
 - 1.1.1 Age
 - 1.1.2 Gender
 - 1.1.3 Academic level
2. Investigate some problems faced in the process of early childhood care and education.
3. Make recommendations that can help solve the problem

1.3 Research questions

1. What are some of the problems faced in the process of early childhood care and education?
2. What are the recommendations that can help solve those problems?
3. What is the profile of respondents as to;
 - 3.0.1 Age
 - 3.0.2 Gender
 - 3.0.3 Academic level

1.4 scope of the study

The study intended to investigate the problems faced in the process of early childhood care and education in Marion preparatory school Nairobi. It was limited by the objectives of the study. It was carried out in December 2007 to August 2008.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study will benefit the following disciplines:

Provide information that can be used by Ministry of Education policy makers in order to make policies that encourage the development and education of early childhood.

Enable policy markers make provision for improving teacher quality with increased knowledge on early childhood development.

Increase awareness of the Head teachers, Board of Governors and PTA and Teachers on the importance of early childhood development.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

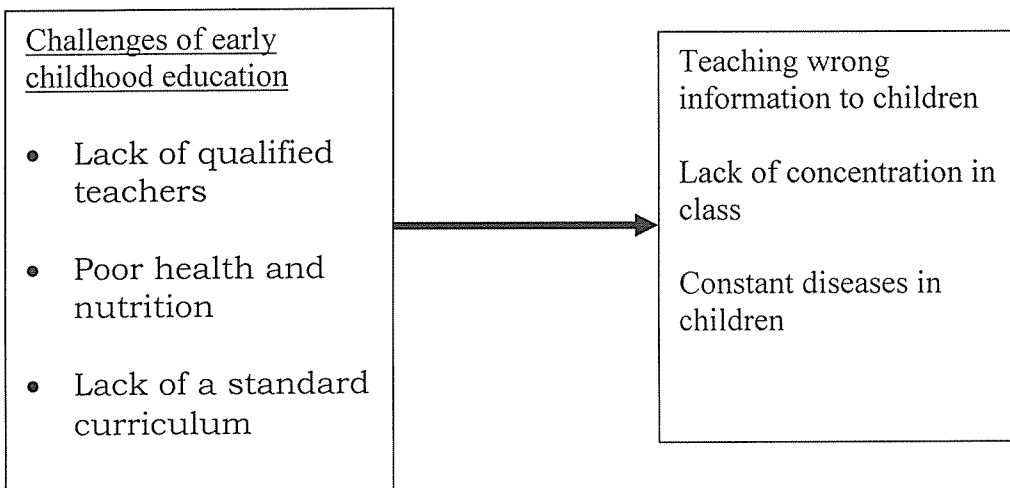
3.1 Introduction

This reviews the literature review of the past researchers in the field of the study. it is guided by the objectives of the study outlined in chapter one.

3.2 Conceptual Framework

Dependent Variables

independent variables



2.3 Related Literature

Going to school is an important step, widening a child's physical, cognitive and social environment. Today more 4 years than ever

and even many 3 years old are enrolled in nursery school Diana E-Papalia and others ;(2002).

In some countries like China nurseries are expected to provide academic preparation for schooling in contrast, most nurseries in the United States and many other Western countries traditionally have followed a “child centered” philosophy stressing social and emotional growth in line with young children’s development needs. Pre-schools in Japan are different from schools in the United States, but similar issues have surfaced there Holloway, (1999). The typical Japanese nursery school, in line with accepted cultural values, is society centered; it emphasizes skills and attitudes that promote group attitude harmony, such as greeting the teacher properly.

The child centered education programs vary a great deal Roopnarine and Johnson, (2000). Some approaches place more emphasis on young children’s social development, others on their cognitive development. Some experts on early childhood education believe that the curriculum of too many of today’s nursery schools programs place too much emphasis on achievement and success, putting pressure on young children too early in their development Charles Worth, (1996); Eikind, (1998).

In Africa nursery schools emphasize the moral values, good social habits, cultural background and customs. These were things that were taught at home by the parents and community members. However, today the pattern has changes as parents have to make ends meet and therefore have to work which gives them no time to

attend to the children and therefore have left the work for nursery schools. Robert, (2002).

Problems faced by nursery schools.

The problems faced by nursery schools include the following; poor health and nutrition, lack of trained teachers, lack of government regulation, unsafe environment, lack of instructional materials, and lack of a standardized curriculum

2.3.1 Lack of government regulation

Pre-Primary Education lays a foundation for later academic, moral and social functioning. However, the current total lack of government control of pre-school education has led to the undesirable trends regarding the content and quality of the curriculum, teaching methods facilities, age entry, quality of teachers and their training programmes as well as school charges. Under these circumstances, socio-psychological principles of child development are not professionally adhered to. MOE, (2000).

According to White and Coleman, (2000) emphasis is on the process of learning rather than what is learned. Other programmes neglect the child's social development Catting McNichols,(1992).

Most of these nursery schools are located in urban areas since they are privately owned by individuals, families, communities or entrepreneurs. There is also lack of quality assurance since the teacher training programmes and qualifications are varied and unregulated by the government. ADEA NEWSLETTER (2003)

Since most centres are owned by private providers, non government organizations or individual entrepreneurs, the government should form a systematic partnership between the providers, in order to ensure equitable and quality access for all children in the early childhood education centres. UNICEF; (1997).

Facilities and instructional materials for nursery schools are not only inadequate but also vary often inappropriate or unsuitable. ADRIANA (2000)

2.3.2 Lack of a standardized curriculum

Nursery school curriculum is not framed in a way that takes into consideration the psychological and cognitive development needs of children including physical, emotional, social and moral needs. This has had a negative impact on the children physically, intellectually, spiritually developed and socially as well as emotionally. For example playing is important for a child to work off excess physical energy and release pent-up tensions. Waas and Kiecker, (2000). It also advances the child's cognitive development.

There should also be a standardized training of teachers for Pre-School Education based on an established Curriculum.

The successful growth of the child is not only shaped by parental guidance but also the mentor or teacher. John W. Santrock, (2001).

2.3.3 Poor health and Nutrition

Early Childhood health and nutrition means better child survival and development. It is not how much children eat but what they eat that contributes to their health during these years. A healthy diet should include an adequate supply of fruits and vegetables, where grains and foods rich in calcium and protein among others. One common form of

malnutrition in developing countries is protein deficiency. Adequate supplies of protein are necessary to support rapidly developing muscles and body tissues. Pollit et al, (1996).

The children therefore lack food and those who have the food lack a balanced diet. UNICEF, (1997).

Health Programs that can be provided in order to improve the childhood education centres include; - immunizations against the main killer diseases like whooping cough, measles, among others. In the developing world, such vaccine-preventable diseases as measles, TB and whooping cough still take a larger part. John, (2004).

Diarrhea infections account for nearly one fifth of the 11.2 million deaths of children under the age of 5 years. Wegman, (1999). Therefore programmes to cater for the health of these children should be provided in the education centres; for example providing a school clinic with trained health workers.

2.3.4 Unsafe environment

The children also live in an environment that is not safe.

Safe environment for children from households, communities and schools is crucial and should be maintained for example safe water and sanitation and housing. Nursery Scholars in day care centres are 2 to 4 more likely to pick up mild infectious diseases such as colds, Flu and Diarrhea Thacker et al, (1992), than those at home therefore things like clean water should be provided.

Safe road measures, safe playing grounds and safe materials are in bad shape and this is a serious problem because young children are mentally venturesome and often unaware of danger, it is hard for care givers to protect them from harm without over protecting them. Although most cuts are “kissed away” and quickly forgotten, some accidental injuries result in lasting death Rivera, (1999).

Children's mental health should also be catered for. It is necessary for children to benefit from school. Children who feel rejected and unsupported are traumatized or grief stricken or those who feel insecure are unlikely to concentrate and benefit from education, child counseling should therefore be offered in these schools. Scraufe, (1997).

The teachers should play a role in monitoring and identifying children who appear not to function as expected at their age.

The development of the child is not only the responsibility of the nucleus family; it requires the entire community and the country to ensure the child is brought up in a supporting and caring environment. Nancy, (2001).

2.3.5 Lack of trained teachers

Nursery schools lack trained teachers and this has been so because most of the nursery schools the teachers are paid by the parents and since the introduction of free primary education the parents do not want to pay because according to them nursery education should be free. WORLD BANK (1990)

2.3.6 Lack of instructional materials

Nursery schools lack instructional materials like play material among others and this jeopardizes the child's future UNICEF (1995)

Instructional materials for the children should be provided to ensure quality of the nursery schools. ReupNarive, (1996).



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the research design, study population, sample size and selection methods of collecting the data and data analysis and limitations.

3.1 Research design

The study used a case study as a research design. Given the duration of the study, the researcher feels that there was a deeper penetration of the problem if a case study was used. This is because a case study examined one School that is Marion preparatory school, which represents others in Nairobi.

3.2 Study population

The study was carried out in Marion preparatory school in Nairobi city, Kenya.

3.3 Sample size and selection

The respondents were drawn from staff in Marion preparatory school in Nairobi City. The respondents fell in the categories of top management, and teaching staff as illustrated by the table 1 below;

Table: Categories of Sample

| Categories of expected Respondents | Sample |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Teachers | 19 |
| Head teacher | 1 |
| Total | 20 |

3.4 sources of data and data collection methods

This study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected using questionnaires, which will be given to teachers. These were self administered since the respondents are all literate.

In carrying out research the researcher first got a release letter from the course administrators which she took to the schools under study. she was then given permission by the authority to access information from the schools.

3.5 Data analysis

This involved three sets of activities which include editing, coding and frequency tabulations. Editing was done by looking through each of the field questionnaire ascertaining that every applicable question has an answer and all errors eliminated for the completeness, accuracy and uniformity.

The researcher then proceeded and coded various responses given to particular questions that lack coding frames, she then established how many times each alternative response category was given an answer using tally marks which later were added up. Data was then presented in frequency tabulations rendering it ready for interpretation.

1.6 Limitations of the research

The first limitation of this study was time constraints. There was little time given for the study and yet a lot was required in terms of finding the required information from the respondents.

Secondly the problem of the post violence election almost made this research impossible to complete as the schools where closed and the

security situation did not permit any body moving from one place to another.

Also there was the issue of some respondents who failed to return the questionnaires as the research had to consider other people who in the first place were not supposed to be part of the study.

Finally the issue of financial resources needed to carry out the study as there was no body who offered to sponsor the researcher. she had to foot all the bills on his own.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATIONS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is a presentation, interpretation and discussion of the field results. The results are presented in tables and in form of frequency counts and percentages. The results and discussions are centered on the set objectives of the study.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The study covered 20 randomly selected respondents of whom 16(80%) are male and 4(20%) are female.

Table I: sex of Respondents

| Sex | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Male | 16 | 80% |
| Female | 4 | 20% |
| Total | 20 | 100% |

Source: Field survey 2008

4.3 Lack of government regulation

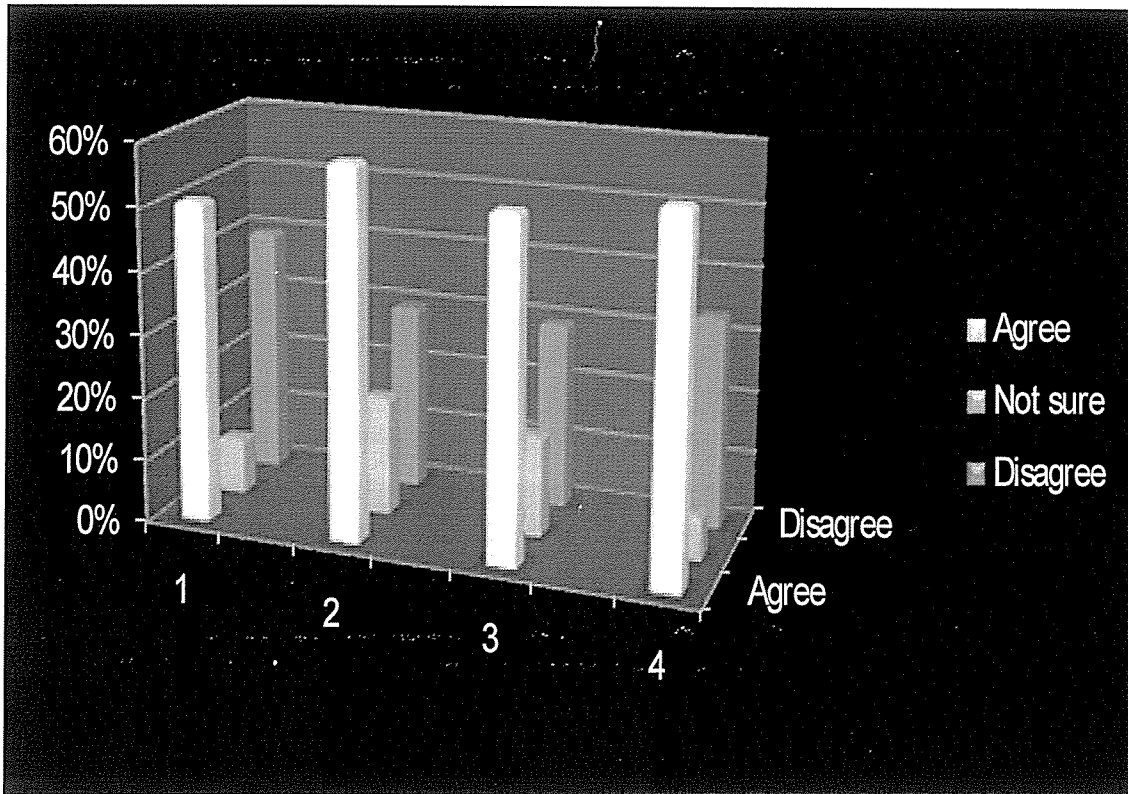
The results on the Lack of government regulation are summarized in the table below;

Table II: response on Lack of government regulation

| | Item | Agree | Not sure | Disagree |
|---|---|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | The are no regulations for starting an early childhood center | 51% | 9% | 40% |
| 2 | Government has no law in place as to which physical facilities are required for an early childhood centre. | 59% | 19% | 30% |
| 3 | The government has no mechanism in place to ensure that the quality of education is adhered to | 54% | 16% | 30% |
| 4 | The government has no total control over early childhood centers where by its only the private sector that operates the places. | 57% | 7% | 34% |

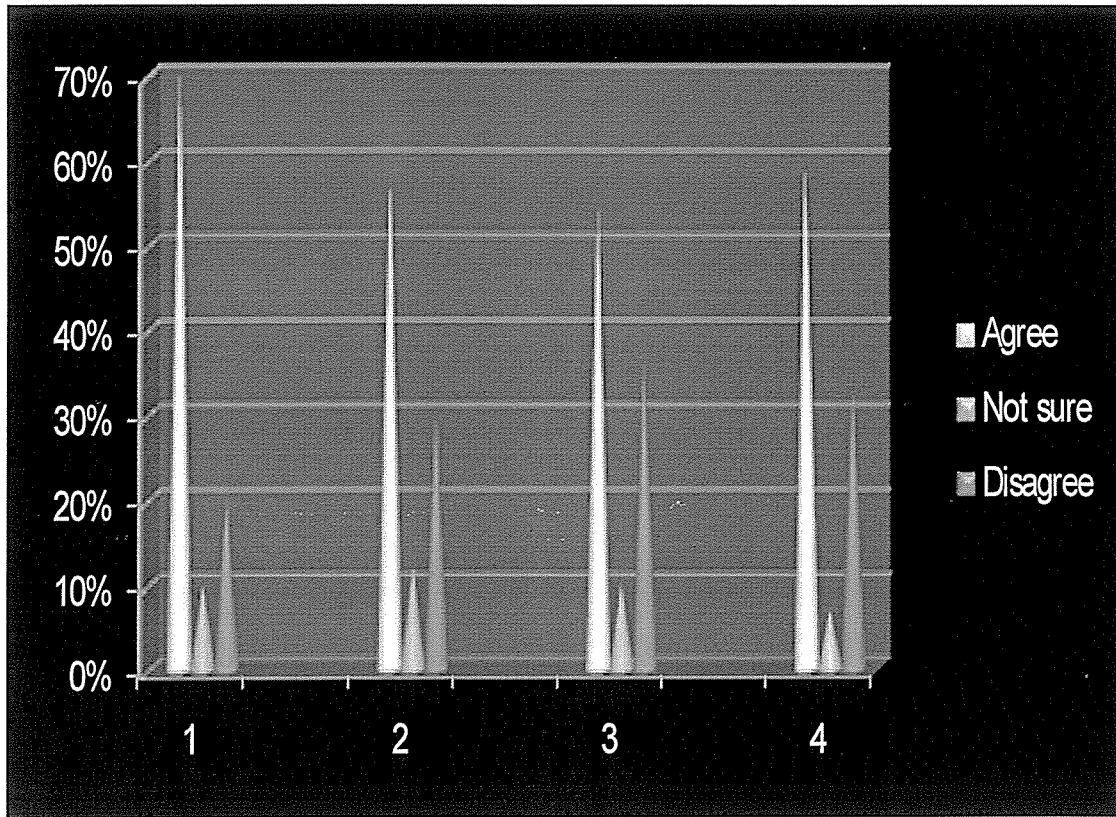
Source: Field survey 2008

Chart I: response on response on Lack of government regulation



Results from the table and chart I above indicate 59% of respondents are of the view that Government has no law in place as to which physical facilities are required for an early childhood centre. On the other hand 54% of the respondents are of the view that the government has no mechanism in place to ensure that the quality of education is adhered to, 51% the respondents are of the view that There are no regulations for starting an early childhood center.

4.3 Lack of a standardized curriculum



The results from table III and chart II show that 70% of the respondents are of the opinion that there is no standard curriculum which people operating early childhood centers operate. 60% of the respondents are of the view that some childhood centers teach children in unsafe environment. Further more 58% of the respondents are of the view that some early childhood centers teach children things that they are not supposed to learn.

4.5 Poor Health and Nutrition

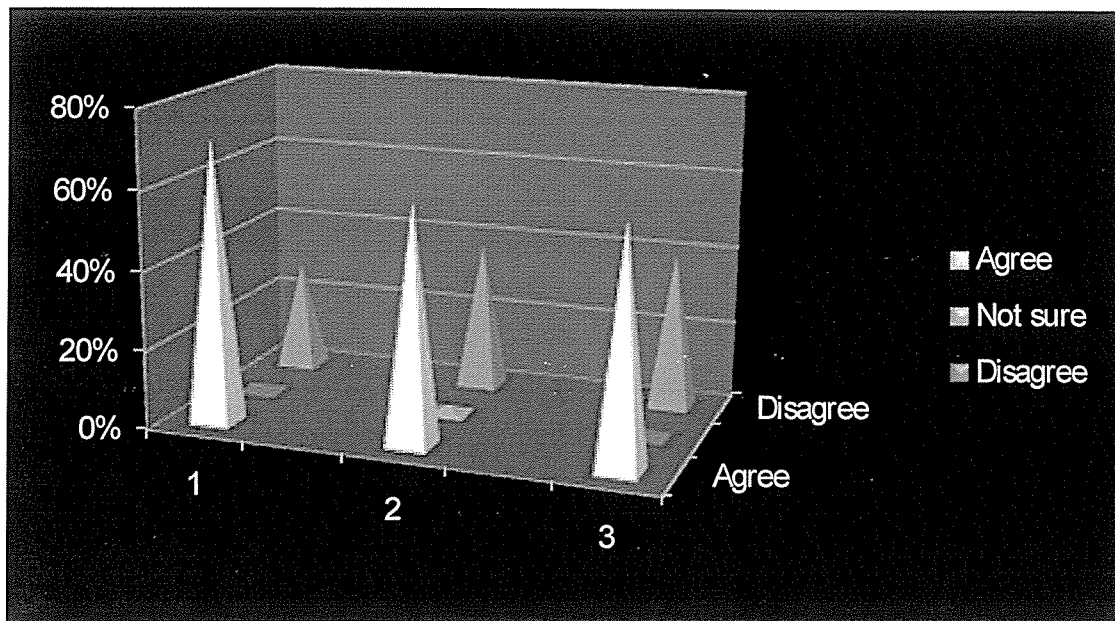
The findings on the Poor Health and Nutrition are presented in table 4.5 below;

Table 4.5: Poor Health and Nutrition

| | Items | Agree | Not sure | Disagree |
|---|---|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Some early childhood centers provide no balanced diet for their children nutrition requirements. | 72% | 0% | 28% |
| 2 | Some early childhood centers have no capacity to provide the necessary food required for their nutrition. | 60% | 2% | 38% |
| 3 | Some children are suffering from diseases as a result of poor nutrition | 60% | 0% | 40% |

Source: Field survey 2008

Chart 4.3: Poor Health and Nutrition



Results from table IV and chat III above show that 72% of the respondents agreed with the statement that some early childhood centers provide no balanced diet for their children nutrition requirements. Also 60% of the respondents agreed with the view that some early childhood centers have no capacity to provide the necessary food required for their nutrition. More still another 60% were also of the view that some children are suffering from diseases as a result of poor nutrition.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study looked at the problems of early childhood care and education in Marion preparatory school Nairobi, Kenya. In an attempt to achieve the above, three objectives were developed. This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the findings

5.2 Summary of the major findings

5.2.1 Lack of government regulation

The first objective sought to investigate Lack of government regulation

The findings revealed that 51% of the respondents agreed with the first statement, 59% of the respondents agreed with the second statement, 54% of the respondents agreed with the third statement, while 57% agreed with the fourth statement and 56% were in agreement with the last statement.

5.2.2 Lack of a standardized curriculum

The second objective sought to investigate Lack of a standardized curriculum

The findings revealed that 70% of the respondents agreed with the first statement, 60% of the respondents agreed with the second statement, and 58% of the respondents agreed with the third statement

5.2.3 Poor Health and Nutrition

The third objective sought to investigate the Poor Health and Nutrition

The findings revealed that 72% of the respondents agreed with the first statement, 60% of the respondents agreed with the second statement, and another 60% also agreed with the third statement and 56% of the respondents agreed with the fourth statement

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Lack of government regulation

The first objective sought to investigate Lack of government regulation

The findings revealed that the respondents were in agreement with the following statements; there no regulations for starting an early childhood center, Government has no law in place as to which physical facilities are required for an early childhood centre, The government has no mechanism in place to ensure that the quality of education is adhered to, and The government has no total control over early childhood centers where by its only the private sector that operates the places.

5.3.2 Lack of a standardized curriculum

The second objective sought to investigate Lack of a standardized curriculum

The findings revealed that the respondents were in agreement with the following statements; There is no standard curriculum which people operating early childhood centers operate, Some early childhood centers teach children things that they are not supposed to learn, Some early childhood centers have substandard teachers, and some childhood centers teach children in un safe environment.

5.3.3 Poor Health and Nutrition

The third objective sought to investigate Poor Health and Nutrition

The findings revealed that the respondents were in agreement with the following statements; Some early childhood centers provide no balanced diet for their children nutrition requirements, Some early childhood centers have no capacity to provide the necessary food required for their nutrition, and Some children are suffering from diseases as a result of poor nutrition

5.4 Recommendations

1. The government should put up a policy that ensures the monitoring of nursery school programs.
2. The government should have a policy in place that ensures that only qualified teachers teach the early childhood learners.
4. The school authorities should be encouraged to put up facilities that ensure that children are taught in a conducive atmosphere
5. There should be strict guidelines as to the proper feeding of children in order to tackle the problem of malnutrition in early childhood learners.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: BUDGET

| Item | Amount (U.shs) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Stationery – Papers - Pens | 50,000/= |
| Transport | 100,000/= |
| Phone calls | 100,000 |
| Internet Usage | 30,000/= |
| Typing and printing | 50,000/= |
| Miscellaneous | 200,000/= |
| Total | 530,000/= |

APPENDIX B: TIME FRAME

| Activity | Time In Months | | | |
|------------------|----------------|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Proposal writing | | | | |
| Data collection | | | | |
| Data analysis | | | | |
| Submission | | | | |

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear respondent,

I am a student of Kampala International University carrying out an academic research on the topic “the problems of early childhood care and education in Marion preparatory school Nairobi, Kenya.” You have been randomly selected to participate in the study and are therefore kindly requested to provide an appropriate answer by either ticking the best option or give explanation where applicable. The answers provided will only be used for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

NB: do not write your name anywhere on this paper.

A) Personal Information

1. GENDER

Male

Female

2. AGE

20-25

26-30

31-35

36 and above

Evaluate the following statements using the following;

| Not sure | Disagree | Agree |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 3 | 2 | 1 |

(a) Lack of government regulation

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | The are no regulations for starting an early childhood center | |
| 2 | Government has no law in place as to which physical facilities are required for an early childhood centre. | |
| 3 | The government has no mechanism in place to ensure that the quality of education is adhered to | |
| 4 | The government has no total control over early childhood centers where by its only the private sector that operates the places. | |

(b) Lack of a standardized curriculum

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | There is no standard curriculum which people operating early childhood centers operate. | |
| 2 | Some early childhood centers teach children things that they are not supposed to learn | |
| 3 | Some early childhood centers have substandard teachers | |
| 4 | some childhood centers teach children in un safe environment | |

(c) Poor Health and Nutrition

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Some early childhood centers provide no balanced diet for their children nutrition requirements. | |
| 2 | Some early childhood centers have no capacity to provide the necessary food required for their nutrition. | |
| 3 | Some children are suffering from diseases as a result of poor nutrition | |
| 4 | In some early childhood centers some children suffer from slow growth due to poor nutrition problems. | |

THANK YOU

