

INFLUENCE OF RESOURCES AND ECDE OFFICERS' KNOWLEDGE ON DELIVERY OF QUALITY SERVICES BY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION OFFICERS IN KWALE COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

The quality of Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) services given to children in their early years is essential for proper growth and development. The study sought to determine whether availability of resources influence delivery of quality ECDE services and establish whether ECDE officers' knowledge influence delivery of quality ECDE services. Descriptive Survey Design was adopted targeting parents from ECDE centres and ECDE officers in Kwale County. The study population comprised of twelve (12) ECDE officers in the county. A census study was used whereby all twelve (12) ECDE officers were selected. Questionnaires were used to collect data from the ECDE officers. A pilot study was conducted in Mombasa County for the ECDE officers. The test retest method was used to test the validity and reliability of the instruments. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data. The analysis was aided by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The quantitative data was presented in percentages, tables and graphs while qualitative data was categorized in themes then reported in prose form alongside the quantitative data. The study established that resources for ECDE officers were inadequate. For the few who had offices, they were not adequately equipped and therefore delivery of quality services was hampered. The findings show that the ECDE officers lacked means of transport and this had an impact on delivery of quality ECDE services. It was also found out that majority of the officers lacked ECDE knowledge even though they had all acquired degrees in education. The ECDE officers encountered a number of challenges which include; ignorance and negative attitudes to the ECDE programme by the communities, lack of resources for effective implementation of the programme, lack of transport and support from the county government. The many challenges faced by ECDE officers had a negative impact on provision of ECDE services as they were not able to impart any ECDE knowledge to parents. The study concluded that lack of adequate resources hampered delivery of quality ECDE services in Kwale County. Provision of quality ECDE services is dependent on resources available to the ECDE officers. The study also concludes that the ECDE officers' knowledge did not benefit the parents and therefore did influence delivery of quality services. Knowledge in ECDE greatly influences delivery of quality ECDE services. The study recommends the County and National government should channel more funds to facilitate ECDE officers to effectively deliver ECDE services. The funds would also help to organize for meetings and workshops to empower parents and other stakeholders on matters of ECDE in the area. The study further recommends that the county government should motivate the ECDE officers by providing them with well-equipped permanent offices, provide them with adequate funds and means of transport to facilitate their movement in their area of jurisdictions to enhance their delivery of services.

Key Words: *Resources, ECDE Officers knowledge, Early childhood education, Delivery of quality services, Early childhood education officers*

1. Introduction

The value of early learning is enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goal 4, second target which seeks to ensure that all girls and boys will have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education by 2030, so that they are prepared for primary education. Early learning education is now identified as a key tool for achieving universal primary education and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A key strategy for improving learning outcomes and educational efficiency is by ensuring access to quality pre-primary education is (Education Commission, 2016).

Early childhood experiences are very critical for one's personality development and should be a major concern to all. Indeed, according to the World Forum Foundation Report (2004:1) it is stated that "*despite differences in culture, language and economics, the children of the World all share a common need; early childhood experiences that will enhance their growth and development*". The main objective of the World Forum is to promote exchange of ideas on the delivery of quality services in the Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) sector around the world. For effective growth and development to take place, quality ECDE service delivery structures and strategies must be availed, and for quality services to be delivered, proper structures and strategies must be designed.

Early Childhood Development and Education officers facilitate services that are crucial in ensuring holistic child development. To offer these services effectively the officers need an enabling environment. Several factors have been noted to be key in provision of quality services. For instance, provision of adequate resources for quality ECDE services has been acknowledged in a number of studies. Possession of knowledge in ECDE by service providers is known to be instrumental and has an impact on delivery of quality services.

Early childhood education in Kenya has existed for decades. Pre-school education was the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MOE) until the new constitution was promulgated in 2010. The Ministry of Education (MOE) had implemented a number of measures that seek to improve the performance in the ECDE sector. This includes establishment of standard guidelines for the management, supervision, and curriculum development for ECDE. A policy framework work has also been developed to give direction in ECDE services (GOK, 2017).

The ECDE program is currently under County Governments as this function was devolved as per the new constitution (Constitution of Kenya Cap 11 Article 174 (f), 2010). The Basic Education Act 2013 Article 189 (2) provides for cooperation between the National Government and County Government. The department of ECDE works closely with the County Director, MOE at the County level (Basic Education Act, 2013; Constitution of Kenya, 2010). The ECDE policy encourages partnership and collaboration (GOK, 2017). In Kwale County, the County Executive Committee (CEC) member in charge of ECDE has under him a number of officers. They include a chief officer, a director of ECDE and a number of Sub-county ECDE officers. There is also a Quality Assurance and Standard Officer to monitor ECDE standards. The relationship of ECDE officers, other government officers and other service providers impact on delivery of quality services.

ECDE officers are mandated to educate parents on the need and importance of acquiring basic learning skills in the tender age as this forms a basis for smooth transition to primary school. With this knowledge parents are expected to assist their children in acquisition of these skills by ensuring that they attend pre-schools at the appropriate time. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.2 stresses the need for inclusive and equitable education to promote life-long learning opportunities for all (UN SDGs, 2015).

To offer these services effectively the officers need an enabling environment. Several factors have been noted to be key in provision of quality services. For instance, provision of adequate resources for quality ECDE services has been acknowledged in a number of studies. Possession of knowledge in ECDE by service providers is known to be instrumental and has an impact on delivery of quality services. As established in some related studies provision of adequate resources impact on the services given. A study in Nigeria by Akinrotimi and Alowe (2016) established that resources, supervision and funding were critical to successful implementation of any ECE program. As noted by Sommer, Pramling and Hundeide (2019) the ability to create stimulating environment in ECE is jeopardized when staff have inadequate or incorrect content on pedagogical knowledge hence the need to establish the ECDE officers' knowledge in influencing delivery of quality services.

Studies conducted by Mukiti (2016) in Matungulu Sub-county and Onyango (2015) in Kisumu Sub-county, Kenya revealed that pre-primary schools suffer from lack of adequate teaching and learning resources and poor physical facilities. Of the few studies conducted in Kenya none has addressed how availability of resources and ECDE officers' knowledge influence delivery of quality ECDE services. Various studies have been carried out which have focused on teachers and parents at ECDE centres and not the issues that touch on ECDE officers. Thus, this study sought to establish whether resources and knowledge in ECDE influence delivery of quality ECDE services in Kwale County.

2. Objective of the Study

- i. To determine whether availability of resources influence delivery of quality ECDE services by ECDE officers.
- ii. To establish whether ECDE officers' knowledge influence delivery of quality ECDE services.

3. Review of Related Literature

3.1 Availability of Resources and Delivery of Quality ECDE Services

Provision of resources to an institution and its workforce is an important factor which cannot be overlooked. In the absence of resources it becomes difficult to achieve the intended objectives and therefore the quality of work might be compromised. Resources refer to any input in the working or learning environment to effectively achieve desired outcomes. These could be human, infrastructure, realia or financial. Resources influence delivery of services if effectively used. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2006) notes that through generous core funding the government and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services are more likely to achieve quality goals: for example, ECEC service providers can innovate curriculum to better meet local needs, hire more practitioners, stimulate parental and community involvement and advance data collection, research and monitoring.

Mbiti (2007) argues that human beings work well when they are happy within their environment. The physical facilities in which the person works must be secure. The people with whom one works with should be friendly and capable of creating a good social atmosphere for interaction. The machines, tools with which the employees perform their duties must be appropriate, safe and secure. In discussing efficiency in schools he gave several factors. These factors include the personal / skill factor, the money factor, the motivation factor, the planning factor and the supervision factor. For employees to perform they must possess the right attitude and competent skills to get work done. The right attitude to the job will help them perform the work efficiently. Efficiency of work is both skills and proper attitude where employees are concerned. This means therefore, ECDE service providers i.e. teachers and officers must have proper skills in ECDE. Other stakeholders i.e. sponsors, parents and the community should have knowledge on the importance of ECDE for efficiency (Mbiti, 2007).

Equipment is another important factor to realize efficiency. According to Mbiti (2007) this includes the tools and materials which are required to get the work done. ECDE service providers need motorbikes or cars for instance, to help them move to execute their mandate. ECDE teachers need a lot of materials i.e. chalk, books, papers and charts to facilitate learning in their centres. Lack of these materials in ECDE centres will lead to poor service delivery. This equipment need to be stored, cared for and maintained properly. This requires proper offices and stores. Another important factor is money, without money budgeted to facilitate functions of ECDE centres and ECDE officers it will be difficult to realize efficiency. The motivation factor has to do with the employee's interest in putting the utmost effort into their work. Such interest must be cultivated by the employer through favourable remuneration and in-service courses aimed at equipping the employee with modern techniques of performing his duty (Mbiti, 2007).

Sound planning and supervision are also important factors in realizing efficiency. A combination of all these factors in any organization will yield efficiency. This efficiency culminates into delivery of quality services (Mbiti 2007). In ECDE these factors are essential in delivery of quality services, hence the need to determine whether resources influence delivery of quality services.

A study by Moyo, Wadesango and Kurebwa (2012) investigated the factors that affect the implementation of Early Childhood Development Programmes in Zimbabwe. The random sample consisted of twelve primary school heads and twelve Early Childhood Development teachers in the Chiwundura Circuit. Descriptive survey design was used. Data was collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The results of the study indicated that delivery of effective lessons was dependent on the teachers qualification. Teacher-pupil interaction was minimal when the classes were large. The study revealed that the teachers' and parents' attitude towards the ECDE programme was positive and this was beneficial to the learners. Further, the study revealed teaching and learning process were affected as resources were inadequate. The ECDE programme was also affected by lack of qualified teachers and as a result the programme was not conducted professionally. Since the ECDE centres were not well equipped the children were exposed to inappropriate experiences denying them the right knowledge.

In Nigeria, Akinrotimi and Olowe (2016) examined the challenges in implementation of early childhood education. The study established that resources, supervision and funding were critical to successful implementation of any ECE

programme. On resources, the study revealed that the quantity and quality of resources available for an educational programme would determine the implementation of the educational programme and delivery of services. On supervision, the study revealed that to ensure effective implementation of early childhood education and delivery of services, supervision must be given adequate attention. It is important to supervise in order to gather information from children, caregivers, parents, communities, and general ECE environment. Adequate funds need to be made available for provision of many resources and activities which include stimulating materials for teaching, training and re-training of staff, enrichment and sensitization of programmes through regular workshops, monitoring, feeding, immunization, supervision and inspection, report writing, publications, school meals and training manuals among others.

Colby and Miske (2000) argue that provision of quality education is affected by working conditions. Many aspects of school life and educational policy go into teachers' perceptions of their employment. Delivery of services in ECDE is influenced by a number of factors; for example, condition of infrastructure, class size, availability of textbooks and learning materials. There is also evidence of growing interest by governments, parents, communities and NGOs in investing in quality ECDE programs by developing teachers' skills and abilities. The emerging government policies and programs in Kenya include training of ECDE teachers as key elements in raising and maintaining quality of ECD programs. Kenya runs a two-year in-service certificate and diploma courses for pre-school teachers and in-service courses for trainers (Hyde & Kabiru, 2008).

Sinyei, Mwonga and Wanyama (2012) examined how availability of resources to facilitate early childhood music and movement curriculum implementation in Eldoret municipality, Kenya. The descriptive survey design was used to examine instructional practices in music and movement activities in Eldoret municipality. The study sampled 35 ECD centres, 105 teachers and their pupils, management practices from five zonal coordinators, one municipal coordinator and an education officer from the municipal council. The officer in charge of ECDE curriculum at the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) also provided pertinent information. The study revealed that more teaching materials and resources especially songs were needed for effective teaching. It was also noted that teachers needed to be competent in use of the music instruments so that they would give guidance to the children on how to perform more effectively. It was concluded that provision of appropriate learning resources would improve the teaching, learning and the quality of early childhood education.

Wangila (2017) assessed the factors influencing the implementation of ECDE policy in Bungoma County, Kenya. The specific objectives were; assess the human resource capacity in the implementation of ECDE policy in Kenya, determine the nature of resources available in the implementation of the ECDE policy in Kenya, establish the nature of monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of the policy of ECDE in Kenya and the challenges influencing the implementation of the ECDE policy in Kenya. The study used a mixed research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches, grounded within the pragmatism philosophical paradigm. The study population comprised, Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QUASOs), the Head teachers, ECDE teachers and the non-teaching staff in respective Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDCs). Simple random sampling, stratified sampling and purposive sampling were adopted in choosing the study sample. Data was collected through

questionnaires, focus group interview schedules, observation and document analysis schedules. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics.

The study established that ECDCs in Bungoma County had sufficient, qualified and trained ECDE teachers and head teachers had good leadership skills although ECDCs did not have enough non-teaching staff. Regarding the nature of resource materials used, the study established that they were not sufficient and the families were major sources of funding to ECDCs making it very difficult to run the programme effectively. The study also identified a number of challenges that hindered policy implementation that included inadequacy of teaching/learning resources, socio-economic factors such as ill health of children, financial constraints and lack of government good will. The study recommended that the County and the Central governments should fund ECDE to improve transition from ECDCs to class one and hire ECDE teachers on permanent and pensionable terms. Further, they should facilitate QUASOs to cover vast areas with ease and increase the number of visits to the ECDCs. They should also revise the Education act to cater for trained ECDE teachers with regard to their level of training.

This study targeted ECDE field officers in Kwale County and intended to look at a few factors to establish whether they influence delivery of quality ECDE services. The previous studies mainly focused on availability of certain factors in the ECDE centres, for example, resources and physical facilities while the present study intended to find out whether availability of resources for ECDE officers influences delivery of quality ECDE services.

3.2 Early Childhood Education Officers' Knowledge on Delivery of Quality ECDE Services

Knowledge is acquired throughout one's life. It is the knowledge we acquire that enables us perform tasks in our lives. It is a continuous process that takes place both formally and informally. This knowledge acquired through a continuous process is important for the ECDE officers, parents and teachers. Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron and Osher (2019) noted that knowledge is intrinsically linked to the way our minds make sense of the world around us. Knowledge is acquired through a social process, it happens through interaction with the world around us. It involves not just the physical world but the knowledge we have of what others know. This interaction between ECDE officers and parents allows sharing of knowledge that could be beneficial to children. It may also strengthen their working relationship hence provision of quality ECDE services.

In USA, Saracho (2010) conducted a study on teachers roles in promoting literacy in ECDE centres, assessed the role of kindergarten teachers in order to promote literacy during children's play. The study revealed that; teachers' age, gender, teaching experience were some of the factors that influence implementation of programmes. While the study used observation only as a method of data collection, this study used questionnaires. This study was also meant to find out the role of teachers in integration of play activities in the parents' entire ECDE curriculum while the current study sought to find out whether knowledge on importance of play materials influenced the delivery of quality services. Lack of proper teacher training adversely affects the implementation of programmes. Teachers who are not trained are not capable of implementing educational programmes. Similarly, effective ECDE implementation requires trained ECDE teachers.

Teachers' attitudes are derived primarily from their own experiences as learners, their professional training, their teaching experiences, their interaction with colleagues, and the cultural values and norms of the society in which they live. The gender stereotypes and prejudices of teachers shape their classroom behavior. Female teachers for example, often exhibit math phobic behaviors. Teachers also facilitate children's gender biases by making gender as important by using it to label and organize students (Bigler, Hayes & Hamilton, 2013). Pre-school teachers labeling and use of gender increases pupils gender stereotyping and avoidance of cross-gender playmates. Thus teacher factors such as attitude towards the curriculum, teachers training in ECDE and their in-service on ECDE curriculum will have an impact on how the curriculum will be implemented (Bigler, Hayes & Hamilton, 2013).

The teacher is the agent in the curriculum implementation process. In Ghana, a study by Ntumi (2016) viewed a teacher as a central change agent as he/she is the one who is primarily responsible for the successful implementation of a new curriculum. Pres-school teachers do not understand the early childhood curriculum. However, teachers who are characterized as motivated, responsible, and organized are open to new learning. ECDE officers are responsible for the specialized training for teachers to ensure success of the implementation of a programme.

A GOK report (2017) noted that the key barriers that contributed to ineffective curriculum implementation were the ability to retain teachers in their employment and lack of teachers training. In order to get teachers committed to an invocation is to improve their knowledge of the program. This would mean creating avenues for their professional development by offering more training and empowering them through workshops. Content knowledge aside, it is only when a teacher can communicate effectively that he/she will be able to draw upon the various social cultural contexts of the learner to facilitate learning. These findings are also supported by Onyango (2015) who assessed the influence of teacher characteristics on implementation of early childhood development and education curriculum in Kisumu central sub-county, and found out that lack of training affects the ECDE curriculum implementation and service delivery.

In Kenya, parental awareness programs have been put in place. These parental programs must build on what parents know and the existing values and other strengths of the communities in relation to the welfare of the child. The focus of the program is to help parents build confidence and self-esteem, empower them to feel capable of providing quality care of their children and fill the gap of knowledge, skills and attitudes that parents and local communities may have on the area of ECDE. Parents and local communities are the most actors in the pre-school program because they are the sponsors of most pre-schools in the country. They are also the care, health and nutritional providers of their children and hence all the programs related to the welfare of their children must be directed to them. Acquisition of knowledge on ECDE for these service providers is therefore very important (K.I.E, 2005).

A study by Makoti (2005) on terms and conditions of service and their relationship to motivation of pre-school teachers in Kwale district, found good terms and conditions of service for preschool teachers' to be a source of motivation. Disparities in the terms and conditions of service may affect motivation of the pre-school teachers if not checked, thus, this situation should be addressed. The findings by Makoti (2005) are in line with those of Boke (2014) who conducted a study on the implementation of quality services in early childhood educational institutions in Kuria East District;

and found out that ECD teachers were not employed by the government but by the parents. The parents who employ these teachers are completely ignorant of the service standards. As a result, this has exposed them to varying salaries making them have low morale. This hampers the implementation of quality ECDE services. ECDE field officers who are in charge of regular in-service training of ECDE at the County level need to be well versed with ECDE knowledge. They also need to be facilitated to enable them organise courses for the ECDE teachers and workshops for parents. When the teachers and parents are empowered, and they support each other ECDE services are likely to improve. The present study intended to investigate whether parents know the importance of play materials in influencing delivery of quality ECDE services.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

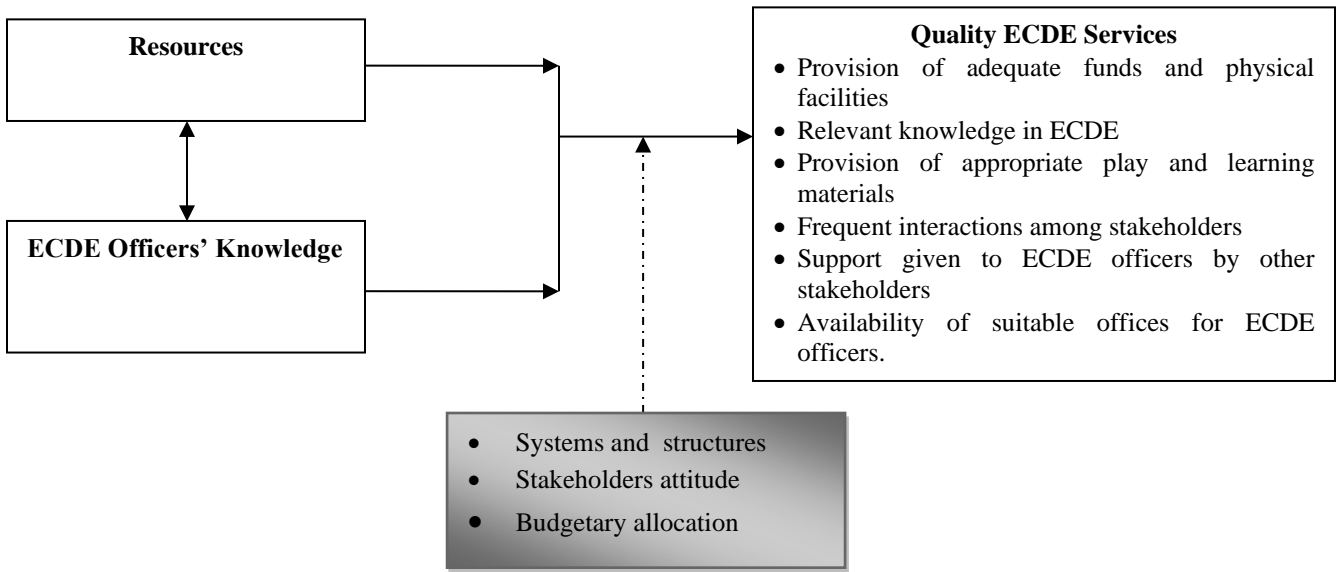


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

4. Research Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey design to investigate the factors influencing delivery of quality ECDE services in Kwale County. Descriptive studies portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations (Chandran, 2004). Descriptive research design was therefore appropriate and suitable for this study as the researcher wanted to establish through questionnaires and interview guides the factors that influence delivery of quality ECDE services.

This study was conducted in Kwale County. The population comprised of twelve (12) ECDE officers in the County in the various Sub-counties of Kwale County, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Target population for Parents

Sub-county	No. of ECDE officers
Matuga	6
Msambweni	3
Kinango	3
Total	12

A census method was used whereby all the 12 ECDE officers in the County formed the study sample since the population was small. When the population is small and variable, any sample drawn may not be representative of the population from which it is drawn (Kothari, 2004); hence no sampling was carried out on the ECDE officers.

The study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through use of questionnaires. Questionnaires were used to collect information from all the ECDE officers. The questionnaire had both open and close ended questions and was self-administered. This study generated qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics which included percentages/ frequency distribution tables and presented in tables, pie charts and bar graphs. The analysis was done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21. The qualitative data which was generated from the open ended questions was analysed through content analysis whereby data categorized in themes in accordance with research objectives and reported in narrative form alongside quantitative presentation.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Availability of Resources and Delivery of Quality ECDE Services

The study sought to determine the influence of resources (financial and support materials) on delivery of quality ECDE services in Kwale County. To address this objective, the study enquired from the ECDE officers the type of offices they occupied, whether they were comfortable in that office and the means of transport they used to move around their work zones. The responses given by the ECDE officers would show the type of offices they occupied in their stations and how this influenced delivery of services. The information sought on means of transport available would reveal how mobile they were to reach the ECDE centres they supervise.

5.1.1 Type of Offices Occupied by ECDE officers

The ECDE officers were asked to indicate the type of offices they occupied. This was to establish whether the officers had offices. The type of office an officer works from determines the type of service he offers. An employee works better when he has office accommodation that is secure (Mbiti, 2007). When the work environment is suitable there is a likelihood of good services hence quality ECDE services. The findings are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Offices Occupied by ECDE officers

Types	Frequency	Percent
Permanent Building	6	66.7
Semi - Permanent	-	-
No Office	3	33.3
Total	9	100.0

The findings in table 2 show that majority of the ECDE officers (66.7%) revealed that they had offices located in permanent buildings. None were in a semi - permanent building. However, 33.3% of the ECDE officers indicated that they did not have an office. Even though majority of ECDE officers indicated that they had an office, the respondents claimed they were too small and squeezed and one officer said he shared it with a Teacher Advisory Centre (TAC) Tutor now referred to as Curriculum Support Officers (CSO). The study further enquired from the respondents on the equipment that were available in their offices. The respondents stated that the offices had furniture such as chairs, desks as well as stationery and reference books but lacked accessories such as computer, printer, and projectors.

The above findings show that the ECDE officers were housed in offices that lacked adequate facilities for them to use. According to Mukiti (2016) inadequate physical facilities such as offices and office equipment affect the implementation of ECDE programmes. The study concluded that provision of physical facilities affected the implementation and delivery of quality ECDE programmes. The findings are also supported by Boke (2014) who examined the implementation of quality services in early childhood educational institutions, in Kuria East and found out that unavailability of physical facilities affected the implementation and delivery of quality ECDE services.

5.1.2 Suitability of Office Accommodation

The ECDE officers were asked whether they were comfortable in the offices they occupied. The results would reveal how comfortable the officers were. The environment employees work in influence their performance and hence quality services. The results are presented in figure 2.

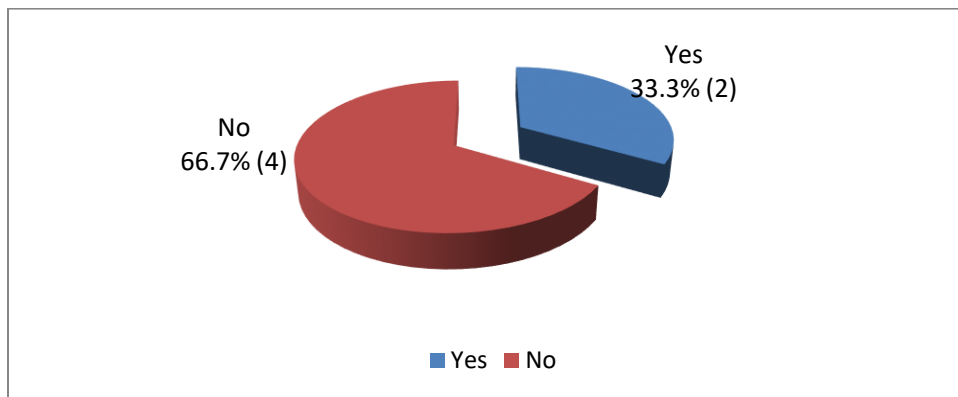


Figure 2: Suitability of Office Accommodation

The study results in figure 2 show that, out of the six ECDE officers who indicated that they had permanent offices, only two (33.3%) officers revealed that they were comfortable. Majority of the officers (66.7%, n = 4) however revealed that they were not comfortable in the offices they occupied. With this scenario, delivery of quality ECDE services would be hampered. This is supported by Mbiti (2007) who argued that human beings work well when they are happy within their environment. This finding concurs with Colby and Miske (2000) who stated that working conditions which includes environment affect the ability to provide quality education.

5.1.3 Means of Transport Used

The study enquired from the ECDE officers on the means of transport they used to move in their area of jurisdiction. The findings show that all nine officers stated that they used public means such as *bodaboda* or walk to their place of work and equally when visiting ECDE centres for inspection and meetings with parents. This therefore shows that movement was greatly hampered, and this could have an impact on the quality of service delivered. Low budget allocation for ECDE programs has been a challenge over the years (MOEST, 2005). Access, equity and quality in ECDE remained constrained by various factors such as finances to facilitate ECDE activities, improvement of physical facilities among others (Sessional Paper No. 1, 2005).

5.1.4 Provision of Funds to ECDE Officers

The ECDE officers were asked how they got funds to manage their activities in their areas. This was done to establish the source of funds they received. The findings revealed that the ECDE officers did not receive funds of any kind from neither the county government nor the national government. They indicated that at times they walked to pre-schools to supervise teachers. They were also unable to mobilize parents for meetings hence poor attendance from the parents. Lack of funds/resources was also cited as a reason for failure to conduct local research. Lack of funds can impact negatively on the performance of the ECDE officers hence delivery of poor services. Mbiti (2007) noted that lack of essential equipment and materials which need funds is an important factor in realizing efficiency. Sessional paper No. 1 (2005) noted that provision of finances in ECDE was a challenge. Low budgetary allocation to ECDE has also been a challenge at both levels of government, lack of provision for capitation grants at the pre-primary level, support grants for children with special needs as well as infrastructure support grants (MOEST, 2005; ROK, 2017). This trend is likely to affect delivery of quality services in Kwale.

5.2 ECDE Officers' Knowledge in ECDE and Delivery of Quality ECDE Services

Objective two of the study sought to establish whether knowledge in ECDE influence delivery of quality ECDE services in Kwale County. The ECDE officers were required to state their level of training in ECDE, their roles, and whether they had conducted any local research on ECDE to establish the problems they needed to address.

5.2.1 ECDE Officers' Level of Training

The respondents were asked to indicate the level of training acquired in ECDE. This would help in knowing the capacity of ECDE officers on ECDE knowledge. The findings are presented in table 3.

Table 3: ECDE Officers’ Level of Training

Level of Training	Frequency	Percent
Certificate	0	0
Diploma	0	0
Degree	2	22.2
Induction Certificate	1	11.1
Attendance Certificate	2	22.2
None	4	44.4
Total	9	100.0

The findings in table 3 show that 22.2% of the ECDE Officers had attained a degree and attendance certificate respectively. A further 11.1% of the respondents indicated that they had attained an induction certificate. The results show that only 33.3% of the ECDE officers had received training in ECDE while 44.4% of the ECDE Officers did not have any training in ECDE.

Even though the ECDE Officers had good academic background and had been in service for long; lacking the proper training and skills could affect delivery of quality services. Relevant training in ECDE is therefore needed for one to deliver quality services. The above findings are in agreement with those of Akinrotimi and Olowe (2016) who examined the challenges in implementation of early childhood education. The study revealed that to ensure effective implementation of early childhood education and delivery of service, there is need for training and re-training of staff.

5.2.2 Role as ECDE Officer

The ECDE officers were asked to indicate whether they knew their roles. The study findings show that all the respondents indicated that they knew they were supposed to co-ordinate ECDE programs in their areas of jurisdiction, mobilizing and sensitizing the community in ECDE education for their children, organizing workshops, training and assessment of ECDE teachers. Though the ECDE officers knew their roles they failed to effectively mobilize and sensitize parents to help them gain skills that would be helpful to them to cater for the needs of their children and this was likely to affect delivery of quality ECDE services.

5.2.3 Local research by ECDE Officers

The study enquired from the ECDE officers if they had conducted any research since appointment. This finding would reveal the knowledge the officers had to enable them conduct basic research that would identify some of the ECDE problems encountered in their areas and come up with possible solutions. The findings are presented in figure 3 below.

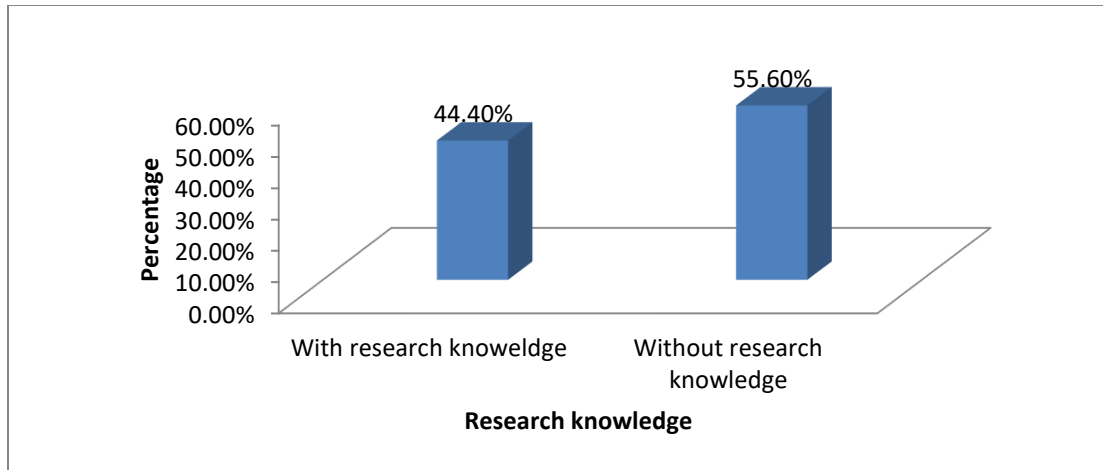


Figure 3: ECDE Officers Knowledge in Research

The findings revealed that out of the nine officers none had conducted any research. More than half the number 5(55.6%) indicated that they were not well versed with research issues while 4(44.4%) cited lack of funds as a reason for not conducting research. Research knowledge is important as it may uncover serious problems that are hindering smooth delivery of services in Kwale. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2001) emphasized on Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) data collection, research and quality rating systems aimed at achieving quality goals and raising standards. Further, OECD (2006) suggests that to achieve evidence based policy making, government administrators need to organize ECEC data collection in the ECEC field, conduct research on this topic and monitor the sector. In the absence of personnel with research knowledge in the county and lack of funds to facilitate research activities delivery of quality ECDE services remains a hurdle. Nafungo (2015) established that financial resources have influence on the success and implementation of the ECDE program. It is prudent therefore for the county government to ensure funds are set aside for research activities.

6. Conclusions

The study concluded that lack of adequate resources hampered delivery of quality ECDE services in Kwale County. The findings established that ECDE officers lacked well equipped permanent offices and as a result they were not comfortable. The officers also did not have adequate means of transport which affected their movement in their areas of jurisdiction to deliver their services. Provision of quality ECDE services is dependent on resources available to the ECDE officers.

The study also concludes that the ECDE officers' knowledge did not benefit the parents and therefore did influence delivery of quality services. Knowledge in ECDE greatly influences delivery of quality ECDE services. In Kwale County, only a small number (33.3%) of the officers had obtained ECDE training. With only a few officers with the relevant training it was difficult for them to effectively impart ECDE knowledge. This denied the parents appropriate knowledge to effectively participate in ECDE activities as they needed guidance from the ECDE officers. The parents therefore utilized the little knowledge they had acquired from other sources.

7. Recommendations

Findings indicated that the resources available were not adequate for the ECDE officers. To ensure that quality ECDE services are delivered efficiently and effectively at all times, both the County government and the National government should provide adequate funds for ECDE services. The funding would enable the officers effectively deliver services. The funds would also help to organize for meetings and workshops to empower parents and other stakeholders on matters of ECDE in the area.

The study recommends that the national government should ensure the mechanisms and strategies put in place are adhered to so that stakeholders in ECDE are empowered with knowledge to ensure delivery of quality services. Since ECDE is devolved the County government should work very closely with the MOE and other stakeholders in ECDE to ensure provision of quality ECDE services.

The County government should organize community workshops that provide a forum for open discussions on the importance of early childhood education, thus promoting the active role of community members in the development of early childhood education and improving the quality of services in Kwale County.

The study further recommends that the county government should motivate the ECDE officers by providing them with well-equipped permanent offices, provide them with adequate funds and means of transport to facilitate their movement in their area of jurisdictions to enhance their delivery of services.

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