

Influence of socio-economic status on social development and learning of children a case of public primary schools in Nakuru Municipality, Kenya

Abstract:

Childhood socioeconomic status is associated with cognitive achievement throughout life. Socio-Economic Status (SES) is the grouping of people with similar occupational, educational and economic characteristics. The development of a child heavily relies on the particular social class of the parents. This study examined the relationship between the different socioeconomic status and their influence on the social development and learning of children (age 6-8 years) in Nakuru Municipality. The study was carried out amongst lower primary pupils and primary school teachers handling these children and parents in Nakuru Municipality. To accomplish these, the study objectives were: To establish the relationship between parents' occupation and social development of young children 6-8 years; to evaluate the effect of educational background of parents on a child's social development and learning; and to determine the influence of the family income on children's social development. The study used a descriptive survey design. The study used a sample size of 105 lower primary pupils and 36 primary school teachers and 36 parents were selected using stratified sampling technique. Primary data was collected using questionnaire method, while secondary data was collected from Municipal of Nakuru, educational records. Primary data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft excel software. The results were then presented in the form of charts and tables for easier interpretation. The findings reveal that most parents were occupied in small businesses, while some worked as labourers. The findings show that the parents' occupation in Nakuru Municipality negatively influenced the social development of young children. The educational background also emerged to positively influence child's social development and learning. Family income affected the capacity of the parents in supporting the children. This situation is due to the high poverty levels experienced in most parts of the country, therefore, there is need for interventions locally, nationally and globally. The Government of Kenya needs to intervene timely to address the poverty levels in the area.