

HOW DOES PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IMPACT IN DEVELOPMENT OF THINKING SKILLS

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to determine the level of children's readiness for the first grade, in terms of development of thinking skills. How prepared are first-graders when they are asked to analyze, differ, compare, synthesize, argue etc.? This research is quantitative and includes 500 children who were enrolled in the first grade in September 2011, as well as their parents. They belong to various schools in towns and villages of Kosovo. The sample was randomly selected. Children are assessed for their school readiness through standardized measuring instrument by the "Brainline" author Joey Du Plooy. The questionnaire was translated and adapted. Children were evaluated by a team of pedagogs who have been previously trained in the use of this questionnaire. Each child was individually assessed and the questions that were impossible to take from the children were taken from their parents. It has been found that children, who have attended institutionalized preschool education such as full day care kindergarten, were more ready or developed than children who were educated during preschool age in their families or in preparatory classes. The survey results raise awareness about the importance of preschool institutionalized education and provide advices of the importance of preparing children for starting the first grade without fear and with self-esteem.

Key words: *preschool education, school readiness, preschool institution, preparatory classes, thinking skills development*