

# IMPACT OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN FROM THE FIRST GRADE TO THE FIFTH GRADE

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this research is to analyze the impact of pre-school education in the education of children from the first grade to the fifth grade in the primary school “Pjetër Bogdani” in Pristina. In order to achieve this goal, a questionnaire for teachers has been designed with a total of 20 questions. Five teachers of this school have been interviewed by means of this questionnaire, who were qualified and were well aware of the importance of pre-school education, thus providing a realistic study on this issue. The findings of this research have shown that 88% of students from respective grades have attended pre-school education, whereas only 12% of them have not attended this level of education. Results of this research confirmed that the differences between students who had attended pre-school education and those who had not attended pre-school education are significant both, in the social aspect as well as in the psychological and educational aspect. Therefore, children who had attended pre-school education compared to children who had not attended it are: more creative, more fluent, they have more discipline and show greater responsibility in carrying out their school tasks, they are more open to logical questions, they familiarize easier with learning process, they are more sociable, more skilled as far as physical movement is concerned, more effective in learning reading and writing, as well as in showing more respect towards children with special education needs. In the future, it is recommended to further raise the awareness of parents regarding the importance of including their children in pre-school institutions, as this will help children not only increase their success during their further education, but also help them in building up their personality, in general. It is also recommended that further research be carried out in this area in order to increase the quality of education in all levels of education.

**Keywords:** *pre-school education, students' skills, questionnaire for teachers.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

According to Foshay (1991, p. 277), the one *continuing purpose of education*, since ancient times, has been to bring people to as full a realization as possible of what it is to be a human being. Other statements of educational purpose have also been widely accepted: to develop the intellect, to serve social needs, to contribute to the economy, to create an effective work force, to prepare students for a job or career, to promote a particular social or political system. These purposes offered are undesirably limited in scope, and in some instances they conflict with the broad purpose I have indicated; they imply a distorted human existence. The broader humanistic purpose includes all of them, and goes beyond them, for it seeks to encompass all the dimensions of human experience.

*Quality education* includes:

- ✓ Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and are supported in learning by their families and communities;
- ✓ Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
- ✓ Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace.
- ✓ Processes through which trained teachers use child-centered teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.
- ✓ Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society (Colby & Witt, 2000, p. 4.).

*School* – is an integral part of the society and an important factor in combining social interests and family interests in educating new generations. As such, school is responsible in the face of the society and the family for the success of learners and their overall development (Shala, 2012, p. 20).

According to Martin-Korp (2001, p. 7), democracy establishes the foundation of the *pre-school system*. Therefore, all pre-school activities have to be conducted in accordance with basic values of democracy. Children embrace ethical values and norms through their concrete experiences. Attitudes of adults affect children to understand and respect the rights and obligations which are implemented in a democratic society. Hence, adults play an important role as models.

*General characteristics of child development* in its most important and most visible aspect are the development of:

- ☺ Motor skills;
- ☺ Knowledge;
- ☺ Speaking;
- ☺ Emotions and socialization;
- ☺ game;
- ☺ visual skills;
- ☺ Music skills (Starc, 2004, p. 14).

According to Cekani (2007, p. 10), *pre-school education* represents the first level of pre-university education. In this way, although not yet obligatory (though lately, the idea to make the third group obligatory is gaining ground), having in mind the great impact the first childhood years have in the development and formation of an individual, it is understandable that great importance should be given to pre-school education in particular, and early childhood development in general. If a child has gone through the experience of education in pre-school education, then transition to primary school becomes easier. Taking into consideration extraordinary capabilities of children in learning at this age, pre-school education should not be seen only in its auxiliary role, because qualitative intervention in early childhood has a high rate of return in the overall mandatory system of education and for all the persons who gain from this intervention.

On the other hand, according to Bibi & Ali (2012, p. 153), *pre-school education* is the first step in child's educational journey. Early childhood experts have the opinion that attending high quality preschool program helps to promote children's social and emotional development and prepare them for kindergarten and beyond. Studies have shown that children who attended quality early education programs are more likely to have better test scores and grades.

*Early childhood education* experiences according to Barnard (as cited by Osakwe, 2009, p. 143) positively affect later home and school involvement in education. A child who fails to acquire early education may suffer emotionally, socially, intellectually and even physically if he is trusted into the primary school without a sustainable early childhood education experience that will give him a solid foundation in the *primary school*. Therefore for the effective and efficient unlocking and development of a child's latent abilities, attitudes and other forms of behavior of positive values in the society in which he lives, early childhood education becomes very imminent.

As to the *lasting effects of preschool education*, Barnett (2008, p. 4), emphasizes these five *recommendations*:

1. Policy makers should not depart from preschool education models that have proven highly effective. These models typically have reasonably small class sizes and well-educated teachers with adequate pay.
2. Teachers in preschool programs should receive intensive supervision and coaching, and they should be involved in a continuous improvement process for teaching and learning.
3. Preschool programs should regularly assess children's learning and development to monitor how well they are accomplishing their goals.
4. Preschool programs, in order to produce positive effects on children's behavior and later reductions in crime and delinquency, should be designed to develop the whole child, including social and emotional development and self-regulation.
5. Because an earlier start and longer duration does appear to produce better results, policies expanding access to children under 4 should prioritize disadvantaged children who are likely to benefit most. More broadly, preschool education policy should be developed in the context of comprehensive public policies and programs to effectively support child development from birth to age 5 and beyond.

## **2 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH**

The aim of this research is to analyze the impact of pre-school education in the education of children from the first grade to the fifth grade in the primary school

## **3 THE SAMPLE OF TESTED TEACHERS AND APPLIED QUESTIONNAIRE**

This research consists of a sample of 5 teachers from the primary school "Pjetër Bogadani" in Pristina. In view of gender, there are 2 male and 3 female teachers.

For the purpose of this study, a Questionnaire for teachers (QUET) has been used, which was prepared by MA. Arlinda Beka (professor at the Faculty of Education in Pristina), and consists of 20 questions related to the analysis of the impact of pre-school education in the education of children from the first grade to the fifth grade in this primary school in Pristina. All answers of teachers who were tested are divided into 5 categories:

1. Completely agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Partly agree
5. Do not agree

#### 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results obtained through this research, it can be concluded that 5 teachers who were involved in this research, completely agree on the following:

- ✓ There are learners in the class who have attended pre-school education.
- ✓ Children who have not attended pre-school education have more difficulties in learning.
- ✓ During the teaching process, teachers usually pay more attention to children who have attended pre-school education.
- ✓ Success in learning is more or less the same with both, children who have attended pre-school education and those who have not attended it.
- ✓ Children who have attended pre-school learn letters faster.
- ✓ Pre-school education should become mandatory education for all children.

As for the issue of:

- ✓ Pre-school education having positive effect on all learners, and that
- ✓ The work volume with children who have attended pre-school education is not the same as with children who have not attended pre-school education,

The obtained data through this research show that 3 teachers completely agree with this, whereas 2 teachers partly agree with this.

Out of total 5 teachers involved in this research, 3 teachers completely agree, while 2 teachers partly agree on the following issues:

- ✓ Parents of children who have attended pre-school education are more cooperative than the parents of children who have not attended pre-school education;
- ✓ Children with special education needs are respected much more by children who have attended pre-school education than by the children who have not attended pre-school education;
- ✓ Children who have attended pre-school education exercise more patience in finishing a learning activity until the end of the school hour.
- ✓ Children who have attended pre-school education are more agile in movements.

While answering the questionnaire, 1 teacher was neutral while 4 other teachers agreed completely to the question that children who have attended pre-school education are more:

- ✓ Creative and eloquent;
- ✓ Responsible in completing tasks;
- ✓ Focused in learning process;
- ✓ Familiarize easier in learning process;
- ✓ Have better skills in making logical questions than children who have not attended pre-school education;
- ✓ Discipline and hygiene at work differs in favor of children who have attended pre-school education compared to those who have not attended it.

As for the issue of:

- ✓ Children who have attended pre-school education having better results in mathematics,

The obtained data through this research show that 1 teacher was neutral, 1 teacher agreed and 3 other teachers agreed completely with this.

With regards to the issue of:

- ✓ Children who have attended pre-school education being more sociable,

Results show that 1 teacher did not agree with this, 1 agreed and 3 other teachers completely agreed.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was the analysis of the effects of pre-school education in the education of learners of the first grade to the fifth grade in a primary school in Pristina. To reach this objective, a teachers' questionnaire has been developed with a total of 20 questions. The questionnaire targeted five qualified teachers of this school, who were interviewed and who were well aware of the importance of pre-school education, which resulted in a realistic study on the issue.

The results that came out of this research show that 88% of learners from respective grades have attended pre-school education, while only 12% of them have not attended this level of education. The results also confirmed that differences between learners who had attended pre-school education and those who had not attended pre-school education were noticeable in both, social and psychological and educational aspect.

All in all, children who had attended pre-school education compared to children who had not attended it are: more creative, more eloquent, they are more disciplined and they exercise higher level of responsibility completing their school tasks, they are more receptive to logical questions, they familiarize easier in a learning environment, they are more sociable, more agile in physical exercises, they learn reading and writing skills in a more effective way, and they show a higher level of respect towards children with special education needs.

Regarding the importance of inclusion of children in pre-school institutions, in the future, the awareness of parents should be further raised, as this will help them increase their success in their further education, in particular and also build up their personality, in general. Further research is also recommended in this area with an aim of increasing the quality of education at all levels.

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