

Importance of Pre-K Before Kindergarten

Name

Institution

Subject

Date

IMPORTANCE OF PRE-K BEFORE KINDERGARTEN	2
Table of contents	
Introduction	3
Research Problem.....	3
Research purpose	4
Research Questions.....	4
Literature Review.....	4
Definition of Pre-K education	4
Key Aim of Pre-K education	5
Past Researches on importance of Pre-K education.....	5
Methodological Plan.....	7
Research Approach.....	7
Research participants, sample size, and sampling technique	7
Data collection	9
Data Analysis.....	9
Reliability and validity	9
Ethics Statement	10
References	11

Introduction

Over the years, there have been different issues that have been highly debated as far as education of children is concerned. Among others, these issues comprise of; the right age that children should start attending school, the syllabus to be used in school, teaching methods to be used by the teachers in school, the meals to be served to the students in school, and whether it is right to teach the disabled kids together with the kids who are not disabled.

Another topic that has been highly debated over the last couple of years entails the issue of Pre-kindergarten education which is also referred to as Pre-K or PK. The reason why this topic has been highly debated is due to the fact that on one hand, there are those who are in support of Pre-K while on the other hand, there are those who are not in full support of Pre-K since they argue that the children are usually very young and might not be in a position to understand what they are taught in Pre-K (Driscoll and Nagel, 2008). It is from that perspective that this research has been proposed with the aim of finding out the importance of Pre-K education. Pre-K education as referred to in this proposal comprises of a classroom based pre-school initiative for children who have not achieved five years (Dona and Kent, 2016).

Research Problem

Pre-K education has been in place for many decades now. The proposed research seeks to find out the importance of the Pre-K education.

Research purpose

As already explained, the proposed research purposes to investigate the importance of Pre-K education. Indeed, the history of Pre-K education in the US can be traced many years ago. Thus, by conducting the proposed research, more insights on the importance of Pre-K education will be gained.

Research Questions

In order for the aim of the proposed study to be achieved, the following are the research questions that the proposed study will have to answer first:

- a) What is Pre-K education?
- b) How long has Pre-K education existed in the United States?
- c) What are the benefits of Pre-K education?
- d) What are the disadvantages of the Pre-K education?
- e) Are there any critical success factors for Pre-K education?

Literature Review**Definition of Pre-K education**

Pre-K as discussed by Miller et al. (2014), is also referred to as child care or nursery care and involves classroom based pre-school programs that are targeted at kids below the age of five. As discussed by Andrews and Slate (2002), Pre-K history in the United States can be traced back in the year 1922 and were at the time mainly run by private institutions even though in the year 1967, the government started the first Pre-K program that was funded and managed by the government.

Key Aim of Pre-K education

Even though there are various aims as to why Pre-K education program exists, Cryer (1999) has explained that the main aim of Pre-K education is to ensure that the child is well prepared for education by the time he/she is joining kindergarten. From that perspective, it can thus be pointed out that those who are in support of Pre-K education are of the view that it helps prepare the child for future education implying that a child who enrolls for Pre-K education have a higher chance of succeeding in his/her future studies.

Past Researches on importance of Pre-K education

From a review of some of the studies that have been carried out in the past focusing on various aspects of Pre-K education, it can be pointed out there are some studies that have focused on the importance of Pre-K education. One of such studies involves the study by Starkey, Klein, and Wakeley (2004) which sought to find out whether Pre-K education enhanced the child's mathematical knowledge. From the study, it was found that even though there is a significant number of children who have challenges understanding mathematical concepts when they start their kindergarten studies, Pre-K education can be beneficial to such children since it has the ability to enhance the children's mathematical knowledge. Another study on Pre-K involved the study by Wong, Cook, Barnett, and Jung (2007) which focused on five state Pre-K programs and sought to establish how the Pre-K programs impacted children's receptive vocabulary, math, and print awareness skills. Specifically, the five states that

were involved in the study comprised of Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and West Virginia. From the analysis of the data that was collected, the scholars found that in some cases, there was evidence for positive and no impact to children's receptive vocabulary, math, and print awareness skills resulting to the scholars concluding that the impact that Pre-K education has on children differ from one state to another. Mashburn, Justice, Downer, and Pianta (2009), studied a relationship between children's expressive language competencies and the children advancement of receptive and expressive language from a research sample of 1812 four-year-old kids from 11 different states. From the research, the scholars found that children who enrolled for Pre-K education had higher receptive language skills and were also easy to manage in a classroom setting.

From the review of the various studies that have focused on the topic of Pre-K education, it has been found that different scholars have had different views and opinions as far as the importance of Pre-K education is concerned. Indeed, as has been discussed when highlighting some of the findings of the studies that have been carried out in the past, some studies have found that there is a relationship between Pre-K education and the education performance of the child while other studies have not found any relationship. Thus, from that perspective, this proposed research is justified since it seeks to provide a better understating of the importance of the Pre-K education. In particular, from the literature review, the following are the hypothesis that the proposed research will test;

- a) Pre-K education helps prepare kids for school thus enhancing their success for education
- b) Pre-K education helps the kids' behavior when they start kindergarten studies

Methodological Plan

As discussed by Saunders et al. (2009), methodological plan entails the methods and techniques that a researcher is going to use in order to ensure that the specified aims and objectives of the study that is been carried out will be achieved. In this part of the research proposal, the research methods and techniques that will be used are explained in detail.

Research Approach

The research approach that the proposed study is going to take will be quantitative research approach. The reason why that is the case is due to the fact that as pointed out by Cresswell (2003), quantitative research makes it possible for researcher to collect views and opinions from a large sample size. Indeed, in order for the specified aim of the study to be achieved, it will be important for the researcher to collect views and opinions from a large sample size and since quantitative research is the only research method that makes that possible, quantitative research method was used.

Research participants, sample size, and sampling technique

Research participants comprises of the individuals or the research subjects who qualify to take part in the research that is been carried out (Patton 2002). Thus, in case of the proposed research, research participants comprise of the individuals who are

going to take part in the study while their views and opinions are going to be analyzed in order to ensure that the aim and objectives of the study are achieved. For the proposed study, the research participants will comprise of kindergarten teachers who have at least five years teaching experience and have taught students who have attended Pre-K education and those who have not. Due to their experience, the teachers will have a better understanding of the impacts that Pre-K education has to the children learning implying that their view and opinions will be crucial for the study. Even though the ideal research subjects would have been the children themselves, the data collection process would have taken time since it would have involved monitoring children from the moment they join Pre-K education to the moment they graduate from the kindergarten and for that reason, the teachers were chosen to be the research subjects.

As far as the sample size is concerned, the number of the subjects who will take part in the study will be 1500 kindergarten teachers. As pointed out, the teachers need to have at least five years teaching experience. In view of the sampling technique, convenience sampling technique is going to be used since this technique will make it possible for the research to use the research subjects that are readily available and are willing to take part in the study (Flick 2006). However, in order to ensure that the findings of the study will be effectively generalized to the entire research population, the researcher will ensure that the research subjects come from different States.

Data collection

The fact that the research will use quantitative research method implies that data has to be collected through the use of quantitative data collection techniques. In that perspective, it can be explained that a research questionnaire that will have close-ended questions will be used to collect views and opinions of the 1500 research subjects that will take part in the study. The questionnaire will be emailed to the research subjects since it will be almost impossible for the researcher to physically distribute the research questionnaire to the 1500 research subjects. The reason why the questions will be close-ended is to ensure that the responses which will be given will be easily analyzed through the use of statistical tools.

Data Analysis

After data has been collected, the researcher will have to analyze the data collected. Since the data collected will be structured as close-ended questions will be used to collect the data, the researcher is going to use statistical tools to analyze the data collected. Specifically, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used to analyze the data and provide a better understanding of the relationship between different variables. Moreover, Microsoft's Excel program will be used to create charts and graphs that will provide a better understanding of the findings of the study.

Reliability and validity

The findings of the study will be reliable and valid since data that will be used in the study will be data that is specifically collected for the purposes of the study.

Moreover, the researcher is going to carry out a pilot study a few days to the actual research taking place in order to ensure that the actual research will be effective.

Ethics Statement

It will be crucial that consent is obtained from all the research subjects before they are allowed to take part in the study. Thus, all the research subjects are going to be informed the reason why the study is being carried out as well as how their involvement in the study is going to ensure that the aim and objectives of the study are achieved. After that, the research subjects will be asked to sign the consent form with any of the research subject who fail to sign the consent form been disqualified from taking part in the study.

The other issue entails the issue of privacy of the research subjects since it will be important that their identity is not disclosed to anyone as it can jeopardize their careers. Thus, the research subjects will simply be referred to as research subjects or participants and their identity will not be disclosed to anyone. Moreover, once the data has been analyzed, the research is going to delete any personal details about the research subjects in order to ensure that there will be no chance of any party accessing private information of the research subjects.

References

- Andrews, K., Slate, M. (2002). Public & Private Pre-Kindergarten Programs: A Comparison of Student Readiness. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 25 (3): 59.
- Creswell, J. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Cryer, D. (1999). Defining and assessing early childhood program quality. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 563, 39-55
- Donna, C., Kent, J. C. (2016). *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Contemporary Early Childhood Education*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications
- Driscoll, A., Nagel, N. G. (2008). *Early childhood education, birth-8: The world of children, families, and educators*. Boston: Pearson.
- Flick, U. (2006) *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. (3rd ed). London: Sage Publishers.
- Mashburn, J. A., Justice, M. L., Downer, T. J., Pianta, C. R. (2009). Peer Effects on Children's Language Achievement During Pre-Kindergarten. *Child Development* Volume 80, Issue 3, Pages 686-702
- Miller, P., Votruba-Drzal, E., Coley, R., & Koury, A. (2014). Predictors of early care and education type among preschool-aged children in immigrant families: The role of region of origin and characteristics of the immigrant experience. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 29, 484-498.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods (3rd ed.)*. Thousand

Oaks: Sage Publishers

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for business students*, (5th Ed). Harlow, Pearson Education.

Starkey, P., Klein, A., Wakeley, A. (2004). Enhancing young children's mathematical knowledge through a pre-kindergarten mathematics intervention. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* Volume 19, Issue 1, Pages 99-120

Wong, C. V., Cook, D. T., Barnett, S. W., Jung, K. (2007). An effectiveness-based evaluation of five state pre-kindergarten programs. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* Volume 27, Issue 1, Pages 122-154