



INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND TYPE OF SCHOOL ON PARENTS SATISFACTION WITH THE QUALITY OF PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION IN DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

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Abstract:

This study attempted to examine the differences of selected demographic factors (gender, education) and type school on the parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education. The study was premised on the ecological systems theory. A descriptive survey research design using a sample of 772 parents with children aged 5 to 6 years in pre-primary schools was used to execute the study. Data was collected using a four point Likert scale questionnaire. Findings revealed that parents were more satisfied with process quality than structural quality of pre-primary education. Results also indicated that parents who were females, more educated and had children in private pre-primary schools were more satisfied with the quality of pre-primary education. The study, therefore, recommends that, the Ministry of Education and school managers should take appropriate measures to improve pre-primary education and allocate resources to meet parents' demands. Moreover, school heads and managers should strengthen parent-teacher partnerships.

Keywords: demographic factors, type of school, parents' satisfaction, quality in pre-primary education

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1. Introduction

Access to quality pre-primary education plays an important role in children's growth and development. Several studies reveal that high quality early education produces long lasting benefits for children such as stronger literacy, language and math skills, better attitudes towards school, better relationships with classmates, and later academic success (Barnett, 2004; 2008; UNESCO, 2008, UNICEF, 2019).

Globally, provision of quality of pre-primary education remains elusive especially in developing countries. According to UNICEF (2019) the quality of pre-primary education in Sub-Saharan African countries was inadequate characterized by shortage of trained teachers, poor funding, poor physical infrastructure, unfavorable child-teacher ratio and low participation rates.

Similarly, in East African countries studies done (Omondi, 2013; Lewa, 2018; UNICEF, 2017, Kyasanku, 2017) revealed that although access to pre-primary education has expanded, provision the quality of pre-primary education remains a challenge. UNESCO (2006) study in Burundi, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania showed that most pre-primary school children in these countries learn in deplorable conditions characterized by low teacher motivation, trained teacher shortages, inadequate teaching and learning materials and poor physical facilities.

In Tanzania, studies conducted by Mbise (2008), MoEVT (2010b), Mtahabwa (2007), Shavega, Brugman, and Van Tuijl (2014) and Libent-Mabagala and Shukia (2019) show that the quality of services provided in most of pre-primary schools was poor across the country characterized by shortage of qualified trained teachers, unfavorable teacher-child ratio, poor funding, lack of good facilities, poor supply of materials and poor environments and little active experiential activity in the classes.

Despite the poor quality of services provided in these pre-primary schools, parents continue to enroll their children in the pre-primary schools. UNESCO (2012) report that Sub-Saharan Africa has registered gains, with enrolment increasing from 18.4% in 2002 to 28.2 % in 2010. For instance, in Kenya the enrollment in Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres has increased by 3.5% from 2.9 million in 2013 to 3.0 million in 2014 (Government of Kenya, 2016). In Tanzania the enrolment rate has risen by 46.1% from 1,069,823 in year 2015 to 1,562,770 in year 2016 (URT, 2017).

Due to the continued demand for pre-primary education among parents against deteriorating quality of pre-primary education in the country, the present study attempted to establish the overall levels parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education provided to their children in Dar es salaam, Tanzania. The study also explored how parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education related to type of school, parents' gender, and education level.

Katz (1993) and Ceglowski (2004) suggested that in evaluating the quality of early childhood programmes different perspectives including of parents should be involved. Parents are consumers and partners in early childhood education because they make decision about choosing types schools for their children. Scholars indicate that parents'

views, opinions and expectations may be affected by demographic characteristics, experience and environment (da Silva & Wise, 2006; Noble, 2007). But, limited studies have been done in Tanzania to document how parents' satisfaction with pre-primary education is associated with factors such as type of school, gender and education levels. Therefore, this necessitated the need to investigate the extent to which parents are satisfied with the quality of pre-primary education and establish the factors influencing their satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Parents' Satisfaction with the Quality of Education

The satisfaction of parents as consumers of pre-primary education is the most efficient and least expensive source of market communication because consumers who are satisfied with the product or service are likely to disseminate positive experiences to others while dissatisfied will spread negative information about the product or service (Dubroski, 2001 cited in Omar, et al., 2009). Ojo (2010) purported that a dissatisfied customer may tell seven to 20 people about their negative experience, while satisfied customer may only tell three to five people about their positive experience.

Parents' satisfaction levels depend on different experiences about school. According to Friedman, Bobrowski and Markow (2007) parents evaluate their children's school on a number of variables including teachers, administrators, curriculum, technology, facilities, involvement, transportation, and budget. These variables may influence the parents' satisfaction with their children's schools.

Understanding satisfaction is important in the sense that dissatisfied customers rarely complain, but rather simply purchase from another service provider (Milbourn, 1998). Dissatisfied parents tend to move their children to different schools. However, satisfied parents tend to be actively involved in school activities (Legg, 2009 & Danner, 2012). Studies show that parents' involvement is significantly related to children's cognitive development and academic performance (Kreider, 2002). Therefore, knowing parents' opinions and levels of satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education is very important as a means to assess whether the service is effective and should be continued in its present form or that service needs to be modified.

2.2 Parents' Satisfaction with Education and the Type of School

Parents' satisfaction with the quality of education has been reported to vary with the type of school. Studies indicate that parents are transferring their children from public to private schools due to perceived low quality of education in public schools in terms of good discipline, physical facilities, better teacher performance and higher quality output (Adebayo, 2009; Oketch, Mutisya, Ngunware, Ezrah, & Epari, 2010). Research conducted by Tooley and Dixon (2005) indicated that even when the parents are very poor, some are keen to pay to send their children to private schools when a free government alternative exists because they believe their children will benefit more from the education offered by

private providers. However, despite the fact that the above findings may provide some insight on how type of school influences parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education, they were done in Kenya and Nigeria and involved parents with children in primary and secondary schools, thus, findings may not be generalized to pre-primary school parents in another country.

In Kenya, Nelliah (2012) conducted a study to assess parents' level of satisfaction with quality of pre-school education in Lang'ata district. The results showed that there were significant differences in parents' satisfaction by type of school. Nelliah findings indicated that parents in private schools were more satisfied with all variables (curriculum, management, physical facilities, teaching and learning materials, teachers' qualifications and teacher-child ratio) determining quality of Early Childhood Education (ECE). On the contrary, Omondi (2013) who conducted a study in Bondo district to establish parental satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education reported no significant difference in parents' level of satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education between public and private pre-primary school parents. However, due to inconsistencies findings and differences in social, cultural and economic situations these findings may not be generalized to pre-primary school parents in Tanzania.

The findings of Omondi (2013) were similar with those of Duo (2007) who was examining parents' attitudes toward kindergarten assessment standards identified by government in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Data were collected from 480 parents of four to six year old children enrolled in 16 licensed kindergartens. The results of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in parents' attitudes toward kindergarten assessment between public and private. The study however was examining parents' attitudes toward kindergarten assessment and their selection factors.

2.3 Demographic Factors and Parents' Satisfaction with Education

The demographic factors of customer also have some impact on customer satisfaction. For instance, gender differences have been reported to affect people's satisfaction on different educational issues. Rätty, Jaukka, and Kasanen (2004) conducted a study in Finland involving 486 university and vocationally educated parents who had seven-year-old children. Parents were requested to evaluate their satisfaction with their child's first school year. Open-ended and structured questionnaire was used. The results revealed that mothers were more satisfied with the functioning of their child's school than fathers. In addition, the parents' gender displayed a significant effect with reference to problems in home-school cooperation, whereby mothers mentioned negative events more frequently than did fathers. This pattern of evaluation suggests that mothers are more actively engaged in their children's schooling than fathers (Lewis & Lamb, 2003). This study was done in elementary schools. The present study was conducted in pre-primary schools.

Menon (2013) investigated barriers to parental involvement in early childhood education classrooms in the Mumbai slums as perceived by 150 parents. The results showed significant differences in levels of satisfaction between fathers and mothers;

whereby majority of the fathers 65.6% faced problems and barriers to be involved in ECE classrooms and were very strongly dissatisfied. According to Menon the reasons for fathers to perceive problems and barriers could be due to their business and long working hours and failure to manage time. Mothers are more involved because they work as professionals and tend to manage their time better to be involved in their child's education. This study was however assessing parents' perception on one dimension of quality which is „parental involvement”, the present study assessed comprehensively different dimensions of quality as being satisfied with parents.

Parents' levels of education have been reported to influence their satisfaction with the quality of education provided to their children. For example, Badri, Mason and Mourad (2010) examined predictors of parents' satisfaction with subject taught in their children's schools. The survey which involved 7,287 parents from 209 schools in Emirate of Abu Dhabi, revealed that parents' educational level was a significant predictor of satisfaction with subject taught. Similarly, Liang (2001) found that education of parents was significantly related to parental satisfaction. These findings suggested that the attitude of more educated parents towards their child's schooling is an effective one and that parents feel entitled to criticize the school if they find a reason to do so, a competence that derives from their high education (Räty, et al., 2004). The above studies involved parents of children in different levels of education; and were conducted in other countries with different characteristics, therefore may not be generalized to parents of pre-primary school children in Tanzania.

However, another study investigated the perceptions of 60 parents of children with autism (5-18 years old) regarding the services provided in Jordan (Al Jabery, Arabiat, Khamra, Betawi, & Jabbar, 2014). The results of one-way ANOVA statistical test revealed no significant differences in parents' overall satisfaction with education services provided across their various levels of education ($F = 1.79, p = 0.144$). The study was however, conducted in Jordan and among parents of children with special needs. Given the geographical, cultural and study population differences, it is difficult to generalize the results to the whole world. This study focused on parents of pre-primary children in Tanzania.

2.4 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The study was guided by the ecological systems theory developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979). The theory recognizes that individuals do not live in isolation but influence and are influenced by the immediate and broader environment in time and space. The epistemological underpinning of this study recognizes the importance of the influence of personal characteristics, experiences and the environment as a process placed in the ecological systems in which parents' satisfaction levels occur. Therefore, it was assumed that factors such as parents' gender, education and type of school had some relationship with the level of satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education. This is due to the fact that parents' satisfaction levels are socially constructed.

The conceptual framework of this study shows the relationship between independent variables which are parents' demographics (gender, education levels) and type of school and dependent variable (parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education) as depicted in Figure 1.1. The quality of pre-primary education was measured by two categories of quality which are structural (physical environment, classroom characteristics and teachers' qualifications) and process indicators (children's experiences, teachers' behaviour and parents' involvement).

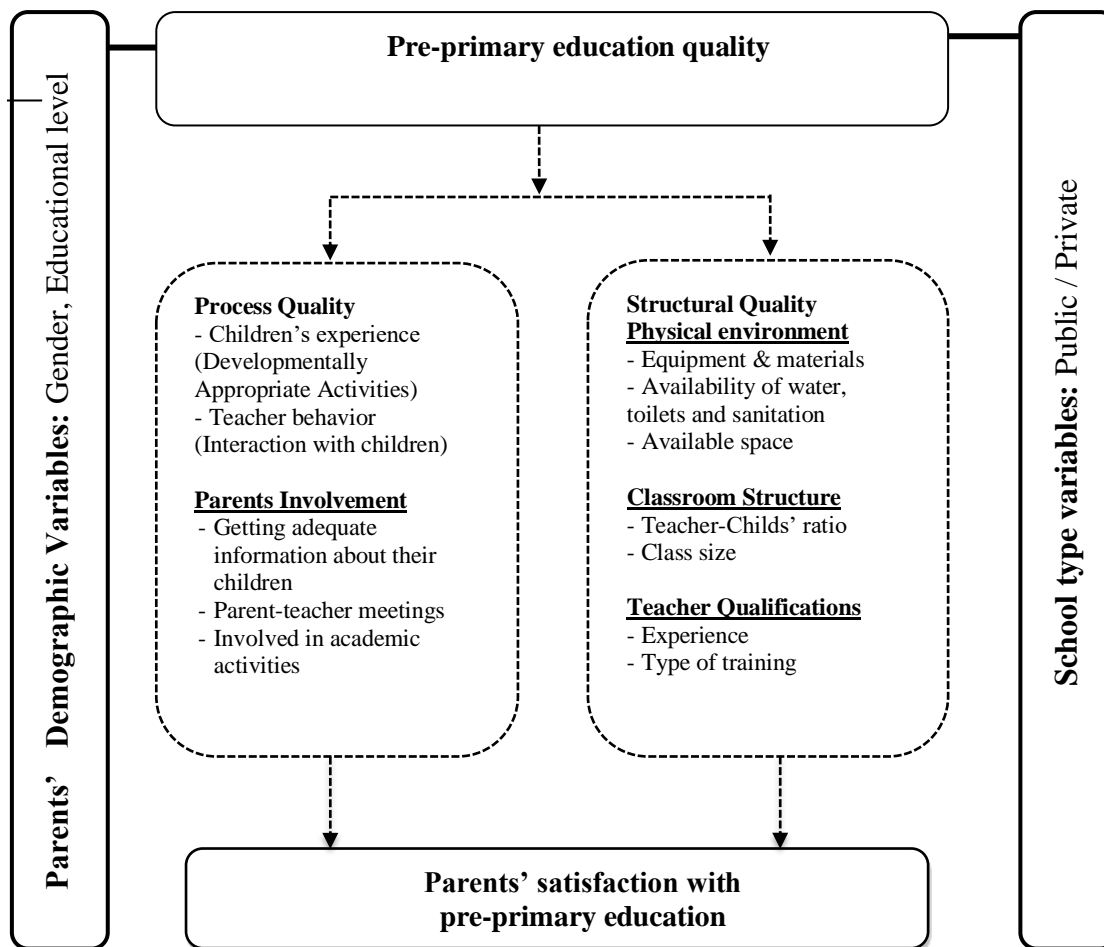


Figure 1.1: Parents' Satisfaction with Pre-primary Education Quality
 Source: Author

2.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study include the following:

- 1) Establish the level of parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education.
- 2) Examine if there is a difference in satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education between parents of children in public and private pre-primary schools.

- 3) Determine if there is a difference in parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education across various demographic variables (gender and education level).

The following null hypotheses were tested at a significance level of 0.05:

Ho₁: There was no significant difference in satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education between parents of children in public and private pre-primary schools.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education between male and female parents.

Ho₃: There is no difference in parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education between parents of different educational levels.

3. Material and Methods

The study employed descriptive survey research design. A stratified random sample of 772 parents with children aged 5 to 6 years from 34 pre-primary schools was used. Data was collected using a four point Likert scale questionnaire designed by researchers based on literature review; the proposed Tanzania minimum standards for ECD and some items were adopted from Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) by Harms, Clifford and Cryer (1998) and modified to fit the study context. The reliability value for the satisfaction scale was Cronbach's Alpha.77. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 was used for data analysis. Descriptive (frequencies, means, standard deviations, and percentages) and inferential statistics (independent samples t-test and One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were computed. The level of significance tested for each hypothesis was .05.

3.1 Scoring of Instrument

Scores on the 4-point Likert-type response scale were added and averaged to provide a total mean score of the parents' satisfaction levels with each item, dimension and category. The researchers grouped the parents' mean score into two groups. The two levels of parents' ratings of quality were operationally defined as 2.01 to 2.99 being low satisfaction and 3.00 to 4.00 being high satisfaction.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Out of the 772 respondents involved in the study, 332 (43%) were males and 440 (57%) were females. The low number of male parents is an indication that mothers (female) were more involved in their children's education. In terms of education level, most (240, 31.1%) parents were university degree holders, followed by secondary certificate (212, 27.5%) and primary certificate (164, 21.2%) holders. The findings show that 96 (12.4%) had college diploma certificate and 60 (7.8%) had less than standard seven level of

education. This gives an indication that parents of different levels of education have children in pre-primary schools.

4.2 Parents Satisfaction with the Quality of Pre-primary Education

The first objective of this study was to establish the level of parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education. To achieve this objective, structural and process categories of quality were also split in six dimensions that comprised physical environment, classroom characteristics, teacher qualifications, teachers' behavior, children's experiences and parents' involvement. Means and standard deviations were used to summarize parents' satisfaction levels of pre-primary education quality as displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean Scores of Parents Satisfaction with the Quality of Pre-primary Education

Category/Dimension	Mean	SD
Structural Quality	2.98	.586
Physical environment	2.98	.634
Classroom characteristics	2.75	.781
Teacher qualifications	3.22	.711
Process Quality	3.01	.626
Teachers' behaviour	3.24	.634
Children's experiences	3.01	.786
Parents involvement	2.80	.797
Overall Satisfaction with Quality	3.00	.561

Note: Satisfaction scale: 1: very unsatisfied, 2: unsatisfied, 3: satisfied to 4: very satisfied.

As depicted in Table 1, Parents were found to be satisfied with the quality of pre-primary education ($M=3.00$, $SD=.56$). Specifically, parents were more satisfied with process quality ($M = 3.01$, $SD =.62$) than structural features ($M = 2.98$, $SD =.58$) of pre-primary education. In addition, parents were less satisfied with involvement of parents in academic activities like storytelling, field trips or collection of local materials for children's learning; sufficiency of outdoor play equipment and the number of children in class. On the other hand, parents were satisfied with teachers' behaviour that was cited as warm and patient; teachers working experience with young children and availability of water. This implies that although parents were not satisfied with other structural dimensions of pre-primary education quality, they have some confidence and trust on the teachers of their children.

Parents' perspectives on the quality of pre-primary education as revealed by the present study contrast with findings of other studies carried out in Tanzania which used 'professional perspective' (Mbise, 2008; Mtahabwa, 2007 & MoEVT, 2010b). The mentioned studies indicated that the quality of pre-primary education was low. Lamb and Ahnert (2006) indicated that reason for variations between parents and professionals in levels of satisfaction and ratings of quality may reflect parents' desires to overcome or alleviate concerns about placing their child in a less than optimal setting.

4.3 Parents' Satisfaction with the Pre-Primary Education Quality by Type of School

The second objective was to examine if there is a difference in satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education between parents of children in public and private pre-primary schools. To understand parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education by type of school, mean scores and standard deviations were computed; and Independent samples t-test was used to test the hypothesis. Results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean Scores of Parents' Satisfaction with the Pre-Primary Education Quality by Type of School

Quality Category	Type of School	n	M	SD	t-value	Sig.
Structural	Public	348	2.81	.616	8.675	.000
	Private	424	3.15	.509		
Physical environment	Public	348	2.80	.673	7.581	.000
	Private	424	3.16	.556		
Classroom characteristics	Public	348	2.41	.840	9.424	.000
	Private	424	3.09	.646		
Teacher qualifications	Public	348	3.14	.786	3.436	.001
	Private	424	3.30	.633		
Process	Public	348	2.85	.680	8.066	.000
	Private	424	3.18	.528		
Teachers' behaviour	Public	348	3.18	.720	2.062	.040
	Private	424	3.29	.550		
Children's experiences	Public	348	2.84	.866	6.203	.000
	Private	424	3.18	.676		
Parents involvement	Public	348	2.54	.842	9.607	.000
	Private	424	3.06	.674		
Overall Satisfaction with Quality by Type of School	Public	348	2.83	.594		
	Private	424	3.17	.479		
Total		772	3.00	.561	9.094	.000

*p< .05

The results show that the difference in parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education between parents of children in public and private pre-primary schools was highly significant ($t_{[770]} = 9.094$, $p = .000$). Parents of children in private pre-primary schools ($M = 3.17$, $SD = .47$) were more satisfied with the quality of pre-primary education than those having a child in public pre-primary schools ($M = 2.83$, $SD = .59$).

The present study agrees with findings of previous studies carried out in Tanzania by Mtahabwa (2001; 2007) and Mwinuka (2001) which used 'professional perspectives' and found that private pre-primary schools were of higher quality than the public pre-primary schools. This implies that parents and professionals' perspectives are in agreement on the quality of pre-primary education based on type of school.

In addition, findings of this study show that parents with children in public pre-primary schools had the lowest mean score on the classroom characteristics' dimension, which had 2.41 (SD = .84). This means that parents in public pre-primary schools were less satisfied with the quality of classroom characteristics (teacher-child ratio and class sizes). This implies that teacher-child ratio and class size is still an issue in public pre-primary schools. According to the proposed Tanzania minimum standards for ECD, each pre-primary class is supposed to have 25 pupils (URT, 2011). Nevertheless, this teacher-pupil ratio is yet to be met and as a result parents in public pre-primary schools are not satisfied with teacher-child ratio and class size.

However, the findings showed that parents in both types of schools were satisfied with teachers' qualifications and behaviours. This implies that parents in public and private schools have trust and confidence on teachers' qualifications and experiences, and that could be one of their reasons for school selection. Parents believe that for one to be employed and assigned the responsibility of teaching and caring for young children she/he must have the required qualifications.

4.4 Parents' Satisfaction with Quality by Gender

To determine if there is a difference in parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education by gender the mean scores, standard deviations and Independent samples t-test were calculated. Results were as presented in Table 3.

Results in Table 3 revealed that there was a significant difference ($t_{[770]} = 2.331, p = .040$) in satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education between male and female parents. As such, females ($M = 3.04, SD = .58$) indicated high satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education than males ($M = 2.94, SD = .52$). On the other hand, both male and female parents were not satisfied with classroom characteristics and parental involvement dimensions while they were satisfied with teachers' qualifications and teachers' behaviours dimensions of pre-primary education quality.

In addition, the t-test results indicated significant differences ($p < .05$) in satisfaction between female and male parents on only two dimensions of pre-primary education quality. These are physical environment ($t_{[770]} = 3.103, p = .002$) and classroom characteristics ($t_{[770]} = 2.042, p = .042$), respectively. It was concluded that the level of satisfaction of parents with different gender was significantly different in physical environment and classroom characteristics.

Table 3: Mean Scores of Parents' Satisfaction with Quality by Gender

Quality Category	Gender	n	M	SD	t-value	Sig.
Structural	Male	332	2.96	.597	.705	.395
	Female	440	2.99	.646		
Physical environment	Male	332	2.91	.598	3.103	.002
	Female	440	3.02	.653		
Classroom characteristics	Male	440	2.78	.694	2.042	.042
	Female	332	2.72	.837		
Teacher qualifications	Male	332	3.19	.720	1.019	.308
	Female	440	3.25	.704		
Process	Male	332	2.93	.554	.304	.056
	Female	440	3.09	.604		
Teachers' behaviour	Male	332	3.19	.602	.948	.344
	Female	440	3.30	.656		
Children's experiences	Male	440	2.88	.777	.899	.368
	Female	332	3.15	.792		
Parents involvement	Male	332	2.77	.759	.309	.754
	Female	440	2.84	.826		
Overall Satisfaction with Quality	Male	332	2.94	.529		
	Female	440	3.04	.582		
Total		772	3.00	.561	2.331	.040

*p < .05

These results are in line with the findings of Rätty, et al. (2004) and Menon (2013), which purported that mothers have a higher level of satisfaction compared to fathers. The present results suggest that males and females have different levels of satisfaction, whereby males appear to have more expectations than females which might have been caused by their low involvement in their children's education. Studies indicate that most fathers do not participate regularly in their children's education (Koech, 2010; Menon, 2013; & Ndani, 2007). Thus, their ratings may be attributed to their having low contact with the school. In addition, in many cultures in Africa and Tanzania in particular, care giving and education for young children has been left to females. Therefore, for fathers to set high expectations on their children's pre-primary education is not surprising due to the fact that they are not aware of some early childhood issues. According to Jinnah and Walter (2008) parents who are involved in childcare programs tend to be more satisfied with the programs.

4.5 Parents' Satisfaction with Quality by Education levels

To determine parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education by education levels, mean scores and standard deviations were computed; and one way ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis. Results are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA for Parents' Satisfaction with Pre-primary Education Quality by Educational Level

Overall Satisfaction with Quality	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.193	4	1.548	5.004	.001
Within Groups	237.299	767	.309		
Total	243.492	771			

*p < .05

The results in Table 4 reveals that there was a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with pre-primary education quality between parents of different educational levels (F [4,767] =5.004, p=.001). Parents with higher levels of education namely college diploma (M=3.07, SD = .42) and university degree (M = 3.09, SD = .48) were satisfied with the quality of pre-primary education than parents with secondary school certificate (M=2.95, SD = .63), primary school certificate (M=2.94, SD = .57) and those with lower than standard seven level of education (M=2.95, SD = .61). This implies that the higher the education level a parent has, the higher chances of being satisfied with the quality of pre-primary education.

To further examine exactly where the differences existed, a Tukey-HSD post hoc test was calculated. The results showed that University degree holders differed significantly with primary (.21841, p = .001) and secondary (.15764, p = .023) school certificate holders. There was also a significant difference between college diploma and primary school certificate holders (.19733, p = .047). Based on the above findings, it was concluded that highly educated parents are more likely to be satisfied with the quality of pre-primary education provided to their children than less educated parents. These findings are in line with several other studies such as Badri, et al. (2010) and Toor (2012). These studies indicated that parents' education was a significant determinant of satisfaction.

The present study suggests that the higher the parents' education level, the higher the chances of being satisfied with the quality of pre-primary education. This could be due to several reasons: First, parents with a higher education level tend to enroll their children in private pre-primary schools which are believed to have high quality. This study revealed that majority (53%) of parents who enrolled their children in private pre-primary schools were degree holders.

Second, high levels of education have been associated with high income. As a result, parents with university degree have the ability to enroll their children in schools they perceive as providing high quality experiences. Third, high parental education is associated with higher levels of active involvement in children's education (Kohl, Lengua, McMahon, 2000; Mwoma, 2009), which influences satisfaction. Whereby, less

educated parents may feel less able to be actively involved in their children's school. Parents with low education may also feel inadequate in school work. This is supported by findings of Jinnah and Walter (2008), Legg (2009) and Danner (2012) who reported that parents who felt involved in the ECE programs were more satisfied with their children's education. This is due to the fact that people's satisfaction with anything is shaped by their experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

5. Conclusion

Considering the findings of this study, it is concluded that parents believed that their children's pre-primary schools had high quality education, specifically in process indicators than in the structural category. As a result, parents were more satisfied with process quality than structural quality of pre-primary education. It was also concluded that parents' demographic characteristics (gender and education) and type of school influences parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education. Parents who were females, more educated and had children in private pre-primary schools were found to be more satisfied with their children's education. Therefore, this indicates that these variables were significant determinants of parents' satisfaction with the quality of pre-primary education.

6. Recommendations

Basing on the findings it is recommended that the government through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) should allocate more financial resources to ensure that structural and process features of public pre-primary schools are improved.

School heads and managers should allocate the limited resources appropriately in order to ensure that structural aspects are improved to the required level. In addition, they should make sure parents are involved as much as possible in different school activities. Schools should introduce special days for parents or hold regular meetings to discuss children's progress and school plans. Parents should also be involved in academic activities like storytelling and collection of local materials for children's learning.

Parents should set substantial amounts of time to be actively involved in the pre-primary schools' activities. For example, they can pay regular visits (by invitation or not) and share their views to the schools. Or, when they drop off or collect their children, they should visit their children's classrooms and have an opportunity to accurately assess the quality of care and education that their children receive. Parents should also attend school meetings, by doing so they will be able to express their satisfactions and dissatisfactions with the services provided to their children.

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