

The State Of Supervisory Support In Private And Government Preschools Education In Ethiopia: Comparative Study

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Abstract

This study was aimed at assessing and examining supervisors support practices of private and government pre-schools in Addis Ababa for comparative purposes. A mixed method research was employed to collect data through questionnaire (from 150 respondents), semi-structured interview (from 20 participants), and observation also made. Both descriptive and inferential analyses were employed including percentages, means, standard deviation, t-test and ANOVA to analyze the data collected. Results unveiled that Supervisory support provided to preschools was better in private pre-schools than government preschool, but the supervisor supports rendered to the preschools were neither professional nor adequate it rather for inspection. Hence, the research concluded that the practices were less effective and the supervisory support practice in both types of pre-schools needs to be reexamined according to the policy framework of Ethiopia.

Key words: ECCE, supervision, preschool, early years, private and government preschool, Ethiopia.

Introduction

Professional and competent supervision support services from the supervisors are key components of among other variable for improving of pre-school program and/or preschool pedagogy. As (Ibhaze, 2016 as cited in Nwagbara (2003); Ogunsaju (2006) further identified supervision is a central administration skill and basic for any of institute such as school programme. As a result, to provide effective supervision support in school requires knowledge, interpersonal skills, and technical skills (Stephen P2013). As Mecgley (2015), as also indicated supervision is a continuous process and, its primary function is to help others to become more efficient and so effective in their pedagogical practice. (Ahmad and, etal, 2019; Kogo .J. Lydia 2018) similarly indicated that supervision in educational institution has a

significant influence on the ability to develop curriculum, develop method of teaching, improve and school materials, conduct classroom organization, identify student characteristics and assess the teaching learning process of school personnel. To sum up, the above research findings assertion implies that adequate as well as capable supervisor's professional support has a noteworthy contribution to teachers'/caregivers in the achievements of overall quality preschool program and/or preschool pedagogy.

Statement of the problem:

In a preschool supervisory support involves direct involvement of different tasks such as critical observation, gathering information from children, teachers and/or care-givers, parents, communities, and overall preschool environment (Hohmann, 2012; Johanna and,etal,2013;

Tarsianer and etal,2013). However, as research and empirical evidence shows that many of preschool designated in supervisory inherit their role of supervisor without having had an adequate training or experience (Hohmann, 2012); complaints in ECD centers regarding children pedagogy that seems to be little or no supervision at all (UNESCO,2007). As it indicated by (Kogo and,etal, 2018) the Kenya Education Sector Strategic Plan of, 2005, shows that there is inadequate management and supervision mechanism in implementation of ECD curriculum.

With so many new teachers, para-professionals and parents entering education, the role of the supervisor is highly significant in early childhood care and education (Naeyc, 1968); and, it is important tools for ascertain quality program Njideka and etal (2014). As a result, every early care and education program deserves a qualified and competent supervisor (Joseph, 2007). And for enhancement of supervision, it needs an interaction with teachers on a regular basis, and that interaction should include reflective dialogue on theory, research, and practice (Gordon, 2019).

Though the concept of supervision has a long standing history in early childhood programmes yet, it is a relatively new concept in England and, introduced as a mandatory requirement for ECEC in 2012, and as a result there is limited research Anita Soni (2019).

Supervision is not widely used in teaching at the moment, and therefore, studies that illustrate the importance and implementation of supervision are greatly needed (Sanna and etal, 2016). Supervision of early childhood education has not been investigated adequately in Kenya (Kogo, 2018). Likewise, it was very recently, that the Ethiopian policy framework (MoE, 2010) clearly stipulated in which the Ministry provides supervision support service for Pre-School Programmes in Ethiopia (Education Statistics Annual Abstract, 2020/21). However, much of

researches were dwell on in primary school (Afework, and etal, 2017 Debeli, 2021.); and secondary school (Kemal, 2015; Tsedeke, 2016; Tezera, 2020; Tesfaw, 2012). These all indicates that supervision support practice with regard to early childhood education has not been investigated adequately. The study therefore sought to investigate the overall practices of supervisory support in Ethiopian preschools.

Method and Materials

This study emphasizes on the comparison of supervision practices between government and private preschools. To do so, the conceptual framework for the study indicated seven components of effective pedagogical practices that include human report and document analysis. Issues of implementation and their intensity are approached quantitatively, while the extent and quality of the service delivery are approached qualitatively. Because of the study employed mixed methods research through the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Furthermore, in mixed research both the quantitative as well as qualitative data are employed for a single study of certain research than using either quantitative or qualitative data separately. As noted by Creswell (2007) neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient by themselves to capture the trends and details of the situation for certain research. As a result, the researcher collected both numerical as well as text data concurrently. In concurrent nested designs, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected during the same stage, although one form of data may be given more weight over the other, in this study being the quantitative.

Data collection Instruments

In this study, the data gathering tools that were used include, document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and observation to collect the qualitative data while questionnaire was also used to gather the quantitative data.

Data Analysis Tools and Techniques

The data obtained through interviews and observations were analysed qualitatively using thematic qualitative analysis. Accordingly, the information obtained through the qualitative data gathering process were classified and discussed under major themes such as curriculum Teaching and learning process, children assessments/evaluation, indoor learning condition and outdoor, pre-schools support, supervisor support, and parental involvement.

Percentages, means, standard deviations were used for descriptive purposes and correlation, comparison tests such as t-test and ANOVA were employed for the inferential analyses of the quantitative data. SPSS was used to make the quantitative analysis of the data collected through survey questionnaires. Qualitative analysis was used for the data generated from transcriptions of interviews, observation and document analysis. Accordingly, the researcher employed synchronized categorical approach to summarize findings obtained from both approaches and tried to reach to answers for the research questions.

In the data processing phase data editing, coding, data entering and cleaning were made so

as to check the consistency and the validity of data collected used the different tools.

Ethical considerations

Informed consents were gained from all the participants before all instruments have been employed in the study pre-schools. All participants were also provided with detailed description of the study such as its purpose and procedures and its significance. Participants were told that their participation is voluntary, and that they can withdraw at any time during the process as well as the right of getting any clear information. Consequently the researcher has obtained consent from all sampled pre-schools teachers and principals. The researchers assured participants that pseudonyms or codes for the information will be used to protect identification of the information they provide. Permission was also secured from the participants if they have concern on recording the interview and observation for voice recording. Upon securing permission audio recording was made for collecting data from all sampled participants.

Table 1. Supervisor support to teachers/Care givers

	Supervisors Support to Teachers/Care Givers		SA		A		N		D		SD	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	In my pre-school/classroom supervisor visits so often	Gov.	9	11.7	19	24.7	2	2.6	30	39	17	22.1
		Priv.	26	36.1	30	41.7	4	5.6	7	9.7	5	6.9
2	In my pre-school/classroom supervisor visits so often and support all pre-school teachers	Gov.	10	13	18	23.4	5	6.5	29	37.7	15	19.5
		Priv.	20	27.4	35	47.9	4	5.5	10	13.7	4	5.5
3	In my classroom supervisor often helps pre-school teachers much on how to implement the curriculum	Gov.	10	13	20	26	3	3.9	24	31.2	20	26
		Priv.	22	30.6	28	38.9	3	4.2	10	13.9	9	12.5
4	In my pre-school supervisor visit so often and discuss with me regarding children academic and developmental progress	Gov.	10	13	16	20.8	2	2.6	27	35.1	22	28.6
		Priv.	19	26.4	30	41.7	5	6.9	9	12.5	9	12.5
5		Gov.	8	10.4	18	23.4	4	5.2	30	39	17	22.1

	In my classroom supervisor visit so often and helps me to cope-up different challenges	Priv.	24	32.9	26	35.6	4	5.5	10	13.7	9	12.3
6	In my classroom supervisor visit so often and helps me to achieve pre-school goals	Gov.	8	10.4	22	28.6	5	6.5	26	33.8	16	20.8
		Priv.	5	34.2	25	34.2	6	8.2	10	13.7	7	9.6
7	In my classroom supervisor visit so often and Check lesson plan and gives me feedback	Gov.	12	15.6	27	35.1	5	6.5	23	29.9	10	13
		Priv.	27	37	31	42.5	3	4.1	5	6.8	7	9.6
Supervisor Knowledge												
8	In my pre-school supervisor have adequate knowledge on pre-school education	Gov.	15	19.5	16	20.8	15	19.5	15	19.5	16	20.8
		Priv.	30	41.1	24	32.9	4	5.5	11	15.1	4	5.5

Source: Survey data, 2022

Table 1 shows results associated with the support rendered by supervisors. Supervisors visited so often in private pre-schools 56 (37.33%) than the government 28(18.66%) pre-schools. This unfolds that supervisors visit schools and support teachers in private well 55(36.66%) than the government pre-schools 28 (18.66%). Supervisors support teachers in curriculum implementation were also found to be better in private 50(33.33%) than the government 30(20%) pre-school teachers.

Whether supervisors visit so often and discuss with teachers regarding children academic and developmental progress was found to be better in private 49(32.66%) in private schools than 26(17.33%) in the government preschools. As indicated in the above table, 50 (33.3%) of the respondents from the private preschools revealed that supervisors visit so often and help them to cope-up different challenges, which was found out to be lesser by half in the government preschools 26(17.33%). Regarding supervisors support towards achieving pre-school goals, 30 (20%) of teachers from each of the pre-schools revealed that the supervisors help them to achieve pre-school goals. Why does this proportion gets less could be seen in varying views. In terms of checking teacher's lesson plans, teachers were asked to reflect their level of agreement on whether supervisors visit them so

often and check their lesson plan and give them feedback. 64 (42.66%) of the respondents agree with this stance in private pre-schools than is 39(26%) in the government preschools.

Therefore one can understand from the aggregate data of the survey that the support of supervisors was much better in the private pre-schools than in the government pre-schools. In aggregate 54 (36%) teachers from the private pre-schools agreed that they believe supervisors have adequate knowledge about supervision than those of the government 31 (20.66%). These trigger one to question why the supervisors focus much on the private preschools than the government preschools. Various ideas could be aired in this regards but one response mentioned was that the private preschools are largely opened for profit and hence need to be controlled through continued supervision. Other further points are discussed following this paragraph.

From the above views of respondents one can understand that supervisor support was higher in the private pre-schools than in the government preschools. However, interviews with private and government teachers and principals revealed that the supervisor's supports were neither professional nor adequate to both pre-schools type.

This study also tried to triangulate the data obtained from quantitative through qualitatively. Principals from both the private and the government preschools have disclosed the following. A principal from private preschool Pprvt(2) mentioned that:

“I can dearly say that we don’t have adequate supervisory support. Teachers and myself are all the time offended with the supervision process, since, we don’t get any professional support. Rather supervisors often come and inspect what the pre-school misses to fulfill rather than focus on building capacity. Supervisors often come and count how many toilets do our pre-school have, the number of tap water, the size of classrooms with respect to children number, etc. Supervisors inspect the compound and the play materials too and write reports. Supervisors never give us professional support on how to cope up our challenges deliver quality education to kids. All in all I believe supervisors do not have adequate knowledge regarding ECCE at all.”

Another principal Pprvt. (5) also stated that:

“Supervisor always comes for reports and to tell us what the government needs from us. We registered their children for free, they often ask for money or we have to teach their children for free. Otherwise they warn us that they will close the pre-schools. But, you can ask any of teachers in our pre-schools that the supervisor never provides any support regarding ECCE.”

A principal at government preschools GovtPp(1) also mentioned that:

The supervisors are consistently changed. I have seen many of supervisors that were assigned and now there is also a supervisor from the woreda but, none of them are effectively supervising our pre-school. They just come and see always what our pre-schools needs to accomplish as auditors than tell us how to do things to make success out of it. I can say the supervisor is capable enough to help us professionally, but often comes for report.

Another principal from another government preschool Govt Pp(3) mentioned that:

The woreda administration does not give good attention especially to the preschools. Supervisor does not provide the needed support and professional training to our pre-school and to teachers either. They only require us to write reports after reports.

From the above views of both the teachers and that of the interviews one can understand that supervisory support is inadequate in both pre-schools. These findings support the results of the study conducted by Tirusew (2007), which showed that there is professional limitation in ECCE staffs, education officers at different stairs are not trained, and furthermore government is involved in accreditation of the pre-schools. The engagement often involves auditing based on rigidly set criteria of evaluation making the supervision non-supportive, punitive, and non-educative. Hence, the empirical findings of Tirusew and the current study at hand confirm the same finding and one can comprehend the other.

Comparison with respect preschool types

In order to interpret the comparison results between types of preschools, the scale based descriptive statistics is presented hereunder

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics with respect to each subscale

Subscales	school type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Supervisor Support	Priv.	73	20.5890	8.85976	1.03696
	Gov.	77	25.9481	8.59911	.97996
	Priv.	73	17.9178	8.90654	1.04243

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics results in order to see variation in the means for each of the subscales between government and private preschools. From these descriptive results it is possible to see that in almost all subscales except those related to “curriculum” issues and “assessment” of children for which the mean score of private preschools was higher, in all the other subscales the mean scores of government is found to be higher than that of private preschools. These variations need to be checked whether the

observed difference is real or by chance of sampling afterwards. For this purpose inferential statistics need to be conducted. In order to do so, initially Leven’s Test was run whose result ensured the assumption of equality of population variance except for the subscale of outdoor environment ($p = .026 < .05$). As a result in conducting an independent t-test for this subscale, equality of variance is not assumed. The result of the independent samples t-test is presented below.

Table 3. An independent t-test comparison between type of preschool

Subscale	School Type	N	M	SD	Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Supervisor Support	Gov.	77	25.95	8.5991	8.03	5.618	148	.000**
	Priv.	73	17.92	8.9065				

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Table 3 presents an independent t-test results that were conducted to investigate whether there is statistically significant difference between the private and government preschools in each of the subscales. Though there is mathematical difference among the means between the government and private preschools, the t-test depicts that the difference in the use of

preschool curriculum $t = .827$, $df = 148$, $p = .41$, Assessment $t = -.873$, $df = 148$, $p = .435$, Indoor learning condition $t = 1.249$, $df = 148$, $p = .214$, Parent Involvement $t = 1.712$, $df = 148$, $p = .243$ were not found to be statistically significant. It is hence possible to conclude that the practices in both types of preschools are similar with respect to these subscales.

On the other side, the difference between the government and private preschools in terms of teaching learning $t = -2.691$, $df = 148$, $p = .008$, outdoor environment $t = 4.341$, $df = 146.49$, $p = .000$, preschool support for teachers $t = 2.633$, $df = 148$, $p = .009$, and supervision support $t = 5.618$, $df = 148$, $p = .000$ were found to be statistically significant. In terms of curriculum it was found that private preschools tend to have higher mean score, but from observation and interviews it was found that the private preschools tend to use a different curriculum to the extent of using English as a medium of instruction. The feeling that the respondents have to declare that they use curriculum based teaching could be seen relative to the roots of conception that this result have not addressed. Hence, this requires further study. In relation to outdoor activities, the difference between the types of preschools was found to be statistically significant with means of private preschools = 22.45 and government = 28.15. From the prior descriptive discussions it was found out that there is sufficient space in the government preschools while there are various outdoor materials for the private preschools. Though there were various materials in the private preschools for outdoor activities, the space was so limited that did not allow excessive use of outdoor activities. Hence, the larger mean score of the government preschools seems to be feasible and acceptable.

For the teaching learning, the mean score of government preschools (Mean = 24.13) and private (M = 20.59) were found to be statistically different. While the teaching at the private preschools was largely focusing on the academic/intellectual development, the government preschools had the possibility of integrating all the other components of ECCE as specified in the curriculum framework. Hence, pedagogy at government preschool seen as appropriate. As the result, supervision support seem to favor government preschools with mean score of 25.95 while that of the private was 17.92. The descriptive narration presented there of depicted that supervisors visit frequently the private schools largely for control and audit purposes than delivering support. Hence, statistically significant difference seems justifiable.

After realizing that there are some subscales for which the difference between the types of preschools are negligible, while statistically significant with respect to others, it was essential to see if there is significance difference in aggregate of the subscales to see the overall standing of the two types of preschools. To this effect an independent samples t-test was run whose results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. An independent t-test comparison between type of preschool (all responses aggregated)

Subscale	School Type	N	M	SD	Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-school Education	Gov.	77	212.8	40.7677	16.27	1.837	120.55	.069
	Priv.	73	196.5	64.4496				

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Levine's Test for Equality of Variances was found to be statistically significant ($F = 5.445$, $p = .021 < .05$) and hence equality of variance was not assumed based on which the t-

test result was $t = 1.837$, $df = 120.55$, $p = .069$. This result reveals that the larger picture of the pre-school education do not vary between school types in supervision support.

Education level of respondents is believed to provide information on practices of preschools and extract realities in consonance with expectations of the curriculum framework. With this basis, similar analysis was conducted to see if there is statistically significant difference in terms of each of the subscales with respect to the education level of respondents. Since there are more than two categories of educational levels,

one-way ANOVA was utilized. Before applying ANOVA, however, the following assumptions were checked. The observations are independent, where the value of one observation is not related to any other observation, variances on the dependent variables are equal across groups, and the dependent variables are normally distributed for each group.

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations of each variable with respect to educational level of Respondents

Variable	Education Level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Supervisor Support	Certificate	105	22.8190	9.96994
	Diploma	34	20.0588	9.25052
	BSc or equivalent	10	20.4000	6.31049
	Total	149	22.0268	9.63660
Aggregate	Certificate	105	208.6190	53.02184
	Diploma	34	194.3824	51.14982
	BSc or equivalent	10	206.2000	73.83435
	Total	149	205.2081	54.08918

Source: Survey Data 2022

The descriptive results express the mean scores, and standard deviations of the sum of the responses to each of the scales by the 149

respondents (one respondent rejected for list-wise deletion).

Table 6. One-Way ANOVA Summary comparing each Variable with respect to Educational Level of Respondents

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Supervisor Support	Between Groups	224.048	2	112.024	1.210	.301
	Within Groups	13519.844	146	92.602		
	Total	13743.893	148			
Aggregate	Between Groups	5216.159	2	2608.080	.890	.413
	Within Groups	427778.391	146	2929.989		
	Total	432994.550	148			

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Table 6 shows that there is no statistically significant difference between each educational level of respondents with respect to each variable, except on the teachers actual teaching $F = 3.048$, $p = .05$ which is at the margin, with certificate holders having larger mean ($M = 23.6$) while Diploma and BSc or equivalent have ($M = 19.94$ and 20.10) respectively. The higher the professional career or qualification, it is expected that there will be better knowledge and skills to approach the implementation of each of the variables mentioned above. But, failure to grasp statistically significant variations triggers a question of what entails for such results. The higher mean score of the certificate holders including in teachers actual teaching also raises concern that need to be addressed. These all entail

Conclusion

In Ethiopia both the government and private's preschools engage in various practices such as providing appropriate pedagogy and overall growth and development of young children, and the government also provides supervision support for both preschool types. However, the practices were less effective in terms of what were intended in each of the practices that involve different challenges to the general practices. The preschools are merely not supported by professional's support from the supervisors assigned at woreda level. Hence, it was found that significant differences observed in terms preschools type. Henceforth, there is a need to redefine of the overall preschool supervisory support practices in preschool Ethiopia.

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further research to uncover each bit of the subscales.

From the comparative analyses given above, one can see that there are issues that need to be discussed further 'supervisor support' which have critical contributions to the pedagogical practices, the result depicted that there is statistically significant difference between the two preschool types. This informs that there is some difference between the private and government preschools in their pedagogical practices. Despite these, there is a statistically significant difference observed between the two types of preschools in terms of supervision support.

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