

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Numeracy and the Preschooler: “Identifying the Contributing Factors to Poor Numeracy Skills and Mathematics Performance”**

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This study investigated the reason why some preschool children had poor numeracy skills and performed poorly in mathematics at two early childhood care and education centres in Trinidad and Tobago. Data were collected from 56 preschools and five teachers through interviews with the teachers, as well as through observations and document analysis. The findings revealed that the factors that contributed to poor performance among the preschoolers were: 1) the numeracy content areas to which the children were exposed, 2) the teachers’ beliefs about numeracy and preschoolers, 3) the way in which numeracy or mathematics was taught to young children, 4) the teachers’ skills and efficacy in teaching mathematics and numeracy to young children, 5) the children’s absence from school, and 6) lack of parental involvement.

**Keywords:** Mathematics education; Numeracy; Early childhood care and education; Preschool children; Case studies; Trinidad and Tobago