

ABSTRACT

An Assessment of Programme Quality in Private Day Care Centres in Barbados in the context of Developmentally Appropriate Practices

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In Barbados it is widely agreed that in the Early Childhood Education arena, the question of programme quality in the context of developmentally appropriate practices is a critical one. Therefore, a study of this nature is both relevant and timely. Several researchers have stated that variations in the programme quality offered in the private day care centres could lead to acquired differences in the quality of early learning experiences of young children. The study was conducted to assess programme quality in the context of the use of DAPs. In assessing the extent to which these DAPs were being implemented, the researcher utilized both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in order to collect and analyse the data. The questionnaire was piloted within a few centres and validated by the Cronbach Alpha. Data were presented and analysed in a single table which outlined the mean differences of the respondents, the one way ANOVAs were used to determine whether the means differed significantly among the four groups and the Bonferroni was also employed to examine pair-wise comparisons across the four groups. The conclusions of the analysis revealed that in most instances there were strong incidences among all four groups of participants that some attempt was being made to practice these indicators of quality as outlined in the questionnaire and observation check lists instruments. However, though supervisors and caregivers were given relatively good assessments in most areas, there is a need to address the issues that parents deemed critical. On almost every occasion, the parents were the group of respondents who expressed uncertainty or disagreement with the extent to which these indicators of quality were being operationalized in these centres in Barbados. This being so, several recommendations has been cited as part of this study. In this era where early child care is a staple to many of today's families, it is vitally important that these issues be promptly addressed.

Key terms used in the study - Developmentally Appropriate Practices-DAP, Early Childhood Education-ECE, Standard Deviation-SD, One way analysis of variance-ANOVA, Mean Difference- MD, Child Care Board- CCB