

Quality in Public & Private ECCE Settings

Examination of predictors of observed early childhood care and education quality in one sub-Saharan African country

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Presentation Overview

- Little work examining public vs. private classroom quality of out-of-home early childhood settings (ECCE) in low- and middle-income countries
 - **In this sample, higher learning and development scores in children attending public ECCE**
- When supply of public ECCE is limited, what do we know about typical private settings?
 - Private market is critical in many countries, but may not be registered, monitored or supported
 - “Childcare” vs. “school-based preschool”



Key Questions

- What are characteristics of children attending public vs. private ECCE?
- How do teacher qualifications vary by private and public settings?
- How is parent cost associated with observed quality? Do families get what they pay for?

Country and Sample Profile

- Lesotho (landlocked sub-Saharan African country; total population of about 2 million)
- Sample of nearly 1000 children aged 2 to 5 years and their teachers, parents and classroom environments
 - Sampling at the child level across all regions of the country; children selected at random from classrooms
 - Assessments included MELQO tools (MODEL and MELE), teacher and parent surveys
 - Observed quality focused on **teacher/child interactions and use of materials/learning activities** (Raikes et al., 2020)



Child and Family Participants

- Parents had on average slightly more than primary school education
- Parents expressed concerns about the development of 27% of children
- Nearly 85% of children attended private vs. public ECCE

Public ECCE Attendees Have Some Risks

- Males slightly more likely to attend public after controlling for family assets and home engagement in learning (females had higher scores on learning)
- No significant differences in fathers' education, assets or concerns about child's development
- Higher probability of enrollment for older children in public ECCE
- *More* likely to report running out of food in last month

Teacher Characteristics

Public

- Experience in PPE*
- Education*
- Paid 2x private*

Private

- Same amount of training
- Report less confidence in ability to do job well*
- Less likely to use a curriculum*

Variables in Analyses

Classroom/School Observation + Director Survey	Teacher Survey	Child Direct Assessment of Learning/Development and Family Survey
<p>Observation of classroom practices using MELE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher/child interaction measured by teachers' use of language in support of children's learning - Materials/activities measured by teachers' engagement of children in learning activities and access to materials <p>Director report of school costs</p> <p>Director report of whether school is private or public</p>	<p>Teacher salary (<i>How much are you paid?</i>)</p> <p>Teacher years of experience (<i>How many years have you been a preprimary teacher?</i>)</p> <p>Teacher education (<i>What's the highest level of education you have completed?</i>)</p> <p>Teacher use of curriculum (<i>Do you use a curriculum?</i>)</p>	<p>Parent report of family assets</p> <p>Parent satisfaction (<i>How satisfied are you with the ECCE facility?</i>)</p> <p>Parent report of food shortage (<i>In the last year, how often did the food you bought run out and you didn't have money for more?</i>)</p> <p>Child learning and development (MODEL)</p>

Multivariate Predictors of Observed Quality

- Public ECCE observed as higher quality
 - Effects partially mediated by teachers' higher salaries, education
- Higher parent satisfaction associated with higher observed quality for both public and private
- Parent cost associated with higher observed quality in ECCE

How much does ECCE cost?

- Overall, public ECCE cost less than private ECCE, but public is not free
 - Directors reported higher fees than parents
 - Private fees 4x as much as public fees
 - 27% of Directors of public ECCE reported relying on parent payments
- Parents who reported running out of food paid significantly less for ECCE each month
 - Families who reported running out of food in private ECCE *paid more than 10x* the cost of public ECCE
 - Family assets were positively correlated with ECCE fees

Cost, Quality & Outcomes

- Across all settings, **family assets and parent cost positively associated with observed quality**
- **Public ECCE is less expensive for families and higher quality, with better child outcomes**
 - But overall, public settings are not yet overcoming inequities in access – 27% of public ECCE directors rely on fees
 - And most children go to private ECCE

Conclusions

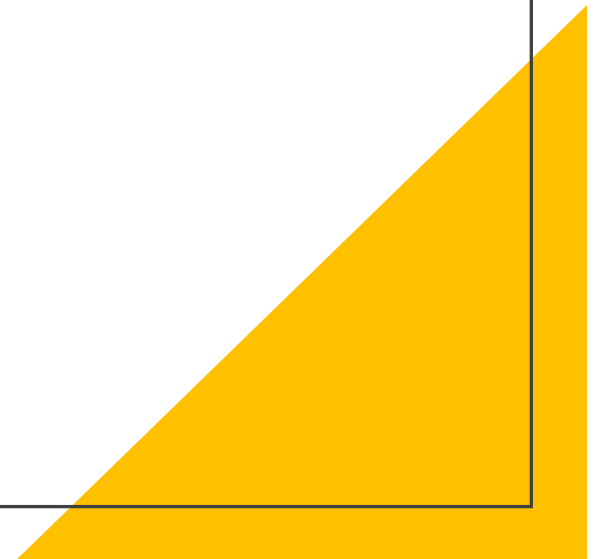
- Substantial (and potentially long-term) investment needed to make public ECCE accessible to all
- Most private ECCE facilities receive little regulation or support for improvement
 - Important to have standards for both public and private
- Untangle costs associated with public ECCE
 - Is “truly free” and funded by government alone an option? May be only pathway to equity

For More Information


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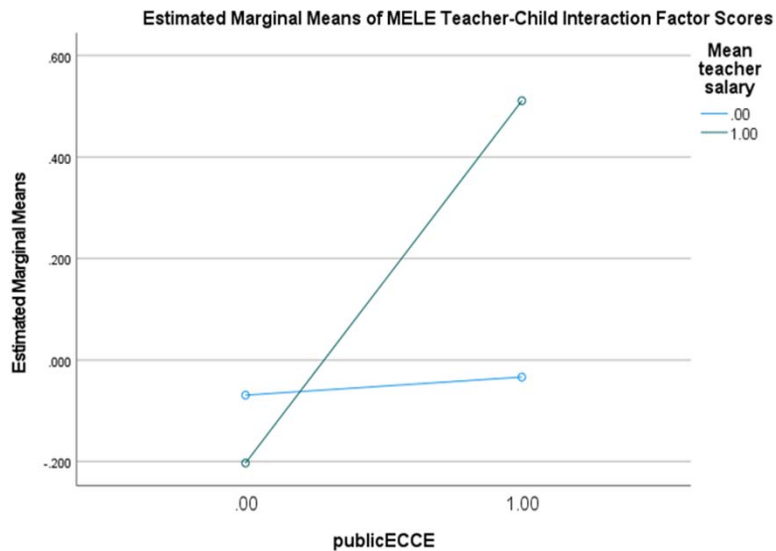


Predictors of Quality Vary by Public/Private

- Parent cost **positively** associated with materials/activities in private settings, but **not** in public
 - Teacher salaries **positively** associated with teacher/child interactions and materials in public ECCE, but **not** associated in private ECCE
 - Teacher experience **positively associated** with quality in public ECCE and **negatively associated** in private ECCE
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Associations Vary by Private/Public

In Private ECCE, Teacher Salaries Not Associated with Higher Quality



In Private ECCE only, Parent Payment Associated with Higher Quality

