



The Quality of Teaching and the Individual's Personality: How do early childhood Arab college students perceive the impact of the quality of teaching in the kindergarten on their personalities in Israel?

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Abstract

This study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the quality of teaching in kindergarten impacts the individual's personality from the perspective of early childhood Arab college students. To answer this goal the researcher used a mixed method, 472 Arab college students were approached to participate in the research. The main findings of this study indicated that the individual's personality development is affected by the physical environment, the educational climate, the management quality, the educational effectiveness, and the interactions between the actors involved (children, teachers, parents) in the kindergarten class. Moreover, according to the results of this research, the quality of the kindergarten education received by Israeli Arab children appears to have a substantial influence on the children's resulting personality traits. The findings of this study will be used to inform the development of educational policies and practices that will best support teachers in fostering these outcomes.

Keywords: *quality of teaching, early childhood, personality, educational climate, management quality, the educational effectiveness*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Topic conceptualization. Early childhood education is pivotal in shaping children's education journey and careers. High-quality preschool education in kindergarten is the catalyst that catapults young children's transition from informal infant learning at home to formal school-based learning. Although quality is a contentious subject that often sparks controversy in pedagogical discourses due to its relativity, it has persisted as a central theme in most education discussions across all levels of learning. Service quality in the context of performance is a relative concept (Cheruiyot & Maru, 2013). Quality in education is relative, considering that people perceive it differently.

Notably, the relativity of education service is perceived in two dimensions. First, quality is relative to the user of the service. For instance, education services offered in one kindergarten school may be assessed as high quality by parents of the school or poor

quality by another that has experienced better services than the latter. Secondly, quality is relative to the conditions under which it is revoked (Redman et al., 2013). For instance, a parent accustomed to low-quality education in underfunded traditional public schools can perceive performance quality in an organized charter school as high. Regardless of the process, outcome, and conditions of the revocation or the user, the main takeaway common in mainstream perceptions is that quality depends on the users' perceptions based on direct or indirect experiences.

Early childhood education is critical for a child's development. It shapes the trajectory of a child's education; thus, quality is a fundamental concept in preschools and kindergartens. Notably, the two levels are often confused and used synonymously but differ. Preschools are the first level of education designed for infants to orient them with learning, learning environment, culture, listening, and following rules, while a kindergarten is a more structured level of learning suitable for children aged four to six years. Preschools are suitable for three-year-old infants and go by names like playgroups in some countries. Preschool classes prepare learners to transition to kindergarten pre-primary one and pre-primary two (Iruka et al., 2014). In some countries, it is called pre-kindergarten.

A review of the history of kindergarten, its genesis and evolution shows that the concept is over two centuries old. The word 'kindergarten' has a German origin translating to children's garden. It originated from the ideas of J.H. Pestalozzi, based in Switzerland and his German learner Friedrich Froebel. According to Forkner (2013), Pestalozzi is the father of the kindergarten education concept. However, Froebel coined the word kindergarten (Nishida, 2019; Ramirez, 2021). Other notable contributors to the growth of kindergarten education include Robert Owen, who popularized the idea in Great Britain when he established the first kindergarten in 1816 (Burger, 2014; Mukhitdinova, 2021). Maria Montessori also popularized kindergarten education in Italy. Maria's efforts were immense, and this early education became popularly known as Montessori schools in other countries (Guttek & Guttek, 2016). Early education proliferated across the continent and was embraced as crucial induction preceding primary education.

In Israel, Kindergarten education is a compulsory learning level for early childhood education. Like in other countries, Israel divides early childhood education into preschool for 3-4 years children, popularly called 'trom trom chova' and 'trom chova', which transitions to kindergarten, popularly called 'Gan Chova' for 5-6 years (Shemesh & Golden, 2022). The genesis of early childhood in Israel can be traced to antediluvian Hebrew education during the 19th century. Jewish settlement picked pace leading to the revival of Jewish culture before the state of Israel was born. The early education movement stemmed from the Kibbutz movement (Aram & Ziv, 2018; Golden et al., 2018). The movement influenced many of the ideological concepts in early childhood pedagogy (Brody, 2018). However, foreign kindergarten concepts began to infiltrate the Kibbutz ideologies, thus sparking a debate over the need to incorporate the new concepts from Owen, Pestalozzi, Froebel and Montessori into early childhood education.

Notably, early childhood education has significantly evolved in response to new quality improvement strategies and emerging trends such as technology. Further, Brody (2018) clarified that Froebel and Montessori's progressive ideologies influenced kindergartens in Israel. Notably, kindergarten for children aged five to six years is compulsory and free in all public schools in Israel (Gluschankof, 2019). The government recognized the importance of providing foundational education for children before they are inducted into primary education through kindergarten and availing the services for free. Although it is free to increase access, the quality of education services offered in these institutions is cardinal because it influences learning achievement in the subsequent levels of learning.

Context. The context explored in the thesis is kindergarten education and curriculum focusing on quality and its implication on children's personalities in Israel. The kindergarten curriculum focuses on imparting essential skills in language, creative and cognitive abilities, social skills and simple arithmetic computations. Stakeholders in education emphasize quality in kindergarten schools even though the quality is perceived differently. NAEYC (2022) explored what a high-quality kindergarten should look like to provide insights into the fundamental concept of quality in early childhood education and found that there are several aspects. First, a high-quality kindergarten should focus on

establishing a caring community of pupils. Secondly, teachers should focus on nurturing and supporting the development and achievement of various learning milestones.

Third, the teacher should plan education experiences within the provided curriculum framework by the ministry of education. Fourth, high-quality kindergarten evaluates pupils learning abilities and enhances their abilities to form new social connections and maintains relationships. Lastly, high-quality kindergartens emphasize collaborative learning that supports an all-rounded learner. NAEYC (2022) concluded that high-quality kindergarten school continuously trains their teachers for the best practices in the profession, infusion of modern education technologies and collaboration with parents. The importance of high-quality kindergarten education in creating a sturdy foundation for a lifetime of learning is underpinned by a plethora of multidisciplinary research on early childhood education (Tan, 2017). The controversy around quality kindergarten education and what it entails has been the genesis of a plethora of research and discussions on the subject and its effect on learners' personalities.

Why the topic matters. Quality education affects learning outcomes. In most cases, quality in kindergarten is assessed from the learner outcomes and learning environment dimensions. According to Wullschleger et al. (2022), quality education in kindergarten is a complex concept whose hallmark of quality is anchored on highly trained teachers, a conducive learning environment, motivated, healthy learners, abundant learning resources, good curriculum, assessment, collaboration and stakeholder participation. A study in Ecuador showed that the quality of teaching in kindergarten was critical because it influenced factors that impacted the learners' success later in life (Araujo et al., 2016). The research included 24000 kindergarten learners and revealed that the quality of education impacts success in life. The teachers were examined on aspects such as intellectual quotient, personality and experience. The teachers were observed the whole day and later ranked based on classroom assessments scoring system on responsive teaching (Araujo et al., 2016). The research found that teaching quality varied across teachers and was highly associated with pupils' achievement in life

In the Israeli context, the ministry of education introduced a new assessment and framework for kindergarten education. The improvement was necessary to continuously

improve the quality of education in 2012 (Cohen-Azaria, 2022). Further, Cohen-Azaria (2022) found that the learning and assessment environment was the most valued aspect of kindergarten learning quality, while involving parents was the least important. Examining the quality of kindergarten education is important because it is hypothesized to influence personality development. Notably, Israel has two types of kindergartens stratified along funding lines. First, state kindergartens are funded by the government and are free for all learners that have attained the required enrolment age. Secondly, private kindergarten is funded by private entities and parents to run the school. Private kindergartens are entrepreneurial and charge school fees as agreed between the parent and the school. Education is integral for personality development in young children. Early childhood education in kindergarten imparts skills needed for life success and knowledge to examine situations and make informed decisions critically.

Additionally, kindergarten learning is central in impacting social skills to help the learners associate with others easily. Notably, the above achievements are crucial concepts in personality. Personality is a collective set of emotional, behavioral and cognitive functions that develop from environmental and biological factors. Kindergarten learning promotes personality development by imparting emotional literacy and residence, promoting independence, inclusivity and responsibility. Kindergarten is learning foster social competence among early education children (Jones et al., 2015). However, there are challenges in the process, considering that the quality of teaching in these schools influences the achievement of learning objectives and development. Therefore, the relativity of quality perceptions creates confusing perceptions about the correlation between the quality of teaching in kindergarten and personality development among early education learners. The topic matters in understanding the contributions of early education to personality development. The following subsection explores the subject further and enumerates the problem.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

General and Brief Review of the Background Literature. Early childhood education is extensively researched from several dimensions, especially preschool and kindergarten learning aspects. However, studies on the relationship between teaching

quality at kindergarten schools and its impacts on personality development are limited. Broekhuizen et al. (2016) examined the quality of classroom teaching and children learning in preschool and kindergarten and their influence on the development of social skills and behavioral challenges. The researchers found that high-quality teaching in preschools and kindergarten was associated with higher social competence and fewer behavioral challenges compared to schools with low-quality classroom teaching. Further, the study found that the correlation was stronger in kindergarten than in first-grade learners (Broekhuizen et al., 2016). The study has a breakthrough in showing the association between the quality of education in preschool and kindergarten, personality development and social skills. The study adopted a qualitative methodology and was conducted in the United States. Therefore, the finding should be carefully applied to an Israeli context.

Other research, such as Jones et al. (2013), Hinkley et al. (2018) and Santos et al. (2014), also obtained similar findings that the quality of kindergarten education influence social competence. Further, Nix et al. (2013) found that quality education at kindergarten promotes social competence, improving behavioral and scholarly performance. Also, there is a shortage of scholarly studies exploring kindergarten education's teaching quality and its relationship with personality development. A random search of various scholarly archives databases and repositories using Google Scholar search and 'kindergarten and personality development' did not yield any matching results. Therefore, the topic is generally under-researched

However, replacing the term kindergarten with preschool in the search phrase obtained two studies (Koutra et al., 2017; Uljaevna & Shavkatovna, 2021) that explored the contribution of preschool learning and personality development of the children. However, the studies did not focus on the concept. The two studies focused on general psychological and behavioral development. None of the studies was conducted in Israel. The revelations above suggest that the subject is under-researched in the context of personality development. Also, the effects of teaching quality in a kindergarten school are underexplored. It is under-researched because there were no matching, relevant or related

studies obtained through Google scholar, which is an efficient gateway to the largest collection of electronic scholarly databases, archives, libraries and repositories.

Problems, research gaps and limitations. Scrutiny of existing literature reveals two problems. First, there is a scarcity of studies on the effect of teaching quality on personality development in kindergartens. Secondly, the subject of kindergartens and preschools in Israel is researched from various dimensions. Examples include bilingualism (Schwartz et al., 2013), political socialization (Nasie & Bar-Tal, 2020), information technology infusion in learning (Magen-Nagar & Firstater, 2019), lifestyle habits of learners (Lerner-Geva et al., 2015) and music (Gluschankof, 2019). Although kindergartens in Israel have been researched previously, there is a dearth of studies on the effects of teaching quality on personality development among Israeli kindergarteners. No study explored kindergarten or related concepts within the Arab sector in the Israel. Therefore, there is a research gap on the topic in the Israeli context.

Lastly, most of the studies, such as (Nasie & Bar-Tal, 2020; Gluschankof, 2019; Magen-Nagar & Firstater, 2019; Gluschankof, 2019), adopted a qualitative methodology. Schwartz et al. (2013) was a mixed method-based study, while Lerner-Geva et al. (2015) was quantitative. The review shows an insufficiency of mixed methods and quantitative studies, considering that majority preferred qualitative approaches. The current study thought to solve the problems above or contribute to the solutions by exploring the impacts of teaching quality on personality development among Israeli kindergarteners in the Arab sector. The studio adds to the body of knowledge on the subject to reduce the literature insufficiency. Also, mixed method design was cardinal in bridging the methodology gap noted, especially in expanding the body of knowledge obtained through quantitative or mixed methods.

Thesis Statement. The quality of teaching services offered to kindergarten learners influences their personality because it impacts their behavioral and physiological development. Therefore, kindergarten schools are conduits through which children are immersed into multifaceted learning to get emotional literacy, scholarly arithmetic and language literacy, behavior and social skills, which influence personality. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how Israeli kindergarten teachers influence children's personalities

by inspecting the quality of teaching services they offer. The following sections describe the significance of the study.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study is significant and important because it bridges the literature gap on the subject. The preceding section has highlighted the research gaps, inadequacies, limitations and shortage of research on the topic, especially in an Israel context focusing on the Arab sector. Therefore, it is important to study the subject because the study will contribute to reducing the knowledge gaps on the topic. Secondly, the study was significant because it offers novel findings on the effects of teaching quality on personality development within the Arab Israeli sector because the subject has not been investigated previously. The results of this study will solve the problems highlighted in the preceding section by reducing the literature gap on the topic.

Additionally, it focuses on the importance of teaching quality in early childhood education, a cardinal foundational concept in a child's educational journey. Lastly, the study is significant because the findings will open up possibilities for further study. Also, it offers recommendations for further research. The theses offer recommendations, especially on early childhood education quality policies, practices and continuous improvement through periodic review, continuous professional development and infusion of new innovative learning technologies and approaches. Lastly, the study is significant to future researchers and education policymakers and early childhood educators because they will find the results and conclusions insightful on the association between quality kindergarten education.

2. Materials and Methods

A mixed-methods study of quality of teaching in the kindergarten class could involve collecting both qualitative and quantitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The study could involve the following:

1. **Qualitative data collection:** Interviews, focus groups, and in-depth observations are all viable options for gathering qualitative information. These techniques could be used to inquire on how kindergarten educators, parents, and administrators feel about the

standard of education their children get. Methods like thematic analysis and discourse analysis could be applied to this data to pick out patterns and trends.

2. Quantitative data collection: Methods like surveys, standardised tests, and other forms of measuring could be used to compile quantitative data. Kindergarteners' academic progress may be measured using standardised examinations, while information about kindergarten teachers' backgrounds, pedagogical approaches, and classroom environments could be gathered with questionnaires. Statistical methods like regression analysis and factor analysis could be used to examine this data for patterns and correlations between the variables of interest.
3. Data integration: After collecting and analysing both sets of data, the researcher would have a complete picture of the kindergarten teacher's effectiveness. Integrating qualitative and quantitative findings may entail using one form of data to interpret the other, or vice versa, to identify common themes and patterns. The study's results could be more reliable if the researcher used data from three independent sources.

A mixed-methods study of quality of teaching in the kindergarten class could provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research problem by integrating both qualitative and quantitative data. This approach could help to identify areas of strength and weakness in teaching practices, as well as factors that contribute to the quality of teaching in the kindergarten class.

Pearson Correlation

Table 1-Correlation table

		Correlations				
		EC	PE	QI	EE	QM
EC	Pearson Correlation	1	.336**	.682**	.538**	.858**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	472	472	472	472	472
PE	Pearson Correlation	.336**	1	.588**	.604**	.295**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	472	472	472	472	472
QI	Pearson Correlation	.682**	.588**	1	.793**	.665**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	472	472	472	472	472
EE	Pearson Correlation	.538**	.604**	.793**	1	.518**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	472	472	472	472	472
QM	Pearson Correlation	.858**	.295**	.665**	.518**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	472	472	472	472	472

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
EC =Educational climate, PE = Physical environment, QI= Quality of the interactions, EE = Educational effectiveness, QM = Quality management in the kindergarten

Correlations among five metrics (EC, PE, QI, EE, and QM) are shown in the table above. One can determine the quality and path of a linear relationship between two variables by using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The significance level (Sig.) for a two-tailed test, which shows how likely it is that the observed correlation coefficient was obtained randomly, is also included in the table.

All p-values for these correlations are less than .01, indicating that they are all statistically significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed) level. The strongest positive relationship is found between QM (Quality management in the kindergarten) and EC (Educational climate), with a coefficient of .858 indicating this. After the correlation between QI (Quality of the interactions) and EC (Educational climate) (0.682), which is already quite strong, the correlation between QI (Quality of the interactions) and EE (Educational effectiveness) is the second strongest (coefficient: 0.793). With a coefficient of .295, the relationship between PE (Physical environment) and QM (Quality management in the kindergarten) is the least significant. Nonetheless, at the .01 level of significance, this relationship is noteworthy. The results indicate that there are robust and significant correlations between these variables, which suggests that they may share common antecedents.

Qualitative analysis

The study and analysis of how well-taught kindergarten classes in Israel's Arab sector contribute to the intellectual and emotional growth of children are referred to as "educational and emotional development," and it is referred to by this term in both the research and analysis. This analysis must take into account a variety of factors, including the pedagogical approaches taken by teachers, the academic development of students, as well as their emotional growth.

Some examples of practices that have been shown to foster children's cognitive and emotional development include the establishment of positive teacher-child relationships, the provision of a safe and nurturing learning environment, and the encouragement of children to engage in exploratory behavior and learn through play.

“I have seen firsthand how the quality of teaching in kindergarten classes can impact my child's educational and emotional development. I believe that teachers who are knowledgeable and skilled in creating a safe and nurturing learning environment, establishing positive relationships with children, and providing stimulating learning opportunities can make a huge difference in children's academic and social-emotional growth.”

This study's overarching objective is to shed light on the impact of the physical and social context of the learning environment on children's learning outcomes and personal development and to investigate how educational policies and practices in the Arab sector of Israel can best support the creation of a positive learning environment.

“I think that the quality of teaching in kindergarten classes plays a crucial role in shaping children's personalities and preparing them for future academic and personal success. As a community, we need to invest in supporting teachers' professional development and providing the resources and support they need to create a positive and effective learning environment for all children.”

3. Discussion

According to the results of this research, the quality of the kindergarten education received by Israeli Arab children appears to have a substantial influence on the children's resulting personality traits. It was discovered that some aspects of a kindergarten's physical environment, educational atmosphere, quality of relationships among actors involved, quality management, and educational efficacy had a substantial impact on the personality traits of children. According to the findings of Algani et al, (2021), one of the best ways to support the mental and emotional growth of children is to provide them with a comfortable physical environment that has appropriate lighting, ventilation, temperature, and furniture. Following this can result in the growth of admirable attributes such as creativity, initiative, and empathy. According to the findings of the research Abu El-Haj, (2023), a learning environment that encourages collaboration and provides support can help youngsters improve their social skills and emotional intelligence. This, in turn, can lead to the development of good traits such as self-confidence, empathy, and comprehension. Positive interactions between children, teachers, and parents, such as open lines of communication and working together, were shown to improve children's social skills and emotional intelligence in the study. These findings were supported by the observation that children's social skills and emotional intelligence can be improved. The research also found that positive personality traits such as self-confidence, tenacity, and perseverance can be developed in kindergarten classrooms by having strong leadership, continuing education

for teachers, and continual monitoring and evaluation. A positive character such as originality, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning can be fostered in children by providing an engaging and comprehensive kindergarten curriculum that encourages children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. This can lead to improvements in children's ability to think critically and solve problems, which in turn can lead to the development of positive character qualities. The findings of this study shed light on the influence that children's kindergarten instructors have on the formation of the children's personality traits, particularly those of Israeli Arab children. According to the findings of Pinchasi, (2019), a pleasant learning environment that supports cognitive, social, and emotional development can give rise to pleasant personality traits and have long-lasting effects on the behaviours and personalities of children. This environment can also have a positive influence.

4. Conclusion:

It's possible that the conclusions of this study won't have the statistical power or precision they need because there weren't enough people who participated in the investigation. It's possible that the estimates of the degree of relationship between teachers' practises and pupils' character qualities might be more accurate if there were more students in the sample.

The last flaw in the research is that it concentrated only on the part that students' teachers play in moulding their personalities, while neglecting the impact that other aspects of people's lives, such as their genetics, upbringing, and extracurricular activities, can have. It is possible that the combination of this knowledge will make it possible to have a more thorough picture of the manner in which the personality of a newborn develops.

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