



Parental Engagement and Caregiving Quality in Home-Based Childcare Services: A Yearly Assessment in Cape Town, South Africa

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Abstract

Home-based childcare services play a crucial role in providing care for children while their parents are at work or engaged in other activities. In Cape Town, South Africa, these services offer an alternative to institutional childcare and have significant implications for child development. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including both quantitative surveys of parents and qualitative interviews with childcare providers. Data were collected from January to December in a representative sample of home-based childcare centers across Cape Town. Parental engagement varied significantly between different types of services (daycare vs. nappy changing), with caregivers who reported higher levels of parental involvement also showing improved caregiving quality and more consistent educational activities for the children. This study provides valuable insights into how effective parental engagement can enhance childcare practices, ultimately supporting better outcomes for young children in home-based settings. Policy makers should consider promoting initiatives that encourage greater parental involvement in home-based childcare services to ensure high-quality care and positive developmental trajectories for children.

Keywords: *African geography, parental engagement, childcare quality, qualitative assessment, social support networks, institutional care effectiveness, longitudinal study*

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