



Early Childhood Education Programmes and Cognitive Development in Ghanaian and Senegalese Pre-Schools: A Qualitative Exploration

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Abstract

Early childhood education (ECE) programmes play a critical role in enhancing cognitive development among young children, particularly in resource-limited settings such as Ghana and Senegal. A qualitative exploration was conducted through semi-structured interviews with educators, parents, and children's teachers from selected pre-schools in both countries. Data were analysed using thematic analysis. Interview data revealed a significant positive correlation between the duration of ECE programmes (at least 45 minutes daily) and improved cognitive performance scores among participating children. The findings suggest that structured, consistent, and age-appropriate ECE interventions can significantly enhance cognitive development in pre-school settings. These insights are crucial for policy-makers aiming to improve early childhood education outcomes. Policy makers should prioritise funding for comprehensive ECE programmes and ensure their implementation fidelity to maximise developmental benefits. Early Childhood Education, Cognitive Development, Ghana, Senegal

Keywords: *Geographical, Cognitive Development, Early Childhood Education, Methodology, Qualitative Research, Anthropology, Pedagogy*

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