

**PRE-SERVICE TRAINING OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND HOW IT
IMPACTS ON QUALITY OF TEACHING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS; A CASE
OF THIKA DISTRICT IN KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Pre-service teacher education programmes are designed to develop in students the initial knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable them grow into successful teachers. The Ministry of Education and other key players in teacher education have long been aware of the need to improve the quality of pre-service teacher education because of its importance to the overall quality of teachers and teaching. This has been brought into focus by the recent research indicating that teachers graduating from colleges do not have strong enough initial preparation for teaching. This study investigated the views of education stakeholders on pre-service training of Primary School Teachers and quality of teaching in Primary Schools in Kenya. A sample of 150 respondents including: Primary Teachers Training College tutors in Kilimambogo and Thogoto Teachers colleges, trainee teachers in the same colleges, primary school teachers, KIE and Ministry of Education officials provided the requisite data. Data was obtained through questionnaires with closed and open-ended questions, semi-structured interviews and documentary review. Qualitative data was used to gather through interviews, documentary review and open-ended questions in questionnaires were subjected to content analysis in which common themes and patterns were identified. Individual comments were also included as a way of illustrating the variety of stakeholders' views on the issue. Quantitative data from closed ended questions in questionnaires were categorized and tabulated. The findings of the study indicated that; principals and lecturers are qualified to administer and teach in the primary teachers training colleges, minimum entry grade to the primary teachers training colleges is C and above in KCSE and most of the trainees attained C+ and B-. The factors that hinder effective pre-service training of primary school teachers and implementation of primary teacher education curriculum include; Short teaching practice period, lack of induction training for lecturers as they join to teach in colleges, specialization of curriculum for both trainees and lecturers, lack of college fees resulting in trainees being away from college and trainees negative attitude towards the programme and certain new subjects. The following conclusions were drawn; the administrators in primary schools and colleges are qualified for the jobs but require managerial and accounting skills training, the minimum entry grade for the teacher trainees is sufficient and the issues concerning negative attitude should be dealt with during orientation week. The factors that hinder effective pre-service training of primary school teachers and implementation of teacher education curriculum can be addressed by the stakeholders to improve quality of training. The following recommendations were made; the period of teaching practice should be increased and lecturers given ample time to advice the trainees after assessment, induction of new lecturers to colleges is essential and a need for establishing an in-service college, specialization is crucial for both lecturers and trainees for quality in curriculum implementation, negative attitude amongst the trainees should be addressed as early as possible in the programme and necessary guidance made and the teacher education curriculum should be revised to reflect needs of the contemporary society. This study makes the following suggestions for further research; to establish the relationship between the role of parents and academic performance of trainees, a review of the primary teacher education curriculum is necessary to address the factors hindering proper implementation of the current programme.