

**Exploring teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in enhancing pre- primary school children's learning of numeracy skills in Mkuranga district, Tanzania**

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This study explored the pre primary school teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in enhancing numeracy skills learning to pre primary school children in Mkuranga District, Tanzania. Three research objectives guided the study: (i) to examine numeracy skills teaching in pre-primary schools; (ii) to assess the ways teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, enhance children learning of numeracy skills; and (iii) to find out the extent to which teachers pedagogical content knowledge affected children learning of numeracy skills. This study was guided by Pedagogical Content Knowledge model which show the subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are critical requirements in teaching numeracy skills to pre primary school children. Therefore teachers were observed to see if they possess pedagogical content knowledge necessary for enhancing numeracy skills learning to children. The qualitative research approach and multiple case study design were used to inform the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to obtain a sample of twenty (20) participants. The sample involved one District Education Officer, one schools inspectors, nine head teachers and nine pre-primary school teachers. The interviews, documentary review and observations were used to collect data. Data were analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis strategies. The findings revealed that teachers lack pedagogical content knowledge which is essential for improving teachers' quality and teaching practice. The findings also revealed that teachers lack required skills for teaching pre primary school children, especially lack of specialized training in early childhood education specifically teaching of numeracy in pre primary schools. Moreover, the findings indicated the basic numeracy skills developed in pre primary schools were continuing numbers, addition, and subtraction. The findings also indicated that teaching and learning materials used were not only inadequate, but also not appropriate for teaching numeracy skills. Furthermore the findings exposed that teacher's lack pedagogical knowledge as a result, they were using teaching methods which are not appropriate to children's age, abilities and interests. Most teachers prefer to use question and answer method, songs, and demonstration in teaching children. It is recommended that, preparation and training of pre primary school teachers should focus on PCK of teachers which are critical for improving teaching practice as well as quality of teachers. Teachers should be provided with the training programme such as seminars and short course training for capacity building.