

Higher teacher qualifications are associated with higher quality early childhood education and care



There is a positive association between teacher qualifications and the quality of the early childhood learning environment

What is the aim of this review?

This Campbell systematic review examines the current empirical evidence on the correlation between teacher qualifications and the quality of the early childhood learning environments. The review summarises findings from 48 studies with 82 independent samples. Studies included children from pre-kindergarten and kindergarteners prior to elementary/primary school and centre-based providers.

This review examines the empirical evidence on the relationship between teacher qualifications and the quality of the early childhood learning environment. Higher teacher qualifications are positively associated with higher quality in early childhood education and care.

What is this review about?

Poor quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) can be detrimental to the development of children as it could potentially lead to poor social, emotional, educational, health, economic and behavioural outcomes.

The lack of consensus as to the strength of the relationship between teacher qualification and the quality of the early childhood learning environment has made it difficult for policy makers and educational practitioners alike, to settle on strategies that would enhance the learning outcomes for children in their early stages of education.

This review examines the current empirical evidence on the correlation between teacher qualifications and the quality of early childhood learning environments.

What studies are included?

Included studies must have examined the relationship between teacher qualification and quality of the ECEC environment from 1980 to 2014, as well as permit the identification of the education program received by the lead teacher and provide a comparison between two or more groups of teachers with different educational qualifications.

Furthermore, the studies had to have comparative designs and report either an overall quality scale or an environment rating scale.

A total of 48 studies conducted with 82 independent samples were included in the review.



How up-to-date is this review?

The review authors searched for studies published until January 2015. This Campbell Systematic Review was published in January 2017.

What is the Campbell Collaboration?

The Campbell Collaboration is an international, voluntary, non-profit research network that publishes systematic reviews. We summarise and evaluate the quality of evidence about programmes in the social and behavioural sciences. Our aim is to help people make better choices and better policy decisions.

About this summary

This summary was prepared by Ada Chukwudozie and Howard White (Campbell Collaboration) based on the Campbell Systematic Review 2017:1 *The Relationship Between Teacher Qualification and the Quality of the Early Childhood Education and Care Environment: A Systematic Review* by Matthew Manning, Susanne Garvis, Christopher Fleming and Gabriel T.W. Wong (10.4073/csr.2017.1). Tanya Kristiansen (Campbell Collaboration) did the layout and copy-editing of the summary. Financial support from the American Institutes for Research for the production of this summary is gratefully acknowledged.



What are the main results in this review?

Overall, the results show that higher teacher qualifications are significantly correlated with higher quality early childhood education and care.

The education level of the teachers or caregivers is positively correlated to overall ECEC qualities measured by the environment rating scale. There is also a positive correlation between teacher qualification and subscale ratings including program structure, language and reasoning.

What do the findings in this review mean?

The review shows a positive statistically significant association between teacher qualification and the quality of early childhood learning environment. This finding is not dependent on culture and context given that the evidence is from several countries.

Mandating qualified teachers, i.e. with tertiary education, may lead to significant improvement for both process and structural quality within centre-based and home-based ECEC settings. However, the evidence is from correlational studies, so evidence is needed from studies with designs which can assess causal effects. Further research should also assess specific knowledge and skills teachers with higher qualifications have learned that enable them to complete their roles effectively.