

Retraction Notice

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- All authors
- Some of the authors:
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History

Expression of Concern:

yes, date: yyyy-mm-dd

no

Correction:

yes, date: yyyy-mm-dd

no

Comment:

The paper is withdrawn from "Creative Education" due to personal reasons from the corresponding author of this paper.

This article has been retracted to straighten the academic record. In making this decision the Editorial Board follows COPE's [Retraction Guidelines](#). The aim is to promote the circulation of scientific research by offering an ideal research publication platform with due consideration of internationally accepted standards on publication ethics. The Editorial Board would like to extend its sincere apologies for any inconvenience this retraction may have caused.

Editor guiding this retraction: Anita LIU (Editorial Assistant of CE)

The Transition of the Children from the Preschool Institutions to the Primary School in the Kosovo

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Abstract

Many countries' systems have regulated the issue of the transition of the children from preschool to primary school, whether by law, regulation, or something like this. Kosovo is a state formed in the 2008, namely the education system of the Kosovo has faced many challenges and problems, especially in the field of the pre-school education, such as the lack of adequate documents for the pre-school education, and the low inclusion of the children in the pre-school institutions, etc. Regarding these issues is the lack of a strategy that will improve the transition of the children from preschool education to the primary schools. In this research, we will examine how the preschool institutions collaborate with primary schools in the Kosovo for the registration of the children in the first grade, whether they have any documents that the children convey from preschool institution to the primary school.

Keywords

The Early Childhood Education, The Educators, The Teachers, The Primary School, Transition from Preschool to the Primary School

1. Introduction

The preschool institutions in Kosovo, as a form of education for the children of preschool age, date back to the beginning of the last century, specifically from the middle of the twentieth century.

If we consider that Kosovo as a state was created in 2008, we can say that the preschool institutions in the Kosovo date back much earlier, a century before the declaration of independence of her, the first institution in the Kosovo dates back to 1907 (Rexhepagiq, 2002), however, despite this fact, the preschool education

in the Kosovo, we can say that it is not at the right level, given its problems and its challenges.

From existing statistics, until 1999, there were 41 public preschool institutions in the Kosovo, and from the statistics issued by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in 2017 in the Kosovo there are 43 public institutions, only.

From a research report published in 2008 by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, among the many challenges in the field of the pre-school education, it mentioned these challenges: the small inclusion of the children in the early childhood education, the lack of the unqualified staff that works with children aged 0 - 3 years old, schooling of the early childhood education, lack of inclusion of the children with special needs in the preschool education, the functioning of the private non-licensed preschool institutions, etc. This long list also adds the transfer of the children from the preschool institutions to the first grade of the primary school.

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2. Review of the Literature

The term “early childhood care and education” (ECCD) refers to a range of processes and mechanisms that sustain, support and aid in the holistic development of children, from age 3 years to 5 years. Due to the rapid neural connections, brain development and growth that take place at this age, this period is considered a critical window of opportunity for optimizing children’s development through the combined impact of education, care, health, nutrition, protection and stimulation (NCCA, 2017).

The transition from preschool to primary school is very important for children and the literature notes that the transfer of information using templates or portfolios is a key part of this complex process (O’Kane, 2016) therefore, the transition from one level of education to the next level, namely in our case the transition from pre-school to primary school, is considered a transition phase. The move from ECEC to primary education is one of the transition phases that children face in their early years. Almost all European countries have issued

central guidelines and/or implemented measures to help children and their families to adapt to their new environment. The types of measures vary widely and involve different parties (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014). This phase has not been regulated by all European countries alike, however, as noted above, for easier child transition from one level to the next level of education, has been done enough work. In the report published by the (2014) it is emphasized that most European countries have regulated by law or special regulation the issue of the transition from the pre-primary to primary school. However, only Poland and Turkey have no specific central guidelines for facilitating transition, but these matters are dealt with at local or institutional level (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014). It should be noted that a few countries have general, central guidelines for dealing with all kinds of possible transitions during the early years. For instance, the Irish framework for ECEC underlines that transition should be organized as smoothly as possible through cooperation between settings, partnership with parents and contacts with relevant professionals. In Finland, central guidelines state that each local curriculum should describe ways of ensuring continuity and cooperation between different levels of education, among them home-based and centre-based ECEC services, pre-primary and primary education (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014). Some other countries have regulated the issue of transition through cooperation with the family. The most common measures include having parents stay alongside their child during the first few weeks and/or progressively increasing the time the child spends in the setting (e.g. Spain, Hungary, Malta and Slovenia). The aim of such measures is twofold: they help the child adapt to the new environment and new people, and they also allow relationships between staff and parents to develop (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014). In the same report, the fact is noted that in some systems, the last year of pre-primary focuses on readiness for school (e.g. in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Lithuania and Liechtenstein), and in some cases records on children's maturity and readiness for school are kept. Where this occurs, the records may be made available to primary teachers, with a view to easing children's integration into primary education (e.g. in Bulgaria and Lithuania) (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014). Seeing as a transition phase the transition from pre-school to primary school, finally activities facilitating the transition from pre-primary to primary level may include children's visits to primary schools while they are still in ECEC, in order to become acquainted with their new learning environment (e.g. in Belgium, Flemish Community and Slovakia). Close cooperation between staff of both levels through joint projects and activities is also developed (e.g. in Portugal, Iceland and Norway) as well as cooperation between staff and parents (e.g. in Slovakia, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014), thing, that doesn't happen in Kosovo.

Among others, in some countries such as in Belgium (all Communities) and France, pre-primary and primary education is often provided on the same premises to facilitate the transition for children as well as to improve staff coopera-

tion (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014), despite the fact that states like Iceland and Norway (2014) the transition phase regulate into the curriculum. Similarly, in Liechtenstein, the structure of the common curricula ensures continuity of learning between pre-primary and primary education (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014). Based on the abovementioned report, in Europe, the age of children for enrollment in the first grade is different, but ranges from age 4 (United Kingdom) to seven years (Bulgaria, Sweden, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia). Until we are talking about age in around 20 education systems, reaching the official age is the only condition for the admission of pupils to the first year of primary education (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014). Based on the above-mentioned report (2014), we are speaking about the following states: Denmark, Croatia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden and Iceland, etc. Age, as the only criterion for registration of children in the first grade, in this rank of states, we have to include Kosovo, because with the Law on Primary Education at the moment, in point 2 of Article 9 of Law no. Nr. 04/L-032, it is said 2. Compulsory education starts at the beginning of the school year after the date the child reaches six (6) years of age who is the minimum age for compulsory education and ends at the end of Level 2 of ISCED. Level 2, according to this law, includes 1.3. Level 2: Low Secondary Education lasting four (4) years (normally from the age of twelve (12) years) (MEST, 2011). It is worth mentioning the experience of Macedonia, where on a report, published by SABER-ECD (2015) states that Macedonia tracks several domains of individual children's development. As of 2014, every child enrolled in an ECCE center has a child development portfolio. The portfolio contains tools to track the child's development based on the Early Learning and Development Standards framework adopted in Macedonia (SABER-ECD, 2015). Always according to the above document, these cover the physical, cognitive, language, and social development domains. Checklists and notes in the portfolio document the child's strengths, abilities and interests. Preschool teachers use this information to adjust the curriculum and teaching. The information conveys children's school readiness, is used to smooth the transition from preschool to primary school (SABER-ECD, 2015). However, in Macedonia, the inclusion of children in pre-school education is low, it should be noted that less than one-fourth of children in Macedonia attend preprimary school, so most children do not have a child development portfolio (SABER-ECD, 2015). Another criterion for starting primary education, in the report issued by the European Commission in 2014, also mentions the readiness for school. Readiness for school is a criterion applied for entry to primary education in several countries such as Bulgaria, Germany, Cyprus, Hungary, Liechtenstein and Switzerland. In some cases, this criterion is applied in certain circumstances. For example, in Belgium (German speaking Community), only children who have not attended pre-primary institutions are assessed, while in Estonia a child's development is taken into account if parents request a year's deferment (Eurydice and Eurostat, 2014). Another practice is offered by New Zealand. The use of portfo-

folios to document and assess children's learning is a feature of preschools in New Zealand. These are used by many primary teachers to learn more about the child's strengths and interests. While they require mutual understanding of this way of documenting learning, portfolios do allow the child's voice to be heard in a meaningful way as they make the transition to primary school (O'Kane, 2016). Compare with other countries, Kosovo didn't have any politics that connect the preschool education with primary school. The only criterion for the enrolment children's in the first grade, as we have mention before, is the age of the child, so in Kosovo we not have connection between these levels of education.

3. Method

The purpose of this research was to understand how is done the transfer or enroll of the preschool children to primary school in the Kosovo. In this research we have used the quantitative method, as part of this research were involved 58 educators of the preschool institutions, and 43 the primary school teachers from all cities of the Kosovo, who completed the questionnaires on the above mentioned problem. Also, we used the qualitative method, in which we have uses the semi structure interviews with 2 directors of the preschool institutions and 2 directors of the primary schools (Table 1).

The quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously using mainly the closed questions but there were also open questions. We have made the descriptive analysis to look deeper into the problem.

In order to get as much information as possible, the qualitative data were transferred to the quantitative data to describe how enroll the children in the first grade of the primary school in the Kosovo.

4. Finding and Discussions

For portfolios purposes, clear ideas give a group of authors (Wortham, Barbour, & Desjean-Perrotta, 1998) when highlighting that the portfolio, helped us, among other things, to see multiple processes in different aspects of child development.

Table 2 gives us information about the perceptions of educators regarding how they understand the portfolio, where we see that 32.8% of them think that it is "A summary of all child labor at the preschool institution", 25.9% of them claim that it is a job documentation and child's development in the IP, 17.2% responds that "important because it should be included in elementary school", 15.5% gave us this answer "Important because it must be included in primary school" only 8.6% of them didn't have answer.

To understand more about the perceptions of educators for the portfolio, a descriptive analysis has been carried out, and according to Table 3, we understand that the average response was 2.6379 (DS = 1.43513).

From the above results we understand that educators perceive the portfolio as important, for the fact that it was stressed by them that it "is a summary of all

the work that children do in the preschool institution and documentation of that work”.

Table 1. The sample on the preschools institutions and the sample on the primary schools.

Nr	The chosen cities	Nr.of Pres.Int	Nr. i of educators	Nr.of the P.School	Nr.of the teacher
1	Pristine	2	8 plus 8	2	8
2	Gjilan	1	8	1	8
3	Gjakove	1	8	1	7
4	Peje	1	8	1	7
5	Ferizaj	1	8	1	8
6	Kamenice	1	8	1	7
7	In total	7	56 educ.	7	45

Table 2. In your words, please let us know how you understand the children’s portfolio.

	Frequency	Percent	Percent valid	Percent cumulative
Very important because they are documentation for the development of children	15	25.9	25.9	25.9
A summary of all child labor at the preschool institution	19	32.8	32.8	58.6
Valid No answer	5	8.6	8.6	67.2
It is important because must to include in the elementary school	10	17.2	17.2	84.5
They include the creativity of children	9	15.5	15.5	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Table 3. The descriptive statistic.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Meab	Stand. Deviation
<i>In your words, please let us know how you understand the children’s the portfolio</i>	58	1.00	4.00	1.6379	.43513
Valid N (listwise)	58				

From semi-structured interviews with the directors of pre-school institutions, from 63% of them was emphasized that since from 2014, in the portfolio of children in the preschool institutions, the document called the Observation Protocol was implemented and implemented.

The portfolios were also highlighted by semi-structured interviews with preschool institutions directors, in which 82.6% agree with the idea of transferring portfolios from preschool institutions to the elementary school concretely: "Portfolios are important for student assessment when coming to first grade".

The strategy of tracking children's portfolios from pre-school education in primary schools is a strategy implemented by many European countries such as: Finland, for whose education system it is known to be one of the countries with the most successful education system based on the PISA results (2015), Sweden, Bulgaria, Lithuania, then paraphrasing an EU report (2014). Greece has joined this strategy since 2014, while from a report published by SABER-ECD (2015) same situation is also the case in Macedonia.

Using portfolios to document and evaluate children's learning is a feature of preschools in New Zealand. These are used by many elementary school teachers to learn more about the child's strengths and interests (O'Kane, 2016).

In our research, we also analyzed the educators' perceptions about the importance of the children's portfolios in the preschool institutions.

For the importance of children's portfolios, general frequency analysis has been performed. From the data in **Table 4** we see that 53.4% of educators claim that the portfolio is extremely important, 36.2% of them stated that the children's portfolio is very important, 6.9% said they were important, while only 3.4% stated neutral. There were no other answers for the other options.

Research findings from the survey statistics show that the average response to the importance of portfolios by the educators was 1.6034 (DS = .77096) (**Table 5**).

The transition from preschool to primary school is very important for children and the literature notes that the transfer of information using templates or portfolios is a key part of this complex process (O'Kane, 2016).

From our research, concretely from semi-structured interviews with directors of pre-school institutions and primary school directors, 100% of them claim that they do not have co-operation on the registration of the children in the first grade.

From the questionnaire realized with primary school teachers regarding what documents should be brings parents when registering their children in the first grade, we got the following results: out of the total of 43 teachers, 83.7% of them said that parents should to bring the certificate of childbirth and the certificate of residence, while 16.2% of them said that parents should only bring the certificate of childbirth. These data are presented in **Table 6**.

For this question was also drawn up descriptive statistics where the average response to this question was 1.3653 (DS = .12752) (**Table 7**).

Table 4. How do you rate the children's portfolio?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Extremely important	31	53.4	53.4	53.4
Very important	21	36.2	36.2	89.7
Valid Important	4	6.9	6.9	96.6
Neutral	2	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Table 5. The descriptive statistic.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Stan. Deviation
<i>How do you rate the children's portfolio?</i>	58	1.00	4.00	1.6034	.77096
Valid N (listwise)	58				

Table 6. Perceptions about the documents that children bring to enrollment in the first grade.

	FREQUENCY	Percent	Percent valid	Percent cumulative
The certificate of childbirth and the certificate of residence	36	83.7	83.7	83.7
The certificate of childbirth	7	16.2	16.2	100.0
Total	43	100.0	100.0	

Table 7. The descriptive statistics.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Stand. deviation
the certificate of child-birth	43	1.00	2.00	1.3653	.12752
Valid N (listwise)	43				

Based on the practices of the aforementioned states, and based on our research, Kosovo does not have any regulations or policies that link the pre-school level with the primary school.

From our research, concretely from semi-structured interviews with directors of pre-school institutions and primary school directors, 100% of them claim that they do not have co-operation on the registration of the children in the first grade.

5. Recommendations

Considering that preschool age is a very important age for the development of a personality, in this part of our research, we will talk about the recommendations that emerged as a result of this study.

Based on the strategies of educational systems of the most developed countries in the world, we can conclude that the cooperation of educational institutions between different levels, is very important. We recommended that:

- Draw up the education policies by Ministry of the Education, Science and Technology, which would focus on co-operation between pre-school and primary education levels. So initially, Ministry of the Education, Science and Technology should draw up education policies that will focus on linking or co-operating between preschool education and primary schools in general, then providing specific strategies for Municipal Education Directorate related to the issue at hand.
- Ministry of the Education, Science and Technology to do templates or portfolios format specifically by experts in certain fields that would summarize the complete follow-up of child labor in preschool institutions. This template should be emphasized that it should be supplemented by the pedagogical and psychological service of pre-school institutions and the same should be taken from elementary school on the occasion of registration of children in first grade. So there has communication between preschool institutions and elementary schools through portfolios.
- In the long-term strategies envisaged by Ministry of the Education, Science and Technology, emphasis should be placed on the implementation of portfolios in the two levels of education, i.e. pre-school education and primary education.
- We recommend that in the Law on Primary Education in Kosovo, as a condition for the registration of children in the first grade of elementary school, not just criterion of age, but it to introduce also a point that will make it necessary to get portfolios of children from their preschool education.
- To issue special regulations from the highest institutions of education in Kosovo that would regulate the issue of transferring portfolios from pre-school institutions to primary schools.
- To develop educational policies by the Municipal Education Directorate that would emphasize the importance of cooperation between preschool institutions and primary schools.
- We recommend that awareness raising campaigns be launched for teachers of primary schools regarding the importance of child portfolios as a basic element for the registration of children in first grade.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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