

Contemporary communities use Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres to secure children's right to conditions of living necessary for holistic development. These centres comprise one of the immediate social and physical environments (Bronfenbrenner's, 1986/1989 microsystems) that influence children's development. To motivate teachers and improve the physical learning environments communities are expected to participate in provision of the necessary inputs. Research findings in Kenyan preschools, however, reveal low teacher motivation as well as worker and learner unfriendly physical environments. This implies low community participation. In contrast, communities reportedly provide better environments for the less vulnerable lower primary school children. This study, therefore aimed at investigating factors that influence community participation, the modes and levels of that participation, and the relationship between participation and, teacher motivation and suitability of learning environments. The study was guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, Epstein's Parent Involvement Model and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation. Ex-post-facto research design was used in the study. To test for factors influencing motivation, independent subject and contextual variables were correlated against levels of participation. The levels of participation were also correlated against teacher motivation and physical environments to establish their relationships. The sample comprised of 40 preschools, 46 teachers, 240 community members and 15 committees. Preschool Physical Environment Checklist, Preschool Teachers' Motivation Questionnaire, Community Members' Participation Interview Schedule and a Preschool Committee Focus Group Discussion Guide were used to collect data. To prepare quantitative data for analysis, the SPSS was used. Frequencies, standardized Z scores and Pearson's Chi-Square tests were then utilized in analysis at the critical value of $p=0.05$. The study found that the motivation levels of more than 50% teachers were low. The teachers were de-motivated by delayed and irregular salaries, poor working conditions, heavy demands at work and lack of clear terms and conditions of service. Good interpersonal relationships, adequate physical environments, timely payment of salary, payment during school holidays and housing were given as their motivators. Additionally, in 55% of the cases, the suitability of the physical environment was below average. Further, the study found 63.2% of community members' participation to be low, though not significantly associated to either the levels of teacher motivation or the suitability of physical environments. Members in rural areas and those from private schools participated more. The members' participation was also motivated by sense of ownership of the preschool, friendliness of teachers and management, invitation to participate, proximity to the school, availability and membership in school committees. Factors found to hinder participation were lack of invitation, lack of awareness on the need and areas in which to participate, poverty and dependency. Since teachers were de-motivated by factors that require community action, the study recommended that communities, policy makers, NACECE, and ECD trainers' employ different strategies to raise levels of participation including, training on management, promoting education and empowering women economically.