

Altruism is defined as any voluntary and intentional action that benefits another which is not motivated by the desire to obtain external rewards, whether social or material, and differs from prosocial behaviour by not including restitution. Altruism is a behaviour that is part of the larger category of prosocial behaviours.

Studies have shown that children learn altruistic behaviour through modeling, reinforcement and nurturance from parents and other adults as they socialize with and observe their behaviours. Teachers spend more time with children at school, and after parents, they are their main socializers and major role models. Despite this close relationship, there seem to be no studies in Kenya showing how the teachers influence the acquisition of altruism in the children. In addition, the level of altruism in pre-school teachers and their relationship to children's altruistic behaviour is not known in Kenya. Without establishing the relationship between teacher altruism and the level of altruism in pre-school children, interventions to children's pro-social behaviour are not likely, thus resulting in adverse effects on the academic growth and social development of the children and the entire society. Therefore this study was designed to fill the knowledge gap identified above.

This descriptive study employed ex post facto design. The study was conducted in Westlands Division of Nairobi Province. Twenty-four teachers, one from each of the twenty-four schools representing four categories and six children of preschools from each respective school were randomly selected for the study from a divisional schools list. A questionnaire and a checklist were used to obtain information on the display of altruism from the teachers and the children, respectively.

The results of the study showed that there was a significant correlation between children's display of altruistic behaviour and teachers' display and reinforcement of altruism. The main modeling attributes teachers displayed were helping, sharing and volunteering, while protecting, comforting and empathizing were least modeled. The main reinforcement attributes that teachers used were praising and thanking while patting, rewarding and hugging contributed very little. There was no significant difference between teachers' training and their display of altruism, and neither was there any difference between boys and girls in their display of altruism. The children displayed four modes of altruism, i.e. general altruism (this is altruism directed to anybody who is not a relative and it is not reciprocal); kin altruism; induced altruism and reciprocal altruism.

The attributes most observed were sharing, helping and volunteering. Children's altruistic behaviour was correlated with teacher modeling at $r = .484$ and with teacher reinforcement at $r = .387$. Direct teaching of altruism seemed to be of little value. Display of altruism was 3.1% in children while that in teachers was 6.5% for modeling and 4.5% for reinforcement, respectively on a score scale of 0 -18%.

The study concluded that pre-school teachers do display altruism although the levels were low; and that children can learn altruistic behaviour from their teachers mostly by modeling and reinforcement, thus confirming Bandura's social learning theory. The study recommended that pre-school curricula should include encouragement of altruistic behaviour by teachers to children

and that teachers should have positive attitudes towards the teaching, reinforcing and modeling of altruism to enhance children's learning and acquiring of altruistic behaviour.