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***An Evaluative Study of Kindergarten
Classes, Attached to Primary Schools in
Fayoum***

A M. Ed. Thesis

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Summary of the study

Early childhood education is one of the most important periods in men's life as it represents the basic structure of child life .In this period children's abilities and talents develop and they are provided with their needs towards a better growth . The primary seeds of these personalities are shaped in these years.

Recent studies emphasized the effect of the high quality education in childhood period on children's abilities .For this reason , education in the kindergarten stage became a human necessity in civilized life, especially that this particular stage is considered a golden period in which children's creative abilities and energies can be developed and invested.

The political leadership in Egypt began to provide all children in the kindergarten age (children between 4and 6 years) with the needed educational services believing that children investment is the best of all other kinds of investment . The government began to provide for many child care institutions such as the national council for motherhood and childhood in 1988 and the first decade document for Egyptian child protection (1989-1999) and the second decade document (1998-2010).

The increase in interest in early childhood period, resulted in an interest in educating the preschool child. A lot of kindergarten classes have been built and increased in number. In 2008/2009 we hade (7915) kindergarten classes. The retention rate of these classes differ from a governorate to anther in Egypt. In Cairo, Alexandria, and Dakahlia for example it is more than 12%, where as in fayoum ,Beni-sweif and minia it is less than 7%.

Problem of the study:

Fayoum is one of the governorates that have the number of kindergarten schools; before 2005 the number of children enrolled in these

schools was less than 5%. But the government began to exert more efforts to provide all the recently built schools with kindergarten classes in order for the number of children enrolled to range between 15% to 60% by the year 2010.

As a result, the number of government kindergarten schools in Fayoum increased (202 schools) in 2009/2010, the number of classes in these classes (616) classes and the number of children enrolled (3278) also increased. In this way, the number makes it urgent to evaluate these classes for their ability to accomplish the aims and the functions they are intended for. It is also important to explore the problems facing these classes and to put forward some solutions. This is exactly what the current study tried to do.

The problem of the current study can be stated in the following main question:

“ To What Extent are the kindergarten classes attached to primary school in Fayoum able to accomplish their intended aims?

- This main question can be branched into the following sub- questions :

1- what are the features of development of the kindergarten classes attached to primary school in Fayoum.?

2- what are the educational and social aims of kindergarten classes attached to primary school in Fayoum?.

3- what is the status of the materialistic and human capabilities and the activities and programs provided in these kindergarten classes ?

4- to what extent are these classes able to accomplish their educational and social aims?

5- what are the suggestions for helping these classes accomplish their intended aims?

Significance of the study

The current study may be significant for the following reasons:

- The importance of kindergarten stage in shaping the intellectual and emotional sides of children and men of the future.
- The study goes along with the national and international interest in early childhood period considering it the base upon which the individual's personality will be shaped.
- Contribution of the current study in shedding the light on the status of kindergarten classes and the extent to which they are able to achieve their intended aims.
- Identification of the extent to which the educational inputs and processes provided are appropriate for achieving the intended aims of these classes.
- Activating the role of kindergarten classes attached to primary school at fayoum in achieving their aims.
- Exploring the status of the educational process in these classes.

Aims of the study

- Getting information about the foundation and development features of kindergarten classes attached to primary school at fayoum .
- Exploring the status of the educational process in these classes.
- Identifying the extent to which the educational inputs and processes provided are appropriate for achieving the intended aims of these classes.
- Activating the role of these classes in achieving their aims.

Limitations of the study

- The current study was limited to kindergarten classes attached to primary school in fayoum .
- The pilot study was conducted in the six centers of fayoum governorate(fayoum- synawrs. Abshaway- etsa – tamia – youssef el sidiek)

Methodology and tools of the study:

- The descriptive method was used in this study for analyzing the status of kindergarten classes investigated and evaluating the aims of these classes. For this purpose the following tools were used:
- A questionnaire directed to (teachers –supervisors – headmasters) of kindergarten classes attached to primary school in fayoum.
- An interview form directed to parent’s of kindergarten children at these schools.
- Opinion explore directed to experts and specialists and those responsible for kindergarten classes.
- Counting card for investigating the capabilities of kindergarten classes attached to primary school in fayoum.

Sample of the study

The study sample consisted of 386 divided as follows(220teachers – 45headmasters – 15 experts and decision makers – 50 parent – and 36kindergarten)

Procedures of the study:

- designing the overall frame of the study (study problems , aims , terms , pervious studies, method and sample)
- Designing the theoretical frame of the study including:
 - the historical context of the foundation and development of kindergarten classes in fayoum.
 - the status of kindergarten classes at primary school in fayoum (quantitative status- qualitative status including activities and programs – kindergarten teacher , preparation and qualifications – the kindergarten buildings- curriculum and learning techniques and administration and financing)
- Aims of kindergarten classes including sources of deriving these aims- aims of kindergarten in some advanced countries – aims of kindergarten in Egypt).

- conducting a field study investigating the extent to which aims of kindergarten classes are achieved, roadblocks of these classes and the suggestions for development.
- introducing a suggested vision for activating these classes to achieve their aims.

Summary of the study results

1- the first aim the comprehensive development of the child including intellectual , physical, emotional, ethical and religious sides taking into consideration the individual differences between children in their abilities ,attitudes and development rates was achieved to an acceptable level in the achievement level for teachers was 78.1% , for supervisors 78.5% and for headmasters 80.1%.

2- the second aim i.e., development of children's linguistic and numerical skills and thinking , creative and differentiation abilities through individual and group work was achieved for teachers was 73.7%, for supervisors 73.7% and for headmasters 76.5%.

3- the third aim (i.e., the best social and health foundation in light of the aims, principles, and values of society) was reasonably achieved . the achievement level for teachers was 80.2% ; supervisors 83.7% and for headmasters 81.1%.

4- the fourth aim (i.e., providing kindergarten children with their needs and growth requirements for helping them have self accomplishment and a balanced personality that is able to deal with the society in an appropriate way) was achieved to a reasonable level ; achievement level for teacher was 76% ,for supervisors 71.2% and for headmasters 79.3% .

5- the fifth aim was achieved for the teachers 70.7% ,for supervisors 71.2% and for headmasters 79.3% .

Findings of the study showed the following obstacles facing kindergarten classes:

1-kindergarten classes is apart of the primary school and it is not established as independent in its own.

2- the budget assigned by the ministry of education for kindergarten classes is weak.

3- lack of interest in applying psychological and intellectual acceptance tests on children applying for enrollment in kindergarten classes.

4- the indoor and out door space provided in kindergarten classes disables children's physical activity.

5- there is a weakness in the continuous and comprehensive evaluation in kindergarten classes.

6- limited community participation in financial support for kindergarten classes.

7- lack of parent's understanding of the developmental requirements of the kindergarten child.

8- a need for more teachers of physical and musical education in kindergarten classes.

9- bad geographical distribution of kindergarten classes as they are located far from the population areas .a problem facing a lot of regions in fayoum.

10- limited co- operation between the planning discipline (administration and supervision) and the executive one (headmaster and teacher)

11- teachers and supervisors working in kindergarten classes are some times not educationally well qualified.

12- slow performance of the educational administration as for providing kindergarten classes with the books and teaching aids they need.

13- the physical environment in kindergarten classes is not suitable for the nature of the activities and curriculum appropriate for that stage.

14- ministry of education decisions and bulletins give more emphasis to the administration sides at the expense of the educational sides .

For overcoming these problems , the researcher introduce a suggested vision that is appropriate matches the human and materialistic capabilities available

for developing kindergarten classes and achieving their goals .this suggested vision includes dimensions that are : aims of kindergarten – kindergarten teacher – building and equipments – administration – financing – supervision and guidance – co- ordination between kindergarten classes and home.