



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PREPARING SENIOR AND PREPARATORY GROUP CHILDREN FOR SCHOOL BASED ON MEDIA EDUCATION

Abdusamatova Nargiza

Associate Professor at Namangan State Pedagogical Institute, Uzbekistan

Abstract

This thesis explores the integration of media education into preschool curricula for senior and preparatory group children, examining the influence of media-based activities on their cognitive, social, and emotional readiness for school. Through the application of various instructional strategies and digital resources, media education allows children to cultivate critical thinking skills, digital literacy, and collaborative problem-solving abilities. The research identifies the specific benefits and challenges involved in adopting media-based education for preschoolers, highlighting how media literacy can be incrementally incorporated to foster an inclusive and effective learning environment. The findings suggest that media education can significantly enhance school readiness by promoting the acquisition of foundational literacy skills, critical observation, creativity, and respectful interaction with peers.

KEYWORDS

Media education, preschool children, school readiness, senior group, preparatory group, digital literacy, critical thinking.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the increasing role of digital technologies and media in everyday life has led educational stakeholders to examine how these resources can be harnessed to improve the learning experiences of young children. Preschool settings have become an essential context for the development of children's cognitive, emotional, and social competencies, forming the basis for a successful transition to formal schooling. Senior and preparatory groups in particular have consistently been identified as critical stages for fostering children's readiness skills, such as linguistic abilities, emergent numeracy, self-regulation, and social interaction.

Media education—the systematic and purposeful use of media resources, including audiovisual materials, interactive tools, and digital applications—presents an opportunity to expand children's educational horizons while promoting critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Although media devices have long been associated with leisure and entertainment, there is a growing recognition of the potential for these tools to be integrated into the preschool curriculum. Educators and policymakers thus face the task of designing curricula that balance traditional methods with novel, media-driven approaches.

An essential consideration in the design of media education at the preschool level is the alignment of learning experiences with developmental readiness. Not all technological tools or programs are equally suitable for young learners, given their emerging cognitive capacities and the need for structured, adult-mediated activities. Additionally, the topic of screen time and its impact on health and well-being remains a nuanced debate, requiring the careful selection and

moderation of media exposure. Nonetheless, when implemented effectively, media education can provide a scaffold for children to build essential skills for school success, including the development of phonological awareness, an understanding of narrative structures, and a capacity for collaborative learning.

This thesis investigates the role of media education in preparing senior and preparatory group children for school. It aims to assess the effectiveness of media-based activities in fostering cognitive, social, and emotional readiness, and to identify the pedagogical strategies and instructional designs most conducive to achieving these objectives.

METHODS

A mixed-methods approach was employed to investigate how media education could facilitate school readiness for children in senior and preparatory groups. First, a qualitative component involved structured observations of children's engagement with media-based activities in selected preschool institutions that had incorporated digital tools, interactive storyboards, and educational applications into their lesson plans. Trained observers recorded the degree of interaction among children, their levels of motivation, and the extent to which they demonstrated emerging media literacy skills.

Second, focus groups were conducted with preschool teachers and administrators who had introduced media education in their classrooms. These discussions centered on strategies used to integrate media in daily routines, adapt it to various learning styles, and manage possible difficulties such as children's overreliance on screens or lack of adult supervision. Participants also reflected on the professional development activities that supported their confidence and expertise in using digital tools.

Finally, quantitative data were gathered through baseline and post-intervention assessments administered to children. These assessments measured foundational literacy and numeracy skills, the ability to follow instructions, and socio-emotional competencies (such as sharing and collaborating on tasks). The assessments allowed for measuring changes in school readiness after a four-month period of structured media education sessions.

RESULTS

The observational data indicated that when preschool educators mindfully integrated digital activities, children displayed higher engagement and motivation to learn. Interactive storybooks and visual presentations piqued the interest of senior and preparatory group children, helping them better grasp narrative structure, vocabulary, and sequencing. Additionally, the use of simple, age-appropriate problem-solving applications appeared to strengthen children's emergent numeracy and logical reasoning skills. Children who participated in these well-structured media interventions showed notable improvements in key readiness indicators such as letter recognition, story comprehension, and the ability to collaborate with peers.

Focus group interviews with teachers highlighted several best practices, including the necessity of limiting screen time, pre-selecting content that aligns with curricular objectives, and encouraging children to work in pairs or small groups on digital tasks. Teachers reported enhanced engagement when the digital activities were tied to thematic units or hands-on experiences. For example, lessons about animals and nature were reinforced through short



educational videos or multimedia quizzes, prompting lively discussions and deeper understanding.

The quantitative data confirmed that children who experienced consistent and thoughtfully structured media-based activities exhibited measurable gains in foundational learning areas. While variations emerged based on children's initial skill levels, the data suggested that, on average, these preschoolers not only demonstrated improved literacy and numeracy but also displayed enhanced social and emotional competencies. Teachers noted increased collaboration among children, who often guided each other in navigating digital resources. Observers reported that this mutual support contributed to a positive classroom climate.

The results underline the value of media education as a resource for strengthening school readiness among senior and preparatory group children. Contrary to concerns that media usage might merely distract or overstimulate young learners, the findings suggest that carefully designed activities, moderate screen time, and active adult facilitation can yield meaningful gains in the cognitive, social, and emotional domains. Furthermore, media education can support equal access to learning opportunities, particularly if teachers adopt inclusive strategies and select content that resonates with children's diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Nonetheless, challenges remain in fully implementing media education in preschool settings. The integration of digital tools often depends on the availability of technological infrastructure and the professional development of educators. Some educators may require training in media literacy themselves, including skills to evaluate digital materials and to navigate potential risks, such as inappropriate content. Additionally, the use of technology must be balanced with hands-on, sensory-based experiences essential to holistic child development. Children benefit most when traditional activities, such as imaginative play, reading physical books, and engaging in outdoor exploration, are combined with interactive media elements.

Overall, the research suggests that media education, when thoughtfully applied in preschool settings, can facilitate children's readiness for the academic and social demands of formal schooling. By focusing on digital literacy, creativity, and collaboration, educators can help children develop the skills required to thrive in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

CONCLUSION

Media education offers a productive avenue for enhancing the school readiness of senior and preparatory group children. The strategic use of interactive storybooks, educational applications, and audiovisual content, coupled with purposeful teacher guidance, can significantly boost children's language, numeracy, and social-emotional competencies. These outcomes highlight the importance of expanding educator training in media literacy and establishing well-defined, developmentally appropriate guidelines for digital integration. Future research may benefit from longitudinal studies that trace the long-term impact of preschool media education on academic performance and socio-emotional well-being in primary school.

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