

**The Relation between the Day-Care
Geographical Socio-Economic Status and
Parents' Demographic Variables, to the Day-
Care's Quality**

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Abstract

During the last decades there has been an increase in the number of children being sent to day-care centers. Previous studies have found relations between the day-care's quality and the child's emotional and cognitive development and behavior as well. In addition, positive relations have been found between the family's socio-economic status and the child's emotional and cognitive development, but the relation between the day-care geographical area's socio-economic status and the day-care's quality has never been tested while the structural features were similar, which makes this work innovative.

Thirty-seven day-care centers located in the Center of Israel have been taken as a convenience sample and tested. The variables which were used in order to test the day-care's quality have been measured by the ITERS-R. The values of the variables which represented the socio-economic status of the area in which the day-care was located and the parents' demographic variables have been taken from the central bureau of statistics (2012). Relations between the area's socio-economic status, parents' demographic variables and the day-care's quality have been tested by using regression.

Socio-economic factors, and most notably monthly average income for an average person have been found associated with the quality of the day-care in the following areas: Personal care routines, Activities, Interaction and Total ITERS-R (general quality mean). Moreover, differences have been found within the quality variables even after the socio-economic variables have been controlled: Space and Furnishings was significantly higher than Personal care routines, Activities, Program structure and Parents and staff, while the variable personal care routine was significantly lower than the other variables.

This work highlights a problematic reality in the Israeli public day-care centers, and its results show that the area's and parents' socio-economic status have an effect on the day-care centers' quality, although those centers are being run according to the same standards and their quality is assumed to be similar. Thus, it's essential to invest more resources in day-care centers which are situated in lower socio-economic status areas and make sure that babies and toddlers will receive high-quality treatment regardless of their families' socio-economic status.