

Child outcome measures in the study of child care quality ^[1]

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Abstract:

This article assesses whether there are methodological problems with child outcome measures that may contribute to the small associations between child care quality and child outcomes found in the literature. Outcome measures used in 65 studies of child care quality published between 1979 and December 2005 were examined, taking the previous review by Vandell and Wolfe (2000) as the starting point. Serious methodological problems were not pervasive for child outcome measures. However, methodological concerns were most prevalent among measures of socioemotional development. Furthermore, psychometric information on outcome measures was often missing from published reports, and health outcomes and approaches to learning were infrequently studied. Future research should address alignment issues between aspects of quality and the specific child outcomes chosen for study.

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