

The Relationship between Early Care & Education Quality Initiatives and Regulatory Compliance: RIKIllc Technical Research Note #67

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Over the past couple of decades there has been many early care and education initiatives, such as Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), Professional Development, Training, Technical Assistance, Accreditation, and Pre-K programs to just name a few. Validation and evaluation studies have begun to appear in the research literature, but in these studies there has been few empirical demonstrations of the relationship between these various quality initiatives and their impact on regulatory compliance or a comparison to their respective regulatory compliance. This brief technical research note will provide examples of these comparisons taken from the Early Childhood Program Quality Improvement and Indicator Model (ECPQI2M) Data Base maintained at the Research Institute for Key Indicators (RIKIllc).

I have written about this back in 2014 (Fiene, 2014) in how the various quality initiatives were having a positive impact on the early care and education delivery system but at that point regulatory compliance data were not available. Today, in 2019, with many changes and developments in state data systems, this is no longer the case. Now it is possible to explore the relationships between data from the various quality initiatives and licensing. Several states in multiple service delivery systems have provided replicable findings in which I feel comfortable reporting out about the relationships across the data systems.

What we now know is that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between regulatory compliance and moving up the QRIS Quality Levels. In other words, facilities have higher compliance in the higher QRIS Quality Levels and lower compliance in the lower QRIS Levels or if they do not participate in their state's respective QRIS ($F = 5.047 - 8.694$; $p < .0001$).

Other quality initiatives, such as being accredited, shows higher compliance with licensing rules than those facilities that are not accredited ($t = 2.799 - 3.853$; $p < .005 - .0001$).

This is a very important result clearly demonstrating the positive relationship between regulatory compliance and quality initiatives. I have some additional state data sets that I will add to the ECPQI2M data base and will continue to analyze these relationships.

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