

Poster Session 2

Room RHMZ02

Professional practice / ECEC policy / Children's learning needs and special education

One form of cross-occupation collaboration in Japanese kindergartens: The role and consciousness of school bus drivers

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Keywords

School bus for kindergarten, Bus drivers as ECCE staff, Cross-occupation collaboration

Abstract

Early childhood care and education (ECCE) is a comprehensive practice closely related to daily life, medical care, local traditions, and culture. Thus, many professionals besides teachers, such as cooks, counsellors, and artists, are routinely involved in ECCE facilities. To improve and understand their work, it is essential to understand their roles and consciousness and for them to cooperate with teachers.

This study focused on Japanese kindergarten school bus drivers to clarify their specialty and consciousness. Japan is more active in introducing school buses in kindergartens than other countries are (MEXT, 2008), and many children in urban and suburban areas ride buses. Many Japanese kindergarten buses are independently operated by private kindergartens; thus, drivers are staff contracted by each kindergarten and work in cooperation with teachers to serve children and parents. Further, it is common for teachers to ride the bus as an attendant and carry out pick-up work in cooperation with drivers. By focusing on bus drivers, it is possible to understand a part of the cross-occupational cooperation in Japanese ECCE practices, and to gain knowledge that may be useful in other countries that operate school buses.

With the cooperation of two private kindergartens in the Kansai region, we interviewed two full-time drivers hired by each facility. They have been working for more than 20 years and are among the most senior staff in each school. Usually, they drive a total of six routes, both outbound and inbound, and are responsible for vehicle maintenance; some serve as facility janitors as well. The interviews asked about their awareness of their work, their relationships with children and parents, and how they work with teachers. All interviews' contents were recorded, transcribed, and analysed using the SCAT qualitative data analysis method (Otani, 2007).

Following the analysis, the following items concerning the role and consciousness of the bus driver were clarified. 1) Bus drivers pay close attention to safe driving and try to drive according to the characteristics of young children. They also pay attention to efficient and gentle driving to win local approval for the operation of the bus. 2) They feel challenged to deepen their relationships with the children and watch their growth. Bus drivers are among the few staff members who stay involved with the same children from admission through graduation; therefore, they have a more continuous and long-term perspective than teachers. 3) Bus drivers are familiar with the kindergarten's traditions and events and back up young teachers on every occasion. 4) Veteran bus drivers are parents' service experts and coaches who teach manners and methodologies to young teachers. However, they are also good elders who can easily advise young teachers because there is no particular tension between them and the teacher group. 5) They take pride in being responsible for the beginning and end of the children's kindergarten day.

A skilled bus driver can be a “living entrance” for a kindergarten. Leveraging their perspectives and abilities can improve teacher busyness and help connect the kindergarten with the community.

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Comparative Studies of Arguments over Sharing Information on Quality of Early Childhood Education and Care: Focusing on Early Childhood Education Journals

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Keywords

Information on ECEC quality, quality review, quality improvement

Abstract

Rationale for the study

OECD (2015) indicates that countries evaluate the quality of ECEC settings and share the results to support parental informed choice. This expects quality improvement through parental choice and competition promoted by this. However, literature on children's poverty and inequality (e.g., Gambaro et al. (2014)) indicates that family socioeconomic backgrounds affect their choice. Therefore, it suggests that sharing monitoring results in the form of rating can widen disparity in access to quality ECEC.

Purpose(s) and research question(s) of the study

The purpose of the study is to review arguments over the impacts of sharing information on quality on ECEC settings and children attending them. Eventually, it argues the possibility of ensuring the quality of children's experiences in ECEC settings.

Brief description

The literature review of articles in three academic journals published by PECERA, EECERA, and NAEYC from 1990 to 2019 examined how research has argued sharing information about ECEC quality.

Summary

All the journals published articles about the need to share monitoring results of ECEC settings and support parental choices, although they also published articles referring to the limits of parental informed choices.

Several articles in the journal of NAEYC indicated that sharing user-friendly monitoring results can support parental choices, although some articles of EECERA suggested that sharing information can promote parents' understanding of and involvement in ECEC settings. In EECERA, it was also expected to support practitioners' work for quality improvement. Moreover, strengths of a unified form of information or data were raised. For example, in EECERA, it was expected to share information on the child outcome assessment between settings regardless of ECEC type. Collecting data on ECEC quality and tracking families' access to quality settings were expected in NAEYC.

The lack of monitoring results of some types of ECEC settings and settings for 0-2 years-old children and the reliability of rating were concerns in NAEYC. Widening gaps in quality between areas and availability between parents were also concerns. In EECERA, the form of rating was criticized because it can have negative impacts on ECEC settings, the teachers, and the children.

The difference in the arguments over the form of rating between NAEYC and EECERA was whether there were concerns about the negative impacts on ECEC settings that are evaluated. In Japanese guidelines and reports on quality review, quality improvement is expected through stakeholders' involvement, not parental choice and competition. Building support systems for quality improvement in settings is also required. So, this research suggests that it is necessary to consider how to support quality improvement in ECEC settings based on the monitoring results as well as how to share them.

However, these results were mainly from American and British research which have different contexts from Asia. Compared with EECERA and NAEYC, arguments about quality review and information disclosure were not evident a lot in PECERA Journal. This suggests the need to develop the arguments over sharing information on quality within the Asian contexts by examining attempts in Asian countries such as New Zealand and Singapore that have been working on the quality review and sharing the results.

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Exploring the direction of early childhood education in the age of artificial intelligence: Delphi analysis of a group of experts

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Keywords

AI (artificial intelligence), early childhood education, delphi survey

Abstract

The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea recently announced, 'The Direction of Education Policy and Core Tasks in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: The Path that Korea's Future Education should take' (Yeon-Hee Koo, Ji-Yung Kwon, Tun-Cheol Nam & Eun-seo Lee, 2020). According to this announcement, Artificial Intelligence (AI) will completely change education, and AI is already being used in a variety of ways in the field of education. Intelligent technology is becoming the intrinsic driving force for educational change (Dongming, Wanjing, Shuang & Shuying, 2020). Education plays a role in nurturing talents required to effectively cope with the future society and leading changes in the future society in a desirable direction (Nam Ki, & Park, 2017). In particular, the field of early childhood education plays a very important role in nurturing human resources for the future society as a basic area where education begins. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the direction of early childhood education for fostering future human resources in the age of artificial intelligence.

In this study, the Delphi survey was conducted on 14 experts engaged in related fields such as computer science, educational engineering, and early childhood education. The study was conducted in a paper-type standard Delphi survey and was conducted in a total of 3 rounds. The degree of consensus was judged based on the analysis of the degree of consensus and convergence of the Delphi 3rd survey results.

As a result of the study, the opinions of experts on the direction of early childhood education in the age of AI are as follows. First, they agreed with concerns about the necessity of AI education from infancy, data collection and diffusion sharing, knowledge acquisition and utilization abilities due to social change, and negative impacts on humans due to misuse. Second, they agreed on the opinion that education in the age of AI is not being implemented due to lack of awareness and lack of instructional and learning manuals. Third, experts agreed that education using storytelling technology Speech Interpretation and Recognition Interface (SIRI) is possible for young children. In addition, they were agreed that initial teacher education, such as basic education for understanding the concept of AI, how to use AI, and education in practical and ethical aspects, and AI education suitable for early childhood development, would be possible. Fourth, they were in a high level of agreement on the opinion that AI education through play should be realized, and physical and economic support for AI education is required.

The conclusions of this study are as follows. First, the necessity and possibility of AI education in early childhood education was confirmed. Second, the basic contents of early childhood education and initial teacher education programs for AI education were explored. Third, the contents of each role and support required in the policy, social, academic, and educational field were derived.

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Meta-analysis of the Effects of Traditional Play on Young Children's Development

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Keywords

Traditional Play, Young Children's Development, Meta-analysis

Abstract

This study's aim was to assess the effects of traditional play on young children's development through undertaking a meta-analysis in order to explore the moderators that affect the development of children. Thirty-seven studies were selected from doctoral dissertations and academic papers published in Korea from 2002 to 2019.

The results of the study were as follows. First, the overall average effect size with a random effect model was 1.32, which can be interpreted as large effect size according to Cohen's effect size analysis criteria. Second, traditional play showed the largest effect size was on physical development, followed by emotional development, social development, and cognitive development. Third, as moderators of the effect of traditional play on young children's development, the treatment time and frequency were significant. Based on these results, future research and implications for program execution have been discussed.

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A study on inclusive childcare for 5-year-old children in South Korea

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Keywords

South Korea, Inclusive Child Care, 5-year-old

Abstract

In South Korea, “Inclusive Childcare Centers” are the facilities designated by districts, cities, and the country, where at least three or more pre-school children with disabilities are nursed (South Korea’s Ministry of Health and Welfare, 2021).

An (2018) points out that there are some specific issues in inclusive childcare associated with age, in which infants tend to imitate the behaviour of disabled children and preschoolers tend to judge a person by one’s appearance and to have prejudice against disabled children. Moreover, preschoolers are attracted to those who are similar to themselves, such as the behaviour, the gender and the age range, when choosing their playmates (Dunn, Cutting & Fischer, 2002). Therefore, it is difficult for preschoolers to select a disabled child as their playmate who possesses a different pace in development in inclusive childcare. This is one of the main factors that make childcare teachers find undertaking inclusive childcare challenging.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship and interaction between preschoolers (5-year-olds) and children with disabilities, and preschoolers’ attitude toward children with disabilities. A survey with 25 teachers with experience in inclusive childcare; an interview with a teacher selected from the participants; and three weeks observation in 5-year-old inclusive childcare classes were conducted. All data was collected in the period of May, 2019.

As a result of the survey on “the age considered appropriate for starting inclusive childcare”, the most frequent response was “three years old” (40%), followed by “four years old” (32%), “two years old” (24%) and “one year old” (4%). None of the participants selected “zero” nor “five years old”, and one of the participants responded that the starting age of inclusive childcare differs depending on the degree of disability. Participants responded that inclusive childcare from the age of one to four was appropriate and the result found that they tend to find it difficult to integrate childcare from the age of zero and five.

Also, the results of interviews with childcare teachers show that the expertise of childcare teachers is more essential than the level of development, age, and type and degree of disability of children in managing inclusive childcare classes. In the inclusive class of 5-year-olds, frequent interactions between autistic children and non-disabled children were observed. Appropriate interventions by teachers seemed to have a positive effect on the interactions between non-disabled children and children with disabilities. Furthermore, modelling by teachers showing how a non-disabled person would treat one with disability was important.

The research concludes that inclusive childcare for 5-year-old children, which teachers consider difficult, could be overcome by the instruction of professional childcare teachers.

As inclusive childcare draws more attention, more specialized childcare teachers are sought and research on various cases of inclusive childcare can contribute to the qualitative development of inclusive childcare. In addition, further examination of the issues of inclusive childcare based on the children’s developmental stage, appropriate teaching methods and specialties of childcare educators is needed in the future.

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Math Talk in the Preschool Classroom

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Abstract

Math Talk can improve your understanding of math concepts by giving you the opportunity to engage in math activities in a classroom setting, and high-quality mathematical interactions help you break the cycle of low math achievement. In a study observing the everyday life of the toddler classroom, the difference in content and amount of Math Talk experienced by toddlers was large and limited to the number and space of specific math content. Math is not enough to experience in play, so teachers need to create an atmosphere and environment in which Math Talk can happen. This study aims to provide practical basic data on early childhood mathematics education methods through the process of investigating the content and level of Math Talk appearing in math activities planned by teachers in the early childhood classroom.

1. What is the content and level of the math talk in the preschool classroom that appears in the math activity?
2. What is the difference between the content and level of Math Talk according to the nursery class?

The content of the teachers' Math Talk, which appeared in mathematics activities collected through observation, were analyzed in five categories: numbers and operations, space and shapes, measurement, pattern, and data organizing as proposed by NAEYC and NCTM (2002). For the analysis of the level of Math Talk, Stein's (2007) 'Levels of Discourse in a Mathematics Classroom' was used, and the content of Math Talk and the cause of the level difference were analyzed qualitatively.

As a result of the analysis, teachers' Math Talk was twice as high as that of young children, and Math Talk according to math activity was in the order of measurement, pattern, space and shapes activity. The content of Math Talk is mostly related to base Counting and Cardinality, and appears in the order of space & shapes, measurement, pattern, and data organization. In Math Talk, level 0 was 71.5%, level 1 was 22.9%, level 2 was 5.6%, and level 3 was not. The difference between the content and level of Math Talk in the preschool classroom was different depending on the content of the math activity, the age of the toddler, and the teacher's mathematical literacy and teaching ability. Through this study, Math Talk can be actively progressed as a math-related activity in preschool classrooms, but teachers' lack of knowledge about math education and low math efficacy are factors that degrade the quantity and quality of Math Talk. Also, due to the activities planned by the teacher, it is possible to maintain a low level of Math Talk with a teacher-led activity, which could be child-led math as an activity that children may be interested in.. It can also be seen that the toddler needs to provide enough time to think.

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Issues of Infant Education for Ainu People under the Ainu New Law

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Keywords

Ainu people, indigenous people, education

Abstract

Rationale for the study

Japan has long been considered a single-ethnic nation. However, even before Japan became a unified nation, the Ainu people, an indigenous people, lived from the eastern part of Japan to the north, as well as in Sakhalin and the Chishima Islands. From around the 8th century, it was advanced by the Yamato Court, and at the time of the Meiji government, it entered the administration of Japan. From that time on, the Ainu people were deprived of language and culture by the Meiji government and came under the Japanese educational administration.

In 2019, a new Ainu law was enacted, officially designating the Ainu people as "indigenous peoples" of Japan. I would like to think about how this law will change the lives of the Ainu people.

Purpose(s) and research question(s) of the study

With the enactment of the New Ainu Law, the Ainu people were established as the indigenous peoples of Japan, and the protection and promotion of Ainu culture was established. Some cultures have languages, customs, and events. For these things, school education in Japan uses curriculums and textbooks supervised by the central government. In addition, language, customs, and traditional events have been deprived of discrimination for more than 100 years, and the purpose of this project is to clarify the challenges of how to rebuild and promote Ainu language and culture in such an environment.

Brief description

The research will be conducted through interviews based on the following materials.

- (1) Interpretation of the law
- (2) Historical materials of the museum
- (3) Interviews with educational sites
- (4) Interviews with educational administration

Summary

It did not last long in the investigation done before the Ainu new law was approved, and there was a record of possible problems include:

- (1) Due to the strictness of school education in Japan, it is difficult to teach anything other than the national curriculum.
- (2) In the Japanese school system, teaching something other than the national curriculum is not a plus for university entrance examinations.
- (3) There is a risk of discrimination
- (4) There are few people who can teach Ainu culture.

From these results, I think that the following will be issues.

- (1) Building a loose national curriculum

- (2) Various university entrance examinations
- (3) Human resource development that can pass on Ainu culture