

Concurrent paper session 3

Room 1 ECEC pedagogy

Sustained shared thinking and other learning focused teacher-child interactions: Emerging insights from research

Author / Presenter information

Tara McLaughlin, Senior Lecturer, t.w.mclaughlin@massey.ac.nz, New Zealand, Massey University

Sue Cherrington, Associate Professor, sue.cherrington@vuw.ac.nz, New Zealand, Victoria University of Wellington

Claire McLachlan, Professor, c.mclachlan@federation.edu.au, Australia, Federation University

Karyn Aspden, Senior Lecturer, K.M.Aspden@massey.ac.nz, New Zealand, Massey University

Lynda Hunt, Teacher-Researcher, Lynda.Hunt@ruahinekindergartens.org.nz, New Zealand, Ruahine Kindergarten Association

Keywords

Sustained Shared Thinking, Intentional teaching, Teacher-Child Interactions

Abstract

Sustained shared thinking (SST) has been identified by research as a critical component of high-quality ECE in order to support children's learning (Hedges & Cooper, 2014; Meade et al., 2012; Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002). SST involves teachers engaging with children in play, working together in back and forth conversations that provide opportunities to discuss, explore, and think about everyday experiences, problems or challenges in an inquisitive and extended way. Yet, research has also shown low rates of shared and sustained conversations in early learning settings (McLaughlin et al., 2017; Meade et al., 2012; Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002).

The Data, Knowledge, Action Teaching and Learning Research Initiative (TLRI) project focuses on exploring sustained shared thinking using a range of innovative data tools and systems. The project is a partnership among a multi-university research team and Ruahine Kindergarten Association using an inquiry model of investigation. Working closely with two kindergarten teams, the project involves teams identifying areas of practice associated with sustained shared thinking and setting teacher practice action plans to further practice implementation. Teams are provided with ongoing data about children's learning experiences, teacher-child interactions, and teacher practice to support their implementation. The research has been guided by the premise that effective data can lead to knowledge which can lead to action for improved child outcomes (cf. Earl & Timperley, 2008; Gunmer & Mandinach, 2015).

At the heart of this research is a focus on quality teacher-child interactions to support children's learning. In this presentation we will share emerging insights from our research on sustained shared thinking and other learning focused teacher-child interactions. Guided by the Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Well-being Scale (SSTEWS; Siraj, Kingston, & Melhuish, 2015), teachers are currently selecting and trying a range of ways to set the occasion for and extend learning-focused interactions including the use of story book reading, introducing elements of surprise and exploration, taking advantage of everyday opportunities for problem-solving and exploration, or setting up opportunities for deeper and semi-structured investigations. Across these different provocations to encourage learning focused teacher-child interactions, teachers are using a range of teaching strategies to engage with children in meaningful and authentic ways. It is important to

highlight that engagement in SST is not a specific strategy or technique that teachers can easily apply; rather it consists of competencies, nuanced skills, and knowledge – relational, pedagogical, and curricular – that teachers use in moment-to-moment decisions in everyday interactions (Meade et al., 2013; Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002). With this in mind, this session will focus on highlighting the range of learning focused teacher-child interactions we have observed and our emerging understanding of the conditions that support these to extend into sustained shared thinking interactions.

Opening doors. Guiding teachers to intentionally facilitate science for young children

Author / Presenter information

Sola Freeman, Sola.freeman@vuw.ac.nz, New Zealand, Victoria University of Wellington

Keywords

Science. Early childhood education. Intentional teaching. Provocations.

Abstract

Research has acknowledged the limited range of scientific opportunities for young children in New Zealand early childhood education (ECE) services. Reasons for this have been identified as a lack of confidence by ECE teachers, their narrow understanding of science, and their pedagogical approaches to teaching. Additionally, a complex and non-prescriptive curriculum and the dominance of developmental theories in ECE has resulted in science learning via osmosis through a process of a hands-off play-based philosophy of practice. Many have argued for pedagogical approaches that can accommodate scientific learning within a play based sociocultural-historical setting (e.g., Broström, 2015; Fler & Pramling, 2015; Kumar & Whyte, 2018), and that science education research in ECE is an area deserving attention, specifically the identification of solutions to the challenges ECE teachers face supporting young children's scientific learning (Fler & Robbins, 2003).

This research investigated what resources and practices influence scientific experiences for children in New Zealand (NZ) ECE centres? The study involved two phases: a national survey and collaborative action research (CAR) with teaching teams in six centres. The researcher took on the role of a critical friend through the CAR process, guiding teachers to critically examine their practice and their centre programme. Action plans were achieved collaboratively within each teaching team. Data was collected over 12 weeks in each centre through focus groups, reflective journals, observations, field notes, and through two research hui with participating teachers from all centres.

The researcher worked alongside teachers as they explored how they fostered science within their centre's context. The research sought to capture the changes teachers made to their practice, their environments, and how they used resources and curriculum documents to enable more scientific experiences. Use of a sociocultural theoretical approach and a critical lens to view the lived experiences of teachers and children in their own centres allowed for an authentic investigation into science in NZ ECE.

The findings highlighted the importance of the teachers' role in recognising and fostering children's scientific experiences. The shift in teachers' pedagogical practices, their adjustments to centre environments, and their role in recognising and responding to children's interests enabled science in a variety of ECE settings. Through their active participation in supporting and extending children's science interests with intentional teaching practices and provocations, teachers enabled rich and authentic scientific interactions with children.

Seeking a change in practice through professional learning and being empowered in CAR, brought about ownership of the teachers' goals and action plans, and the eventual shifts in their pedagogy of practice. Furthermore, the shift towards using intentional teaching practices, provocations, and opening doors to knowledge, validated and foregrounded the importance of the teachers' role and emphasised their value in noticing, recognising, and responding to children's scientific interests in meaningful ways.

References

- Broström, S. (2015). Science in early childhood education. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, 4(2(1), 107-124. https://doi.org/10.15640/jehd.v4n2_1a12
- Fleer, M., & Pramling, N. (2015). *A cultural-historical study of children learning science. Foregrounding affective imagination in play-based settings*. Springer. <https://doi.org/http://helicon.vuw.ac.nz/login?url=http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9370-4>
- Fleer, M., & Robbins, J. (2003). "Hit and run research" with "hit and miss" results in early childhood science education. *Research in Science Education*, 33, 405-431.
- Kumar, K., & Whyte, M. (2018). Interactive science in a sociocultural environment in early childhood. *He Kupu The Word*, 5(3), 20-27. <https://www.hekupu.ac.nz/sites/default/files/2018-05/04%20Kumar%20and%20Whyte.pdf>

Teachers' interests as professional knowledge in curriculum and pedagogy

Author / Presenter information

Helen Hedges, Professor, h.hedges@auckland.ac.nz, New Zealand, University of Auckland

Keywords

Children's interests; teachers' interests; professional knowledge

Abstract

A strong historical commitment to child-centred philosophies exists in early childhood education (ECE). The notion of building curriculum on children's interests has been one widely shared interpretation of child-centred approaches (Ang, 2016) itemised in some international curricula documents. In Aotearoa-New Zealand (NZ), the context of the studies drawn on in this paper, the early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017), specifies children's interests as one of four key sources of curriculum alongside children's strengths, abilities and needs. Dominant interpretations of child-centredness in early childhood education have likely left the field uncertain as to the contribution teachers' interests and related knowledge might make to curricular provision and children's learning. Allegiance to child-centredness and developmental psychology has likely meant teachers subjugated their own interests within their pedagogical decision making. Teacher interests make only a brief appearance in the professional and academic literature (Alati, 2005; Manning & Loveridge, 2010; Peiser & Jones, 2013). In this paper I argue that teachers might draw on, acknowledge and document their personal interests and related professional knowledge more overtly in ECE curriculum and pedagogy. The paper draws on examples of teacher interests to support this argument from four qualitative, interpretivist studies undertaken in Auckland, New Zealand (Hedges & Cooper, 2016; Hedges, Cullen & Jordan, 2011; Jones, Hedges & Lovatt, 2014; Podmore, Hedges, Harvey & Keegan, 2016). The studies were undertaken as partnerships between teachers and researchers. Three explored teachers' identification of, and responses to, children's interests as a source of curriculum. A range of methods were used across the studies such as interviews, focus groups, field notes, video footage of everyday teaching and learning, and collaborative forms of thematic data analysis. Selected findings highlight ways that alongside children's interests teachers' interests were also vital and central in curriculum and pedagogy. The interests, knowledge and interactions of teachers illustrate rich possibilities for engagement yet were largely undocumented in assessment, planning or evaluation practices. These new insights suggest that while children remain foregrounded in curricular considerations teachers can be viewed as instigators, inspirers, responders, and extenders of children's interests, who use their own interests and related knowledge to do so. The findings also

suggest that while ECE can remain focused on children and their learning, that teachers' interests ought to be repositioned in curriculum and pedagogy, a repositioning acknowledged in documentation that results from these interactions. I call for attention to teacher interests as an important form of personal and professional knowledge within teacher professional knowledge.

References

- Alati, S. (2005). What about our passions as teachers? Incorporating individual interests in emergent curricula. *Young Children*, 60(6), 86-89.
- Ang, L. (2016). Rethinking child-centred education. In L. Hayward, J. Pandya & D. Wyse (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment* (pp. 141-152). London: Sage Publications.
- Hedges, H., & Cooper, M. (2016). Inquiring minds: Theorizing children's interests. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 48(3), 303–322. DOI: 10.1080/00220272.2015.1109711
- Hedges, H., Cullen, J. & Jordan, B. (2011). Early years curriculum: Funds of knowledge as a conceptual framework for children's interests. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 43(2), 185-205. DOI: [10.1080/00220272.2010.511275](https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2010.511275)
- Jones, S., Hedges, H., & Lovatt, D. (2014). The Treehouse Project: Capitalising on a teacher's funds of knowledge. In H. Hedges & V. Podmore (Eds.), *Early Childhood Education: Pedagogy, Professionalism, and Philosophy* (pp. 43–57). Auckland: Edify.
- Manning, S., & Loveridge, J. (2010). Me too! Teachers' interests as a curriculum resource. *Early Education*, 46, 10-13.
- Ministry of Education. (2017). *Te Whāriki. He whāriki matauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Peiser, G., & Jones, M. (2014). The influence of teachers' interests, personalities and life experiences in intercultural languages teaching. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 20(3), 375-390. doi:10.1080/13540602.2013.848525
- Podmore, V., Hedges, H., Keegan, P., & Harvey, N. (Eds.). (2016). *Teachers voyaging in plurilingual seas: Children learning in more than one language*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Room 2

Teacher professional learning

Navigating initial teacher education: Early childhood student teacher experiences of hauora and wellbeing during their study

Author/presenter information

Andrew Gibbons, agibbons@aut.ac.nz, New Zealand, Auckland University of Technology

Rainie Yu, New Zealand, Auckland University of Technology

Rebecca Hopkins, New Zealand, (Auckland University of Technology)

Catherine Powell, New Zealand, Healthy Families Waitakare

Pauline Bishop, New Zealand, Unitec Ltd

Yo Heta-Lensen, New Zealand, Unitec Ltd

Mary-Liz Broadley, New Zealand, Open Polytechnic

Kiri Gould, New Zealand, The University of Auckland

Jacoba Matapo, New Zealand, The University of Auckland

Justine O'Hara-Gregan, New Zealand, The University of Auckland

Keywords

Hauora, wellbeing, initial teacher education

Abstract

The recently published early learning action plan in Aotearoa New Zealand clearly identifies national and international concerns regarding early childhood teacher working conditions that impact on goals for children's care and education before they reach school age (Ministry of Education, 2019). A recognition of the impact of working conditions for child experiences and outcomes is consistent with the holistic ecological approach to early childhood curriculum emphasised in *Te Whāriki*. The national curriculum states: "The wellbeing of each child is interdependent with the wellbeing of their kaiako" (Ministry of Education, 2017, p. 20). Research of working conditions in early childhood education and care settings highlights specific concerns regarding the wellbeing of teachers (Faulkner, Gerstenblatt, Lee, Vallejo, & Travis, 2016; Jovanovic, 2013; O'Connor, McGunnigle, Treasure, & Davie, 2014; Thorpe, Ailwood, Brownlee, & Boyd, 2011). The very experience of studying to be an early childhood teacher with an initial teacher education provider can be understood to have an impact on hauora and wellbeing. It follows that the affective experience of initial teacher education impacts the quality of education and care for early childhood centre communities.

Concerns regarding the wellbeing of tertiary students in the 21st century indicate the importance of understanding the emotional and social dimensions of learning (Baik et al., 2018; Crisp et al., 2020; Donovan & Erskine-Shaw, 2020; Jones et al., 2020; Riva et al., 2020), the nature of disciplinary identities and practices (Donovan & Erskine-Shaw, 2020), and the culture and environment of the academic programmes (Baik et al., 2018; Riva et al., 2020). Essentially, student wellbeing is more complex than a pastoral issue to be addressed by counselling support only (Jones et al., 2020). It needs a holistic understanding of the tertiary student journey. For instance, student wellbeing is also impacted by one's pre-existing and emerging identities, experiences and responsibilities (Donovan & Erskine-Shaw, 2020), the way assessments are designed, delivered, perceived and understood (Jones et al., 2020), and the quality of interactions and connections formed with one's peers and teachers (Baik et al., 2018; Crisp et al., 2020; Jones et al., 2020; Riva et al., 2020). Notably, there is a shift away from understanding stress as a result of individual incompetence. Facilitation and support are now centred around enhancing student wellbeing through empowering students with positive attitudes, confidence and resilience (Baik et al., 2018; Donovan & Erskine-Shaw, 2020; Hill et al., 2021).

In the study *Senses of Hauora and Wellbeing in Early Childhood Initial Teacher Education* we are concerned with better understanding the ways in which student teachers navigate their studies, how the navigated journey contributes to professional learning, identity and experience, and how these factors impact on the hauora and wellbeing of student teachers. The study brings together researchers from Healthy Families Waitakere, Auckland University of Technology, Unitec Ltd, The University of Auckland, and Open Polytechnic, with a collective commitment to treasure and nurture student teachers now and in the future.

This presentation reports on data collected during phase one of the research project. Phase one data was collected through an anonymous online survey of early childhood student teachers. The link to the survey was shared with initial teacher education providers around the nation, and on social media sites. Participants were asked to share their experiences of hauora and wellbeing whilst studying, including aspects of support, and of challenges. Initial findings from phase one highlight the significant diversity in, and complexity of, student teacher experiences and perceptions.

We then reflect on initial implications for initial teacher education. These include ideas and opportunities for both the experience and focus of study through incorporating practical, theoretical, political and philosophical exploration of hauora and wellbeing in student teacher communities. We also consider the contribution that a hauora and wellbeing 'lens' offers for initial teacher education.

References

- Baik, C., Larcombe, W., & Brooker, A. (2019). How universities can enhance student mental wellbeing: The student perspective, *Higher Education Research & Development*, 38(4), 674–687. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2019.1576596>
- Crisp, D. A., Rickwood, D., Martin, B., & Byrom, N. (2020). Implementing a peer support program for improving university student wellbeing: The experience of program facilitators. *Australian Journal of Education*, 64(2), 113–126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0004944120910498>
- Donovan, C., & Erskine-Shaw, M. (2020). 'Maybe I can do this. Maybe I should be here': Evaluating an academic literacy, resilience and confidence programme. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 44(3), 326–340. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2018.1541972>
- Faulkner M, Gerstenblatt P, Lee A, Vallejo V, Travis D. (2016). Childcare providers: Work stress and personal well-being. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 14(3), 280–93.
- Hill, J., Healey, R. J., West, H., & Déry, C. (2021). Pedagogic partnership in higher education: Encountering emotion in learning and enhancing student wellbeing. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 45(2), 167–185.
- Jones, E., Priestley, M., Brewster, L., & Wilbraham, S. J., Hughes, G., & Spanner, L. (2020). Student wellbeing and assessment in higher education: The balancing act. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 46(3), 438–450. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2020.1782344>
- Ministry of Education. (2017). *Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō nga mokopuna o Aotearoa/Early childhood curriculum*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.
- O'Connor, D., McGunnigle, C., Treasure, T., & Davie, S. (2014). Teachers who care and carers who educate. Professional status issues and differences in pay and conditions are resulting in a tale of division within our Early Childhood Community. *7th International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation*. <http://doi.org/http://library.iated.org/>
- Riva, E., Freeman, R., Schrock, L., Jelcic, V., Özer, C., & Caleb, R. (2020). Student wellbeing in the teaching and learning environment: A study exploring student and staff perspectives. *Higher Education Studies*, 10(4), 103–115. <https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v10n4p103>
- Thorpe, K., Ailwood, J., Brownlee, J., & Boyd, W. (2011). Who wants to work in child care?: Pre-service early childhood teachers' consideration of work in the childcare sector. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 36(1), 85-94.

Educator-child reminiscing in home-based ECEC: Relationships between reminiscing and children's socio-emotional competencies

Author/presenter information

Amanda Clifford, a.clifford@otago.ac.nz, New Zealand, University of Otago

Dr Elizabeth Schaughency, libby.schaughency@otago.ac.nz, New Zealand, University of Otago

Professor Elaine Reese, elaine.reese@otago.ac.nz, New Zealand, University of Otago

Keywords

Home-based early childhood education and care; Reminiscing; Socio-emotional development

Abstract

Adult-child conversations can provide opportunities for learning. When adults talk about past experiences, they can encourage children to extend their discussion about what happened and how it was experienced. Elaborative and emotionally rich mother-child reminiscing is thought to support children's developing socio-emotional abilities (Salmon & Reese, 2016). However, little is known about educator-child reminiscing occurring in ECEC settings (Neale & Pino-Pasternak, 2017). In Aotearoa New Zealand many children have attended some type of early childhood education and care by age five (Ministry of Education, 2018). Educators' reminiscing style during conversations with their children and the content of these conversations may provide differing learning experiences for young children's developing competencies. Thus, there is a growing need to explore potential benefits of these conversations between children and the other important adults in their lives.

Relative to centre-based early childhood education and care (ECEC), less research has been conducted in home-based ECEC. The purpose of the present study to describe the interactions between home-based educators and children when they talk about past shared events. Second, we looked at associations between children's talk during these conversations and their independently assessed developing socio-emotional competencies.

As part of baseline assessment of a wider study, 25 home-based educators and 40 preschool aged children in their ECEC were asked to discuss one shared event. Educators selected a special experience with the children—like a field-trip to the airport—and were asked to talk about the event as they usually would. Conversations were video recorded and transcribed. The conversations were analysed for features associated with an elaborative reminiscing style and for the presence of emotion (e.g. sad), cognitive (e.g. remember), and evaluative (e.g. favourite) language. Additionally, educators and parents rated children's self-regulation and social skills on the Child Behaviour Rating Scale (CBRS) and children completed a number of socio-emotional measures with a post-graduate student.

Descriptive results showed that when educators were asked to talk about a past shared event some educators talked about several events. These included shared and non-shared events, often making references to the child's home environment or to teach children about concepts related to their reminiscing. Overall, educators were elaborative in observed conversations with children. Many included cognitive and evaluative language, but little emotional language was used. Correlational analyses examined relations between features of children's talk during reminiscing with independently assessed children's socio-emotional competencies. Children who included more evaluative language when reminiscing performed better in some tasks and were rated to display better socio-emotional abilities by their parents on the CBRS.

The current study demonstrates that educators may converse about a range of topics when reminiscing. These conversations may reflect educators' values such as making connections to the child's home environment. Links between children's participation in conversations and their developing competencies suggest conversations in which educators encourage children's voices about their experiences may be associated with benefits for social-emotional learning. Future research should evaluate ways to support early childhood educators' use of conversations as learning opportunities for social emotional learning and benefits for children's development.

References

- Ministry of Education. (2018). *Understanding attendance; results from the 2017 Early Childhood Education census*. Retrieved from https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/188238/Understanding-attendance-results-from-the-2017-Early-Childhood-Education-census-v4.pdf.
- Neale, D., & Pino-Pasternak, D. (2017). A Review of Reminiscing in Early Childhood Settings and Links to Sustained Shared Thinking. *Educational Psychology Review*, 29, 641-665. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-016-9376-0>.
- Salmon, K., & Reese, E. (2016). The Benefits of Reminiscing With Young Children. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 25, 233–238. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721416655100>.

Enhancing teachers' creative self-efficacy using a community approach

Author / Presenter information

Dr Anita Mortlock, Lecturer, New Zealand, Herenga Waka: Victoria University of Wellington
Neil Boland, Senior Lecturer, New Zealand, Auckland University of Technology
Karen Affleck, Co-President of Waekura, Manager, New Zealand, Michael Park Kindergarten
Tracey Lee Hooton, Manager, New Zealand, Four Seasons Kindergarten, Taupo

Keywords

Creativity, teacher development, professional learning community, Steiner

Abstract

Creativity is seen as one of the most desirable skills internationally. The World Economic Forum identified it as the single most desired characteristic of workers (Caroff, Massu, and Lubart, 2018), assisting in problem solving in increasingly complex environments. OECD (2015) has begun to stress the place of creativity for the economic development of countries. In addition, creativity is now associated as being a critical factor in an individual's wellbeing (Humes, 2011).

Though the importance of creativity is largely undisputed in literature and research about innovation, the values that promote creativity are less well researched, certainly in the contemporary social and political contexts of Aotearoa. It follows that our society's notions of creativity are embedded in complex systems of values, which we have yet to fully understand. Furthermore, in the context of education it is accepted that creativity is not merely an individual trait, but a social process (Wilson, 2010). As such, teachers' understandings about creativity will surely impact on children's creativity. Using this as our premise, we undertook a project in which a professional community of Steiner Kindergarten teachers (see Wenger, 1998) explored and enhanced their creative efficacy. Our core questions were:

1. How do the teachers' perceptions of themselves shift over time within a professional community of creativity?
2. What factors enhance and inhibit the teachers' creativity within that professional community?

A qualitative inquiry was undertaken, and the data were gathered through peer-observation, teacher reflective journals, a series of anonymous questionnaires, and focus group meetings. The analyses followed an interpretive approach that identified iterative themes common across the individual teachers' data as well as making sense of data that were outliers to the common themes.

The preliminary findings suggest that not only do teachers' perceptions of their own creative efficacy shift over time, but that the community of creatives was essential in challenging teachers' negative scripts about their own creativity. The community approach also encouraged teachers to take on new skills and approaches. Finally, inhibiting factors to teachers' creativity included fear of judgment or difficulty in determining the deeper reasons for creative blocks, whereas enabling factors comprised the (1) nature of relationally and common bonds established within the professional community, and (2) the kinds of provocations and encouragement that emerged out of the community. The findings offer insights into how a professional community that values personal courage and relationality deepens teachers' skills and identity as "creatives."

References

- Caroff, X., Massu, J., & Lubart, T. (2018). Measuring Creativity at work. (pp. 3-22). In L. Martin and N. Wilson (Eds.). *The Palgrave Handbook of Creativity*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Humes, W. (2011). Creativity and Wellbeing in Education: Possibilities, Tensions, and Personal Journeys. *TEAN Journal*, 2(1), retrieved from: <http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/1371/1/69-366-1-PB.pdf>
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, meaning and Identity*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Room 3

Sustainability for indigenous languages and cultures

Ngā Taonga Mōhiohio: Kaumātua voices

Author / Presenter information

Lesley Rameka, Dr, Senior Research Fellow, New Zealand, Faculty of Education, University of Waikato

The premise of this kaupapa Māori project is that wellbeing for Māori entails the recognition of mana and the actioning of mana, through kaitiakitanga. We aim to explore ways that ECE accords mokopuna opportunities to recognise mana and understand ways to attain mana through being kaitiaki of themselves, others and their environment, thereby contributing to a collective sense of wellbeing. This presentation utilises pūrākau (stories/narrative) collected from kaumātua (elders) and Māori early childhood education leaders to illuminate how mana and kaitiakitanga were traditionally upheld and utilised for the benefit and wellbeing of all. It then discussed the implications of these narratives for contemporary early childhood theory and practice.

Supporting toddlers as story weavers across home and early childhood contexts in culturally diverse communities

Author / Presenter information:

Amanda White, Doctoral candidate, awhi602@aucklanduni.ac.nz, New Zealand, University of Auckland

Irene Aspuria-Padtoc, Registered Early Childhood Education teacher, ipadtoc@gmail.com, New Zealand, Elim International Kids Early Childhood Centre, Wellington

Keywords

Toddlers, Multimodal literacy, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Abstract

Communication and literacy development of young children is shaped by the nature of social and cultural relationships in their everyday lives (Rogoff et al., 2018). Stories about personal experiences are one literacy context in which children learn through engaging with others in their communities (Kerry-Moran & Aerila, 2019). Few studies, however, have explored ways that infants and toddlers under 2 years of age engage in naturalistic story interactions within and across their family homes and early childhood education (ECE) settings. In this presentation, we argue that personal stories about lived experiences are valuable sociocultural contexts for considering the communicative competencies of 1-year-old toddlers. We share the story of Lexie, aged 16 months, who participated in a qualitative study of story interactions in a culturally and linguistically diverse community of Aotearoa New Zealand. Using video data, we demonstrate how multimodal analysis (Bezemer & Jewitt, 2010) revealed the visual, verbal and kinaesthetic ways Lexie communicated with her parent, teacher and peers in a story about eating lunch in her ECE centre. Multimodal ethnography (Flewitt, 2011) provided the means to situate specific modes of communication within the unique context of Lexie's social and cultural relationships. As story collaborators, Lexie, her family, and teacher drew on shared cultural and linguistic resources based on their mutual understandings and experiences (McDevitt, 2020) of relocating to New Zealand from the Philippines. This study illuminates the role of toddlers as active, competent communicators who contribute to the process of story sharing with others in multimodal ways that reflect sociocultural relationships. It also highlights the critical role of ECE teachers in sustaining family linguistic and cultural practices in educational settings (Paris & Alim, 2017). The findings of this study make an original contribution to the field of

early childhood communication and literacy development by providing insights into the potential for everyday personal stories as contexts for informal learning across home and ECE settings in socially and culturally diverse communities.

References

- Bezemer, J., & Jewitt, C. (2010). Multimodal analysis: Key issues. In L. Litosseliti (Ed.), *Research methods in Linguistics* (pp. 180-197). Continuum.
- Flewitt, R. (2011). Bringing ethnography to a multimodal investigation of early literacy in a digital age. *Qualitative Research*, 11(3), 293-310. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794111399838>
- Kerry-Moran, K., & Aerila, J. (2019). Introduction: The strength of stories. In K. Kerry-Moran, & J. Aerila (Eds.), *Story in children's lives contributions of the narrative mode to early childhood development, literacy, and learning* (pp. 1-8). Switzerland: Springer.
- McDevitt, S. E. (2020). Teaching immigrant children: Learning from the experiences of immigrant early childhood teachers. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, doi:10.1080/10901027.2020.1818650
- Paris, D., & Alim, H. S. (Eds.). (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world*. Teachers College Press
- Rogoff, B., Dahl, A., & Callanan, M. (2018). The importance of understanding children's lived experience. *Developmental Review*, 50, 5-15. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2018.05.006>

Room 5
Advocacy in ECEC / Teacher professional learning

Building a framework for equitable early childhood education for refugee children in Malaysia

Author / Presenter information

Kimberley Kong, Dr, kimberley.kong@usm.my, Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia
Iram Siraj, Professor, iram.siraj@education.ox.ac.uk, United Kingdom, University of Oxford (
Katharina Ereky-Stevens, Dr, Katharina.ereky@education.ox.ac.uk, United Kingdom, University of Oxford
Kathlin Ambrose, kathlin.ambrose@gmail.com, Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia (
Alexandra Cheah, cheaheelynn@gmail.com, Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia
Azilah Hassan

Keywords

Refugee children, preschool education, school readiness

Abstract

Rationale for the study

Malaysia is a host to one of the largest urban refugee populations in the world. However, unlike other host countries, Malaysia is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Owing to this lack of legal recognition, the rights of the refugees, including access to education are immensely restricted. Refugee children are not able to enroll in the mainstream school system and, where possible, receive their education through informal community learning centres.

A quarter of the refugee population in Malaysia are children below 18 years of age. According to latest data in January 2020, there are some 15,672 children of concern (refugee and asylum seekers) aged between 3 to 6 years registered with UNHCR in Malaysia, hailing from 35 countries. Eighty-nine (89%) of these children have origins from Myanmar (comprising of Rohingyas, Chins, Myanmar Muslims, Rakhines and Arakanese, as well as other ethnicities) and the rest from Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Syria, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan amongst others. Only 20% of the refugee children are enrolled in early childhood education (ECE) compared to 85% of the general Malaysian children. The refugee population, particularly the Rohingya, are much dispersed and pockets of the communities continue to be identified in places where there is no access to education in learning centres, especially outside the capital city. The provision of ECE to refugee children has largely been underserved with its access being very uneven.

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

- i. Assess child development in two target groups of children at preschool age of 5 and 6 (400 children of refugees with ECE experience, 400 children of refugees without ECE experience)
- ii. Investigate issues of school readiness in carrying out semi-structured interviews with 30 teachers in primary school
- iii. Collect information on the quality of ECE/early learning programmes through structured questionnaires administered and semi-structured interviews carried out with 30 teachers/educators in ECE.
- iv. Identify barriers and challenges to refugee ECE through semi-structured interviews conducted with 50 parents

Brief description of methodology including that used for data analysis

Using mixed methods, data from multiple sources on child development will be collected to compare outcomes of those who did and did not access and participate in ECE. The study is designed to link comprehensive data from:

- Children aged 5 & 6 (direct child assessment using IDELA)
- Parents (semi-structured interview)
- Pre-school staff (questionnaire, semi-structured interview)

Statistical and thematic analyses will be employed on the data.

Summary

This study is a responsive call to reach a vulnerable population by addressing the issues of quality, equity and accessibility to early childhood education (ECE). It investigates the impact of ECE on the development of refugee children in Malaysia and identifies challenges and barriers to ECE, so the development of refugee children, the wellbeing of their families and ECE teachers can be supported. The findings will be used to inform policy and promote high quality ECE practice through all key stakeholders. Some preliminary findings of the study will be presented.

References

UNHCR (2021). *Malaysia Education Fact Sheet: January 2021*

Julia Palik (2020). *Education for Rohingya Refugee Children in Malaysia*. PRIO Policy Brief. Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO).

Abu Al-Rasheed Talpis Tanggol, Eleni Ayala Ojeda, Janani Balasubramaniam, Muhammad Ashik Bin Mohamed Daud (2019). *Inclusion of Refugees in formal education: An assessment of the Malaysian case*. Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

Save the Children (2018). *Hear It From The Teachers: Getting Refugee Children Back to Learning*.

Chinese kindergarten teachers' proactive agency in job crafting: A multiple case study in Shanghai

Author / Presenter information

Chuchu Zheng, Ph.D. candidate, 52174104004@stu.ecnu.edu.cn, China, Faculty of Education, East China Normal University, Shanghai

Yong Jiang, Professor, jyong191@163.com, China, Faculty of Education, East China Normal University, Shanghai

Beibei Zhang, Ph.D. candidate. 670079601@qq.com, China, Faculty of Education, East China Normal University, Shanghai

Fang Li, Ph.D. candidate, 15538830901@163.com, China, Faculty of Education, East China Normal University, Shanghai

Tianyan Sha, Master student, shaty_1998@126.com, China, Faculty of Education, East China Normal University, Shanghai

Xingjian Zhu, Master student, 13857983696@163.com, China, Faculty of Education, East China Normal University, Shanghai

Keywords

job crafting, kindergarten teachers, work experience

Abstract

Improving kindergarten teachers' working experience has long been a core concern of scholars and practitioners in the early childhood education sphere (Ackerman,2006;). However, previous attempts mainly focused on improving external working conditions and administrators and principals redesigning job structures for teachers (Al-Mahdy et al.,2018; Aust et al.,2010; Balay, 2006; Barnett,2003). These attempts minimize the role kindergarten teachers play in

proactively influencing positive changes in their own day-to-day work. Hence, we introduced a new notion: job crafting and consider it a possible pathway to improve kindergarten teachers' work experience from the bottom up. Originally proposed in management field, job crafting refers to the process of individuals redefining and adjusting their job in personally meaningful ways to improve their work experience (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Wrzesniewski et al., 2013).

In this multiple case study, we explore how a group of kindergarten teachers conduct job crafting and examine its potential outcomes. Based on criterion sampling and purposeful selection, we recruited 28 kindergarten teachers and four principals working in Shanghai, China. Qualitative interviews and the analysis of kindergarten teachers' diaries and work documents show that teachers craft their jobs in four main ways: task crafting, relational crafting, cognitive crafting, and work-life crafting. In addition, they employ 12 specific crafting techniques. The interviews reveal that kindergarten teachers feel able to make changes to align their work with their abilities, needs, and preferences, meaning that job crafting can lead to significant positive effects for teachers, teacher communities, kindergartens, children, and their families. Some potential sides effects of job crafting, and precautionary strategies are also discussed.

We believe that our study makes a valuable contribution to the teacher workforce literature because it reflects the increasing value of how teachers can proactively align their work better with their unique abilities, needs, and preferences. Job crafting offers an exciting and positive way for teachers to cultivate meaning in their work, thereby helping reduce teacher absenteeism, increase staff stability, and improve education quality.

References

- Ackerman, D. J. (2006). The costs of being a child care teacher: Revisiting the problem of low wages. *Educational Policy*, 20(1), 85-112.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904805285283>
- Al-Mahdy, Y. F. H., Emam, M. M., & Hallinger, P. (2018). Assessing the contribution of principal instructional leadership and collective teacher efficacy to teacher commitment in Oman. *Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies*, 69(1), 191-201.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.10.007>
- Aust, B., Rugulies, R., Finken, A., & Jensen, C. (2010). When workplace interventions lead to negative effects: learning from failures. *Scandinavian journal of public health*, 38, 106-119. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1403494809354362>
- Balay, R. (2006). Conflict management strategies of administrators and teachers. *Asian Journal of Management Cases*, 3(1), 5-24.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/097282010500300103>
- Barnett, W. S. (2003). Low wages = low quality: Solving the real preschool teacher crisis. *Preschool Policy Matters*, 3. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.
- Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J. E. (2001). Crafting a Job: Revisioning Employees as Active Crafters of Their Work. *The Academy of Management Review*, 26(2), 179-201. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259118>
- Wrzesniewski, A., LoBuglio, N., Dutton, J. E., & Berg, J. M. (2013). Job crafting and cultivating positive meaning and identity in work. In A. B. Bakker (Ed.), *Advances in positive organizational psychology: Advances in positive organizational psychology*. Emerald Group. [https://doi.org/10.1108/S2046-410X\(2013\)0000001015](https://doi.org/10.1108/S2046-410X(2013)0000001015)

Room 6

Teacher professional learning

Early childhood teachers' awareness of the movement guidelines for young children in Hong Kong

Author / Presenter information

Catherine M. Capio, Dr, PhD, ccapio@eduhk.hk, Hong Kong & Philippines, Early Childhood Education Department, The Education University of Hong Kong & Department of Health Science, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines

Toby C. T. Mak, PhD, tobyct.mak@polyu.edu.hk, Hong Kong, Early Childhood Education Department, The Education University of Hong Kong & Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Keywords

Movement guidelines, young children, teachers, Hong Kong

Rationale and Purpose

Healthy movement behaviours in early childhood are believed to track to adulthood, potentially imparting protective benefits against non-communicable diseases. As such, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the Guidelines on Physical activity, Sedentary behaviour and Sleep for Children under five years of age (WHO, 2019). These guidelines were subsequently adopted in Hong Kong by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP, 2020), extending the target to six-year-old children. The guidelines are being disseminated through early childhood education centres (ECECs) who have volunteered to join a public health campaign on healthy eating and physical activity. It is expected that with teachers who are aware of these guidelines, activities will be designed in ECECs to promote healthy movement behaviours. As an initial step to evaluating uptake, this study assessed ECEC teachers' awareness and knowledge of the movement guidelines for young children in Hong Kong.

Methodology

The participants consist of kindergarten teachers (N = 301) who responded to an online survey invitation. The survey included close-ended questions that were adapted from previous studies that measured the awareness (i.e., whether they had seen, heard, or read of them) and knowledge of physical activity and movement guidelines. Additional questions enquired about the context in which physical activities were implemented in the participants' ECEC settings.

Findings

Majority of the participants reported that they were aware and had knowledge, respectively, of the guidelines for physical activity (88%, 87%), sedentary behaviour (70%, 80%), and sleep (58%, 84%) of young children. A comparatively smaller portion of the participants reported the correct recommended time for physical activity (23%), sedentary behaviour (25%), and sleep (62%). More teachers who have higher qualifications tended to be aware of the guidelines for physical activity ($X^2 = 9.56$, $p = 0.04$) and sedentary behaviour ($X^2 = 13.20$, $p = 0.01$). Physical activities were reportedly promoted in class during free play (81%), outdoor activities (73%), indoor games (66%), and integration with other learning areas such as literacy and numeracy (28%).

Discussion and Implications

Healthy movement behaviours of young children could be enhanced by leveraging on the role of ECEC teachers. Such an approach requires that teachers have adequate awareness and knowledge of the evidence-based guidelines. It appears that in Hong Kong, dissemination of the movement guidelines for young children

have been adequate to promote awareness amongst ECEC teachers. However, further effort is needed to facilitate the correct knowledge, and to support integration of healthy movement behaviours in ECEC learning activities. The findings suggest that if ECEC teachers were to effectively promote healthy movement behaviours in their pupils, support through improved dissemination of health-related information needs to be put in place.

References

- World Health Organization. (2019). Guidelines on physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep for children under 5 years of age. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- Centre for Health Protection. (2020). Physical Activity Guide for Children aged 2 to 6. Government of Hong Kong SAR.

A framework for assessing reflective thinking of pre-service early childhood teachers

Author / Presenter information

Dora Wu Chen, Singapore University of Social Sciences

Sylvia Chong, Singapore University of Social Sciences

3 Keywords

Reflective thinking, framework, professional development

Abstract

Reflection is widely accepted as an important learning tool and is considered integral to the professional development of an early childhood teacher. Reflective practitioners are at the core of effective teaching (Körkkö, Kyrö-Ämmälä, & Turunen, 2016; Luttenberg & Bergen, 2008). The goal of our early childhood pre-service teacher education programme is to nurture the development of reflective teachers who are observant, who ask thoughtful questions about existing practice and their own practices in relation to the impact on children's development, and are able to examine situations from different perspectives; teachers who are flexible thinkers, capable of generating solutions in the face of problems, as well as enthusiastic and open-minded about trying new ideas. As such, tools for guiding reflective thinking is commonly embedded into teacher education programme requirements.

Although reflection is affirmed as a critical tool for professional learning in the literature, relatively less is known about how to assess it (Plack, Driscoll, Blissett, McKenna, & Plack 2005). This paper reports a pilot study that is a part of a larger exploratory study aimed at the development of a framework for examining the evolution of the depth of reflection of pre-service early childhood education teachers' pedagogical interactions during their field placements in Singapore. This pilot examined the works of six students gathered from their first through their final semester of practicum experiences – a span of 2.5 years. The data included assignments designed to capture thinking around practical experiences, influences on development and knowledge acquisition, and feelings towards both the reflective process and the pre-service teachers' own journey as a developing professional, for example, journals, lesson plans with reflections, as well as their final reflective portfolio with self-evaluation of their teaching competencies.

This framework draws from the works of Cole, Messner, Swomigan and Tollman (1991, as cited in Bendixen-Noe and Naizer, 2000), Luttenberg and Bergen (2008) Parrish (2017) and Svojanovsky (2017). It consists of four levels of reflection. Each level has three key categories of emphasis: 1. Techniques and/or issues related to classroom practice, 2. Educational and psychological implications/consequences of teaching decisions and actions and 3. Beliefs and values about the teaching and learning process. In this session, pointers for fine-tuning this framework that resulted from this pilot study will be shared.

References

- Bendixen-Noe, M. K., & Naizer, G. L. (2000). Reflections on reflective teaching and early childhood teacher education. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 21(3), 365-371.
- Körkkö, M., Kyrö-Ämmälä, O., & Turunen, T. (2016). Professional development through reflection in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 55, 198-206.
- Luttenberg, J., & Bergen, T. (2008). Teacher reflection: The development of a typology. *Teachers and Teaching*, 14(5), 543–566.
- Parrish, J. C. (2017). *K-12 teacher professional growth for nature of science and scientific inquiry: Promoting reflection through exemplars* (Doctoral dissertation, Middle Tennessee State University).
- Plack, M. M., Driscoll, M., Blissett, S., McKenna, R., & Plack, T. P. (2005). A method for assessing reflective journal writing. *Journal of allied health*, 34(4), 199-208.
- Svojanovsky, P. (2017). Supporting student teachers' reflection as a paradigm shift process. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 66, 338-348.

Quality of children's physical development and movement environment: Action research in three kindergartens in Mainland China

Author / Presenter information

Dandan Zhang, zhangdandan@cedim.cn, China, Yew Chung Education Foundation, Chor Hang Educational Research Institute
Ruifeng Pan, pennyrf.pan@cedim.cn, China, Yew Chung Education Foundation, Chor Hang Educational Research Institute
Huimin Tao, taohuimin@cedim.cn, China, Yew Chung Education Foundation, Chor Hang Educational Research Institute

Keywords

Movement Environment, Physical Development, Action Research

Abstract

Many studies have found that physical development affects children's physical health, language, well-being, and learning (O'Connor & Daly, 2016; Archer & Siraj, 2015). Therefore, Early Childhood Education (ECE) settings should provide appropriate and high-quality physical environments for children. However, ECE leaders and teachers do not always know what such movement environments should look like, or how to improve their existing physical provision and pedagogical practice.

The Movement Environment Rating Scale (MOVERS), designed by Archer and Siraj (2017), provides helpful answers to these questions. MOVERS, like the world-renowned Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales (ECERS), assesses the quality of ECE movement environments and pedagogy for children 2-6 years of age. Two years ago, the Yew Chung Publishing House was authorised to translate and publish the MOVERS in Chinese, and this new research-based tool has since been made available to the ECE sector in mainland China through the Nanjing Normal University Press.

This action research was conducted in three kindergartens in mainland China, located in Qingdao, Rizhao, and Shenzhen, all belonging to the Yew Wah International Educational Kindergartens (YWIEK) network. A total of three principals, three curriculum heads, and 12 class teachers (from 6 classrooms, ranging from ages 2-6) were involved, supported by researchers from the Yew Chung Education Foundation's Chor Hang Educational Research Institute (CHERI), some of whom were translators of the MOVERS. The objective was to apply and deeply understand the MOVERS in mainland Chinese kindergarten settings, which will enhance ECE teachers' physical development knowledge and enable them to improve their practice in promoting children's holistic development. We also hope that our hands-on

experience will be helpful to other ECE settings, whether in China or abroad, that may be embarking upon similar staff professional development and school improvement initiatives too.

Facilitated by CHERI colleagues, all participants first familiarized themselves with the Chinese translation of the MOVERS. The 12 class teachers then selected one item of MOVERS to make a self-assessment of their own classroom, identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement, and then formulated action plans. After these action plans were finalized, each kindergarten was supported again by CHERI staff when implementing their action plans, and the changes made were recorded by a series of "photos stories". The same MOVERS item was then administered again in the same classroom for a 'post-test' evaluation. Finally, all 12 class teachers shared their respective and reflection "photos stories" with the group, before selecting another MOVERS item to begin the same action research cycle, until all 11 items of MOVERS were completed.

The findings of this small-scale action research are as follows: (1) the quality of the movement environments of the 6 classrooms, as assessed using MOVERS, has significantly improved; (2) the "photo stories" documentation is a powerful tool for teachers to critically reflect upon their professional learning and school improvement process; and (3) there may be some regional cultural differences that should be taken into account when using MOVERS in Mainland China.

References

O'Connor, A., & Daly, A. (2016). *Understanding physical development in the early years: Linking bodies and minds*. Routledge.

Archer, C., & Siraj, I. (2015). *Encouraging physical development through movement-play*. Sage.

Archer, C., & Siraj, I. (2017). *Movement Environment Rating Scale (MOVERS) for 2-6-year-olds Provision: Improving Physical Development Through Movement and Physical Activity*. UCL IOE Press.

Room 7 Professional practice

The action research for the social language support of three year old children

Author / Presenter information

Soonhwan Kim, Associate Professor, ksh6220@ewha.ac.kr, Korea, Ewha Womans University
Youngmee Lee, Assistant Professor, ymlee@chu.ad.kr, Korea, Cheju Halla University

Keywords

Children, Social communication skills, Picture book

Abstract

This study aims to explore ways to improve social communication skills in children aged three using picture books and to examine the effect on children. For this, research questions were established as follows: First, how the social communication skills of three-year-old children can be improved using picture books? Second, how do the social communication methods affect children?

This action research was carried out from March 2019 to June 1, 2020. During the research process, speech issues in children aged three were identified, activities using picture books to improve social communication skills were planned and implemented, and evaluation was carried out. For data analysis, collected video data, recording data, the results of activities, photos, daily education plans, researcher's journal, observation logs, etc. were analyzed.

The results of this study are as follows: First, as for the children' social communication skills, it was found that they were lacking in expressing their feelings and opinions. In particular, they seemed not to be able to know what words to use when they were put in a situation requiring social skills. Accordingly, the researcher developed a plan for them to learn the virtues of humanity and improve appropriate social communication skills for different situations and planned and implemented educational activities using picture books containing various social situations. Since communication requires actual practice, activities to develop communication skills based on the situations in the picture books were conducted. Second, the effective method of improving social communication skills in three-year-old children using picture books helped improve speech in terms of social skills. The research subjects were able to express their feelings, thoughts, and opinions during large-group activities and plays; very few wept or yelled. As their social skills improved, necessary speeches were made in different situations. Although the children did not know how to use apologetic words or ask for a favour or had difficulties in such situations, after the educational activities, they learned and became able to say, "I'm sorry," "I'm sorry, but can you..." "Can you please repeat that?" and "Please."

Kindergarten teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education: Perspectives from Macau

Author / Presenter information

Leng San leong, MED student and kindergarten teacher, ieonglengsan@gmail.com, Macau, Keang Peng School
Chunrong, Sun, Assistant Professor, Susannah.sun@usj.edu.mo, Macau, University of Saint Joseph

Keywords

Kindergarten teachers, Inclusive education, Teachers' attitudes

Abstract

Rationale for the study

Early years inclusive education has great significance for the psychosomatic development of students with special education needs. As the main participants of inclusive education, kindergarten teachers, especially their attitudes, are key to successfully implementing inclusive education.

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

This study aims to investigate kindergarten teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Macau. In order to achieve the research aim, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are teachers' cognitions of inclusive education?
2. What emotional experience do teachers have towards inclusive education?
3. What do teachers do to practice inclusive education in their daily practices?

Brief description

To get an in-depth understanding of teachers' real attitudes in the process of implementing inclusive education, a qualitative research approach was adopted in this study. In order to explore the direct and concrete understanding of teachers' attitudes, this study only focused on teachers who have inclusive education experiences. Twelve teachers with different teaching experiences were purposefully selected as participants. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore teachers' cognition of inclusive education, their emotional acceptance of inclusive education and their actions in implementing inclusive education in practices. A combination of inductive and deductive approaches was used to do data analysis.

Summary

Results show that from the perspective of cognition, most teachers' understandings conformed to the international spirit of inclusive education. There were still a few teachers who misunderstood the meaning of inclusive education. From the perspective of emotional acceptance, most teachers supported implementing inclusive education in kindergartens and they actively learnt about inclusive education and welcomed students with special education needs. However, nearly half of participants showed their worries, fears and resistance towards inclusive education. It is worth mentioning that teachers' emotional acceptance of inclusive education showed dynamic characteristics. Specifically, when they first faced inclusive education, teachers either warmly accepted or fearfully resisted. After practicing inclusive education for a period of time, teachers' feelings towards the inclusive education changed. Teachers who actively accepted inclusive education in the early stage would become resistant to inclusive education because of the difficulties they encountered in the educational practices, while those who resisted inclusive education in the early stage would increase their confidence in implementing inclusive education with the accumulation of practical experience, and they began to support inclusive education. When implementing inclusive education, teachers would consider the developmental needs of all students, they would adjust the classroom environment, curriculum and teaching strategies, and also try to cooperate with resource teachers and parents in order to maximize the educational effects.

References

Allport, G. W. (1935). *Attitudes: A handbook of social psychology*. Worcester MA: Clark University Press.

- Anderson, E. M., & Lindeman, K. W. (2017). Inclusive prekindergarten classrooms in a new era: Exploring the perspectives of teachers in the United States. *School Community Journal, 27*(2), 121-143.
- Avramidis, E., Bayliss, P., & Burden, R. (2000). A survey into mainstream teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the ordinary school in one local education authority. *Educational Psychology, 20*(2), 191-211.
- Bernard, H. R. (2006). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches (4th)*. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
- Correia, A., Teixeira, V., Monteiro, E., & Kuok, A. C. (2016). *Inclusive education in Macao: Teachers' perceptions and attitudes*. Macao, China: Macao Foundation.
- Costello, S., & Boyle, C. (2013). Pre-service secondary teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 38*(4), 129-143.
- King, N. & Horrocks, C. (2010). *Interviews in qualitative research*. London, England: Sage.
- Kurniawati, F. & Minnaert, A. (2012). Primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 29*, 976 – 985.
- Ng, S. W., & Kwan, Y. W. (2020). Inclusive education teachers—strategies of working collaboratively with parents of children with special educational needs in Macau. *International Journal of Educational Reform, 29*(2), 191-207.
- Priyadarshini, S., & Thangarajathi, S. (2016). Effect of selected variables on regular school teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. *Journal on Educational Psychology, 10*(3), 28-38.
- Saloviita, T. (2020). Attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education in Finland. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 64*(2), 270-282.

An action research case study: Integrating the concepts of STEM education into the shadow play in kindergarten

Author / Presenter information

Shiming Tong, Hangzhou College for Kindergarten Teachers, Zhejiang Normal University
Manjing Huang, Hangzhou College for Kindergarten Teachers, Zhejiang Normal University
Chaoyi Wang, Hangzhou College for Kindergarten Teachers, Zhejiang Normal University

Abstract

As a Chinese intangible cultural heritage, shadow play contains rich Chinese culture and national spirit. However, there was little research on the practice of shadow play in kindergartens. This study integrated the concepts of STEM courses into the shadow play by utilizing the model of Opera and “5E teaching strategies” within a series of courses. The entire course included (1) mastering the knowledge of light and shadow, (2) understanding the cultural knowledge of shadow play, and (3) shadow play by groups. An action research case study was conducted. This involved twenty-eight children who attended a Chinese kindergarten. Data were collected and analyzed over a six-week period. The study found that the child participants were able to think critically about the science concepts and took on the roles in the play. Another finding was the teachers in the study had a transformation of teaching philosophy that shadow play can be more aligned towards the Science field rather than the Art fields. An important outcome of the study was the development of a new curriculum model that integrates the STEM education into the shadow play.

Room 8 ECEC policy

Workforce diversity and quality improvement policies in early childhood education in the Asia-Pacific: Troubling discourses of difference

Author / Presenter information

Joce NUTTALL, Professor, joce.nuttall@acu.edu.au, Australia, Australian Catholic University

Sue Grieshaber, Professor, s.grieshaber@acu.edu.au, Australia, La Trobe University

Eunju Yun, Professor eunjuyun@sookmyung.ac.kr, Republic of Korea, Sookmyung Women's University

Sirene Lim, Associate Professor, sirenelimmy@suss.edu.sg, Singapore, Singapore University of Social Sciences

Keywords

Cultural diversity; workforce mobility; service quality; early childhood centre accreditation

Abstract

Rationale for the study

This paper reports an analysis of early childhood education quality improvement texts in three East Asia Summit member nations in the Asia-Pacific region: Singapore, Australia, and South Korea. This analysis was undertaken in preparation for a larger research project concerned with the learning needs of migrant early childhood educators and their colleagues, and the relationship between these learning needs and quality improvement policies.

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

The overarching study is concerned with the relationship between early childhood quality improvement systems, workforce mobility, and the professional learning necessary to support migrant early childhood educators. These professional learning needs can be experienced both by migrant educators themselves and by their workplace colleagues. The professional contexts for the study include the relationship between workforce diversity and the learning of diverse children in early childhood services (Burns, Assaf, and Johnson, 2012), and the global mobility of early childhood educators in response to workforce shortages in many countries, including Australia (Australian Government Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, 2019). Our axiological stance is that it is critical for policy and practice in early childhood education to understand the potential of migrant educators to contribute in dynamic and positive ways to quality improvement policy and practice in early childhood services.

Brief description

In this paper we report our analysis of a range of quality improvement texts in each of the three countries, focusing on what these texts have to say about concepts of culture, diversity, and difference. This process included word level content analysis of Singapore's SPARK preschool accreditation texts (Singapore Government Early Childhood Development Agency, 2011), South Korea's Kindergarten Evaluation texts (Seoul Early Childhood Education & Promotion Center, 2019), Preschool Accreditation texts (Korea Childcare Promotion Institute, 2017), and Nuri curriculum, and Australia's National Quality Standard texts (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, 2018) and Early Years Learning Framework. We then ordered and re-ordered the findings of this analysis according to our deductive categories of 'diversity', 'culture', and 'workforce'.

Summary of findings

These texts each acknowledge the diversity of children and families and provide guidance (to a greater or lesser extent) on issues of diversity, although there is considerable slippage in the language used to describe diversity, including 'multiculturalism', 'culture', and/or 'linguistic diversity'. However, they are all silent on issues of workforce diversity and its dynamic relationship with children's learning, as well as being silent on the threats to learning posed by racist attitudes and behaviours. We conclude with a call for careful consideration of policy development to recognize the significant opportunities for quality improvement offered by a globally mobile early childhood education workforce, and to ensure such designs are not bound by inherently racist concepts of difference.

References

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority. (2018). *National quality standard*(rev.). Sydney, Australia: Author.
- Australian Government Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business. (2019). *Industry employment projections 2019 report*. Canberra, Australia: Author.
- Burns, M. S., Assaf, M. M., & Johnson, R. T. (2012). *Preschool education in today's world: Teaching children with diverse backgrounds and abilities*. Baltimore, MA: Paul H. Brookes.
- Singapore Government Early Childhood Development Agency. (2011). *SPARK: Singapore pre-school accreditation framework*. Singapore, Republic of Singapore: Author.
- Seoul Early Childhood Education & Promotion Center. (2019). *유지원 평가 편람*. Seoul, Republic of Korea: Author.
- Korea Childcare Promotion Institute. (2017). *어린이집 평가인증 안내*. Seoul, Republic of Korea: Author.

Teachers' perception and practice of education for sustainable development for young children

Author / Presenter information

Eun-Young Choi, Research Fellow, iameyny@gmail.com, Republic of Korea, Korea Institute of Child Care and Education
Nam Hee Do, Research Fellow, cando@kicce.re.kr, Republic of Korea, Korea Institute of Child Care and Education
Min Ju Kim, happymj0802@gmail.com, Republic of Korea

Keywords

Young children, Sustainable Development Goals, Education for Sustainable Development

Abstract

Education for sustainable development (ESD) is education pursuing a society where all people can receive high-quality benefits and learn the values, behaviors, and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and society. Early childhood is a critical period for ESD and should be the starting point of education (Shin & Park, 2012).

To this end, this study investigated the support teachers need to practice ESD in their programmes with young children. The study used a survey that targeted 480 kindergarten teachers and 800 daycare center teachers in Korea. The research questionnaire consisted of Likert Scale questions, forced response questions, etc.

Findings from the questionnaire survey include mixed recognition of relevant terms with "sustainable development" most recognized at 80.7% and "SDGs" least recognized at 54.8%. The subjects in this study highly recognized the need for all ESD focus areas with the exception of the "world's/national responsibilities and natural resources".

The lack of materials to use in ESD activities was pointed out as the most severe difficulty in implementing ESD, although respondents reported that ESD is applied in everyday life in an integrated way. Based on the results of this study, several measures to practice short-, mid-, and long-term ESD in early childhood were identified. These include ESD PR data, ESD series data, and ESD training program in early childhood need to be supported as the central government's short-term task, and ESD factors should be expanded during early childhood as the mid- and long-term tasks, etc.

Reference

Eunsoo Shin & Eunhye Park (2012). Redirecting the Early Childhood Education Curriculum for Education for Sustainable Development, *Journal of supporting Early Childhood Education and Care*, 7(1), 27-50).

ECCE policy development cooperation on quality monitoring in the selected Asia-Pacific countries

Author / Presenter information

Mugyeong Moon, Dr., Director, Office of International Research and Data Analysis, mgmoon@kicce.re.kr, Korea Institute of Child Care and Education, Republic of Korea

Keywords

Quality Monitoring, Policy, Development Cooperation

Abstract

The study aimed to understand the current status of monitoring systems of early childhood services and to provide consulting in order to establish and enhance monitoring systems in selected Asia-Pacific countries (Uzbekistan, Vietnam, and Fiji).

Site visits to early childhood centers and interviews with stakeholder groups including ministry officials in the three individual countries were conducted regarding quality monitoring systems and related issues. Workshops and seminars, in collaboration with the UNESCO Bangkok and ARNEC (Asia Regional Network of Early Childhood), were held in order to facilitate development of action plans and to discuss challenges and strategies in each country. The outcome measurement and evaluation model based on theories of changes (Morra Imas & Rist, 2009; Korea International Cooperation Agency [KOICA], 2018) was adopted to analyze inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts of development cooperation.

Although three individual countries were at different status of quality monitoring of ECCE services, some common needs on development cooperation across countries included developing and elaborating quality indicators, piloting of monitoring indicators, training of evaluators, and developing manuals and guidelines for teachers. Consulting was provided by focusing priorities of each country among the common needs, such as supporting a piloting of monitoring indicators in Uzbekistan; strengthening the implementation power of monitoring systems (e.g., setting scoring standards, financing for training of evaluators); and consolidation of monitoring tools and training of trainers in Fiji.

For future development cooperation on ECCE policy, the following were suggested: establishing a robust data system in cooperating countries, rigorous and constant technical assistance toward achieving goals of development cooperation, close communication with ministry officials in cooperating countries and mobilizing international organizations, developing analytic framework to monitor outcomes of ECCE policy consulting.

References

- Global Partnership for Education. (2019). Strengthening early childhood care and education. A knowledge and innovation exchange (KIX) discussion paper. <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/strengthening-early-childhood-care-and-education-knowledge-and-innovation-exchange-kix-discussion-paper> (Accessed 21 August 2019).
- Morra Imas, L. G., & Rist, R. (2009). *The road to results: Designing and conducting effective development evaluations*. The World Bank.
- Korea International Cooperation Agency (2018). *KOICA PDM guidelines*. Seoul: Author.