

Investigating the role of teacher training of reception teachers in implementing the pre-primary curriculum in Francistown, Botswana



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ANTERIOR STORY

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Background: Teachers emerge as main role players guiding the process of curriculum implementation across all levels of education. At early childhood development (ECD) level, curriculum implementation is unique, but emphasis on teacher training is essential as it influences teachers' efficacy in promoting holistically developed children. Upon realising the significance of ECD, Botswana effected the Pre-primary Curriculum Framework (PCF) to guide teachers in teaching children.

Aims This article aims to investigate the role of teacher training in implementing the Botswana's PCF in Francistown. Bandura's social cognitive learning theory (SCLT) and Wenger and Wenger-Trayner's communities of practice (CoP) were used as they both advocate for teacher mentoring programmes and partnerships to assist teachers towards effectiveness in curriculum implementation.

Method: Interviews, document analysis and observations were employed as data collection

Results: Despite the support given to teachers towards implementing the Botswana's PCF, they are still faced with challenges such as lack of training, supervision and shortage of

Conclusion: For teachers to effectively implement Botswana's PCF, there is a need for transforming policies on conducting in-service teacher training such as the use of a needs assessment protocol.

Keywords: carriculum framework; curriculum implementation; pre-primary; reception teachers; teacher training.

Introduction

Teacher training is viewed as fundamental to effective teaching and learning of children. This statement is validated by Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017) who looked into the role played by qualified teachers in the effective implementation of a curriculum. There is considerable evidence on how proper teacher education is a definitive factor for children's effective learning and understanding of concepts even at the earliest stages of learning of early childhood development (ECD). According to Kennedy (2016), teacher training is a necessity for every teacher who wants to join the teaching fraternity. Every year, students enrol at universities and colleges in teacher training programmes to become qualified teachers and when they are employed do inservice training. Darling-Hammond (2017) stated that initial teacher education in-service training is key to the production of highly effective and influential teachers. Concerning ECD, teacher training and its contribution in promoting effective curriculum implementation are inter-related. As suggested by Piasta et al. (2015), this is because, at the level of ECD, children's effective learning. and development are mainly determined by the teachers' ability to provide an enabling environment. This is because teachers act as guides and mentors, even though children are expected to experience freedom in learning. This is the basic principle at all levels of learning as suggested by most theories of learning such as Bandura's (1971) social cognitive learning theory (SCLT) and Wenger and Wenger-Trayner's (2015) communities of practice (CoP) employed for this study. These theories are no different from those of other earlier philosophers such as Vygotsky's social constructivism and Piaget's theory of cognitive development in emphasising the significant roles of trained teachers in promotion of children's learning. As suggested by Shabani (2016), one can apply similar contextual references of child learning such as zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding to adult learning for teacher effectiveness.

Implementing The Primary Curriculum A Teacher Guide

Pat Hoodless

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