Report on SARAECE National Conference May 2018

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Introduction

Since its inception in 2011, the South African Research Association for Early childhood Education (SARAECE), has worked to develop the Early childhood Education (ECE) sector. SARAECE was established as a response to the National Education Department's White paper 5, Early childhood Education (2001) in recognition of a need for a body with a specific focus on the initial years of childhood development and education. Although originally comprising largely Higher Education Institutions, it did work with both practitioners and teachers in the field. Most recently, SARAECE has opened its membership to include the NGO sector and TVETS. This was as a result of being part of the PIECCE project which aimed to work inclusively and to understand what the training offerings were in the birth to four age group. The purpose behind this work was to inform the development of a diploma and degree aimed at professionalising the sector.

The aims of SARAECE are:

- To provide an academic forum in South Africa for the development and dissemination of research in Early childhood Development (ECD) and Early childhood Care and Education (ECCE).
- Facilitatoe cooperation and collaboration among ECD and ECCE researchers nationally and internationally
- Promote links between research, practice and policy in ECD and ECCE
- Raise the visibility and status of research in ECD and ECCE

Within a two-year cycle SARAECE hosts both regional and national conferences. Last year the majority of the nine regions were able to host either a conference or a seminar. In May 2018 the National conference was hosted in Centurion, at the Forever Hotel and resort. The overarching theme of the conference was *Transforming teacher education in the early years,* a theme that has particular relevance at this point in time in South Africa's education history when students at HEIs are calling for a 'decolonising' of curricula.

Conference sub-themes

The sub-themes of the conference are testament to the diversity that is encountered in the ECD sector and why it is so important for the most recent drive to bring the voices of multi-stakeholders together, in order to work collectively towards the betterment of the sector.

The following sub-themes were chosen:

1. Sustainable Early Childhood Development
2. Quality Education
3. Curriculum in ECCE
4. Language development in ECE
5. Numeracy development in ECE
6. Inclusivity in ECE
7. Transformative Pedagogy
8. Children's rights
9. Parents and families
10. ECCE Policy
11. Assessment in ECCE
12. Professionlization and professionalism in ECE
13. Creativity in ECE
14. Science and Technology in ECE

Novice researchers

A key aspect of this particular conference was the emphasis on the 'Novice researcher'. The SARAECE committee wanted to provide a conference that would allow novice researchers a platform to present their work and receive rich feedback from their peers and more experienced ECE researchers. We additionally wanted to validate our novice researchers and consequently contacted various publishing houses to garner support for book prizes. We would like to thank Pearsons; Juta; Van Schaik and Oxford University Press for providing considerable support. Delegates were all given relevant collateral such as stationary and flashsticks together with book hampers and individual book prizes. This certainly allowed for an exciting conference and appropriate acknowledgement of our novice researchers.
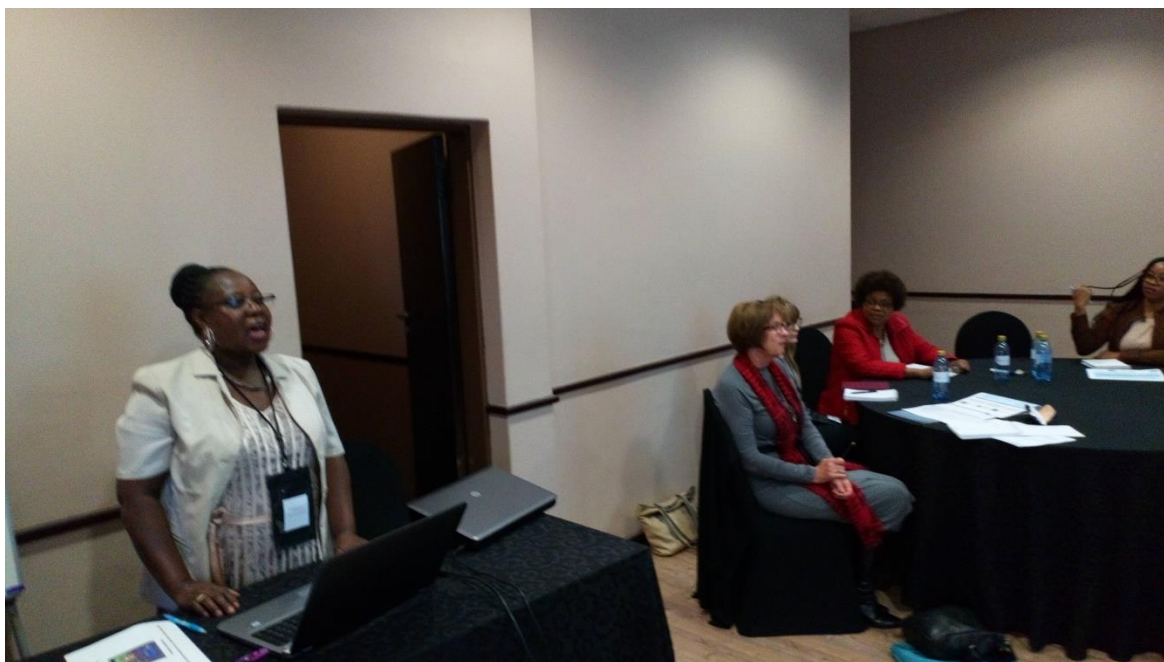
Types of presentations

In the spirit of the diversity of ECE the 2018 National Conference had a variety of types of presentation. These included poster presentations, keynotes, powerpoint presentations and presentations from publishing houses on virtual packages.

The poster presentations took place in the tea break where delegates were free to consult with the presenters. It was interesting to note that two of the presentations were from the NGO sector including one on the use of Persona dolls and the other on the collaborative research of the PIECCE project. Pearson's presented on their work related to the 'virtual child' and received useful feedback on how the programme can be adapted to other contexts. Generally, the quality of the powerpoint presentations was high however there was a suggestion that going forward SARAECE should consider hosting a seminar before the next conference on how to design and present research using powerpoint. This is something the committee will take forward.

Keynotes

When choosing keynote speakers for a conference it is particularly important to match the keynote to the theme of the conference. We were very fortunate to have four excellent keynotes who each provided a different perspective on the state of ECE. Our first keynote Dr Whitty Green, gave an overview of the crisis in education in South Africa and why starting earlier in the educational journey could potentially right the wrongs of the past. In the current climate of transformation in education, Professor Mishack Gumbo's presentation on indigenous knowledge provided much food for thought. Our third keynote, Professor Hasina Ebrahim is not only a previous President of SARAECE but also a UNESCO Co-Chair and is well published in the field of ECE. Her address provided the delegates with questions about the quality of ECE and how we develop a programme framework that will allow for quality. Our international Keynote came from Dr Caroline Cohrssen from the University of Melbourne. She took a research-based approach and spoke to the topic of the teacher as researcher. This was particularly relevant for all the novice researchers at the conference and spoke to our birth to four curriculum in which observation of the child is a key form of assessment. All of our keynotes were particularly gracious in sharing their expertise with our novice researchers.

Evaluation and feedback from delegates

Post conference, a google survey was conducted with the 81 delegates who attended the conference, in order to obtain feedback on how they had experienced the conference and to improve the work of SARAECE. A total of 6 NGOs, 16 Universities; 1 TVET and 3 private training institutions, attended the conference. It should be noted that this was the first SARAECE conference where the registration fee included automatic SARAECE membership. Below is a presentation on the findings of this survey.

The conference delegates noted that the conference had contributed to their field of expertise in the following ways:

- An appreciation of the amount of work being done in the ECE space.
- An appreciation of the key issues that pertain to ECE.
- Exposure to current and relevant research in ECE.

The response to the types of topic that were covered was generally positive with one delegate noting that they would have liked to have seen more on the use of technology in ECE. There were only three presentations that dealt with this aspect of ECE. Delegates appreciated the thematic grouping of presentations and their relevancy. The mix of what a delegate termed 'high level academic research' with the more practical approaches, was noted. Comments such as 'the topics were relevant to ECE; all topics were very informative and interesting; and interesting and diverse, illustrate that delegates were satisfied that the multi-dimensional nature of ECE was represented at this national conference.

Keynote speakers at a conference often provide a depth of understanding that is at the meta level. This conference was no exception. The delegate response to the variety of keynote presentations was very positive. There was a particular interest in Professor Mishack Gumbo's presentation as he was addressing a topic that is in its infancy in terms of exploring how we decolonise ECE curricula. His presentation on the use of indigenous knowledge in the curricula was extremely well received. Dr Whitty Green's sharing of statistics whilst sobering for much of the audience, was considered by the delegates as 'necessary knowledge' within our South African context. Professor Hasina Ebrahim's presentation was also appreciated by the delegates with comments like 'informative', 'thought provoking' and 'professionally delivered'. The international keynote, Dr Caroline Cohrssen was appreciated for her ability to make the delegates 'think outside the box'. All keynotes were noted for their professionalism, generous sharing of knowledge and relevance.

When asked what delegates enjoyed about the conference the following points surfaced:
- It was well organised and exciting
- Plenty of opportunity to network with people in the field of ECE
- The presentations were informative and relevant
- There were plenty of debates, discussions and informal conversations
- Learning from others
- A feeling of hope for the young children in South Africa
- Organisers were hands-on and respected time.
- The novice researcher theme was supportive.
- The interaction that followed each presentation allowing for rich feedback.

The above comments are confirming that the conference was generally appropriately pitched for the delegates and that their was a positive energy associated to the two days of collaboration.

In any event there will be things that can be improved upon hence the survey asked the delegates what they did not like about the conference and where we might improve.

The overarching comment was that some delegates did not notify the SARAECE organising committee that they would not be attending, which resulted in disappointment for the delegates who had anticipated attending a presentation and had the knock on effect of causing some sessions to run out of sync with the programme. There was also a request to allow for a quicker turnaround time in the processing of abstracts and the distribution of the conference programme. Finally there was a request that we continue to work with NGOs and TVETS and that their voice should be even greater in future conferences. These are all points that the SARAECE committee will endeavour to rectify in our preparation of the next round of regional conferences.

The last question on the google survey simply provided a place for any other comments that had not yet been addressed. It was here that we received positive feedback such as :

- Onwards and upwards ECE!
- Thank you and the very able team who worked tirelessly to put things together. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed.
- We look forward to SARAECE becoming a powerful arm for research in South Africa.
- It was a wonderful experience for me.

A few additional points that SARAECE must consider going forward that emerged from the above question included:

- Increasing our visibility particularly overseas
- Increasing our membership
- Making sure that the criteria for the Novice awards is sufficiently scholarly.

These issues will be brought to the SARAECE committee's attention and ideas discussed to address the above concerns.

Addenda

SARAECE Conference abstract booklet

SARAECE Conference programme

South African Research Association in Early Childhood Education

Book of Abstracts

National Conference
Pretoria
10-11 May 2018

Contents

Symposium:

A 60-minute symposium is proposed for two related papers:

PAPER 1: PRODUCING AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT TEXT-MESSAGE CURRICULUM

AUTHORS: L. Plaatjies and N. Roberts

This paper examines gatekeeping phenomena and processes in the production of an Early Childhood Development (ECD) Short Messages Service (SMS's) for caregivers of young children. This paper forms part of a broader PhD study of an m-learning parenting programme which demonstrates a directly beneficial relationship between caregivers, children, and text-messaging information. The broader study builds on the relationship between adult education theory, change theory and communications theory. In this paper the interrelated notions of 'publics' (Warner, 2002), 'gates' and 'gatekeeping' (Bruns, 2008) are in focus. An action research design was adopted whereby the writing team could test and refine the SMS curriculum based on feedback from case study mothers. Rich qualitative information was collected from the primary beneficiaries of the service in order to improve and develop the SMS curriculum. The data collection included SMS responses, home visits, questionnaires, photographs and short videos. The study was endorsed by the National Department of Health, approved by five provincial Departments of Health, and undertaken under the ethical clearance number: 2017-038 of the University of Johannesburg's Faculty of Education. The study provides a thick description of the processes undertaken, and the gatekeeping phenomena experienced, in the development of an ECD SMS curriculum. Ways of being receptive to feedback and relevant to the lives of mothers receiving the child grant are discussed. Mothers and caregivers can participate in development of parenting programmes which use SMS's as a critical mobile platform for adult education. This paper may be of interest to government actors, curriculum designers, and implementers of ECD parenting programmes which seek to send parents systematic information about child development processes. Parents and caregivers are the first teachers of young children; and hence a key part of transforming teacher education in the early years.

Keywords: m-Learning, text-message /Short Message Service (SMS), Early Childhood Development (ECD) curriculum, communications, adult education

PAPER 2: ENGAGING WITH AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT TEXT-MESSAGE CURRICULUM

AUTHORS: I. Mostert, L. Plaatjies and N. Roberts

This paper examines the engagement processes of a ~900 caregivers of young children receiving an Early Childhood Development (ECD) Short Messages Service (SMS's) in English, Afrikaans or isiXhosa. In this paper the concepts of m-learning 'engagement' related to 'uptake' and 'use' as adopted by Roberts & Vänskä (2011) are applied. An experimental design was adopted where the target group was assigned to either a treatment group (receiving three messages per week), or a control group (receiving one message per fortnight). A pre-test and post-test survey was administered at the baseline (prior to the 6-month message service intervention), and repeated at the endline. Two additional measures of engagement were obtained: The responses to fortnightly questions posed to both treatment and control groups, and the opportunities presented fortnightly to the treatment group to request additional information. The data is analysed using descriptive statistics and factor analysis. The study was endorsed by the National Department of Health, approved by five provincial Departments of Health, and undertaken under the ethical clearance number: 2017-038 of the University of Johannesburg's Faculty of Education. The study provides quantitative evidence of how the caregivers engaged with the m-learning parenting service and reports on measurable shifts in attitudes and beliefs as well as knowledge about early childhood development. This paper may be of interest to government actors, curriculum designers, and implementers of ECD parenting programmes. Parents and caregivers are the first teachers of young children; and hence a key part of transforming teacher education in the early years.

Round Table Discussion

PRESENTING THE BASELINE FINDINGS FROM OUTPUT 2
AUTHORS: Naseema Shaik, Hasina Ebrahim and Colwyn Martin

Tranformative pedagogies sit at the heart of democratic practice and should be understood and implemented at the inception of early childhood education. The focus of this large scale study was to explore the knowledge and actions of practitioners, parents, practitioner educators and district officials about a transformative pedagogy in South Africa for children aged birth to four years. The key objective was to activate stronger social cohesion between practitioner educators, practitioners, district officials and parents and to sustain equitable and respectful dialogues which will strengthen a transformative pedagogy in SA. Whilst important measures are in place to ensure that birth to four teacher qualifications and practice is strengthened, there is also a dire need to take cognizance of a pedagogy that is inclusive, rights based and participatory. The study was undertaken through a qualitative approach and the method of data collection was through semi-structured interviews that took place in seven provinces in South Africa. The framework for the interview schedule was based on Formosinho & Formosinho (2008) pedagogy in participation. The focus of the interview questions was based on capabilities of children, listening to young children, giving children voice and choice, respect for culture and diversity, democratic participation and using language to motivate children. Findings of the study is work in progress. Ethical clearance for the study was secured by the ethics committee at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology since this was the lead institution. This was a project that was funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training and the European Union.

Keywords: Transformative, pedagogy, rights based, democratic practice

Paper Presentations:

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S LEARNING OF MATHEMATICS: THE ARTS PERSPECTIVE

AUTHORS: Olusola Ariba and K. Luneta

With the mounting awareness of the indispensable role that teachers in early years play in building and shaping the future society, the need for procedure and strategies to improve on teaching is critical.

Mathematics as a subject is relevant at all levels of education, most importantly at the early years where the foundation is laid for subsequent learning. Regrettably, it has been associated with a high record of failure and disinterested learners, who believe that mathematics is hard, irrelevant and boring (Brunkalla 2009). On the contrary, the Arts have been recognized for its impact on the mind and spirit of learners, irrespective of the age (Adu-Agyem, Enti and Peligah 2009). Neuroscience also confirmed that intellectually stimulating environments (which the arts are rich in) fortify the pathway of neurons and challenge the intellect of the child, (Jensen 2009). Thus this study seeks to explore the use of skills and content of the arts to foster children's learning of mathematics, making it interesting and meaningful. The theoretical framework underpinning this research work is based on the constructivist theory which affirms that learning takes place when learners are involved actively in the learning process, making meaning and personally constructing knowledge as they learn (Brewer 2006). The study employs a qualitative research approach whereby participant observation (video graphics) and content analysis are used to collect data from purposively sampled primary one pupils in Abeokuta, Nigeria. Results from the study revealed learners' readiness, inquisitiveness, wonder and excitement for mathematics improved. Stimulating environments using the arts can positively influence the learning of mathematics and teachers need to be adequately trained to operate an integrated curriculum.

Keywords: learning, mathematics, arts, early years

INDIGENISING THE CURRICULUM THROUGH INTEGRATION OF PLAY AND LEARNING USING *UKUDLALA IZINDLU*

AUTHOR: Nosipho Bele

This paper seeks to explore the indigenous game of *ukudlala izindlu*, which loosely translates to playing house. *Ukudlala izindlu* is a game that has existed for many years in South African townships. Internationally, much research has been done about play and its benefits to learning. However, little research has focused on the kind of play that occurs in townships in South Africa. The focus of this study was to outline the sub-activities of the indigenous game, explore the skills gained and recommend how the indigenous game can be integrated in the classroom for learning at the foundation phase level. The study was qualitative and used Piaget's theory of constructivism together with Vygotsky's social constructivism as a framework for the study. The study was completed using an interpretivist paradigm and used observation and group discussions as methods to collect data. The participants were between 4 to 7 years, male and female in one township in Kwa –Zulu Natal. The study was able to unpack the sub – activities of the game and showed the skills children develop when they play. These are social skills, interpersonal skills, creativity and inventive skills to name a few. The study recommends that indigenous games can be integrated into South African learning environments as both teachers and learners are familiar with the games.

Keywords: play, indigenous games, *ukudlala izindlu*, learning

THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONAL PARENTAL EXPERIENCES IN THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTS AND THEIR YOUNG CHILDREN

AUTHORS: Keshni Bipath and Danielle Bishop

Parental involvement holds such importance that traits such as confidence, competence, and mastery of the environment, connectedness and empathy for others can only be learnt through quality interactions with parents. It is these characteristics that "create the love, safety, and security" (Ginsburg, 2007) that a young child requires to succeed. The easily accessible information from Google on "parent's dos and don'ts" create tension amongst parents about the best parenting skills to adopt for their young child. Drawing on the theoretical framework by Baumrind (1971), this paper problematizes three prominent parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. Data are drawn from interviews with six sets of parents with children between the birth to four age category and observation of the six children at drop-off, lunch and pick up times. Thematic analysis of the data prove that a tentative notion can be made that adults who were parented under authoritative characteristics see the value in this parenting practice and thus adopt the same parenting style with their children. However, adults who were raised under the authoritarian, uninvolved and permissive parenting characteristics are more likely to utilize different parenting styles in order to create within their children a different childhood than they had once experienced. Such findings reveal that "perfect parenting" is just a myth.

Keywords: Parenting styles; Authoritarian; Authoritative; Permissive, "perfect parent"

THE IMPLEMENTABILITY OF INQUIRY-BASED SCIENCE EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN FOUNDATION PHASE CONTEXT
AUTHOR: Linda Bosman

South African children's achievement in science calls for renewed ways to approach science education, intervention and reform. Quality science experiences for young children seem to remain problematic, and practices such as inquiry-based science education (IBSE) are rarely implemented in early childhood school contexts. Preparing early childhood teachers for the task of implementing innovative child-centred pedagogies such as IBSE has thus become an important priority. This presentation reports on a completed PhD study investigating the implementability of the French *La main à la pâte* (LAMAP) IBSE programme in South Africa, focusing on two groups of participants, namely student teachers implementing IBSE in foundation phase classrooms (teaching) and children doing science like scientists in the context of their classroom (learning).

The conceptual framework integrated contemporary perspectives on childhood, theory theory and constructivist theory concepts and IBSE. I utilised an interpretative, qualitative multiple-case study design to elicit the voices of both student teachers who facilitated science education following the LAMAP approach and young children-as-scientists engaged in scientific inquiry. I purposively selected three conveniently sampled schools in an urban setting as case studies. Inspired by a rights-based perspective on childhood, I involved the child participants as consultants, and the student teachers as associates who worked cooperatively as co-researchers to try out a new approach in early childhood practice and then reflect on it as a way of teaching. Data collection methods included interactive classroom observation, whole class reflection sessions, focus group discussions, models and document analysis. Findings emphasised the potential of the LAMAP programme in preparing student teachers to effectively apply IBSE theory to foundation phase classroom practice. Implementing IBSE contributed to shaping reform-minded inquiry-oriented teacher identities for science education. Findings furthermore indicated that the children engaged in IBSE as natural scientists, displaying the cognitive capacity to think, act and learn like real scientists in the context of their classrooms. Engaging in science within a community of scientists, and being physically and mentally active in the knowledge construction process furthermore shaped children's sense of agency and identity as scientists. While this research confirms children's strong voice as scientists, the implementation of IBSE as approach in South African foundation phase classrooms ultimately depends on research-based policy making and translating policy into required transformation. Based on the results, I designed a framework proposing guidelines on multi-levels for IBSE implementation in the South African foundation phase classroom context.

Keywords: Inquiry-based science education, reform-minded, inquiry-oriented, foundation phase, child-scientist, student teacher

CREATING MEANINGFUL PEDAGOGY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CLASSES IN DIFFICULT CONDITIONS: APPLYING A RESEARCH BASED APPROACH TO CHALLENGES
AUTHORS: Henry Chinhara, Namhla Sotuku and Symphrosa Rembe

There is demand for quality early childhood development programmes across and within the breadth and length of education developing countries. Stakeholders argue the need for a shift in emphasis from teacher-directed to child-centred practices that involve active learning, problem solving, critical thinking and play. Embroiled in the early childhood education and care dilemma is support for a paradigm shift towards transformative education. Practitioners, centre directors, district managers and the Department of Social Development. Local authorities are expected to lead the implementation process. On one hand implementers are accused of failing to implement child-centred learning. The study aimed at investigating early childhood development teaching practices that support transformative education. A key aim is for teachers to shift their current teaching practices, which emphasise knowledge acquisition, drill and practice and parrot learning, towards engagement of young learners in constructivist learning experiences that involve direct experience, exploration, discovery and social interaction based on debates, discussions, critical analysis of issues and incidents. The theoretical framework is informed by constructivist principles and post-positivism paradigm. The study employed mixed methods approach, which allowed the use of many data collection instruments. Observations, interviews, questionnaires and document analysis were employed to collect data. The results showed that teachers are not aware of the transformative pedagogies, and still believe in total control of the learning processes. Given the results; the researchers recommend staff development programmes where transformative educational practices are demonstrated. Another recommendation is for school managers to initiate in-service staff development programmes led by experts.

Key Words: child-centred learning; knowledge acquisition; transformative education; exploration;

PLAY-BASED INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGIES: LESSONS FROM AUTISM SPECIAL SCHOOLS

AUTHORS: Mary Clasquin-Johnson and Tawanda Majoko

South Africa has adopted *inclusion* to ensure that all children access their fundamental right to education. We report on a 3-year-long investigation on curriculum adaptation for learners with autism. While international scholarship has focused on evidence-based practices on teaching children with autism, no such study has been conducted in South Africa. This qualitative multiple case study involved 22 ECCE teachers at five schools for children with autism in two provinces. Data was produced though document analysis, classroom observations and in-depth semi-structured interviews. We obtained ethical clearance for this study from the UNISA College of Education's Research Ethics Committee. (Ref. 2015/06/17/1130536/24/MC extended 2017/06/14 to 2019/06/14). Drawing on Inclusive Pedagogy, we consider how mainstream ECCE centres could implement play-based pedagogies for all children. This holds promise for teaching culturally, linguistically and developmentally diverse children. ECCE teachers are implementing practices in schools for children with autism that need to be shared with mainstream ECCE teachers, to empower the latter to implement inclusivity. We offer recommendations for inclusive play-based ECCE teaching strategies in teacher education programmes.

Keywords: autism, ECCE centres, play-based curricula, inclusivity, special schools

MAPPING THE ROUTE FROM HOME TO SCHOOL: INTEGRATING NUMERACY IN A PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

AUTHOR: Caroline Cohrssen

This presentation will report on one element of a six-week project enacted with kindergarten children in the year prior to starting school. The researchers were interested in providing opportunities for children to demonstrate and rehearse knowledge of shapes and spatial thinking. Spatial thinking contributes to other aspects of mathematical thinking such as concepts of quantity and recognising structural elements of patterns. Focussing on a seemingly non-mathematical topic, 'Starting School', children were positioned as experts of this process. In this way, the research reflected both a child rights approach (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2001) and a learning trajectories approach (Clements & Sarama, 2014).

Early childhood teachers enacted a planning cycle that started with gathering data about a child's interests, learning and development. Study data took the form of video-recordings and photographs of children's work collected twice-weekly over six consecutive weeks. A brief video exemplar will provide a snapshot of a one activity and explain how this activity aligned with the early years planning cycle. Clear learning objectives supported formative assessment and sequential learning experiences as components of the planning cycle. Back-and-forth conversations encouraged the use of spatial language and for children to demonstrate spatial thinking in diverse ways. Simultaneously, discussions about the important transition process from kindergarten to school provided opportunities for teachers to respond to individual children's social and emotional needs.

The findings from this study will add an important component to high quality initial teacher education through supporting early childhood teachers' ability to integrate mathematics learning in play-based curricula.

University Human Research Ethics approval was obtained prior to the start of the project.

Keywords: early years planning cycle, numeracy, kindergarten, spatial thinking

THE EARLY LEARNING OUTCOMES MEASURE (ELOM): AN INSTRUMENT FOR MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS OF EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMMES FOR SOUTH AFRICAN CHILDREN

AUTHORS: Andrew Dawes, Linda Biersteker, Matthew Snelling, Elizabeth Girdwood and Colin Tredoux

Assessment of early learning programme effectiveness in South Africa is hampered by a lack of suitable and inexpensive measures that take into account variations in cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and can be administered by trained field staff rather than professionals. The study aimed to develop an instrument to address this gap as well as measure the effectiveness of the early learning opportunity models in the SA National Integrated ECD policy. ELOM is designed to assess the effectiveness of early learning programmes in enabling children aged 50 – 69 months to reach Early Learning Development Standards for key domains prior to entering Grade R.

ELOM draws on items in existing measures aligned with the NCF. Gross motor, visual motor integration, language and literacy, cognitive and executive functioning, numeracy and mathematics are directly assessed, and social /emotional functioning is rated by teachers. Following ethics approval and piloting the age-validation and norming process used a two stage random sampling (schools in each quintile and learners in Grade R classes) which yielded a sample of 1331 children aged 50-69 months in five socio-economic groups and speaking five languages. Item Response Theory techniques were used to establish the reliability, validity and fairness of the ELOM.

Psychometry indicated that: ELOM domains are unidimensional and internally consistent; items hold interval scale status and discriminate reliably between more and less able children; items do not discriminate unfairly between children of different socio-economic and language backgrounds; age validity was established; and differential performance by socio-economic group was established.

Initial use of ELOM on a range of early learning programmes has explored whether participating children meet standards and to inform curriculum and practitioner development.

RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF REFUGEES AS THE MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN

AUTHOR: Kerryn Dixon

In noting the severe literacy challenges in South Africa, a recent Save the Children report draws specific attention to the consequences of early and primary school exclusion for child refugees, migrants, asylum seekers and children separated from parents (Martin 2015). Estimates suggest that there are 65.6 million displaced people globally, the highest number ever (Edmond 2017). Data also reveals that nearly fifty percent of refugees are children (Clayton 2015). Despite a slew of legislation supporting rights of refugee children to education the reality is different (Magqibelo et al 2016, Palmary 2009, Smit 2015). This conceptual paper takes the position that higher education has an important role to play in advocating for the educational rights of children and that there needs to be an explicit focus on preparing student teachers to work with vulnerable, marginalised and displaced children. It is underpinned by the argument from inclusive education theorists that placing principles of inclusion at the centre benefits all (Walton 2015). By drawing on a wide range of local and international literature of refugee education this paper considers what content may be relevant for teacher education. Key terms in the field are presented, the relevant legislative frameworks are identified and discussed that both support and deny children access to education, the impact of trauma on learning is considered, and pedagogical and contextual issues that affect approaches to language and literacy education in the early years are proposed.

Keywords: teacher education, refugee children, language and literacy curriculum

A PROPOSAL FOR A SOCIAL REALIST ANALYSIS OF MATHEMATICS METHODOLOGY CURRICULA FOR FOUNDATION PHASE PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

AUTHOR: Edward Domboka,

This paper focuses on my PhD proposal. My proposed research seeks to ascertain the knowledge legitimated in mathematics methodology curricula for foundation phase pre-service teachers. The trajectory of (under)performance, which starts in the foundation phase, has been tied to the poor development of children's number sense. While there are a multitude of explanations for this, one of the explanations suggests that teachers have insufficient content and pedagogical knowledge to develop children's number sense. Linked to this explanation are concerns about the teacher education system in South Africa, and the extent to which teacher education programmes are equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to develop children's number sense. My research asks the question: what knowledge and knower structures are legitimated in foundation phase pre-service mathematics methodology curricula that focus on the development of children's number sense. Documentary analysis of the mathematics methodology curricula, and interviews with the lecturers involved in teaching the number sense component of the curricula will be used to generate the empirical data. I will draw on Legitimate Code Theory and Mathematics Knowledge for Teaching as the explanatory and analytical tools. It is my hope that the findings of this proposed research will be of value and utilised to inform the design of the number sense component of pre-service mathematics methodology curricula.

Key Words: number sense; foundation phase; legitimate code theory; critical realism; mathematics knowledge for teaching

DEVELOPING AND APPLYING CLASSROOM RULES: FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES

AUTHORS: Ntombozuko S. Duku and Ishola A. Salami

Foundation Phase, especially Grade 1 is the beginning of formal schooling. Sometimes being less familiar with the formal schooling space, the learners commit mistakes which are sometimes considered by teachers as challenging and disruptive behaviours. In an attempt to manage such behaviours and creating a safe environment, foundation phase teachers draw up classroom rules. This paper explores in detail how the selected Grade 1 educators develop and apply the rules in their classrooms. The study is anchored on Choice Theory and employs a qualitative approach to understanding teachers' perspectives on developing and applying the rules for the learners. The data was collected through semi structured interviews with three Grade 1 educators who agreed to participate in the study. Documentary analysis was also used. Thematic data analysis approach was used to analyse the data. The study found that there is sometimes a mismatch between the identities of the learners and teacher expectations. Teacher power and authority that determines routines, procedures and rituals for learning sometimes frustrate learners.

EXPLORING AND UNDERSTANDING MENTORSHIP FOR BEGINNER FOUNDATION PHASE (GRADE R TO 3) TEACHERS FROM THREE SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

AUTHORS: Thokozane P. Dyosini and Geeta Motilal

Mentorship is known as the foundational tool used to support and guide novices in their transition from students to professionals. There are explicit processes that need to be followed in order for one to successfully learn from a mentor. The teaching profession is one of the few professions that lack the use of a graduate programme or internship for beginner teachers. It is assumed that foundation phase (Grade R-3) teachers in particular know how to use the skills and theory they have learned throughout their 3 or 4-year initial teacher training. This research study seeks to explore the in-service teacher's perceptions of mentorship, identify the shortfalls and outcomes of mentorship for beginner teachers and the key features of developing a mentorship programme. Recommendations for policy and practice of mentorship for beginner teachers in the foundation phase will be made. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks that will be employed for the purposes of this research study is 5 fold;

1. Communities of Practice (Wenger, 2011)
2. The Positioning Theory (Harré, 2004)
3. Mentorship
4. Initial Teacher Training
5. Professional Identity

A qualitative interpretivist paradigm will be used to attain and interpret data. Ten foundation phase beginner teacher participants will partake in answering a questionnaire. Thereafter, 6 of the chosen participants will be interviewed through the use of semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, 4 veteran foundation phase teachers who are mentors to beginner teachers will be interviewed alongside the 3 chosen primary school principals. Ethical considerations for the research will be attended to by applying for ethical clearance through the Wits ethics application system. The value of this research is to inform an intentional, standard structure and policy that enables beginner teachers in the foundation phase access to opportunities to explore their professional identities in their working contexts through a mentorship programme.

Key words: mentorship, initial teacher training, beginner teacher, professional identity, communities of practice

CHRONICLING PRACTITIONERS' EXPERIENCES IN IMPLEMENTING THE BIRTH TO FOUR CURRICULUM IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE

AUTHOR: Nelisiwe Gabela

The importance of the young child is recognised through the acknowledgement of early childhood development throughout the world. Likewise, South Africa has shown its interest in the emergent early childhood cohort by developing the curriculum for children from birth to four. This paper reports on the case study of practitioners who were among the first group that implemented the birth to four curriculum since its inception in the Free State Province. The practitioners reported on their experiences of implementing the new curriculum and their views about their preparedness to teach using the curriculum. This qualitative study is interpretive in nature. Using purposive sampling, six practitioners who were trained for this curriculum were sampled as participants of the study. Ethical consideration was obtained from various stakeholders concerned. Data was generated through semi-structured interviews and then analysed and categorised. The patterns across categories showed that there were some difficulties and some opportunities in implementing the curriculum as some practitioners benefited from using it while others responded negatively. The findings of the study showed that some of the practitioners are challenged by using the document that is written in English while they are compelled to teach in their mother tongue, which is Sesotho. On the other hand, others reported that they are benefitting from the curriculum as it provides them with guidance. The study concluded that the practitioners who are implementing the curriculum need proper training and support to boost their self-confidence and to realise the important role in implementing and sustaining the birth to four curriculum.

Keywords: practitioners' experiences, 0-4 year's old children, curriculum, implementation

READING ACQUISITION IN GRADE 1 – A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

AUTHORS: Annalize Gouws and Anne-Mari Dicker

Although the study focused on a broad range of objectives the main objective of the study was to determine if teachers felt that the Home Language Workbook (DBE, 2016) provided by the Department of Education is sufficient to teach children to read in Grade 1 without an additional phonics programme. A thorough literature study indicated the importance of phonics as a method of teaching reading; (Woodward, 2015) and the benefits of a phonics. The Balanced Approach to reading as well as the Simple View to reading are the two theories that formed the theoretical framework for the study. The Balanced Approach to reading is the strategy to teach reading through balancing Phonics and the Whole Language theory. The Simple View to reading is built on the principle that reading is achieved through Decoding and Verbal Comprehension. The conceptual framework entailed an analysis of Home Language as a subject of the CAPS that was introduced in 2011. A pragmatic view to research supported the methodology of the study. A convergent parallel mixed-method was used by combining quantitative and qualitative research methods done over the same period of time. Qualitative data was gathered through 6 in-depth interviews with Grade 1 teachers. Quantitative data was gathered through 48 questionnaires that were completed by Grade 1 teachers teaching in English medium schools in Mpumalanga. Permission for the study was obtained from UNISA's ethics committee as well as from the Department of Education. Care was taken to respect all participants by obtaining permission from principals and teachers before partaking. All information is confidential. Most teachers (98%) felt that the Home Language Workbook (DBE, 2016) provided by the Department of Education was insufficient to teach reading in Grade 1 without a phonics programme. Teachers felt they need more reading resources. According to the finding of the research an additional phonics programme and other reading resources can be an advantage if made available to Grade 1 teachers to assist them with teaching reading in Grade 1.

Keywords: reading acquisition, teachers' perspectives, reading in English, reading resources, phonics

LIFTING THE PROFESSIONAL BAR FOR SA'S UNDER AND UNQUALIFIED GRADE R PRACTITIONERS THROUGH WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING (WIL)

AUTHOR: Susan Greyling

According to the CHE (Council on Higher Education, 2011), programmes that promote graduates' successful integration into the world of work and that enable graduates to make meaningful contributions in contexts of development, require innovative curricular, teaching, learning and assessment practices. Work integrated learning (WIL) is implemented in an integrated way within the Diploma in Grade R Teaching. Students are required to integrate their knowledge and skills attained through academic modules with knowledge and skills mastered *from* and *in* practice, while guided by a professional mentor in the field of grade R education. A study guide directs students in the implementation of informal and formal practical tasks, as well as reflective learning to develop an increasingly self-regulated teaching practice. Assessment of WIL by mentors and NWU academic staff is based on tangible proof of applied competencies in the form of a portfolio (Rahima & Donald, 1996). The development and application of reflective learning strategies also instil in teachers the tendency towards a reflective teaching practice, which is often viewed as the most important characteristic of an expert teacher. Effective and meaningful learning, theoretical and practical, is always nestled in reflective learning. Students continuously reflect on learning through theory (academic modules), as well as on learning in and from practice. Research shows that reflective learning by teachers can make a lasting impact on their teaching practice (Henderson, Napan & Monteiro, 2004). Work-integrated learning experiences provide a bridge for the student between the academic present, and their professional future - an opportunity to apply and merge theoretical knowledge gained in academic studies to "real-world" workplace practical experiences. WIL prepares the student for a career by providing an opportunity to develop relevant professional skills. A three-way partnership between the student, the workplace organisation, and the university requires all parties in the relationship to assume definite responsibilities, perform specific functions, and achieve benefits as a result of the involvement (Martin & Hughes, 2009:8).

Keywords: under and unqualified grade R practitioners, work-integrated learning (WIL), Council on Higher Education (CHE), portfolio**,** mentor

TOWARDS A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF TEACHER TRAINING, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES

AUTHOR: Giulietta Harrison

There were three main drivers in this research project, namely quality, diversity and collaboration between multiple stakeholders. The aim of this research was two-fold: firstly, to benchmark the status quo regarding how training institutions presently develop and train in-service and pre-service teachers and secondly to assist in understanding what attitudes and practices can inform the development of a quality birth to four degree or diploma. The research methods employed were Action Research and mixed methods. Three national surveys were conducted together with a literature review and document analysis, with participation of 18 HE, TVET and NGO institutions. Arguments were further strengthened with the use of case studies. Four key areas were identified for examination by a collaborative research team namely Work Integrated Learning (WIL); Academic Support (AS); Record of Prior Learning (RPL) and Norms and Standards. Findings surfaced a wide variety of ECE qualifications on offer. The study found that academic support was acknowledged as important but not implemented in a sufficiently integrated manner; reflective practice is highly prised by academics as a skill that teachers should possess in order to be quality educators and that a key component of WIL was that students should be adaptive to context. RPL seemed to have limited uptake from HEIs as it was viewed as having the potential to compromise quality. A competency approach was suggested as the way forward and ten competencies were isolated from policy documents.

Keywords: academic support, work integrated learning (WIL), recognition of prior learning (RPL), action research, collaboration

GRANDMOTHERS' HOME ACTIVITIES AND ACQUISITION OF MATHEMATICAL SKILLS BY GRADE II LEARNERS

AUTHORS: F. N. Hlungulu, N Duku and I.A. Salami

Literature has it that one of the contributing factors to poor performance of early years' learners is the lack of parental involvement in exposing children to mathematical skills as parents do not know how to help their children with mathematics. In South Africa, in particular, there is evidence that most children live with their grandmothers. Yet studies on parental involvement in mathematics learning concentrated more on biological parents or guardians. There is dearth of information on how and what activities grandmothers engage their grandchildren with at home. The question asked was whether activities with grandmothers could enhance the acquisition of mathematical skills? This study was anchored on pragmatism theory and adopted interpretive paradigm conducted in an exploratory approach. Purposive sampling technique was used to select six grandmothers, three teachers and six Grade II learners. The criteria for selection were that the home must be one headed by grandmother who has a grandchild in Grade II; the teachers are those teaching the learners identified from selected homes. A self-designed semi-structured interview schedule was used to gather data. Necessary ethical considerations were observed during data collection which include negotiation of entry, anonymity, informed consent among others. Some of the major findings are the diverse activities at grandmothers' homes that inform physical, financial, fun and playful activities which can enhance the acquisition of mathematical skills. Some mathematical skills that can be reinforced are number and numeracy, geometrical shapes, spatial relationships, classification and sorting among others. It is recommended that Grade II teachers should collaborate with caregivers at learners' homes, most especially grandmothers in order to encourage and promote home activities that can enhance learners' acquisition of mathematical skills.

Keywords: grandmothers, home activities, mathematical skills acquisition, grade II learners, school-home collaboration

IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON EARLY LEARNERS' IMMUNIZATIONS IN MOUNTAIN LEARNING ECOLOGY IN NIGERIA

AUTHORS: Olugbenga Ige, Emmanuel Adu

Mountain societies around the world are vulnerable to seasonal movements of people from one region to another, which could make or mar the health care of young school children. This study presents the impacts of parental migration on the health care of school children in a mountain community in Nigeria. The sample of the study comprised 28 school-aged children and three teachers purposefully selected from a mountain learning ecology in Nigeria. The study adopted a mixed method approach because it possesses both qualitative and quantitative dimensions. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the quantitative data, while the Glasser-Straussian constant comparison technique was used to identify the trends in the key informant interviews. Results showed that migration of parents influence the health care of school children in the selected alpine communities. Results of the qualitative and quantitative analyses show that children with migrating parents were not vaccinated for measles, polio, and whooping cough. The study projects the need for a participatory health care system for school children in global mountain communities.

Keywords: migration, early learners, immunizations, health care, mountain learning ecology, Nigeria

INVESTIGATING GENDERED PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS TOWARDS FOUNDATION PHASE MALE TEACHERS IN EASTERN CAPE SCHOOLS

AUTHOR: Obakeng Kagola

The aim of the study is to investigate the gendered perceptions of school governing bodies (SGB) towards foundation phase male teachers. Literature has focused on factors that influence the low participation of males entering the highly feminised profession (Bhana and Moosa, 2016) and how other in-service students perceive male student teachers studying in the foundation phase programme (Mashike, 2015). There is paucity in literature regarding the role played by SGB's in the employment of males as foundation phase teachers. Therefore, I will employ a qualitative approach, situated in a critical paradigm, and utilize participatory visual inquiry (namely collage) to explore the gendered perceptions of SGB's within the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan. Consent will be requested from Nelson Mandela University and the Department of Basic Education. The study aims to contribute to the defeminisation of the foundation phase and how SGB's can play an important role in this regard. This presentation is an opportunity to present my proposal of study which is a work in progress.

Keywords: gendered perceptions, school governing bodies, male foundation phase teachers, participatory visual inquiry

ENRICHING LEARNING AND TEACHING THROUGH ARTEFACTS: AN EARLY CHILDHOOD MATHEMATICS TEACHER EDUCATOR'S SELF-STUDY

AUTHOR: Makie Kortjass

This paper reports on what I learned in a self-study research project using artefacts for teaching an integrated learning approach (ILA) to foundation phase (FP) pre-service teachers in the module Numeracy in the Early Years. As a teacher educator, self-study inspires me to continually attempt to improve my practices with the aim of supporting pre-service teachers' learning and subsequently their teaching. Considering the importance of early childhood education as agent for social change, I implemented an integrated approach to teaching and learning mathematics which requires critical awareness of how mathematical relationships are used in social, environmental and cultural relations. I adopted a sociocultural theoretical perspective which highlights the fundamental role of working together in making sense collectively of personal experience. Ethical clearance to conduct the study was obtained through the appropriate channels at the institution. In the artefact activity, the students discussed and presented self-selected cultural artefacts such as beadwork, jewellery, clothing, etc. by describing what their artefacts were, their patterns and how they linked with Mathematics, Languages and Life Skills learning areas. Through this activity, I discovered that for pre-service teachers to learn and appreciate mathematics meaningfully, they require ample opportunities for making sense of objects from their sociocultural environments and practical experience of the content of early childhood mathematics. I also learned the importance of modelling that practice in my classroom in order for an integrated approach to mathematics to make sense to the pre-service teachers. By engaging in innovative self-study methods to support pre-service teachers, teacher educators can improve the quality of their own practice in order to improve student learning.

Key words: self-study research, integrated learning approach, early childhood mathematics, cultural artefacts, pre-service teachers

GRADE R MATHEMATICS: IN OR OUT?

AUTHOR: Cally Kuhne

Many Grade R teachers react negatively to the idea of teaching mathematics in Grade R, preferring to talk about 'numeracy' and 'incidental learning of maths' in the daily programme. Too many Grade R practitioners (or teachers) lack the knowledge and understanding of the mathematics content that needs to be introduced in Grade R in order for children to succeed in Grade 1. The question often asked is 'What is mathematics in Grade R and how should it appropriately be dealt with at this level?' Research on children's development of maths concepts present several trajectories for learning and highlight key milestones. The Schools Development Unit (SDU) at the University of Cape Town (UCT) has developed a Grade R Mathematics Programme (R-Maths) that attempts to answer these questions and provide a conceptual 'road map' to support teaching in Grade R. R-Maths builds on and extends the early mathematics concepts that children develop in their everyday contexts. It intentionally makes the transition from pre-school to Grade 1 by offering a framework for understanding the 'big ideas' that underpin the five Grade R CAPS mathematics content areas. In addition, it presents a trajectory that highlights the key milestones in children's development of early maths concepts. R-Maths can be used as a resource when planning and preparing maths experiences for young children and it offers suggestions on how to extend children's maths language, vocabulary and reasoning through play-based, hands on activities. R-Maths also provides a guide for assessing children's maths knowledge through meaningful and purposeful activities and experiences. The presentation will seek to answer what mathematics in Grade R is and how to appropriately deal with it in the grade R class.

Keywords: early mathematics, grade R, conceptual roadmap, every day contexts, play-based

CURRICULUM ACCESSIBILITY BY ALL FOUNDATION PHASE LEARNERS: DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH IN SOUTH AFRICAN FULL SERVICE SCHOOLS

AUTHOR: Raesetia G. Ledwaba

Schools globally are characterised by an increasingly diverse learner population. Diverse needs of learners have implications for teaching pedagogy, as it demands an intensive focus on learning needs. Accommodating diverse learning needs requires a shift from the traditional "one-size-fits-all" to a more inclusive approach. This study explored foundation phase teachers' experiences in implementing curriculum differentiation in full service schools. Bronfenbrenner's ecosystematic theory provides the theoretical lens to interpret the data. The sample size for this interpretive study consisted of six foundation phase teachers from three rural and three township full service schools in three different provinces. Data collecting techniques employed were semi-structured face-to-face interviews and documents analysis. The study revealed that foundation phase learners are disadvantaged and still excluded from curriculum accessibility due to teachers' limited understanding and implementation of differentiation. The study also revealed that teachers have limited or no knowledge of policy documents that guide differentiation of the curriculum. In the light of these findings, some recommendation and implications are discussed.

Keywords: curriculum differentiation, diversity, foundation phase, full service schools,

TRANSFORMING EARLY LEARNING: A THEORY AND PRACTICE DRIVEN ORIENTATION COURSE SUPPORTING NATIONAL CURRICULUM TRAINING FOR BIRTH TO FOUR YEAR OLDS

AUTHORS: Nadia Lubowski and Carole Bloch

The 5-day orientation course was a 'hands-on' experiential adventure which dealt with the fundamentals of nurturing and educating our birth to four year olds in South Africa. A small group of Early Childhood Specialists attended.

We focused on locating participants in their own practice in order to better experience the learning world of babies and young children. Understanding how babies and young children learn was discussed at length. We incorporated fundamental pedagogical information to inspire and support learning by providing optimal spaces, resources and approaches. The entire course was informed by relevant literature (given to all participants) and current thinking which has stood the test of time from holistic, inter-disciplinary perspectives: anthropology, philosophy, psychology neuroscience, language studies and education.

The course was designed with the aim of appreciating the necessity of academics experiencing practical implementation for themselves to support reflecting on and understanding of the essential 'practice-reflection - theory-research-practice' cycle. Key understandings and intentions of the course for participants were to: be confident about what and how to provide a range of educationally worthwhile experiences for children in well thought through ways; to deepen their understanding of appropriate early childhood educational approaches; understand young children as story tellers, symbol makers, symbol users and meaning makers and become familiar with 10 transglobal principles of early learning (Bruce 1987/2005). This course is being researched by UCT to understand its use in training. The UCT ethics clearance procedures were followed. Audio and video-recordings were taken and will be used for research purposes, including improving the course for the benefit of future teacher educators in ECCE. Follow-up visits with informal discussions of videoed data with participants will take place in their own professional settings. The different video-recordings, field notes and auto-ethnographic (visual) data will be used to provide evidence of effectiveness.

TEACHER PREPARATION FOR INCLUSIVITY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

AUTHORS: Dikeledi Mahlo & Thembi Phala

Globally inclusivity in Early Childhood Education (ECE) is on the agenda of many educational institutions. However, student teachers are unable to deal with diverse needs of young learners in the early year's classrooms. Drawing from Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979), the paper argues that curriculum practice is shaped by systemic factors. The aim of this qualitative study was to investigate teacher education initiatives undertaken by higher institutions preparing student teachers to teach learners with diverse needs. Data was collected from 20 student teachers through interviews and observations. The findings revealed that the practical component of inclusive education was missing in the teacher preparation programme for which the student teachers were registered. Only one module of inclusive education formed part of their studies and this did not prepare them adequately to practise inclusivity at schools. Higher education institutions should transform their teacher education programmes to include a practical component for inclusivity and design specialist programmes for addressing different barriers to learning and development.

Key words: teacher preparation, early childhood education student teachers, curriculum transformation, practical components for inclusivity**.**

THE CREATION OF A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO THEIR COMMENCEMENT OF FORMAL SCHOOLING

AUTHORS: Ntshengedzeni T. Makhwanya, T A Mbatha; and A P Kutame

The aim of this study will be to investigate the creation of a learning environment for children from birth to the commencement of formal schooling. Simple random and purposive sampling procedures will be used to select participants for this study. Early years are critical for creating a learning environment for children from the earliest age until they go to formal schooling. Early Childhood Development (ECD) is critical to ensure better performance in formal schooling which will later result in improved levels of employment. However, very little literature is available on how to prepare children to succeed when they start formal schooling. A theoretical framework based on a bio-ecological system of Bronfenbrenner, which looks at child development within the context of the system of relationships, will be applied. This study will follow a pragmatic paradigm that uses both the quantitative and qualitative research approaches collecting data through questionnaires and face to face interviews. Permission will be sought from all those who will be taking part in the study. No-one will be forced to take part and will be advised to stop participation in case they feel uncomfortable. The findings of the research will inform researchers on how the learning environments for children from birth to the commencement of their formal schooling can be created. Caregivers, ECD practitioners, educators and parents will be informed by the recommendations and suggestions from this study.

Key words: learning environment, pre-school children, preparation for formal education

EVERYDAY CLASSROOM LITERACY PRACTICES: NORMALISING THE SCHOOL READY LITERATE CHILD

AUTHOR: Colwyn Martin

Framing early childhood education as an instrument for school readiness and later school success has become a normative and universal truth for literacy practices both within South Africa and internationally. It can therefore be argued that early literacy practices work to [re]produce and [re]construct particular forms of knowledge and literate subjects in early childhood classrooms. Using classroom observation data, generated from a larger doctoral study, this article looks at the classroom literacy practices of two early childhood teachers; the kinds of literate children these practices engendered and its normalising effects. Foucault's theory of disciplinary power enabled an exploration of the complex interplay of teaching and learning in the early childhood classrooms. A genealogical analysis revealed how disciplinary technologies were embodied in different literacy practices, which were interconnected with particular truths and knowledge and worked to produce the school ready, literate child. In addition, the effects of these technologies of power constructed and normalised children in particular ways. However, it was during this process of normalisation that children began to negotiate their subjectivity; [re]producing and [re]constructing themselves within the literacy space. This points to the productive effects of literacy practices that emphasise the subjectivity of an agentic, self-regulated child, whilst at the same time, one who is subject to someone else through different technologies of power.
Keywords: early childhood, literacy practices, disciplinary power, normalisation, subjectivity, genealogy

PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS OF A GRADE 3 TEACHER USING THE *JIKA IMFUNDO* CURRICULUM INTERVENTION TO TEACH LITERACY IN ENGLISH AS A FAL
AUTHOR: Thabile Mbatha-Ngubane

The purpose of the research is to explore teachers' experiences and viewpoints about using the Jika Imfundo resources for teaching in a Grade 3 classroom. Maharaj, Nkosi and Mkhize (2016) assert that South Africa's primary education faces many challenges such as the implementation of Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) due to the lack of resources and poorly trained teachers. They recommend proper training, ongoing support and the provision of resources in order to ensure effective curriculum implementation. Jika Imfundo is a programme implemented by the Department of Education (DoE) to improve learning outcomes in CAPS. It is designed by PILO (Programme to Improve Learning Outcomes). It focuses on monitoring curriculum coverage and reporting it to the level where action can be taken. Curriculum theory was used as an analytical framework. One Grade 3 teacher's views are analysed in an ongoing research project. A semi-structured interview and an analysis of the Tracker and other related documents were reviewed. The research question being asked is: How materials provided by Jika Imfundo are used in teaching Grade 3 and how they facilitate coverage of the learning outcomes in IsiZulu Home Language? Preliminary findings revealed that teachers were enthusiastic towards Jika Imfundo amid concerns that it rushes them to cover a lot of topics in the curriculum. It eases lesson preparation and the quality of learners' and teachers' work is suitable. However, there are concerns regarding time and pacing hindering differentiated learning. Although the quality of the resources is good in ensuring curriculum coverage, teachers require flexibility to make practical additions. The findings are valuable in giving teachers' feedback of this very important intervention.

Keywords: Jika Imfundo, CAPS, learning outcomes, tracker, intervention

UNDERSTANDING PARENTING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: EXPERIENCES OF RURAL GRADE R TEACHERS

AUTHOR: Soane J. Mohapi

The historical definitions of parenting are still present in the current academic scholarship, research, educational policies and school discourses. For the purpose of this paper, parenting is regarded as how parents and families create home environments that support their children as they grow up and learn. This paper seeks to explore the experiences of rural grade R teachers to understand parenting as they experience the phenomenon in Early Childhood Education. Three teachers were selected randomly from the three schools in Phuthaditshaba in the Free State. These teachers were part of the "500 Schools" project conducted by UNISA academics. The results showed that teachers are faced with challenges of linking what the child has learnt at home and what he/she must learn at school. Teachers find themselves playing a parental role instead of being able to build on the foundation laid by parents at home. The paper advocates parenting strategies as a solution to create supportive learning environments for children in Early Childhood Education

IN PURSUIT OF AN "INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND BARRIERS TO LEARNING" COURSE IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION USING A COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE APPROACH

AUTHOR: Bev Moore

The motivation for this paper is based on exploring the possibilities for developing a pre-service teacher education course on teaching children with barriers to learning within the inclusive education domain. In South African schools there are increasing pressures that challenge teachers to accommodate learners with various forms of barriers to learning – from the visible to the invisible. Research shows that many teachers do not have the necessary support and theoretical knowledge required to identify learning barriers with reasonable accuracy, and provide suitable interventions. Given this situation, it is crucial for teacher education institutions to develop pre-service teachers' knowledge and skill so as to equip them to teach in diverse classrooms. Developing a course to meet these requirements begs a number of questions: what is the core knowledge required for barriers to learning; what is the nature of this knowledge; what counts as knowledge; what are the learning mechanisms and critical skills necessary for teachers to become professional and confident inclusive teachers. Important to answering these questions includes the voice and experience of in-service teachers. Notwithstanding, the intentions of education policies, these documents do not answer the above questions or provide adequate information to inform the pedagogical content for an Inclusive Education and Barriers to Learning course for pre-service teachers. This leaves teacher-educators to create and implement their own innovative means of packaging a curriculum for inclusive education purposes. Orientations to the course development includes: linking research to practice; building on students' prior knowledge, and it being appropriate to their developing understanding of teaching; hearing the voices of practicing teachers; embedding their needs into the course

so that it may be fit for purpose. Hence, an interpretive framework using a communities of practice approach will be followed. To accomplish the above, educational design research methodology has been purposely chosen. It is iterative in nature and addresses educational problems in real-world settings. It has two primary goals: to generate knowledge by exploring the experiences of others; and to develop potential solutions to an identified problem. Therefore, to gather the necessary data the following tools will be used: interviews with key role-players; reflective journal entries and document analysis of course notes, 'snapshot' experiences in assignment format and unstructured written responses. The research findings will provide a framework on which teacher-educators may design their curriculum, and reflect upon their own practice. Consequently, this study contributes towards pre-service teachers being better prepared to meet the realities of inclusive education within the South African context.

THE AFRICA A+ SCHOOLS PILOT PROJECT: ENABLING SCHOOLS TO NURTURE CREATIVITY
AUTHOR: Anya Morris

The World Economic Forum's *Future of Jobs Report,* published in January 2016, estimates that up to 65% of young children will be working in jobs that do not exist today. The report identifies key skills that employers will require of their 2030 employees i.e. problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and emotional intelligence. How do we prepare children for success in the age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution?

The Africa A+ Schools project, a three-year pilot project completed in March 2018, sought to address the conundrum of how to educate today's children for tomorrow's world through an approach underpinned by eight A+ Essentials. A+ is a whole school methodology that enables creativity, collaboration, diversity and the arts to flourish while supporting curriculum outcomes. A+ creates a climate where educators can realise themselves as agents of change in children's lives. Feedback from two participants reveal how they saw their own growth and revealed changed attitudes towards children:

> *For adults, a lot of us think we can't do things. Also, because of what we went through... If a person says you're stupid, you take on that you're stupid. If you're given the choice to try different things, make mistakes, that's how you grow, get more confident. Give kids free choice, they can see they can choose, accomplish something, become more independent.*

> *I am so used to being told what to do; thank you for making me think and be creative.*

The presentation draws on the project director's experiences and the findings from two project evaluation reports (Biersteker & Burtt, 2017; Biersteker, 2018), a Master's study (Kloppers, 2018), and a five-year study by the University of Central Oklahoma. The presentation outlines the context and A+ activities and challenges before describing the

contribution made to teaching and learning in South African early education settings.

Keywords: creativity, school transformation, educating for the future

EXPLORING TEACHER CHANGE FROM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AUTHORS: Geeta Motilal and Brahm Fleisch

This article describes an envisaged model of teacher change from a professional development intervention. The model portrays the implementation of training from an Early Grade Reading Study (EGRS) and captures the teachers' attitudes, perceptions and instructional changes made to the teaching of reading in Setswana in foundation phase (Grade 1-3) classrooms. This study uses a case study interpretive paradigm to provide an empirical comparison of effects of different characteristics of professional development on teachers' learning. Teachers from four schools participating in the EGRS were observed while teaching and interviewed to gather data. Guskey's (2002) model of teacher change is used to analyse the data.

Results indicate that teacher change occur only if (a) it is recognised that professional development is gradual and a difficult process; (b) ensure that teachers get regular feedback on student progress and (c) provide continued follow-up, support and pressure in the form of coaching or monitoring.

Research evidence supporting the model is summarized and the conditions under which the change is visualized and implemented is described.

EXPLORING THE USE OF ICTS TO ENHANCE VISUAL PERCEPTUAL SKILLS OF GRADE R LEARNERS

AUTHOR: Shila Mphahlele

This study aims to explore the roles that Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) play in enhancing visual perceptual skills of grade R learners; and focuses on the seven building blocks necessary to develop visual perception: visual discrimination, visual memory, visual spatial relationship, visual sequential memory, visual figure ground, visual form constancy and visual closure. ICT in education has been a policy imperative in South Africa since 1996, however, implementation has been emphasised in other grades except Grade R. The literature on the use of ICTs has highlighted its fundamental role in the enhancement of visual perceptual skills as confirmed by studies conducted by Wlley, Grayson, & Biedenbach (1989) and Valantika, Firman & Nahadi (2017). However, one of the dominant assumptions made about ICTs is that they have potential for providing supplementary visual perceptual and visual motor therapy or home programming activities. Research findings from studies conducted by Schneck (2011) and Visser, Nel, Jansen, Kinmont, Terblanché, and van Wyk, (2017) indicate that learners without accurate visual perceptual processing, would have difficulty learning to read, give or follow directions, copy from the whiteboard, visualize objects or past experiences, have good eye-hand coordination, integrate visual information with other senses to do things like ride a bike. Furthermore, considerable amount of literature indicates that traditional teaching has put more emphasis on the development of reading skills instead of focusing on the development of visual perceptual skills as a basic prerequisite. This study seeks to explore how grade R practitioners facilitate and mediate the teacher-learner interaction as well as learner-learner interaction when enhancing visual perceptual skills using ICTs in the classroom. This study departs on the assumption that children are social beings intertwined with other people eager to help them learn and gain skills. Drawing on Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development, it argues that the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding are important to classroom learning. Vygotsky believed that when a learner is at the ZPD for a particular task (in the context of this study: visual perceptual development), providing the appropriate assistance (scaffolding) (in the context of this study: using ICTs) will give the learner enough of a motivation to achieve the task. Guided by the theoretical framework explained above, the suitable paradigm for this study is considered social constructivism on the premise that it emphasises the importance of the learner being actively involved in the learning process. With the use of ICTs, the learner plays a more active role. Qualitative research will be undertaken and data will be collected through lesson observation, document analysis and teacher interviews in five grade R classes. Ethical clearance was obtained from UNISA and the Gauteng DoE. Preliminary results of the study will be presented.

Keywords: Information Communication Technology, Early Childhood Education, visual perceptual skills, Zone of Proximal Development, scaffolding.

AN EXPLORATION OF HOW ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE TEACHERS TEACH READING TO GRADE THREE LEARNERS IN MULTILINGUAL CONTEXTS

AUTHOR: Welile N Msimango

This paper will report on the exploration of how English first language teachers teach reading to grade three learners in multilingual contexts. Reading plays a pivotal role in terms of learners' comprehension and understanding of what is taught in schools. In the context of South Africa, the legacy of apartheid can still be felt almost 24 years after its collapse. This is more so the case considering the linguistic diversity of South Africa - many learners in multilingual contexts of South Africa encounter reading difficulties as they are taught in a language foreign to their mother tongues. If learners cannot read there is a greater likelihood of poor academic achievement. After observing some grade three learners struggling with reading, I intended to explore how teachers who speak English as a first language teach reading to grade three learners. The study was located within the interpretive paradigm and the case study was utilised as an appropriate methodology. I used the top-down reading model in order to frame my work. It was employed for its potentiality at allowing teachers to read interesting stories from the beginning to the end. It also allowed learners reading errors to be corrected immediately by the teacher. The study was guided by the university's and Department of Education ethics and policies. As a result, full ethical clearance approval was granted by the university and the KZN Department of Education. The findings revealed that teachers who speak English as a first language, in multilingual context, experienced several challenges in teaching reading to grade three learners. In overcoming this, teachers employed a variety of methods and strategies while teaching reading, thereby ensuring comprehension and support for the learners. The study has wide ranging implications not only for multilingual schools (schools often more resourced), but for poor schools too. The implication for practice highlights the importance of team work in the school, knowledge and competence in the teaching of reading, comprehension of teacher's role and the prioritisation of child in the reading process.

CAN THE RECRUITMENT OF MEN INTO FOUNDATION PHASE ADDRESS GENDER INEQUALITY? A CASE OF NINE MEN IN THE PROVINCE OF MPUMALANGA

AUTHOR: Vusi Msiza

The paper draws from a broader project that sought to explore the constructions of masculinity and professional identities by male foundation phase teachers. In South Africa foundation phase teaching is still predominantly female and recently there has been calls to recruit more men in a space previously reserved for women only. The paper explores the perceptions on the recruitment of more men and its impact for gender equality in the context of South Africa. The study is informed by interpretive paradigm and methodologically I used a case study. The data was generated using a total of nine men, who were observed and interviewed twice. For theory, the study was framed using Connell's (1995, 2005) theory of masculinities and intersectionality theory by Crenshaw (1989) to demonstrate; how gender, sex, ethnicity, sexuality and context shapes the perceptions of men on issues of gender equality and the recruitment. Ethical requirements were adhered to and permission obtained from the relevant institution. The study found that male teachers in the foundation phase are calling for the recruitment of more men to break the cycle of the teaching occupation being perceived for women only. Men also felt a need to challenge the thinking around gender roles and stereotyping. The perceptions of the male teachers reveal nuances of patriarchy and a portrayal of female teachers as irrational. The findings suggest that there should be a policy framework on teacher recruitment, particularly for foundation phase teachers. It is also recommended that institutions of higher education develop modules that deal with gender issues in the context of foundation phase teaching.

Keywords: gender equality, foundation phase, masculinities

THE INFLUENCE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF FOUNDATION PHASE LEARNERS IN SCHOOLS

AUTHORS: Shonisani A. Mulovhedzi and Ndileleni P. Mudzielwana

The school environment is caring and allows learners to develop good health and well-being during physical movement activities. Physical movement activities are essential for successful learning and happy lives for children. This paper aimed at exploring the role of physical activities on good health and well-being of foundation phase learners. The study adopted a qualitative case study design. All foundation phase teachers were part of this study, but only eight sampled teachers participated. Interviews were used as the main and sole data collection tool and data was analysed thematically. Self-determination Theory was applied in this study. The study found that in schools, some teachers use physical activities to make learners aware of certain basic concepts through movement. Some teachers experienced a problem of engaging learners in physical activities due to an unauthentic environment. There were gaps that emerged from interviews as teachers were not aware that physical activities were associated with health outcomes in schools. The study recommends that teachers should be equipped with theoretical knowledge on how learners can learn through movement. Teachers should be encouraged to engage learners in physical activities every day for their healthy development and well-being. Teachers should be motivated to implement correct programmes as stated in the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement which serves as a vital role in developing learner's movement abilities.

CONTEXTUAL VARIATION AND PEDAGOGY IN THE INTRODUCTION OF FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN GRADE 1: A MULTI-CASE STUDY

AUTHORS: Jabulile Mzimela and Labby Ramrathan

This paper aims to determine whether the geographical categorisation of schools, namely; urban, semi-urban and rural, have any influence on the introduction of First Additional Language (FAL) in grade 1 as mandated by the national curriculum. These categories have largely been used in reporting learner performances and interventions, yet these categories may have serious implications for teaching and learning and may ultimately impact learner performance. Research on first additional language introduction and teaching has been on the agenda in South Africa, and indeed the world, for several decades now. Interventions have been made in response to systemic findings, yet little success has been noted in terms of advancement to a sustainable degree. As a result, on-going research in this focus area is needed to enrich scholarly debates and the practice of additional language introduction and teaching with new insights. This paper alludes to the new insights that were obtained in its quest to determine if there were any significant deviations in the pedagogical practices that Grade 1 teachers employed when teaching a first additional language in different contexts. The research study was underpinned by Bernstein's pedagogic theory and Bourdieu's social topography conceptual framework. The study was constructed as a qualitative multi-case study that involved three grade 1 teachers who taught English FAL in three geographically different schools in Ilembe District. Data were generated through multiple data generation methods that included semi-structured interviews, structured observations, and document analysis. The data were thematically analysed and the results are presented in this paper as collated key findings. The findings revealed variances in the manner in which teachers introduced English FAL. These variances were linked to contextual variations that clearly influenced the way they introduced EFAL. The study's axiology contributes to a fresh understanding of how geographical variations influence grade 1 teachers' pedagogic practices.

Keywords: First Additional Language teaching, grade 1 teachers, pedagogic practices, geographical context, school categorisation

UNDERSTANDING PLAY AS A TEACHING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP PEDAGOGIC CONTENT KNOWLEDGE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

AUTHORS: Blanche N. Ndlovu and N. Madonda

In this article our aim was to explore B.Ed. Early Childhood Development (ECD) preservice teachers' understanding of play as a teaching strategy to develop pedagogic content knowledge and also to develop play as a teaching strategy in the ECD. The study was conducted with forty pre-service teachers in their final year of the Bachelor of Education (Foundation Phase specialisation), in one of the universities. Case study design was employed to generate qualitative data by means of focus group discussions, semi-structured conversation and semi-structured interviews. Purposive sampling was used to select the most accessible research participants. Data was analysed using guided analysis (which produced narrative stories). This focussed on the ten curriculum component of the spider web. Research analyses, semi-structured conversation, one on-one semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and semi-structured conversations were used for data production. Using guided data analysis, the conclusions arrived at indicate that play is important in children's learning and development. The findings signify that play environments for ECD pre-service students should be inviting and equipped with toys that are available so that children can play whilst learning.

Key words: pedagogy, play, content knowledge, curriculum, childhood education

AN EXPLORATION OF EVALUATIVE CRITERIA TRANSMITTED DURING THE TEACHING OF EARLY NUMBER SENSE IN SEPEDI AND ENGLISH

Author: Manono Poo

This study was motivated by studies on differences in pedagogies and learner performances within the South African context. Considering the state of mathematics teaching and the Language of Teaching and Learning (LoLT) within the South African primary schools, the study investigated a range of evaluative criteria (EC) teachers transmitted in Sepedi and English medium classrooms during the teaching of early number and how modes of representation featured in what was transmitted. The focus on EC was motivated by literature evidence of the absence of EC in schools serving disadvantaged learners (Hoadley 2008). Data included observations, field notes and video recording of whole class lesson segments from four primary schools in Johannesburg East. Using the EC and the MoR (Modes of Representation) framework, a grounded analysis of data showed four varied levels of transmission of the evaluative criteria with varied translations between representations. Findings of this study reinforce evidence of pedagogic variations in the two language groups based on the range of the EC teachers transmitted and how modes of representations featured in what was transmitted.

Key words: mathematics, evaluative criteria, modes of representations, early number, additive relations

BEYOND POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL: EXPERIENCES OF THE ECD PROGRAMME IN LESOTHO

AUTHORS: Edith M. Sebatane and Setungoane Letsatsi

The study seeks to unfold key issues that face policy implementation, resulting in the slow pace of implementation of planned activities. The need for development of policies relating to early childhood development is critical (Vargas-Baron 2001). The implementation of these policies relating to children's matters help to, among others, fast track the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by individual countries. Policy implementation efforts undertaken in different countries have resulted in different experiences (Boakye et al, 2008). According to Penn (2011) "theoretical ideas and research which inform policy rationales for ECEC and the academic disciplines from which they are drawn are shifting." In this study, it is posited that while there is growing consensus in discussions that child upbringing across the world is "deeply culturally embedded" (Penn, 2011), another critical factor to consider for successful early childhood policies, is based on the conceptual ideas of James Heckman, a Nobel prize winner and economist, who argues that early childhood is an investment. Hence, for countries to realize economic development, they need to invest in young children. The conceptual underpinnings of this study will therefore be embedded on the concept of "economics and marketisation of child care services". The study will follow a qualitative approach**.** A sample of five ECD specialists will be purposively selected from a population of ten subjects. Data will be collected through a review of the department's documentation and semi structured interviews. Data will be analysed using simple descriptive statistics and themes emanating from the findings. Recommendations will be made based on the study findings and suggestions made on policy implication for ECD teacher education. Teacher education curricula must equip teachers with skills in ECD policy planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It is anticipated the study findings will address issues of low ECD budgets due to seemingly lack of political will and weak representation of key ministries in high forum ECD discussions, as a contributory factor to weak policy implementation in Lesotho.

Key words:

policy implementation; coordination; advocacy, dissemination, early childhood

OBSERVATION AS A TOOL FOR ASSESSING QUALITY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION (ECCE) PROGRAMMES

AUTHORS: Jenny Shumba, Toyin Adewumi, Henry Chinhara, Symphorosa Rembe and Sibangani Shumba

Observation is a process of carefully watching or monitoring something or someone. It is also a useful tool of analysis of situations or contexts. There are many observation variations such as process observation, physical structural observation, child observation and classroom pedagogy observation to name a few. Quality is relative and has many dimensions. It can be judged in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and utility. In relation to quality in ECD, it is further broken down to: process quality, structural quality, quality as programme structure as well as quality as expectations etc. This paper attempts to bring together observation and quality ECCE programmes to show how all these dimensions and variations of quality are assessed through observation. The observational techniques used in the process will be discussed. The roles of the ECCE practitioners and other stakeholders in all this interplay will also be discussed.

Key words: Observation; quality, ECCE programmes, ECCE practioners

ENABLING RURAL FAMILIES HELP YOUNG CHILDREN MAKE SMOOTH TRANSITIONING TO SCHOOL
AUTHOR: Leetoane Sibeko

In South Africa, many rural families are characterized by low socio-economic status, unemployment and poverty. However, these families have cultural resources and ancestral practices i.e. indigenous knowledge (IK) that are unrecognised, and often represent assets which families and the schools can utilize to help children make a smooth transition from early childhood education to primary school. This protocol is for a planned study which aims to design a strategy to enable rural families to help young children make a smooth transition to primary school. Existing research shows that parents themselves do not value their IK, and rather emphasize academic skills as most important skills for children to have before commencing schooling, (Margetss, K. & Phatudi, N.C. 2013: 47). However, the article does not explain other strategies which parents develop to help their children settle into school. The study is underpinned by the funds of knowledge (FoK) theory to explore the concept of IK in families, households and classrooms of economically marginalized students. The study will draw on participatory action research (PAR) as a methodology. PAR is a study that combines action and reflection with the intention of improving practice, and which is considered an ideal approach for investigations involving marginalized people. The researcher will ensure that participants are fully informed about the study and understand their roles. Confidentiality and anonymity will be explained. The researcher envisages that the grade 1 learners will benefit from the strategy because they will be learning from cultural resources, skills and knowledge they understand. This will be valuable research about how cultural resources can be used to support formal modern education. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document values IK, however, gives little or no framework for IK and therefore the Department of Basic Education (DBE) will benefit from the strategy.

IMPLEMENTING AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM THAT SUPPORTS HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT: REALITIES AND CONSTRAINTS OF ECD PROGRAMMES

AUTHOR: Namhla Sotuku and Henry Chinhara

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) is facing a dilemma with regard to curriculum implementation. This is an area of concern noted by early childhood specialists and parents, who observe young learners engage in formal education instead of exploration of the different learning areas, as articulated by the dominant early childhood educational psychology and contemporary policy framework. These concerns explicitly show that there is a need to guide the personnel in early childhood centres, especially those with low certification and little training, on what and how to handle learning programmes in early childhood classes. The study reported in this presentation aimed at investigating how teachers deliver the ECEC curriculum, how they cover important learning areas and whether they adopt a common and responsive pedagogical approach that reaches a certain developmental level of quality across age groups. The study employed qualitative methodology, where a case study design was used in ten ECD centres. A purposive sampling technique was utilised and interviews and observations were used as data collection tools. The results showed that teachers lacked proper orientation in the use of adaptive teaching methods, especially the play method, which they saw as time wasting (for themselves and children) and demanding. There are also many demands from children's families, who believe the play method does not benefit young learners. In light of these findings, the study recommends the design and application of programmes aimed at teacher professional development (TPD) that can help teachers implement the ECEC curriculum effectively. Sensitisation programmes with parents also need to be done on how they can support a holistic and purposeful ECEC curriculum.

Keywords: childhood education and care; play method; learning materials; early childhood development; curriculum assessment

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE: GRADE 2 BOYS STRUGGLE MOST

AUTHOR: N. Swanepoel

Reading comprehension in English is an educational challenge worldwide as mentioned in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Skills. This pertains to English as Home Language and English as Additional Language. Teaching and learning English as First Additional Language is also significant in South Africa. At the time of political change, schools changed and accommodated learners from diverse language backgrounds. This resulted in many learners being placed in a school where the language of learning and teaching was not their first language, yet they had to learn English and English as First Additional Language. The study investigated the teaching of English reading comprehension to Grade 2 First Additional Language learners in independent schools. One of the research questions that framed the study enquired as to what factors are likely to influence the teaching and learning of reading comprehension of English as First Additional Language. This qualitative study was undertaken through the interpretive paradigm and a case study research design was used. The research sites included three independent English schools in the Gauteng Province, South Africa. The conceptual framework integrated the three stages of reading with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. Data collection strategies included individual semi-structured interviews and classroom observations of the Grade 2 teachers teaching English reading comprehension. In addition, a reflective journal was kept by the researcher during the interviews and observations. Ethical clearance was obtained from all parties involved in the study before data collection commenced. The data were analysed by making use of thematic coding. Findings from the study revealed the factors that influenced the teaching of English reading comprehension. These included home environment, school, personal, emotional and individual factors. One of the unexpected findings emerging from the data was that boys take longer to develop reading comprehension in English First Additional language. This aspect thus needs more in-depth research that can enhance understanding of this phenomenon.

Keywords: English First Additional Language, reading comprehension, scaffolding, boys, grade 2

CURRICULUM CHANGES: EXPLORING STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND ARTS LEARNING

AUTHORS: Aletta van As and Lorayne Excell

Changes in MRTEQ (2015) dictated nationwide curriculum changes to all B.ED. programmes. At our HEI, financial constraints and a reduction in human resource capacity resulted in significant streamlining of subject options offered to students. As a result, students in the foundation phase can no longer chose early childhood development (ECD) or any creative arts discipline as a subject. This new streamlined curriculum resulted in a reconceptualisation of courses offered to students and the introduction of a major subject, offered over four years, Childhood Studies. This course considers children from birth to nine years and the content has been predominantly drawn from the previous ECD and life skills courses. To compensate for the loss of the arts, a new course, *Arts for Primary School Teachers* has been introduced for first year foundation phase students. Given the focus on research based teaching and learning, ongoing research of new courses is essential to ensure relevance and quality in teacher education. Through this paper we aim to explore how first year students are experiencing the *Arts for Primary School Teachers* courses. We investigate, using open-ended questionnaires and interviews, what students thought they would be learning and if *Arts for Primary School Teachers* met their initial expectations? We also explore how, in their opinion, the *Arts for Primary School Teachers* course could be adapted (if at all) to promote the professional and personal growth of first year students in the foundation phase. This data will allow informed adaptations of future *Arts for Primary School Teachers* courses. All ethical requirements have been met. Initial findings from this ongoing study will be presented.

Keywords: early childhood development, creative arts, teacher education, quality

TRANSFIGURING IMAGINATIONS TOWARDS MUSICAL CREATIONS USING EVERYDAY OBJECTS AND SOUNDS IN A RURAL ECCE SETTING

AUTHOR: Mignon van Vreden

In South Africa, the quality of and access to ECCE (Early Childhood Education and Care) services remain challenging, especially for children living in poverty and in rural areas. Insufficient ECCE funding, inadequate infrastructure, learning and teaching materials, low levels of qualifications, insufficient training, professional support and poor working conditions for ECCE caregivers impact negatively on the quality of these services and outcomes. ECCE programmes should therefore include the provision of support to the caregivers, including parents and /or educators of children, as well as stimulation and education at home and through community and site-based programmes. The research aims of this study are to explore the meaning rural children in an ECCE setting ascribe to everyday objects and sounds through their musical creations and to conceptualise guidelines for ECCE caregivers utilising everyday objects and sounds to transfigure children's imaginations towards musical creations. The existing literature focusing on creativity and imagination in the early years and the utilisation of everyday objects and sounds in early childhood music education will underpin data collection and research. The qualitative research paradigm of this study is framed by a constructivist worldview to conduct an exploratory case study. Data will be collected through observation, interviews and creative methods such as drama and *musicking*. Permission to conduct research will be obtained through written consent from the ECCE centre operator, caregivers, parents and children. As ECCE services for children aged 0 – 4 years are provided by private or community-run initiatives which have resulted in significant variations in terms of access and quality, the implications for practice is to conceptualise guidelines for ECCE caregivers to nurture musical creativity using everyday objects and sounds that stimulate children's imaginations.

Keywords: imagination, creativity, musical creations, ECCE, everyday objects

THE EMERGENCE AND EXPRESSION OF TEACHERS' IDENTITIES: THE ROLE OF REFLEXIVITY
AUTHOR: Lise Westaway

This paper addresses the question: What role does reflexivity play in the emergence and expression of teachers' identities? The advent of a democratically-elected government in South Africa in 1994 disrupted the erstwhile synchrony between the schooling system, teacher education system, curriculum and pedagogy. Yet the vast majority of teachers in South Africa today continue to express their teacher identities much like they did prior to 1994. Drawing on the philosophy of critical realism and its methodological equivalent, social realism, I analyse narrative and observation data of two grade 3 teachers with a view to identifying: (i) the social structures that condition the emergence and expression of their teacher identities; and (ii) the manner in which teachers 'act back' on these structures. It is in the process of 'acting back' that teachers modes of reflexivity come to the fore. Reflexivity refers to the mental capacity to consider oneself in relation to one's social contexts and visa versa. I examine the modes of reflexivity of two grade 3 teachers, to demonstrate how they 'act back' on the social structures that condition the emergence and expression of their teacher identities. I trace each of the teachers' identities historically into the present. I argue that their modes of reflexivity are key to understanding how they deal with the disruption of synchrony brought about in 1994.

Key words: teacher identity, reflexivity, roles of the teacher, social realism

Poster Presentations:

CROSSING SECTORS: COLLABORATING FOR QUALITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION IN PIECCE (PROJECT FOR INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATION)

AUTHORS: Ms Melissa King; Ms Kaley Le Mottee & Mr Craig Johnson

Building collaborative partnerships is complex. In this consortium-led programme framework development project, partners include universities, NGOs and TVETs. The research aim is to track how collaboration processes evolve, describe enablers and barriers, and explore how this approach increases quality in the development of ECCE teacher education programmes. Literature review on collaboration literature informs the research. The theoretical framework included Gibbs Reflective Cycle; Participatory Action Research; Constructivism and The value of experiential evidence. A 'collaboration-in-action' approach to developing the model is taken throughout the project, using an iterative and self-reflective process in structured reflection workshops and interviews, and monitoring processes and perspectives with online collaboration tracking tools. Ethical clearance processes for PIECCE was approved by UNISA College of Education Research Ethics Review Committee. Lessons on enablers and barriers, and ways in which internal and external pressures impact on collaboration, have been captured. Consortium members reflect on how working outside their usual institutional boundaries, and sharing information and different contextual perspectives, has enriched curriculum perspectives. Collaboration leads to an expanded understanding of the impact of different sectoral factors on the training of ECCE educators, which will contribute to the development of common standards in educator progammes. This supports career progression, qualifications articulation, professionalization, and contextual enrichment of ECCE educator curricula.

Keywords: Collaboration ; Cross-sectoral; Reflection; Quality ; ECCE Professionalization

PROFESSIONALIZATION AND PROFESSIONALISM EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: BEYOND THE POLICY FRAMEWORK.

AUTHOR: Ms Ruby Motuang

The South Department of Higher Education and Training published the Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators policy. The aim of this poster is to present in detail factors that need to be taken into consideration when implementing the Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators.

The Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development states that the ECD "…situation is inadequate, fragmented, uncoordinated, unequal and generally lacking in educational value (DoE, 1996,). This is besides the noted observation that Early Childhood Development directly contributes to increased participation in compulsory basic education. While professionalising the field is the right policy in the right direction, implementing the policy will be the real test. The quality of training and education of early childhood development practitioners and educators impacts on the quality in the implementation of early learning and development programmes. The study will use qualitative methodology in which secondary data will be collected through literature review. Since this is a poster, the findings will be presented mainly through chats, graphs with minimum text.

The poster will use publicly available data, images and symbols. No images of adults or children will be published in the post. The main finding is that for effective professionalization of the ECE teachers, universities and training institutions need collaborate and work towards qualifications in Higher Education for it to receive its full status. The factors that need to be considered for effective implementation of the policy ECE are capacity of the institutions, programme content, quality assurance, approval, accreditation, articulation, human resource strategy and enrolment. These findings have potential to alert professionals in the ECE of the actual practical considerations that need to be attended to for successful implementation the Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators policy.

Keywords:
Professionalization, Professionalism, Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Development, Training

PERSONA DOLL TRAINING SOUTH AFRICA: EMBRACING DIVERSITY

AUTHOR: Ms Delores Athiemulam

The poster presentation will introduce conference participants to the work of persona doll training, most commonly known as PDT. Persona Doll Training (PDT) South Africa is a non-profit organisation and accredited training provider in the Early childhood Development (ECD) and education sector. The Persona Doll approach is a practical, powerful and creative way to teach important life skills and encourage diversity, inclusion and respect for human rights as enshrined in the South African Constitution.

Our 'hands-on' experiential training assists adults to deal with the challenges of poverty, violence and abuse, racism, and stigma and embrace diversity in their own lives and with young children using the unique Persona Doll approach.

Persona Dolls are hand-made 70-cm tall cloth dolls each with their own identity, life history, family and cultural background, likes and dislikes, fears and abilities. They are used by ECD practitioners, teachers, social workers, community health workers and NGOs to help children and young people:

- Accept and value their own identity
- Embrace difference and diversity
- Express their feelings
- Develop self-esteem, confidence, empathy and emotional intelligence
- 'Unlearn' prejudice on topical issues including racism and xenophobia, sexism, disability and HIV/AIDS stigma
- Develop critical cognitive, language, communication and problem-solving skills.

PDT diversity training creates a facilitated, safe space in which individuals and groups can explore, experience and appreciate the potential for embracing diversity and learn creative ways to deal with challenges that arise. Participants feel comfortable to share and learn from each other. Our interactive approach encourages participants to reflect on and draw from their individual experience. Our methodology of facilitated discussion, guided self-reflection
and creative problem-solving skills focuses on practical ways to foster inclusivity and improve the quality of inter-personal relationships in the workplace, within organisations and in other settings.

Keywords: Anti-Bias ; Anit-Racism ; Inclusive ; Psycho-Social

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South African Research Association for Early Childhood Education (SARAECE)

2018 National Conference

Transforming teacher education in the early years.

Introduction

Apart from being the traditional national conference that SARAECE hosts every second year, this conference is an opportunity to bring together the voices in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) with a particular emphasis on the birth to four age group. Much work has taken place in 2017 across universities, NGOs, TVETS and particularly government. South Africa now has an explicit birth to four policy that helps to inform the development of a diploma and degree which is aimed at professionalising the sector. This conference provides a platform to showcase the valuable work that is being done across the sector. In the past, there were complaints that the ECE sector in South Africa was insulated and stakeholders did not speak to one another. Aside from a drive to professionalise the birth to four sector, has come the added advantage of multiple stakeholders communicating with one another, recognising specific expertise and drawing from them in order to strengthen the work of each player. We are additionally privileged, to have four keynotes presenting over the two-day conference, namely [1]Dr Whitfield Green; Prof Hasina Ebrahim; Prof Mishack Gumbo and Dr Caroline Cohrssen. Each of their presentations will provide the audience with a range of perspectives from policy, transformation, africanisation to an international viewpoint on the work related to the birth to four. Furthermore as SARAECE is also about the development of novice academics, we are providing validation for young researchers through the support of our publishing houses that are making it possible for us to award book prizes for the best 'novice research papers'. The range of themes that encompass this conference speak to how diverse the ECCE is.

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[1] Please see biographies of keynotes in this programme

Conference Sub-themes:

1. Sustainable Early Childhood Development
2. Quality Education
3. Curriculum in ECCE
4. Language development in ECE
5. Numeracy development in ECE
6. Inclusivity in ECE
7. Transformative Pedagogy
8. Children's rights
9. Parents and families
10. ECCE Policy
11. Assessment in ECCE
12. Professionalization and professionalism in ECE
13. Creativity in ECE
14. Science & Technology in ECE

The programme includes presentation of papers (20 minutes) followed by 10 minutes for discussion and a symposium of 45 minutes. In addition we will have a number of posters on display during tea break and lunch break where delegates can discuss a 'paper' with the presenters.

Keynote speakers

We are privileged to have keynote speakers who have a wealth of expertise and who have been instrumental in raising the profile of ECCE in recent times. Below is a short biography of each keynote.

1. Hasina Banu Ebrahim, Ph.D.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Hasina Banu Ebrahim holds a PHD on Constructions of Early Childhood Education for and by Children. She is a Professor in the Department of Early Childhood Education at the University of South Africa. She is also the UNESCO Co-chair in Early Education, Care and Development. Professor Ebrahim won the 2017 UNISA Women in Research Award for her leadership in the ECD field. She has been nominated for the 2018 South African Women in Science Award. She served as the President of the South African Research Association for Early Childhood Education from 2014 to 2016. She is a rated researcher who has numerous publications in journals of national and international standing. Professor Ebrahim has delivered several keynote addresses nationally and internationally. She serves as the sector editor for the South African Journal of Childhood Education and sits on the editorial board of different early childhood journals. She is the institutional lead for the European Union Funded National Multi-Stakeholder Project on Inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education (PIECCE). Her latest forthcoming co-edited book is on Early Childhood Care and Education on the Margins: African Perspectives on Birth to Three.

2. Dr Whitfield J Green

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Dr Green was formally a school teacher, teacher training college lecturer and University academic. He is Chief-Director for Teaching and Learning Development in the South African Department of Higher Education and Training, and leads the work of the Department in respect of:

- Supporting the development of a university-based teacher education system that is able to produce sufficient numbers of high quality teachers for all education sub—sectors, including pre-schooling, schooling and post-schooling.
- Developing, implementing and monitoring policy and programmes to support capacity development of academics and professional staff at universities, including through management and oversight of the Department's University Capacity Development Programme.
- Development of a coordinated system for the management of international postgraduate scholarship partnership

3. Dr Caroline Cohrssen

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Dr Caroline Cohrssen is a senior lecturer (teaching and research) on the Master of Teaching (Early Childhood and Early Childhood & Primary) streams. Caroline's doctoral research (2010-2013) was undertaken at The University of Melbourne, positioned within the E4Kids Study and focused on quality interactions for mathematics teaching and learning with children aged from three to five years. Her current research focuses on mathematics teaching and learning in the years prior to formal school education, from the home learning environment to the incorporation of an embedded mathematics focus in informal, preschool programs. Her research is primarily disseminated at conferences in Australia and overseas, and through peer- reviewed journal publications. She is collaborating with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority in the development of supplementary resources to augment the mapping of the revised Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (DET, 2016) to the Victorian Curriculum F-10 to support child transitions and content area learning continua.

4. Professor Mishack T Gumbo

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY
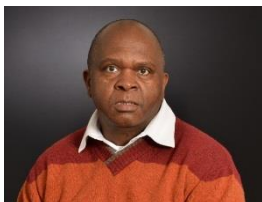
Mishack Thiza Gumbo is a Full Professor at University of South Africa (Unisa) in the College of Education's Department of Science and Technology Education. He worked at Vista University (1996-2003) and University of Pretoria (2004 – January 2008) before he joined Unisa in February 2008. He holds a PhD (Vista University: 1999-2003) specialising in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and Technology Education Curriculum, MEd (University of Johannesburg: 1996-1998) in Technology Education, MEd (Unisa: 2015-2016) in ODL, MPhil (University of Pretoria: 2006-2007) in Applied Theology, BEd Hons (Unisa: 1995-1996), BA and UED (Vista University: 1988-1991), Internat. Cert. in Technology Education (ORT-Step Institute: 1998), Cert. in Distance Education and E-learning (University of Maryland: 2012-2014). His research interests are Technology teachers' PCK, IKS and Curriculum, ODL and E-learning. He has published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals and presented papers at local and international conferences. He has led research and book writing projects. He is the first editor of a recently published book titled *African voices on indigenoisation of the curriculum: Insights from practice.* He is currently leading an intervention project on Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Mpumalanga Province. He has extensive experience as an external examiner of undergraduate programmes and dissertations and theses for numerous universities locally and internationally. He is article reviewer for numerous journals and conferences; a Senate member at Unisa; member of Southern African Association for Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education; Board Member of International Technology and Engineering Educators Association; Advisory Board Member and Regional Representative of Africa Update. He participated in the Tertiary Education Linkages Programme at University of Indiana, USA in 1999, and Summer Educational Transformation Institute at Vanderbuilt University, USA in 2002. He was a visiting Scholar at University of Waikato, NZ in 2010. He was Assistant Manager in the Office of Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Education (Unisa) in 2010 to 2014. He has facilitated numerous master's and doctoral research workshops nationally and in Ethiopia. He mentors developing academics and Post-Doctoral Fellows at Unisa.

President of SARAECE

Dr Giulietta Domenica Harrison Ph.D.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Giulietta Harrison, who is the current President of SARAECE has come from a background of many years of teaching in early childhood classrooms across a variety of contexts. She has been a school Principal, an HOD and a lecturer in Foundation Phase. She is presently the Director for the Centre for Social Development at Rhodes University and wears both an academic and an NPO hat. She has a passion for helping teachers to provide positive spaces for learning which she expresses through her work in Emotional Intelligence. She did her Masters research looking at how to promote this in a Grade R classroom and her PhD on understanding how children learning using Grade 1 Literacy as her vehicle for analysis. She is presently mentoring both PhD and Master's students and lecturing on the B.Ed and PGCE programmes offered at the Education Faculty at Rhodes University. She has written a variety of training programmes as 'open-source' documents for the NPO sector including parent and teacher programmes. As the Director of an NPO, she manages a range of outreach and training programmes together with a full portfolio of fundraising activities. Through the work of SARAECE she would like to promote the development of novice academics and contribute to the growth of the ECCE sector.

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How did we come about?

Overview

The SARAECE association was established in 2011, by academics from the respective higher education institutions (HEI's) in South Africa. The association identified a need for a body with a specific focus on the initial years of childhood development and education, as a response to the National Education Department's White paper 5, Early Childhood Education (2001). Early Childhood Development (ECD) ranges from the ages of 0-9 years whilst Early Childhood Care and Education spans the 0-4 age group.

SARAECE was the pioneer in establishing a research journal with the intention of foregrounding ECD in South Africa.

ECD is housed within the Department of Social Development (DSD); Department of Education (DoE) and Department of Health (DoH). With the infusion of three departments in a relatively new sector in South Africa including the Non-profit organisations (NPO) and Non-Government organisations (NGO), SARAECE was established to address the "gap" in ECD and ECE research.

Aims of SARAECE

- To provide an academic forum in South Africa for the development and dissemination of research in Early Childhood Development (ECD) & Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

- Facilitate cooperation and collaboration among ECD & ECCE researchers nationally and internationally.

- Promote links between research, practice and policy in ECD & ECCE.

- Raise the visibility and status of research in ECD & ECCE.

- Provide a valuable resource through the ECD & ECCE database which is situated on our website.

SARAECE National Conference Programme: 10th-11th May 2018

Venue	Venue 1	Main Venue	Venue 2
**DAY 1: Thursday 10th May 2018**			
Time			
7:30-8:30	**Registration | Tea & Coffee**		
8:30-8:40	**Welcome: Dr Giulietta Harrison**		
8:40-9:20	*Keynote speaker 1: Dr Whitty Green*		
Chair	**SARAECE committee members: Nkidi Phatudi**	**SARAECE committee members: Giulietta Harrison**	**SARAECE committee members: Keshni Bipath**
	Sub-Theme: Quality in Education	**Sub-theme: Curriculum in ECCE**	**Sub-theme: Numeracy development in ECCE**
9:20-9:50	Curriculum changes: exploring student teachers' perceptions of early childhood and arts learning. Presenters: Ms A. van As and Prof L. Excell (Wits University)	Producing an Early Childhood Development text-message curriculum. Presenters: Ms Lydia-Anne Plaatjies; Prof Nicky Roberts and Ms Ingrid Mostert ((University of Johannesburg)	Mapping the route from home to school: Integrating numeracy in a preschool curriculum. Presenter: Dr Caroline Cohrssen (University of Melbourne)
9:50-10:20	Technology and classroom practices: Experiences of South African pre-service teacher education exchange students. Presenters: P. Naidoo (University of Johannesburg) and E. Bass- Flimmons (Georgia State University)	Chronicling practitioners' experiences in implementing the birth to four curriculum in the Free State Province. Presenter: Ms Neli Gabela (University of the Free State)	Grandmothers' home activities and acquisition of mathematical skills by grade ii learners Presenters: Ms Faith Hlungulu; Dr Ntombokuzo Duku and Prof Isholo Salami (University of Fort Hare)

10:20-10:50	An exploration of how English first language teachers teach reading to grade three learners in multilingual contexts. Presenter: Ms W. Masimango (University of Zululand)	Implementing early childhood development curriculum that supports holistic development for the 0-4: What are the realities and constraints of the ECD programmes? Presenters: Dr. N. Sotuku and Dr H Chinhara (University of Fort Hare)	A proposal for a social realist analysis of mathematics methodology curricula for Foundation Phase pre-service teachers Presenter: Mr Edward Domboka (Rhodes University)
10:50-11:10	**TEA: Poster presentation: Crossing Sectors: Collaborating for Quality in Teacher Education in PIECCE – Melissa King & Kaley Le Mottee.**		
CHAIR	**SARAECE committee members: Ina Joubert**	**SARAECE committee members: Linda Bosman**	**SARAECE committee members: Nkidi Phatudi**
	Sub-theme: Quality in Education	**Sub-Theme: Transformative Pedagogy and Children's rights**	
11:10-11:40	Towards a deeper understanding of teacher training, attitudes and practices. Presenter: Dr G. Harrison (Rhodes university)	**Round table discussion.** Presenting the baseline findings from output 2 Presenters: Dr Shaik, Prof Ebrahim and Dr Martin	Mathematics in Grade R or out of Grade R? Presenter: Ms Cally Kuhne (University of Cape Town)
11:40-12:10	Observation as a tool for assessing quality in early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes. Presenters: Dr Jenny Shumba; Toyin Adewumi; Henry Chinhara; Symphorosa Rembe and Sibangani Shumba (University of Fort Hare)		
	Sub-themes: Sustainable Early Childhood Development	**Sub-theme: Transformative Pedagogy**	**Sub-Theme: Children's rights**
12:10-12:40	The creation of learning environment for children from birth to the commencement of the formal school within Vhembe District. Presenters: 1. Ms Ntshengedzeni Theresa Makhwanya; Professor T A Mbatha and Professor A P Kutame (University of Zululand)	The emergence and expression of teachers' identities: the role of reflexivity. Presenter: Dr Lise Westaway (Rhodes University)	

Time			
12:40-13:10	The influence of physical activities on health and well-being of Foundation Phase learners in schools. Presenters: Ms Shonisani Mulovhedzi and Professor N. Mudzielwana (University of Venda)	Transforming Early Learning: A Theory and Practice Driven Orientation Course Supporting National Curriculum Training for Birth to Four Year Olds. Presenters: Ms Nadia Lubowski and Dr Carole Bloch (PRAESA/University of Cape Town)	Developing and applying classroom rules: foundation phase teachers' perspectives. Presenters: Dr Ntombozuko Duku and Professor Salami (University of Fort Hare)
13:15- 14:00	**LUNCH**		
14:00-14:45	*Keynote speaker 2: Professor Hasina Ebrahim*		
CHAIR	**SARAECE Committee member: Nkidi Phatudi**	**SARAECE Committee member: Linda Bosman**	**SARAECE Committee member: Giulietta Harrison**
	Sub-Theme: Language development in ECE	**Sub-theme: Transformative Pedagogy**	**Sub-theme: Parents and families**
14:50-15:20	Is it possible that boys take longer to develop reading comprehension? Presenter: Ms Nadia Swanepoel; Dr Judy Van Heerden and Prof Cycil Hartell (Pretoria University)	Creating meaningful pedagogy for Early Childhood Development classes in difficulty conditions: Applying a research based approach to challenges. Presenters: Dr Henry Chinhara; Dr Nanhla Sokutu and Professor Symphrosa Rembe (University of Fort Hare)	Understanding parenting in Early Childhood Education: Experiences of Rural Grade R teachers. Presenter: Dr Soane Mohapi (UNISA)
15:20-15:50	Reading acquisition in Grade 1 – A teacher's perspective. Presenters: Annalize Gouws and Anne-Mari Dicker (UNISA)	Understanding play as a teaching strategy to Develop Pedagogic Content Knowledge in Early Childhood Education. Presenters: Blanche Ndlovu and N. Madonda	Impact of Migration on Early Learners' Immunizations in Mountain Learning Ecology in Nigeria. Presenters: Dr Olubengu Ige (Free State) and Professor Emmanuel Adu (Fort Hare)
		Sub-theme:ECCE Policy	**Sub-theme: Parents and families**
15:50-16:20	Everyday Classroom Literacy Practices: Normalising the school ready literate child. Presenter: Dr Colwyn Martin (University of the Free State)	Beyond policy development and approval: experiences of the ECD programme in Lesotho. Presenters: Edith Sebatane (National University of Lesotho) and Setungoane Lestatsi (Save the Children South Africa)	Enabling rural families help young children make smooth transitioning to school. Presenter: Ms Leetoane Sibeko (University of the Free State)

16:20-16:50	Early reflections of a Grade 3 teacher using the Jika Imfundo curriculum intervention to teach literacy in English as a FAL. Presenter: Prof Thabile Mbatha-Ngubane, (University of Zululand)		The influence of personal parental experiences in the relationships between parents and their young children. Presenters: Dr K Bipath and Prof I Joubert (University of Pretoria) and Miss D Bishop (Kempton Park Primary)
17:00-17:30	**AGM (Nomination & voting)**		
18:30-20:00	**Cheese and wine & book display & Prize giving session 1**		

DAY 2: Friday 11th May 2018			
Venue	**Venue 1**	**Main Venue**	**Venue 2**
8:00-8:45	*Keynote speaker 3: Prof Mishack Gumbo*		
Chair	SARAECE committee member: Keshni Bipath	SARAECE committee member: Ina Joubert	SARAECE committee member: Giulietta Harrison
	Sub-theme: Language development in ECE	**Sub-Theme: Assessment in ECCE**	**Sub-theme: Creativity in ECE**
8:50-9:20	Contextual variation and pedagogy in the introduction of First Additional Language in Grade 1: A multi-case study. Presenters: Ms Jubulile Mzimela and Professor Raddy Ramrathan (University of Kwazulu Natal)	The Early Learning Outcomes Measure (ELOM): An instrument for measuring effectiveness of early learning programmes in South African children. Presenters: A. Dawes; L. Biersteker; E. Girdwood; M. Snelling and C. Tredoux (University of Cape Town & independents)	Transfiguring imaginations towards musical creations using everyday objects and sounds in a rural ECCE setting. Presenter: Dr Mignon van Vreden (North-West University)
	Sub-theme: Inclusivity in ECE	**Sub-theme: Professionalization and professionalism in ECE**	**Sub-theme: Creativity in ECE**
9:20-9:30-50	Teacher preparation for Inclusivity in ECE. Presenters: Professor Dikeledi Mahlo and Ms Thembi Phala (UNISA)	Lifting the professional bar for SA's under and unqualified Grade R practitioners through work-integrated learning (WIL).	The Africa A+ Schools pilot project: enabling schools to nurture creativity. Presenter: Anya Morris (Africa A+ Schools)

		Presenter: Susan Greyling (North-West University)	
9:50-10:20	What does it take to equip pre-service teachers for the realities of classroom diversity? Linking research to practice. Presenters: Ms Beverley Moore (Rhodes university)	Exploring teacher change from professional development. Presenter: Dr Geeta. Motilal and Brahm Fleisch (University of the Witwatersrand)	Supporting children's learning of mathematics: the arts perspective. Presenter: O. Ariba and K. Luneta (University of Johannesburg)
10:20- 10:35	TEA – Poster presentation: PROFESSIONALIZATION AND PROFESSIONALISM EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: BEYOND THE POLICY FRAMEWORK. – Ms Ruby Motuang PERSONA DOLL TRAINING SOUTH AFRICA: EMBRACING DIVERSITY – Ms Delores Athiemulam		
CHAIR	SARAECE committee member: Linda Bosman	SARAECE committee member: Ina Joubert	SARAECE committee member: Giulietta Harrison
	Sub-theme: Inclusivity in ECE	Sub-theme: Professionalization and professionalism in ECE	Sub-theme: Creativity in ECE
10:40-11:10	Play-based inclusive pedagogies: lessons from autism special. Presenters: Dr Mary Clasquin- Johnson and Dr Tawanda Majoko (UNISA)	Exploring and Understanding mentorship for beginner Foundation Phase (Grade R to 3) teachers from three South African universities. Presenters: Thokozane P. Dyosini & Dr. Geeta Motilal (University of the Witwatersrand)	Indigenising the curriculum through integration of play and learning using *ukudlala izindl.* Presenter: Ms Nosipho Bele (University of Kwazulu Natal)
		Sub-theme: Science and Technology in ECE	
11:10-11:40	Enriching Learning and Teaching Through Artefacts: An Early Childhood Mathematics Teacher Educator's Self-Study. Presenters: Ms Makie Kortjass (University of Kwazulu Natal)	Exploring the use of ICTs to enhance visual perceptual skills of Grade R learners. Presenter: Shila Mphahlele (UNISA)	Responding to the needs of the most vulnerable children. Presenter: Dr Kerryn Dixon (Witwatersrand University)
11:40-12:10	Can the recruitment of men into foundation phase address gender inequality? A case of nine men in the province of Mpumalanga.	The implementability of inquiry-based science education in the South African foundation phase context	Pearson's presentation on 'The virtual child' Presenter: Juanita Pratt

	Presenter: Mr Vusi Msiza (University of Kwazulu Natal)	Presenter: Dr Linda Bosman (University of Stellenbosch)	
12:10-12:30	Curriculum accessibility by all foundation phase learner Differentiated approach in South African full service schools**.** Presenters: Dr Raesetja Gloria Ledwaba (UNISA)	An exploration of a range of evaluative criteria transmitted in grade 3 Sepedi and English medium classrooms and how modes of representations featured in what was transmitted. Presenter: Manono Poo	
12:30-13:00	Announcement of newly elected members		
13:00-13:45	LUNCH		
13:50- 14:35	*Keynote speaker 4: Caroline Cohrssen*		
CHAIR	SARAECE committee member: Keshni Bipath		
	Sub-theme: Inclusivity in ECE		
14:40-15:10	Investigating gendered perceptions of School Governing Body members towards Foundation Phase Male teachers in Eastern Cape schools. Presenter: Mr Obakeng Kagola (Nelson Mandela University)		
15:10-15:20	Presentation on SARAECE Website and database: Mr Arthur Knox. (Main Venue)		
15:20-15:30	Summary: Dr G Harrison & Prize giving session 2 (Main Venue)		
15:30	End of conference		

SARAECE Achievements

- SARAECE has a journal, South African Journal of Childhood Education (SAJCE) which was founded in 2011.
- Regional and National conferences.
- Doctoral supervision training for emerging supervisors.
- Writer's seminar to support emerging academics.
- A database of research in the field of ECCE and ECD.

Benefits of SARAECE Membership.

- Networking with regional, national and international academics working in ECCE & ECD.
- Full access to the SARAECE website & research database: www.saraece.org.za
- Capacity building and support for teaching in the ECCE & ECD field.
- Voting rights at the annual general meeting.
- Your 'voice' incorporated in the ECCE & ECD field.

Thank You

We would like to acknowledge the support of SARAECE National conference committee in implementing this conference; DHET & Pearson's publishers for assisting in the funding of the conference, Pearsons' Publishers, Van Schaik, JUTAS and Oxford University press for sponsoring the contents of the conference bags and book prizes for the best 'Novice research papers'. We would also like to thank our Keynotes for giving of their time to make a meaningful contribution to this conference.