

Setting up a Preschool Book Corner: A Pilot Study with Special Reference to Preschool at Polpithigama in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The period of Early Child Care and Education (ECCD) of 6 years separated in to two, 0-3 years as the step of beginning and 4 and 5 years as the stage of preschool education. A supportive preschool learning atmosphere encourages the growth of children's critical thinking skills; and cultivates the interest and the engagement as the foundation of methods to learning. This type of setting must develop children's capacity to involve extremely in individual and group activities and projects. This study focuses to determine the purposes of preschool teachers in reading for children, the practices they use to give children the pattern of reading, the resources they keep in their particular book area, the methods they use, the themes they desire in the books they read for children, and the events they conduct using story books which are significant throughout this period of childhood. The main objective of this study is to establish a creative book corner in preschool. Second objective is to explore the preschool teachers' performances. The sample group of the study is composed of 89 preschool teachers working in independent preschools of the Polpithigama Pradeshiya Saba. As an initial stage the researcher conducted a one day workshop with all teachers conferring various types of group activities, way of storytelling and presentations related to book corner. This study data were collected by the evaluation of distributing questionnaire. Results showed that every preschool have story books. Though they have books, there is no any special creative area relevant. Recommendations for preschool and kindergarten teachers to accomplish diverse practices namely, teachers should plan picture story book reading activities that they will perform in their preschools considering principles as selecting books with a good theme, by voice, mimics and gestures, keeping the story short and exciting, repeating it on the following days and integrating them with the activities as poems, music and drama. Moreover, teachers should be aware of children's skills and determine the issues that will attract them.

Keywords: *Book Corner, Children's Literature, Early Child Care and Education, Pre-literacy, Preschools*