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Opinion of Students of Early Childhood Education and Primary Teaching Education Studies on

Katja Heraković, <u>Ms Helena Kovač</u>

Transition is defined as the process of change of a child's environment from family to kindergarten and from preschool to school. It is assumed that responsibility for quality transition is in the hands of all the participants of the process, however, due to professional responsibilities the key role is played by the opinions of a early childhood educator and a teacher of primary education. This research aimed to determine the opinions of students of early childhood education students and students
of primary education, future teachers of primary education, about the process of transition from preschool to school, how prepared they believe they are, and their expectations. The participants are students of primary teaching and early childhood education studies in the Republic of Croatia (N=523), of which two-thirds are students of kindergarten studies. In this paper, a Questionnaire of School Readiness (Version for Parents, Kindergartens Teachers, and Teachers) was used after getting the permission of the authors (Visković and Višnjić Jevtić, 2020.) Results showed the difference between the students regarding their perception of transition in 8 variables, while sociodemographic indicators (university, year of study, and age) are predictors of the students' opinions. Statistically, a significant difference has been determined in the students' assessments depending on their experience regarding the topic of transition. Analysis of the students' reports made it possible to determine that listening to the common subjects was highlighted as a possible collaboration improvement. Participants assess that collaboration between families, preschools, and schools are the requirement of quality education (M=4,63, SD=0,60). At the same time, they do not believe it is necessary to include teachers in kindergarten activities to kindergarten teachers (M=2,16, SD=1,14). Students do not share the same opinion regarding the scholarization of the preschool which is consistent with the recent findings of education directed to the kids.

Teachers' burnout and classroom management strategies during COVID-19 pandemic: The effectiveness of the Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management Program

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The Incredible Years-Teacher Classroom Management Program (IY®-TCM) is an evidence based program with worldwide research emphasizing an increase in the use of positive classroom management strategies by early childhood teachers and a reduction in the negative ones. However, COVID-19 pandemic introduced several changes in daily-life and classroom dynamics which may (or not) had a negative effect on preschool teachers' burnout and in the classroom management strategies that they use. The main goal of this study is to compare teachers' burnout and the use of positive/negative strategies when they receive or not training in the IY-TCM during COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 28 preschool teachers participated in the study and were randomized into two groups (IY-TCM intervention and control). The pre and post-assessment took place at the beginning and the end of the school year. Each teacher completed in both moments the Portuguese versions of the Shirom-Melamed Burnout Measure and the Teacher Classroom Management Strategies Questionnaire. Despite not reaching the statistical significance, promising positive results were found for teachers' burnout, particularly for physical fatigue, cognitive fatigue and emotional exhaustion for the teachers who completed the IY-TCM training, compared to control group. According to the results of other studies conducted before the pandemic, participating in the program is not sufficient to increase teachers' emotional well-being. In line with previous research, the results for the frequency of use of classroom management strategies were unequivocal to highlight the effectiveness of the IY-TCM, with teachers from the IY-TCM group using more positive strategies discussed during the training:coaching, praise and incentives, social and emotional teaching, limit-setting strategies, positive approaches with parents and planning and support (statistically significant interaction and main effects). Implications about delivering the IY-TCM intervention during COVID-19 pandemic are discussed as a challenge and an opportunity to assess its effectiveness in a specific circumstance.

COVID-19 influencing preschool practice in Iceland.

'we now have opportunity to stop and observe what is happening'

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In Iceland, preschools are part of the educational system as the first level of schooling. All preschools work according to Preschool Act. No. 90/2008 and National Curriculum Guidelines where emphasis is on children's learning through play and quality practice. Teachers' education and competences, learning environment, children's group size, focus on health and well-being, and assessment are all factors that support high quality in preschool practice. The aim of the study was to shed light on how the first wave of COVID-19 and the restrictions that followed, influenced preschool practice in Iceland and preschool teachers' agency. Data was gathered through mixed methods. Interviews were conducted during the first wave of COVID-19 and questionnaires were send out to all preschools in Iceland after the first wave. Participants were asked if and how COVID-19 influenced the preschool practice and preschool teachers' agency. The findings show that restrictions of schooling during the first wave had considerable influence on the preschool practice in Iceland. Children's groups were smaller than usually which had positive influence on play and quality of the practice, according to the participants. The study is an important contribution for preschool community and creates knowledge and understanding on the influence of the first wave COVID-19 on preschool practice. Furthermore, the findings give reasons for further reflections on how preschool practice is organized in relation to quality early childhood education.

Role of the early childhood teacher: new scenarios, challenges and opportunities

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Role of the early childhood teacher: new scenarios, challenges and opportunities
Teachers Patricia Alberti – Shirley Ameigenda (Uruguay)
Key words
Early childhood, pandemic, teacher role, challenges, learnings, opportunities
Abstract
Para poder definir y caracterizar el rol del docente de Primera Infancia es necesario identificar las características del mundo actual.

Esta nueva realidad nos obliga a repensar cómo intervenir desde nuestro rol para ser garantes de aprendizajes significativos y del derecho a la educación.

Dada la particular situación que se está transitando debido a la pandemia generada por el Covid-19, es imprescindible pensar qué se necesita priorizar y poner a disposición de los niños.

Frente a esta nueva situación, como docentes, tuvimos que reinventarnos y revisar las estrategias que desarrollamos en la presencialidad, rediseñarlas y adecuarlas al nuevo espacio virtual.

Fue imprescindible repensar algunos aspectos: la perspectiva tiempo en relación a la jornada escolar y a las dinámicas familiares; el lugar del cuerpo y del movimiento en las propuestas educativas; el espacio desde la virtualidad; el vínculo con las familias desde su tarea de coeducadoras; la evaluación de los aprendizajes.

En esa búsqueda de nuevas estrategias fue necesario encontrar otras formas de comunicación; promover la exploración y la creatividad; generar experiencias potentes y para ser desarrolladas con la mediación de las familias; recuperar la mirada, los rostros, lo humano; reconocer las ausencias; conectar de forma singular con cada alumno.

Por otra parte, fue clave tener en cuenta sus condiciones actuales. La situación de pandemia abrió más la brecha debido a las barreras que generó la ausencia de conectividad o de dispositivos.

El reto que seguimos enfrentando demanda de nosotros la capacidad de actuar, promoviendo el cambio en los nuevos escenarios que se nos presentan, visualizando las oportunidades para poder crear un nuevo diseño que garantice la educación para todos los niños.

The role of leaders in Australian early childhood organisations in responding to health communication during COVD-19: Lessons from elite interviews

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Responding to health messages and implementing change was a key feature of practice within early years services during the COVID pandemic. Leaders at the organisational level had to source, evaluate and communicate health information, whilst supporting appropriate strategies and practices, in order to keep children, families and educators safe. How did they do this and what is to be learned about the role early childhood education (ECE) organisations can play in effectively communicating health messages to children, families and communities? This paper reports on the findings from one component of a larger multi-tier study investigating health communication during COVID in Australia. Specifically, the paper reports on findings from elite interviews, grounded in qualitative theoretical perspectives of social constructionism, and using inductive analytical approaches, designed to investigate how leaders in ECE organisations communicated health messages. Elite interviews were conducted with individuals with expert knowledge and key responsibilities for health and safety and / or for communicating health messages, within in 12 ECE organisations (peak bodies; ECE employer organisations, and advocacy groups) with reach across all Australian states and territories. Analysis of the elite interviews found overarching themes related to contextual and external factors impacting health communication; accessibility and clarity of health information received by the ECE organisations; processes used to communicate health information to stakeholders; and the role of educators in communicating with families. Overall findings from the elite interviews are that organisations require consistent, timely information, that is accessible from 'one source of truth', that is specific for the ECE field, and is contextualised for different service types and geographic locations. Policy implications are that early childhood organsations are willing and able to communicate health messages. However, closer engagement between the health and ECE sector, contextualised health information, and adequate support and resourcing are required to make this a reality.

Shifting roles and identities of early years staff during the time of Covid-19 pandemic

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The schools and early years services have closed multiple times throughout the national lockdowns in Scotland as a part of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. When they reopened, the settings had to apply some changes and implement new practices to support the continued safe operation. These include splitting children into smaller groups, dividing the overall space, limiting the use of some resources and materials, introducing frequent hand washing and cleaning routines, maximizing the outdoor use, and so on. Throughout the time, many switching back and forth have occurred in these practices, along with the updated government guidance. The new meanings, experiences and relationships were formed and constructed where limitations and opportunities took place. As a part of ongoing PhD research, this paper aims to focus on practitioners' shifting roles and identities during the time of Covid-19 pandemic by emphasizing their voices, experiences and feelings on matters related to be a working with children, families and staff team. To fulfil these aims, 35 online semi structured interviews were conducted with early years practitioners and stakeholders, between April 2020 and March 2021. Additionally, the policy documents published by the Scottish Government during the time of pandemic were analyzed to understand their reflections into practices. Thematic approach was applied to analyse the data. The initial analysis of data showed that practitioners have worked in physically and emotionally demanding conditions. They mentioned increasing workload with huge amount of cleaning; worries about the children's and their families' wellbeing and fear of becoming sick and passing the virus on their own families. On the other hand, practitioners appreciated some of the changes and mentioned their positive impacts such as working with small groups, thus having more attuned relations with children, increasing outdoor time and more recognition for their role in this challenging time.

The Second Year of Infant Development Program in Quarantine: Reaching More Families with Infants during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Education beginning the early years continue to be offered remotely for the second academic year in the Philippines. While the quarantine persists, the University of the Philippines Child Development Center (UPCDC) continued to refine the Remote Learning Program (RLP) in order to serve families with children from 0 to 5 years through virtual platforms.

The Infant Development Program was reinvented to provide psychosocial support to parents of infants during the quarantine in 2020. With the success of the program, a second cohort was created in the hope that the service could be improved further for the benefit of even more families. In its second year of implementation, the proponents focused developments in these key areas: a.) supporting parents to thrive in their roles as primary caregivers, b.) developing assessment tools, and c.) extending the Kits for Family Play (KFP) to support early literacy and early numeracy during RLP across all age groups within the Center.

Enhancements for the first key area were made to highlight the family-centeredness of RLP. Instead of focusing immediately on the developing infant, the first quarter was devoted to recognizing the parents' emerging roles from the arrival of their infant. Through the weekly community sessions, parents are guided through reflections about their own past experiences and how they bring these into their new roles as parents. Improvements in the area of assessment were made in the delivery of adapted Learning Stories and Family Portfolio. More accessible virtual platforms were explored to encourage parents in contributing to the documentations of their child's first year in the program. Finally, refinements in the third key area focused not only in improving the Kits for Family Play (KFP) for infant groups but were extended to all preschool classes until kindergarten and plans for indigenization of materials have been laid out.

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: THE INFLUENCE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON TEACHER SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES.

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The importance of the influence of socio-emotional development during the early years on later life outcomes cannot be overstated. For teachers, engaging in professional development is known to influence classroom practices (related to socio-emotional development), however, this can be impacted by other factors such as disasters and stressful situations such as COVID-19. The study seeks to know the extent to which professional development is affecting teachers' social-emotional development practices in the early care and education setting during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Researchers received IRB approval for this cross-sectional study that employs purposive sampling. An electronic survey link was distributed via mailing lists of leading early childhood education organizations in the US. To be eligible for the study, respondents had to be providing early care and education to children aged 0-5. The questionnaire, which was administered via Qualtrics, included demographic questions and researcher-developed questions on access to professional development opportunities. Respondents were also encouraged to share their thoughts through an open-ended question.
 Data was collected between September and November 2021 with a plan to complete data analysis by February 2022. The statistical analysis to examine the potential relationship between professional development and socio-emotional development practices will be a multiple regression analysis.

This study provides a glimpse of how professional development is influencing early educator practices related to socio-emotional development during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is the first study we know of that assesses how professional development specific to socio-emotional development is influencing teacher practices targeted at socio-emotional development in children 0-5 as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to run its cause. Through the findings of this study, we will gain insight into the current practice and training needs of early educators. This knowledge will facilitate the development of pandemic preparedness strategies for early educators to employ in the event of another pandemic.

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: THE RELATION BETWEEN PARENTAL GUIDING STRATEGIES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN CHILDREN PLAYING DIGITAL GAMES

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One of the most important events of the 2000s has been COVID-19 pandemic, and it already has a colossal effect on children's psychological health. Therefore, this study set out to gain further understanding of the relationship between parental guiding strategies and the level of psychological well-being in 5–6-year-old children during the first months of COVID-19 pandemic. The study was conducted in the form of a survey, with data being gathered via an online platform. The data was collected from parents in a period of seven months, between January and July, 2021. The data collection process was carried out in two steps. First, teachers in pre-school education institutions in a southwestern province of Turkey were contacted. Second, volunteer teachers delivered the scales to 256 families via online platform. Digital Play Parental Mediation Strategies Scale (Budak, 2020) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale for 5-6-year-old Children - 5/6-PWBiC (Atan & Buluş, 2021) were used as data collection tools. According to the results of Pearson's correlation analysis, there was a significant positive correlation between 5/6-PWBiC levels and active ($r=.250$, $p<.01$) and technical strategies ($r=.273$, $p< .01$). On the other hand, negative correlation was found between 5/6-PWBiC levels and monitoring ($r=-.236$, $p<.01$) and free strategies ($r=-.206$, $p<.01$). As for the results of regression analysis, active ($p<.05$, $t=2.318$) and technical strategies ($p<.01$, $t=2.686$) were positive predictors of 5/6-PWBiC, while monitoring ($p<.01$, $t=-2.974$) and free strategies ($p<.05$, $t=-2.064$) were negative predictors ($R2=.16$, $F=12.255$, $p<.001$; Durbin-Watson=1.933). The present study is one of the pioneer investigations focusing specifically on parental guiding strategies and 5–6-year-old children's psychological well-beings during COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, the scope of this research may be too broad. Thus, further studies are required to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relations between parental attitudes and child well-being.

Teachers' experiences of special needs education during the Covid-19 pandemic: lessons from Norway

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Background: The Covid-19 pandemic obliged schools worldwide to make various structural and pedagogical changes in response to the infection situation in their countries. New national infection control measures at schools were continuously announced, implemented, and then changed multiple times to ensure pupil education and health.

Aim: This article investigates, from a teacher perspective, how infection control measures during school lockdowns and reopenings influenced on the teaching and learning environment for pupils with special needs at Norwegian schools.

Method: It uses data collected during the pandemic in in-depth digital interviews with eight elementary teachers and coded thematically.

Theory: The theoretical framework is constantly evolving as a result of our inductive approach to our material. Preliminary analyses suggest that the theory of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000) will be central.

Findings: Nine themes were generated from the data: flexible teaching, integrated special needs education, pupils' friendly class and playground settings, teachers in the home-world of pupils, closer relational developments, a new status for hygiene, opportunities to think alternative, everyday outdoor teaching, forced technical knowledge, and parental curricular insight. Schools organized infection control measures according to the traffic light scale, where red is strict, yellow is moderate and green is normal. Teachers reported practical challenges and positive teaching and learning opportunities at the red and yellow levels.

Conclusion: The findings call for policy makers and professionals to rethink current special needs educational practices based on the lessons learned from the Covid-19 universal school intervention. The school experiences of pupils and teachers during the Covid-19 ought to receive future research attention.

Helping Young Children to Learn Mathematics: Challenges Faced by Myanmar Preschool Teachers

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Developing young children's mathematical proficiency is an important task for preschool teachers but it has recently been revealed that Myanmar children's mathematical performance is not as good as their literacy performance. Hence, with serious threats by COVID-19 on Myanmar preschool education, like many other countries, this study aimed to identify the challenges encountered by preschool teachers when helping young children to learn mathematics before and during COVID-19, so as to figure out how to better support preschool teachers to teach mathematics. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 Myanmar preschool teachers. Their responses were audio-recorded and transcribed. Thematic content analysis was then performed. Results showed that there were several common problems experienced by preschool teachers during mathematics teaching before the pandemic: (1) lack of pedagogical content knowledge about mathematics; (2) lack of understanding of early mathematical development; and (3) great diversity in children's mathematical abilities in the classroom. During the pandemic, face-to-face classes suspended, and only 4 of the preschool teachers were able to arrange online lessons with children. Making the situation even worse, some additional problems emerged. They included: (1) shortened teaching time (including the time to teach mathematics); (2) lack of competence in teaching mathematics online; and (3) lack of parental support in helping children to learn mathematics at home. Based on the results, school administrators and the government are recommended to offer more training to preschool teachers, to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to teach mathematics effectively in the classroom and online, as well as cater for children's individual differences in mathematical learning. More mathematics learning resources should also be made available to preschool teachers. Last but not least, parents should be informed of the importance of early childhood mathematics education and strategies of supporting young children's mathematical development at home.

Young children's perspectives of learning: Preliminary findings of a systematic literature review

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Children's learning is a multidimensional issue that has been extensively researched, and it continues to attract researchers' interest from all over the world. From a pedagogical viewpoint, the last few years, there is an effort on seeking children's own perspectives on their learning. In general, such studies have identified children as important contributors to the investigation of their own reality. This is in line with the provision for children's participatory rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which acknowledges children as social agents and reflects an understanding of children as active members and constructors of their complex social worlds, as well as the primary source of information about matters that affect them, such as their own learning. The theoretical position of this study, within 'new' sociology of childhood, recognizes that children could have unique perspectives on the process of learning and different priorities and concerns to adult practitioners or researchers in an educational setting. Thus, investigating how young children experience teaching and learning, and how they describe such experiences, could provide an important foundation for developing ways to improve teaching and learning practices as well as to reconsider the conceptualisation of early childhood education in nowadays. This presentation reports on a systematic literature review which is still in progress. The overall purpose of the review is to map peer reviewed studies (published between 1999 and 2019) concerning how young children (aged 4-8) reflect and perceive their learning in preschool and other surrounding social contexts. Data collection strategies included electronic database searches and checks of references listed in selected publications. The methodology, limitations and some preliminary results of the review are being discussed.

Kindergarten's circle time: Perspectives from Norway, Germany and Greece

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The paper explores the position of circle time in the framework plans in three countries with different kindergarten contexts. In Norwegian kindergartens, the position and value of circle time has been discussed (Eide, Os & Samuelsson, 2012), and there are few studies on circle time in the Nordic countries (Håberg, 2014). The Norwegian framework plan for kindergartens is on the state level and does not include the concept of circle time. In Germany, the responsibility for framework plans is on the county level (Oberhuemer, 2005), and some of these plans include the concept. In Greece, the framework plan is on the state level. In our study, we analyse the framework as documents and explore whether circle time is mentioned in the plans and which pedagogical ideas it is connected to. From our preliminary results, we see that children's participation is emphasized as an important element in kindergarten in all three countries. However, the theoretical background for this as well as the structure and child-adult ratio differ. While the Norwegian framework plan (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Research, 2017) highlights the importance of children's contribution to the kindergarten community in general, e.g. the Bavarian framework plan in Germany explicitly focuses on circle time as an arena for children's participation (Staatsinstitut für Frühpädagogik IFP, 2016). In the Greek framework plan (Dafermou, Koulouri & Basagianni, 2006), circle time is related to learning new concepts and topics, sharing experiences and storytelling. Moreover, it is connected to a specific place in the kindergarten – the discussion corner. We recognize a difference in the view on how circle time may contribute to social learning and achievement among children. Based on this, we discuss the position and value of circle time in the kindergarten as an arena for children's mastery, motivation and social learning (Bandura, 1977).

Transforming the Content of Education for Sustainable Development with Systems Thinking

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Is education for sustainable development (ESD) the solution or part of the problem for the challenges our planet currently faces? Experts in the field of ESD draw attention to the need for new pathways in teaching and learning to overcome current obstacles through fostering ESD. So far, transformative ESD has repeated the failures of the conventional educational designs, resulting in seeking remedies for today's problems considering yesterday's solutions. Only limited success has been achieved in the last 30 years in terms of conceiving a paradigm that equips teachers and learners for creating sustainable societies. We argue that the central role of education towards a more sustainable future can be truly achieved only through equipping learners with the transdisciplinary systems thinking (ST) skills. The ST discipline has the potential to become a guiding principle for children to understand and appreciate the complexity and tensions existing in sustainability-related issues. Herein, ST is regarded as a key ESD competency, notwithstanding the scarce research and implementation on the utilization of ST in the learning framework design, particularly in early childhood education (ECE). Accordingly, with the aim of providing a model on how to build up and apply a project-based curriculum that incorporates sustainability and ST as core components into preschoolers' learning experiences, we designed and implemented a learning framework. The learning framework was developed by ESD and ST experts and centered around a guidebook involving 27 integrated play-based preschool learning activities specifically designed about "water". It was implemented with the participation of thirty-one 60-72-month-old preschoolers from a public preschool in Ankara, Turkey. Considering the availability of limited sources about the integration of ST together with ESD into ECE systems, presenting the outcomes of the learning framework design and implementation project is expected to inspire ECE policy makers, researchers, and practitioners.

Parents beliefs about preschool education objectives

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Preschool education is the first, crucial step during the school career of students. The influence and relevance of parents towards children's education is widely accepted and their active involvement and support of the educational process is intensified when they are satisfied with the educational system. In this respect, it is particularly important to consider parental perceptions and expectations as far as organizing the curriculum and the functioning of preschool centers is concerned. The present research investigates parents' perceptions about the objectives of pre-school education within the Greek educational framework. The aim of this research is to make use of the data that will occur, in order to show ways to improve the quality of the pre-school education provided. A quantitative survey was conducted and 201 questionnaires were collected from parents whose children attend centers of pre-school education. The data were then analyzed by using the SPSS statistical program. The main outcome of this analysis was that, according to parents' view, pre-school education centers main objectives are their children's socialization and the development of their intellectual and creative abilities. Preschool education follows the guidelines of Cross-Thematic Curriculum Framework (CTCF) in which the activities are organized in different learning areas. Socialization in preschool education is considered as one of its most important objectives by the educational system and the CTCF provides several types of activities which aim at preschooler's socialization.

The Inheritance and Practice of Outstanding Traditional Chinese Culture in the Context of Kindergarten-based Curriculum

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Developing the traditional Chinese cultural curriculum is an effective way to pass on the outstanding traditional Chinese culture. Preschool education is the beginning of lifelong learning. The building of the Kindergarten Curriculum under Traditional Chinese Cultural will exert an imperceptibly influence on the children's learning and inheriting of the outstanding traditional Chinese culture, and helps them develop the national self-confidence and pride in their abilities. When we constructing the kindergarten-based traditional Chinese cultural curriculum, we will define the value idea of "experience, games, and inheritance", form the "three three three" curriculum and put it into practice, conduct interactive curriculum discussion, improve kindergarten-based traditional cultural curriculum constantly, and promote the Inheritance of outstanding traditional Chinese culture.

Parents' voice on children's authentic assessment at the kindergarten: a case study

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In the early years, as research has shown, authentic assessment of young preschoolers entails the active involvement of children, educators and parents. In the above context, children's assessment is a shared responsibility of those who take part in the instructional process. In the authentic assessment environment of preschool education, parents' involvement and understanding of the assessment practices used in the context of the preschool setting, is considered crucial at this stage of children's development. In the light of the survey findings, parental perceptions about children's authentic assessment is a considerable issue that concerns many researchers. Today, although the alternative forms of assessment have included inter alia parental involvement in early childhood education, assessment methods and techniques have just recently begun to be used in the Greek preschool context, aiming to encourage parents to get involved both in the educational process and in the children's evaluation. The purpose of this study was to analyze parents' thinking upon the procedure of child's assessment and to explore the parental role concerning the function of alternative forms of assessment in the context of early childhood education. A semi-structured interview in two different time periods with 18 parents whose children were enrolled in a public kindergarten in Greece was carried out to achieve the objectives of the study. Findings show that the majority of the parents (a) acknowledge authentic assessment as a procedure of recording children's learning and development that helps both parents and teachers, (b) gain an understanding of children's learning progress, (c) comprehend the way children think and develop in the preschool setting, (d) perceive the significance of the portfolio assessment and the teacher's role in the assessment procedure, (e) support the cooperation between teachers and parents and (f) are willing to provide home-based information about children's progress and collaborate with kindergarten teachers.

Doing philosophy with children using a picture book: A reflection on a workshop with students and teachers

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The purpose of this paper is to offer a deep meta-analysis and reflection of a workshop on doing philosophy with children by using a picture book as a stimulus. The workshop took place at OMEP conference 2019 and the participants were students and teachers with no previous experience in doing philosophy with children. Emphasis will be given on certain criteria, practices and techniques used when doing philosophy with children that enable children to develop their critical, creative, caring and collaborative thinking, taking into account both the researcher's and the participants' experience and reflections of the workshop. Such criteria, practices and techniques are: a) the selection of a stimulus (picture book) in philosophy with children sessions, b) the dialogic method of "community of inquiry" as used in practice, c) the questions that were posed and their further analysis, d) the mapping of ideas as a way of visual thinking and tracking children's ways of thinking. This meta-analysis offers a tool for reflection on how both teachers and students can do philosophy with children and through that shape further both their own thinking, teaching ability and children's ways of thinking.

Mind mapping as a systems thinking tool: How preschool children conceptualize water on our planet

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Rapid population growth and urbanization are critical challenges for water management across the world. Water is one of the integral subsystems of the planet, thus it is pivotal to understand the cycling processes and its impacts on living organisms for sustainability of earth systems. Children need to be equipped with systematic and integrated understanding of complex systems more than ever today. Accordingly, one of the central premises of this research is to investigate children's conceptual development through systems thinking practices designed about water through mind mapping used as an assessment methodology. In total, twenty-nine 60-72 month-old children (ngirls=18, nboys=11) from a public preschool in Ankara-Turkey participated in this study. Twenty-seven play-based and interdisciplinary activities developed by experts were implemented in a span of four weeks. Data were collected through mind maps constructed by each child before and after the learning framework implementation. In mind mapping sessions, children were provided several visuals (sun, river, animals, snow, humankind etc.) which were radially organized on a white paper. Subsequently, each child was asked to explain which visual could be linked with water and also with each other by elaborating why and how. The findings of this research suggested that children made considerable progress in terms of conceptualizing the interrelationships concerning the water. In pre-maps, most of the children displayed rudimentary skills in recognizing the relationships between the water cyclical system and its components. The most prominent feature in pre-maps was children's tendency to pay attention to unidirectional relationships between a few components. Whereas, the post-maps indicated the development of an ability to recognize multi-directional relationships among many components. Children were likely to express accurate and elaborated explanations of continuous patterns. All in all, post findings showed that our water learning framework enhanced the conceptualization skills of children about the complex system of water.

Through the path of critical friendship

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This study attempts to present the main steps towards the development of a critical friendship as it took place in the context of a collaborative action research, implemented during the school year 2018-2019. The project involved nine teacher researchers working along with the researcher-facilitator in order to explore the Persona Doll approach as a research hypothesis of dealing with diversity in their classes. As the project included group meetings (training sessions, experiential workshops, reflection and feedback meetings), two critical friends were invited to offer their lenses and reflect on the process in an effort to broaden the researchers' viewpoint and increase the research credibility. Almost a year after the completion of the research, the three of them flashback and re-examine the experience of their critical friendship. Their main purpose is to enlighten the process followed and focus on the qualities involved in being a critical friend of the researcher in a similar context. The presentation also focuses on the dilemmas faced and the presuppositions confronted in their attempt to define the role of critical friends and establish their place in the research. The analysis shows that the course of their way through the procedure was neither simple nor linear. On the contrary, it entailed overpassing important barriers, developing skills and rethinking about their role and their relationship with the researcher. The notion behind the study is to contribute to the dialogue about critical friends in quality research by putting their role under self and researcher's scrutiny.

"Greek teachers' perspectives and practices regarding assessment in preschool education".

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Efstratia Sofou
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This two-year inquiry aimed to uncover the perspectives and practices of preschool teachers regarding the assessment in preschool education in Greece. In particular, the study explored the values and meanings which preschool teachers ascribe to assessment, the strategies employ and the challenges regarding their assessment practices. Research has shown that assessment is important for supporting children's learning and development (Bagnato, 2010; Dunphy, 2010). This can be achieved through the processes of collecting information about children's learning, documenting that information, reflecting on it and then using the information to support and extend learning (Dunphy, 2008, 2010). The theoretical framework for this study draws upon sociocultural theories (Vygotsky, 1978; Rogoff, 1998) that emphasise the socially constructed nature of learning and of assessment (Anning, Cullen, & Fleer, 2009). The study adopted a mixed method research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative data (Bryman, 2016). Questionnaires were filled out by 152 preschool teachers in public settings and in-depth interviews were conducted with ten preschool teachers from different settings in the region of Epirus. The analysis was conducted through a thematic analysis to identify emergent themes (Tsiolis, 2018). Consent forms emphasised the participants' rights and made clear the optional nature of the study. The findings demonstrate that educators agree that assessment is important for supporting children's learning and development. Nevertheless, data demonstrate that preschool teachers hold diverse views, have varying approaches to assessment and use different methods and tools. The study also suggests that the number of children per teacher and the lack of time are two of the most important factors that challenge their assessment practice. The findings of the study can offer insight on the views and practices of preschool teachers and the issues they are faced with and direct future research regarding assessment practice in preschool education.

LEARINING STORIES in cross-cultural contexts of Early Childhood Education and Care

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The "Learning Stories" approach was developed in New Zealand around the turn of the century. Ever since, this early childhood educational concept has successfully been implemented and is now being realized in almost every institution in the country. From New Zealand.

The Marie Meierhofer Children's Institute (MMI) introduced the „Learning Stories" in Switzerland back in 2009, initially as part of a study. The study focused on the impact of the approach on the quality of pedagogy and the development of children. The study also brought to light what elements contributed to a successful implementation of the "Learning Stories". By now, MMI has supported 140 day care centres in their implementation of the approach.

In our current study, we are looking at the impact of the "Learning Stories" on the interaction and relationships, in particular with socially disadvantaged children and their parents. We are including the perspective of the day care professionals, the children and their parents. For that purpose, we are conducting questionnaire surveys with staff and semi-structured interviews with parents as well as workshops with children in day care centres in which the "Learning Stories" have been implemented for at least one year.

"Learning stories" are proving to be a valuable pedagogical concept to support learning of young children from diverse familial and cultural backgrounds and does so in a resource-focused and participatory manner.

Wustmann Seiler, C. & Mueller, E. & Simoni, H. (2017). The Protective Role of Childcare Quality for Behavioral Adjustment in 3- to 5- Year-Old Chidlren. Zeitschrift für Entwicklungspsychologie und Päadagogische Psychologie, 49 (1), 1-10. Hofgrefe.

Schlegel, C., Spirig, E. & Simoni, H. (2020). Evaluationsbericht BULG zuhanden Roger Federer Foundation. Auswirkungen der BULG auf Kinder, Eltern und Fachkräfte in Kitas. (Working title, in progress)

FAMILIES AS ACTIVE CURRICULAR AGENTS: THE ASSESSMENT DILEMMA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OF CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OLD

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The Covid-19 pandemic has triggered an enormous change in our way of life, including education. However, opportunities that were hidden or normalized, by omission or tradition, have emerged. In Chile and in other Latin American countries online education has been implemented, so the entire teaching process has been transferred to virtual platforms. During this process, a teacher identified a phenomenon and made an audiovisual record of it which was later analyzed using a critical analytical treatment. Consequently, the present study acquires form and substance and proposes a central objective: to research into the evaluative imaginaries that families reveal as active curricular agents in the learning process of children under 6 years of age. Thus, this objective considers the interaction of the subjects in evaluative situations as well as the systematic observation of the aforementioned phenomenon to explore these revealed assumptions. This research applied a qualitative approach (phenomenological - hermeneutic), and the information was analyzed using Atlas software Ti 7.5, which facilitates the discourse analysis of the extracts. Our findings show that imaginaries reveal adult-centered expectations and notions, which are uncritically assumed by those who —in this scenario— accompanied the children. Therefore, this situation needs to be problematized since it nullifies the needs and interests of young children regarding their learning and development process. Finally, we conclude that this phenomenon not only invites us to rethink how families, in their role as curricular agents, assume this evaluative process, but it also promotes a debate on this issue and its educational implications.

Am I missing something by not using storytelling? Why we should ask university students to use storytelling to evaluate their experiences of learning.

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Evaluations of student's learning experiences hold increasing currency in shaping decisions about how to improve teaching and learning. This paper proposes that students who use storytelling for evaluation help to facilitate this. Adding to previous research that shows the benefit and challenges of gathering qualitative evaluation, stories written by forty-seven undergraduate Early Childhood Studies students while at university in England explained their learning experiences (Sherwood, 2019).

The benefits of adopting this method were that the content of their stories identified what their learning journey had been like providing useful information to shape teaching, assessment and preparation for employment; all important measures for universities because they are factors that influence the number of applicants to their institution (Lenton, 2015). The research concludes that stories written by students are useful because they enable the HE teacher to engage in new ways of listening and responding to personal accounts that communicate what the learning experience is like for students.

The term storytelling as a method of gaining information about learning experiences has been used by Flint, Oxley, Helm and Bradley, (2009) in their research using "free text comments to develop composite stories of student experiences at the institution" (p.611). The process of story writing in this research led to students moving beyond traditional evaluation practices of measuring satisfaction to reflect on their experience. Bolton's (2011) findings illustrate that this type of reflection is beneficial to the reader because when students write stories they blend learning, personal feelings and experiences.

This research concludes that when students write stories about their learning experience they include different information to that recorded on evaluation surveys. The storytelling activity provided an insight into the minds of students which communicated information about their learning experiences that might otherwise have been over-looked or missed.

The development of scientific concepts in early childhood within a sociocultural frame

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The @formal and informal science education researching group (@fise group) presents a new perspective on ontology, subjectivity and acquisition of scientific knowledge from the early ages based on Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). In this sense, the development of concepts and categories is dialectically connected with moments of change. The development of scientific concepts during early childhood is considered as a trajectory from syncretic concepts, complexes, pseudoconcepts, potential concepts and pre-concepts to spontaneous, true and actual concepts. Science curriculum in early childhood education gives children the opportunity to understand their surroundings, which in fact are their life worlds. As a next step, emerging topics have to be studied in depth, which means that children will be involved in structured activities mediated by artifacts. The underlined hypothesis is that culture becomes structure. Artifacts provide resources to structure activities, mediate conversations, prepare and set up scenarios in which actions and conversations about scientific concepts may unfold. This process can expand the borders of pedagogical content knowledge and can be more liberating and more motivating than traditional learning. Examples of good practices are provided for both formal and informal settings and an open discussion with the audience will occur. Early childhood education involves a complexity of a social (societal-political) practice that is possible even with the youngest of children. Motivation includes challenge in order to satisfy the need for achievement, choice and independence in students' learning, expansion of learning community through out of school activities as well as support and encouragement by the family, the peer group and the teachers.

The influence of COVID-19 on educational quality in Quebec's childcare centers

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To promote children's development, Quebec's (Canada) Family Ministry has progressively implemented a Quality Assessement and Improvement Measure to evaluate educational quality offered to 3 to 5 year-olds within childcare centers. However, since March 2020, the COVID-19 forced centers to comply with sanitary measures to protect educators, children, and parents (Gouvernement du Québec, 2021b). While the educational quality evaluations were suspended at the beginning of the pandemic due to a lockdown, they resumed in September 2020. Have the reorganizations associated with COVID-19 influenced educational quality offered to children in Quebec's childcare centers?

Data were collected in 1085 childcare centers, 485 evaluated before the lockdown (April 2019- March 2020) and 600 assessed after (September 2020- October 2021). A team of three evaluators visited each center during a single day, conducting observations in the morning to assess quality of interactions and of the physical environment, interviewing educators in the afternoon to assess quality of their observation and planning practices, and administrating a questionnaire to educators and managers to assess the quality of relationships with parents and structural quality.

Compare to scores collected before the pandemic, the scores gathered in centers visited after the lockdown suggest lower scores of quality of interactions, the physical environment, the educator's planning practices and the relationships with parents and higher scores of quality of educator's observation practices.

While this cross-sectionnal study presents some limits to consider, the results suggest that the reorganizations associated with COVID-19 could have influenced educationnal quality. In an ecosystemic perspective of educational quality (Bigras et al., 2020), the legal requirement to produce a portrait of children's development, the staff shortage, and deterioration in educators's wellbeing could help explain to those changes in educational quality. The pandemic context will be discussed as a possible accelerator of some of the contextual challenges faced by childcare centers.

SENSE OF WONDER AT OUR FEET. How do we connect to the world, to search new-way of ECEC with Covid19 ~An example of the Oikeashita japanese nurseryschool's summer camp

Mr Kei Kihara[1]
[1]*Oikeashita Nursery School*

To carry out Summer-camp with Covid19
How to make children safer and more densely connected to the world while it's difficult to go out and contact for Covid19. As a result, the sense of wonder we found at our feet. This is an example of a summer camp at our Nursery-school with Covid19.

Our Nursery-school at centre of Kyoto, Japan. 5-year-old, 30children go to a summer camp at our school every year. The destination have not been decided. At first, the children will discuss with teacher what do I want to do, where do I want to go, from April to July. Under the theme of "Realizing dreams," we usually go to various places (nature place or museums etc...), investigate what we want to do, think about how to realize it. We are working while taking method as active learning.

It's very risky to go out for the Covid19 pandemic now. However, taking advantage of that, We worked on the sub-theme "delving into the wonder things in our daily life".
Three teams that came up after three months of discussion.

The natural team interested in nature things. they collected insects and flowers in our garden and investigated it. Our garden was full of things which didn't know yet. We actually experienced that the most familiar place.

The space team who was interested in space, they asked many questions remotely with a doctor of Space Engineering, and they did astronomical observations on our rooftop at night.

And the world team interested in foreign countries. we talked remotely with people from 6 countries. We asked the situation of Covid19 etc.

Finally we made a newspaper about what we knew and felt, and they sent 6 countries.

The Sense of wonder was found at our feet, even if we don't go out.

The inclusion of technology in early childhood education, ideas for an on-going debate

Mrs Estela Casco[1]
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Children are born immersed in a digital culture, so we understand that it is essential to reflect, discuss and share experiences regarding the use of technology, but also about the role of educators, institutions and families in the accompaniment of children, recognizing potentialities and risks .
In this presentation we propose to:
• Reflect and discuss about the pedagogical sense of using technologies in E.C.E.
• Provide contributions to the reflection about the role of the family in accompanying children in the current scenarios of high exposure to screens and technologies.
• Consider new challenges in the work of educational centers with families, since the child and his family are a unit, and if we want an education that transcends and is useful for social integration we must also generate actions to facilitate digital inclusion of families, providing them with tools and knowledge to meet their needs in the exercise of digital citizenship and to support their children's learning process.
• Share experiences regarding the use of technology in E.C.E. that are being developed in Uruguay within the framework of the public policies of digital inclusion developed by Plan Ceibal (*), in E.C. institutions; such as:
- Android tablets delivery for being used by teachers, schools and children (OLPC - "One laptop per child" project).
- Implementation of supportive programmes such as "Aprender Tod@s" that work with teachers and families.
- Development of a proposal of "Computational Thinking" in early childhood education, and its contributions to the construction of basic skills for learning.
(*) Plan Ceibal, was launched in 2008 with the vision of providing every grade school student and teacher with a laptop connected to the internet. The acronym "Ceibal" stands for Basic Informatic Educative Connectivity for Online Learning (Conectividad Educativa de Informática Básica para el Aprendizaje en Línea).

Differences between teaching at preschool and primaryschool in Iceland

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he research aim is to explore the difference between teaching at the preschool and the primary school in Iceland. According to preschool teachers. Last year (2019) law on teacher education was passed that gave teachers the opportunity to teach at different school levels. From the perspective of the Ministry of Education, this will strengthen the professional identity of teacher and promote mobility between school levels. At the same time, it is clear that there is a serious shortage of preschool teachers in the country. The preschool is not well prepared to ´loose´ teacher to the primary level.
But over the last few years, many preschool teacher in Iceland have moved to primary school.

This development will be explored through the lens of Mills (1959) theory of Social imagination and from the perspective of neoliberalism in education.

The research was carried out within a framework of qualitative interpretive studies (Creswell, Shope, Clark, and Green, 2006). The data consists of both policy documents and interviews with 25 preschool-teacher from all over Iceland that has changed the school level they teach. Interviews and policy document was analysed using both thematic and discourse analyses (Jóhannsson, 2009). Pseudonyms replace the names, and geographical information about each participant is withheld, and all participants informed of this practice.

Findings indicate that there is a big difference in working conditions and respect the teacher get from the community. The contact hours with children are fewer at the primary school; there is more professional collaboration, more organising days, and so on. Most of the teacher feels that the primary school is overall better funded, which is apparent in, for example, the equipment the teachers get. Almost none of the teacher can see themselves return to teaching at the preschool.

COMMUNITY CRÈCHE IS A MEASURE TO PREVENT CHILD INJURIES – ITS CHALLENGES AND MEASURES FOR IMPROVEMENT

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Background: Injury is the leading killer of children in Bangladesh. Anchal (community crèche) is an effective intervention to prevent injuries among children under 5. Through SoLiD project 1,600 Anchals are in place in three sub-districts in Bangladesh. The objectives of the Anchal are to provide supervision and early childhood development stimulations (ECD) to the children. A local trained caregiver supervises 20-25 children, 9 to 59 months old, during 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., six days a week. Although it was found effective, during its implementation phase several challenges were noticed.

Objective: To identify challenges and means to overcome those to improve the Anchal activities.

Methodology: In-depth interviews were conducted with Anchal caregivers, their supervisors and trainers. Focus group discussions were conducted with the mothers of the Anchal children. The study was conducted in Manohardi sub-distict during November 2015.

Result: Decay of knowledge and skills after 2-3 months of training, lack of formal certification and inappropriate selection of women as Anchal caregivers, enrollment of small children (less than 12 months) were the important challenges. Reluctance of parents to send children at the Anchal in proper time, failure to engage children in various ECD activities, ineffective conduction of parents and community leaders meeting by the Anchal caregivers, insufficient accommodation and poor supply of logistics for children were also the important challenges. The suggestion for improvement were to recruit caregivers as per standard criteria, provide them refreshers training at three months interval, train them on effective conduction of parents and community leaders meeting, provide formal certificate, and ensure regular supply of logistics.

Conclusion: The identified challenges are needed to be addressed by utilizing the suggestions obtained from the IDIs and FGDs to make the Anchal intervention more effective in preventing childhood injuries.

"Life" as a Key Concept for Education for Sustainable Development and Early Childhood Education and Care in Japan Based on Sozo Kurahashi's Early Childhood Education Theory

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Respect for "life" is a basic concept connecting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Japan. During the early childhood period the basic attitudes and values of life are fostered, and therefore, ESD in early childhood is also important on nurturing future leaders with new values.

The Japanese National Curriculum Standard for Kindergartens states that " Encouraging children to undertake voluntary activities and allowing them to lead a life appropriate to early childhood, based on the idea that young children utilize experiences essential to their development through fully demonstrating their abilities in an emotionally stable manner" in Chapter 1 'General Provisions'. And the words "life" "life experience" "daily life" appear repeatedly in this curriculum standard.

ESD also aims to provide high-quality education that contributes to improving the quality of life in individuals, families, communities, society, and the entire planet. It is important to recognize and respect the cultural values brought by learners. In this way, respect for the learner's "life" is a basic concept linking ECEC with ESD.

Sozo Kurahashi (1882-1955) put the concept of "life" at the center of ECEC theory. Kurahashi asserted respecting the children life itself and providing ECEC based on it. Kurahashi's theory is reflected in the current Japanese national curriculum.

In this presentation, ECEC practices focusing on play that comes from children's lives are reported from Kurahashi's times to today.

Children develop their lives while taking in natural and social phenomena, and playing "life". To start from "life" might be common in ECEC and ESD.

In order to practice ECEC as ESD, it is essential for teachers to grasp the locality and history of the "life" concept. And it is essential to have the viewpoint that children themselves will inherit and create culture in the community.

Contesting Universal assumptions and exploring Socio-Cultural perspectives of human development using case studies from mainstream (England) and alternative curricula (India)

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Until recently, traditional understandings of human development held the view that a child's development is universal and that children have characteristics and skills that develop independently of cultural processes. Piaget (1983) especially contends that children are born with very basic mental structures, which evolve over a period of time in a pre-determined, stage like, universally applicable manner independent of their contexts. This has largely led to the universal and evolutionary view of human development discounting on the socio, cultural and historical contexts that impact on children's development.

However, Rogoff (1990 & 2003) extending upon the Socio-Cultural theoretical work of Vygotsky (1978) through her research work with communities in Asia and Africa, argues that human development must be understood as a cultural process, not simply a biological or psychological one. She contends how all children grow, develop, learn yet all that happens in the contexts of their culture, which define and determine How and When making a case for contextual, cultural understanding of development as opposed to universal assumptions.

Taking inspiration from Socio cultural theoretical insights for my PhD research, I have explored early childhood practitioners' roles in fostering children's peer relationships using case studies from cross-cultural contexts of India (alternate curricula) and England (Prescriptive curricula). Framing the unit of analysis through Rogoff's three plane analysis of Personal, Inter-Personal and Institutional, I explored how early childhood educators' perceive (personal) and practice (inter-personal) fostering of peer relationships and under their specific socio cultural contexts (institutional & beyond) so as to offer cultural and contextual understandings by preserving mutuality and the embedded-ness of the planes. The implications of this research for theory, policy and professional practice are considered in terms of recognising Cognition as Collaboration and the significance of Socio-culturally framed Relational pedagogy and transformative curriculum for democratic and sustainable early childhood education.

Future of Early Childhood Education and Care in the 4.0 revolution: 4 B's: Being, belonging, becoming and believing

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The future of early childhood education and care, the role of humans and the nature of learning and teaching in the period of rapid technological change is the focus of this paper. Learning theories and teaching approaches have dominated the domains of policy, research and practice for the past 100 years. Consideration about the impact of the 4.0 revolution on education and specifically education of children in the first 8 years of life is worth discussing. The role of teachers, families and peers on the learner are also considered as well as the space for interactions with the physical environment and non-humans (AI). Learning is by its very nature, an individual endeavour. The education systems around the world, have tended to think about learners and their success as a member of a class, cohort or group rather than as an individual. The future of learning and teaching is likely to be more personalized than ever before. So what does this mean for traditional Early Childhood canons about play, relationships and the role of the teacher drawn from history and 'good practice'. This presentation will not provide answers to these potential challenges but seeks to start a discussion about the future of early childhood education in the midst of the 4.0 revolution. The 4 B's are presented as one way to reconceptualise ECEC in the future. One aspect that is certain is that we need to consider how solutions using human creativity, social interactions alongside machines (AI) to create a perfect learning environment for children to thrive.

Cultural workshops for children at early childhood education and care (ECEC) settings: A framework of practice of the Erasmus+ 2018 Strategic Partnership project EDUCLAB (Education and Digital Cultural Laboratory)

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This paper presents a suggested framework on how educational cultural workshops could be organized and implemented for children aged 3-5 from diverse cultural backgrounds in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings. The framework has been developed for the purposes of the Erasmus+ funded project EDUCLAB (Education and Digital Cultural Laboratory), based on an in-depth analysis of data collected during focus group interviews conducted in all five partner countries (Cyprus, Italy, Portugal, Romania, and Turkey) (i.e. discussions with 50 educators at a European level). The analysis of the data gathered from the focus group interviews allowed for the identification of skill gaps and pedagogical approaches, as well as of other emerging themes, including the importance of school-family relations, uses of technology, the characteristics of good practices relating to cultural workshops in ECEC, as well as challenges faced by educators across Europe in organizing and implementing cultural workshops. A meta-analysis of the emerging themes, supported by contemporary literature, shed further light as of how such cultural workshops may be developed, organised and implemented by ECEC educators. The framework proposed provides practical and useful indications and training material for ECEC educators on how to organize workshops for their students, that also involve visits to cultural institutions such as museums, libraries, archaeological sites, theatres and/or musical institutions. The aim is for young children to be able to appreciate, interpret and engage with artefacts, art and cultural sites. Through these cultural workshops educators are expected to be able to promote awareness on cultural diversity in the classroom and support children in developing interdisciplinary and intercultural skills.

What makes picture-books a good stimulus for doing philosophy with children?

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Philosophy for children is a form of applied philosophy in the classroom which enables children to develop their critical, creative, caring and collaborative thinking. It was first presented by Matthew Lipman, an American philosopher who introduced philosophy in schools in form of novels that he wrote accompanied with manuals for the teachers. Since then there are more stimuli used for doing philosophy with children. This paper aims at discussing what makes picture books a good stimulus for doing philosophy with children. There will be discussed criteria based on: a) certain characteristics of the picture books themselves such as the role of the pictures, the role of the text and the combination of both text and picture, b) certain teachers' attitudes towards the picture-books that either attract or repulse them from doing philosophy with children (censorship) and c) children's approaches to picture-books that affect positively or negatively doing philosophy. It will be argued that picture-books which allow ambiguity, enforce children's questioning and allow the emergence of concepts that are central, common and contestable are ideal stimuli for triggering both children's and teacher's thinking.

Travelling Project – a Journey to the Competences of the Future - an Erasmus+ KA2 project

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The project "Travelling project – a journey to the competences of the future" was an Erasmus + KA2 project that organized at 2017-2019 by nine partners: Greece, Poland, Turkey, Italy, Portugal, Latvia, Romania, Bulgaria and Lithuania.

The main aim of the project was the improvement of the key competences of the educators and their students guaranteeing success achievement and easy participation in European environment, by multi-faceted methods of small travelling projects, acting in combination with bilingual education on improvement of teachers and their students during lasting the project.

When we developed a box method for children, we wanted to let children face the problem, the surprise we have prepared for them. Give the child the opportunity to work creatively, which is adapted to the needs of the youngest students and the educational process that is carried out at the first stage of education. Our goal was to show how to work with children through the implementation of small projects (lasting a short, day or two) where they can discover, think about and solve the problem by themselves and create a new solution.

We have noticed that an important element of modern education is the need to teach children how to solve problems and learn how to deal with them. However, learned rules quickly cease to function when these problems change, so it is important to focus on the process of solving the problem, transforming or showing the possibility of dealing with it. Searching for solutions to problems, creative action with children, are the goals that guided us in the work on the implementation of that project.

Our expected results were the developement of eighty teachers of their professional competence and the development of approximately 900 children of their competences, creativity and language skills.

A critical view of Orff-Schulwerk in 21st century early childhood education

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Orff-Schuwerk, the so called pedagogical work of Carl Orff, is a well-known educational approach of music and movement education widely implemented in early childhood education. Its main principles, values and contents were formulated from Carl Orff and Gunild Keetmen from 1924 to 1962. The purpose of this study is to examine whether Orff-Schulwerk is still able to contribute to the early childhood education needs in the era of 21st century. The study is structured in three parts. The first constitutes a brief historical retrospect of Orff-Schulwerk's course. The second refers to the institutional ways that this approach is updating in time. The third is a critical evaluation of Orff Schulwerk based on the comparison with contemporary theories and research data of educational research. The study is based on three sources: literature review, interviews with international Orff teachers, Orff Institute teachers and members of International Orff Schulwerk Forum and participant observation. According the analysis, Orff pedagogical approach is able to contribute effectively to the demands of 21st century early childhood education because contributes to the development of 21st century skills and demands. It is a holistic and multi modal approach that mainly aims to the development of expressive, creative and social skills through aesthetic education. Orff-Schulwerk utilizes formal and informal ways of learning able to adopt in every cultural environment supporting social cohesion. In addition, research seems to verify practices, principals and means that had been worded as a result of personal research and intuition from Carl Orff and Gunild Keetmen. Orff delivered to the educational community an approach that has concrete principals, values and mean but remains open and each phase of its development is a point of a new start. This both ensures the resilience and sustainability but also poses the risk of disorientation.

Early childhood experiences and the abilities to learn. Neuro-pedagogical perspective

PhD Profesor Renata Michalak[1]
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We needed many centuries to acknowledge that a child is a thinking and autonomous being who thinks, feels and deserves our attention and respect; more so, we have given it a status of a researcher. It has been acknowledge that adulthood in many respects is the result of experiences and changes taking place in the childhood period, even though the period constitutes one tenth of a human's life, and early childhood comprises only its first three years. The child, though, is not so greatly appreciated only because it eventually turns into an adult. The child is valuable in its own right. Even thought the childhood period lasts so short, it does not change the fact that it is of key importance for development and for what a human being achieves at their next levels. According to Brzezińska (2010, p. 8) "the early years are the foundation, the basis, the luggage for the entire life." Such assessments and views are most likely the result of the peak development of research over the child, its nature and development conducted mainly in the field of neurosciences.

Generally, it can be stated that neuro-pedagogy, relying on the state-of-the art neurology, analyzes the capabilities and conditions of its practical application in any form of pedagogical activity, such as, parenting, teaching, care, therapy, reeducation, etc. The aim of the presentation is to show the significance of the knowledge in the present and future development of the youngest children as well as to outline the assumption of the program supporting the educational development of children on the basis of the latest findings in the field of neurology.

Exploring very young children's play with digital technologies.

Mrs Dimitra Bourha[1], Mrs Maria Hatzigianni[2], Mrs Trifeni Sidiropoulou[3], Mr Michael Vitoulis[4]
[1]University Of West Attica, [2]University of West Attica, [3]University of West Attica, [4]International Hellenic University

Exploring very young children's play with digital technologies
Dimitra Bourha, Maria Hatzigianni, Trifeni Sidiropoulou, Michael Vitoulis

The incorporation of digital technologies in young children's play has increased significantly in recent years (Fotakopoulou et al., 2020; Marsh, 2018). By studying the international literature, we understood that young children's play has been enriched and differentiated from the past. This presentation will examine the current literature and relevant research with a focus on children under four years of age. Important research such as the study from Bird and Edwards, (2014) which examined the introduction and evolution of the use of digital technologies in children aged 4-6 years in Australia and the adaptation of the same study in Greece by Hatzigianni et al. (2018) will be discussed. Both studies used an observational tool, the digital play framework (Digital Play Framework, [DPF]), based on Vygotsky's (1978) and Hutt's (1981) theory. They concluded that children learnt to use digital technologies through free play in a specific time frame. Children were first becoming familiar with technological functions of different devices and then they were able to create new play scenarios using those devices on their own or with the support of educators. To date, however, this tool has not been tested with children under the age of four years and the research investigating these ages proved to be minimal. This research gap has serious implications for practice as the need to understand possible advantages and disadvantages from using digital technologies in play is becoming imperative. The examination of international research projects in this field will contribute to a better understanding of this issue and will provide useful suggestions for further research with children under the age of four years.

Statewide Quality Rating and Improvement Systems in Early Childhood Education in the United States: Successes and Challenges

Dr. Zeynep Isik-Ercan[1], Dr. Kelley Perkins[1], Ms. Jennifer Cortes[1]
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In the United States, statewide Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) have been shifting the early childhood education landscape for the last 15 years. Originally conceptualized as a way to rate the quality of early childhood education programs, it grew exponentially to be a statewide system of quality improvement effort that more than 40 states adopted systematically. In this presentation, we will discuss the role of QRIS as a quality improvement effort that is systematic and discuss ways that they are able to tackle some important challenges in the United States child care and education system such as fragmented systems, training availability, alignment and coordination, conflicting requirements for improving quality, resource and referral system, lack of statewide data systems, and leadership development.

Some of the immediate successes of QRIS have been forcing states to think about early childhood education and care systematically, defining stronger standards for early childhood programs, defining career ladders for early childhood practitioners, defining quality indicators for early childhood programs with opportunities to move up in rating as they complete additional requirements, leadership training, improved regulations, incentives for early childhood programs to participate in initial quality improvement efforts, and for highly rated programs, being able to participate in continuous quality improvement.

However, there are still many challenges to how QRIS operate, function and make impact in early childhood education landscape including funding availability, changing state priorities with leadership change, low compensation, fragmanted state systems and regulations, and lessons learned with revisions in several QRIS systems. Our presentation will introduce QRIS as a system and describe the national progress made through them, at the same time discuss current challenges and recommendations for moving forward in national and international contexts. It will also describe the role of Early Childhood Leadership Institute plays in New Jersey QRIS: Grow NJ Kids.

A Texas Municipal Government's Investment Into the Early Education Business: How Pre-K 4 SA Is Working for the Children

Mrs. Susan Hancock[1]
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Deep in the heart of South Texas, the 7th largest city in the US put early childhood to a vote eight years ago. The Mayor and City Manager proposed a bold, risky, outside-the-box endeavor to pay for educating approximately 2,000 4-year olds in San Antonio with an 1/8-cent per dollar sales tax. There was opposition from those outraged at the thought of city government getting into the business of education. But San Antonio had been investing state and federal dollars for years through workforce development programs and the early childhood community was built on partnerships and collaboration. It was one of the few cities in Texas that had business, for profit and non-profit support of early care and education. The Pre-K 4 SA program was presented to voters in 2012 and the tax passed by a slim margin (53.6% to 46.4%). The early childhood community rallied around the potential for city-wide quality improvements in child care and became a significant voice advocating for the tax increase. With its passage, the Pre-K 4 SA program became the gold-standard for quality in preschool buildings, classroom environments, teacher education and professional development.

Pre-K 4 SA is a comprehensive early childhood initiative aimed at changing the educational and workforce trajectory of San Antonio in one generation. It produced positive academic outcomes for students enrolled in the first year of the program (2013-2014 cohort). On average, students had stronger exam scores on third grade reading and math, better attendance, and less need for special education services than students who did not participate in public prekindergarten.

The next political task will be to renew the tax in 2020 and ask voters to preserve a program that has demonstrated results and success for young children.

Promoting interculturalism and democratic culture in schools: The role of principals

Dr. Maria Vlachaki[1]
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Interculturalism constitutes an important criterion of democracy in an educational institution according to a whole – approach, which integrates goals both in learning and governance. Effective management and leadership are closely related to the promotion of cooperation, participatory decision making, respect and equality in a school community.

This paper, which is based on quantitative and qualitative research collected in 2018, presents the perceptions of 120 principals of kindergartens and primary schools in northern Greece on the following issues:

a. The management of ethnocultural diversity in their school (difficulties and encouraging ascertainments according to a critical self-reflection).

b. The educational policy in managing ethnocultural diversity in Greek schools.

c. Effective practices the principals follow at their work and reflect the recognition of pupils with different ethnocultural identity and the promotion of democratic values.

The research of the promotion relationship between the kindergarten teacher's professional role and the mother's role

Yuying Zhu[1]

[1]*Jiangsu Second Normal University*

Based on the role theory, by using the method of interviewing of the qualitative research, this research discusses the promotion relationship between the kindergarten teacher's professional role and the mother's role. According to the collation and analysis of the data, the researcher has drawn the following conclusions:Firstly, the kindergarten teachers' professional role promote mother's role in two main aspects: On the one hand, professional knowledge helps kindergarten teachers to form a scientific concept of family rearing, which mainly includes paying attention to the habitual cultivation of children, following the rules of children's physical and mental development, choosing scientific teaching methods and establishing scientific views to children.On the other hand, the professional role has created convenient conditions for kindergarten teachers to raise children, including the professional role that is conducive to children's admission to the kindergarten, helping kindergarten teachers fully understand the children's kindergarten life and improving the teachers' family parenting ability.Secondly, the teacher's mother role promotes teacher's professional role in three dimensions: enriching the kindergarten teachers' childcare and education experience;renewing the kindergarten teachers' ideological concepts;and improving the ability of teacher-parent communication.Thirdly, the study also found there are also contradictions between the kindergarten teacher's professional role and the mother's role: professional experience has limitations in family parenting; work pressure affects the quality of parent-child interaction;and paying more attention to mother's role causes the reduction of the teachers' professional achievement.In view of the research results,the researcher discussed three aspects which includes the value of the promotion relationship between the kindergarten teacher's professional role and the mother's role; the kindergarten teacher's career choice reflects the dual influence of traditional culture and social reality;and the external support system which is important to handling kindergarten teacher's work-family relationship.

Preservice kindergarten teachers' affective relationship with science and mathematics: a digital storytelling approach

Dr Georgios Kritikos[1], Dr Andreas Moutsios-Rentzos[2], Dr Fragkiskos Kalavasis[1], Dr Michalis Meimaris[2]
[1]University of the Aegean, [2]National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

The nature of the teachers' multifaceted relationship with a discipline is crucially linked with the appropriateness of the teaching practices that the teachers employ in the respective school course. In this paper, we discuss a project that builds upon a research perspective that utilises digital storytelling as means for engaging a group of 16 preservice kindergarten teachers (PSTs) in individual and collective reflections about their affective relationship with mathematics and science. The project aims to support the PSTs in affectively dealing with the teaching of two courses that for many of them constitutes an emotional "Portcullis". The project includes three phases. In the first phase (the "story creation"), the PSTs' self-reflections about their relationship with mathematics and science were first noted in two storyboards (one for each discipline) and subsequently captured in two digital stories. The PSTs were advised to create stories based on their personal experiences (for example, specific incidents, an important person etc) and to keep a structured "creator's log". In the second phase (the "individual viewing"), the PSTs watched two sessions of all the digital stories, and they completed three reflective worksheets (science, mathematics and their links). In the third phase (the "sharing"; video-recorded), the focus turned on the PSTs' sharing their viewing experience: about science, about mathematics, as well as about their links. The third phase concluded with the PSTs' noting their reflections about the sharing experience on a structured worksheet. The digital stories, the logs, the worksheets and the video-recording of the sharing session were subjected to content and thematic analysis with the help of Atlas.ti, allowing us to map and reveal the PSTs' unidiscisplinary and interdisciplinary complex affective relationships. The findings will inform the PSTs' training and support, including the acceptance and didactical embedding of authentic emotional mathematics and science experiences in kindergarten practices.

Reconsidering bias: A review of prospects and dilemmas resulting from a collaborative action research project.

Mrs Evangelia Kosmidou[1], Prof. Maria Sfyroera[1]
[1]*National And Kapodistrian University Of Athens*

This study seeks to present the key points of a research project implemented during the school year 2018-2019 in the context of a PhD research. Nine preschool teachers, one researcher-facilitator and two critical friends worked together on an anti-bias action research program that used Persona Dolls method as a research hypothesis of dealing with diversity in their settings. Participants were involved as teacher researchers in a collaborative action research project that included - among others - training sessions, experiential workshops as well as reflection and feedback meetings with the whole team. The primary aim of the process was to theoretically and methodologically support teachers to plan and conduct anti-bias educational interventions in their classrooms, using the Persona Dolls approach and to reinforce their effort to meet students' diversity in order to challenge prejudice and discrimination. At the same time, acting as researchers of their own work, they were encouraged to contribute their opinion about the educational exploitation of Persona Dolls method towards managing student heterogeneity and combating bias. The presentation focuses on reflecting teachers' overall experience during their participation in the research and the way it is intertwined with the use of the PD method within their classrooms. The analysis reveals interesting findings, as their involvement in the project seems to have challenged both their personal and their educational beliefs and practices. More specifically, their participation in the research and the exploitation of the program's methodological tools appears to be associated with remarkable changes in the way they approach issues of diversity and prejudice in and outside school. The main difficulties and dilemmas they encountered, the kind of support they consider significant and the perspectives they acknowledge through their way in the project are also discussed.

Low-cost alpha-numeric mobile phones to deliver professional development for early childhood teachers in Papua New Guinea

Associate Professor Kym Simoncini[1]
[1]University Of Canberra

Early childhood teachers (Kindergarten to Year 2) in Papua New Guinea (PNG) have typically only completed Year 10 and receive limited teacher training (certificate qualification). Access and opportunities to receive professional development is even more limited due to high costs in delivering workshops and difficulties accessing teachers from rural and remote schools. As such, teaching in PNG can be very isolated and teachers have few, if any opportunities to share their practice and learn from one another. This presentation details the use of teaching videos to widen teacher's repertoire of teaching practices delivered through low-cost alpha-numeric mobile phones using micro secure digital (SD) cards. Videos were created reinforcing ideas and teaching strategies taught in face-to-face training, showing teachers what different teaching strategies look like in real PNG classrooms and giving teachers confidence in their teaching practice.

The teaching videos were developed as part of the Together for Education project that aims to improve access and quality elementary education in three provinces focusing on literacy and numeracy. The project is delivered by a consortium including World Vision, ChildFund, Library For All and the University of Canberra. SD cards were distributed to 200 teachers involved in project teacher training during 2019. Teachers completed a written survey about SD during the final teacher training workshop. Teachers reported that the SD cards were very useful and improved their teaching by giving them new strategies to use in the classroom. Perhaps more importantly, the teachers reported sharing the videos with other teachers who did not receive the training, primary school teachers who have had more training and qualifications. The teaching videos allowed teachers to reflect on their own and other's teaching practices. SD cards viewed on low-cost alpha-numeric mobile phones present unique opportunities for education systems with limited resources enabling continued professional development.

An investigation into the provision of trauma training in the Irish Early Childhood Education & Care profession

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Childhood adversity is an emerging public health matter which has generated concern in the Early Childhood Education & Care (ECEC) profession globally (Butler, 2021; Prevention & Early Intervention Network, 2019). Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stress-inducing experiences which have the potential to profoundly alter brain-body functioning (Siegel, 2012), and can manifest in a host of negative consequences across behavior, learning and relationships (Frieze, 2015). During sensitive developmental stages, trauma exposure can interfere with a child's sense of safety and trust, inhibiting their capacity to regulate their emotions, build relationships, and be receptive to new information (Nicholson et al., 2018; Shonkoff & Gardner, 2012). The cumulative effects of childhood trauma justify the need for Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP), which is a culture of renewed empowerment designed to mitigate the effects of early adversity (Pemberton & Loeb, 2020). Speck (2019), however, reported that a startling 60% of primary school teachers have no trauma-informed education, with Butler (2020) expanding that this figure may be higher among ECEC practitioners. Therefore, due to the practical and theoretical importance of ECEC practitioners receiving trauma training, this PhD research serves to establish a bespoke training programme specifically developed for ECEC practitioners to assist in their delivery of TIP. Notably, many countries across the globe have accelerated their respective trauma/ACE movement, and have implemented impactful trauma-focused frameworks, which have been reported to decrease social isolation, improve educational outcomes, and build resilience in young people (Campbell & Johnston, 2018; Skuse & Matthew, 2015). This research, utilising a strategic four-phase methodology process, aims to design, implement and evaluate a novel and pioneering trauma training model. Grounded in an education and care context, this emerging initiative strives for a trauma sensitive ECEC landscape, which is the first of its kind in Ireland, generating unprecedented data in the field.

Examining the Job Satisfaction and Psychological Resilience Levels of the Pre-School Teachers in Turkey: An Interregional Comparison

Ms ÖZGE AKGÜN[1], Dr Serap ERDOĞAN[2]
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In Turkey, the educational institutions are divided into 3 service regions in terms of the conditions of their residential areas. In forming the service regions, the following factors are taken into consideration: geographical location, level of development etc. In Turkey, the teachers face different positive and negative conditions in fulfilling their professional duties depending on the service regions where they work. The psychological resilience is the feature that will support the teachers in terms of maintaining their performance, motivation, and efficiency in the face of difficulties they encounter in their professional lives. The purpose of this study was to describe the psychological resilience and job satisfaction levels of pre-school teachers in terms of various variables and to reveal the relationship between the psychological resilience and the job satisfaction. The method of this research is a relational research model which is one of the quantitative research methods. Within the scope of the study, the goal was to reach the pre-school teachers working in different regions. Since the other data collection methods were not feasible in terms of time and cost, the online data collection method was used to achieve this goal. The research data were collected through "Survey Monkey", a widely preferred online web-based survey development site. In the study, the general information form was used to obtain the demographic information about the teachers; and the "Resilience Scale for Adults" and the "Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale" were used to determine the teachers' psychological resilience and job satisfaction levels, respectively. Within the scope of the study, a total of 1364 teachers from 3 different service regions were reached. The research data were analyzed using the SPSS statistical software. The data analysis process and reliability studies of the research are still ongoing. Therefore, the findings and conclusions will be shared later.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): A tool for fostering collaboration between educators (nursery and kindergarten teachers) in a split Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) System.

Mrs Alexia Evgenia KOUMARIANOU[1]
[1]European University Of Cyprus

The purpose of this study is the in-depth investigation of the participation of 10 early childhood educators (nursery and kindergarten teachers) in a PLC and the impact on their daily practice.

International organisations (European Commission, 2019; UNESCO, 2011; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2017) report that ECEC in the majority of countries, as in Greece, separates its structures according to the age of children. This results in different targets being set according to the age of children, governments investing more public expenditure in structures for older children by degrading structures for children up to three years old as well as inequalities in both children's access to services and the workforce (Kaga, Bennett & Moss, 2010; European Commission, 2014; Haddad, 2002). Nevertheless, children's development should be approached holistically as it follows a perpetual flow and is not divided into fragments depending on the age of children (Bautista, Ng, Múñez, & Bull, 2016).

The organisation of PLCs in the context of ECEC, can be a powerful tool used by the educational community in order to achieve the collaboration of ECEC educators for the whole age range 0-6 years as well as the first essential step towards improving the quality of structures. Participants in the PLCs are setting common goals (DuFour, 2004), and through reflective disposition, shape, change and improve their pedagogical practices (Borko, 2004; Earl & Timperley, 2009).

In this study, the context of the PLC will focus on strengthening the emotional learning culture as a common target across the whole ECEC age range. Data will be collected from the observation of the PLC, from the analysis of the educator's reflective journals and from focus groups.

Student educators' beliefs and self-efficacy about early childhood inclusion: A Greek perspective

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Early childhood inclusion(ECI) for disabled children is a priority area (UN, 2015). One of the factors that inhibits the process of ECI is educators' internalised ableist/disablist beliefs (Fyssa, Avramidis, & Vlachou, 2014). It is suggested that the typology of 'anti-disablist/disability-focused anti-oppressive' pedagogies can offer possibilities for transformation (Symeonidou & Chrysostomou, 2019), supporting educators to understand disability as a form of social oppression. This transformation is vital to begin from initial education for educators.

In Greece, a dichotomous training system for professionals in the early childhood care and education(ECCE) workforce is followed according to which different University Departments(UD) are focusing on the preparation of prospective educators. The present paper focuses on Greek student educators' beliefs and training efficacy to support the needs of disabled children in regular ECCE settings. An adapted version of a survey instrument previously developed by Symeonidou and Phtiaka (2012) was used to provide insights into participants' beliefs and skills about ECI. This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Patras.

The study is in the data-analysis phase. The survey instrument has been completed by 329 student educators in their last year of undergraduate studies (Student Childcare Practitioners[SCP]=51.7%; Student Kindergarten Teachers[SKT]=48.3%). The large majority of participants are female which is representative of gender split in Greek UD offering such undergraduate programs (319[97.3%] female; 9[2.7%] male). The participating SKT have completed university courses on supporting the education of disabled children with a frequency of 84.9% while SCP with a frequency of 48.2%. Such a notable difference is probably expected taking into consideration that the study programs of the UD with orientation in Early Childhood Education offer more often modules relevant to special and inclusive education. With the completion of the study, implications of the findings for initial education on disability and ECI will be discussed.

Factors related to kindergarten teachers' emotional intelligence and problem solving skills

Mrs Sofia Saiti[1,2], Dr Ntina Kourmousi[3]
[1]University of Ioannina, [2]OMEP Greece, [3]School of Pedagogical & Technological Education (ASPETE)

A lot of discourse has been developed recently about educators' socioemotional skills for their positive contribution to successful teaching. The presented cross-sectional study examined personal and work factors associated to emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills in 366 Greek Kindergarten teachers, nine male and 357 female ones, with a mean age of 40,7 years. The study questionnaire posted on official and main teachers' portals included individual and job-related characteristics, the Wong & Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) and the Problem Solving Inventory (PSI). Multiple linear regression was used to identify independently associated factors with the WLEIS and the PSI dimensions, namely Self-Emotions Appraisal, Regulation of Emotion, Use of Emotion and Problem Solving Confidence, Approach-Avoidance Style, Personal Control. Standardized regression coefficients were performed to measure the effect of independent variables.

Regarding WLEIS, the analysis showed that age had the greatest effect on the Self-Emotions Appraisal, followed by gender. Gender had the greatest effect on Regulation of Emotion, followed by increased working experience and support from colleagues. Greater scores on Use of Emotion were associated with increased age, followed by mental health promotion/SEL (Social Emotional Learning) training and higher studies. Concerning PSI, Personal Control, Approach-Avoidance Style, Problem Solving Confidence and Total PSI score were found to be increased with age. Higher educational level, having students with language speaking/comprehension difficulties and mental health promotion/SEL training were found associated with better Problem Solving Confidence, while teaching in special education was associated with worse Problem Solving Confidence. Higher studies and having students with language speaking/comprehension difficulties had the greatest effect on Total PSI score. The identification of enhancing factors like training in mental health promotion could contribute significantly in designing training that can simultaneously benefit teachers' skills and students' psychosocial well-being.

We will Discuss the Alabama Reflective Coaching (ARC) Model as Part of a High Quality Pre-K Program, Share ARC Teacher Data, and Use Child Data to Advocate for Program Expansion

Dr. James Ernest[1]
[1]University of Alabama at Birmingham

From 2003 to 2018 in the United States, the number of 4-year-olds served in state-funded preschool programs has increased from 14% to 33% of all children (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2018). Alabama's First Class Pre-Kindergarten program has been awarded the highest quality rating by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) for the past 13 years. A NIEER report released in November 2018 shows that Alabama First Class Pre-K is the only state-funded pre-K program in the country that "comes close to having all the elements of a strong pre-K program." Since the 2005-2006 school year, First Class went from serving 1.7% to 32% of all 4-year-olds, with increased state appropriations from $4.3 million in 2005 to almost $120 million in 2019 (Ross, 2019).

This presentation describes a professional development coaching model called the Alabama Reflective Coach (ARC). The model was co-developed by the presenter in collaboration with the Director for Professional Development, Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education. It is currently used in more than 1,200 state funded pre-k classrooms serving more than 20,000 children. The presenter will share how the ARC is based on a capacity building empowerment framework, utilizing the most effective adult learning practices identified through meta-analyses (Dunst & Trivette, 2011).

The presenter will discuss (1) components of the ARC, (2) feedback from teachers about the ARC, and (3) child-level data (e.g., Teaching Strategies GOLD, PPVT language) linked to later kindergarten readiness and school success (ages 8-15). Finally, the presenter will encourage participants to share personal experiences with coaching models, and provide a rationale for using data to support program growth. In addition, the presenter will plan to network with other professionals with an interest in coaching and systematically growing programs throughout the remainder of the conference.

Educational cultural workshops for children aged 3-5 from diverse cultural backgrounds at early childhood education and care (ECEC) facilities: A framework of practice of the Erasmus+ project EDUCLAB

Professor Loizos Symeou[1], Dr Elena Stylianou[1], Dr Chrystalla Papademetri-Kachrimani[1], Dr Sophia Hadjipapa[1], Dr Georgia Petroudi[1]

[1]*European University Cyprus*

This paper presents a suggested framework on how educational cultural workshops could be organized and implemented when dealing with children aged 3-5 from diverse cultural backgrounds at early childhood education and care (ECEC) facilities. The framework has been developed for the purposes of the Erasmus+ funded project EDUCLAB (Education and Digital Cultural Laboratory). The main aim of the project is to develop training materials for educators working at kindergartens of the specific age with a high number of pupils with diverse cultural and migrant background, on how to plan, organize and implement cultural and artistic workshops in the classroom in the frame of the European Year of Cultural Heritage. The focus is on cultural workshops to help to prepare children to visit museums, libraries, archeological sites, theaters and musical institutions and provide them a "key" to enjoy such visits and to interpret the artistic creations they are going to explore.

The framework proposed provide practical and useful indications for pre-school educators on how to organize cultural workshops in the classroom in order to prepare children to visit cultural institutions and be able to appreciate art. Through these cultural workshops educators are expected to be able to promote awareness on cultural diversity in the classroom and support children in developing intercultural skills. The framework firstly presents an in-depth analysis of the data collected during the various focus group discussions conducted in all five partner countries (Cyprus, Italy, Portugal, Romania, and Turkey); two focus-groups with a minimum of five educators each, for each partner country, i.e. discussions with 50 educators at a European level. Based on a meta-analysis of the emerging themes from the analysis of the data the framework proposes a guideline as to how such cultural workshops may be devloped and organised by ECEC educators.

A case study on kindergarten teachers' views related to early science experience: evidence and outcomes from a training program of teaching science in early years

Dr. Anastasios Pekis[1], Ms Paraskevi Alogdianaki[1], Ms Sofia Botonaki[1], Ms Aggeliki Mentaki[1]
[1]*Primary Education of Chania*

Research studies in early childhood indicate that teaching science in early years helps children to construct understanding of world concepts and leads them to the development of scientific thinking. Today, kindergarten teachers play a substantial role as they motivate children to explore the world around them by engaging them in early science experiences. In the above context, kindergarten teachers' training on science education is a considerable issue as it consists a vital component in teaching science effectively to young children. This study presents the impact and the outcomes of a training program on kindergarten teachers' instructional use of science with preschoolers which was implemented by the ex-Preschool Advisor in collaboration with the Laboratory Center of Physics Science during the school year 2016-2017 in Chania, Greece. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to explore kindergarten teachers' reflection and to analyze their attitudes after participating in a training program regarding teaching science in early childhood. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a research survey was carried out, during which an electronic questionnaire composed of four open-ended questions was given to a convenience sample of 55 kindergarten teachers working in the public kindergartens in the municipality of Chania. According to the results, significant ascertainments in kindergarten teachers' views were observed. Findings show that science education in Greek early childhood settings through a training program was beneficial in kindergarten teachers' professional development as the majority of them became more effective on their teaching and instructional practices concerning the enrollment of young children in the field of science.

Men in Early Childhood Education and Care: reasons for absence and strategies for promotion

Mr Matteo Corbucci[1]
[1]Omep Italia

Objectives: This presentation addresses, starting from the Italian situation, the theme of the absence of the male professionals in early childhood education. The question of why men do not choose to work with young children will be discussed, but, we will take this reality, also, as a reference for the status of the general debate on ECEC.

Methodology: Starting from the data of Italy, as an emblematic example of a country where the presence of men in early childhood context seems very difficult in increasing, the question of how to promote a greater presence will be addressed.

The project "Men in education and in care activities" that OMEP Italia has chosen to develop as one of its top commitments on the national territory, wants to face, for the first time in the country, this problem in an organic and articulated way.

The presentation will illustrate the design idea and the concrete actions that will be put in place to bring out the issue, which often remains silent or neglected, and to transform it into an important social battle.

Reaffirming, with determination and awareness, that men can and must take charge of the education and care of young children, and supporting and encouraging them in this task, means creating an alliance between men and women: that, together, find their way of liberation in those job positions that previously was denied to them because of their gender.

Men who take on the responsibility of educating and caring for children - who have the strength to resist in a profession in which they are generally not supported or fully recognized - discover the beauty and importance of working in those apparently unusual contexts: above all, they understand the value of their necessary presence for children, families, and the entire educational group.

Buildings sustainable transitions with a focus on communication, relations, and activities.

Mrs Ingela Friberg[1]
[1]Kristianstad University

The purpose of this study is to analyse the transition from different educational cultures, how teachers support children's transition, in what ways teachers create continuity for children's transitions, and what pedagogical and didactic strategies need to be developed so that children can influence and be active participants in their own transition journey

This research built on previous research on transition (Dockett & Perry, 2009; Dockett, et.al 2017; Garpelin, et al. 2010). The results can be seen as an answer to the need for more research about how teachers in preschool, preschool class and primary school can create continuity for children's transition journeys (Sandberg, et al. 2017).

The theoretical underpinning is built on professional development theories (Rönnerman, 2004;2012) and theoretical perspective on children's participation (Hart,1992). Transition, transition journey, children's voices and participation are used as conceptual frameworks.

This project is focusing teachers pedagogical and didactical practices according to children's active participation in the transition process. The teachers received information about the research aim, method, process, and consents were collected from all participants. Ethical guidelines from the Swedish Research Council (2016) and Gustavsson, Hermerén & Pettersson (2011).

This research is inspired by action research. Action research can be described as an approach with participatory, collaborative, and cyclical ways of producing knowledge and change. Teachers are seen as developers of their own practice with opportunity to constantly ask new questions (Mc Niff, 2014; Rönnerman, 2004).

In this study teaches from different school forms participated. They were identifying and reflecting on children's perspective on transition in their different educational cultures. This with focus on children's voices, and their right to be listened to in the transition process. The results point to the importance of the teachers in the study developed new pedagogical and didactic strategies to support children's perspectives in and about the transition.

Supporting pre-service teachers' awareness of children's participation in decision making: an evaluation of the VOICE intervention in initial teacher education.

Dr. Christina Sidiropoulou[1], Dr. Sofia Avgitidou[2], Dr. Konstantinos Karadimitriou[3], Dr Maria Kampeza[4], Dr Maria Ampartzaki[5]

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The need for a participatory early childhood education (ECE) has been emphasised as one of children's rights and supported by current learning and educational theories. However, pre-service teachers' positive stance towards children's participation in decision making is not taken for granted since prior research has shown that their beliefs of children as lacking abilities to participate act as obstacles for enhancing participatory ECE practices.

This paper presents the process and results of an intervention in initial teacher education (ITE) aiming to foster pre-service teachers' awareness of the need for and the ways to enhance children's participation in ECE. This intervention was based on the use of purposeful educational material produced within the program VOICE (Voicing children Opportunities Interaction Collective decision making Education) funded by the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI). It involved a systematic engagement of pre-service teachers with theoretical, research and reflective tools related to children's participation during a semester course. The teacher educators from five different University departments of ECE in Greece collaborated to detect changes in pre-service teachers' knowledge about participatory practices after the intervention and their evaluations of the used material and teaching processes. 150 pre-service teachers took part in this research after their informed consent. Research tools included questionnaires administered to pre-service teachers at the beginning and end of their course as well as teacher educators' diaries and reflective meetings regarding the results of their interventions during their teaching.

The research is still in progress but preliminary findings show variations in the effects of the VOICE teacher intervention programme on student teachers' knowledge and thinking. Further analysis is needed to provide an explanatory framework for these variations. Evidence-based recommendations for the organisation and content of ITE will be provided after the presentation of results.

Professional Mentoring for Early Childhood Practice: Enhancing Educators' Capacity to Support the Professional Formation of Early Childhood Educators

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Internationally, mentoring is acknowledged as one of a number of mechanisms to ensure that ECEC educators remain aware of appropriate research methods, and knowledge, to inform their curriculum and practice (OECD, 2012; Keegan, 2017; European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019). In an Irish context, research also demonstrates that mentoring is a key support in ensuring quality in ECEC settings (Goodbody, 2011; National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)/Early Childhood Ireland (ECI), 2013; O'Dwyer and McCormack, 2014). More recently, the Award Criteria and Guidelines for Initial Professional Education for Students engaging in undergraduate Degree Level Programmes in Ireland (Ireland, 2018) stress the key role of mentoring in the professional formation of early childhood educators. Against this backdrop, the author and her colleagues developed an accredited online Special Purpose Award: 'Professional Mentoring for Early Childhood Practice'. In the autumn semester 2021, ninety students (existing educators involved in mentoring undergraduate ECEC students) undertook this CPD programme. This paper, which draws upon an evaluation of the CPD programme, illustrates how involvement in the programme increased participants' knowledge, skills and competence in the area of mentoring. It points to the need for such a programme in the Irish context. Findings further underscore the benefits for educators of engaging in a community of practice (CoP) where they share their experiences, ideas and reflections. Overall, the findings have implications for ECEC policy in Ireland in terms of building educator capacity to mentor undergraduate ECEC students to support their professional formation, as well as existing staff within their settings who may require mentoring from time to time.

Critical reflection on kindergarten teachers training in Greece

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This study is an overview and a reflection on how to organize and implement training on kindergarten teachers in Greece. Training, as a repetitive process that is part of the process of lifelong learning, creates favorable conditions for professional and individual development in all sectors. In the kindergarten teachers area it is considered necessary since science and society constantly evolve.

With the common assumption that the kindergarten teacher profession in Greece is a 'lonely profession', the notion of group learning, through a training program, not only expands educators' ability to approach the learning process and strengthens their skills, it also helps particularly their communication skills.

The kindergarten teacher needs to work with colleagues, to exchange practices, opinions on issues that concern him/her in the classroom, to reflect on daily school practice, to stop passively accepting the ready-made solutions imposed on him/her "from above", to work with people who will understand his/hers concerns and finally together to seek solutions through experience, in everyday problems that concern them.

With the aim of modifying perceptions and educational behavior, training in Greece began in the early 19th century. The socio-political conditions over the centuries have led to substantial steps to be taken around teachers' training from that period till today. This is because we must bear in mind that educational reforms are not achieved by tricks and advice, directives and recipes, suggestions and circulars, but by targeted training policy.

Our youngest learners have something to teach us: new perspectives and dilemmas arising from the growing use of digital technologies.

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This paper will focus on an ongoing international study across several countries (e.g., Greece, UK, Norway, Portugal, Australia, China etc) which aimed to explore educators' beliefs around the use of touchscreen devices by children under three years of age. Despite the expansion of the use and access to digital technologies worldwide and from a very young age limited research exists in what early childhood educators believe and do in their everyday practice. Older studies focused on educators' lack of confidence and insufficient training and resources for justifying the limited adoption of new technologies in early childhood settings. However, more recent studies challenged these findings by reporting that early childhood educators are now more confident with the use of technology but also more worried about the impact of the early use of technology on very young children. Technological affordances, such as the interactivity and portability of touchscreen devices, resulted in making them easily accessible to younger children persistently attracting their interest and attention at home and in early childhood settings. Through the adoption of an ecological framework, and the use of an online survey and interviews, findings from this study reveal that educators competently use technology in their everyday life. Educators reported that they need pedagogical support with how to meaningfully integrate technology in their settings. Finally, a new perspective around educators' teaching philosophy and their image of the child and its strong association with their views on technology will be discussed. New dilemmas will arise by challenging old philosophies and constructing a strengths-based view on infants and toddlers being active learners and intentional contributors in their social worlds.

"It felt so real; now I understand what the news talk about!"

A case of Human Rights Education approach of in-service training, focusing on refugee issues, through Drama/Theatre Pedagogy

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A case of Human Rights Education approach of in-service training, focusing on refugee issues, through Drama/Theatre Pedagogy

The contribution of the Theatre/Drama Pedagogy to the social development of children and young people is an experiential and exploratory pedagogical approach that has, in recent decades, aroused the educational and research communities' interest. Its impact is based on its experiential and holistic (mental, emotional, physical) dimensions, providing the learning process with qualities that give an inclusive and multidisciplinary approach to the teaching subjects. The present research focuses on the ways in which the Theatre/Drama Pedagogy can contribute to the in-service training of educators on Human Rights Education (HRE), in today's school.

Our mixed methods research was implemented during the school year 2019-2020. It involved 171 educators of a variety of disciplines and levels, from 8 Greek cities, who were trained in a 20-hour Drama/Theatre Pedagogy seminar concerning Human Rights and refugees-related issues, as part of the "It could be me - it could be you" training program, organized by the Hellenic Theatre/Drama & Education Network and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - office of Greece. The study also involved 5 trained teachers' student groups, acting as focus groups which added valuable data on the research questions, especially on the HRE-sensitive teacher profile they would require.

Data collection tools consisted of a) a closed-ended questionnaire distributed to teachers in 3 phases, b) 12 individual interviews with semi-structured questions to teachers, and c) 7 interviews with student focus groups of all educational levels (preschool, primary, secondary). The quantitative and qualitative analysis revealed important shifts of teachers on their perceptions and information on Human Rights and preparedness to act towards them with their teaching, thus getting closer to the HRE-sensitive teaching profile their students have shaped. Important data was also offered on the contribution of Theatre/Drama Pedagogy as a methodology in Human Rights Education.

Child protection: The role of Saudi government agencies and social institutions in promoting cyber safety awareness from exploitation

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Children have the freedom to access various websites on the Internet, which may include sexual (views, exploitation), emotional and physical violence (Goldman and Grimbeek, 2015). The research findings of DeHart et al., (2017) explain that Internet-based sexual offences have increased; offenders can target children by using images or in chat apps. Children will try to find information from untrustworthy sources such as friends or the Internet. Given the more outward-facing orientation in contemporary society and governance in Saudi Vision 2030, these policies need to be locally appropriate but might also be informed by recommendations from international organisations such as UNESCO. Conducting scientific studies in different fields for protecting children from sexual abuse is one of the recommendations of the 'National Forum for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation of Children via the Internet', organised by Ministry of Interior and National Security of the KSA (Alshebani, 2016). This can be seen as a significant legal step, with the involvement of many specialists from different fields (Banunnah, 2017b). Thus, this paper demonstrates that the status of child online protection is one of many changes that are needed as KSA modernizes. Permission was obtained from the Saudi Ministry of Education before collecting the data. Most of the participants in this study agreed that many government agencies and social institutions need to be more effectively involved in protecting and safeguarding children.

Supervising matters! Good leadership and management promote supervision in Early Childhood Education

Ms Marja-Liisa Keski-Rauska[1]
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Supervision of early childhood education aims to ensure that early childhood education in Finland is safe and equal throughout the country. Supervision of early childhood education is based on law. The supervisory authorities have been defined in the Early Childhood Education Act (2018). Regional Administrative Agencies and the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health are national supervisory authorities. In addition to agencies, municipal authorities supervise private early childhood education.

Supervision of ECEC should be implemented in accordance with good governance. Good governance and leadership create the qualifications for supervision. The aim of the study is to increase understanding how good leadership and management can deliver trust instead of strict control under the supervision of early childhood education.

The conclusion of the theoretical analysis shows that the control is self-directed manner when ECEC is openly and transparently managed. The visibility and a certain degree of familiarity under the supervision increase the confidence of the authorities. Good management includes interaction, evaluation, analysis of the operating environment, risk management, structures where problems are reviewed and addressed together.

Towards a global common good. Reconceptualising early childhood education policy in times of crises

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In 2022 the world is cautiously adapting to a post covid-19 reality. The covid-19 pandemic–which is far from over for the majority of the world's population–has been exacerbated by lack of international solidarity (vaccine nationalism), inadequate global coordination, and unacceptable levels of inequality between and within countries in both the global south and global north. It has become clear, too, that the current pandemic is only one of several existential, self-inflicted, and mutually reinforcing crises converging on humanity, most prominently climate, biodiversity, forced migration, conflict, poverty, and democracy. While countries have been, and continue to be, affected differently by the crises scenarios, first analyses show that young children regularly are the worst affected group, not least due to widespread disruption of ECD/ECEC services, programmes, and systems. Inequalities that affect infants, young children and their families predate the covid-19 pandemic but have been compounded by it. In consequence, young children from marginalised groups in all countries, including the most affluent ones in the global north, fare increasingly worse on a whole range of indicators including health, (mal)nutrition, healthy development (stunting), and fulfilment of their full potentials (well-being, education). Against this background, an increasing number of countries, many of them in the global south, are adopting ambitious multisectoral ECD/ECEC policies. From these approaches emerges a fundamentally ethical and political project for ECD/ECEC to contribute to countries' transition to more sustainable and equitable systems for all, and to enable achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Framework in its entirety.

Using the context of the annual global G20 summits as a prominent example, this presentation tracks the changing global policy environment, with a particular focus on how experiences from the global south can inform ECD/ECEC policy in the global north in order to secure humanity's survival on a finite planet in existential crisis.

Public agenda in early education in Chile. Analysis of 31 years of political definitions (1990-2021)

Dr. Blanca Barco[1]
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In Chile, since the return to democracy in 1990, different governments have promoted educational agendas in favor of the access to Early Childhood Education. The impact of these agendas has generated an increase in enrollment in children from 6 months to 3 years from 5.5% to 31.6% and from 4 to 5 years from 38.9% to 88.3% between 1990 and 2017. This increase, has been internationally recognized as one of the largest in Latin America, but still below the average of OECD countries. This research analyzes the content of the public agendas in Early Childhood Education in Chile from 1990 to 2021, using the presidential accountability speeches issued by the presidents to the citizenry each year. The results show that the agenda of the different governments has continuities and ruptures in the identity of the educational level, in the increase of capacity by goals according to the age, in the priorization of Childs and family, in the purpose of childhood education (schooling or female labor), in the definition of quality of education (in structures or processes), and in the types of provision (state-maintained or subsidized). These results provide guidelines for the new democratic process in Chile and for the future educational policy agendas in Early Childhood Education.

Inclusive quality early childhood education can level the playfield

Maria Rafaela Kaldi[1]
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Countries worldwide are moving towards more inclusive education systems, yet at different pace. Analysis carried out by the Global Education Monitoring Report Team has shown that inclusive education is multifaceted. Ultimately, however, inclusive education is realized when everybody, despite abilities and backgrounds, learns. One of the necessary conditions for this to happen is equitable access to quality education at all levels and ages. In this respect, the evidence has increasingly shown that early childhood education is a foundation stage. It can level the play field and enhance outcomes over the life course.

Learning do not start in kindergarten or school (Heckman 2004). It is already in early years that hostile environments created by a combination of adverse nutrition, safety, health and learning conditions can result in development disabilities and delays especially for the most marginalized.

All boys and girls should have access to early childhood education by 2030 (SDG target 4.2). The launch of the Nurturing Care Framework at the World Health Assembly in May 2018 (WHO, 2018) is a milestone in the history of early childhood care and education. Yet many countries are far from universal access. Several factors influence participation. Some are in the immediate environments (e.g. learning spaces, home, peers and educators), other are outside the latter, some affect society functioning at large including legislation and policy and national and international level. Most interact compounding difficulties for some to access.

This work aims to illustrate some of the most recent literature findings along with developments in legal and policy framework in the area of inclusive early childhood education. It will also discuss some of the main challenges for particular groups as for example children with disabilities and from ethnic minorities and how countries are overcoming those. Some space will be also devoted to the role of pedagogy.

Building culturally strong kindergartens

Aihua Hu[1], Åsta Birkeland[1]
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Education for cultural sustainability in early childhood education is a fundamental issue on the path towards sustainable futures. Research has confirmed that children's participation in local cultural practices influence values and behaviors and improve resilience. As kindergartens across the world are becoming increasingly diverse, it is important to understand and appreciate local cultural practices and at the same time develop knowledge and understanding of cultural practices as changing. A cross-cultural project comprising three Norwegian kindergartens and five Chinese kindergartens is designed to promote education for cultural sustainability. The project focuses on kindergarten teachers' and children' exploration of their local neighborhood, such as local heritage, historical sites, local architecture, local storytelling and other cultural aspects of the community. The kindergarten teachers will share and explore their practices with the other participating kindergarten teachers through workshops. The purpose of this presentation is to highlight experiences from a workshop held for the participating teachers. The presentation is based upon visual data produced from the workshop presentations and the discussions among the teachers. The presentation will address the issue of how kindergarten teachers can develop practices that are locally situated with global awareness.

Concept of 'Playfulness' in Japan and Early Childhood Education

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We have the word 'Asobigokoro ' in Japanse. 'Asobi' means 'play' and 'gokoro' means 'heart'. So totally 'Asobigokoro' means not serious but to have a mind of relaxation, latitude or liberty. There are lots of study about 'Asobi(play)' because it is very important for early childhood education. However the study of 'Asobigokoro' in the field of ECEC is very few. How is the Asobigokoro in Japan understood by Japanese people? English has a word 'playfulness' and it is translated as Asobigokoro in Japanese. However, is it translated correctly? Is it different from 'humor' in English?

In Japan, lots of preschoolers and primary students are being abused in families and in some facilities. And the number of abusing notified to child consultation centers are increasing year by year. We thought that there was some relation between Asobigokoro and prevention of abusing.

This study shows that how this 'Asobigokoro' is cared for early childhood education in Japan. We also hope that we will have the possibility to overcome the sense of despair in Japan through 'Asobigokoro' of parents, childcare workers and teachers.

At the presentation in July we will introduce the researches to parents and childcare workers about our study of 'Asobigokoro 'such as drawing faces by footwears at door way. We will try to have the opportunity to think together with the participants.

Qualified Book, Qualified Time Project through the Eyes of the Children

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Qualified Book, Qualified Time Project was conducted to introduce children with qualified books and to spend qualified time with their families through books. In the project, 125 children (5-6 year old) attending preschool education institutions in a city located in the western part of Turkey, their parents and five teachers participated.

At the beginning of the project, picture books for 5-6 year old children were examined by the researchers and 25 children's books were selected. For each book, a booklet including questions that families can ask to their children and activities that family members and children can do together was prepared. Families and teachers were informed about project implementation through training seminars. In the second term of the 2018-2019 academic year, the project was implemented in five preschool classes and lasted 13 weeks. Research data were collected through interview and document analysis. When the project was completed, all children participating in the project were asked to paint their favourite book in the project. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total of 30 children, six of whom were from each class. Activity books, three-dimensional materials and photographs of activity applications were examined.

In the interviews with the child were examined, the children stated that their mothers mostly read the books to them and that they did activities mostly with their mothers. When activity books and photographs were examined, it was seen that   most of the activities were completed.

When gathered data analysed, it is thought that the aims of introducing children with qualified books and spending quality time with their families through books were achieved to a great extent. Through the books and activities in the project, children have experienced and discovered different ways of expressing themselves while having a quality time full of communication, art,play and movement with their families.

An evaluation of an intergenerational project between a nursery school and a residential care home in England

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Our presentation will discuss an evaluation of an intergenerational project between a nursery school and a residential care home in England. Despite the potential benefits of such projects for children, older people and communities there is limited academic research in this area. Most of the research has either focused on how intergenerational initiatives have increased children's knowledge about conditions which can affect people in old age (such as dementia) or the benefits for those living in care homes (Galbraith et al., 2015). However, there appears to be a gap in the literature in relation to how intergenerational projects involving pre-school children and how this might benefit children's academic outcomes in the early years as well as engagement (interest and enjoyment) for both children and those living in a care home.

To add further knowledge to this emerging area of practice the current project set out to investigate how participation in an intergenerational project can support pre-school children's development and provide engagement for both residents living in a care home and pre-school children. The methodological approach for the project was both quantitative and qualitative. Naturalistic observations of interactive sessions between pre-school children and older adults with dementia were supplemented with semi-structured interviews with professionals from the nursery school and residential care home. Additionally, statistical data of children's attainment in communication and language and personal, social and emotional development was collected at the beginning and end of the project. The presentation will discuss the findings of the project and how this contributes to innovation and collaboration between the early years sector and wider communities.

Five years old participating in parental meetings in one Icelandic preschool

Ms Kristin Dýrfjörð[1]

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In recent decades, the importance of collaboration between families and preschools has been widely acknowledged, including in policy papers such as national laws, curriculum, and regulations in Iceland (OECD, 2019). Children have become increasingly active agents in the preschool research community, with their voices listened to, and their perspectives sought (Hreiðarsdóttir & Dýrfjörð, 2019). At the same time, children still tend to be viewed as vulnerable and unable to participate in meaningful discussions and decisions in their preschools and lives. Despite talk about democracy within preschools, children may not always live it in reality.

A related, ongoing debate concerns children's participation in parent conferences, with perspectives ranging from the view that it is unacceptable (Jensen & Jensen, 2008) to the view that it is both desirable and unquestionable (Markström, 2008). In this paper, the latter viewpoint is favoured, and children consider to be both capable and essential practitioners in parent conferences. It is, however, acknowledge that parents sometimes may need meetings with teachers without children present.

An overview of the general development of parental involvement in public policy documents concerning preschools in Iceland in recent decades is a backdrop for the case study. The case takes place in one preschool that has developed parent conferences in cooperation with the 5-year-old children. How teachers see the connections between conference preparations and children's empowerment and democracy is examined. Habermas' (2007) theories on democracy and empowerment provide the foundation for this case study.

Data was gathered by recording a critical dialogue among teachers reflecting on their participation in the project during the autumn of 2019. Points from teachers professional meeting when they discussed this idea for the first time were also made available.

Fathers' knowledge and parenting practices as factors promoting children's positive developmental outcomes in early years

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Abstract

The study aimed to investigate the extent of parenting knowledge and practices of Nigerian fathers about child care and developmental outcomes in early years. A qualitative study was conducted in four selected states, representing four different Geo-political zones in Nigeria. A total number of 40 fathers, who had children between 3 and 60 months, participated in the study. To validate fathers' comments, 50 mothers (from different households) also participated. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGD) were carried out. A thematic analysis was completed to identify emergent themes within the data. Three types of fathers (traditional fathers, fathers in transition and modern fathers) were identified based on the extent of their parenting knowledge and practices. The findings provided new insight to the literature in describing fathers' roles and challenges in routine child-care practices. The study also presented information on cultural diversity in parenting in Nigeria. The findings suggested that targeting fathers may be a worthwhile approach and that involving fathers more in child care will help in promoting positive developmental outcomes of Nigerian children.

Keywords: fathers' parenting practices, developmental outcomes, yearly years, Nigeria.

The relationship strategies of families, around the use of children's audiovisuals

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The fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals is a highly valued point in the agendas of some countries. UNESCO refers that particularly in the context of education, technologies can contribute to "Offer universal access, participation and equity". Those of us who study early childhood know that from an early age the first approaches to the existing audiovisual universe and inherent to social and family life begin. In the case of Cuba, there is a process of digitalization and social computerization, the audiovisual consumption of boys and girls is very high and there is a demand from families related to the need for guidance on this issue. The truth is that it has demonstrated the importance of children's relationships with their closest adults, as well as family boundaries for proper child development. However, the way family relationships happen around the use of children's audiovisuals is less known. Therefore, this paper intends to identify the most frequent family relationship strategies around the use of audiovisuals based on the review of scientific literature and testimonies of 5 cuban families about their educational practices

'For the Best Interests of the Child':

A Case Study of Perspectives of Kindergarten Teachers on Parental Involvement in Norway

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Currently, parental involvement has already been an important and hot topic in early childhood education for not only researchers but also practitioners. The cooperation between home and kindergarten is also very important in Norwegian context. However, many researchers focused on investigating the practices of parental involvement, while perspectives of teachers of parental involvement have been largely ignored. The purpose of this research is to find out kindergarten teachers' perspectives of parental involvement. The research question of this study is as follows: How do kindergarten teachers perceive parental involvement?

This study adopted qualitative case study method and selected four Norwegian kindergarten teachers as research participants. Using interviews, artifacts and participatory observations to collect data, the study found that:

The participants show a positive and satisfactory attitude toward parental involvement. 1) They attached significant importance to the positive relationship with parents and reported how they promote positive relationship and avoid conflicts by having good communication with parents including formal and informal ways. 2) They thought most of parents are highly involved in collaborating with kindergarten but not every parent is so interested and active. 3) The teachers reported that there were several differences in working with immigrant families compared with Norwegian families. Although it took sometime for immigrant parented to adapt the way how teachers took care of their children, they finally accepted and worked with teachers very well. 4) Teachers try to meet parents' needs as they can but they always put children's need at first place. 5) Teachers think the status of teachers and parents are quite equal but some of them think parents are customers. The teachers acknowledge the importance of parents and consider them as equal partners instead of advisors for parents. However, dilemmas and obstacles in collaborating with parents are also mentioned by the teachers.

Parents' participation in teaching activities in kindergarten

Eleni Zisopoulou[1]
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The involvement of parents has been recognized as an important part of preschool pedagogy. The importance of parent engagement in their children's schooling has been repeatedly documented over the last few decades (Fan and Chen 2001; Jeynes 2012; Pomerantz et al. 2007). Studies highlight the importance and benefits that obtain all the members (school, family and child). In part, the value of parent engagement with school, and similarly the value of teacher and school outreach to parents, may benefit child's achievement because it helps parents and teachers build mutually supportive relationships (Dearing et al., 2017).

In the present study we aimed to analyze the significance of kindergarten – family cooperation which promote the physical and mental development of preschool children. Effective operation strategies were: teachers and parents should have a unified educational goal, keep communication in time, participate in teaching activities together and make full use of potential educational resources to enrich teaching contents (Zhang et al, 2018).

The present study was action research which was implemented in a kindergarten. It lasted five months and the sample consisted of 30 parents and 5 kindergarten teachers. The data collection tools were the observation guide, the photography and the questionnaire. For the data analysis the method of qualitative content analysis was used.

The study's participants were asked to fill a consent form for their participation. They were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any stage.

The results were quite remarkable. Teachers and parents learnt the connotation of kindergarten-family cooperation, had unified educational goal, kept communication in time. The involvement of parents as well as the supportive environment in the school helped to enhance contribute to cultivation of cooperative and cognitive skills and active participation in the educational process. Children developed positive interactions and elements of creativity in their activities.

Pilot of an online forum for parents of children with disabilities to "chat and release"

Ms. Miho Maehiro[1], Dr. Mikako Yazawa, Dr. Yuko Yamamoto, Prof. Mutsuko Yoshinaga
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In 2020, the COVID-19 epidemic has forced society to refrain from physical connections. Past practices of this study have revealed the importance of connecting and communicating with each other, especially for parents raising children with disabilities. Therefore, this year, we set up an online forum for chat and release experience. As the name "YURURI YURARI" in Japanese implies, we aim to provide an safe and relaxed environment on the web where experts in social work, psychology, nursing, and childcare attend as hosts to talk about their experiences of raising children in a laid-back manner.

It reveals how "hardship and difficulty" and "happiness" are connected and transformed through the real words spoken by parents of children with disabilities. The participants were characterized by a certain degree of parenting experience that allowed them to question and take action as well as to talk about their own experiences. We found it significant that this forum would be a place for these parents to prepare to be childcare supporters in their communities.

There are still many issues to consider, such as setting the date and time of the event, publicizing the recruitment of participants, how to facilitate the conversation etc. We would like to spend more time to study the appropriate management of both the actual forum and the online forum.

THE ROLE OF FAMILY INSTABILITY AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE CHILD'S COGNITIVE AREA: CHILD AND LANGUAGE

Ms KATERINA KOTI, DR EFI GOURGIOTOU

Current research shows the early years are crucial to future success in school and career. As educators, we know that high-quality pre-school programs can give disadvantaged children the necessary propulsion to succeed in elementary school and beyond. Children's educational outcomes is one of the key areas influenced by parent's education level. Children, which parents have a low educational level often start school already behind in terms of performance in relation to their peers from more cultured families, as shown in measures of school readiness.

This paper suggests in order to combat those factors that threaten children's development, curriculum must be strengthened through the implementation of early high-quality instructional intervention. Moreover, the parenting side can be strengthened, by measures provided by the state, enabling them to continue their education and training.

Results of international interventions have shown that similar family effects can be counterbalanced using sustainable interventions that provide academic-social and community support to raise the performance of those children.

The limited number of systematic research in Greece in this area, for preschool age specific, spurred me to investigate the effects of parents' educational attainment on children's school readiness through the communication of the family environment with the child.

The research was conducted in 2017-2018 school year on preschool students attending the 6thPublic Kindergarten of the Municipality of Fili in the Prefecture of Attica, using an anonymous written questionnaire given and completed by the students' parents. SPSS20 and statistical techniques (frequency-relevance tables) were used for statistical processing of the survey data:

The results showed that the parents "educating" factor not only influences, but is one of the key prerequisites for children's school readiness through responsiveness and family communication. In conclusion, we argue that active and sustained collaboration between key actors ,parents and children, is fundamental to ensuring children's school readiness.

Exploring the Support Framework for Preschool Children of Refugee Background. Views and approaches of teachers and coordinators for their integration into the school.

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Greece is a country where a significant number of refugees now live and consequently a significant number of refugee children attending Greek education. This new reality puts the Greek school in front of new challenges.

The present study attempts to study the views of kindergarten teachers, coordinators, as well as those working with refugees in order to capture some practices that will help preschoolers to integrate into the education system, the context in which they are implemented and the factors that affect their smooth integration. The research questions asked are: What are the benefits of integrating preschool children into kindergarten? What actions should society take to help children integrate?

The qualitative methodological approach taking into account the fact that the choice of a research approach depends to a large extent on the very nature of the research itself, but also on the type of information intended to be produced, the qualitative approach was chosen as the main research method in the present study. The interview research technique is used as a primary means of gathering the information needed to answer research questions.

The research concludes that it is vital that preschool refugee children join the Greek education system as early as possible, open more places in schools to make their access easier and not to wait, there are interpreters to help children learn the language, the role of parents is important and their involvement in the educational process must be essential. The integration of refugee children and immigrants into Greek schools has only positive aspects, as Greek children will study in a multicultural environment, fostering the spirit of world citizens, peaceful coexistence and compassion

The influence of family SES and home contexts on children's early reading attainments: Observations from naturalized citizens/refugees in Tanzania

Dr Laurent Gabriel Ndijuye[1]
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The paper explored and compared the role of family SES and home learning contexts on children's learning attainments in Tanzania. It employed a mixed-method with concurrent design in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed within a single phase. A sample of 200 pre-primary and early grades couplet children, 100 parents (father or mother) from the self-settled and in-settlement naturalized citizens, rural and urban majority groups were recruited. Data were collected using parents' questionnaires, interviews, Bracken's Basic Concept Scale–Receptive, and Early Grades Reading Assessment. Although home learning environments of naturalized citizens were generally comparable to those of the rural majority, and had lower SES than the urban majority, their learning attainments were as good as those of the more-advantaged urban majority. Regardless of urbanicity, girls outperformed boys in reading attainments, with girls from the group of in-settlement naturalized citizens significantly outperforming all other population groups. Children from the rural majority group were schooling but not satisfactorily learning. Reported parental involvements and beliefs towards their children's education explained their relatively better learning attainments. These findings have policy and practice implications especially in a context with limited educational resources as is the case in the sub-Saharan region.

The role of home learning environments and socioeconomic status on children's learning in Tanzania: A comparison study of naturalized refugee, rural Majority, and urban majority population groups

Dr Laurent Gabriel Ndijuye[1]
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This study investigated the role of home learning environments and family SES on children's learning in Tanzania. A total of 303 participants from the naturalized refugees, rural and urban majority groups were recruited. Data were collected using parents' questionnaires, interviews, Bracken's Basic Concept Scale - Receptive, Early Grades Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grades Mathematics Assessment (EGMA). Findings indicate that although naturalized refugees' home learning environments were comparable to those of the rural majority, and had lower SES than the urban majority; their learning attainments were as good as to those of the more-advantaged urban majority. Parental beliefs and expectations were the possible reasons for their demonstrating better learning attainments. These findings broaden our understandings of various protective and supportive factors that have implications on children's development and learning across contexts.

"There was Always so Much Fighting" – or was There? Historicizing Forced Displacement in Children's Literature

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Drawing from several critical content analyses of picturebooks about children who have sought refuge, we outline a scaffolded process for historicizing issues of forced displacement in early childhood social studies. The purpose of this work is to use children's literature to teach history, engage in critical inquiry into human rights education, and work towards anti-racist decolonizing stances in education. Drawing from excerpts of representative picturebooks, we share generative questions and instructional resources that invite both teachers and students to investigate the historical and sociopolitical contexts of these narratives, and to deliberately construct counternarratives, challenging underlying values and assumptions in texts that reproduce dominant hierarchies of power.

Refugee children's subjective well-being in Greece: Concepts of safety

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Over the last few years Greece has evolved into a host country for a large number of immigrants and asylum seekers with growing numbers in children. There is scarce evidence underlining the gaps in a clear and coordinated immigration policy, with little attention paid to child protection, sanitation, and safety. In particular, little is known about the experiences of refugee children living in flats (family settlements). Thus, the aim of this explorative study is to record children's personal views and understandings of their well-being addressing how they perceive matters of safety and violence. Four Afghan refugee children aged 4, 6, 7 and 8 years old who live in Northern Eastern Greece flats, who attend the Greek school and undertsand Greek participated in the study. Ethical protocols were followed and communicated carefully. By considering the "tactics" of research (Christensen and Prout, 2002), initially one-to-one interviews were conducted with the presence of an interpreter. However, as children were feeling uncomfortable, at a second stage, the study considered a more child-friendly approach acknowledging the lived experiences of participants in particular sociocultural contexts; the mosaic approach (Clark and Moss 2011). Children engaged in drawings and interviews (phase 1), in discussions with a persona doll (phase 2), in narrative drawings of a bug (Bühler-Niederberger & Schwittek, 2014; phase 3) and in using cameras to represent important places and people in their lives (phase 4). Preliminary findings indicate that children sense safety and violence mainly in relation to other children and not to adults. Furthermore, aspects of their lives that were significantly apparent through their narratives and creative engagement were friendships, play time, toys, school, and home life. Further research is needed to address the significance of refugee children's subjective wellbeing in practice and policy.

Barriers to Inclusion of Refugee and Migrant Children: Teachers' Perspectives

Mr Serif Ali Cakiray[1]
[1]The University Of Edinburgh

Barriers to Inclusion of Refugee and Migrant Children: Teachers' Perspectives
Serif Ali CAKIRAY1, S.A.Cakiray@sms.ed.ac.uk
Migration due to various reasons such as social, economical, religious, ethnic and political factors have always been a part of human history (Bade,2015). Due to political and financial changes in the world migration and displacement still are relevant topics. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) suggested that there are now more people displaced than there were in World War 2 (UNHCR, 2015). There are now 47,938 children who speak English as a second language in Scottish education system and significant part of this population is refugee or migrant children (Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland, 2020).
The aim of this paper is to explore the potential barriers that refugee and migrant children might face in mainstream classrooms in Scotland through teachers' perspectives. Another goal of the research is to understand whether teachers' have any misconceptions about refugee and migrant children and whether these misconceptions (if any) create barriers on its own.
To fulfil the aims of this research, a qualitative design is applied and semi-structured interviews are conducted with 7 teachers who have teaching experiences with refugee and/or migrant students. All the interviews are audio recorded and transcribed for the purpose of extracting data. Thematic analysis was applied to interpret the data. Transcribed interviews then coded and similar codes grouped together to create themes.
 In conclusion, thematic analysis provided six codes as: Language Barrier; Psychological-Emotional Well-being, Lack of Background Information, Lack of Social Acceptance, Cultural Differences, Teachers' Misconceptions About the Concepts of Refugee and Migrant. Two main themes are Teachers' Perceptions of Migrant and Refugee Children and Teachers' Perspectives of Barriers That Migrant and Refugee Children Face in Mainstream Classroom.

The inclusion of refugee students in Greek schools: challenges and possibilities

Dr. KONSTANTINOS KALEMIS[1]

[1]*Ministry Of Education And Religious Affairs - Ekdd*

The concept of educational integration could generally be defined as the process in which all children are educated to the greatest extent possible and in an environment with as few restrictions as possible. But can education lead to the social integration of refugees? Apart from the fact that it is a fundamental individual and social right, it is also a key tool for socialization. At the same time, it is the main driver of social integration and social cohesion and the mechanism of upward professional and social mobility, both for indigenous and refugees. Moreover, education is defined as a social and public good which is provided by the implementation of a public policy and is not a personalized responsibility of each, seconded by society. It is a social good which is freely and unhindered as a public and free and as such should be provided to refugees, regardless of their economic and social background, but with a view to their social inclusion which is a fundamental need of themselves and Greek society.

Obviously the Greek school does not seem very attractive, considering that the language is foreign. Starting from the non-negotiable principle that every child has a right and obligation to go to school, refugee populations are required to join the school and this is an expected process that is not a utopia or naivety. The current cultural diversity of Greek society makes the need to raise awareness and alertness of the educational community for the education of refugee students, rather than simply addressing the linguistic problem. Therefore, the education system is called upon to find the solution by including these children. In our paper, we will try

Moral and ethics as a concept in the inclusive education of vulnerable social groups

Dr. KONSTANTINOS KALEMIS[1]

[1]Ministry Of Education And Religious Affairs - Ekdd

Our aim is to explore the meaning and role of inclusive education for people with disabilities in a world that is undergoing rapid social, political and economic changes. It is clear that the issue of inclusive education is a question of respect for and respect for human rights and in this way we must address it in all our theoretical investigations and the practical implementation of them at the level of education and social policy. At the same time, there are also some central and related issues, such as social justice, participation and equal educational opportunities. The process of adopting and implementing inclusive education is endless with the aim of constantly increasing children's participation in cultures, schools and analytical programs and not a stage at which a school can reach some period of its operation. It consists of a sustained effort to discover, adopt and formulate good practices in the direction of continuous improvement in the provision of equal opportunities for students. The aim of a democratic school, an equal opportunities school, is, that is, permanently active. Moreover, inclusion is not only about teaching, but reflects the whole school life. Inclusive education clearly shifts responsibility from person to society, to the very education system that needs to be differentiated, so that it can welcome students with particular educational needs without these variations being separate segregated with their classmates. In order to achieve the realization of this concept, it is necessary to integrate as many children with disabilities into general school as possible while gradually reducing the number of special schools operating in isolation by maintaining also the model of marginalization and exclusion.

Main purpose of our research is to examine how the concept of human rights could be linked to ethical obligations towards those in an unfavourable or vulnerable position.

Prejudice and Participation. An Investigation into challenges surrounding access to Early Childhood Care and Education for Children from the Travelling Community in Ireland

Ms Denise Baker[1]
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Over half of the Travelling Community's population in Ireland are children and almost a third are less than 6 years of age (CSO 2017). Traveller children suffer the negative outcomes attached to being a Traveller as well as being a minority within the Travelling community that is, being a child, a minor who has no power and often no voice (Pavee point, 2013). This study investigates the attributing factors associated with the various social and cultural challenges that children from the Travelling community face in accessing ECCE. While progress appears to have made within Traveller education over the past number of years, there remains a significant gap between the participation, attainments and outcomes of Traveller learners in comparison to their settled counterparts (Irish Traveller Movement, 2011). The introduction of the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme in 2010 was deemed to be a positive step in the inclusion of Traveller children into a mainstream provision and away from segregation but this has indeed lead to new challenges. Essentially, The Early Childhood Stats series (2018) inform there are 2,399 Traveller children attending Early Years Services in Ireland but the CSO (2017) figures from Census 2016 show a total of 4023 Traveller Children of preschool age in the country (not including NI). Significantly, this shows that 40% of Traveller children are not availing of Early Years Services in Ireland. This research identifies the reasons for this and will attempt to delineate possible solutions.

Documentary review of educational policies and preschool guidelines to reveal the guarantee of rights of grade-level children Transition of public schools in Colombia

Sra Gloria Stella Campo V.[1]
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The objective of this article is to present findings from the first phase of doctoral research, that reveal the details and inconsistencies of educational policies and guidelines at the preschool level, when referring to transitional grade children. Previous work shows inconsistencies between said documents and, between them and what happens in the daily care of Transition grade children and their families in public institutions. However, it is important to note that these policies and guidelines, at the national and regional level, are governed by guidelines and agreements with international and supranational organizations that have exposed the importance of serving the child population, taking into account their value and relevance to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), specifically target 4.2. That is, to be guarantors of rights that contribute to the healthy integral development of children and the desired educational quality.

Methodologically, a quantitative approach is made for the collection of information, however, the data will be treated according to the qualitative, hermeneutical and contextualized basis of the research. Therefore, the check list is used, with previous and emerging categories, to determine the reference to the Transition degree in educational policies, guidelines, norms, monitoring and evaluation of the preschool level. It is important to note that students in the Transition grade, the last grade of the preschool level, are the only ones that are actually served by more than 90% of the public schools in the country. Hence the importance of making visible the way in which educational policies are taking into account Transition grade children, either by promoting care and attention, or in inconsistencies that affect children, going against the guarantees of their rights.

Advocates For Children: A civic engagement curriculum model for first year students in higher education

Dr Jessica Essary, Miss Lillian Norrs[1], Miss Alexa Fluty[Cazenovia College]
[1]*Cazenovia College*

Children sometimes are not aware of ways to advocate for their rights, and they may struggle to do so. It is the responsibility of child advocates, i.e. any adult within a child's sphere of influence, to promote and defend the rights, needs, and interests of the future generations. Young children are individuals with a set of rights that they deserve.Therefore, their voice and opinion should be heard. Those who advocate for children are making sure children receive these rights no matter the circumstances. Both presenters had the pleasure of taking Advocates For Children, a first year seminar course for undergraduate students as new students at a small, private college in New York in the Fall of 2020. Then, again in the Fall of 2021 we decided to come back to the class as master students, this distinction allowed us to take an advanced version of the course for upper level credit. It is uncommon to find a course with a title or description which emphasizes child advocacy in the USA. Furthermore, it is even more rare to find an opportunity which allows for returning students to teach lessons which are enhanced after a great period of metacognitive reflection. Establishing classes similar to Advocates For Children within other colleges will help spread awareness about advocates for children. This work will help create a better society that listens, promotes, and defends children and their rights. In this session we will outline the weekly topics, course assignments, and general feedback from the students. Artifacts from major assignments, such as the child voices assignment and agency/services assignment will be shared. In summary, educators and children not only grow from one another but also may work together ---transforming society--- to help society grow together.

Outdoor Learning in the Context of the Core Principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Dr. Ayse Ozturk Samur[1,2], Dr Paulette Luff[2], Dr Mallika Kanyal[2]
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The aim of this paper is to evaluate the concept of outdoor learning (an important element of early childhood pedagogy) and its applications in different countries, in the context of the core principles of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This paper presentation reports a thematic literature review that is designed to underpin a qualitative study of outdoor learning in different countries. The focus is on experiential and rights based approaches in early education. First of all, the concept of outdoor learning is explored: how outdoor learning is interpreted from the past to the present, with reference to the work of philosopher pedagogues of early childhood; and how outdoor learning activities are understood and implemented in different countries with varying traditions and cultures of outdoor play. The literature search uses article databases, including ERIC, EBSCO, ProQUEST, Elsevier, and Springer. Key words to guide the search are: child rights and children's rights, outdoor play, outdoor learning, early childhood, cross-cultural and early childhood pedagogy (and combinations of these). Peer reviewed journal articles and books are included in the literature search. Dates are not restricted due to valuing the historic work of early childhood philosopher pedagogues.

The thematic review is organised utilising the four overarching principles of the UNCRC and the concept and practices of outdoor learning are analysed in the light of these principles, namely: survival and development; participation; non-discrimination; and the best interests of the child. Findings from the literature are synthesized descriptively, with questions raised to guide future research.

Transition grade children's rights, pending the application of public policies in early childhood education

Mrs Gloria Stella Campo Vergara[1]
[1]Magisterio Cauca

The purpose of this article is to present specific points regarding the rights of transitional (preschool) children, taking into account that, as a transition teacher, in a public school in Colombia, I identify that there are guidelines and public policies that are going contrary to the daily offerings in the classroom, of public schools. With situations experienced by children, who, I exemplify how they suffer with academic demands and lack attention according to their rights, due to the dynamics of our educational system, affecting their healthy development and the desired educational quality. It is also important to note that there are colleagues who verbalize knowledge of early childhood needs and guidelines, but in their practices they do not experience them; Teachers and managers who are unaware of the policies and, in that sense, go against a process that guarantees the advancement of a preschool education that guarantees rights, according to the contexts of the students it welcomes, its needs and children's interests. Likewise, families unfamiliar with the rights of their children, most of them interested in personal ideas that respond to the capitalist and competitive system. In this way the importance of attending early childhood is recognized, it is necessary to make visible and transform the way of the state (Ministry of Education -MEN-) to monitor, accompany and evaluate what happens in schools that guide the preschool grade, especially the transition grade.

Colorful Elmer always Fights... for Children's Rights!

Κυρία Anastasia Papadopoulou[1], Κυρία Μαρία - Βασιλική Γκόγκου[1]
[1]Δημοτικό Βρεφοκομείο Αθηνών

In recent years people are asked to familiarize themselves with the constant changes that happen around them – as a result of globalization. The main idea being "The Child and their Rights", children are asked to know and understand notions like rights, pluralism, along with identity, but also to become familiar with discernible problems of the society, which need to be resolved, such as the environment, the inclusion of different ethnic groups, the peaceful coexistence. Thus, via education, and knowing that it constitutes the most important means of humanism for children, we implemented the specific pedagogical program. We mainly focused on themes concerning personal & societal development, the environment & natural science and arts. In terms of methodology, we moved into the realm of the experiential – mostly – approach (simultaneously using other teaching approaches, depending on the activity that was to be implemented). The collection tools used were: a) children's productions (individual and team handcrafts), b) audiovisual material (photographs and videos) of experiential activities, in which also parents participated, c) teacher's records, thus offering a number of activities, which could provide the necessary stimuli, so that the children could think, express themselves and collaboratively create.

Advances and pending challenges of Uruguay in guaranteeing the rights of early childhood.

Dr. Gabriela Etchebehere[1]
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30 years after the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereafter UNCRC) was proclaimed, the process of transforming attitudes and actions towards children that respect and guarantee their rights, is still slow. In the field of early childhood care and education in Uruguay, some research shows that these difficulties are reflected by the low recognition of the teachers' role as a guarantor. However, many educational actions, especially those related to promotion of progressive autonomy, are in line with the principles of the Convention.

On the other hand, at a normative level, it was not until 2004 that a new Childhood and Adolescence Code was approved after a slow process of changing norms and decrees.

However, in 2008 a path of priority to early childhood began to be drawn. With regard to education, this is seen by the implementation of a new law (2008) and a curricular framework for early childhood care and education (2014) with a clear perspective on rights. It also highlights the beginning of a new early childhood teacher training plan (2016).

In summary, this chapter will discuss research, programs and policies that mark the advances and pending challenges in order to guarantee the rights of early childhood in Uruguay.

The right to be heard (Art. 12, UN-CRC). Participation in ECEC – Potentials and Challenges.

Eva-Lotta Bueren[1]
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The right to participation is a human right. Therefore, children have a right to participate. The laws – especially the UN-Convention on the Rights of the child – make it clear that children and young people are experts in their own matters and must be involved in all decisions affecting them. Children and young people are subjects who can exercise their rights independently. The right to participation is particularly important taking into consideration that adults in our societies have more power and privileges than young people. Participation strengthens individually the self-confidence of the child and enables important experiences of self-efficacy. Furthermore, participation is a basic precondition for training of social competences and thus for democratic coexistence. The question must therefore be asked how can participation be lived out in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and be anchored in everyday life of children? What steps must be taken to achieve this in facilities of ECEC and which limitations does participation has? As institutional prerequisites for participation in early education, the German OMEP Committee has identified the following aspects as particularly important for participation in ECEC:
1) Participation depends on a specific mindset
2) Participation needs specific structures
3) Participation must involve all relevant actors
4) Participation requires specific knowledge
5) Participation must include all.
The presentation will provide further insights into the five aspects and encourage discussion on children's participation in the early education system. The presentation will thus focus in particular on the potentials of child participation and its impact on children and professionals.

Right to education and care in the first three years of life

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This research is part of the cooperation agreement between the World Organization for Preschool Education - OMEP and the Tecnológico de Antioquia Institución Universitaria - TdeA. The research is in the Strategic Plan of the world presidency of OMEP 2020-2022, in knowledge management, becoming a global project that will allow continuing consolidating the investigative processes not only of OMEP but also of the Senderos Línea Infancias Group of TdeA. The project's main objective is to understand how children are guaranteed in the first three years of life the right to education and care in the various modalities and settings that they go through in ECE.

The right to education and care in the first three years of life is fundamental to guarantee other rights, from recognizing education as a social good to care as a social practice. We based the project on mixed research with a descriptive-interpretive approach, which allows collecting fundamental elements from the conceptions, practices, discourses, policies, pedagogical proposals, actors, modalities, and scenarios to guarantee these rights to children and the girls. The data that we analyzed was from the voices of experts, teachers, and educators and the presidencies and national committees of OMEP in various countries worldwide.

The different inequalities -gender, social, educational, among others- and social exclusion resulting from weak and deficient public policies regarding early childhood education and care are highlighted as partial results, revealing a disarticulation between the various actors in the guarantee of education and care in the first three years of life -State, family, society, and market-.

Inclusive practices to enhance the participation of children with disabilities in the decision-making process during the educational procedure: Making use of the children's perspective

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This paper is based on a study providing children with disabilities with the possibility to express their perspective during the learning procedure, by participating in the decision-making procedure regarding activities of the kindergarten. The ultimate purpose of the research is to formulate an inclusive framework that supports the voice of children aiming at their active involvement in the formulation of the educational procedure. The theoretical background of the research is connected to the principles of inclusive education in combination with the framework of new sociology of childhood. The educational interventions were designed according to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, focusing on appropriate didactic approaches, such as student-directed learning, interest-based learning, differentiated teaching and cooperative learning.

The methodology of the study adopts the characteristics of qualitative approach of the action research. The collection of data followed the method of triangulation ensuring data from the perspective of the teacher researcher, the critic friend and the point of view of children in combination with the use of three different means of collection: observation, interview and children's works. The analysis of findings took place using the method of thematic content analysis. The subjects of this research were four (4) children with disabilities, members of a group of nineteen (19) children of a Kindergarten class, the teacher of which was the teacher researcher.

From the analysis of findings, it is ascertained that interaction both among children and with the teacher researcher enhances their participation in the decision-making process, considering that the acceptance of the value of a child's perspective empowers their participation in the educational procedure. Additionally, it is concluded that the formulation of a framework of active listening and support of children's voice, together with the use of differentiated didactic methods enhance their role as co-formulators of the educational procedure.

"Why do bats hang upside down?"

Initiating prospective preschool educators in Drama/Theatre Pedagogy and Human Rights Education

Ms Athanasia Choleva[1], Mr Antonis Lenakakis[1], Ms Maria Koltsida[1]
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The paper explores the potential teaching and methodological possibilities, created by the prospective preschool educator's familiarity with Drama/Theatre Pedagogy as a methodological tool in the teaching and facilitation of diversity- and human rights-related issues. The research question we ask is if these Educational Drama practices can contribute to a) the teacher's familiarity with human rights, and more specifically the child's rights, b) the degree to which Drama Pedagogy can empower the prospective educator enough, in order to utilize Educational Drama approaches in practice.

Our research involved 235 University graduate students of Early Childhood Education Department in Greece, as part of their placements during the winter semester 2019-2020. The students participated in 18-hours drama workshops, receiving weekly feedback and a 9-hours distant-counseling, while applying aspects of Educational Drama practices to their interventions, which were based on a Sudanese tale "Why bat hangs upside down?", as well as on various tales about diversity and disability.

The research data collection tools were a) closed-ended and semi-closed ended questionnaires, distributed to the research participants in four phases: before and after the drama workshops, as well as before and after their teaching interventions, and b) two written reports with open, reflective questions, filed after weekly interventions. The data analysis indicated significant shifts on participants' information levels of human rights, children's rights and inclusive education, as well as positive shifts concerning immediate implementation of drama-pedagogical methodologies. In particular, the analysis of their weekly written reports showed the ability of immediate usage of new multi-sensory tools deriving from a new expanded and enriched personal and teaching repertoire. In the same vein, the prospective preschool teachers' reflective texts record their theoretical searches, questionings, thoughts and experiences, depicting a deeper understanding of the subject, the improvement of their teaching practices, and their professional development in general.

Education and upbringing in forest classes and forest kindergartens as an effective form of preventing nature's deficit, children's depression and addiction to e-technology devices in children.

Mrs Agnieszka Kuźba[1]
[1]Safe Nest Fundation

We will present the achievements and limitations of Polish public and private early childhood education and forestry kindergartens in preventing the effects of nature deficit and simple solutions to implement to prevent nature deficit in children.

The lack of a living relationship with nature, physical and mental separation from nature is due to the way children learn about the world of nature at home and in the kindergarten. The function of creating emotional and physical relationships with nature has been taken over by electronic media and green spaces devoid of greenery - children in kindergartens are disconnected from the real world behind the door and learn about threats to health, various animal species and ecosystems only through the screens of electronic devices.

Education through daily outdoor activities, regardless of the weather, for preschool children is an important goal for a large group of teachers and parents in Poland. We implement programs aimed at preventing the nature deficit and its effects: impact on the correct, harmonious psychophysical development of public students and private kindergartens.

The benefits of implementing these programs in large Polish cities, as well as in small towns and villages - free fun and outdoor learning - are varied. Natural space in the environment or in a residential environment and educational institutions contributes to a higher level of physical activity and better emotional, behavioral and cognitive results of children covered by the program Movement in nature, Green hour, Green garden, Forest in the City. A city in the woods. Children develop a stronger bond with nature, feel its living part and understand the challenges related to the needs of sustainable development activities.

We counteract children's early addiction to the virtual world, electronic media and alienation among peers. We will discuss the forms and scope of these activities.

Wash from the start: Inquiry of local conditions for children's access to water

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Abstract: OMEP's Wash from the Start Project seeks to educate and raise awareness of adults and children regarding the importance of washing their hands frequently to prevent the spread of multiple infectious diseases. COVID-19 has amplified the importance of hand washing, but it has also exposed the lack of access to water experienced in many countries. Between February and July 2022 an OMEP subproject set out to raise awareness amongst early childhood education communities concerning this inequity through a curiosity driven inquiry. We invited children to engage in a project with their teachers in local communities around the world by asking "where does the water in the place where I live come from?", "what is happening to the water where I live?" and "what does this mean for my community and me? The planet?". This presentation will present some of the preliminary findings from this cross-cultural exploration, inviting adult speculation and introspection concerning the importance of water for young children through their voices.

Young children as agents for inter-generational learning for sustainability

Dr Jane Spiteri[1]
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While research demonstrates that family dynamics play a role in shaping children's behaviour, little is known about the actual and potential influence young children have on their parents' perceptions of sustainability. This study begins to fill this gap in early childhood education for sustainability (ECEfS) research by considering young children as agents of inter-generational learning for sustainability. It explores the ways in which young children (aged 3-7 years), in Malta, influence their parents' perceptions of sustainability and pro-environmental behaviour.

Designed within an interpretive methodology, this study adopted a qualitative multiple case study approach. Data were generated through observations; conversational interviews with children; children's interpretations of photographs; and children's drawings and interpretations of them. Semi-structured interviews with parents, teachers and head-teacher; a researcher's journal; and document analysis were also used to triangulate data. Different theoretical perspectives, including theory of cognitive development, socio-cultural theories, bio-ecological theory, theory of inter-generational influences, the new sociology of childhood, and the Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), framed this research.

The findings revealed that family relationships (image of the child, empowerment of the child and a positive relationship between children and parents) can lead to inter-generational learning for sustainability from child-to-parent, with children transferring the messages about pro-environmental behaviour learned in school to home. Parents' verbal interaction with children about sustainability issues and parents' perceived high values of these issues were influential. Data also suggested that parents' lack of interest in sustainability issues limit the success of inter-generational learning. The implications of these findings in relation to ECEfS are explored. New approaches to support inter-generational learning for sustainability at familial and societal level, starting in early childhood, are discussed and areas for further research are identified.

A Study of the Perceptions of Primary Education Teachers on the Organization and Functioning of Eco-Schools in Greece

Mrs Maria Eleni Kandaridou[1]
[1]Public School Kindergarden Teacher

The present study presents the perceptions of Primary Education teachers on the implementation of the environmental program "Eco Schools", the effectiveness of the environmental actions organized and implemented and the environmental impacts of the program on students. The statistical analysis is based on empirical data derived from a four-part structured questionnaire. The sample is comprised of 80 teachers and kindergartens whose schools participate in the Eco Schools network in Greece. All of the schools nationwide were 100 Primary Schools that belonged to either the public or the private sector. Data were collected using a questionnaire method, mainly with closed-ended questions, which followed the 5-point Likert scale. After collecting the completed questionnaires, Spearman Correlation, Mann-Whitney U-test, Kruskal-Wallis Test, simple regression and / or Multinomial logistic regression were performed using SPSS statistical package. Empirical data confirms that important organizational processes such as targeting, planning of actions, discussing environmental issues for decision making contribute to more efficient organization and operation of Eco Schools. The research estimated that the more well-organized a school unit is, the higher its environmental efficiency levels may be. In addition, the skills of the ESD that appear to be acquired, in line with teachers' positive responses to the program's implementation, provide students with the opportunity to face the environmental challenges of the present and future through a sustainable way of thinking.

Bokträdgården - the center for learning about sustainable development and outdoor education. A whole world of adventures and opportunities for preschool children located outside a city in Sweden.

Mrs Magdalena Tomczak Stenström[1]
[1]Malmö Stad

How can we help develop the relationships between children and nature in today's society when the world is at constant change.
How do we create sustainable relationships in societies?
The UN estimated that by the mid-2000s, around 70 percent of the world's population will live in cities. How can we give children hope about the future when almost every day we are reminded of the effects of climate change through the media?
The city Malmö came up with innovative idea about outdoor education. It offers children excursions to "Bokträdgården" , where the visitors participate in the creation of an exciting story together with the garden. Everyone can interweave their experiences and knowledge when it comes to encounters with nature through play and exploration.
In Bokträdgården there are various locations that inspire the children to role-play with natural materials from the urban environment, instead of the restaurant and home environment. These new places encourage their creativity. A greenhouse where they can paint or an outside play area which allows construction with bricks. There are places that challenge the children's motor skills and require taking risks: climb trees or balancing on rocks. A place that arouses imagination and awakens a desire to learn more about the mystery of nature, constant discoveries of different traces left by animals and nature. The children who are given the opportunity to be in natural environments increase interest in plants and animals and show more compassion to environmental issues, wanting to plant flowers, build insect hotels in preschools in the city.
Through experience we learn that everything is connected in nature and we are dependent on each other-biocentrism .
 The children and educators continue to spread a positive and meaningful change in societies when they bring stories, experience, natural materials and educational documentation from Bokträdgården.

The OMEP-UK Education for Sustainable Citizenship Award

Dr John Siraj-blatchford[1], Ms Lynnette Brock[1]
[1]*Schemaplay*

Following trials In Kent and In Dorset, the OMEP-UK Education for Sustainable Citizenship Award was officially launched In May 2019. The scheme is organised around an 'ESC Passport' that is provided for each child, and "I-Care.." activity booklets that are carried out in the home and local environment with family and community groups. Preschool settings gain accreditation at Bronze, Silver or Gold level when they have engaged the majority of their children/families in the scheme and made significant progress in developing their ESC curriculum as evidenced by progress made from a baseline audit of their ESC provisions. The audit tool that is applied has been adapted from the OMEP ERS-ESD Rating Scale. We now have 25 independent trainers across the UK, all supporting preschool settings in their efforts to achieve the Award and the project has recently expanded with 11 additional trainers now supporting the Montessori St Nicholas Schools In the UK. More than 700 children and families are already engaging In the ESC activities that have been provided, and a large increase in these numbers is expected as new trainers are recruited, and each trainer extends their work further. The presentation will report upon the progress and illustrate the range of activities being carried out in UK homes and preschool settings.

The 'ESC Passport' provides a summary of the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and follows the reasoning of Amartya Sen in defining Sustainable Citizenship as a life-long emergent capability.

To be awarded each sticker, parents and preschool practitioners work together to support the child in completing educational activities that range from the identification and naming of three wild birds, the identification of wildlife habitats, to the recycling of waste materials, and the recognition of interdependence and cultural and linguistic diversity.

Towards a new perspective on the social network of infants' ,young peoples`, children's and, adults` active participation for SDGs , their facilitating and accommodation system ,through family, preschools ,schoois and the other groups in community

Mr. motoaki hagiwara[1]

[1] 群馬大学

I presented on the theoritical frame of facilitating accommodated with infants` young children` and childrens` active participation by agents around them before. Here I will present a new perspective on transform from passive participation to their active participation ,and from facilitating dominated by agents to facilitating accommodated with children's` needs and acтive participation for SDGs. Secondly I will also present on new active participation for SDGs by all the members in each family, preschool, schools, and the other groups and social network of changing from dominated system to accommodation system in order to promote children-centered active participation I through every their family, preschools, schools and the other groups in their community. ,

Using Photography as a means for students' research and expression in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability

Mrs Marianthi Kalafati[1,2], Dr Evgenia Flogaiti[1]
[1]National & Kapodistrian University of Athens, [2]2nd Kindergarten school of Voula

For many years young children were not actively involved in research and action towards sustainability, mostly because they were considered to be immature to get involved with complex environmental issues. The emerging field of Early Childhood Education for Sustainability tends to overthrow this belief, by empowering pre-school students to address and cope with crucial problems related to the environment and sustainability.

This presentation is part of a research study that examined kindergarten children's creativity in Education for Sustainable Development, using visual arts. Here we focus on the use of Photography during the educational environmental intervention on which the study was based, as a means for research, action and expression of students in a kindergarten school of Athens.

We propose practical ways to integrate photography into the school curriculum, capitalizing its benefits for early childhood education for sustainability. Specifically, photography proved to be a valuable medium for students to evaluate their school environment, by highlighting its strengths and weaknesses. Inspired by the Photovoice method, children focused on the waste issue that was derived from their photographic snapshots. After a thorough group discussion on this critical issue, students committed to take action in order to resolve it, following democratic, collaborative and creative procedures.

In addition, selected photographic artwork by various artists raised students' awareness on the environmental issue, by helping them examine its key-aspects, identify related values and realize the inherent dilemmas. Finally, the use of the digital camera enabled students to create animated artworks through which they expressed suggestions for action and shared them with the community.

Overall, we argue that photography played a key-role to children's engagement with their environment, by visualizing their concerns and expectations and by making their vision for sustainable development apparent, in a highly creative way.

ERASMUS - OMEP project ESD for ECE

Ass. Prof. Ingrid Engdahl[1], Preschool principal Erica Strand
[1]OMEP

We will present a three year project, 2022-2024, with three content areas from a list given by Erasmus+:
- Early childhood education and care
- Creating new, innovative or joint curricula or courses
- Digital content, technologies and practices

The 'ESD for ECE' is designed to
- provide transformative in-service and pre-service education for EC teachers and under-graduate ECE students to promote sustainability-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour for young children in ECE.
- Furthermore, the project will enhance the skills of preschool teachers with knowledge of sustainable development for educating the youngest generation of European citizens in environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability.
- Additionally, the project aims at developing digital content and digital competencies.

Partners are Kristianstad University, Sweden, (coordinator), OMEP Sweden, OMEP Croatia, OMEP Czech Republic, OMEP France, OMEP Ireland, and edChild, where each of these organisations work with preschools and universities.

The aim of ESDforECE is to develop and implement an on-line course ESD for Early Childhood Education with 8 interactive, project-based modules incorporating environmental, economic, and social aspects of ESD to promote change in both daily preschool practice and in teacher education in 5 countries. The 8 modules of the course address the three dimensions in ESD as well as the importance of their integration and outreach towards transformative changes.
Foundational characteristics of the course respect children's thoughts and ideas, listen to and challenge children, and promote influence on the multiple voices of children. Participants will also reach out to the local community and initiate twinning partnerships with preschools outside of EU, as part of global citizenship. The course will be free of charge for the participants.
All material will be available in English, French and Swedish, with a possibility of translations into more languages.

"Practices to inspire active citizenship in young children via the pedagogical approach of the UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals. The paradigm of two Greek preschool education units"

Mrs Christina Vassi, Dr Efthymia Tsiara

[1]Preschool Teacher, Med, Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Ionnina.

Educational community plays a key role in cultivating attitudes that serve sustainability. It is of upmost importance for the contemporary and future social cohesion and prosperity the NetGen to be exerted into a learning culture, which emphasizes effort, teamwork, empathy and solidarity. In order to achieve this upper goal teacher should focus on student engagement and active citizenship. Indicative examples of such a pedagogical approach applied in two Greek public preschool education units in 2020. Applying teaching practices focused on student engagement and active citizenship we discussed about the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Being teachers of the above mentioned school unites which are located in two different environments, we collaborated setting the base for involving our students in real life situations so as to inspire empathy and solidarity. Students involved in planning, organizing and sharing learning experiences, having the opportunity to develop a sense of responsibility and commitment. Gradually the project included more empathy and solidarity focused learning experiences, close related to the Agenda 2030, giving young students the opportunities to be actively involved in authentic activities, volunteering and actions of public benefit. Assessing the teaching practices applied, we consider that the pedagogical approach of the SDGs offered young student increased opportunity not only to co-construct knowledge but also shape life's attitudes for a sustainable world. Implementing various student- centered and cooperation-oriented pedagogical practices we tried to inflate the values of solidarity, justice and offering into children, making them understand that these values have our self as a starting point. In conclusion we estimate that if we have managed to inspire young students to follow our example and broaden their viewpoint, we may have contributed to understanding that we are members of a broader environment and our actions directly or indirectly affect social and environment sustainability.

Design of interactive digital storytelling about school nutrition and food waste in preschool education

Ms Charistoula Chatzinikola[1], **Dr Georgios Kritikos[1]**, Dr Vasileios Papavasileiou[1], Dr Maria Kaila[1]
[1]*University of the Aegean*

Food security and adequacy of natural resources are a global challenge. Overpopulation and climate change affect the environment and threaten the agricultural production and food availability. In Greece, the preschool curriculum includes sustainability and nutrition education. Healthy nutritional habits in preschool age are associated with obesity prevention and healthy nutritional status. Latest nutritional guidelines for population encompass the environmental impact of dietary choices. In public kindergarten, family is responsible for the preparation, the food choices and the quality of the kids' snacks and meals. Teachers may recommend or promote healthy food choices through experiential learning and curriculum. Pre-schoolers do not often consume their whole home-made meals or snacks and they may be wasted. "Digital storytelling" is used in the educational process as an attractive tool for motivating learning and reflection purposes. The aim of our research is to present the use of interactive digital storytelling in raising awareness of food waste and nutritious food choices, combining the two dimensions of sustainability, the social dimension, including health and the environmental dimension. The digital storytelling scenario "What does Tim eat at school?" involves a child making choices of snacks and meals at school and indicates how these choices have an impact on the environment and health if consumed or wasted. Over-consumption and/or food waste is actually a waste of nutrients and, consequently, pre-schoolers are encouraged to understand the interconnection of health, nutrition and environment. The scenario involves interactive choices of various foods and their impact on the environment when consumed or wasted. The children have the probability to enhance the scenario through their different dietary choices, and are expected to make decisions for the evolvement of the story. This study may contribute to the promotion of children's nutrition education and environmental sensitization in the context of sustainable education.

Environmental sustainability in the early years: Understanding families' perspectives and practices of instilling pro-environmental values and behaviour in their children

Miss Jessica Hine

There is a growing urgency to implement Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in national education systems and at the early childhood care systems, both in settings and in home environments. This growing popularity is supported by the inclusion of ESD in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG, goal 4.7) which empowers children as central agents of change in achieving the SDGs (UN, 2015). Sustainable lifestyles, recognised as pivotal in acquiring the knowledge and skills needed in securing the SDGs, begin with the active engagement and direct involvement of parents in early years children's climatic learning and action (Iwaniec and Curdt-Christiansen, 2020; Ando et al., 2015). Therefore, the research places families as key stakeholders in the sustainability agenda. However, little is understood about how parental efficacy is facilitated within home environments and the barriers faced by parents when transpiring positive environmental practices. The study therefore aims to address gaps in current knowledge and make a relevant contribution to early childhood education by exploring and understanding one family's perspectives and practices of instilling pro-environmental values and behaviour in their children within the early years. The study sample consists of one family from London who adopt a sustainable lifestyle. An ethnographic qualitative methodology was called upon to answer the research questions and semi-structured interviews and semi-immersive observations utilised. As data collection tools, the semi-structured interviews sought to identify parental perspectives and practices, and the semi-immersive observations to elicit visual data in evidence of findings drawn from the interviews. The undergraduate research study will be completed by May 2022 where findings and conclusions will be available for dissemination and I would seek and appreciate OMEP support in building this project.

Exploring in-service kindergarten teacher's perceptions of differentiated instruction, as part of a training program in Greece

Dr Maria Kampeza[1], **Ms Vassiliki Mantzouratou[3]**, Dr Angeliki Vellopoulou[2]

[1]Regional Center for Educational Planning (P.E.K.E.S) of Western Greece, [2]School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Educational Sciences and Early Childhood Education, University of Patras, [3]Directorate of Primary Education of Achaia

Although it is acknowledged that in each classroom children differ one from another the crucial question is how teachers make decisions to differentiate instruction in order to address these differences and to design teaching and learning responding to the needs of all. There is a wide variety of learner needs that impact learning therefore it is hard to picture what differentiated instruction (DI) looks like on a daily basis in the classroom. Teachers' perceptions and/or misconceptions which may lead teachers to think of DI as personalized or individualized learning constrain its implementation in everyday practice. The aim of the study is to shed light on teachers' perceptions of DI as a basis to design a professional development program in order to clearly define the concept of DI, provide support and facilitate the application of related practices in their classrooms. A qualitative research process was followed; data for the current presentation came from a questionnaire with closed-ended and open-ended questions that were used to obtain written responses from 42 in-service kindergarten teachers. Their initial responses indicated the need for clarification; most of the participants considered children's interests (12) and preferences (9) as relevant to DI as well as special educational needs (21), individualized learning (12) and learning difficulties (9). Fifteen of the participants replied that they have unity in their classrooms in terms of children's knowledge and interests while twenty seven of the participants considered diversity in their classrooms in terms of children's knowledge, family background, age and gender. Collaborate with parents, follow a specific pace in activities, provide personalized learning and address children's language difficulties came up as the challenges they have to deal with in daily basis to address diversity in their classrooms. Results are also discussed in terms of further implications on teachers' professional development and support.

Hospital pedagogy, learning experiences of childhoods with Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases

Nadia Henao[1]
[1]*Tecnológico De Antioquia*

We configured the research as an interdisciplinary and inter-institutional study of explanation, collection, and dissemination of the learning of a group of sick hospitalized children and adolescents suffering from Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (CNCD) in the city of Medellín-Colombia.

The narratives-life stories will be assimilated and interpreted in a plural way and from the life situation of other hospitalized children and adolescents and their families and caregivers so that their readings can serve as an experience of training themselves. In hospital environments and within other social practices and institutions, for example, the educational practices of hospital pedagogues, designers of public educational policies, social welfare and health, hospital services, and their hegemonic or alternative medical devices that need to humanize their attention, learning to listen to the voice and experience of children and adolescents with illness.

We based the methodology on a qualitative paradigm focusing on grounded theory, using life stories as a technique. We developed the study in three phases: a) Enlistment and documentary review; b) Fieldwork; and c) Analysis and socialization of results. Currently, the project is in the phase of analysis and socialization of results, yielding as results the experiences that build around the disease in three dimensions: before, during, and after the disease, and as from a pedagogical accompaniment, they allow spaces to narrate "what happens to them."

The findings found constants around the learning built by children and young people during the disease experience: 1. Recognition of physical symptoms before the diagnosis. 2. Learnings regarding how to take legal action against EPS. 3. Strengthening family relationships. 4. Habits of care and self-care regarding the disease. 4. Construction of a life project.

A practical study on children's personalized learning in the course of "Mini Learning Club"

Mrs Zhen Chen[1], Mrs Jin Jin[2]

[1]*Zhejiang Normal University Preschool Education Group,* [2]*The Second Affiliated Kindergarten of Hangzhou College of Early Childhood Education, Zhejiang Normal University*

China's kindergarten education program clearly points out: "respect children's individual differences in development level, ability, experience, learning style and other aspects." Early childhood education should respect children's personality and rights, respect children's physical and mental development rules and learning characteristics, respect children's individual differences, so that each child rich individual development. This paper focuses on the three parts of "micro-association curriculum", namely, children's independent course selection and teacher selection, three teachers' joint learning, and dynamic tracking and evaluation, and elaborates on the positive significance of micro-association for children's personalized development, mining superior intelligence, and promoting their sustainable development.

How may Early Childhood Education increase the student´s competence to reveal and work with children at risk for maltreatment, the parents and support agencies?

Ms Charlotte U Johannessen, Head Of Studies Geir Aaserud, Ms Unn Christin Håvie
[1]Oslo Metropolitan University, Department Of Early Childhood Education

The goals are to develop the education program about to strengthen the student's skills in detecting children at risk and working with children and parents in kindergarten. Increased focus on the kindergarten's interdisciplinary cooperation is also central.

A new area in the framework plan for kindergarten is life management. The staff should have a conscious relationship that children may be exposed to neglect, violence and sexual abuse, and know how this can be prevented and discovered. The staff shall be aware of the duty of disclosure to the child welfare service, cf. the Kindergarten Act section 22. The teaching is organized as seminars over 2 years. The first seminar emphasizes that students should gain knowledge of identifying various forms of caregiving failure and develop action skills in working with children and parents. The second seminar emphasizes collaboration with parents and relevant partners. This is a study in development. It is based on results from one student survey. The students wish more knowledge about working with children at risk and the kindergarten's interdisciplinary cooperation. The results are used to develop the educational program. It will be followed up by a survey at the end. The goal of a new educational program is to strengthen the nursing profession's knowledge of good conditions for raising children at risk.

STE(A)M Brigdes for Refugee/Immigrants Children: A research proposal in early childhood settings

Mrs Kikilia Tsoukala**[1]**, Mr Kostas Magos[1]
[1]University of Thessaly - Department of Early Childhood Education

Technology evolution and increased cultural diversity change the way individuals and societies communicate. They form a new socio-cultural reality whose management presupposes new skills focused on developing intercultural communication and empathy. Pedagogies of multi-literacies and pluralism highlight learning as a multifaceted, multimodal process, underlining the different ways of perceiving and interpreting reality.

Early childhood is the most appropriate time to start raising children's awareness of effective diversity management and formulate an intercultural awareness concerning the development of an 'emotional understanding' of the 'other'. Research has promoted the identification of "common ground" between students and the construction of "bridges", where teachers can recreate the relationship between the different cultural contexts that students bring in class.

Review of literature revealed a very limited number of studies describing how STE(A)M approach can be supportive in the inclusion of pre-school students with migrant/refugee background, in the wider intercultural awareness of all students. Present paper examines how STE(A)M approach creates "common ground" and "bridges" between kindergarten children, regardless their cultural background. Our research, carried out in the context of a doctoral dissertation, will involve 40 students (4-6 years old), 1/4 of them having an immigrant/refugee background. Projects with STE(A)M thematic modules and interdisciplinary orientation will be organized. Learning environments are designed, where multimodal hands-on and digital material will be utilized. Research tools will include research diary, semi-structured interviews with students, other material children will create (drawings, posters, constructions). Research hypothesis is that STE(A)M approach can be supportive in creating intercultural awareness and an inclusive classroom climate. The effectiveness of the intervention will depend on parameters such as the selection and organization of interdisciplinary concepts, the use of appropriate educational materials and especially the formation and maintenance of a classroom atmosphere where all students will feel respectful, comfortable to communicate, express their questions and creativity.

From Chaos to my Cosmos: Differentiated pedagogy and play based learning in a project about active citizenship in a multicultural neighborhood.

Ms Eleni Kourneta[1]

[1]85th Kidengarten of Athens, [2]Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Athens

The purpose of this study is to describe the pathways of facing the challenges of inclusion and play based learning in a public kindergarten in the center of Athens (Greece). Early years educators often regard their long experience, their child centered educational theories and perhaps a 'toolbox' full of games, as enough, in order to cope with any group of children. However, this is not true, if learning does not become accessible to every child, regardless their socioeconomic background. It takes a specific methodology and a clear objective to acquire this level of flexibility. With the ultimate aim to achieve a sense of belonging and team spirit for a group of 4 and 5 year-olds, educators have to set priorities and redefine the objectives of meaningful learning outcome for each child by including every cultural and socioeconomic background. What a better way to start, than to explore our neighborhood? Which are the aspects of a place that interest children from a different social background? How can children act upon their space as active citizens of their society but also as global citizens? How do children perceive meanings like rights and responsibilities when it comes to citizenship? How can we organize a project about the neighborhood through differentiated pedagogy? This presentation aims to tackle these questions through the methodology of action-based research and reflective practice. The sought results are monitored through the research tools of observation, diary, photography and recordings.

Investigation of the Relationship Between Social Problem Solving Skills and Emotion Regulation Strategies of Migrant Children in Turkey

Ms. Nilay Kaptan[1], **Prof.Dr. Serap Çimen-Erdoğan[1]**
[1]*Anadolu University*

In Turkey, as in the rest of the world, importance is given to the participation of immigrant children in education based on inclusion in early childhood. Immigrant children are one of the groups that need the most social and emotional support in the education process. The social and emotional support to be given to these children can be beneficial for the child in the short and long term. However, there are some difficulties that immigrant children face in the early childhood education process. Especially the difficulties that these children experience in the process of second language acquisition cause them not to benefit from peer and adult support sufficiently. In addition, the encounter of immigrant children with a new and different geography, culture and society can be effective in experiencing problems related to social and emotional adjustment. In order to effectively involve migrant children in the education process, it is necessary to help them overcome these challenges. The study to be conducted in this direction aims to determine the relationship between social problem-solving skills and emotion regulation strategies of immigrant children. The sample of the study consists of 250 immigrant children aged 48-72 months. In the study, the survey model, which is one of the quantitative research methods, will be used. The data collection tools of the study are " Social Problem Solving for Children Questionnaire " and "Emotion Regulation Scale". The findings obtained as a result of the study will be discussed and suggestions for both research and practice will be presented. Furthermore, It is thought that the findings of the study can help develop effective intervention programs for migrant children and offer practical solutions for preschool teachers, school counselors and parents.

Inclusive Classroom

Mrs Zahra Foroud[1], Dr Afra Foroud
[1]Lethbridge Montessori School, [2]Superintendent & Behavioural Specialist Lethbridge Montessori School Authority & Adjunct Professor University of Lethbridge

Each one of us are individuals different from others with our own strength and weaknesses.
How can we see the world through each individual eye and make the most of individual differences?
Our society has been struggling with the task of educating children who are different and have different needs.
Are we educating children based on their needs? Are we offering them a program that is developmentally appropriate? Is it based on child's interest? Is the environment attractive? Does it offer choices, order and freedom? does it promote learning through play?
We have a tremendous role by building the future by understanding and respecting each child's uniqueness and helping him to become an effective member of society. "Children are the only future human can trace, teach them well."

Causes of dyslexia in Greece: Is there a deficiency in the Greek language?

Mrs Konstantina Keratsa
[1]Greek Ministry Of Education

My main aim in this presentation is to show how the Greek language was highly influenced during years of slavery, wars etc. To underline the main characteristics and the structure of the modern language system and finally to wonder on how that structure may be possible to cause dyslexia in Greek pupils. Then I will attempt to present some of the inconsistencies and peculiarities in the Greek language. Finally I will present problems that Greek dyslexic children face within the structure of the Greek language. Last but not least it will be presented official attitudes, such as provision, laws etc that the Greek Ministry of Education has made to meet the needs of children who syffer from dyslexia.

INCLUSIVE SPECIAL PRESCHOOL EDUCATION AS A CASE STUDY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DIFFUSION OF AN INNOVATIVE SCHOOL PRACTICE

Mr Theodoros Ntavlantanis[1], Dr Sofia Chatzistefanidou[2]

[1]128 Primary school of Athens, [2]Department of Preschool Education, University of Crete

Inclusive Special Education (ISE) – like Inclusive Education in general - is an educational innovative proposal/movement based on general guidelines. 1994 UNESCO's Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policies and Practice in Special Needs Education was a milestone in the international course of the idea of ISE. Inclusion calls on the educational community to create case-specific types of curricula (flexible curricula) within the general schools in the name of social justice and the absolute respect for the element of diversity between people. The implementation of inclusion principles in education has an increased degree of difficulty. Appropriate adjustments to the dominant education systems are made only gradually and with varying rhythms and ways among different countries. The field is under constant configuration. Research is underway internationally. Some findings contribute to the strengthening of the idea of inclusion through the selection, communication, and promotion of best practices in its implementation while others justify the questioning of its effectiveness. Inclusion concerns all educational levels with the pre-school one located in a favourable position regarding the conditions of its application. In our presentation we will try to shed light on the evolutionary course of Inclusive Preschool Special Education as a process of international diffusion of an innovative school practice. In order to interpret this phenomenon elements of the general theory of "Diffusion of Innovations" by Everett M. Rogers were used. The focus was directed to four specific factors: 1) the innovative practice itself with the five characteristics that determine its use (relative advantage, relevance, compatibility, complexity vs. simplicity, trialability), 2) that networks or communication channels used to spread information about the innovation, 3) the element of 'time', and 4) the 'nature' of the society to whom the innovative practice was introduced.

The role of the latest innovational programmes-new supportive frames in the Greek educational system

Mrs Konstantina Keratsa[1]
[1]*Greek Ministry Of Education*

In this presentation, we will briefly refer to the Greek educational system since 1980 and will specialize in the latest changes that have occured in the field of special education. We will analyze the terms ΣΔΕΥ a term which stands for school network for educational support and ΕΔΕΑΥ a term which stands for commissionof inter-scientific educational evaluation and support.

Then we will empasize on how important is early evaluation /diagnosis for preschool children, who have educational needs. Additionally we will explain the importance of using scientific methods in a team, which is composed by scientists, such as: psychologists, social workers, special educators etc.

We will present how Greek classrooms work on a daily basis and point out how a diagnosis can be used by special educators, in order to create an individual educational programme. Every individual educational programme is unique, as every child is also unique. The pupil with educational needs, is the one who will guide the rest of the scientific team. We should always bear in mind that changes in individual educational programme may occur during the programs implementation.

ΕΔΕΑΥ, emphasize the fact, that are in a positive position to interfere in the childs assesment and evaluation, as they represent people with specialization in their field, such as psychologists and social workers and co-coperate with preschool teachers and special educators in the classroom, in a one day per week basis.

Last but not least we will mention the benefits of using these innovational programmes, in Greece, for pypils, parents, teachers and school and the state in general.

Facing the Harsh Reality that the United States is Failing Our Special Education Students: A Research Focused Discussion

Miss Indy Neidhart[1]
[1]Cazenovia College

In the 21st century special education has come so far from where it used to be. However, in the United States special education services are failing students with special needs in vast quantities. This paper takes the time to look at first-hand experiences of students learning needs being overlooked by educators who are more focused on getting through the curriculum on time. This paper does branch out and talk about how the inclusiveness in schools in the United States is difficult to attain with the educators who have been in the field for over 7 years. These educators tend to be hesitant to support students with IEPs (individualized education plans) or students who need extra support and may not have an IEP, because that slows the educator down with curriculum or forces them to adapt and alter their original plan. General education educators are quick to try to have students with needs removed from their classroom and placed in an already overpopulated and under supported special education classroom. The majority of this paper is focused on research papers and YouTube videos showing how special education educators may be trying their best, but they have low staff for their classroom, not enough support from the school (including financially), and have a rigorous state curriculum to get their class through. There is a discussion on how to create reform for the special education in the United States however, there can be no solid one solution due to every school building and district having a different setup with different needs.

Implementation of Pretend Play in enhancing Executive Functioning skill (Response Inhibition) of children with ADHD: An intervention study

Ms Kam Ping Fung[1]

[1]Hong Kong Baptist Univesity

The purpose is to find out the effectiveness of Pretend Play intervention in enhancing Response Inhibition (RI), one of the Executive Functioning (EF) skills, in children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Before and after the Intervention, parent and teachers were invited to rate the child's frequency on his impulsive behaviours in four areas, namely Verbalization, Behaviour, Cognition and Emotion and had interview asking the child's performance on RI. The RI control of the child was assessed by the researcher using the Animal Stroop Task, Head Toes Knees Shoulders task and Gift task. During the intervention process, the researcher recorded Anecdotal Records that related to RI and EF and had self-reflections. The result showed effectiveness in enhancing the Verbal RI of the child, while that of Cognitive, Behavioural and Emotional RI had inconsistent findings, showing that Pretend Play intervention was not effective at all. The reason for effectiveness was the internalization of favorable language used in the Pretend Play and that of non-effectiveness was due to environmental factors, physical state and inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity of ADHD. Future researchers might regard the present research as a pilot and focus on investigating the categorization of RI and design intervention pinpointing RI.

Early intervention for children on the autism spectrum in Greece: A qualitative study exploring the experiences and needs of their parents.

Dr Despina Papoudi, Dr Aristea Fyssa, University of Patras, Department of Educational Sciences and Early Childhood Education , Ph.D Lia Tsermidou, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Department of Early Childhood Education

The design and implementation of early intervention programmes is crucial for promoting the development, learning and inclusion of children on the autism spectrum. Such programmes should involve the activation of a variety of support services according to children's and their parents' needs which should be provided in their natural environments, including the home and community early childhood education and care (ECEC) settings with the support of education professionals. Yet, few studies at an international level focused on the experiences of parents with children on the autism spectrum in relation to early intervention highlighting the need to ensure high quality support services and enhance parental involvement in decision-making for their children. In Greece, there is a pressing need to investigate the area of early intervention because early intervention services are not well established and this presentation reports on the preliminary findings of an ongoing study, thus informing the gap in the field. Data are collected through semi structured interviews with parents of children on the autism spectrum who attend a class at general or special early childhood education setting in Greece during the current school year.

Preliminary analysis of the data collected so far shows that parents (a) are not well informed about the available services and face challenges in gaining access to such services, (b) need reliable information and frequent communication with the early childhood education professionals, (c) experience stigma and exclusion, and (d) propose stronger involvement in the decision-making process and in their children's education with appropriate support and training.

It is expected that the final findings of the present study will contribute to the effective design and delivery of early intervention provision and support services in Greece for children on the autism spectrum and their families.

Keywords
parents, children on the autism spectrum, early intervention, early childhood general/special education, inclusion

Library Services for All: Autism Friendly Children's Library

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Libraries should be accessible to every member of society and strengthen the community and provide opportunities for everyone to have a good time. Unfortunately, it is not possible to say that every library can meet these requirements. Library services, especially for children with special needs and their families, can be quite limited. Children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are one of the groups with special needs most frequently encountered by libraries providing inclusive library services. The diversity and variety of inclusive library services offered to children with ASD can be beneficial for both the children's and their family and ultimately the society. In this study, it is aimed to create an inclusive library program for 3–8-year-old children with autism spectrum disorder and their parents and to evaluate the effectiveness of this program. For this purpose, a mix method intervention study was planned in two stages. In the first stage, the participants are children with ASD, their parents, and librarians. At this stage, the opinions of the participants about the use of the library will be acquired. This stage will be conducted as a case study to determine the views of children with ASD, their parents and library staff on library use of children with ASD and their parents. Semi-structured interview will be used as the data collection technique. In the second phase of the study, the participants are children with ASD and their parents. This phase will be carried out as a Single-Subject design to test the effectiveness of the intervention used to teach children with ASD and their parents the target behaviors to be determined within the scope of the inclusive library program. At the end of the study, the findings will be discussed and suggestions for practice and research will be presented.

Challenges and barriers in the operationalization of inclusive educational partnerships for children with special educational needs and the implications for the roles of early years educators

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The introduction of the 'Every Child Matters' Agenda and its incorporation in the educational and legislative system in 2004 signalled a turn in the establishment of interagency partnerships. Despite the rhetoric emphasising partnership working there has been a dearth of research related to the specificities of educational practices that support collaborative partnerships for young children with special needs. My presentation is based on a research study conducted in the South West of England and explores the educational partnerships that form between early years educators, parents and external professionals and the challenges and characteristics that define these. It examines the subtle power shifts that occur in the attitudes and roles of early years educators in response to the behaviour exhibited by the other stakeholders and the ideology and deficit discourses that frame their exchanges. In doing so, it delves into the exogenous and endogenous factors that hinder the materialisation of multiagency partnerships within the current and historical societal context.

The roles of early years educators in the operationalisation of inclusive multiagency partnerships are multifaceted and operate at the interface of various disciplines. Their responsibilities are not restricted to 'working with or on the children'; they encompass a holistic approach that takes into account the children's and family's needs, advocates for their rights, and aims at building effective support networks that address their requirements. The Special Educational Needs sector remains tainted by excessive bureaucracy and an apparent lack of interdepartmental collaboration and sufficient funding despite successive governments' attempts to ameliorate the processes associated with the identification of children with special educational needs. As a result of the aforementioned issues, inclusive early years educators have to navigate a complex field; their duties and responsibilities are complex and multifarious and should command the appropriate training and work conditions that are commensurate with their contribution.

Possibilities and challenges for male practitioners in Early Childhood Education and Care

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The aim of this paper is to present an overview of studies which contribute to get knowledge on the possibilities and challenges for men who intend to work or are working within the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). Men's relations to children have often been reduced to the issues of fatherhood, paternity and parental leave, and also fathers' rights post-separation and divorce (Hearn & Pringle, 2006). During the past decades, some scholars have been interested about to study the relation between men and children in educational settings, specially within the ECEC where the number of male practitioners is very low.

A worldwide pattern indicates that there are few men working in ECEC (Peeters, et. al, 2015). Taking the total amount of the ECEC workforce, 1-4% of that corresponds to male practitioners. Men engaging in care work can be a way to deconstructing traditional forms of masculinities and contributing to the gender equality in the society as whole (Moosa & Bhana, 2020). Mixed-gender teams in ECEC can benefit children when they see that care and teach are not associated to a single sex. Moreover, the increase of men in areas that involve care of children can also be a way to break a segregated labor market by deconstructing gender stereotypes and norms in some professions.

However, the insertion of more men in ECEC is a challenge due to the lack of local and national policies and support for male practitioners. Men's presence in ECEC can also be subjected of suspicious when the relation between men and children associates to discourses on children's protection and sexual abuse (Pruit, 2015). Therefore, studies about men in ECEC can bring questions and discussions about the importance and challenges of increasing the number of male practitioners working with small children in different countries.

The teaching of agency in preschool children in the Montenegrin context

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In this study we have tried to map the pedagogical influences in the preschool context which encourage the development of agency in preschool children. The importance of and current relevance of this problem have been confirmed by numerous research works. In the methodological part of this paper, we present the qualitative research we carried out in educational units in the three regions of Montenegro. Besides systematic observations, our study also includes the conducting of focus group interviews with preschool teachers (101 interviewees). We used the ATLAS.ti software to analyse and prepare the produced results. This type of research has not been conducted in Montenegro before. The significance of its timing is evident in preschools, as well as in peer interactions and the environment in which children spend their time. Preschools in Montenegro operate according to a structured daily regime, especially in larger groups (central region), and there is no space left for children to use materials or research them, nor there is enough open space for children's implicit learning. The greatest barrier to their undisturbed work and even the encouraging and expression of agency is to be found in the fact that the teaching groups are t
o large. This situation was especially noted in the central region. Therefore, the standardisation and reduction of the number of children in teaching groups are definitely recommended, in order to improve the overall work and education of the children.

Identity development through museum education in early childhood settings.

Dr Maria Vassiliadou[1]
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In a multicultural society cultural identity is essential in early childhood education. Therefore, the role of the museums for the improvement of identity and its understanding is crucial thus the past is important for the future.

In a previous investigation done with my students, which was based on a questionnaire given to pre-primary teachers questioning the application of museum education in early childhood settings, we found that one of the most important reasons for not visiting museums with their students is the lack of adequate programmes at the museums.

Unfortunately, although many museums in Cyprus have educational programmes, only few of them have special programmes for pre-primary education.

In this presentation we are going to demostrate the results of a short scale investigation which took place with children from two different nursery schools in Nicosia at the Cyprus Folk Art Museum. The main purpose of this investigation was to show, on one hand, the capacity of small children to participate in an educational programme at a museum and, on the other, to use the content of the specific museum in order to help children to improve the notion of their identity and also to express themselves through the activities which took place after the visit.

Another important purpose of this project was to give to children from different countries the opportunity to recognise part of the Cypriot identity through the exhibition.

The methodology applied in this project and examples of the works done by children will be shown and the outcomes will be discussed during the presentation.

Finally, we will debate the importance of the application of museum education in early childhood settings not only for the identity development of the children but also for self- expression and self-enrichment.

Democracy in Early Childhood and Primary Education: Educational proposals on gender perspective

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The school in parallel with the family are the major actors of children's socialization generally, and also regarding the socialization of gender roles, as it continues and reinforces this procedure. The school reproduces not only mental skills but also perceptions and values, which are necessary to maintain the social structure of a particular spatiotemporal and sociocultural context. Socialization in terms of gender roles consists of the different way of educating boys and girls in order to prepare them for the different roles that society defines according to their sex. When stereotypical perceptions and behaviors exist within the school, inequalities and social prejudices are fomented. The internalization of gender stereotypes is a key aspect of understanding gender in childhood, since children perceive them through their interaction with their family, teachers, mass communication and social networking, groups of peers and other members of their social environment in every aspect of their lives.

Therefore, it is imperative that teachers become aware of gender stereotypes and gender equality. The alleviation of gender stereotypes empowers teachers and students to overcome stereotypes and prejudices about: nationality, culture, language, religion, sexual orientation, social class, disabilities, emotional difficulties, school performance, academic achievement, different family environments, etc. In this lecture, educational proposals in Early Childhood and Primary Education are presented aiming at the teachers' raising awareness to the establishment of democratic values, human rights, social justice and gender equality too.

"In this class the red cat is me, isn't it?": Unravelling racism through music in ECE

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Can music be used as a means for creating a space where issues of racist beliefs, experiences and actions are brought into light, and can it become a means for unravelling and combating racism? And how can we develop ways that enable young children to talk about their feelings in relation to issues of racism, opening up the possibility of emancipation? This paper will specifically reflect on the problematics of talking with children in the context of a music education action research project that involved four kindergarten classes in Athens, Greece, two of which were comprised largely by children of Greek origin, and two were classes attended by immigrant and refugee children. The larger aim of the project, that is now in the phase of data analysis, has been to forge a music education practice that brings to the fore issues of racial discrimination and exclusion, actively working towards offering collaborative musical experiences that cultivate anti-racist beliefs and modes of behaviour.

Through specific interview examples, the paper will first document the sharpness and the power with which even very young children have been subjected to and/or are agents of racism. It will then try to advance a reflexive account of the ethical, educational and political complexities that the researcher experienced in her attempts to initiate discussions with the children-participants of the study. Lastly, the potentialities that are opened for music education when it dares to actively combat racism will be briefly outlined.

Building Citizenship in Early Years – The role of Educators

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Nowadays education is confronted with major challenges, such as the coexistence of different cultures, climate change, and rapid changes in multiple domains. A central aim of education is to teach students how to grow into 21st-century citizens. Citizenship, in a broad sense, is understood as a lifelong route that starts early. It can be argued that citizenship has no age or that it runs all ages and its starting point is in early childhood. Teachers may intervene actively in this direction and promote citizenship. The present study investigates the role of early childhood educators in building citizenship. Curriculum content and teaching methods in early childhood education in Greece are explored through interviews with educators. They were asked about the civic issues of election, national celebrations, war, foreign people and countries, tolerance and human rights. The results indicate that building citizenship so that it can face the challenges posed by the 21st century is an extremely interesting and demanding process, especially when it is attempted in early years.
Key words: Citizenship Education, Early Childhood, Curriculum, Educators

Hidden and Overt Messages of National Belonging in Early Childhood Education

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Few would argue the beneficial influences of positive pedagogical practices on each child's learning experiences in the world around them. Yet, sometimes children feel ostracized by society. For example, children from different nations may be treated inequitably in their shared schooling experiences; while, those who are identified as a national citizen may receive benefits others do not. Considering current global migration movements, national belonging in the early childhood environment is a topic which warrants further academic discussion. To define the issue, the presentation will detail the dearth of literature on national belonging, share relevant international law, and detail cases when national belonging in the classroom was compromised in a variety of countries. Through the examination of various case studies, the audience will learn about cultural norms which can deter national belonging. The cases highlight situations which compromise national belonging and may cause young children to experience identity conflicts, learning challenges, social challenges, and marginalization of opportunities to display skills/talents. A definition of national belonging in education is provided with a framework for national belonging inclusion in education. In addition, the session features examples of positive affirmations of national belonging in the classroom for all students. Also, examples are provided to unify the students and expand their appreciation for global diversity. These examples include national and global citizenship activities as well as opportunities to showcase diverse fund of knowledge/ talents. The central themes in this session include citizenship, national identify development, and participation in early childhood education. All professionals in early childhood education maintain a critical role in helping children foster their sense of national belonging.

Democratic Classroom and Inclusion Methods

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Introduction: Inclusion is the educational method that enables the effective integration of all children despite their different needs and abilities and regardless of their different social backgrounds. School inclusion is based on the principle of equal opportunities and the construction of a democratic school. This contributes to reducing the phenomena of exclusion of groups of children, and its promotion involves both the existence of a relevant institutional framework and its implementation by those involved in the school: teachers, parents, administration and other stakeholders.

Aim: The critical analysis of the aspects of inclusiveness currently taking place in the Greek kindergarten, in order to ensure a democratic educational framework that is accessible and participatory for all pupils without exclusions.

Method: Critical literature review of research studies published in the last decade in scientific journals and websites: google scholar, Pub Med, university libraries, as well as the study of the Greek institutional framework for inclusive education.

Results: Inclusion is mainly implemented through differentiated teaching, i.e., through specific educational adaptations to the learning process so that all students can respond in an active way. The implementation of inclusion in Greek kindergartens shows positive results, as an increasing number of teachers apply the pedagogical principles of inclusion in their educational practices. A dominant form of educational inclusion in Greece is that of enhanced support for children with special educational needs. The advantages of this approach are that students can be integrated and participate in the educational process of the mainstream classroom without being segregated.

Conclusions: Inclusion contributes to the development of a democratic school framework suitable for all students without discrimination. In the Greek kindergarten, inclusion has been promoted significantly in the last decade with very positive results for students.

Child duel (Duelo infantil)

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CHILD DUEL

Summary:

Grief is an emotional process with which human beings face their losses, it has a physical, cognitive, philosophical and behavioral dimension and not only occurs in adults. Children from an early age live, suffer and face constant losses in their lives. Losses ranging from the temporary absence of their toys, pets and loved ones, to definitive losses caused by a change in the place of residence or death of a loved one.

The work presented in this paper is not an educational study or research, the author intends to share the experiences, learning and educational actions related to the sad moments lived by children between 3 and 6 years of age, when one of her parents lost her life as a result of fulfilling her duty in military activities and that they led the principal and educators of the "Agustín Melgar" Kindergarten under the Ministry of National Defense in Mexico to investigate, design, prepare and execute actions that help students overcome and continue their life school in the conditions more bearable possible.

It is also intended to share a support guide developed and put into practice in different cases that occurred between 2008 and 2019, in which the author served as director of the only kindergarten available to the Secretariat of National Defense in Mexico and in which the preschool education service is provided to the sons of military men.

TRANSITIONS FROM KINDERGARTEN TO SCHOOL - PERSPECTIVE OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS

Mrs Monika Nathalie Baršić[1], Dr. sc. Adrijana Višnjić Jevtić
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Public education policies typically define the structure of transition as the operational level of children's involvement in the formal educational process. The methods, the involvement of the children, the obligations of the participants in the process and the expected outcomes are predetermined. The quality of the transition from kindergarten to school can contribute to children's achievements and the perception of the educational system. World research points to the need for systematic research into the transition process, understanding the personal perspectives of all participants in the process and accepting children as active participants in their own education. While these processes in the Republic of Croatia are insufficiently researched, some European countries (Iceland, Sweden) are changing their educational policies on the basis of research in order to facilitate children's transitions. While in the Republic of Croatia they talk about the child's readiness for school, in Iceland and Sweden discuss about the school's readiness for a child. Qualitative data were collected through interviews with 9 parents and 9 children during the transition period of children from preschool to primary school. Interviews were conducted during the last year of attending kindergarten and after 4 months of attending primary school. Ethical guidelines of the Croatian Science Fund (2018) were considered during the design and research process. The results showed that parents expect the kindergarten to prepare the child for school. They see readiness for school as emotional competence, general knowledge, curiosity, creativity and independence of children. Their expectations of the school were child-centered providing them with learning through play, creative activities, and a commitment to child safety. While kindergarten met their expectations, the school did not.

Transition from kindergarten to primary school – children's perspective

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The transition from kindergarten to school implies the time from the first information about the school to the beginning of regular attendance. In this process, the child is exposed to different information. The way a child decodes this information significantly influences attitudes about the school, their own expectations and expectations of others, and future imagined social interactions.

The quality of the transition is related to the level of socio-emotional adjustment, the initial achievement of the children and long-term academic success. Active participation of children in the educational process during transition is one of the fundamental children's rights (UNCRC, 1998). The level and way of children's participation is determined by their individual abilities and previous experience, but also by the openness and support of adults. It is therefore justifiable to examine children's views on transitions to primary school. Most of the available research on transitions analyzes adults' perspectives and their interpretation of children's perspectives. By recognizing children as active participants, we assume that children are understood and accepted as eloquent individuals capable of (self) interpreting personal thinking.

The specificity of research with children is complex and multiple. It is recognizable in the necessity of a thorough analysis of the ethical justification of childhood intrusion, the necessary consent of parents and high examiner's professionalism.

Research is focused on understanding, not interpretation or generalization. Children's expressions of opinion and children deeds are accepted as exact statements. A research of children's opinion about school was conducted in the process of participating ethnography. A semi-structured interview was used as a measuring instrument. The association of children's opinion on school with the social status of children in the family, previous experience, connectedness with other children and learning strategies was noticed.

Home-Based Child Care: What is it? What are the Challenges? Could it offer an alternative model of childcare?

Paulette Luff[2], Kay Aaronricks[2], Dr Theodora Papatheodorou[1], Mandy Mandy Edmond[1]
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Home-based childcare is defined as non-parental, non-familial childcare arrangements offered in either the provider's home, i.e. childminding, or employment of a nanny in the UK context where childcare is provided in the child's own home (Ang et al 2017). Although it is widely used, home-based childcare is an under-researched topic. While there is extensive research about quality in institution-based childcare and education (DfE 2017; Melhuish and Gardiner 2018), less is known about domestic, home-based provision such childminders, and least of all about in-home childcare provided by professional nannies.

As part of our study, we have conducted a scoping study, following Gough et al's (2013) methodology, to build a comprehensive picture of what is known and what is not known about home-based childcare. This was followed by an empirical study, to elicit the views of childminders and nannies, employing a survey and focus group discussions in a sequential manner. Three pertinent themes emerged from both the scoping study and the empirical research, which are:

1. The distinctiveness of home-based childcare and its quality features, considering benefits for children, families and professional childminders and nannies

2. The challenges, including: the lack of an established framework for home-based childcare; limited professional development; and the support required for home-based childcare professionals

3. The possibility of introducing home-based childcare as an alternative model in national policy.

The empirical study shed further light concerning the last theme, with nannies and childminders calling upon the government for a better understanding and promotion of home-based childcare, so that it is recognised and valued as an alternative model of childcare, beyond centre-based provision, especially in the evolving situation in the context of COVID-19.

These issues will be explored further in this paper presentation

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Transition to Primary School: Preschool teachers, parents, and children's experiences and expectations

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[1]*Omep Croatia*

The transition from preschool to primary school is an important developmental milestone for young children, their families, and teachers. Preparing children for a successful transition has been identified as a national priority and great emphasis has been given on children's successful entrance in primary education. Although the preschool is not the preparatory institution, the importance of quality educational practice should not be disputed to make the transition to school as simple and easy as possible for the child. In doing so, each child has to be afforded positive opportunities for upbringing and education in order to achieve all their competences. The aim of this research is to examine the attitudes and experiences of preschool teachers, parents, and children about the quality of the transition practices and children's expectations about school. Data is being obtained from a close-ended questionnaire for teachers and parents, and interviews with children across Croatia.

The importance of play-based learning in practices based on 21-century skills in preschool education

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Today, for the growth of countries, it has gained importance in early childhood education in applications based on 21st century skills such as STEM, robotic coding and coding in terms of raising individuals who use problem solving and critical thinking skills. As in all over the world, these practices have become common in Turkey. In order to perform these applications functionally, the developmental needs of children in preschool period should not be ignored. One of the most important developmental needs is undoubtedly the play. The play enables the child to express his feelings and thoughts and to understand himself in a realistic way; It supports mental, emotional, physical and social development. In official preschool education programs in Turkey, the importance of process-based assessment and play-based learning is emphasized. However, it is seen that in applications based on 21st century skills such as STEM, coding and robotic coding, results-based evaluation is made rather than the process, and a didactic-mechanical approach is adopted in the content presentation, and this structure cannot fully meet the developmental needs of children. Preschool teachers are the primary responsible for increasing the educational quality of these practices. In this context, the opinions and competencies of preschool teachers about reflecting 21st century skills to education with a play-based approach are important. The purpose of this research; is to examine the opinions of preschool teachers about using 21st century skills such as STEM, coding and robotic coding with a play-based approach. The research was created with the qualitative research method and interview questions were used. The sample of the study consists of 25 pre-school teachers working in early childhood education in Turkey.The data were collected face to face interview and via the internet through the interview forms.

Play, schemas and agency in children under the age of three in Greek ECEC settings

Mrs. Eleni Sotiropoulou[2], <u>**Dr Eleni Katsiada[1]**</u>
[1]University Of West Attica

Research on how young children exhibit the different schemas during play is an under researched area in Greece. This paper presents an account of the various schemas used by ten children under the age of three in two ECEC settings in Greece. It draws on findings from a larger ethnographic case study which aimed to identify young children's views on various aspects of their ECEC environment. The study followed the interpretative paradigm having received influences by the new sociology of childhood and sociologists like Corsaro (2011). Children's views were researched using an adaptation of the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2001) and ethical and power issues were taken into consideration in conducting this study (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Greig & Taylor, 1999). Data were analysied using data-driven thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998).

The study's findings suggest that young children, by exercising agency, use all of the available resources within their setting to exhibit the various schemas including toys, furniture but also their peers. These findings add to the literature about the universality of early action schemas as repeated patterns of behaviour (Arnold, 2007). Schemas contribution to peer interactions, as also pinpointed by Bruce (2011), were also highlighted in this study alongside children exercising agency and using extensively their settings' floor in order to exhibit the various schemas during play. These findings have implications for theory, policy and practice because they provide indications that children do not seem to perceive the physical and social environment of their settings as separate entities but as a whole which forms their ECEC environment and, if they are given the opportunity, they use all of the available resources in order to exhibit the various schemas and extend and promote their play.

The Goulandris Natural History Museum for the very young

Mrs Lily Iakovidou - Alevra[1]
[1]*Goulandris Natural History Museum*

The Goulandris Natural History Museum was founded 1964, and has been the leading Museum in Environmental education in Greece. The Museum's educational programs and workshops provide reliable knowledge and aim to form environmental conscience, from the very early age. Though the use of educational play and theatrical game, we target familiarity with the natural environment, understanding the interdependent relationships that are developed therein, raising public awareness of the dangers of the natural environment today, and activate children in the direction of its preservation. One of our targets is to make children from a young age to realize that humans are not on the top of some hierarchical pyramid, but instead they make part of the circle of life. Several activities are therefore designed, organized, coordinated and implemented, in forms of educational programs or workshops. Since 2005, we are working with children from 4 years old onward. During the last 2 years, we have also reached groups of 2 – 4 years old, in special workshops, where we aim to provide quality time for parents and children. There is a large variety of subjects, which provide different values, and offer the opportunity to meet with the natural environment and living creatures. Among them are: "Me and the animals" an introductory workshop that introduces to the very young children the biodiversity of the wild life, workshops based on J. Jolivet book Zoo Ology, "A very hungry caterpillar", based on E. Carle's famous book, the diverse means of survival in the wild, workshop "I defend myself". Entering the world of creepy – crawlies, "Nine insects and one Spider" and "Bees and flowers live together", Fairy tales of Christian Andersen, several workshops with Dinosaurs. Exploratory workshops with a variety of Greek environments, i.e. "Life beneath the waves". Workshops that combine Greek Mythology and nature.

Outdoor play in Early Childhood Education: How do school policy and practitioners' beliefs matter?

Miss Zubeyde Genc[1]
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Schools make policies assuming that teachers will implement them. However, this may not necessarily be the case. This presentation reports on a qualitative case study, which explores the relationship between school policy and practitioners' beliefs and practices around outdoor play within the foundation stage of a primary school in England. In particular it will discuss how practitioners' outdoor play practices are influenced by their own beliefs, as well as school policies, headteacher influence and wider school cultural norms. The research data was gathered through observations, photographs, document analysis and interviews. Data was generated through the observation of the practice within three classrooms, (a nursery and two reception classes) in both indoor and outdoor settings, each observed for a three month period. The photographs, which were taken during outdoor play, were used in order to expand the observation notes when describing the school environment. Additional material relating to outdoor play, such as school policies, teachers' weekly plans and responsibilities, and outdoor rules for children, were used for document analysis. The data gathering process concluded with semi-structured interviews with practitioners. The practitioners included the school's headteacher, forest school leader, 2 ECE teachers, and 6 teaching assistants. Preliminary thematic data analysis, which is still ongoing, show that there is conflict between the beliefs of practitioners, especially while they share the playground, and this conflict is also reflected into the practice. The dominant view is that it is necessary to plan and create specific policy for outdoor play in order to take account of the views of all stakeholders. This result points to the importance of the development of policies and objectives for outdoor play which recognise teacher beliefs and use team work to increase the likelihood of harmonious work practices and effective policy implementation.

Valuing Children's Growth with Engaging Experiences

Dr. Gail Cox[1], Ms. Marlyn Kramer, Mr. Larry Kotch
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Best Practices in a Texas Early Childhood Classroom

United States National Association for the Education of Young Children and Texas Guidelines for Early Childhood Standards will be the basic to develop appropriate individualized classroom engagements for children of various ages, birth through 5 years old. This will include group time, transitions, music and movement, room arrangement, experiences related to math, science, literacy, language and social skills to foster developmentally appropriate practices. Family engagement and classroom management through observations and positive expectations will be used as bases for play based ideas for individuals and groups of children. Session includes teacher designed examples, hand-on activities and ideas to create a positive experiences-based classroom. Attendees of this "fun" fast-paced workshop where participants will engage in activities to share with their classroom.

Presenters would like to share website; Texas Child Care Quarterly an online publication written for the classroom teacher. https://www.childcarequarterly.com/
    Please explore back issues online.

Puppets from the start: workshop on animating the puppet with and for the children

Mr Matteo Corbucci[1], Mr Biagio Graziano[1]
[1]*OMEP Italia*

Puppetry is one of the most ancient form of theater, which dates back to the origins of humanity and that, over the centuries, it has responded to a universal expressive need: that to tell stories with the help of the use of objects and figures to represent, evoke and inspire through the solicitation of the spectator's creative imagination.

The hand puppet (burattino, in Italian), in particular, is an instrument that sits perfectly between the world of theater, the world of school, the places that reunites the community (for example, the park) but also the more familiar one, that of childhood games in the family home; being an essential tool, not technically difficult to animate, but typical in its specific expressiveness, it is a universal and intergenerational object of use: particularly suitable as a tool for telling and interacting in everyday life, between play and art. It is no coincidence that children are deeply fascinated by these figures and that we all retain them as emotionally significant memory, once we grow up.

The workshop participants will discover, by touching them and wearing them, some puppets made to be used by children and the educator in the nursery. The materials with which they are built, with the various creative possibilities will be told.

They will experience the first form of animation, very simple, to start communicating with the child through the animated object and how to start realizing essential show inspired by fairytales. They will experiment with how the puppet can become a mediator of the relationship and a catalyst of interest in the relationship between an adult and a child or with a group of children. For the occasion, a simple puppet theater will be set up, where participants will practice puppets animation.

Early Childhood Pathways to Sustainability: Providing Each Child A Voice through Active Learning Activities that Invite Guided Response and Participation

Ms. Deborah Kayton Michals[1]
[1]*Learn With Action Llc*

Presentation will discuss practical Active Learning activities combining cognitive and physical development in support of five content domains of preschool learning - consistent with accepted program standards - including Literacy (and pre-literacy), Numeracy (and pre-numeracy), Motor skill development, Nutritional Learning and Healthy Body Awareness. Attendees will be invited to learn and participate in several specific examples of Active Learning exercises.The presentation will also discuss the scientific basis of the connection between these specific physical activities in an engaging play-based curriculum and cognitive development in preschoolers. Active Learning Literacy Exercises will be shown as a tool to support cultural and linguistic diversity; as a way to encourage creativity; as useful for teaching children comprehensive health and wellness; functional for engaging children of all abilities; and helpful to share with parents and caregivers to promote family engagement.

Deborah Kayton Michals Bio: 35 years as director, trainer, teacher and program developer for preschools, social service agencies and arts organizations; working with public, private and philanthropic organizations in designing programs that combine physical activity and movement with cognitive, social and emotional development; author of the 2 book series "Up, Down, Move Around – Active Learning for Preschoolers in Literacy and Math and Active Learning for Preschoolers in Nutrition and Motor Skills (Gryphon House, 2013), in use by educators internationally. Recent presentations: USA School Readiness Grant 2019, Head Start 2018,OMEP USA 2017, Ct State School Readiness Committee 2019-20, NHSA Parent and Family Engagement conference 2018, NAEYC Annual Conference 2017-2013, OMEP World Conference 2015, Edulearn Spain 2015, NAEYC PID, 2014-13, NHSA Annual 2015-13, NHSA Parent Conference 2014, Early HS National Conference 2014. Program Director and developer for the Educational Alliance, Legal Aid Society, NYC Bd of Ed,
Yale University. BA Yale University, MFA New York University.

Collective Imaginary Situations as Shared Intellectual Spaces in Early Childhood Education

Dr Glykeria Fragkiadaki[1], Dr Marilyn Fleer[1]
[1]Monash University

Imaginary play has a critical role in child's learning and development in early years. Young children use their imagination during play in order to stretch, transform and expand reality and construct understanding about the world. Apart from being an individual intellectual tool, imagination has also a collective aspect. Collective imagination as a means to create shared intellectual spaces in early years is discussed in this study. The study focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) learning and development as well as on infants/toddlers age period when the sense of collectives is in an embryonic stage. How collective imaginary situations create opportunities and possibilities for joint STEM experiences in early childhood settings are explored. The study is part of an Australian National Programmatic Research. Study design was based on Conceptual PlayWorlds, a learning space that encourages STEM through play and imagination. The system of concepts of Cultural-historical theory and a Cultural-historical research methodology led the study. The concepts of demands, motives, motive orientation and inter/intra-psychological interrelation were mainly used as analytical tools. Methodological choices were determined by dialectical-interactive method. One hundred and thirty infants/toddlers participated in the study. Indicative case examples are presented. Visual methods were used for digital data collection and analysis. It is argued that imaginary situations bring together children's motives to play and explore their natural, technical and technological reality with the institutional demand for engagement in collective STEM experiences. Sharing imaginary situations children jointly engaged in conceptual play related to STEM. Supporting imaginary situations educators created motivating conditions and motive orientation of children towards collectively approaching STEM concepts and phenomena. New insights about the nature and the role of imagination as a learning and development interface between peers, educators, different age groups and families as well as a transitions' facilitator across an early childhood center emerge.

"Play is Important" has Been Quoted Many Ways, But Are All of Us Doing What We Say?

Mrs Susan Hancock, Ms. Diane Goyette[1]
[1]Early Childhood Specialties LLC

Early childhood professionals in many different roles understand the importance of play for young children. We know that play is the optimal mode for learning and for supporting children's development in all domains. However, our curriculum design, daily schedules, and program environments may not always reflect that importance. In this session participants will work together to examine these components to ensure that they prioritize the provision of sustained, open-ended, free-choice, child-initiated play in every setting.

TOY LIBRARY - BEST START IN LIFE

Mrs Lilian Okal[1], Mrs Nyamikeh Kyamah[1]
[1]OMEP Kenya, [2]OMEP Africa

Since 1948, OMEP has worked to safeguard all aspects of early childhood education and care (ECEC). Its aims and objectives have particularly been with special emphasis on children's right to education and care worldwide. To achieve this, OMEP works to aid any undertaking which aims to promote access to quality early childhood education and care.

OMEP's Play and Resilience pillar emphasizes the importance of play for quality growth and development and also as a child's right with reference to article 31 of the United Nations' (1989) Convention on the Right of the Child. Play seems to be the most violated among rights of a child. Furthermore, focus on academic studies, which is largely theoretical leaves no room for play leading to deprivation of a child's sensory stimulation and brain development. https://drive.google.com/drive/u/3/folders/1ekLzT9i5ADJGUyOIdwkrp-VmT3sr5voz
Early learning experience foundations psychosocial support, failure to which may lead to antisocial behaviors.

Establishment of the first toy library in Kenya (OMEP Kenya Toy Library) in 2017 was to spearhead the replication of toy libraries in Kenya in order to provide all children access to high quality early learning opportunities for their required foundation to make it through formal schooling, continue with their studies and make it through successful adulthood. This enriched space in play makes play more objective, focusing on all developmental

Mobile and lending facilities help to reach vulnerable population. A number of skills-based courses have also been designed to empower parents and toy librarians. Toy libraries can provide space to conduct "come and play" sessions to children, and offer the educational resources required to implement SmartStart playgroups.

Available at: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/3/folders/1ekLzT9i5ADJGUyOIdwkrp-VmT3sr5voz
Accessed on 29th November 2021

SchemaPlay: An exciting new approach to play pedagogy

Dr John Siraj-blatchford[1], Ms Lynnette Brock[1]
[1]Schemaplay

SchemaPlayTM is a currently being implemented in more than 50 preschool settings across the United Kingdom. An ever-increasing number of independent trainers support early childhood settings in auditing their practices, supporting them in developing the environmental conditions, and the adult capabilities required to improve the learning outcomes of disadvantaged children through free-flow play. Early childhood educators are provided with training to recognise and to build progressively upon what it is that each child already 'knows' and can 'do'. This presentation will provide a conceptual overview of the SchemaPlay project and report upon the already considerable evidence of its effectiveness.

It is now commonly recognised that traditional reductionist approaches have failed to resolve a wide range of 'wicked problems', these include such diverse concerns as sustainable development, social justice, equality and early childhood care and education. SchemaPlay has rejected popular assumptions regarding paradigm incommensurability, and has followed Piaget's (1972) concern to seek 'trans-disciplinary' answers. Grounded firmly on the ecological insights of James and Elenor Gibson, which have gained increased interest and currency in recent years due to the empirical findings of neuroscience, and on the cognitive semantics of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, SchemaPlay provides, in its Zone of Proximal Developmental Flow (ZPDF) model, the possibility of a new rapprochement in Piagetian and Vygotskian thinking. The ZPDF integrates Piaget's (1969) cognitive distinction between operative schemes and figurative schema, Csikszentmihalyi's (1979) conception of 'flow', and the considerable insights of neo-Vygotskian Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT).

The ZPDF provides a more intuitive and a more influential account of the benefits of free-flow play to childrens learning and wellbeing through play than any alternative currently available.

Be the Buffer- Trauma Awareness in Early Childhood Education and Care

Dr Judith E Butler[1]

[1]*President of OMEP Ireland,* [2]*Cork Institute of Technology*

Speck (2019) informs that 60% of teachers have no relevant training on the needs of children who have experienced trauma. For those working in the ECEC sector the number may be significantly higher. It is during early childhood, a child's brain develops more than at any other time in life with 80% of brain development occurring by the time the child is 3 years. Fundamentally, the impact of trauma is greater on the still-developing brain. At birth, the amygdala which is the emotional and alarm centre of the brain is well developed, so fear is the strongest early emotion we have. For children who have experienced trauma, the world is seen as a dangerous place. Remarkably however, these traumatic experiences are seldom acknowledged in early education and children only appear to come to our attention when some inappropriate or concerning behaviour is displayed. Trauma impacted children are not bad or bold, they are injured. Developmental trauma is an injury, which must be understood as such. This paper identifies the importance of relationship-based approaches in ECEC, and in particular for trauma impacted children. From birth, we need trauma reducing rather than trauma inducing care and education settings for our children. Through this revised approach, the setting understands the prevalence and impact of trauma, and they understand that any healing from trauma can only come from responsive, respectful relationships in safe predictable environments. Trauma is inevitable. We cannot prevent many Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), but trauma is not what happens to us, it is how it impacts on us. What is essential is who helps to buffer that impact. Teachers can be that buffer. We need teachers to understand that the only healing from trauma is through relationships and this presentation interprets the 3Rs of Education to mean Relationships, Relationships, Relationships.

Everything from dinosaurs to a grandmother - back to the future

Erica Strand[1], <u>Ms Elisabeth Corsander[1]</u>, <u>Ms Marika Russberg</u>
[1]*Bohusläns Museum*

Four community actors; four preschools (Matildaskolan), regional museum, local heritage society, cultural heritage association, have together developed a method for learning through cultural heritage. This is for children in Swedish preschool.

With united resources and common interests met with our various experiences, the four organisations started a project. Together, we wanted to investigate children's thoughts on "in the past in time" and by starting from the children's own reflection and questions, together explore cultural heritage at several ways to learn through cultural heritage. Children's values are established early in life and preschool has an important part of this. According to the national curriculum for preschoolin, preschool will lay the foundation for a lifelong learning as well as promoting a positive belief in the future.

It is valuable that we give the children knowledge and conditions for an organic and careful approach to the surrounding environment as well as to nature and society. Cooperation between different actors in the project helps to increase children's consciousness, knowledge and understanding of the value contained in heritage.

The method we use contains many different steps and perspective and is based on an overall theme: the children explore and think about older objects; visit to preschool by the Museum and the local heritage society; exhibitions at the museum and visits to a cultural environment.

We lay the foundation for children to eventually acquire knowledge they need to become good citizens in a sustainable and democratic society. For children to understand their present it is important that we adults contribute to giving children an understanding of there history. We want to give children an understanding of the whole, that what people did in the past affect us today and what we do today affects the future. We do this by learning through cultural heritage.

An intercultural approach through musical traditions of different cultures

Mrs Eleni Doni[1]

[1]*Institute Of Educational Policy In The Scientific Unit For Preschool Education*

The lullaby is a gentle expression of popular wisdom and knowledge. It's a rhythmic rocking of human existence that aims to calm, comfort and put young children to sleep. The themes of these particular songs are usually just missals which invoke sleep. Lullabies is a familiar subject to most children and enables much searching, as well as activities related to all learning areas of the curriculum.

The purpose of this paper is to present the cross-curricular intercultural project "Our Europe is put to sleep and sweetly lulled", which was implemented under the Innovative Action Teachers 4 Europe, with the participation of 22 students who attend all-day classes in the 10th kindergarten of Preveza.

Our students -European citizens of tomorrow- shall learn to act in a school where multiculturalism is already a reality. Morpheus, god of Sleep and Night, traveled to European countries and brought lullabies in his suitcase, in the language of each country, as well as images, tales and customs. Especially lullabies were an appropriate expedient, so that students can come into contact with the cultural heritage of certain European countries, in a panhuman education, in order, first to experience and then become aware of the differences and similarities of these cultures. The final evaluation of the program confirmed that it contributed substantially to this direction, with participants acquiring a positive attitude towards different cultures. The main methodological approach of this project was a cross-curricular approach, which enabled the interconnections between different cognitive areas, the development of sociocognitive attitudes and skills, the cultivation of teamwork, the formulation and investigation of questions, the cooperation with the family and the extraction of information from various sources.

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The contribution of flexible use of space in the cultivation of creativity in kindergarten

Eleni Zisopoulou[1]

[1]*PhD in Education from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Coordinator of Educational Planning for kindergarten schools, 1st Regional Center for Educational Planning (RCEP) of central Macedonia*

The aim of the present study is to show, how flexible use of space through the method of Pedagogical Space Design and the use of cooperative leaning, supports students' creativity.

Pedagogical Space Design is a method that approaches the school space design in a way that it adapts to the students themselves and makes them active participants of the educational process. Its criteria for the organisation and use of the school space associate the child's characteristics with the characteristic of the cooperative method (Germanos, 2018). Although intentional design of learning environments has not been widely referred to in pedagogical research, it is a key element to the cultivation of creativity in children (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2014).

The present study was a result of action research which was implemented in ten kindergarten classrooms. It lasted for three months and the sample consisted of the kindergarten teachers and their students. The data collection tools were the observation guide, photography and the calendar. For the data analysis the method used was that of qualitative analysis.

Based on our literature review, classroom observations, and administrator feedback, the findings of the research showed that the children chose specific spaces for their work or play, rearranged the space so that it supported their actions, incorporated all the available educational material in their activities (furniture, educational material, etc), displayed their work around the space, used all the areas of the kindergarten (courtyard, event hall, etc) and turned them into learning environments. Hence, a learning environment was created, that promoted engagement, deep learning, and meaning. Such a space emphasizes the process, not the product, personalizes learning, and contributes to the development of the person as a whole.

The accuracy of the research results would be enhanced if the research applied to a higher number of kindergartens

Early years at the beach: Affordances of a coastal environment

Dr Alexia Barrable[1], Duncan Barrable
[1]University Of Dundee

Education in natural spaces, especially in the early years, has seen unprecedented growth in the last decade and continues to grow across different settings and climates. This paper describes a slightly different setting, in a coastal town of Eastern Scotland, where a Beach School was set up. Children from a primary school joined weekly for lessons relating to curriculum, but also for thematic units related to Education for Sustainability and promoting Health and Wellbeing. Using Gibson's Affordances theory we explore the use of the outdoor space by children and teachers, especially the use of sand in lessons, and in promoting child-led and autonomous learning and play.

Confronting Radiological Contamination From the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant In Early Years Childcare and Education:

~Data Based Caution vs. Emotion Based Overreaction~

Ms. Mihoko Endo[1], Mr. Yoshiya Higashi[2], Dr. Takashi Satio[2], Mr. Sam Murchie[2], Mr. Hideshige Komatsu[2], Dr. Yutaka Yamazaki[2], Ms. Tomosa Mine[2], Ms. Emiko Takahashi[3]

[1]Shokei Gakuin University, [2]Haramachi Seiai Kodomo En, [3]Sayuri Kindergarten

A massive tsunami generated by a mega-earthquake struck the shores of eastern Japan in 2011 and engulfed the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant (FDNPP). This led to the FDNPP nuclear meltdown. What followed was an extensive dispersion of radioactive material whose effects are still being felt in many early year childhood care and education facilities.

Nine years after the FDNPP accident, 40,000+ people are still living as radiological contamination evacuees. In addition, 20+ childcare facilities have had to shut down.

At childcare facilities that did reopen, children were nevertheless required to abide by highly restrictive limits on outdoor playtime.   In addition, these children were also prohibited from touching various elements of nature (e.g., soil and grass).   Schoolgrounds were eventually decontaminated and outdoor play resumed.   However, there was a noticeable number of children who were fearful of, or simply avoided contact with bugs and soil per se, regardless of the fact that the bugs and soil were now safe to touch.   When children from highly contaminated kindergartens with many outdoor play restrictions took field trips to areas safe for play, these children had trouble forming mud patties. Increased obesity rates among children from lack of exercise were observed as well. Our research team coined this phrase, "Nature Deprivation Syndrome" to describe this condition in children.

Long-lasting radioactive pollution undoubtedly poses a substantial threat to sustainable child development. It is of upmost importance to recognize that any realistic path toward fulfilling SDGs must instill a renewed "sense of wonder" among children, as well as teachers, towards nature, animals, and beyond.

Effectiveness of the school-based Mental Health Promotion Programme "Steps for Life" in Greek Students aged 6-8, as recorded by their parents

Ms Despina Dede[1], **Dr Ntina Kourmousi[2]**, Dr Kalliope Kounenou[2], Dr Vasilios Koutras[1]
[1]Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Ioannina, [2]Department of Education, School of Pedagogical & Technological Education (ASPETE)

During the past decades research on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and mental health promotion school programmes has grown significantly, since their key-importance has been well documented. Considering that the vast majority of studies was conducted in high-income countries and mostly in the US, WHO prompted researchers to investigate outcomes in different settings also.

The presented experimental study reports the evaluation of "Steps for life", a Greek school-based, annual, mental health promotion universal program, designed to improve social-emotional competence in students aged 6-8, by using appropriate methods such as story-telling, brain-storming, role-playing, diffusion in formal and hidden curriculum, and parental involvement.

The sample consisted of 1.497 students, with 964 forming the experimental group and 533 the control group. The anonymous study questionnaire measuring the frequency of students' behaviors as rated by their parents, was administered pre and post intervention, to both groups' parents. It consisted of socio-demographic information and the 97 items of the parent-rated Personal and Social Skills Scale for Students aged 6-8, divided into eleven 7-point Likert-type subscales with Cronbach $\alpha > 0,8$: attention concentration, cooperation, emotions' identification and management, ability to control verbal aggressiveness, ability to control physical aggressiveness, ability to control victimization, self-esteem, empathy, friendship skills, problem-solving skills, and responsibility undertaking.

Data analysis indicated that both experimental and control groups significantly improved ($p < 0,05$) most of the investigated skills, according to their parents' ratings. However, as indicated by the repeated measurements analysis of variance (ANOVA), the experimental group had significantly higher improvement in cooperation, ability to control verbal aggressiveness, problem-solving skills and responsibility undertaking, while the control group's self-esteem, victimization avoidance, problem-solving and responsibility undertaking did not seem significantly altered.

The study's findings corroborate those of other researchers, suggesting that well designed mental health promotion school programmes can improve students' social-emotional skills and thus contribute to their well-being.

Using Picture Book as a medium on Emotion Management for Preschool children aged 5-6: an action research

Ms Lee Chin Ban[1], <u>Dr Connie Lum</u>
[1]NTUC First Campus Co-operative Limited

Young children's emotional capacity refers to their ability to identify, adjust and express self-emotions appropriately based on recognizing and understanding their own and other's emotional status. Emotional competences are made up by three dimensions: emotional recognition and expression, empathy and self-regulation.

With its uniqueness and characteristics, picture books are commonly known as a medium for young children to gain knowledge. This study is an action research to construct a set of emotional education project suitable for the characteristics and development needs of children aged 5-6 years through picture books analysis and mutual discussion, to design lesson plans, implement activities and evaluate the reflection promote healthy emotional development for young children. This study involved 24 preschool children aged 5 to 6 years old and 2 teachers from a childcare.

Research on Teachers' Reactions to Preschoolers' Negative Emotions

Dr. Zheng Wang[1], Ms. Fuli Wang[1]
[1]Henan University

ABSTRACT

Negative emotions are as important as positive emotions. Teachers' reactions to children's negative emotions are significant to children's emotional competence. The goal of this research is to investigate how preschool teachers coping with children's negative emotions. Research methods are non-participatory observation and semi-structured interview. We selected 2 children's centers from Kaifeng city, Henan province. Then, from each children's center we randomly selected 2 preschool classes. Each class has 2 teachers. So, this research involves 8 preschool teachers and 130 preschoolers. We have continuously observed 8 weeks and collected 160 events. Our observation frame is designed according to literature review. Teachers' reactions are coded in 6 categories (according to Coping with Children's Negative Emotions Scale). 3 are supportive: Problem-Focused, Emotion-Focused, and Expressive Encouragement; the other 3 are non-supportive: Minimization, Punitive, and Distress. This research finds that: (1) among the 160 events, 2 supportive reactions (emotion-focused and problem-focused) add up to approximately 50%, 2 non-supportive (punitive and minimization) add up to about 40%, while the supportive Expressive Encouragement reaction is only 1.9%. (2) Teachers' reactions vary in different situations. With respect to the 4 main negative emotions in preschoolers: anger, sadness, fear and tension, teachers are more tolerant to children's sadness and tension. However, when the child is fearful, the Punitive reaction is 65%. As regards anger, it is quite relevant to teachers' acceptance of anger or not. If yes, the reaction will be supportive, if not, the reaction will be non-supportive. (3) If the child's negative emotion is caused by teacher's criticize, teachers will demonstrate more Punitive reactions. (4) teachers use more Punitive reaction to children's negative emotion in teaching activities than routine activities and play activities. (5) observation data also reveals that emotion-focused and problem-focused reaction are quite effective, while Punitive reaction is the most non-effective.

Parents' ratings on Greek 1st and 2nd grade students' socioemotional skills at the beginning and end of the school year.

Dr Ntina Kourmousi[1], Ms Despina Dede[2], Dr Kalliope Kounenou[1], Dr Vasilios Koutras[2]
[1]Department of Education, School Of Pedagogical & Technological Education (ASPETE), [2]Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Ioannina

The study of the impact of school environment components – such as the curriculum and students' interaction with teachers and classmates – on their social-emotional development, is of great interest not only for teachers and parents, but also for those involved in educational policy planning.

The presented study investigates changes in socioemotional skills in 533 Greek first and second grade students, as a result of the school environment and the formal curriculum, during a school year. It was conducted in Southern and Eastern Attica primary schools by the use of an anonymous parent-rated questionnaire assessing the frequency of students' behaviours, at the beginning and end of the school year. The questionnaire included demographic information and an adaptation of the Personal and Social Skills Scale for Students aged 6-8, for parent rating. The scale consisted of eleven 7-point Likert-type subscales with Cronbach $\alpha > 0,8$: Attention concentration, cooperation, self-esteem, emotions' identification and management, empathy, physical aggressiveness avoidance, verbal aggressiveness avoidance, victimization avoidance, friendship skills, problem-solving skills, and responsibility undertaking.

Data analysis indicated that both first and second graders improved ($p < 0,05$) most of these domains at the end of the school year, according to their parents. Specifically, attention concentration, cooperation, emotions' identification and management, empathy, avoidance of physical and verbal aggressiveness, and friendship skills were significantly improved. However, self-esteem and victimization avoidance appeared to be reduced, though not to a significant degree. Problem-solving and responsibility undertaking did not seem altered.

This finding raises questions regarding the enhancement of critical skills – like control of victimization, problem solving and responsibility assuming – in the school environment, while also highlighting that it is important for the Greek educational system to implement evidence-based approaches, which will improve students' personal and social skills, in order for them to achieve the highest possible success in school and in life.

A Case Study on Behavior Management of Infants and Toddlers in 2-3 Years

Ms Ting Liu[1], Ms Dan Liu[2]
[1]Anhui Normal University, [2]Beijing Xicheng District Experimental Kindergarten

Behavior management plays an important role in the socialization process of infants and toddlers. This study focuses on the behavior management of infants and toddlers in the child care institutions. From the perspective of symbolic interactionism theory, this paper explores the research questions of what behaviors of infants and toddlers do teachers manage, how teachers manage infants and toddlers' behaviors, and why teachers manage infants and toddlers' behaviors in this way.

This study selected two 2-3-year-old infants and toddlers' classes, adopting qualitative research method, using observation, interview and material collection methods to collect data, through the situational analysis and generic analysis of the research data, drew the following three research conclusions:

In the scope and content of behavior management, the teachers of the child care institutions cultivate the behavioral habits of infants and toddlers in life behaviors, safety behaviors, emotions and social behaviors, public behaviors and order behaviors.

In the way and process of behavior management, teachers manage the behavior of infants and toddlers through various means, including verbal behaviors (instructions, commitments, praises, explanations), non-verbal behaviors (physical contact, eyes and facial expressions), and symbolic resources (time symbol, space symbol). The teacher's behavior management of infants and toddlers is not static, but is a dynamic process of constructing together in the interaction between teachers and children. The teacher's behavior management of infants and toddlers is a continuum of control from weak to strong.

In the cause of the behavioral management teacher behavior model, the internal reasons mainly refer to the individual factors of the teacher. The concept of the teacher's behavior education, teacher role, teacher-child relationship directly affects the way of teachers' management. External factors such as class conditions, the nature of the institution, and the culture of the institution indirectly affect the mode of teachers' management of infants and toddlers.

The challenge of teaching in diverse classroom environments and a variety of languages

Ms Eleni Alifieraki[1]
[1]Omep Uk

In a globalised world bilingual education is part of many children's experience. In cases where this situation is not a choice, bilingualism is not a luxury, but becomes a struggle; that is the case of the migrant and refugee children. It is a challenge for both children and teachers whose pupils speak a language different from the one of the school's.

Teaching in a diverse classroom environment requires special teaching skills, but nowadays it is becoming every day more and more evident that diversity is common in education, especially in specific countries, like Greece for example, where the number of the migrant children is considerable.

This presentation is an overview of a practical experience in teaching in Early Years. It aims to share teaching ideas about how to include children who are learning in a language other than their first language into a regular class and support their learning in order to achieve best results focusing on their communication and language. It also aims to suggest teaching methods and techniques that will build up confidence and enhance positive attitudes to learning for these pupils, in order for them to make academic progress, to thrive and to fulfill their potential.

Coming to school without knowing the school's language is a huge barrier, but it can be turned into a positive and rich experience for everybody in the school community: foreign children, native children, teachers, parents, everyone.

Impact of Screen-Time on Language Development: Parent Perceptions

Dr. Melissa Garcia[1]
[1]Texas A&m International University

This presentation will discuss findings of a research study that investigates parent perceptions between screen-time and the development of language and academic skills in children between 1-5 years of age. A survey was utilized to obtain information from parents/legal guardians regarding the child's demographics, language development skills, academic skills, and time spent on screen-time. Data was collected in towns located in South Texas (Border of USA and Mexico) and Costa Rica in both English and Spanish. Findings of this research demonstrates the perceptions parents have on screen-time and how it affects academic skills and language development.

With advancements in technology, smartphones and tablets are more accessible and affordable. Their use by adults and children alike has significantly increased in the past decade. Research has found that parents rely on devices such as smartphones and tablets to pacify their children during social occasions such a restaurant outings. The child safety advocacy group, Common Sense Media, found that one out of five parents uses a tablet or smartphone to keep children distracted while running errands. Recently, the American Academy of Pediatrics stated that screen time has a negative effect on development in children younger than two years of age. In 2017, the Canadian Pediatrics Society found that in the United States, rates of screen time use in multiple devices used among two to four year olds increased from 39% to 80% between 2011 and 2013. To address the correlation of the use of technology and academics, Peiró-Velert, et al. (2014) conducted a separate study that found that screen media usage interferes with academic activities, such as studying and reading books. Recently, the view of displacement theories have been the focus in early childhood. The impact of screen time on movement, social interactions, play, talking and learning will be discussed in this presentation.

An action research to foster openness to linguistic diversity and language development of emerging bi/plurilingual children with shared reading of plurilingual storybooks using the "ELODiL Multilingual Storybooks" online app

Dr. Catherine Gosselin-lavoie[1], Dr. Françoise Armand[1]
[1]University Of Montréal

In societies where the presence of immigration is strong, such as Quebec (Canada), many emerging bi/plurilingual children attend kindergarten classroom. At their first steps in schools, the had varying amount of language experiences in the different languages of their repertoire. While some are comfortable to express themselves in the language of the school, some begin to learn it. In order to foster a safe, caring and inclusive living environment and to promote the language development of emerging bi/plurilingual children, as advocated by the «Preschool Education Cycle Program» promoted in Quebec (Quebec's Ministry of Education, 2020), it is important to consider the diversity and specificities of children and their families, such as the different resources of their linguistic repertoire. Furthermore, several studies show that shared reading of children's literature books promotes language development among young children (Cunningham & Zibulsky, 2011; National Early Literacy Panel, 2008).

With the aim to implement an openness to linguistic diversity and legitimize the linguistic background of emerging bi/plurilingual children as well as school-family collaborations (Cummins, 2001; Gosselin-Lavoie & Armand, 2015; Hélot, 2014), a broad action research project (Armand et al., 2017-2021) was deployed in the area of the Great Montreal. In the latter, the online application "ELODiL Multilingual Storybooks", who brings together 11 children's literature storybooks translated into 22 languages, was developed. For 12 weeks, seven of these albums were read repeatedly in 10 kindergarten classrooms (5 y-o) located in pluriethnic and plurilingual environments. Activities co-developed with the teachers and surrounding the readings took place. Before and after the intervention, language data were collected from the children and compared with those of a control group to measure the effects of the intervention. In this presentation, we will present some of the results regarding language development, more specifically related to narrative skills.

Support and Development of Reading and Writing in 3-year-old Children - With a Focus on "Name Letters"-

Dr. Soon hwan Kim[1], Dr. Youngmee Lee[2]
[1]Ewha Womans University, [2]Cheju Halla University

The purpose of this study was to analyze how to use name letters to support the reading and writing development of 3-year-old children, as well as to examine their impact on these children.

The study subjects consisted of 25 children aged 3 and a half. From April 1 to July 5, 2021, the importance of name letters in reading and writing development education was recognized and implemented.

This study found that through the book "Shall we be friends?", small group activities could be performed with related content and could spark interest from children in regards to language as to determine their own and each other's names in a literary form. In consideration of the development level and characteristics of the children, various activities such as group activities of varied size and indoor free play were conducted, and interactions with teachers were encouraged in daily life as to allow the children to naturally pay attention to and recognize both their names and their friends' names.

Additionally, children grew to become interested in the name letters themselves, resulting in a search for familiar letters in the world around them. Children were observed drawing name letters unprompted, and through these varied activities, the children in this study displayed a greater understanding of the function of name letters. Moreover, the activities involving name letters displayed positive changes in reading and writing development, which was further supported by the post-test which established that positive change had occurred for all but two of the 25 children. Children were also able to create and maintain friendships more easily through the acknowledgment and retention of each other's names. Overall, it can be seen that this focus on name letters had a positive effect on the children and displays educational significance in this regard.

The understanding of metafiction by kindergarten children: the case of wordless picturebooks

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In the world of children's literature wordless picture books have become a distinct genre over the last forty years. A wordless picture book is a text where the visual image carries the weight of the meaning and the absence of written text contributes to the overall meaning of the narrative (Arizpe, 2013).

Many wordless books published the last decades are quite sophisticated visual texts that use complex metafictive devices. Metafiction draws the attention of readers to how texts work and to how meaning is created. According to Waugh, metafiction is "fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (1984, p.2). One common aspect of the discussions about metafiction is its self-referentiality or self-consiousness and metafictive texts use a number of devices or techniques to draw attention to their status as fiction (Pantaleo, 2005). The common element of the various devices is their power to distance readers from the text, of the, frustrating traditional reading expectations and practices, and positioning "readers in more active interpretive roles" (McCallum, 1996, p.398).

Metafictive picturebooks are considered to be difficult for children under five years old although previous research has shown that children are quite sophisticated readers of complex texts (Arizpe & Styles,). In our research we read five metafictive wordless picturebooks in a kindergarten class with students aged 4-5 years old. Our research showed that children were able to discuss complex metafictive devices as metalepsis, non-linear and non- sequential plots, intertextualities, intervisualityand experimentations on peritextual elements. Children enjoyed the elements of play in these texts and they were active readers, filling gaps and constructing the meaning of the story.

Preschool English Language Teachers' Views on Bilingual Education in Early Childhood Settings

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Bilingual practices in kindergartens have started to receive significant attention following the demonstration of preschoolers proficient at learning and improving both languages at the same time. According to the Critical Period Hypothesis, infants have a natural tendency to learn a second language better compared to adults. This hypothesis also propounded that children could not achieve the same language proficiency after they passed this specific learning period (Cameron, 2018). In addition to the importance of the early start for learning a second language, the social environment that a child interacts with plays a vital role in language comprehension (Otto, 2014). During this language acquisition process, teachers also have a great responsibility to support children. Dressler (2018) promoted this idea by asserting that teachers' skill and in-class practices direct children while learning a second language. For this reason, the current research aims to examine preschool foreign language teachers' views on the purpose of bilingual education in preschool years as well as their practices, challenges and the ways that they cope with these challenges while they are planning, implementing, and assessing children's bilingual education process. To gain a deeper understanding of this educational tendency, a phenomenological study was designed. Teachers who work in private preschools in Ankara/Turkey will be selected as participants. Teachers' views will be gathered by conducting an interview which was designed by researchers. After the data collection procedure, a thematic analysis will be applied to represent teachers' views about bilingual education in preschools, challenges that they face, and the ways they use to cope with these challenges.

"Reading lessons" for preschoolers from two contemporary picturebooks by Anthony Browne

Ms Effrosyni Katsikonouri[1]
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Picturebooks just like fairy tales and oral tales constitute the first "reading lessons" (Meek, 1999) for children that can develop their reading skills and allow them to become adult critical readers. Pre-school children are learning faster than older children and that is why they learn from an early age a huge amount of words. Children's literature and especially picturebooks can help children of pre-school age to develop their language but they also introduce children to the codes and conventions of literature. Research (Styles & Arizpe, 2003) has shown that children are excellent and sophisticated readers of complex picturebooks at an early stage of life. Through their life they need sophisticated books to help them identify how meaning is constructed with the use of verbal and visual text, design or the materiality of books. One of the most celebrated creators of picture books is Antony Browne. His books are considered to be cross-over books, which means that they are suitable for a wide range of audiences but they are well known as classic picture books for young age

Our analysis focus on the written and visual text of two illustrated book "My Father" (2001) and "Zoo" (1999) by Antony Browne and the collaboration of images and text in order to produce the meaning of the story. We focus on the structural elements of narration such as the plot, the characters, the scene and the point of view with emphasis in the intertextuality and the twists that make this picture book a really complex and demanding reading for the child reader and the adult co-reader.

Traditional chain tales as guides to educational and creative design in preschool.

Storyteller's Sassa Voulgari method which use folk tales structure for teaching

Mrs Sassa Voulgari
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In a cumulative tale, sometimes also called a chain tale, action or dialogue repeats and builds up in some way as the tale progresses.

These traditional tales often depend upon repetition and rhythm for their effect, and can require a skilled storyteller to negotiate their tongue-twisting repetitions in performance.

Chain tales are the most suitable material even for very young children as they are rhythmic and linguistically playful in their construction.

Their structure is such that their use in preschool for teaching can be impressive and immediately fruitful in a particularly fun way.

In this work we will show how this material can be applied as a basic guide to multiple teaching and creative topics with great flexibility.

We will see how we can use a chain tale with children for:
•   cultivate perception of space and place
•   cultivate logical-mathematical - algorithmic thinking
•   construct a mental map in a simple way
•   build their own chain tale on a theme
•   develop a linguistic and musical sense
•   practise them at mnemonic skills
•   encourage them to narrate their own stories

Using Origami in Preschool Mathematics Education and Teachers' Views on Using Origami

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The aim of this research is to present examples of activities for the use of origami (a paper-folding art) in preschool mathematics education and to determine the views of teachers about the applicability of these origami activities in preschool mathematics education. When the literature is examined, it can be seen that origami activities support the development of mathematical and geometric thought. Origami activities carried out within the scope of this research include basic geometric shapes (triangle, square, rectangle, etc.) in accordance with preschool education. Within the scope of the research, which was designed qualitatively, the data were obtained from preschool teachers working with children aged between 5 and 6. Origami activities were held in 10 preschools in different districts of Istanbul. The data were collected through interview forms, and audio and video recordings. In the first part of the research, at least one origami activity was held in all groups, and these activities were recorded on video, and photographs of the origami were taken from various angles. After the origami activities, preschool teachers were interviewed about the activities. The data obtained from the pre-school teachers about the applicability of origami activities through the voice recording and interview form were subjected to content analysis. As a result of the research, it was determined that the teachers generally believed that origami activities facilitated the understanding of mathematics and geometry, and that they enabled children to learn by having fun while learning by doing.

Human Calculator: Introducing the Mathematical Principles of Computing to Preschoolers using Theatrical Games

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Human Calculator (HC) is a theatrical game to teach computing principles to preschoolers. It addresses the binary representation of numbers and the algorithms used to perform the four arithmetic operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division). It employs no special equipment, just the body of the participants.

HC is played by n participants that organize themselves in a row to form an n-bit calculator. Another participant undertakes the role of the "user" of the calculator and is able to input a number by touching the correct "bits", simulated by the other participants. This is essentially a way to find the binary representation of an integer ranging from -2^(n-1) to +2^(n-1)-1. In a similar way the "user" can perform addition and multiplication.

All "bits" follow the simple rule: When somebody touches you, change your state from 0 to 1, or 1 to 0, depending on your previous state. State 0 corresponds to "bit's" right hand in horizontal position touching the shoulder of the "bit" in front of it. State 1 corresponds to "bit's" right hand raised up. To do subtraction and division the rule followed by the "bits" and the "user" changes to: When someone stops touching you, then change your state.

HC is organized in episodes so that the participants discover gradually:

1. The binary representation of positive numbers

2. Adding binary representations of numbers

3. Multiplying positive numbers by shifting bits, implementing the so called Russian peasant multiplication algorithm

4. Subtracting positive numbers

5. Representing negative numbers in two's complement form

6. Subtracting numbers and calculating algebraic expressions of positive and negative numbers

7. Dividing numbers and finding the quotient and the remainder

The process is simulated as a Scratch project at: https://scratch.mit.edu/projects/324171028/

HC is currently implemented in schools and results will be presented during the conference.

Early childhood teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) in Greece and England

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This abstract highlights part of a dissertation that took place in 2021 during a Master's degree. The aim of this part of the study was to investigate the attitudes and beliefs toward STEM that early childhood teachers have in Greece and England. There was an effort to understand where those attitudes and beliefs emerge from. The study had a comparative dimension and the data gathered from Greece and England provided a unique insight into this important area of study. A mixed-method approach was adopted and quantitative and qualitative data were generated through an online survey (N=189, 94 Greek and 95 English teachers) and follow-up semi-structured individual interviews (N=8, 5 Greek and 3 English teachers). The findings indicated that most of the teachers thought STEM activities were an integration of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (84.0% from Greece and 68.4% from England) and generally they held positive attitudes and beliefs toward STEM in ECE. Furthermore, the comparison between countries demonstrated that the teachers who were working in England held significantly more positive attitudes and beliefs than those in Greece. The study found that teachers who showed positive attitudes and beliefs were supported by professional learning opportunities to hence had sustained opportunities to develop further insight into the pedagogies of STEM learning. Finally, it is worth mentioning that even though more teachers from Greece stated that they have participated in STEM-related training (40.4%) than those from England (14.7%); the English teachers showed more positive attitudes and beliefs towards STEM. The outcomes of this study enriches the knowledge about attitudes and beliefs toward STEM in ECE and also they support some directions for further research.

Expanding the scope of early childhood science education for sustainable development: focusing on teachers

Dr Eleni Kolokouri[1], Dr Athina-Christina Kornelaki[1], Professor Katerina Plakitsi[1]
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The international ISCAR research community and especially the @fise group of the University on Ioannina, Greece, support the integration of Cultural Historical Activity Theory to Early Science Education. This can be transformed to a substantial paradigm in Science teaching. Within this frame, the key elements of the methodological approaches of our research work were the use of Activity Theory, CHAT and other socio-cultural approaches, the focus on the study of activity systems that are object-oriented, seek for an outcome and are mediated by artifacts, the analysis of contradictions within and between activity systems for change and development and finally the design and analysis of formative interventions in Science Education in expansive cycles. The research as a whole, addressed to the complexity of science teaching and learning in formal and informal settings in the process of fostering transformative thought and logical reasoning within a multidimensional context. As a next step, a series of science projects were developed focusing mainly on teachers' training and addressing to the global social and environmental challenges of the contemporary world. The projects that have been developed so far are connected with the Agenda 2030 and the 17 goals of sustainable development and concern cancer, poverty, water sustainability and agenda 2030 and inclusion. The design and analysis of the projects were based on a new researching and teaching model, named SCOPES, which includes Systems of activity, Contradictions, Outcomes, Praxis, Expansive learning and Science education. The main objective of these projects was to prepare professionals working in the field of sustainability and support them to integrate scientific and humanistic knowledge through participatory methods.

Evaluation of the Construction of Mathematical Thought in Preschool Education: an experience from school supervision

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Keywords: evaluation, preschool education, early childhood education, school supervision, mathematics.
This paper shows the procedure and results of an investigation carried out by school zone supervisors and teachers to know the performance level of 5140 students of public kindergartens in rural areas of the State of Mexico in the field of mathematical thinking. The experience of making an evaluation different from the one proposed by the government body where school supervisors and teachers participate in all phases of the process is emphasized: construction of instruments, application, systematization, interpretation and, above all, collective analysis of the results that lead to the reflection of the practice and to design improvement strategies in schools and school zones with objective information. The built-in individual evaluation instrument is presented and since it is a quantitative descriptive investigation that uses statistical numbers to respond to specific causes-effects, the answers to several specific questions - or hypotheses - that are posed as to the level of performance of some curricular standards established in the 2011 Preschool Education Program of the Mathematical Thought Formative Field.
This study also considers that the time factor is fundamental, since the research covers what happened in two school cycles - 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, and the progress that children have throughout each school year, as it is done a measurement at the beginning and end of it. From the analysis of the results a comparison is made considering several aspects: gender, the type of organization of the schools and the socio-economic context.

THE EFFECT OF ACTİVİTY SUPPORT PROGRAM SUGGESTED İN THE TEST OF EARLY MATHEMATİCS ABİLİTY-3 (TEMA-3) ON THE MATH SKILLS OF CHILDREN BETWEEN 60-72 MONTHS

Researcher Assistance Muammer Kalkan[1], **Prof. Dr. Serap Erdoğan[1]**
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The pre-school period, in which its development is the fastest, is expressed as the period in which children gain basic concepts and skills. Gaining the basic concepts and skills related to mathematics in this period becomes the basis of the mathematical concepts and knowledge necessary for children's later school life. The problems experienced in this period also negatively affect the academic success of children in the following years. In this study, it is aimed to determine the mathematical skills that children aged 60-72 months with the activity supports program suggested in the Test of Early Mathematics Ability-3. For this purpose, a mathematics skills support program will be prepared. This program will be created by considering the "Book of Recommended Activities" included in the Test of Early Mathematics Ability (TEMA-3). In the study, one group pre-test post-test model, which is one of the experimental methods, will be used. The participians of research will in consist of children between 60-72 months. "Test of Early Mathematics Ability-3 (TEMA-3)" and "Recommended Activities Book" will be used to obtain the data. The data collection process will be planned as 12 weeks. At the end of the study, teachers and families will be given feedback on the mathematical skills that children have problems with. In addition, in the light of the findings and results of the research, suggestions for both practice and research will be presented.

Teaching mathematics in early childhood context through games

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Early mathematical learning is considered vital for future performance on the subject. It is therefore essential to engage children from as early as possible with high quality and on the same time entertaining mathematical activities. It is proposed that an effective pedagogical approach towards this aim is to organize mathematics teaching through play. Thus, as part of a research project, a series of games, suitable for 6 to 8-year-old pupils, were designed. They were then implemented in a Greek public school throughout a whole school day with the intention to provoke 'inquiry based' mathematics learning. Data were collected through observations and were subsequently analysed by adopting as unit of analysis a 'thematic episode'. The analysis results from one of these games will be presented in detail in order to provide evidence of this venture's success.

Design as Play! Through the paradigm of designing mathematical activities for young learners.

Mrs. Andrea Eliadou[1]

[1]*European University Cyprus*

The designing of mathematical activities is formed and improved through the active involvement of all participants and the decisions that must be made during the implementation from both, the teacher and the children. Design could be described as an interactive, dynamic and exclusive process for each group, and it certainly differs greatly from the linear programming as that it is still used in educational practice nowadays.

Design is not something that is done outside of the learning environment and it doesn't concern the design of any "given" mathematical activity, following linear frameworks and procedures. But it seems to have a similar sequence of development as play, which is exclusively children's "job" and is influenced by team's characteristics.

Thus, this presentation will describe how the design affects the designing of mathematical activities for young learners (4.5-5.5 years old) through several paradigms. Explicitly, in this paper the meaning of design is used and defined by three different definitions:

i. as design research which is the research methodology approach (Cobb, Confrey, DiSessa, Lehrer, Schauble, 2003; Edelson, 2002; McKenney, & Reeves, 2018),

ii. as design learning which is the process of educational design -the epistemological discussion about teaching mathematics for young learners- (Nunes & Bryant, 2007˙Papert,1972˙Tzekaki, 2007),

iii. as design thinking that is an alternative lens through which we can see the learning procedures of all participants (Li · Schoenfeld · diSessa · Graesser · Benson · English · Duschl, 2019).

Exploration possibilities to teach nature of science in ECE through book talks: a teacher-researcher collaboration

Associate professor Susanne Thulin[1], Dr Lotta Leden, Professor Lena Hansson
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Science education research emphasizes not only focusing on specific phenomena in the teaching of science, but also on the Nature of Science (NOS). Research shows that stereotypical images are frequent concerning scientific knowledge, its processes and researchers in school as well as in media. This is a part of the facts-tradition in school where scientific knowledge processes often not are mentioned. In a similar way a common image of the researcher as a white man, wearing lab coat and glasses often is communicated. A pilot study (Hansson & Leden, 2016) on picture books for children, showed how this kind of stereotypical images of science and scientists often are strengthened, but sometimes also challenged in different ways. The aim of this presentation is to describe and discuss the first results from a study which will try out ways to use picture books to raise NOS issues in discussions between children and teachers in a preschool setting. This could mean highlighting issues such as How do we know this? What does the knowledge processes look like in science? Can knowledge change? What do a researcher do and what does he/she look like? Our assumption is that an inclusion of such issues in science teaching is important if common stereotypical images are to be challenged. Discussions about NOS in preschool could be a means to avoid reproducing the facts-tradition, and instead open up for more nuanced images of science and scientists, and thereby open up science for more children. The research adheres to ethical guidelines (Research Council, 2011) and required informed consent from guardians combined with a sensitivity to participating children's volition.

Investigation of the Effect of Philosophy for Children on Gender Stereotypes in Preschool Ages

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The main purpose of this study, which uses the classical experimental model with an experiment-control group, is to examine the impact of Philosophy for Children on children's gender stereotypes. In this research, "Philosophy for Children (P4C)", which is one of the thinking training programs, was chosen for its applicability to young children.

This research will be carried out in two classes of a kindergarten, selected through an easily accessible case sampling in Istanbul during the spring semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. One of the classes is the control group and the other is the experiment group. For those children in the experimental group, P4C activities will be held over 10 weeks.

In order to determine the impact of P4C on the gender stereotypes of children, the "Gender Measurement Tool" developed by Şıvgın (2015) will be used in the pre-test and post-tests. In the measurement tool, there are 43 items in total: for tasks-jobs there are 9 items; in professions, 17 items; in toy size, 10 items; and 7 items in games. In the tool to measure gender stereotypes, each item has three answers. In the measurement tool, while the answer "Women and Men" or "Girls and Boys" for the sub-dimension of toys and games does not reflect gender stereotypes, the response "Women", "Men" (or "Girl", "Boy") reflects gender stereotypes. In the measuring tool, each item can be evaluated separately. In addition, for each item, total scores can be obtained by giving "1" to the answer "Men and Women" and 0 for "Female" or "Male". While a high score reflects an androgenic characteristic, a low score indicates gender stereotypes. The research process is ongoing and the results will be shared at the congress.

A history lab at our school: Developing historical skills and creativity in 5-6 year old pupils

Dr. Maria Vlachaki[1]
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History education has an important role to play in promoting democratic culture in schools and building inclusive societies. It can offer insights into the complexities and diversity of past and fosters the ability to interrogate differing and even conflicting narratives.

This paper describes how a class in a kindergarten in northern Greece can be organized as a history lab and presents the tools which can be used in order for the pupils of 5-6 years to acquaint themselves with the historical research and the production of historical knowledge.

It also highlights the historical skills which pupils can develop through a discovering learning process. Pupils try to understand how their area was between the 50's and 60's by using different historical sources such as images, artifacts and narratives. They are encouraged to compare the way of living in the past and nowadays and discern changes or continuities. They also understand important developments such as means of transportation, the urbanization and new customs in the families and society, but also the reasons for historical events such as refugee and migration movements from and to their region.

Pupils who participate actively in the research process collect information from their relatives or other informants from photos and artifacts. Thus, they can recognize that the past can be narrated in different ways, because individuals can hold divergent views about it.

Pupils make their own interpretations about the past by creating maps, newspapers with photos and drawings.

Scaffolding Historical Inquiry for Preschoolers: School & Home Active Play-based Explorations

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Photographs, artwork, and other historical artifacts are powerful objects to stimulate interest and excitement in young children as they closely observe details, reflect on the intent of the creator, and imagine life in another time and place. Research evidence, while limited, indicates that an understanding of time and socio-historical belonging begins to emerge before formal schooling. Historical consciousness explains ways in which historical learning, from a range of sources, may contribute to children growing a sense of identity and belonging for the individual within a family, a community, a time, and a place. The history of any community and its inhabitants is embodied in the physical and cultural structures that remain, by virtue of continued use, preservation, and commemoration. Family and community influences appear to be especially powerful for exposing young children to these traces of the past and contribute to an emergent historical consciousness that encourages early understanding of the past and awareness of history. Even though the value of explicit, intentional teaching to establish a strong foundation for historical consciousness has been demonstrated for all children, early childhood educators often lack expertise and confidence with historical concepts, content, and pedagogy. This presentation describes a collaboration between a university, early learning centers, libraries, and museums to prepare early childhood teachers to support preschoolers' exploratory learning and play-based inquiry using community-based primary sources. We will share interdisciplinary activity sets designed to foster preschoolers' problem-solving, critical thinking, and visual literacy skills and related resources for family engagement to promote inclusive family-friendly experiences that connect stories of the past and young children's lives today. Primary source inquiry may support children in both the development of a sense of identity and reduce the tendency to create rigid 'us and them' boundaries, contributing to more subtle understandings of cultural discourses around identity and belonging.

Social Studies in the Greek kindergarten: Challenges and opportunities

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Key words: Social studies, personal empowerment, social dexterities, values, skills, exploration

The Greek kindergarten, following the contemporary pedagogical approaches, has introduced the cognitive area Social Studies in the New Curriculum of 2014.

The area, which contains four units (History and Culture, People Space and Environment, Education for sustainable development, and Society and Economy) is associated to the cultivation of competences, values and the attitudes, necessary to make them children active and responsible citizens in local, national and global level (program, 263). The young children aware of their place in different contexts such as family, school class, peer groups, neighborhood, village, town, country etc. acquire personal empowerment and social dexterities, the two interrelated dimensions of early childhood education.

Young children, even if they lack maturity to understand 'difficult' and 'abstract' concepts, can approach social studies in order to develop the skills and concepts that enable them to explore and understand natural, social and human environment and their interactions in different contexts in the past, present and the future.

Children starting kindergarten have already a certain amount of knowledge and ideas about these areas. Gradually they learn to observe, pose questions, guess, verify, realize the relation between cause and effect, decide and draw conclusions. There are many different ways to this 'study': stories and literature, small researches, observations, photos, drama and singing etc. Teachers must ensure a rich selection of materials and sources including, of course, the ICT tools.

A crucial question is how the introduction of Social Studies and their specific methods can be combined with other cognitive areas such as language, mathematics, sciences art etc. and play centered activities.

Exercising ... in order to stay healthy

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The motive of this project was Sports Day, an event held every year at our school. The children had the opportunity to get in touch with athletes and Paralympics from different sports, talk with them and try some sports. The project implemented in the classroom had a particular impact on children aged 3 to 6 years. The overall objective of the work plan is to make a priority contribution to the physical development of students, their acquaintance with different sports, the Olympic and Paralympic institutions, and at the same time help in their mental and spiritual cultivation as well as their integration into society. The work plan addresses three key areas of student personality: the psychomotor, emotional and cognitive. Students develop kinetic concepts, basic skills of athletic movement, so as to participate effectively in physical and recreational activities in the present and the future. They are also familiar with the concepts of dexterity (the right way to perform the skills), as well as the concepts of activities (where the body can move) and more specifically rules, strategies, formations. They demonstrate responsible athletic and social behavior through their involvement in sports activities. The main goals of the program are: a) to get the children familiar with their body, b) to combine sports with healthy eating, c) to have a positive attitude towards sports, d) to learn to cooperate and develop good sports behavior, e) to understand the value of participation and not to win, f) to test their skills in sports, g) to have fun and enjoy their participation in sports, h) to have a positive attitude towards diversity, i) to get acquainted with ancient and current sports, and finally g) to gain knowledge of the Olympics and Paralympics. The project ended with athletic demonstrations by the children.

Artbots, Emergent Literacy & Special Education: A case study

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Artbots (art + robots) are robotic constructions which produce drawings and, thus, they are mainly associated with visual arts and technology as well as with the maker's movement and the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) approach. The present paper refers to a case study of a preschooler with special educational needs in an inclusive educational setting and the use of artbots for the improvement of his literacy skills. This approach expands and extends the possibilities of using artbots in interdisciplinary practices further than STEAM. Other issues being addressed include: the preparation activities for the use and the possibilities of artbots; the teaching process with a synthesis of methods for shaping abstract or figurative drawings as well as random or well-defined and precise shapes and forms; the reflection on the teaching process. The preschooler expressed himself freely and at the same time achieved utmost precision in drawing the letters which highly enhanced his learning. This activity also helped the preschooler to overcome compulsiveness and learn in a fascinating, playful and pleasant way. Furthermore the activity enhanced the social interaction among the schoolmates who were motivated and asked to continue drawing letters with the artbot beyond the teaching course. The overall experience proved the contribution of activities with artbots in providing a rich environment for emergent literacy in general as well as in special education settings.

Teachers' practices and concepts regarding the assessment in visual art education programs

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Assessment, in the field of visual art education, is an issue that has been faced with several reservations by the educational community. Most reservations derive from the existed traditional assessment forms that seem to be unable to record the procedures and, moreover, the multiple distinct features of art learning. Consequently, these assessment forms are incompatible with the field of art education, raising the issue of authentic and performance-based visual arts assessment that meet the principles and objectives of this particular field. A related problem seems to be, also, that teachers tend to identify the procedure of assessment with that of control and accountability. Still, taking into account the fundamental role that is assigned to the teacher as the main carrier of assessment, both by the official Greek educational policy and the discussion of the scientific community, it is more than clear that teachers' attitudes determine significantly the dominant educational reality.

This current thesis is intent on presenting a cohesive image of this issue in Greece, through the study of teachers' practices and concepts, in primary education, regarding the assessment of student learning in visual art education programs. For this purpose, a survey was conducted with a sample of 250 teachers (kindergarten teachers, elementary school teachers and art teachers), which was selected according to the multidimensional sampling method. The findings of the research highlight special information about the nature and the frequency of the assessment practices followed by the teacher in the classroom. In addition, the results reveal teachers' concepts and attitudes around the issue of assessment, which determine the quality of the above practices. Finally, demographic data, such as specialization and experience of the teachers, included in the questionnaire, indicate the factors that determine teachers' beliefs and evaluative practices.

Challenges for Going Beyond Art Education in Japanese Early Childhood Education and Care

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The study explores alternative narratives of art education to bring the new perspectives in early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Japan. In times of globalization, diversity, and uncertainty, the field of early childhood education and care as well as political and economic world are under the pressure of searching for "panacea," and being governed by "dominant discourses" (Moss, 2018). This situation may enforce teachers for carrying out "prophetic pedagogy" (Malaguzzi, 2016). In other words, this type of practice may deprive the children's wonder and thinking as well as the rights as citizens. We need for creating and guaranteeing space, time, and materials for the children to be co-constructors of knowledge, researchers, and inventors for the world. In these days, art thinking has been highlighted not only for the field of education, but also in business (Akimoto, 2019). Art thinking emphasizes the importance of raising questions and expressing new views. In terms of art and art education, Malaguzzi (2010) said that we must go beyond materials and techniques to stop and look at processes of empathy and intense relations with others. Although, he talked about this relating to atelier and atelieristas, we, the researchers of the study, explored the possibility of preschools/nursery-schools to become the places of creating new ideas and ways of living through having relations with things, people, and space. The study was empirical, thus, the researchers collaborated with two preschools/nursery-schools to share their processes of practice. The documentations and interviews revealed pedagogy of listening and providing materials, space, and time are important for the children to create new stories of life, and expanded their views of art and art education. The art thinking in ECEC has possibility to bring the freshness and originality of approach to life.

BOOKS UNITE KINDERGARTEN SCHOOLS

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[1]*Municipal kindergartens of Palaio Faliro*

Books from the CHILDREN'S MUNICIPAL LIBRARY OF PALEO FALIRO unite the children of 3 nearby kindergarten schools, two Greek public kindergarten schools and an Armenian – bilingual- one, in an adventure to explore the pluralistic world of a book: pictures, titles, ISDN, book covers, writers, dedications, endpapers, story, fonts, characters, story, end, editors, type of paper, everything a book consists of!

On monthly basis, teachers of the kindergartens select and borrow from the Children's Library copies from the same book (one in Armenian) and every teacher decides which element of the book will focus on with her children. The adventure begins by presenting the book to the young "detectives", followed by focusing on the pre-selected element, in a work full of fun, search, comparison and above all, creativity artistic as well as linguistic! A presentation is created on H/Y with the results (creations, games, suggestions, questions, etc), which is sent by email to all partners to make them well aware of the specific element. A feedback is always most welcome. The books come from the Municipal Library so that children know how a library works. They learn how to become a member, how to choose books from an open list , borrow and returning one. The goal is to get to know through the program an organization that exists in their city and connects them.

The main aim is children to have holistic perspective of books (and hopefully of other aspects of life) through collaboration within and throughout classes and schools. Moreover, since collaboration means also getting to know the "other" we also aim to that, not only for children, but for educators, too.

Creativity in Crisis: Art process vs art product and how it affects preservice teachers experience

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Abstract

Like many educators today, preservice teachers approach art education as an instructional manual in which students are expected to confine their creativity within the strict boundaries of pre-defined images or objects. The plethora of Pinterest type images provides preservice teachers with a comfortable and secure environment ensuring that the 45-minute art class will have a satisfactory and measurable outcome. Children are presented with a variety of craft like images which they are asked to duplicate to the best of their ability while also being encouraged to add their personal touch or accent. The final result usually fulfills all the preservice teacher's lesson plan requirements, as well as satisfying students and parents. But the final product lacks diversity and the uniquely singular characteristics that define every child's personality and imagination. The art class is reduced to an assembly line type environment resulting in the production of product-oriented crafts.   Art class should allow children to explore and experiment with a variety of materials while encouraging them to think creatively through a process of problem-solving, collaboration and self-expression. This can only be accomplished when art education is process-oriented rather than product-oriented.   Process-oriented art eduction allows preservice teachers to develop an understanding and appreciation for positive student assessment while encouraging and supporting early childhood developmental standards such as social-emotional development, fine motor skills, cognitive and sensory development, critical thinking and problem-solving, as well as math and language skills development.

Culturally Sustaining Creative Development in an Urban Project-Based and Arts-Integrated School

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The purpose of this research is to investigate how teachers in an integrated arts project-based urban school develop the culturally-situated creativity of their learners. This qualitative study uses interviews with early childhood teachers, classroom observations, school environment analysis, and document analysis. Results suggest that 1) teacher and learner creativity development are interdependent, 2) teachers' creative identities are influenced by their childhood experiences and cultural backgrounds, and 3) classroom creative affordances are shaped by larger sociocultural contexts. This study informs how creativity can be researched in the field, understood by policy makers, and supported in the classroom.

Experiential aesthetics-based arts integration activities in the teaching of the Mathematics syllabus

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Although the relationship between aesthetics and art education seems to energize current discussion in both the fields of aesthetics and art education theory, the education community's understanding of this relationship remains either implicit or not overtly addressed. The issue that guided this study is that arts education could constitute the evidence-based field to use aesthetics in education and to establish the scope and significance of an "aesthetic teaching" of any subject taught in kindergarten.

Initially, we examine four different aesthetic approaches (representationalist, expressionist/cognitivist, formalist, and post-modernist) and we refer to learning theories that these different aesthetic lenses illuminate. Then we analyze how each of these approaches can give rise to corresponding ways of designing "experiential aesthetics-based arts integration activities". Next, we describe how this kind of activities were integrated in the teaching of the Mathematics syllabus (subject: "the first numbers"). The intervention took place in 64 kindergarten classes. Our purpose was to explore how the participating students were affected, depending on which of the four aesthetic approaches was used as the theoretical basis of each activity. The data collected came from the children's verbal commentary during the experiential part of each activity, and the focus group discussion that was linked to it. The findings of the interventions, their limits, as well as their educational perspectives, and ideas for future research are discussed.

The study indicates that the different "experiential aesthetics-based arts integration activities" can constitute different stages of an aesthetic teaching program, offering a varied, multi-faceted, and holistic approach to the teaching of any subject to preschoolers.

P.S. The paper presents the findings of unpublished data, the analysis process of which is described in Sotiropoulou-Zormpala, M., & Mouriki, A. (2020). Enriching Arts Education through Aesthetics. Experiential Arts Integration Activities for Early Primary Education, London, New York: Taylor & Francis, Routledge.

Art activities in the children's municipal library of Palaio Faliro:From picturebooks to painters

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Although children's libraries seem inextricably linked to schooling, they are more truly understood as alternative learning spaces and experimental settings, where possibilities can emerge. Public libraries, where a situated learning is taking place, function as local gateways to knowledge and reading environments, not compulsory like schools (Mahwasane, 2019).

Eventually, reading is linked with other enjoyable activities, which expand their reading experiences (Raines & Canady, 1989). Reading programs put emphasis not only on literacy, reading and writing, but also on other forms of creativity, like fine arts (Carr, 2007). In libraries knowledge about painting may start from children's picturebooks. Nowdays many narrative picturebooks about painting are published: artists' biographies, books on certain paintings, e.g. Cat and a bird (Elschner, 2012), stories about visits to art museums and of books with references to fine arts, either as reproductions, transfigurations or stylization (Serafini, 2015).

In the Greek city of P. Faliro, children's public libraries have launched an experimental project that aims at familiarizing children with great painters. Using children's picturebooks and establishing art workshops, children come to know many painters, their paintings and influential art movements (cubism, surrealism, etc.). Crossover books are selected and thought-provoking activities are proposed. In the learning environment of the library children and their families using the picturebooks' collection, read picturebooks about fine arts and learn about great painters through ludic activities. References Carr, David 2007. Art information, arts learners: the role of libraries, Liora Bresler (edit.) International Handbook of Research in Arts Education. Dordrecht: Springler.

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Serafini, F. (2015). The Appropriation of Fine Art into Contemporary Narrative Picturebooks, Children's Literature in Education, 46, 438-453.

Visual Arts in Early Childhood Classrooms: The Views of Pre-service Teachers

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Visual arts in the early years are a critical outlet for children to express themselves verbally and non-verbally. Therefore, the way teachers value arts in the classroom or the attitudes teachers hold toward arts become significant to investigate. In this study, the views of the pre-service teachers (n=26) who are taking visual arts course was investigated in terms of the benefits of visual arts in early childhood classrooms, teacher role in preparing a supportive classroom environment, and the content of visual arts courses in teaching young children. The data was collected through an open-ended survey and then analyzed through content analysis. The findings indicated the value pre-service teachers had for visual arts in early years, specifically its benefits for emotional skills. They also indicated the role visual arts played in nurturing children's creativity skills and aesthetics sense. However, the findings also revealed the limited pedagogical knowledge of the pre-service teachers in relation to teacher role and the content of visual arts courses while working with children. The results will shade light on the content of the visual arts courses offered in the early childhood teacher education programs. That is, more emphasis should be given to the pedagogical content knowledge of pre-service teachers and their understanding in terms of teacher's role in providing a supportive environment for visual arts classes.

Integrating design thinking, digital technologies and arts to explore peace, war and crisis concepts with young children.

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Design thinking is regarded as a means to promote problem and inquiry- based, scaffolded and authentic learning (Scheer, Noweski, & Meinel, 2012) and closely associated with STEAM approaches. A popular design thinking model, IDEO (Fierst, Diefenthaler, & Diefenthaler, 2011) was adopted in this study. Technology facilitated the whole design process with the use of e-Shadow, a digital storytelling platform which converts paper-based drawings into digital moving puppets. The study aimed at:
a) Helping young children to better understand the political situation (Macedonian Crisis in Greece in 2018 - 2019) and to comprehend abstract concepts such as: peace, war, border disputes and others;
b) Supporting children's feeling of belonging by emphasising positive values (e.g. peace, collaboration) over negative attitudes and stereotypes (e.g. war, dispute).
Four kindergartens, 76 children aged 4-6 years, and seven teachers from the Northern part of Greece collectively participated in the project (2018 – 2019) for seven months. Children were interviewed twice and were active participants in the whole process. They explored internet sites, had rich interactions with the local community, skyped to exchange ideas, created a scenario to capture their understanding, designed the heroes for their scenario, shared them with the other children and then used the software to convert their drawings into digital puppets. Finally, children created a digital play performance for the end of the school year celebrations.
Findings revealed that the design thinking approach was easily implemented and children's active participation enhanced their understanding around complex issues. Children enjoyed e-Shadow and successfully collaborated with the help of digital technologies.
This study will provide useful insights into STEAM pedagogy and its implementation in early childhood education. It will also reveal the advantages and challenges of adopting a design thinking model with young children and will make recommendations for future research in this emerging field.

Animating Children Stories with eShadow to Promote Creative Learning, Social Inclusion and Language Awareness – The case of the MUSILIB project

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The MUSILIB project answers the need for teachers to acquire a broader repertoire of teaching strategies to tackle the challenge of addressing increasingly multi-ethnic and multilingual classes. The project provides educational concepts, methods and tools to enhance inclusiveness within the classroom and to foster mutual understanding and communication among children from different cultural origins. It collects and enriches with musical resources children's stories in the form of 28 e-books, in 14 languages, including 6 languages spoken by immigrants. The stories contain essential elements of the culture they represent. Teachers can use the e-books within the context of a variety of playful activities that use a combination of different media such as text, audio, images, animation and video. In this paper we present a particular set of such activities that are inspired by traditional Shadow Theatre and combine traditional art with digital technologies.

In particular, these activities incorporate eShadow, a digital storytelling platform that renovates shadow theatre tradition by employing Internet technologies and interactive graphics to offer a creative digital platform in tune with current trends of cross-curricular learning. It enables children to reconnect with their national culture in a way that combines ICT in a creative and educationally significant framework. Through the use of eShadow pupils undertake various roles, cultivate social and cognitive skills while developing their psycho-emotional world.

Within the context of the MUSLIB project, eShadow enables playful learning scenarios that motivate and entertain children within interdisciplinary theme-centered projects that exploit MUSLIB stories and multimedia resources. The overarching pedagogical framework adopts the phases of the film-making process in a flexible way to promote cross-curricular (horizontal) skills: speaking and writing skills, social cooperation and research skills, digital and meta-cognitive skills. Collaborative performance online is supported to record individual scenes, store and combine them in playlists.

An Exploration of Spatial Reasoning as a Foundation for Computational Thinking in Preschoolers' Guided Play

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Spatial skills are essential for everyday tasks; they help us solve problems by manipulating, constructing, and navigating the paths of objects as well as ourselves. Early evidence suggests that spatial reasoning offers an important foundation for computational thinking; however, researchers have debated about how, and at what level of instruction, to introduce students to these spatial-thinking skills. Studies suggest that young learners are well equipped to perform a variety of age-appropriate spatial-thinking tasks as early as two or three years of age. This implies that young children are not only able to practice these skills, but also that educators should intentionally engage children in activities that support this learning as a pathway to developing computational thinking skills. We explored how preschoolers develop understanding of spatial concepts as the children took turns navigating a path during guided play with a tangible technology. A transparent spherical robot (i.e., Sphero) was integrated into the curriculum in a preschool classroom. Actor Network Theory informed our examination of humans and non-humans as actants that influence interactions during children's play scenarios. Data sources included video documentation that provided a "fine-grained multimodal record" of the verbal and nonverbal expressions of the teacher, small groups of children, and Sphero. Our findings confirm that pedagogical moments rely on both non-human and human agency. Acquiring skills entailed more than the input received by the children through connecting with an adult's knowledge. Sphero evoked a chain of actions, enacting pedagogic forces that transformed children's learning. These experiences facilitated embodied exploration of specific spatial concepts through the operationalization of actions by the tangible technology. The additive effect of talking about spatial concepts combined with the inter-activity with Sphero enhanced children's acquisition of spatial ideas relative to the quantity of children's verbal expressions and complexity of their applied spatial skills and computational thinking.