

Summary

Ebbeck et al. (2017)'s Early Experiences Matter: A Relationships-Based Curriculum for the Birth-to-Three Age Group explores the potential of a relationships based approach in raising the quality of curriculum for infants and toddlers and could be considered for application in child care centres in other countries. Using a pre-test/post-test design, they trialed the development of a relationships-based curriculum on experimental (n=58) and control cohorts (n=59) from two child care centres of the same anchor operator. The infants, toddlers and young children (up to the age of three) in both experimental and control cohorts were measured before and after the curriculum intervention using the Laevers' Active Involvement scale.

Developed by the researchers, the relationship-based curriculum was trialed during the 4-month pilot study. It was then implemented with the experimental cohort by the educators over a period of 8 months. Over an eight-month curriculum intervention, the researchers observed the children using the six signals and indicators from the Child Involvement Scale to assess and rate the children's level of involvement. The Child Involvement Scale was modified to suit local context and was validated during the pilot study. Children in the control cohort were observed but the curriculum was not implemented. Children in both the experimental and control cohort were observed on three different occasions for involvement in both pre- and post- data collection periods.

Results showed that there was a statistically significant improvement in the active involvement of the children in the experimental cohort as compared to no improvement in the control cohort using a paired sample t-test. A series of one-way ANOVAs analysis confirmed that the differences between experimental and control cohort were significant in all six signals.

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