

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE MAJOR**<sup>1</sup>Mohd Nazri Bin Abdul Rahman, <sup>2\*</sup>ZHENGDAOYI[\\*Daoyi2333@163.com](mailto:Daoyi2333@163.com)<sup>[1]</sup>University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**ABSTRACT**

*This article explores the teaching methods proposed by Dewey in the context of early childhood education (ECE), focusing on their impact on teacher assessment and evaluation. The study also examines challenges such as balancing structured evaluations with the dynamic and flexible nature of Dewey's pedagogy, and suggests strategies to support teachers in implementing and reflecting on this approach effectively.*

**Keywords:** *child-centered pedagogy, Dewey teaching methodology, Early Childhood Education, teacher assessment*

**INTRODUCTION**

Major changes are taking place in early childhood education, in the aims and knowledge of parents' visions, and in the innovative achievements of pedagogy. Recent academic research has pointed out that early schooling is critical to children's intellectual, social, and emotional development, with lifelong effects on learning and life experiences (Heckman, 2011; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). With the continuous improvement of education levels, it is believed that academically focused curricula can no longer meet the needs of children and their growing families. These goals are important for parents involved in early education decisions, who need programs that promote not only/purely cognitive academic learning, but also creativity, emotional, and social well-being (OECD, 2021).

These important educational programs are implemented by teachers and professionals who find it difficult to combine creativity with practical methods. One study showed that despite teachers' acceptance of new teaching methods, challenges include insufficient training, scarce resources, and low parental involvement (Pianta et al., 2005; Slot, 2018). Furthermore, improvements to child-centered curriculum models such as Reggio

Emilia and Montessori have been documented, but their application often faces the pressing challenge of adapting to various sociocultural contexts (Edwards et al., 1998; Lillard, 2017).

With so much need, it is crucial to understand the expectations and perceptions of parents and teachers regarding the future curriculum of early childhood education to adapt to modern culture. This exploratory qualitative study identifies the satisfaction of parents and teachers with the current curriculum and determines their needs and concerns for future design, while exploring the applicability of innovations from the teacher's perspective.

This study will fill a gap in the current early childhood education literature by revealing how stakeholder expectations translate into actual implementation. Combining parental aspirations and teacher insights, this study provides policymakers, educators, and curriculum developers with effective solutions that are both progressive and feasible.

**METHOD***Research Design*

This is an exploratory qualitative study that aims to explore the strengths and weaknesses of the

current early childhood education curriculum design. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect teachers' views on the current curriculum design, analyse the challenges in practice, propose suggestions for future improvement, and explore possible difficulties in implementing innovative curricula. The study also aims to provide practical suggestions for policymakers and curriculum developers..

### *Participants*

A total of three experienced kindergarten teachers from Pingdingshan City, Henan Province, China were interviewed: one was a teacher from a public kindergarten with five years of teaching experience, another was a teacher from a private kindergarten with no work experience as a new teacher, and the third was a teacher from a bilingual kindergarten with ten years of work experience. This study aimed to obtain more diverse perspectives through this setting of participants.

### *Measurement*

Impressions of the existing kindergarten curriculum design. Major challenges in implementing the current curriculum. Suggestions for future curriculum design. Potential difficulties in implementing innovative curricula. Specific suggestions to support the role of teachers. Measurement method Mainly through the analysis of teacher interviews to identify key areas for curriculum improvement and practical feasibility suggestions

## **RESULTS**

Early childhood education is more or less defined as an important stage in the development of children's critical skills, knowledge, and personal and social characteristics, which may determine their future educational experiences and development (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Howes, 2000; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). There is currently interest in academia not only in early education as a form of education, but also in the

developmental purposes that are of general concern to educators, policymakers, and parents. This review also focuses on changes in such curricular goals, issues related to the integration of new forms and models of education, and the views of parents, educators, and teachers on this.

Over the past two decades, the focus of early childhood education has shifted towards a broader developmental agenda. Traditional academic curricula have failed to effectively address the gap between children's developmental needs and those of their families (OECD, 2021). Today, parents are seeking learning experiences that teach IA skills, social skills and emotional literacy, as well as academic achievement and IQ (Slot, 2018). Particularly well-known universal approaches, such as Reggio Emilia and Montessori, support the principles and practices of self-directed learning and child-led inquiry in the workplace (Edwards et al., 1998; Lillard, 2017). However, these approaches require considerable adaptation to integrate different sociocultural and institutional contexts.

Innovative curricula are more popular because other approaches, while potentially improving student outcomes, are difficult to implement. Previous research also suggests that teachers sometimes encounter obstacles in the classroom, such as low-quality and low-quantity professional development, a lack of resources, and low parental involvement (Pianta et al., 2005). Structural quality aspects More specifically, Slot (2018) found that the teacher-to-child ratio and the layout of the classroom are other important process quality determinants in early childhood education. Moreover, effective implementation of child-centered models (e.g., Montessori) requires specialized skills and resources, and therefore can only claim flawed implementation in developing countries (Lillard, 2017).

## **DISCUSSION**

Therefore, the views of parents and teachers must be fully considered so that the curriculum can meet the requirements of society and institutions. Teachers look forward to finding an educational plan that meets the dreams of parents for their children and their needs at any given time (OECD, 2021). In contrast, teachers provide important views on the actual implementation of the curriculum. My research shows that although teachers welcome changes to their teaching methods, they are torn between new methods and policy realities most of the time (Pianta et al., 2005; Slot, 2018).

The topic of this interview is “Improving the design to meet the challenges of the future early childhood education curriculum.” Three experienced kindergarten teachers from public, private and bilingual kindergartens participated in the interview to collect different perspectives. The discussion focused on evaluating the current curriculum design, identifying key challenges in implementation, making recommendations for future improvements, and exploring potential difficulties in implementing an innovative curriculum. In addition, the interview examined how to better support teachers in their role and provided practical feedback and suggestions for policymakers and curriculum developers. The main purpose of the interview was to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum, explore the feasibility of innovative approaches, identify potential obstacles and conditions for support, and provide practical insights for early childhood education reform.

### CONCLUSION

This article shows that the current early childhood education curriculum needs to be improved to meet the expectations of parents and the challenges faced by teachers. As mentioned earlier, teachers need to ensure that students believe in the importance of hard work while also engaging in activities that help to develop imagination, interact with peers, and have fun. However, many difficulties, such as funding shortages, insufficient

professional preparation, and the need for greater parental involvement, hinder the adoption of new methods.

These problems require partnerships between teachers, parents, policymakers and curriculum developers. It is recommended that teachers and parents work together as stakeholders to develop curricula that are relevant and developmental, and that can adapt to the changing needs of the home and classroom environments. Thus, by allowing teachers to focus on providing high-quality early childhood education and intervening directly in children's development, the effectiveness of children's future learning can be improved.

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### DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

ZHENG DAOYI does not work for: consult, hold shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this manuscript, and has not disclosed any affiliations other than those stated above.

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