An Assessment of the Availability of Resources to Facilitate Early Childhood Music and Movement Curriculum Implementation in Eldoret Municipality, Kenya

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Abstract
The study was a descriptive survey that examined instructional practices in Music and movement activities in Eldoret Municipality. It involved 105 teachers and their pupils from 35 sampled early childhood education centres and management practices from five zone coordinators, one municipal coordinator and the Municipal Education Officer (MEO). The officer in charge of ECDE curriculum at the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) also provided pertinent information. Data collection instruments included questionnaires, observation and interview schedules, photography and video recordings. Data collected was analyzed using percentages and frequencies, and presented in tabular form which provided the basis for analysis. It emerged that there was a need for more teaching materials and resources especially songs. Instruments would also be good for the children but the teachers would need to be competent in them to guide and teach the children on how to perform on them more effectively. However, children need to be given a chance to explore the timbres/sounds and general musical effects of as many instruments as possible hence the need for a music corner in the classroom where children can enjoy trying out different instruments, listening to recorded music or engaging themselves in creative and free dancing. The findings of this study will benefit early childhood educators, teacher educators, educational managers, parents and learners on the effective use of early childhood Music and movement activities, provision of appropriate learning resources and suggestions on appropriate implementation strategies to improve the teaching and learning of Music and movement in early childhood education.

Keywords: assessment, availability, resources, facilitate early childhood music & movement curriculum, implementation, Eldoret municipality, Kenya.

INTRODUCTION
Definitions of early childhood education differ around the world (Swiniarski et al., 1999). However, the general consensus is that early childhood is the period from birth through age 8 (Essa, 1999; Wortham, 2000; (Eville-Lo & Mbunga, 2001; UNICEF, 2002). There is an increased interest in early childhood education around the world which reflects respective people’s particular philosophical beliefs about children (Graves et al., 1996). In Kenya, most parents are interested in Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) services for they believe that these services give a head start for the children’s later formal education which is considered extremely important given the highly competitive and examination oriented education system in the country (Koskei, 2008). Opportunities should be created for quality child development through quality ECE as a means of empowering children as responsible members of the society and future leaders (Republic of Kenya, 1997). Music and movement as one of the activities in early childhood education when effectively presented is one such opportunity. Music and movement plays a great role in the provision of ECE services given its dual nature in education that involves education in and through activities such as singing, playing of instruments and the physical accompaniment and response (herein referred to as ‘movement’) to singing and instrumental music performance (Pugh & Pugh, 1998).

Experiences in music and movement, appropriately presented, offer children a great source of enjoyment enhancing their musical and overall holistic development (Jenkins, 1994; Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2006). This enjoyment together with the numerous developmental benefits of using music and movement experiences in early childhood settings should be recognized and thus encouraged in early childhood education (ECE). Music and movement experiences in early childhood include activities such as singing, playing instruments, chanting, dancing and listening to music; all of which involve movement. These experiences not only enhance concepts in Music and movement but also in all the other ECE activity areas such as language,
mathematics, social studies, creative activities and religious studies.

In addition, activities in Music and movement such as songs and movement in response to music, are used for class control to make the children calm; and also during transitions between the different activities. Music and movement activities also enhance personality development boosting the children’s confidence and leadership skills (Wafula, 2010).

**Benefits of Preschool Music Education**

Many researchers have reported the benefits of music and movement to a child’s holistic development (Jackman, 1997; Fortson & Reiff, 1995; McFee, 1994; Walker, 1992; Lowden, 1989). A child’s language, cognitive, physical, social and emotional development may be enhanced through music and movement experiences. Language, for example, is nurtured through vocabulary development in experiences such as singing. Cognitive functioning is supported through the use of experiences that allow for bodily expression (Lynch-Fraser, 1991). In addition, music and movement experiences can be used as a tool to assist in the learning of specific concepts such as counting in mathematics (Humphrey, 1987). Physical development is fostered through the opportunity to develop movement skills while engaging in music and movement experiences (Hamilton, 2003; Jenkins, 1994; NSW DET, 1987; Pangrazi & Dauer, 1981). Social development is promoted through the use of music and movement in group performances which promote social interactions (Henniger, 1999; NSW DET, 1987). Finally, emotional development is enhanced through the opportunity for self-expression which music and movement experiences invite (Read, Gardner & Mahler, 1993; Brinson, 1991). While there is substantial documentation regarding the benefits of music and movement experiences for young children, an examination oriented system of education that uses a purely academic approach such as is becoming the case in Kenya may not favour its use and development. An academic approach is likely to influence teachers, parents and directors to consider experiences such as music and movement as time consuming and not being very important to the early childhood development and education (Gharavi, 1993) and therefore given no significant priority.

Appropriate resource materials and facilities are necessary for the implementation of any new innovation. In the catalytic role model, Gross et al. (1971) report that implementation was hindered by lack of resource materials and facilities. The principal of the school did not have direct authority to purchase instructional materials. The change proposed did not give room for an assessment of the available material resources and facilities. Bishop (1985) stresses the importance of resource materials in the implementation of innovations when he says that teachers’ ability to implement curriculum change is a function of the availability of tools for the job. There must be ready and continuous supply of resource materials. Okech and Asiachi (1992) contend that it is the kind of resources available that have great implications in what goes on in schools today. Eshiwani (1993) observes that the expenditure on instructional materials per pupil and the management efficiency of material per pupil may boost school achievement. Similarly, Shiundu and Omulando (1992) hold that “a new programme requires relevant and adequate facilities. Even before implementation, physical facilities must be prepared and materials purchased to ensure successful activation of the programme” (p. 178).

Resource materials and facilities need not only be available but be in the right quantities (Gross et al., 1971). Lack of resource materials and facilities frustrates and demotivates teachers. According to Kocchar (1990), a teacher who has adequate and relevant teaching materials and facilities will be more confident, effective and productive. Sifuna (1975) criticizes the New Primary Approach by citing lack of necessary teaching and learning facilities. Sifuna (1975) observes that:

Most primary schools were not ready. Most buildings were not ready for the implementation of NPA. Some had no furniture at all, to say nothing of special movable seats and tables required for group work. Suitable books were in short supply (p. 54).

The Republic of Kenya (1980, p. 42) also says the following on the importance of equipping music departments: “Books and other educational materials including musical instruments are the basic tools for music instruction.” In case of lack of resource materials and facilities suggested in the syllabus, teachers should improvise. Shiundu and Omulando (1992), argue that the teacher should be innovative enough to improvise and provide alternatives using locally available materials. In teaching music, Miller (1987) advocates the use of simple and natural resources found within the community. She says that music teachers should use their ‘voice’ for it is the cheapest and the only God-made instrument. She also cites traditional songs as another resource which provides excellent material for learning music as they are straight forward and are derived from natural speech patterns. This proposition holds true, especially in the Kenyan context of preschools given that many preschools may not be well equipped with a variety of facilities for teaching music other than songs. In addition to traditional songs, songs from other nations such as English songs in the case of
Kenya are also useful for they enhance international consciousness and language development. It is evident from the foregoing views that there is need to have adequate supply of resource materials and facilities for an effective implementation of an innovation. Different songs and instruments can make it possible for an ECDE teacher to effectively implement the music and movement experiences in ECE. This study presents a collection of songs and chants transcribed in sol-fa and staff notation to ensure proper documentation and accuracy in presentation by teachers for effective use in early childhood education. Teachers who may not be able to directly read music using the notations used can use the available computer music software such as the noteworthy composer, Sibelius and finale programmes.

The Need to Facilitate Music Teaching/Learning
Music and movement is an important activity in early childhood education the world over (Young & Glover, 1998). In Kenya, the Ministry of Education through the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) has realized its potential benefits and included it in the early childhood education syllabus. Studies however have shown that its implementation is riddled with many challenges which include inadequate resources and varying competence levels among the ECE teachers to effectively present the Music and movement activities (Andang’o, 2009; Kabiru & Njega, 2001; Kabiru, 1992). Furthermore, much emphasis has been placed on the pursuit of excellent summative examination results which are based on the subjects that are perceived to be more academic at the expense of a holistic approach to learning.

The prevailing attitudes concerning what is regarded by teachers, parents and education managers as the most important activity areas to be emphasized have influenced the teaching approaches used by the teachers. These approaches emphasize teaching, mainly through drilling; the specific activity areas based on the national examination requirements that to a large extent test the theoretical understanding of concepts. Due to these attitudes, activity areas that are thus perceived as not being examinable in the long run such as Music and movement tend to be neglected. This is evident from the instructional materials currently available for Music and movement which are inadequate in content and focus. These concerns necessitated an investigation that would address the issues in early childhood music and movement activity so as to provide some intervention for its effective implementation as an activity area in its own right and in its use in enhancing other activity areas in early childhood education.

There are different stakeholders involved in the provision of early childhood education. Coupled with the flexibility in the ECDE curriculum, there is need to provide some unifying guidelines to be used by the teachers to enhance the interpretation of the curriculum. Music and movement acts as the unifying tool through its ability to enhance all the activity areas when effectively presented. There is need to avail relevant and age appropriate resources to aid early childhood teachers in attaining the educational objectives for the ECDE level, a level which is instrumental for a child’s growth. This study therefore assessed the effectiveness of the early childhood Music and Movement curriculum by examining the different practices of teachers, directors and children to enhance the presentation and evaluation of Music and movement curriculum activities in early childhood education.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
The study was conducted in ECDE institutions within Eldoret Municipality based on its accessibility by the researcher. Financial and time constraints could not allow the research to be carried out in other parts of the country. The study could also not manage to address the efficiency and effectiveness of Music and movement among children with special needs such as those with mental and multiple disabilities as found in one of the preschools under study. However, even with these limitations, the findings of the study can still be generalized to other parts of the country. When generalizing, there is need to consider the different social, cultural, religious and economic conditions that are found in the different parts of the country which result in different lifestyles, values, beliefs and varying resources. This will ensure that pastoralists and nomads, for instance, are given a chance to adapt the resources and recommendations from the findings to suit their environmental conditions; the different ethnic communities maintain their cultural music identities as they embrace multiculturalism and that the different religious faiths enhance their religious beliefs as well as tolerance for other religions through the music and movement activities. The varying economic conditions in the country necessitate the adaptability and use of the locally available music resources within a given geographical area based on the guidelines in the study findings.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
The study was carried out in Eldoret Municipality within the Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The Municipality contains both public and private providers of ECDE curriculum who use different curricular approaches, some offering the NACECE/DICECE curriculum, others the Montessori while others integrate the two. The study employed a descriptive survey design to gather facts, views, opinions, attitudes and suggestions from educational managers, teachers and parents on the theory, policy, and practice of music in early childhood education.
The author used a non-probability sampling technique to obtain a purposive sample of respondents who were directly involved with the implementation of music and movement curriculum within the preschool settings. Simple random sampling was used in obtaining the preschools to represent the five zones in the municipality while purposive sampling was used to stratify the public and private preschool institutions; and further stratify the private preschools into those offering the Montessori and NACECE curricula. Names of the specific preschool institutions in the respective category were then written on pieces of paper, folded and placed in separate boxes. Seven names were randomly picked from each box bringing the number to 35.

Learners, teachers and educational managers within the 35 ECDE centres were then selected using purposive sampling. Some institutions had more than three streams per class level and therefore more than three teachers. The teachers in charge of each class level were then selected to participate directly in the study. A total of 105 teachers and the learners under their direct care, 5 zone coordinators, 1 municipal ECDE coordinator, 1 Municipal Education Officer (MEO), and the officer in charge of ECDE curriculum at the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) participated in the study.

For data collection, questionnaires, interviews, document analyses and observation schedules were used. Triangulation was used in data collection and presentation for authenticity and validity in data analysis. The data obtained was coded considering the interrelatedness of the responses. Emerging patterns were then recorded, classified and interpreted as per the variables of the study. It was then analyzed using descriptive statistics through frequencies and percentages, and presented in tabular form containing the number of responses per item (frequency) and the percentage of each response. The computer SPSS package was used to compute the empirical data which provided the basis for analysis and description of the data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Availability of Material Resources
To assess the availability of material resources for the effective implementation of Music and movement in ECE, teachers were asked to indicate the availability/use, adequacy and storage of material resources in their respective institutions. Their responses are reflected in Table 1.

Results from Table 1 above show that Western (English) songs were the most popular resource indicated as being used by all the schools (100%) except that the songs were inadequate. From observations, it emerged that the songs were mainly in the form of western singing games and Christian sacred songs. Most teachers did not have a variety of teaching resources in form of songs in their repertoire and this prompted a repeat of the a few songs over and over. During the interviews, quite a number of these teachers expressed the need for more songs needed for teaching. During the interview sessions, the teachers expressed their need for in-service opportunities which they felt would alleviate their problems.

Table 1: ECDE Institutions’ Indication on the Availability, Use and Storage of Music and Movement Material Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Resources &amp; Storage</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Frequently Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western (English) songs</td>
<td>35 (100)</td>
<td>5 (14.3)</td>
<td>35 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poems</td>
<td>32 (91.4)</td>
<td>3 (8.6)</td>
<td>32 (91.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African songs</td>
<td>29 (82.9)</td>
<td>15 (42.9)</td>
<td>27 (76.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dances</td>
<td>32 (91.4)</td>
<td>12 (34.3)</td>
<td>27 (71.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>21 (60)</td>
<td>11 (31.4)</td>
<td>16 (45.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drums</td>
<td>15 (42.9)</td>
<td>8 (22.9)</td>
<td>12 (34.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children as resources</td>
<td>35 (100)</td>
<td>3 (8.6)</td>
<td>5 (14.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charts/Pictures</td>
<td>35 (100)</td>
<td>20 (57.1)</td>
<td>8 (22.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottles and shakers</td>
<td>35 (100)</td>
<td>16 (45.7)</td>
<td>32 (91.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riddles</td>
<td>35 (100)</td>
<td>21 (60)</td>
<td>31 (88.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flutes (Tin whistles)</td>
<td>3 (8.6)</td>
<td>3 (8.6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage space</td>
<td>27 (77.1)</td>
<td>27 (77.1)</td>
<td>25 (71.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music corner in the classroom</td>
<td>9 (25.7)</td>
<td>4 (11.4)</td>
<td>3 (8.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboard/other instruments</td>
<td>8 (22.9)</td>
<td>4 (11.4)</td>
<td>2 (5.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentages are presented in brackets and rounded off to one decimal point.

Poems were indicated in 91.4% of the ECDE institutions as being an adequate and frequently used resource during the Music and Movement lessons. Poems form the textual material upon which songs are derived. Furthermore, the rhythmic as well as pitch contours in poems form the basis of music composition in terms of rhythm and melody respectively. This is because in composing songs, there is need to observe the natural intonation in pitch and rhythmic flow. Among the children, poems can enhance their public speaking skills and also help them build their self esteem.

African songs (African singing games and folk songs) were indicated as being used in 82.9% of the institutions. Other resources included books in 60% of the institutions, drums and children themselves, indicated in 42.9% and 100% of the institutions respectively, charts and pictures (100%), bottles and shakers (kayamba) in 100% of the institutions, riddles (100%) and flutes (8.6%). As to whether or not there was sufficient and adequate space to store the material resources, 77.1% of the institutions indicated that the storage space was available, adequate and frequently used. However, in most of the institutions, there was no designated music corner where children could enjoy music making activities such as experimenting on instruments, dancing or creating
their own music. Keyboard instruments were generally not available for even in the few institutions that indicated their availability, the instruments which were in the form of electronic keyboards were seldom used due to lack of expertise on the part of the teachers.

The teaching materials, teaching methods and evaluation procedures a teacher uses are largely determined by the type of pre-service training undergone (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 1995). From the findings, it emerged that there was a need for more teaching materials and resources especially songs. Instruments would also be good for the children but the teachers would need to be competent in them to guide and teach the children on how to perform on them more effectively. However, children need to be given a chance to explore the timbres/sounds and general musical effects of as many instruments as possible hence the need for a music corner in the classroom where children can enjoy trying out different instruments, listening to recorded music or creative and free dancing. Songs, on the other hand, would be easier to learn and teach since all that would be needed would be the natural voice which everybody basically has, and with some little training, learning and teaching will be more fun. Due to the different providers of ECE training opportunities, the teaching methods were bound to differ among the teachers in the different preschools. The NACECE/DICECE trained seemed to exhibit a more child-centred approach employing theories of child development (though at varying degrees). Materials were expected to be prepared on a daily basis whereas the Montessori training emphasized a more practical approach with materials having been prepared in advance and made ready. The Montessori-trained teachers admitted to having not been taught much of child development. Much of the concentration, they said, was on collection of general teaching materials. These materials however hardly consisted of a variety of songs or instruments. The Montessori system has a bias towards a Christian religious background and this prompted the teachers to use Sunday school songs in their classes for these were readily available.

From the author’s observation however there appeared to be a conscious effort from all the teachers to use the prescribed national curriculum from the KIE. According to the Municipal ECDE coordinator, it was a requirement by the government for all the ECE institutions to use the prescribed syllabus. Given the various training backgrounds the ECE teachers had, a hybrid of integration involving the various methodologies in the process had to be done whether consciously or unconsciously. For better effectiveness of the integration process however there would be need for specialized in-servicing for teachers. This will bring about more uniformity and better effectiveness in teaching. Furthermore, with the multiplicity of providers the methodologies and approaches to teaching are likely to remain varied for quite a while unless interventions such as the provision of in-service opportunities and resource materials are hastened. This study collected songs and chants as part of the intervention strategies to enhance effectiveness of Music and movement in ECDE.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In an attempt to address the lack of teaching materials and facilities which was cited as the most immediate problem by the teachers, it was imperative to start somewhere and the practical place to start was to make a collection of the locally available materials in form of existing as well as composed songs and chants and suggest developmentally appropriate ways in which these songs can be employed in the different stages and activities in early childhood education. This would not only provide experiences in music and movement as an activity area on its own but would also enhance thematic experiences in other learning areas such as language development, mathematics activities, physical and emotional development and cultural development and integration among others.

In furtherance to the above, schools need to make use of locally available resource persons such as relevant music, movement and dance teachers who can give practical training experiences to the ECE teachers and even children. These resource persons can be found in schools, colleges (including universities), the local community and churches/temples.

In addition, there is need to avail resource materials and facilities such as music instruments, radio with audio cassettes and CD players and videos where possible for children to learn from. These can ease teachers’ work and make the teaching more effective by saving time and enabling the teacher to give individual attention to each child. Moreover, schools should explore the available sources of support within their reach such as workshops which could be organized by individuals, groups of individuals or the Ministry of Education; and internet sources.

On their part, parents should provide opportunities for children to get exposed to good music that can add value to their lives right from an early age. Such music includes traditional folk music, religious music and other types of secular music that uphold educational values. In support of this, there is an urgent need for the government to fulfil its promise to remunerate ECDE teachers and establish policies governing ECDE for this will motivate and encourage the teachers to be more committed to all the tasks they undertake; Music and movement included.
As a matter of urgency, more funds need to be allocated by the government towards equipping preschools with resource materials and facilities like music instruments to improve the quality of learning at this critical stage. Institutions of learning and teacher training should also carry out extensive research and seek avenues to disseminate the research findings. This way, teachers get continuously informed and challenged to improve on their practice.

REFERENCES


