



ONLINE LIBRARY

(www.onekhmer.org/onlinelibrary)

Title: Report of the enactment of a pedagogy of care for teaching infants and toddlers

Name of Author Seng Sam Oun

Name of University University of Auckland

Country of Study New Zealand

Major Education

Degree Master

Course Title

Type of Document Assignment

Year 2017

Report of the enactment of a pedagogy of care for teaching infants and toddlers

Introduction

A pedagogy of care for infants and toddlers' learning and teaching plays a very crucial role for both very young children and educators to uphold the quality of care and education (Rockel, 2009; Page, 2011). As this pedagogy is concerned the implementation is much more important and such a long journey to undertake for every infant and toddler's teachers. For this reason, a report of the enactment of a pedagogy of care is generated which divides into the introduction, background, literature review, strategic plan to address critical issues in terms of professional knowledge, leadership support and policy changes, and also followed by some suggested tensions or challenges in the possible practical experience. Lastly, the report will conclude the main points and end the discussion.

Background

Some researchers have been drawn the definition of a pedagogy, yet Rockel (2009, p. 3) has given a meaningful discussion by mentioning that "a pedagogy can be defined as providing a theoretical and philosophical basis to practice". Dahlberg and Moss (2005) referenced that "pedagogy is a relation, a network of obligation" (p. 1). The explanation of pedagogy denotes to an idea of ethics of an encounter. It also refers to the ethics of care and the pedagogy of listening. "Doing justice to thought, listening to our interlocutors, means trying to hear that which cannot be said but that which tries to make itself heard" (p. 1).

With regard the term care in infants and toddlers' context, Goldstein (1998) views care "as not an attribute or personality trait, but a relation. Caring is not something you are, but rather something you engage in, something you do (p. 2)". Moss (2006) considers care as a pedagogical framework. It makes the association with and provides a relationship between care, learning, and upbringing. Moreover, care is explained not just as a service to 'mind' infants and toddlers whose parents were absent and busy but to empower and encourage children and their families (Ministry of Education, 1993). However, care is relevant to "the

carings for the self, for others, for ideas and natural world which is the need and aim of an ethical life" (Noddings, 2003, p. 245). Additionally, Noddings (2002) also offers the definition of care which refers to "attentiveness towards others, considering other's points of view and assuming a stance of support" (p. 13).

Briefly describe, I posit that a pedagogy of care is an ethical of teaching profession that regards infants and toddlers as competent learners that are vulnerable. These ideas are aligned with the concept of care in Te Whāriki's the Early Childhood Education curriculum document 2017 of the Ministry of Education.

Literature Review

The study of a pedagogy of care is very complex and multidimensional (Rockel, 2009; Shin, 2014). A notion of care in early years' settings has drawn much attention and discussion from local and international experts about its values and standards (Rockel, 2009). This report has been generated and inspired by some rational why implementation of a pedagogy of care is essential for infants and toddlers. Four features are discussed in the literature.

The care and education term have been applied and attached in the first year studies in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ). These ideas are widely known both in NZ and other places for under two children. Care has been mention in all types of Early Childhood Education (ECE), even in Ministry of Education's documents, regulation, and Education Review Office (ERO). However, a pedagogy of care is still invisible and partly focus in Te Whāriki. That is why, this notion should be more incorporated into curriculum documents.

Care is central to early years' teaching and learning, yet it catches much less attention in the Australia national curriculum document (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2008). This leads to the discourse of the concept of care discussed in NZ and Australia national early curriculum. However, there are still misinterpretations by educators about the premise of care when enacting in the curriculum (Degotardi & Pearson, 2009). Therefore, less research has been conducted that has addressed the concept of care (Davis & Degotardi, 2015).

A job as a caregiver deems a feminization of women in low value work (McDowall, Clark & Baylis, 2012). Because 'caregiver term' is associated with mothers who are working at home and is seen as non-work leads to negative viewing such important work as a low status (Cooper & Royal Tangaere, 1994). Degotardi and Pearson (2009) also explain that the profession as teachers for the first years is regarded as low credit, less paid, and women's work which result in impacts on ethical issues. This profession is less paid and little motivation, for example in Cambodia, which triggers very young children missed out on the first years schooling.

Lastly, many teachers in this profession merely and partly understand the physical and basic care, whereas care should be interpreted and understood as an ethic of care with professionalism (Goldstein, 1997). For example, Cambodia's early years drew less responsiveness and consideration as the policy, regulation, and curriculum do not include and focus on care of infants and toddlers as a top priority (Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport, 2010). This attribution leads to no research and study about care for very young children has been conducted and studied. As a result, very young children in Cambodia do not have the opportunity to get formal care and education. Therefore, a pedagogy of care should be a top agenda to be discussed and studied for further understanding and practicing. This is the gap in the literature that seeks consideration which leads to create the strategic plan for implementation of a pedagogy of care.

Strategic plan

Strategy 1: Improving professional development and training of the individual teacher in terms of qualification and a code of ethics to promote the quality of a pedagogy of care (Dalli, 2017; Manning-Morton, 2006).

Professional Knowledge:

- Providing scholarship for teachers who are not qualified or registered to further their formal education (bachelor degree) in ECE in order them to upgrade and update their skills, competencies, and knowledge particularly in terms of a notion of care for very young children.

- Encourage individual teacher to attend workshops, training, and conferences that related to the offering a better care and education to infants and toddlers.
- Initiate internal staff/teachers meeting or workshop to strengthen and share their experiences and knowledge with consideration of updating research knowledge as monthly basic.
- Annually review teachers code of ethics in their provision to ensure the sustainability of promoting the quality of a pedagogy of care.

Leadership Support:

- Providing enough wages or salary to every teacher based on their qualification, skills and knowledge (Manning-Morton, 2006).
- Professional Development to teachers who need further trainings and development in term of care and education for the first years children. It should be a systematic to manage the staff appraisal or performance management. It also requires staff to do reflection on their working practices and accountable for their learning and development, which is under the supervision and management of Centre managers and other senior leaders (Grey, 2015).
- Distributed leadership is applied where leaders or Centre manager plays a role as a facilitator and coordinator to guide, plan, monitor, follow up, and evaluate teacher's daily tasks.
- Mutual engagement between a leader and teachers is very important to understand each other and having a common goal and objectives about how a pedagogy of care work and applied with infants and toddlers.

Policy Changes:

- Smith, Ford, Hubbard & White (1995) state that working conditions, wages and education of teachers were of crucial importance in providing high quality care environments for infants and toddlers. Therefore, a 10-years strategic plan of the Ministry of Education (MoE) is to motivate all ECE settings in NZ should have at least 50% of qualified teachers for under two children must by 2012.

- The number of registered teachers in the first years should be increased to 100% in order to ensure the high quality of care and education. To achieve this idea, pay parity for ECE teachers and value caregivers as teachers might be a good solution. Thus, ECE profession will be an attractive career (Ministry of Education, 2017).

Tensions/Challenges:

- In NZ experience, there is a limited continues professional development for ECE teachers who are working with infants and toddlers, which means that viewing on teaching of the very young children is still a major concern in term of culture, identity formation, social justice, and power relation (Rockel, 2009).
- The lack of motivation and limited access to infants and toddler research' articles, policies, and newsletters have hindered and slow down teacher professional development to theories practice and evaluate infants and toddlers' daily lives in ECE settings (Rockel, 2009).

Strategy 2: Building personal awareness and theoretical knowledge contributes to the quality of pedagogy of care (Manning-Morton 2006).

Professional Knowledge:

- Focusing the importance of opening up dialogue between teachers and asking about 'taken-for-granted, even cherished assumptions and practices' in order to formulate alternative hypotheses to be tested (Smyth, 2001, p. 189). Without dialogue new ideas will not have the opportunity to drive change in theorising practice.
- Setting up the important plans and priorities with support from other teachers. Those plans should be prioritized and write down into journal or notebooks in order to keep track the progress of teacher self-awareness and theoretical knowledge of a pedagogy of care.
- Teachers consistent discussions are shared with other teachers and exchanging their ideas about care and education of infants and toddlers occurs tenfold.

Leadership Support:

- Self-review and reflection should be gained more encouragement from leaders as these tasks take time and center's resources. Beside teaching, teachers might spend their operation time to do self-review and reflection about their teaching, code of ethics applied to very young children and other teachers, and administration work during the day to evaluate the what went well and what did not go well. In doing so, teachers will found out their weaknesses and strengths in order to make adjustment on the other days.
- Distributed leadership should motivate teachers to conduct self-review and reflection on their employing a pedagogy of care as daily or weekly basic. Clear plan should be applied to all teachers in the Centre and consider self-review and reflection as a work obligation to complete. Therefore, attitude and knowledge about a pedagogy of care will be informed and developed from day to day.

Policy Changes:

- Set up a new policy to accommodate the schedule or plan that support all teachers having time to build their personal awareness and knowledge about their profession (e.g. ethic of care, ideas of care, and care as a physical knowledge).
- Preschools or ECE Centres might work with Ministry of Education to provide and allocate more budget and time for every teacher to seek advice and ideas from their mentors or senior teachers how to improve their personal knowledge and theoretical knowledge that related to a pedagogy of care.

Tensions/Challenges:

- Some teachers and student teachers do not have adequate knowledge and skills of a pedagogy of care for infants and toddlers because they are not regarded reflective practice as a component of learning and development in teacher education program. That is why, practicing self-review and reflection will increase their understanding of care and education (Rockel, 2007; Powell, 2007).
- Offering for the quality of care and education for very young children demands theoretical knowledge and practical experience (Ministry of Education, 2017). It reveals that curriculum framework for infants and toddlers regards an individual

teacher as an integral component to support infants and toddlers' learning and development. While there still have some fragments and tensions between registered and unregistered teachers in terms of working conditions and wage inequality. Thus, all ECE's teachers, leaders, and ministry of education ought to work corporately to promote the rightness of being ECE teachers.

Strategy 3: Empowering teachers' reflections as an approach of philosophy practices to support the implementation of a pedagogy of care (Grey, 2015).

Professional Knowledge:

- Effective planning a pedagogy of care based on ongoing observation, monitoring, and evaluation of the child progress and development. All teachers ought to be able to plan in order to support effective learning experiences and activities which align to ECE's goals, standards, and objectives. To do so, teachers are empowered to master about how to conduct the observation, monitoring and evaluation of the children progress and development.
- Self-review is a mutual expectation that is applied in ECE settings. Self-review is also delineated in the Register Teacher Criteria 12 which mentions that "teachers use critical inquiry to reflect on and refine values and practice, and respond to feedback from their colleagues" (Grey, 2015, p. 52). Teachers are motivated to do self-review on the enactment of a pedagogy of care in order to redefine its quality and development.
- Practical philosophy is regarded as a practical intelligence that incorporated with practical wisdom in order to implement principles to a specific context (Grey, 2015). Its goal of practical philosophy is to allow teachers to use their practical knowledge of a pedagogy of care to apply in a particular situation when they are working with infants and toddlers. In doing so, the quality of a care and education might be guaranteed.

Leadership Support:

- Everyday teacher leadership which refers to relation and empowerment, everyday

practice, and identity (Copper, 2014). A teacher's role in ECE settings is very crucial because a teacher can be a leader who ensure the activities run smoothly. Thus, everyday teacher leadership would encourage teachers to empower their identities and practices toward a pedagogy of care with infants and toddlers.

- Offering teacher reflection session is a time when teachers have opportunities to share and discuss about their good and needed improvement points. Leadership support in terms of teacher reflection about a pedagogy of care will permit teachers can find develop and update their existing knowledge about ethics of care which result in maintaining the quality of care and education for infants and toddlers.

Policy Changes:

- A policy of implement the pedagogy of care might be confront with some ECE settings where their culture of pedagogic practice is different. Therefore, adaptation of a pedagogy of care might be cause some concerns to some teachers as well as ECE settings. For example, Cambodia where nursery school is for infants and toddlers, a pedagogy of care is not widely understood and applied. ECE teachers usually understand about physical care of infants and toddlers in terms of changing nappy, toileting, bathing, and napping. Thus, it is uncommon to apply an ethic of care.
- To support teacher reflection in a context of Cambodia, changes in wages and length of teaching hours are needed. Due to the fact that the working hours is only haft day teaching, teachers do not have enough time to perform their task properly. This concern also related to wages which paid less than other professions. Hence, an increase in wages and prolong working hours allow teachers having enough time to do reflection in their teaching practices, which finally support a quality of care and education in the first year's learning and teaching.

Tensions/Challenges:

- There is no a notion of teacher reflection has been stated in Te Whāriki 2017 which reveals that this policy does not take teacher reflection as a crucial principle for

every teacher to maintain the quality of their teaching. That is why, the MoE ought to rethink about the idea of teacher reflection in the next version of Te Whāriki.

- In Cambodia where the less responsiveness and attention of infants and toddlers' learning and teaching occurs, empowering a self-reflection as a philosophy approach to support a pedagogy of care is by far most beyond the expectation of teachers, researchers, policy makers, and parents. Thus, teaching very young children ought to be deemed as a top priority in terms of setting clear policy, regulation, and curriculum. Then, the notion of care and education would be widely disseminated. Therefore, a pedagogy of care will be understood and enacted through teachers' professional reflections of their teaching practices.

Conclusion

A pedagogy of care is a principle that functions as a crucial role to facilitate infants and toddlers learning in their first years. A report of an enactment of a pedagogy of care posits as a guideline and strategy for Early Childhood Education teachers to support and engage with practices in their teaching tasks for very young children. This report highlights about the background, rational, and strategy which supported by professional knowledge, leadership support, policy changes, and tensions when applying a pedagogy of care. The example of NZ and Cambodia's context are also supplied.

Reference:

- Cooper, D., & Royal Tangaere, P. (1994). A critical analysis of the development of early childhood education in Aotearoa. In J. K. Coxon, J. Marshall, & L. Massey, *The politics of learning and teaching in Aotearoa-New Zealand* (pp. 82-111). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Cooper, M. (2014). 'Everyday teacher leadership': A reconceptualisation for early childhood education. *Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice*, 29(2), 84.
- Dahlberg, G., & Moss, P. (2005). *Ethics and politics in early childhood education*. Oxfordshire: RoutledgeFalmer.

- Dalli, C. (2017). Tensions and challenges in professional practice with under-threes: A New Zealand reflection on early childhood professionalism as a systemic phenomenon. In J. E. White, & C. Dalli, *Under-three year olds in policy and practice* (pp. 115-130). Singapore: Springer .
- Davis, B., & Degotardi, S. (2015). Who cares? Infant educators' responses to professional discourses of care. *Early Child Development and Care*, 185(11-12), 1733-1747.
- Degotardi, S., & Pearson, E. (2009). Relationship theory in the nursery: Attachment and beyond. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 10(2), 144-145.
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. (2008). *Early years learning draft framework*. Australian government. Retrieved from www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/development/eylframework.pdf
- Goldstein, L. S. (1998). More than gentle smiles and warm hugs: Applying the ethic of care to early childhood education. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 12(2), 244-262.
- Grey, A. (2015). "It is a risk, but it is a risk worth taking": Early childhood teachers' reflections on review of practice using an approach of practical philosophy. *Child Forum*, 18, 52-66.
- Shin, M. (2014). Enacting caring pedagogy in the infant classroom. *Early Child Development and Care*, 185(3), 1-13.
- Smith, A. B., Ford, V. E., Hubbard, P. M., & White, J. E. (1995). *Working in infant childcare centres: Final research report to Ministry of Education*. Wellington, New Zealand.
- Smyth, J. (2001). *Critical politics of teachers' work: An Australian perspective*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Manning-Morton, J. (2006). The personal is professional: Professionalism and the birth to three practitioner. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 7(1), 42-52.
- McDowall Clark, R., & Baylis, S. (2012). 'Wasted down there': Policy and practice with the under-threes. *Early Years*, 32(2), 229-242.
- Ministry of Education. (1993). *Te Wha-riki : He whariki matauranga mo nga mokopuna o Aotearoa: Draft guidelines for developmentally appropriate programmes in early childhood services*. Wellington, N.Z.: Ministry of Education, Learning Media.

- Ministry of Education. (2017). *Education Counts website*. Retrieved from http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/__data/assets/excel_doc/0017/55430/ECE-Enrolments-by-Age-and-Authority.xls.
- Ministry of Education. (2017). *Te Whariki: Early Childhood Curriculum*. Wellington, New Zealand : Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport. (2010). *National policy on early childhood care and development*. Phnom Penh: Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport.
- Moss, P. (2006). Structures, understandings and discourses: Possibilities for re-envisioning the early childhood workers. *Contemporary issues in early childhood*, 7(1), 30-34.
- Noddings, N. (2002). *Starting at home: Caring and social policy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Noddings, N. (2003). Is teaching a practice? *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 37(2), 241–251.
- Page, J. (2011). Do mothers want professional carers to love their babies? *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 9(3), 310–323.
- Powell, K. (2007). Commentary: Challenges in establishing an infant-toddler specialism in Aotearoa New Zealand. *The First Years Nga Tau Tuatahi NZ Journal of Infant and Toddler Education*, 9(2), 29-33.
- Rockel, J. (2007). "A hot potato?" The continuing struggle for infant-toddler status. Workshop presentation, Early Childhood Convention, 23-28 September, Rotorua.
- Rockel, J. (2009). A pedagogy of care: Moving beyond the margins of managing work and minding babies. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 34(3), 1-8.