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We presented the research findings at the 60th Annual Conference of Japan Comparative Education Society held at Nagoya University on June 28th.

### **Kyoko Taniguchi**

#### **Educational Practices in Pre-primary Education in Malawi: Focusing on the Voluntary Activities of Caregivers**

##### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to analyze the educational practices in pre-primary education in Malawi, with a particular focus on the voluntary activities of caregivers.

In recent years, research on pre-primary education in developing countries has primarily focused on the discussion and measurement of skills that should be acquired during early childhood. However, there is very little research that analyzes the specific educational practices of caregivers in pre-primary facilities.

Pre-primary education in developing countries has been positioned as part of basic education and its importance has been emphasized since the "Education for All (EFA)" declaration in 1999, leading to an increase in support for education (Hamano, 2011). Early childhood is a critical period not only for education but also for health and nutrition care, as well as the promotion of social and emotional development. In developing countries, there is a disparity in access to pre-primary education, with particular attention needed for disadvantaged children.

In Malawi, the subject of this study, access to pre-primary education has been expanding. The number of pre-primary education facilities increased from 7,801 in 2007 to 12,220 in 2018. Pre-primary education facilities are broadly categorized into free Community-Based Childcare Centers (CBCCs) and fee-based facilities. While fee-based facilities are more common in urban areas, free CBCCs account for 80% of the facilities in rural areas. Therefore, this study focuses on CBCCs in rural Malawi. Caregivers in CBCCs lead the educational practices. Malawi lacks formal caregiver training institutions. Caregivers acquire knowledge and skills through two-week training programs conducted by the government and aid organizations. In fact, 47.3% of caregivers have received the training (MoGCDSW, 2021). As the name implies, CBCCs are community-based facilities, and caregivers essentially work as unpaid volunteers.

The research site is Nkhata Bay District in northern Malawi. The subjects of the study were 19 caregivers from five CBCCs and 29 community members. To investigate the educational practices of caregivers at each CBCC, activity observations and semi-structured interviews were conducted with the caregivers, while focus group discussions were held with community members. This research was carried out in September 2022, May 2023, and December 2023.

CBCCs operate for about 2 to 3 hours in the morning on weekdays. Tuition is generally free, and children can attend facilities near their homes. The main target group is children aged 3 to 5 years. The number of children varies by facility, ranging from 20 to 70, and the number of caregivers also varies, from 2 to 5 per facility. The facilities are community-run, with government involvement limited to facility registration and training.

Buildings used include dedicated CBCC structures, community buildings, or churches. Caregivers' educational practices were mostly carried out voluntarily. While about half of the caregivers had received training, the two-week training period was short, and the knowledge gained was limited. Most caregivers combined the knowledge from their training with their own experience to plan educational activities. Only one facility recorded activity plans in a notebook. One facility had created a timetable similar to that of primary education, while the other three facilities did not have written activity plans, with caregivers stating that they had them in their minds. Teaching materials were creatively made from locally available resources. Activities in all facilities were generally teacher-led, focusing on memorization of calendars, alphabets, numbers, and body part names. Most facilities provided simple meals, considering children's nutrition, but activities to support social and emotional development were rarely observed. The results of this study contribute to improving the quality of pre-primary education and increasing access in rural Malawi.

**Chey Sarom**

**School Principal Leadership in School-Based Management Practice in Cambodia  
Abstract**

In the world, every government tries to find a way or strategy to develop its citizens' knowledge and skills to grow its economy and produce high income for people. One of many approaches is for the government to improve education to be high quality, which can serve economic growth. Learning development can happen in many countries nowadays by implementing strategies that produce high-quality and achievable results, such as school-based management (SBM). To develop education, the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS), Cambodia implements decentralized in making-decisions by providing the schools with such as budgeting, school curricula, and evaluations of teachers' performance. This study examines the principals' leadership in school-based management at public primary schools in Cambodia.

Botha (2006) found that principals in African schools that embraced school-based management (SBM) and school development programs were empowered, taught, and given the knowledge to make decisions. SBM adoption and school improvement depend on many factors. His research showed that the school principal's leadership style was most important. In Indonesia, principals run schools. Principal leadership and school committee roles are positively associated with school-based management achievement, according to Purwandari (2011). An effective educational leadership style in school-based management must match principals' changed skills, abilities, duties, and obligations (Saputra, 2020). Principals are crucial to improving schools and student progress.

This study employed a mixed method, which utilizes the concurrent triangulation approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze and interpret the primary data. The field research was conducted in Kampong Thom and Siem Reap Provinces from August to September 2023. The questionnaires were administered exclusively to 165 school principals and semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten school principals. The questionnaires were analyzed using statistics and interviews were coded using keywords.

The principals' leadership was classified into six categories: professional ethics,

leadership skills, thinking skills and innovation, school administration leadership, curriculum leadership, teaching, and learning, and connecting schools and communities. Professional ethics had the higher mean score at 4.521 (Five-Likert scale), while curriculum leadership, teaching, and learning had the lower mean score at 3.686. In SBM, principals often made a school improvement plan (mean score of 4.364), while they rarely involved the School Management Committees in the school activities (mean score of 3.636). The findings contribute to enhancing leadership skills in Cambodian primary schools to improve student academic performance.

### **Phan Chesda**

#### **Factors Affecting Teachers' Perception and Intervention in School Bullying in Cambodia**

The phenomenon of bullying has been documented and studied in many countries worldwide (Jimerson, 2009). Children who are bullied may experience a range of negative consequences, including physical injuries, truancy, and the development of psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches, stomachaches, nightmares, and anxiety; in severe cases, victims may even develop school phobia (Sharp, 2002). Experiences of bullying exerted a significant negative influence on an adolescent's ability to attain the established national academic standard for their age group (Rothon, 2011). This research explored teachers' perceptions and interventions on bullying in lower secondary schools and the factors that affected their perceptions and interventions.

This study was conducted within Phnom Penh City. A stratified sampling technique was employed, selecting 14 secondary schools from the 14 districts using data from the National Consultant for Development of Education Management Information System (EMIS) software. An additional school was purposefully chosen due to its multicultural environment, ensuring a diverse range of perspectives. The study focused on teachers' perceptions and interventions regarding bullying. A sample of 240 teachers was the primary data source to achieve this aim. Additionally, data was collected from 647 students and 11 school principals to explore a wider range of perspectives on teacher intervention. The questionnaires were designed based on theoretical frameworks and prior research findings. They encompassed six distinct categories: demographic information, professional information, perception of bullying (including physical, verbal, relational, and cyberbullying, and addressing victims), teacher views on bullying frequency and sympathy, and teacher intervention strategies for each type of bullying.

An analysis of preliminary data revealed that, on average, teachers reported a mean score of 0.53 for bullying incidents. These incidents most frequently involved verbal taunts about personal appearance and occurred during classroom break times. Teacher perceptions regarding traditional bullying types indicated that verbal bullying held the highest mean score at 3.180 (Maximum: 5.00), with a standard deviation of 1.261. This score suggests a stronger perception compared to other forms of traditional bullying. Bullying examples of perceived verbal bullying included students leaving harmful notes for others (mean score of 3.29) and taunting related to appearance, ability, and socioeconomic background (mean score of 3.22). Notably, these mean scores still indicate a level of perception below a potential maximum value. Analysis revealed that teachers perceived cyberbullying to a greater extent than traditional bullying (Mean Score: 3.30,

Standard Deviation: 1.355). Intervention strategies varied based on the perpetrator's location. When the perpetrator was a student within the school, teachers primarily reported the incident to the school principal. Conversely, if someone outside the school grounds targeted the victim, teachers opted to educate the student and implement a temporary school ban. In situations where the student was cyberbullied by someone unaffiliated with the school, teachers again reported the incident to the school principal.