

ABSTRACT

THE RELEVANCE OF DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRE-SCHOOL PRACTICE FOR TRANSITION TO INFANT YEAR 1 OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Using a mixed approach, a qualitative inductive analysis was undertaken, to examine the relevance of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) at pre-school, for transition to infant year 1 of the primary school.

The study was conducted in Trinidad, among 39 adults and 24 children, comprising administrators, teachers, ancillary staff, children and their parents, at one pre-school and four primary schools.

Participants had a clear understanding of DAP and acknowledged that it was beneficial and excellent for the early childhood teaching/learning environment. However, unwillingness to institute the practice was expressed, mainly because the desired policy framework was not in place to implement it.

Based on the findings, I concluded that if the mode at primary schools remain as found in this study, then DAP at pre-school, is not feasible for transition to primary school.

It was therefore recommended, that there be public dissemination on the attributes of DAP as a vehicle for quality early childhood practices; that a policy framework at the level of the Ministry of education be put in place for DAP implementation by: making the necessary allowances for individual differences in children's age, developmental level and culture; training and re-training of teachers of the early childhood group; more dialogue between practitioners at pre-schools and primary schools; greater respect to be shown for the work of pre-school personnel in preparing children for entrance to primary schools.

Early Childhood -

Further research was also recommended on the teaching/learning experiences at more pre-schools, to ascertain the extent to which DAP is practiced; investigation of the relevance of formally structured settings for transition to infant year one of the primary school; comparisons of various pre-school programmes to ascertain which one is best for transition to infant year one of the primary schools in their present form. *World Book Dictionary, p. 2223*

KEY WORDS

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) - *f analysis come from the data;*

“...it is not a rigid set of standards that dictate practice. Rather, it is a framework, a philosophy, or even an approach to working with young children.”

(Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992, cit. Gestwicki, 1995, p.5)