Leadership and development issues for childhood teachers thesis proposal example

Life, Childhood

Preceptor/Guide

The research in this body of work will be concerned primarily with the leadership qualities in young children, and how early childhood educators can participate in the process of facilitating leadership in children. Facilitating leadership qualities in children without creating children that have a tendency to misbehave or bully is something that many early childhood educators are heavily concerned about; a focus on this issue will help provide a number of different options for educators who are interested in facilitating leadership qualities in the children under their care. This will not be a study conducted exclusively for educators, however; much of the research that has been done in this area is also important for parents and guardians of young children. Building up young people's leadership qualities helps them function better and with more ease in their everyday lives.

The current literature on the subject of leadership development in early childhood education suggests that there are a number of qualities that a leader has that can be developed in early childhood. Nivala and Hujala (2002) suggest that perseverance, an ability to overcome adversity, a positive attitude, and goal-setting tendencies are all attributes of leadership that can be learned by a child in their early childhood education. Hensel (1991) goes so far as to suggest that more often than not, leaders are made rather than born; leadership qualities are qualities that are honed and practiced in childhood, rather than qualities that a leader or potential leader are born with (Hensel, 1991).

In addition to being a major focus in early childhood educational theory today, research also suggests that further development of the topic is

growing in necessity. The Muijs et al. (2004) study concluded that, " there is a clear need to identify what effective leadership practice is in terms of processes and outcomes within this field. It also concludes that theoretically based studies that allow different models and characteristics to be empirically tested are long overdue. The serious lack of leadership training is also highlighted which means that many early childhood managers could be significantly under-prepared for their role" (Muijs and Aubrey et al., 2004). When individuals cannot express good leadership qualities in their own lives, it is difficult for those same adults to pass leadership qualities to young children, many of whom are still in the phases of learning by example (Muijs and Aubrey et al., 2004).

The purpose of this thesis will be to investigate a number of early childhood educators and determine, through a series of qualitative and quantitative analyses, what kind of leadership skills are being taught to children. This study will take place in Saudi Arabia's pre-schools, with a focus on Saudi culture. In addition, the researchers will study and examine in what ways appear to be the most effective when it comes to facilitating leadership qualities in early childhood education. Because early childhood learning and early childhood educators are linked so closely, it is important to look at both the educators themselves as well as what they are teaching the children involved in the study. Muijs et al. (2004) and Trawick-Smith (1988) both suggest that the early childhood educator is one of the most important individuals insofar as cultivating leadership skills is concerned.

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