

Ensuring Harmony and Protection in Preschool Education¹

Buddhiprabha D. D. Pathirana*

Abstract

The article discusses the development of a reader friendly resource book for preschool teacher to prevent/minimize early violence and aggressiveness and to promote pro-social behaviors in preschool children. The aim of the article is to explain the milestones of the research journey which took place to develop it. The contents of the resource book was based on interviews of national and international experts, survey outcome of 275 preschool teachers from 18 districts, 23 preschool teacher interviews, observations of preschool children in four different preschools and a literature review over 300 journal articles and books. Based on the above, the author developed 14 training modules for Sri Lankan preschool teachers to create a non-violent environment in the preschool. The article discusses the writing process, validating the modules for content and cultural relevance, piloting the resource book and suggestions for training the preschool teachers using the resource book.

Key Words : Aggressive Behaviors - Early Violence - Intervention - Preschool Children - Preschool Teachers - Prosocial Behaviors

1. This paper has been based on author's the PhD thesis 'An inquiry into early violence- aggression and prosocial behaviour in pre-school children in Sri Lanka to identify appropriate intervention by pre-school teachers' submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Colombo, Colombo, Sri Lanka in 2006.

* Senior Lecturer, Department of Philosophy & Psychology, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. email: buddhiprabha2001@yahoo.com

Background to the Problem

The findings of the national survey on preschool children have revealed that some preschool teachers practise traditional disciplinary techniques such as corporal punishment, which are not even recommended by the Ministry of Education (Global initiative to end all corporal punishment of children: Sri Lanka, 2011) which prohibits physical assault even for formal schools (Wijetunge & Wickramaratne, 2003). Moreover, the review of preschool teacher training courses revealed that none of them has syllabi provision on, nor provides training in specific early violence prevention strategies (Pathirana, 2006). Hence, it was considered important to identify whether preschool teachers need to be trained in order to provide early violence prevention or whether they already possess the skills to do so. However, no systematic research has so far been done in Sri Lanka to investigate the situation.

Since preschools can be considered as the earliest structured institutions that young children in Sri Lanka are exposed to, it is important to identify and investigate preschool teachers' perceptions of disciplinary practices, which influence the ways they maintain discipline and manage disruptive behaviors of the children in the class. This would, in turn, help us to identify whether they believe that hitting and punishing children yield positive outcomes, or, whether they indulge in such practices because they are not aware of other practices recommended by research studies.

Though biological theories of aggression point out that violence is an inborn or inherent trait, a large number of research evidence indicates that it is learned, often early in life from significant others (Erickson, 1950; Lorenz, 1952; Perry, 1997). Hence, children learn to be aggressive through direct observation of significant others (often family members), viewing violent media (Murray, 1997), being exposed to community, societal and cultural violence (Jenkins & Bell, 1997)

Therefore, if preschool teachers are using disciplinary strategies that have been agreed upon as negative and destructive, such as corporal punishment, (De Silva, 2001; De Silva, De Soyza & Kannangara, 2000; De Soyza, Rajapakse & Newcombe, 2005) it would not only provide a negative model for children but also affect young minds, making them aggressive adults in the future (Farrington, 1994; Conduct Problem Prevention Group, 2002).

Therefore, a research study was conducted to investigate the common trends in preschool teacher (Pathirana, 2006) perceptions on different aspects of aggressive and prosocial behaviors in preschool children in different parts of Sri Lanka, and teachers from varied communities such as urban, rural, street communities (the nature of the behavior, reported versus actual practices, and, needs of the preschool teachers, factors which contribute to promoting aggressive and prosocial behavior). The findings of the study revealed that preschool teachers in Sri Lanka require training in the context of preventing/minimizing aggressive behaviors and promoting prosocial behaviors in preschool children. In order to cater to this need a reader friendly resource book, based on the findings of the research was developed.

Evidence Based Research for the Formulation of the Action Research

In order to investigate the preschool teacher perceptions pertaining to the issue, a survey was carried out. Data was collected from 275 preschool teachers from 18 districts (including North & East) and interviewed 23 preschool teachers from varied backgrounds. The author also observed preschool children in four preschools, in order to achieve the following objectives:

1. What are preschool teacher perceptions pertaining to alternative disciplinary practices, preferred positive practices and perceived ineffective practices, in a structured, hypothetical situation provided?
2. What are the preschool teacher perceptions pertaining to the nature and prevalence of aggressive and prosocial behaviors in preschool children?
3. What is the nature and prevalence of perceived practices of the preschool teachers pertaining to preventing and minimizing aggressive behaviors and promoting prosocial behaviors in preschool children?
4. What are preschool teachers' perceptions on different types of violence (media, domestic, community, political and other types of violence) that promote aggressive behaviors in preschool children?

5. What are the perceived attitudes (possibility of teaching to prevent and minimize aggressive behavior in the preschool children and promote prosocial behaviors in the preschool children) and training needs, if any (do they require training and if so what are their preferred method?) of the preschool teachers regarding aggression and prosocial behaviors in preschool children?

6. Is there a relationship between training, experience and education, and disciplinary practices among preschool teachers in Sri Lanka, as perceived by them?

Major Findings

Results revealed that although certain practices perceived and employed by the preschool teachers were consistent with the ones presented by the research studies, (tried out best practices and intervention strategies mentioned in the literature), certain practices were labeled by the preschool teachers as ineffective and negative (use a stick to frighten the children, tell children that teacher does not love bad children, advice or preach). The vast majority of the preschool teachers who responded to the survey questionnaire perceived that preschool children could be oriented to prevent and minimize aggressive behaviors and promote prosocial behaviors within the preschool setting. Of teachers surveyed, 97% and interviewed 90% stated they require training in this area in order to do so. A regression analysis was carried out to examine the relationship among training, educational qualifications, experience, aggressive and prosocial behaviors in children and preschool teacher practices pertaining to those practices. Analysis of regression revealed that training, experience, and educational qualifications are poor predictors of the intensity of the reported aggression, intensity of the reported prosocial behaviors, intensity of the teacher practices to prevent and minimize aggressive behaviors and intensity of the reported practices to promote prosocial behaviors of the preschool teachers. Therefore, findings of the survey indicated that preschool teachers require knowledge, skills and competencies pertaining to preventing and minimizing aggressive behaviors in preschool children.

Contributions from the Expert Interviews – National Exposure

Experts in the field of Early Childhood Education, Senior Preschool teachers and child Psychologists were consulted before identifying and developing a method.

Contributions from the Expert Interviews – International Exposure

While attending a Train-the Trainer program in Oxford, UK, the author interviewed Early Childhood educational experts from 52 countries who promoted value education, early violence prevention and minimizing aggressive behaviors. Their experiences, insights and comments were also taken into account when identifying and developing a suitable intervention method.

Contribution from the Literature Review

As described above, the author used the information gathered from the researches and prevention/ intervention literature (Slaby, Roedell, Arezzog & Hendrix, 1995; Committee for Children, 2002; ACT, 2004; McGinnis & Goldstein 2003) to create instances in the modules of the resource book. In addition, over 300 journal articles were reviewed in order to identify studies in the context of early violence, aggressive/prosocial behaviors within preschool children, and preschool teacher practices. Effective teacher practices, activities, skills, and interventions for aggressive behaviors as well as ways of promoting prosocial behaviors mentioned in the literature were included.

Contribution from the Survey & Preschool Teacher Interviews

In the survey questionnaire a large percentage of preschool teachers had mentioned that they use reparation as a technique to maintain discipline in the class. Hence, the author included an instance in which reparation was practised in the hypothetical preschool to educate preschool teachers with recent research findings about reparation. Moreover, as the preschool teacher interviews revealed that the aggressor was given attention simultaneously or immediately after the event, the author advocated alternative best strategies mentioned in the literature. Again, all these were moulded into and presented as occurrences in the hypothetical preschool. Similarly, as a large number of teachers stated that they use role plays, stories, songs to prevent and minimize aggressive behaviors and promote prosocial behaviors

in preschool children, the author included sample role plays, stories and songs that they can use on such occasions and effective ways of using them.

The author also made it a point to include highly prevalent aggressive and prosocial acts, mentioned by preschool teachers in the survey as instances occurring in the hypothetical preschool. For example, a large number of preschool teachers had stated that fighting was very common in preschools, citing many different modes, causations and contexts of such fights; the author tried to include fights and alternative practices that preschool teachers can adopt, to prevent and minimize fights. These included practices to be used before, during, immediately after and subsequent to, a fight.

When creating positive (model) instances, the author incorporated in the experiential guide some of the activities that preschool teachers have listed as positive practices (if they were consistent with the literature). For instance, some teachers had said in the questionnaire that they take preschool children to visit elders' and children's homes, and also for nature walks. Therefore the author included these in her experiential guide as instances, which occur in the model preschool. Her intention was to disseminate good practices of preschool teachers as well as provide as many familiar anchors as possible to them. She did not want to force a large number of practices developed in the West upon them, though they have been proven effective by scientific research. Therefore, the author combined these practices with actual practices of Sri Lankan preschool teachers in a manner that they could be receptive. Also, a separate module to address television violence was created based on the review of literature and responses provided by preschool teachers.

Since the data analysis revealed that preschool teachers prefer teacher initiated/ centered/ oriented actions, the author included a large number of such effective actions. When including instance of these practices she made an effort to incorporate practices cited in the research journals, literature as well as best practices tried out by the preschool teachers, as indicated in the survey questionnaires and interviews.

Though strategies such as empowering the bystanders or being assertive were hardly mentioned by the preschool teachers in the sample, considering their cost-effectiveness, evidence based support

and value added skills provided by these practices to the preschool children, she included a module for assertiveness. Also, considering the fact that preschool teachers in the sample did not list specific effective ways of handling children with prominent aggressive behavioral patterns, the author included a separate module for this. In it, she incorporated effective ways of handling specific aggressive behaviors as well as the technique of drawing up a behavioral modification plan for such children, in a user-friendly simple language.

Preschool teachers in the survey and of the interviews stated that they created awareness among parents on different issues such as television and domestic violence. Considering this as a need in the preschool context, the author too created instances in which teachers created awareness in parents on different issues such as negative consequences of media violence, buying age inappropriate toys (e.g. toy guns), bringing toys to the preschool, handling parental concerns pertaining to activities in the preschool. Also addressed was the issue of treating differently able children who attend the preschools with love and respect.

Contributions from the Observations

Direct observations were carried out to confirm the preschool teacher perceptions. This comprises several stages which contribute to the modules in different ways.

Initial Pilot Observations

These were conducted while collecting the survey data and preschool teacher interviews. It was observed that preschool children indulged in aggressive and prosocial behaviors stated by the teachers in the survey and interviews. Though hitting children was not observed, it was seen that teachers used a cane and sometimes hit the floor to make their points. Again, care was taken to include such instances as instances of the hypothetical preschool.

Contributions from Observation of Children and Teachers

The researcher also observed behaviors of the children ($n=23$) with prominent aggressive and prosocial behavioral patterns as well as teacher practices and responses to them and incorporated those

observations into the modules. The observations provided an insightful understanding of aggressive and prosocial behaviors in preschool children as well as preschool teacher practices pertaining to it.

Though the review of programs in the area of early violence prevention revealed the importance of reaching out to all parties; preschool teachers, children and parents, data revealed that this could be an extremely difficult task due to structural constraints such as the difficulty of effective networking and enlisting resource personnel in the ECCD sector in Sri Lanka.

Creating a Conceptual Framework for the Early Violence Prevention Intervention

Most of the major problems in the world will not be solved by yet more analysis. There is a need to 'design' the way forward. (De Bono, 2000). When developing the modules the author faced with a task of considerable magnitude, of creating a conceptual framework, a technique and tools to instill values and self-control in children enabling prosocial and non-aggressive behavior. However, as stated above the author also had to consider the constraints that Sri Lankan preschools face, being a nested structure in a developing country; lack of resources, limited number of resource people, and absence of a curriculum or a set of guidelines for preschool teacher training. Deciding on the target group (the critical mass) a practical, economical, feasible modus operandi for dissemination of the technique and tools to the preschool community were the challenges experienced. During the discussions with the experts it transpired that if the author developed a program with parents as the target group it would not be practically feasible, due to financial constraints. However, if she was to develop a training program, modules or a similar tool for preschool teachers, circulation and sustainability would be relatively more feasible in comparison to a parental program.

Based on the expert interviews and the literature a decision was taken to develop a tool to train preschool teachers due to the absence of literature for preschool teachers in the area of value education, violence prevention, minimizing aggressive behavior and in promoting prosocial behavior. Literature review of the course content of preschool teacher training courses, further confirmed this as none of the courses offered 'early violence prevention/minimizing aggressive behavior' as a separate subject (Pathirana, 2006). Therefore, the

study also revealed that the identified techniques need to provide theoretical and practical information in a manner that enhances the creativity, commitment and motivation of preschool teachers; showing the pathways of positive discipline and alternative teacher practices.

Identifying the Themes for the Intervention Technique

The author identified 15 themes, which could be relevant to train preschool teachers. Drawing on the literature reviewed and the field experiences gained through pilot preschool teacher survey and interviews. Based on the suggestions of the experts ($n = 10$) in the field of early childhood education, she divided the themes into two broad categories; preventive and curative. They are as follows.

Modules That Emphasize Preventive Aspects

1. Application – Addressing the trauma and violence in real life
2. Designing the physical and programmatic environment in the pre-school
3. Selecting aid-providing materials to prevent potential violence and promote prosocial behavior in preschool children
4. Structuring & modeling cooperative activities
5. Responding effectively to prevent early violence
6. Fostering conflict resolution and social problem solving skills
7. Encouraging voluntary sharing and group activity
8. Enhancing perspective taking and empathy
9. Controlling media effects -Teaching children to be critical viewers of media & using prosocial media

Modules That Emphasize Curative Aspects

10. Introduction of the concepts – Early Violence, aggression, & prosocial Behavior
11. Helping children with aggressive behavioral patterns
12. Teaching assertiveness skills and developing resistance to bullying

13. Self protection, issues related to child maltreatment
14. Providing effective role models for prosocial and nonviolent behavior
15. Providing materials for active learning and expression for different competencies/talents, simple to complex tools for each competency / talent.

Then the modules were written in English and later translated into Sinhala. The author used simple language and practical examples given by the experts (n=10) and preschool teachers (n=05) during the program investigation phase. Based on the expert suggestions, the author decided to exclude two topics from the manual to be developed: Self-protection, (issues related to child maltreatment), and providing materials for active learning and expression (to suit the development of different competencies/ talents, simple to complex tools for each competency/ talent). Based on the suggestions made by an early childhood expert, the author included a module to create parental awareness pertaining to early violence prevention. This module addresses themes such as take home letters, forming a library for parents in the preschool and awareness workshops. Then she rearranged the topics in a more user friendly and systematic format, in consultation with an educationist interested in Early Childhood Education.

Identifying a Method to Present the Intervention Technique

The author also researched for a method to present these modules to preschool teachers in a comprehensible manner that would result in a personal commitment and collective change within them.

When identifying a method to present the intervention technique the following factors were also considered

- i. Failure of implementing the policies (those formulated and recommended by the Children's Secretariat) by the provincial councils in the preschool education sector, which still allows the Carte blanche for anyone to start a preschool without formal education, training and internship.
- ii. Need to reach out to, and suit the requirements of the preschool teachers who have not had any formal training.

- iii. Challenge of incorporating sophisticated research findings and other relevant data into a mould sufficiently simple to be understood by the majority of preschool teachers in the country; trained as well as untrained, with diverse educational qualifications and experience.
- iv. Need to develop the intervention to fit in with preschool teacher training courses while being able to stand on its own.

Writing the Manual Operating on the Value of Simplicity

Any system that is going to be operated by ordinary people or that is going to affect ordinary people needs to be simple. There's no excuse for it to be otherwise. A complex system is likely to be a bad design. (De Bono, 2000).

Though the survey conducted revealed that a majority of respondents (in the preschool teacher sample) favored workshops, videotapes or, a combination of other methods, the author overruled such usage considering the technology, sophistication and expenses involved. The literature too confirmed that if the developed conceptual tool is to be widely and easily circulated in Sri Lanka, it has to be in a written format.

Therefore, based on the literature survey of fiction (Gamachchi, 2003; Rowling, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2003, 2005, Tillman, 2003) and real stories (Farrer, 2000), the author decided to write the module in the form of a partial narrative and created a hypothetical model preschool named 'Didula' which implemented positive disciplinary practices and touched the interpersonal dimension of preschool children. In it, she included practical methodologies of positive discipline as strategies and instances in manner, which occurred as day-to-day activities of the preschool. She also created a role of a head teacher who modeled these practices and is competent in their application, based on the data obtained from the preschool teacher interviews.

Importance of a Written Format

Based on the findings of survey and interviews it was assumed that preschool teachers would be more receptive to a written format, which uses simple, clear language and explains theoretical concepts in practical, applicable ways, while retaining the theoretical value of the manual. Hence, before each module she included a case study in the form of a story to indicate ways that positive discipline was practised in the hypothetical preschool.

Thus the author initiated each module with vignette-stories as given below:

It was a very busy day for Number 10, Samagi Mawatha, because Hiruni and her little brother, Tharu are preparing to go to a new preschool. Hiruni's mother had told her that it was very different to the preschool that they previously attended...

Aim of the author was to motivate preschool teachers to read the modules because upon enquiry, during preschool teacher interviews, she found that material written on the subject of preschool children uses high-flown terms and words which are very difficult to be understood by the preschool teachers. Hence, she assumed that preschool teachers would be more susceptible to read the material if presented in this manner. She also used case studies and examples as to how this hypothetical preschool practised positive ways to minimize aggressive behavior and promote prosocial behavior in preschool children.

However, the theoretical part of the modules was retained as experts interviews revealed that the theoretical importance may not be comprehended, if not included. In order to do so, the author used headings, which convey the theoretical meaning. Also, at the end of each module she summarized the theoretical concepts and presented them under the heading 'lesson at a glance'. She also included important theoretical information in boxes under the heading 'message to the preschool teacher'.

Though the author initially wanted to develop a manual or a handbook for preschool teachers, she would like to call her final product 'an experiential guide' which offers 'a multitude of perceptual

possibilities' rather than providing specific instructions. Also, prevention/intervention literature reviewed confirmed that a structured program might posit several drawbacks (Slaby et al, 1995; McGinnis et al, 2003; Howard Flora & Griffin, 1999).

When developing the modules a limitation experienced was finding appropriate ways to present to teachers what the author intended to convey, due to lack of appropriate Sinhala terms. For instance, since the Sinhala term in the glossary for prosocial, (*Samajasheeli*) did not convey the intended meaning but rather a meaning akin to 'socialable'. Hence, the word '*Yahasamajeeya*' was selected based on the expert suggestions.

Validating the Training Modules for Contents, Cultural and Language Relevance

The modules were screened for cultural and content relevance by an educationist in the area of preschool and primary education. The modules were also screened for grammar and spelling by an expert in the Sinhala Language. Based on their suggestions, the author decided to use one introductory module and thirteen practical modules.

Also, considering the suggestions made by the experts, several alterations were done in the modules. For instance, the manner in which the head of the model hypothetical preschool was addressed changed from 'Loku Aunty' to 'Loku Teacher'. The 'logic for this came from the fact that in rural preschools and in urban middle class and lower middle class preschools the head teachers were called thus. The author felt it was important to provide many anchors that a large number of preschool teachers in Sri Lanka could relate to and decided to call the head teacher 'Loku Teacher'.

Based on the expert suggestions, modules have been edited to include daily events and annual events (New-year celebrations, concerts etc.) in the preschool, indicating how these events can be used to prevent and minimize aggressive and promote prosocial behavior in children. After these revisions, further editions were carried out to merge in these suggestions to suit the existing structure as well as make it more reader friendly. Training modules were validated against the data obtained from literature review, survey, preschool teacher interviews, and observation of preschool settings.

Factors Excluded

Though the survey included responses provided by preschool teachers from conflict - affected areas (during the time of the data collection) such as Ampara, Vavuniya, and Trincomalee, the author did not include a significant number of instances of ethnic conflict and ways that children are affected due to the magnitude, specificity and sensitivity of the issue. Upon consultation, the experts were also of the opinion that it should be addressed as a separate theme.

Also excluded from the hypothetical preschool are instances of domestic violence although a large percentage of preschool teachers have stated in the survey and preschool interviews that domestic violence is a prominent factor in the lives of preschool children. Again, the author believes separate preschool teacher and parental awareness programs should be created to address this issue with the help of agencies who work in this area.

Implementation

If you sell a picture you may also give advice on where and how the picture might be hung. (De Bono 2000).

Pilot Project - Phase I

Three out of the fourteen modules were provided to an ethnically diverse sample of preschool teachers ($n=16$) from 05 districts in Sri Lanka. With these modules, a semi-structured questionnaire was provided. After the preschool teachers read the modules, a brief focus group discussion was carried out to investigate the limitations, strengths, and improvements needed for the modules. In addition, these modules were given to a group of preschool teachers ($n=55$) from Monaragala. Both groups of teachers reported in the evaluation questionnaires that they benefited immensely by studying these modules. Some of them have conveyed to the program coordinators that they were able to handle the caste problem, which was prominent in their preschools and were able manage aggressive behaviors in the children, effectively after being exposed to these modules.

All the preschool teachers who participated in the training program have mentioned in their evaluation forms that they found the modules useful, effective and helpful in minimizing aggressive

behavior and promoting prosocial behavior in preschool children. They also reported that the modules are useful to the preschool teachers to understand how they should talk, behave and structure the classroom environment. All the teachers who responded to the questionnaire seemed to be pleased with the semi-narrative format, in which the modules were presented. However, data obtained from the focus group discussions revealed that preschool teachers were somewhat perplexed by the ideal conditions described in the model preschool and mentioned that it would be difficult to create play corners and group activities in their preschools as mentioned in the modules.

Therefore, in sum it could be said that the strengths of these modules are that they have been developed on a solid foundation of literature, survey, interviews and observation. Also, they have been validated by an expert in the Early Childhood Education on cultural and content appropriateness for preschools, validated for grammar and spellings, and finally three modules have been given to preschool teachers to obtain feedback. Moreover, these three modules have been tested with fifty five preschool teachers in Monaragala district.

Though the author was not in a position to carry out the following steps due to time and financial constraints suggestions mentioned below are presented as necessary for further development and sustainability of the identified intervention. These suggestions are divided into two phases.

Suggestions for a Pilot Project - Phase II

1. Validate the developed modules with a significant number of preschool teachers from varied communities (n=20).

2. Select a sample of preschool teachers representing varied preschool settings and divide them into two groups (control and experimental). Then train the sample of experimental group of preschool teachers to apply the interventions described in each module. Next, conduct a focus group discussion for each module for 14-weeks to identify the applicability, relevance, strengths, and limitations of those modules. Based on the data obtained make changes in the modules. As the next step conduct pre- and post-evaluations to assess the differences (whether preschool teacher practices and children behavior pertaining to early violence has reduced in the experimental group due to interventions induced) between experimental and control group of preschool teachers and preschool children under their charge.

Suggestions for an Island-Wide Teacher-Training Programme

Several suggestions pertaining to potential training programs and the implementation of these concepts are provided below.

1. Translating the modules into Tamil
2. Assessing Sinhala and Tamil versions by a core group of Early Childhood Educational experts
3. Design a program to train the trainers (TOT)
4. Identify and develop criteria to select the participants (when selecting the potential TOT's, individuals who possess knowledge and knowledge - based skills on training should be given preference).

Based on the data gathered, the author suggests that the expected duration of the preschool program is approximately 70 contact hours, to be carried out in 15 sessions (15-contact days). The Trainers (TOTs) should be trained in two alternate batches, with 25 in each group. The 15 contact days would be divided into three 5-day-workshops. Based on the data obtained the author suggests that the contents of the program need to include introductions to the modules, and activities to promote skills and help trainees to identify needs of their respective communities. After the training, the trainees should be provided with the support (mentoring, resources and financial assistance) to train the preschool teachers in the area. The expected design of the program is that after completing the program a team of 2 - TOTs would conduct a 2 - day program to train preschool teachers on early violence prevention.

During the teacher training program preschool teachers should be provided with a study pack which contains the modules, outline of lecture sessions based on modules, followed by group discussions and role play of skills and activities. If and when possible co-teaching with the TOTs, peer coaching and mentoring should be implemented by arranging sessions or visits to the preschools.

Another way in which these modules can be used to train preschool teachers is by integrating them to the existing, ongoing preschool teacher training programs such as the Sarvodaya or the Open University of Sri Lanka. Again, teacher trainees should be provided with the modules and training sessions based on modules or

a few selected modules (if there are time constraints), followed by focus group discussions and role-plays. All these training programs should contain a systematic, structured evaluation process. This process should contain outcome as well as process evaluation. The evaluation should involve need analysis, future expectations and suggestions of the participants during the training program. Initial pilot project of TOT and preschool teacher training program with pre- and post-test, and a control group should also be included in this. The pilot project should include gathering post implementation data from multiple sources such as direct observations, teacher and parent interviews. Also, gathering data from preschool children should be carried out in a developmentally appropriate manner to assess whether change has taken place in the teaching and parenting styles and behaviors of the children.

If and when possible, the training programs should also use rigorous evaluations such as spot checks and rapid assessments to improve the training. It can be achieved by employing individuals to coordinate and evaluate the program to ensure its smooth functioning.

Conclusions

From a research point of view, the author believes the work she has done so far can be summed up in terms of five steps. They are:

1. Study the literature and existing situation using research methodology
2. Identify a context the target population is familiar with
3. Mould the identified theories, concepts and research studies into a form which would fit into the identified structure
4. Make adjustments in the existing identified structure for the intended mould to fit into the structure
5. Fit the mould into the adjusted structure

However, due to limitations in time and financial constraints she was not in a position to empirically carry out the procedures described below. However, the steps indicated should also be followed for this process to become a holistic, empirical, and an independent course of action.

1. Present the intervention (mould and structure) to the identified target population
2. Observe and record their reactions and responses pertaining to the intervention
3. Make further adjustment in the intervention (mould and the structure) to suit the target population

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