

Mainstreaming Early Grade Reading Instruction in Early Childhood Teacher Education.

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Abstract

This paper provides insights on how Early Grade Reading Instruction Curriculum (EGRIC) catalyzed a pedagogical shift and, consequently, began transforming early childhood teacher education in Kenya through reading instruction. EGRIC, themed: All Teachers Teaching Reading All Children Reading, was sponsored by USAID's All Children Reading: Grand Challenge for Development and implemented by the University of Nairobi from September 2012 to September 2014. EGRIC developed the capacity of 315 purposively selected UoN pre-service teachers enrolled in Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Education and 170 in-service teachers to provide reading instruction, assessment and remediation in the early grades (K-3 rd grade). The ultimate goal was to infuse EGRIC into UoN's B. Ed (ECE) program. Data were collected using mixed-method research approaches and analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. EGRIC workshops and school follow-ups became an odyssey where teachers re-discovered the true meaning of reading instruction. Consequently, 298 teachers were certified as reading teachers at project close-out. Over 17, 800 children's reading skills were impacted; of these, 298 children at-risk of reading failure received weekly one-on-one tutoring and registered improvements in their reading skills and motivation for reading. There is need to open up and/or extend space(s) to foster technical leadership, knowledge sharing, and evidence building around issues of early grade reading instruction and assessment; improving effectiveness, sustainability, and scaling up of early grade reading interventions. The broader goal should be to build capacity of stakeholders to apply evidence-informed practices to increase impact, scale, and sustainability of reading interventions in Kenya and beyond.

Key words: Mainstreaming Early Grade, Reading Instruction, Early Childhood Teacher Education

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