

ECEY_6011

Quality

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Reflective paper

Reflection paper

Introduction

Pianta et al., (2016) define quality as how educators adapt to each child's needs, the type of material delivered to children, staff-to-child ratios, and various other requirements set by inspection policymakers. However, the definition of quality differs in schools, where it is often measured by educational outcomes. The idea of quality in early education services and later schooling varies significantly. Pianta et al., (2016) further describe quality in early years as the standards set by policymakers, emphasising its critical importance in children's early education. They also highlight the role of teachers in implementing these standards and meeting requirements to achieve high-quality education (Pianta et al., 2016).

Hibbard et al., (2010) study highlights that, despite the massive availability of data on healthcare quality and methods for improvement, many patients do not effectively utilise this information. This is mainly due to the lack of accountability in using such data to enhance healthcare decisions. To achieve better quality of care, it is essential not only to share information with clients but also to present it in a way that explains its importance and practical application. The Kaiser Family Foundation (2008) states that only 14% of clients make use of the available information to make informed choices and improve the quality of their healthcare. Although research indicates that clients highly value medical care quality, their understanding of quality often differs from how doctors and healthcare organisations define it. Clients are inclined towards quality of care which they link with factors such as doctor availability, medical expertise, or what level the speed of care is being delivered. As a result, when doctors share reports as basic pieces of information, they may not align with clients' expectations or be easily understood. The study emphasises that if communication from doctors or healthcare organisations is not well-presented, the effectiveness of quality improvements will be limited (Hibbard et al., 2010). According to Doherty, G (2012) when a company or business aims to improve something to achieve better outcomes, they begin by closely assessing the current condition and

identifying any shortcomings of the project. This process is known as 'quality control,' which involves identifying issues, evaluating what is going wrong, and making necessary improvements to achieve quality. The authors describe the next step, 'quality assurance,' as addressing problems as they arise, rather than simply dealing with them on the spot or implementing solutions to prevent them before they become issues. They add that this is often carried out by inspectors within organisations who establish rules and guidelines to achieve quality. Their role involves assessing quality and ensuring that it is maintained by following the established guidelines to achieve the desired standards (Doherty, G.2012).

Importance of high-quality setting

High-quality settings play an important role in children's cognitive development, which has long-term impacts on their lives and shapes their future. Therefore, it is essential for children to have access to high-quality settings that provide opportunities for them to thrive and reach their full potential. As Taguma et al., (2012) research agrees that high quality settings promote the best outcomes in children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. Excellent quality services also help children prepare for future success by enhancing their ability to understand the world around them and fostering creativity and critical thinking. This is particularly true when the staff is highly qualified, as they are able to deliver the right programs and materials to engage children effectively. Qualified staff can direct children's attention to the appropriate resources and guide them in their learning. Furthermore, staff who listen to children's views and bring their ideas to life, while valuing their perspectives, play an important role in fostering a positive and enriching environment for development (Taguma et al.,2012).

Two chosen methods of quality assurance

1. Self and peer evaluation method

2. Child centered approach and wellbeing monitoring

Self and peer evaluation method

Pahigiannis,K and Glos M (2020) describes growing attention on self-evaluation highlights its strong connection to long-term health outcomes for children, particularly when it begins early in life, from birth. Teaching self-regulation from an early age, especially during early childhood education in settings like preschools, plays key role in children's development. Educators with the right knowledge understand the importance of engaging with children, creating a supportive environment where they feel comfortable around their peers. This interaction provides children with opportunities to self-evaluate as soon as they enter preschool, fostering their social and emotional growth (Pahigiannis and Glos,2020). Blair and Diamond (2008) and Montroy et al., (2016) agree that self-evaluation is achieved through regulating emotions and controlling behaviour, which are essential for effective self-reflection. They emphasise that the ability to manage emotions and behaviours is beneficial in developing self-awareness and improving decision-making skills. According to Blair and Diamond (2008), self-regulation is not a set quality to have but rather a flexible process that requires individuals to modify their thoughts and behaviours in response to different situations. This view highlights the necessity of adaptability in managing emotions, actions, and cognitive responses based on environmental demands. They emphasise that self-evaluation is achieved because of what life has taught individuals over the period of interaction through family and social environments like it starts from early age such as preschools services (Pahigiannis and Glos,2020).

According to Lucas-Nihei et al. (2025) emphasises that Ponitz et al. (2008) agree on the importance of self-evaluation as a key aspect of self-regulation. They argue that for individuals to effectively self-evaluate, they must be able to control various external and internal factors, such as their emotions, behaviors, and responses to different situations. This ability to self-monitor and adjust one's actions is essential for personal growth and development. DuPaul et al. (2001) suggest that preschool education plays a vital role in help to develop children's self-regulation skills, particularly in managing emotions and

controlling behaviour. Children who gain experience in a structured preschool environment help towards controlling on behaviour to self-evaluate, which in turn enhances their ability to interact positively with peers.

On the other hand, children who struggle to control their emotions and adjust to their surroundings are less likely to engage in social interactions, which can have a negative impact on their development. This lack of self-evaluation may lead to difficulties in forming relationships, adjusting to new situations, and succeeding in early learning experiences. Therefore, early childhood education is essential in fostering these skills, helping children build a strong foundation for both social and academic success. (Lucas-Nihei,et al.,2025).

Furthermore, self-evaluation requires individuals to be flexible in their thinking, meaning they must be open to changing perspectives, adapting to new challenges, and modifying their behavior when necessary.

This process helps individuals solve problem-solving skills, increases abilities to make decisions, and improves their interactions with others. In the context of early childhood education, teaching children how to self-regulate and self-evaluate can help them navigate social situations more effectively and set a base for learning abilities for the whole life and development. Learning how to self-evaluate at an early age provides children with the tools to manage emotions, make decisions, and adapt to different situations. Without these foundational skills, children may struggle with peer interactions, emotional stability, and academic readiness. Children who develop strong emotional and behavioural control tend to form healthier relationships, communicate more effectively, and engage in positive social experiences.

In contrast, those who lack these skills may withdraw from social interactions or exhibit challenging behaviors, leading to difficulties in school and beyond. Preschools and early childhood education settings provide a structured and supportive environment where children can practice and refine self-evaluation skills. Teachers and caregivers play a crucial role in guiding children through emotional and social challenges, helping them develop coping strategies that benefit them in the long run. This reflection highlights the long-term benefits of self-regulation development in early childhood. Investing in quality preschool education not only helps children thrive academically but also strengthens their

ability to manage emotions, build relationships, and develop resilience skills that are essential for future success.

Blair and Raver (2015) argue that children from vulnerable populations, especially those affected by poverty, face significant challenges in developing self-regulation due to the impact of stress on brain development. They explain that chronic stress can disrupt the way brain structures are involved in self-regulation function, making it harder for children to develop essential skills for emotional control, decision-making, and adaptability. As a result, these disruptions can negatively affect their ability to adjust and succeed later in life (Pahigiannis and Glos 2020). Environmental factors effecting development matches Vygotsky's theory (1978) of social and emotional development where he suggests that social interaction helps children problem solving and many other skills emerges in the result of peer evaluation method (Pahigiannis and Glos 2020).

In contrast, Lucas-Nihei et al. (2025) highlight the importance of acceptance from peers in developing self-regulation among preschool children. For example, a child who is well-accepted by their classmates is more likely to be someone that other children enjoy playing with (Ladd & Sechler, 2013). Coplan and Arbeau (2009) suggest that children who attend early childhood education services gain valuable experiences by interacting with peers, which helps them develop social skills, learn appropriate behavior, and strengthen self-regulation abilities. They argue that while children in early education settings benefit from early social interactions, there is still limited research on how these experiences impact preschoolers' self-regulation, despite studies being conducted on school-aged children. Booth-LaForce and Kerns (2009) agree that in order to better understand self-regulation in preschoolers, more research is needed. They emphasise that early childhood education plays an important part in fostering peer relationships and self-regulation, making it essential to conduct studies focused on this developmental stage (Coplan and Arbeau, 2009).

Child centered approach and well-being monitoring

According to Power, S. et al., (2019) for more than century, people have discussed the best way to educate young children, with two main ideas competing: developing gradually,

which focuses on the child, and set way of teaching which is old, more teacher-led (Semel et al.,2016). These discussions have led to constant changes in education, where child-centered approaches, sometimes called open, modern, or advanced, become popular for a while, then go back to more teacher-controlled methods. Power et al (2019) further emphasise why the right education method is not appointed because there's less research conducted which could prove what method is beneficial. However, there are some studies like Wright (1975 and 1976) which was conducted in USA and Bennett et al., (1976) who demonstrated comparison between child centered approach and teacher led teaching between benefits (Power et al.,2019).

These studies aimed to assess the advantages of each approach, shedding light on how different teaching methods impact children's academic and social growth.

Power et al. (2019) further adds that Supporters of the child-centered teaching approach argue that a teacher-centered method does not adequately support children from disadvantaged backgrounds or those from diverse cultural environments. They claim that teacher-led instruction may create barriers for these children, making it harder for them to engage with the learning process. As a result, children who struggle to adapt to this approach may face challenges in their education, potentially limiting their future success (Power et al., 2019).

The discussion on teacher-centered vs. child-centered teaching approaches highlights concerns regarding educational equity and student engagement. A one-size-fits-all teaching method often fails to address the diverse learning individual need, particularly those from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. This lack of flexibility can create barriers to learning, making it becomes difficult for individuals to connect with the material and fully participate in the educational process.

By contrast, child-centered learning encourages active engagement, exploration, and personalized learning experiences, which can be more effective for students who struggle with traditional, rigid classroom structures. In a teacher-centered environment, where direct instruction and lectures dominate, some children may lose interest, fall behind academically, and struggle with confidence. These challenges can have long-term consequences on their educational journey, reinforcing the need for adaptive teaching strategies that prioritise inclusivity and responsiveness. Ultimately, this reflection

underscores the importance of flexible and student-centered teaching methods that cater to individual learning needs. By adopting an approach that is more adaptive and inclusive, educators can empower all students to succeed, ensuring that no child is left behind due to inflexible educational structures.

In conclusion, the debate between child-centered and teacher-centered approaches in early childhood education underscores the importance of adapting teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of all children. Evidence suggests that child-centered approaches, which emphasise active engagement, social interactions, and individualized support, are particularly beneficial for children from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who struggle with traditional, set teaching methods. Self-regulation and self-evaluation are main components of early development, and promoting these skills through structured early childhood education settings helps children develop the emotional and social intelligence needed for lifelong success. Ultimately, the role of quality education shaped by responsive educators and supportive environments ensures that all children, regardless of their background, can thrive academically and socially, setting the stage for a brighter future.

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