LEARNING IN THE MOST MARGINALIZED CONTEXTS. NAMIBIAN TEACHERS' FOLK PEDAGOGY IN PRE AND LOWER PRIMARY CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a qualitative study of Namibian teachers' understanding of children's learning in the most marginalized contexts. Interviews of nine teachers from three schools revealed the complex ways in which teachers predict development and make pedagogical decisions to support learning. The findings suggest that teachers rely on their folk pedagogies in solving dilemmas emerging at the intersection of theory and practice. Neither pre- nor in-service teacher training equips teachers to situate new knowledge in the living context that poses complex problems in marginalized contexts. The study concludes that learning in the most marginalized contexts may be hindered by teachers' limited competence to mediate points of congruence between seemingly contradicting cultural and social norms. Enhancing competence in meta-cognition and cultural mediation to teachers' professional development may help in providing more just and equal early education in the most marginalized contexts

Key words: folk pedagogy, social justice, pre-primary education, teacher education

Teaching in the most marginalized contexts of Sub-Saharan Africa presents both an opportunity as well as a challenge for schools to contribute towards building peaceful, just and inclusive societies. Children from diverse ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds enrich the social and cultural life of school communities. But at the same time, demanding socio-economic conditions combined with unique cultural beliefs and practices amount to environments where teachers are faced with intergroup tensions, stereotyping and institutionalized discrimination (Ellis, 1996). An example of such setting is Namibia, the context of this study, where studies concerning the most marginalized communities describe little improvement of school performance over the past 20 years (Dieckman, Thiem, Dirkx & Hays, 2011; Haraseb, 2011). Limited understanding on how to support learning in socio-economically challenging and culturally diverse contexts is a globally recognized education quality

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concern (Dervin, Paatela-Nieminen, Kuoppala & Riitanoja, 2012; UNESCO, 2011; UNICEF & UIS, 2014).

Prerequisite to any attempt to improve educational practice, is taking into account the existing belief systems about how children's minds work and develop. This study aimed at exploring teachers' understanding of how children learn and how teachers should teach when the context is characterized by challenging socio-economic conditions and cultural divides between the teacher and learners.

Literature Review

Social Learning for Inclusivity or Marginalization in Classroom Settings?

Positive social environment has been recognized as key dimension of effective pedagogical practice (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Neal & Neal, 2013). Yet, in contexts where teachers have had social norms and values different from those of the community, children have become vulnerable to misunderstandings and unsettling emotions in the classroom environment (Pearson, 2016; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). Teachers have lacked skills to translate knowledge about their learners' cultural backgrounds into effective instruction and an enriched curriculum (Daiute, Ataman, & Kovács-Cerovic, 2015; Pearson, 2016). The long term experiences of uncomfortable social arrangements for the child have been detrimental (Hays, 2011).

The role of school in building a common nation and social justice from ethnic, cultural and language diversity has been undermined (Buckler, 2015; Jorgensen, Grootenboer, Niesche, & Lerman, 2010). Teachers have not been equipped to pursue a social justice mandate by building upon the cultural strengths and characteristics which learners from diverse communities bring to school (Banks, Cookson, Gay, Hawley, Irvine, Nieto, Schofield, & Stephan, 2001) and assisting learners to acquire the knowledge, skills and values needed to become participating citizens of society at large (Howarth & Andreouli, 2015).

Improving educational practice by transforming folk pedagogies

To facilitate effective learning in multicultural settings has required teachers to move away from their traditional role of a facilitator of learning to being more of a cultural mediator (Ashton & Pence, 2016). This role is particularly important in early childhood education in which culture has been recognized as an important construct of development (Myers, 1996). Mediation as a complex and multi-layered process brings about dialogue settlement between opposing views in a situated environment

(Witherspoon, 2010, p. 89). It has required teachers to “find points of congruence between seemingly contradicting cultural norms” while also reaching learners at a more emotional and personal level, by having “the ability to empathize with the experiences of others” (Ellis, 1996, p. 217).

The concept of a “folk pedagogy” has been used in educational research to uncover and describe beliefs and perceptions on how children learn and how they should be taught. Bruner (1996, p. 46) notes that pedagogical choices emerge from “folk pedagogy” despite the fact that people “may not be able to verbalize their pedagogical principles”. Folk pedagogies are powerful sources of information, formed throughout personal history and experiences in specific socio-cultural contexts, which enable individuals to interpret behaviours and decide on responses in specific situations. (Lee & Walsh, 2004; Turunen & Tuovila, 2012).

Introducing new educational approaches has to be done by modifying or replacing folk theories that already guide teachers and learners. Bruner (1996) has identified four dominant models of mind and models of pedagogy, and divided them into two major dimensions: The externalist theories emphasize what adults can do for children from outside to foster learning. The internalist theories focus on what the child can do; what the child thinks he or she is doing and how learning can be premised on those intentional states, as presented in Figure 1 below. Compared to the externalist theories, the internalist theories are believed to prompt deeper thinking and learning, highlighting the importance of learner-centred education where children are active constructors of their own learning.

Model of Mind	Model of Pedagogy	
1. Children as imitative learners	The expert seeks to transmit a skill he has acquired through repeated practice to a novice who, in turn, must then practice the modelled act in order to succeed.	Externalist
2. Children learning from didactic exposure	Abilities no longer mean doing something skilfully but rather the ability to acquire new knowledge. Teaching is not a mutual dialogue but telling from one to another	
3. Children as thinkers	Children are seen as constructing a model of the world to aid them in construing their experience. Pedagogy is to help the child to understand themselves better	Internalist
4. Children as knowledgeable	Teaching should help children grasp the distinction between personal knowledge, on the one side, and "what is taken to be known" by the culture, on the other.	

Figure 1. Illustration of four dominant models of mind and pedagogy, adapted from Bruner (1996).

The perspectives of teachers in supporting learning in the most marginalized contexts have not sufficiently been understood. Buckler (2015) studied quality of teaching against the goals teachers set for themselves in culturally diverse contexts of South Africa. Although some studies (see Buckler, 2015) have highlighted the need to equip teachers better to translate contextual factors into effective pedagogical practices, none of them have given an insider's view of how it is to support children from the most marginalized communities. Understanding teachers' folk pedagogies and how they are linked to culture may function as a constraint to more effective teaching and may help to construct more powerful knowledge than is readily available in the culture (Lee & Walsh, 2004) as well as enforce implementation of reformed policies (Jorgensen, Grootenboer, Niesche & Lerman, 2010). Focusing on the

perceptions of the pre-primary grade one teachers and school principals, this study investigated how teachers describe their folk pedagogy concerning the child's mind and how its growth and development can be best supported. By choosing a qualitative research design, we wanted to capture a rich understanding of teaching and learning in such contexts; something that is currently not well covered in the African research literature on child development.

Methodological Approach

This study is based on an epistemological assumption that research which is interested in understanding people has to take into account multiple truths and realities that emerge from their historical, cultural, social and political contexts. The study aimed to reveal the views of individuals who are insiders to the living context and hence, applied a case study methodology (Yin, 2003; Stake, 1995). The case study methodology was selected because it allows consideration of a broad range of contextual conditions, such as culture and work environment, essential to understanding the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2003). Through socio-constructivist and socio-cultural lenses, the study explored how teachers perceive the child's mind and its development (Vygotsky, 1978) by analyzing insider views qualitatively and comparing them with existing theories.

Settings and Participants

Namibia presented a suitable context for this study due to the educational marginalization that characterizes its education system (MoHSS, 2014). When selecting one of the fourteen regions as the setting for the research, several risk factors of marginalization such as high poverty, high number of orphans and vulnerable children, indigenous communities, level of remoteness or distance to towns, high repetition of grades, high dropout rates and generally low school performance compared to other regions were used as variables (MoE, 2013a). The author requested assistance from the Ministry of Education to identify schools which would be considered as serving educationally marginalized communities in the selected region, as per the national policies (MoE, 2015; MoE, 2013b). All the three schools shared some similarities concerning the communities they served, such as remote rural location, poor access to services and general poverty. Within the schools, the study focused on pre-primary phase in order to understand the first transition from home to school context; a phase during which repetition of grades, dropping out and poor school performance are common in Namibia (UNICEF, 2011).

Nine teachers (three principals, three grade one teachers and three pre-primary teachers) were identified as key informants with assistance from the school principals. The participants, Mary, Susan, Serah, Calvin, Sylvester, George, Mona, Elizabeth and Lisa (pseudonyms), were purposefully selected because they possessed in-depth knowledge of the research topic within its real-life context (Yin, 2003) by being involved in the administration of pre-primary education, grade one transition and actual delivery of pre-primary education. In order to maintain anonymity, teachers' work contexts and job descriptions are not described in detail.

Data Collection and Analysis

Interviews were conducted to gain insights on the views of teachers (Yin, 2003). Prior to the research, all needed permits were acquired. The interviews took place in the school premises in English and were audio-recorded. Interview questions such what characterizes a well-raised child and what kind of practices are needed to raise children were asked to uncover teachers' folk pedagogies in their specific political, social, historical and personal realities (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The interview questions followed a case study protocol, yet, allowing key informants to have time and space to elaborate their perspectives (Yin, 2003).

Recordings were transcribed and organized for analysis. The pattern-matching technique of Campbell (1975) was used to analyze the data both inductively and deductively. First, the author focused on each teacher's descriptions of learning. Second, a list of initial codes was generated (i.e., surprising codes, unusual codes and codes that were linked to the larger theoretical perspectives), followed by a search for patterns among codes. The researcher took into account multiple truths and realities that emerged from the voices of each teacher, searching for common patterns but highlighting unique or different views where they were evident. In the deductive phase of the analysis, these patterns were reviewed (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen & Kyngäs, 2014) for improved accuracy and against Bruner's (1996) theory of folk pedagogy which focuses on two aspects of the nature of the mind and how this mind develops and grows. The goal was not so much to understand individuals but to contextualize each teacher and their views of learning within the broader culture, to see through their reflection into the underlying cultural values and practices, and to see how their teaching approaches are culturally constrained (Lee & Walsh, 2004).

Findings

The study reports what is the nature of the mind and how it develops by presenting dominant descriptions from nine teachers and highlighting unique or opposing views from individuals. All teachers had completed their basic education partly or fully in a rural and traditional African setting and many described experiences of the struggle of growing up and schooling in poverty. They were all Namibians and spoke one or more local languages in addition to English, the official lingua franca of the country. Their teaching experience varied extensively from less than a year to more than 20 years.

What The Mind is Like

Teachers shared a common view that the mind is a blank slate to receive the "right" knowledge. The "right" knowledge enabled children to become knowledgeable and informed. It was seen as the responsibility of parents, teachers and persons of authority to "fill" the mind of children with the "right" information because, as elaborated by Susan (pre-primary teacher), "the child does not have knowledge that much" when they enter school. According to Serah (pre-primary teacher "but if you are educated, people know that you are having something. Then you will be regarded as a person also." The same sentiment was expressed by George (a Grade 1 teacher) "I think education is the best equalizer because if someone is educated, you happen to do things the right way. You know the wrong and the right things."

The potential of the mind to utilize the knowledge and grow, was unanimously perceived to be fixed. The capabilities and skills were described as built-in characteristics which the children are born with. The mind of a child was either seen to be strong or weak, and this fixed potential determined whether the children will succeed.

> At the same level, then you teach, you give them whatever you give. Whoever will grasp anything; that thing which you grasped is what will help you. So I think it's very true [that education is the best equalizer], because you are all given the same opportunity (Susan, Pre-primary teacher).

Mary did not only think that "the child is talented, if she is having something in the head". She also noted that if a child is poor, at his family there, he is also poor in the class", thereby connecting weak performance to poor socio-economic living conditions.

Development of the Mind

Teachers had a common view that the mind develops through social interaction where right behaviour is enforced through communication between the teacher and the learner. Except for teachers who shared the same mother tongue with their learners, three of the teachers were frustrated with constraints brought about by the language barrier to the development process. In one instance, the teacher had a different mother tongue than the official medium of instruction used by the school, which also was different from that of the mother tongue of the majority of learners. Teachers who shared similar scenarios could not communicate well with learners; learners did not understand what they were saying which led to misunderstanding and enforced a negative classroom atmosphere. Some teachers concluded that no quality education can be provided in their school because the mother tongue of the children was not used.

> I wish I could be trained how to go about these learners. Like their mother tongue. Because you know these beginners, they need to be taught in their mother tongue. You will struggle telling them stuff. You show some actions do this and do this, but you will see that only a few will understand what you mean. What is the problem? They don't understand. It would be better if I would explain to them in their mother tongue, then it could be better (Mary, Grade 1 teacher).

The mother tongue was seen as a guarantee for effective communication. This included practicing the use of culturally-appropriate language by greeting elders, following instructions without questions and showing appreciation by clapping hands and kneeling down. Language was seen as an important part of the development process: Learning to use language that was polite, respectful towards others contributed to social cohesion and community life. By enforcing an attitude of respect and encouraging the ability to listen, recite, imitate and memorize, children were not only believed to develop their minds for academic reasons but to become contributors to cultural systems around them. Elizabeth, (a principal) said: "First of all, you must have respect. Respect should not only be shown to teachers. But you should respect even the learners in the class. Because when you respect them, they will also respect you. Another principal (Calvin) drew from his own experience:

> Why did you succeed at school? I respected all the rules and regulations of any institution in which I attended. Because I was respecting the rules and regulations, I was always afraid not to violate whatever is put in place

Two key informants, Calvin and Mona, emphasized that chores concerning cleanliness and proper dressing are important for children. Practicing household chores, according to Mona, was a way to learn valued skills and attitudes of responsibility:

> Children must know that after two days, they have to wash their trouser. If it is a weekend, they have to wash their school bags. Kids are too playful and they forget. When they come from school, as a parent you have to ask them to wash their uniform. You should not stop them from playing either, because they learn from playing also.

The younger teachers and the older teachers had different views on how to best develop the mind of a child when it comes to learning. The younger teachers encouraged learners to talk in the classroom, used pictures and objects as part of teaching which they considered to be the core of a learner-centred approach. The observations of the younger teachers' classroom practice confirmed a more teacher- than child-oriented pedagogical practice. One older teacher highlighted story telling as a very positive experience used to develop children's social mind as it utilized children's natural imagination and enforced the local values and practices.

> Your parents will tell you stories of what happened. And if they saw that you were stubborn, they would usually ask you to go to collect firewood so that when you come back, they will tell you stories around the fire. And then, just there, you may be young but you will realize that what was happening in the story was what you used to do. So that behaviour is wrong. I am not supposed to do it. Because what happened to this boy in the story, because he was stubborn, he was eaten by the giant (Elizabeth, Principal)

The young teachers considered it more important to construct teaching on formal books rather than folk stories as explained by Mona, a recent graduate of pre-primary education:

> Last year I told them a story. Then I asked why are you not telling me what I told you? You don't know? Or you don't want my stories? Others said, yes, we don't want your stories teacher. What stories do you want? We want to hear about the jackals, those old stories. Do you know that jackal speaks, a cat speaks? So why do you want the stories for cats and jackals? Do you know that they speak? No, they don't speak,

> teacher. I know they don't have books that suit them, but at least I chose for them books that have pictures. Otherwise I would just be telling them without having pictures. Because children they learn with pictures. No, I am giving you these stories, so you learn something from those stories. Grandmother tells you that jackal speaks.

As opposed to young teachers who saw little academic value in traditional knowledge, the old teachers wished they could borrow from the past into the new system as the learner-centred approach was not something they valued.

> But now, the learners are the people who act more than the teacher. Now it is learner-centred. But to me our [education system] was better. Because you know when you do wrong things, you used to be sjambocked (corporal punishment). But now, a learner can insult a teacher, there is nothing that you can do (Mary, Grade 1 teacher)

Learner-centeredness was described to be an approach where children are doing and saying more than the teachers as opposed to the traditional approach in which teachers are talking and listened to. Teachers were concerned that the new approach would support social behaviour which was not considered appropriate in the community.

Social Mind: Observing and Interpreting the Development of the Mind

Social behaviour was a key characteristic that teachers' observed to determine the nature and development of a child's mind. Against familiar social behaviours in the culture of the teacher, children were observed for the way they interacted, interpreted and acted out in social situations.

> A well-raised child cannot insult others, cannot beat others, because those are the things you have to tell your child. You have to play nicely with others; you have to respect people that are older than you. Not getting angry. When you see an elder, greet her in a nice way (Mona, Pre-primary teacher)

Ability to adhere to the cultural norms and social expectations such as expressing respect by following the instructions from elderly persons was perceived as an indicator of a well-developed mind.

> If a learner cannot identify that this is an elderly person, this is a younger person, how will he get instruction and follow

> orders given by all these levels? A child if he doesn't know the difference between these, is easily influenced by peers, in a wrong way (Sylvester, Principal)

Two teachers, Mary and Susan, whose linguistic and socio-cultural background differed significantly from that of their learners, had difficulties in understanding and interpreting the nature of the mind of their learners. They felt that the social behaviour of their learners was unacceptable and influenced negatively their growth.

> They are not the same like us where we come from. Because what I used to see here, you will see that a child will share a room with the parents, which is not good. I don't know but to my culture, it's not good. Children cannot be raised in a good way if you do it like that (Mary, Grade 1 teacher)

> Like for example if the kid is refusing to do anything then you just do a little bit of (demonstrates corporal punishment), the kid will just walk away from class. Or he will just fight with you. So I don't know. I don't know if this thing is coming from the parents or this is how the kids are raised (Susan, Pre-primary teacher).

Even though Mary and Susan wanted to treat everyone equally, they did not know how to handle learners whose approach appeared to be different from theirs. All teachers emphasized that the "right" pedagogical practices were found in books and other documents of the ministry which they were responsible for implementing. None of the teachers mentioned giving feedback concerning the challenges in implementing those practice in their contexts. Teachers had knowledge and experience in using the formal pre-primary teacher manual, principal guidelines and syllabus. None of the participants mentioned using or being aware of policies concerning educationally marginalized children and special provisions concerning their education.

Discussion

This study investigated how teachers describe their folk pedagogy concerning the child's mind and how its growth and development can be best supported. Contexts of teaching were in many ways similar to their own schooling experience, with the exception of four teachers who were teaching in socio-culturally unique communities. Teachers' folk pedagogies portrayed the child's mind as a blank receptacle, ready to be filled. Children were believed to have little knowledge capital

prior to starting school which is why teachers saw no need to utilize traditional knowledge. As illustrated by a recent graduate in pre-primary education, teachers preferred to use modern books regardless of the fact that the children wished for traditional folk stories. Perceiving, feeling and thinking are elements of learning which belong together and it is one of the functions of a culture to keep them related and together for example through folk stories by which our experience is given coherence and cultural relevance (Bruner, 1986). This finding demonstrates how relevance of content is lost in the process of teaching which may contribute to poor performance in marginalized contexts (Hays, 2011).

The mind was perceived to have a fixed capacity. Teachers' ability to assist learners were limited to learners' in-born talents and capacity. Pedagogically they resolved this dilemma by hoping that transferring the right content to the empty minds, some of the "right" information would remain in the receptacle mind. This suggests that teachers may conclude the potential of child's mind based on culturally-constrained judgements which can be detrimental for children who cannot relate to the learning contents. The fact that the responses from experienced teachers and recent graduates portray similar scenarios suggests that teacher education has failed to challenge folk pedagogies with more recent understanding of the dynamic nature of the mind.

Memorizing, repeating facts and imitating behaviours emerged as key strategies in developing the mind. Receiving instructions and following them through, was recognized as a valuable competence at different levels of the social system. Some older teachers opposed the learner-centered approach as an approach that allows children to grow disobedient and has no value within their communities that deeply values respect. These strategies contradict with the learner-centered approach promoted by the Ministry of Education which emphasize learners as active constructors of their own learning. The enforcement of inclusive education policies may also be questioned by the fact that none of the teachers were familiar with the policy guidelines concerning educationally marginalized children; something which is rarely noted in national reports highlighting the need for sensitization (UNICEF, 2015). This finding confirms that when people encounter beliefs and practices different from their folk pedagogies, they tend to make judgments and draw conclusions in order to make sense of their observation (Ellis, 1996). Without sufficient mediation between the opposing views, the wide gap between old and new set of beliefs leads to misunderstandings that may compromise the learning process.

At this point it is important to ask how teachers' folk pedagogies, as described above, may function as a constraint to more effective teaching. The models of mind and pedagogy that teachers described reflects the externalist theories as

presented by Bruner (1996). Unlike internalist theories which prompt deeper thinking and learning, the findings revealed that teachers' models of mind mirror outdated understanding of human development which may explain pedagogical approaches and practices that did not support children to become active agents in their own learning. The ideologies of externalist theories, such as lack of mutual dialogue, were also evident in interaction with other stakeholders in the community of practice. Teachers described their role as authorities towards the children and families who were perceived to have little to bring to the education system. In the same way teachers perceived their role below the authorities in the ministerial structure. Teachers chose to keep the weaknesses in education delivery for themselves, demonstrating little willingness to question the system or suggest changes. This was evident from the way teachers handled weaknesses in the delivery of the mother tongue education.

Language is a primary element of development and the joint and mutual use of language gives a huge step in the direction of understanding other minds. When teachers interacted with children who did not share the means for this mutual exchange, they regressed, became suspicious which bordered on the paranoid as noted by Bruner (1986, 63). Teachers were aware that the unspoken language barrier compromised hugely the learning and interaction both with the children and families but considered it a priority to implement policies exactly as written, with little questioning and reflection regarding implementation within regional or national structures. By doing so, they preferred to do the right thing in the eyes of the authorities, rather than the children.

Teachers folk pedagogies, which were rooted on understanding of mind as a receptacle and developed through memorizing, repeating facts and imitating those who were perceived to be higher in the hierarchical system, limited the possibilities to understand and solve contextual challenges and build meaningful interaction. To tackle the challenge of social inclusion, teachers should be encouraged to have deliberate, critical, creative and informative reflections from the field which guide future practice and policy. This finding agrees with other studies (Daiute, Ataman, & Kovács-Cerovic, 2015) that field-based experience has not sufficiently informed education reform.

It is the social mind that connected home and school environments to each other, building on existing values and practices that children brought from communities, except for contexts in which teachers did not share the same socio-cultural backgrounds with the children. In such contexts, teacher's culturally-constraint beliefs and inability to mediate between opposing cultural viewpoints created a barrier for learning and effective home-school interaction. As opposed to

Howarth and Andreouli (2015) who reported on teachers actively finding solutions to integrate children from marginalized context, this study revealed that the teachers' ability to understand their own cultural position to mediate in such situations was limited and often dismissive of other theories of cognitive development as also noted by Bahou (2015). By exposing teachers' hidden models of the mind, it may be possible to transform outdated folk pedagogies with evidence-based models that support effective teaching and learning. The findings of this study add to the increasing interest to move towards creating more comprehensive teacher education programs which emphasize equity and social justice (Kaur, 2012). The process of quality teaching is under-acknowledged in the wider debate surrounding education quality (Buckler, 2015), and understanding teachers' folk pedagogy can provide insight into this process. The findings may be limited in terms of the number of informants, however, through the rich descriptions which appears very similar across the informants, we wanted to portray an insider's view. More research is needed to explore possibilities to build African theories of child development that build on social competencies and responsibility.

CONCLUSION

Teachers are steered in their work of helping children learn about the world by notions of folk pedagogy. This study suggests that folk pedagogies are powerful resources that teachers draw from in their decision-making. The assumptions of the mind underlie attempts at teaching, but they may not necessarily benefit the child. If teachers draw too much on the folk pedagogies (e.g. the mind having a fixed state), they may indirectly limit the child's learning potential. Teachers' folk pedagogies are largely rooted in traditional cultural beliefs and practices, regardless of the length of their teaching career. This reality presents two important notions.

First, there is a need to address these findings in the context of educational reform, especially the extent to which education innovations have engaged with existing folk pedagogies of Namibian teachers. Concepts of learner-centeredness, learning through play and other approaches promoted in the dominant discourse on early childhood were not only absent from teachers' reflections and practices, but were perceived as foreign and, in some instances, unwelcome. Teacher training must provide opportunities for student teachers to discover their culturally and socially formed folk pedagogies, understand the kind of values and practices that underpin them and debate their new constructions in the light of recent theories of child development for improved practice.

Secondly, if teachers are not able to view children's situations and development from the perspective of meta-cognition, this may impede learning and promote injustice within the educational context. Teachers of children coming from socio-culturally and historically- marginalized contexts need to be equipped with cultural mediation competencies, especially in contexts where they are serving. A good starting point would be to strengthen a culture of mutual dialogue and agency of all stakeholders involved in solving contextual dilemmas. A common language in which the teacher can communicate not only with learners but their families, is a crucial part of this process. Lastly, more research is needed to explore possibilities to build more African theories of child development that build on social competencies and responsibility.

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