Association between teachers' beliefs about make-believe play and quality of interactions observed in kindergarten

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ABSTRACT

- Kindergartners' educational success have been associated with a focus on make-believe play in the classroom and also with the quality of classroom interactions.
- Make-believe play:
  - Important now in formation of the child’s mind,
  - Affects the development of children's abstract and symbolic thinking, and their ability to engage in intentional and voluntary behaviors (Bodrova, 2008).
- Quality of classroom interactions:
  - Contribute to promote children’s educational success (Sailor et al., 2013).
  - Teachers’ interventions support the development of the make-believe play in classroom (Bodrova, 2008; Vygotsky, 1978), which is influenced by their beliefs;

- Teacher’s beliefs

It seems relevant to identify if a link exist between the teachers’ beliefs about make-believe play and the quality of interactions in kindergarten. Therefore, this research has three objectives:

1. Examine the teachers’ beliefs about make-believe play,
2. Evaluate the quality of the interactions in 5-Year-Old kindergarten in Quebec (Canada);
3. Examine the association between the teachers’ beliefs about make-believe play and the quality of interactions in kindergarten.

OBJECTIVES

1. Examine the teachers’ beliefs about make-believe play.
2. Evaluate the quality of the interactions in 5-Year-Old kindergarten in Quebec (Canada);
3. Examine the association between the teachers’ beliefs about make-believe play and the quality of interactions in kindergarten.

RESULTS

Objective 1.

Teachers believe in the importance of adult support in make-believe play, while giving less importance to academic focus.

Objective 2.

Quality of interactions show a medium-high level of emotional support, and a low level of learning support.

Objective 3.

- Correlation analyses were conducted:
  - The variable Academic Focus (beliefs) is positively correlated (r = 0.53, p < 0.05) with the variable Emotional Support (quality of interactions) (Table 1).
  - The variable Academic Focus is correlated with the dimensions "Teacher sensitivity" in the domain of Emotional Support.
  - Simple linear regression analysis were conducted.
  - The variable Academic Focus is a predictor of the Emotional Support and explains 25% (R = 0.5, R2 = 0.25, p < 0.05) of its variance. The F-test indicates that this prediction is significant (F(1, 13) = 5.13, p < 0.05).

Table 1. Means and correlations - Teachers’ beliefs and quality of classroom interactions

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<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
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<td>Academic Focus</td>
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<td>Quality of classroom interaction (Domains)</td>
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IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Cemere (2005) suggest to look at teacher more closely and to look not only at their understandings of play and make-believe play, but also at how was play addressed in their undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Thus, this study reinforces the idea of focusing on initial and ongoing training that addresses beliefs about play in order to promote children’s educational success;
- Quality of instructional support specifically should be deepen in initial and ongoing training since it remains lower than the other domains;
- It may help to do further action-research project about pedagogical practices in kindergarten, to help transfer knowledge into practice, in order to promote the quality of interactions in classroom.

REFERENCES