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Child-to-Child Methodologies for Inclusive Learning in Government Primary Schools in Uganda

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how Child-to-Child methodologies promote inclusive learning in government primary schools of Adjumani District in Uganda, guided by Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory and Rawls' Social Justice Theory. A qualitative exploratory case study design was employed, utilising classroom observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis of lesson plans and schemes of work to gather comprehensive insights from teachers and learners. Findings indicate that teachers primarily utilise cooperative learning and mixed-ability grouping strategies to foster peer collaboration and support diverse learners. However, the study identified significant challenges in implementation, including inconsistent methodology application across subjects, inadequate adaptation for learners with special needs, and a disconnect between lesson planning and classroom practice. These barriers were compounded by large class sizes and resource constraints, limiting the potential of Child-to-Child approaches to achieve inclusive education goals. The study contributes to inclusive education discussion by revealing how contextual factors influence the effectiveness of peer-learning strategies in refugee-hosting primary schools. Key findings highlight disparities between policy aspirations and classroom realities, particularly regarding teacher preparedness and systemic support structures. The research emphasises the need for enhanced teacher professional development focused on practical, context-specific implementation of Child-to-Child methodologies, improved lesson planning integration, and stronger school-based support systems. Recommendations include developing exemplary lesson plans that demonstrate progressive integration of peer-learning skills, establishing peer mentoring networks among teachers, and advocating for policy adjustments to address structural barriers. Future research should investigate the long-term impacts of these methodologies on both academic and social outcomes for diverse learners, assess their effectiveness across different educational contexts, and examine cultural factors in peer-learning dynamics. Addressing these gaps will inform evidence-based practices and policy decisions to optimise inclusive education through Child-to-Child approaches in primary schools.

INTRODUCTION

In the pursuit of inclusive and equitable quality education as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), there is growing recognition of the need for learner-centred pedagogies that promote collaboration, engagement, and equity in diverse classrooms (UNESCO, 2020). The Child-to-Child (CtC) methodology, which emphasises peer-mediated learning, cooperative group work, and reciprocal teaching, has emerged as a key strategy for fostering inclusive learning environments, particularly in settings with high learner diversity (Schreiber & Valle, 2013). In Uganda, where government primary schools face challenges such as large class sizes, refugee integration, and varying learner abilities, Child-to-Child approaches hold significant potential for improving learning outcomes (UNICEF, 2016).

The Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) has promoted learner-centred methodologies, including Child-to-Child strategies, as part of its competency-based curriculum reforms (NCDC, 2019). However, implementation remains inconsistent due to persistent teacher-centred practices, insufficient training, and resource constraints (Kwesiga, 2021). Teachers play a pivotal role in ensuring the success of Child-to-Child methodologies, particularly through lesson planning, group structuring, and facilitation techniques that accommodate all learners.

The theoretical foundation of Child-to-Child methodologies is deeply rooted in Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory (1978), which highlights the role of peer interaction and scaffolding in cognitive development. Additionally, Rawls' Social Justice Theory (1971) underscores the importance of equity and fairness in education, aligning with the principles of inclusive learning (Terzi, 2005). These frameworks provide a lens for understanding how peer collaboration can bridge learning gaps in diverse classrooms.

Despite the policy emphasis on inclusive education, empirical evidence suggests that Ugandan teachers struggle to effectively implement Child-to-Child strategies in overcrowded and under-resourced classrooms (Dryden-Peterson, 2003). Challenges such as mixed-ability groupings, language barriers, and refugee integration further complicate classroom dynamics (Mendoza & Heymann, 2022). This gap between policy intent and classroom practice necessitates a deeper investigation into how teachers adapt Child-to-Child methodologies to promote inclusive learning in government primary schools.

This study examines how teachers in Adjumani District, Uganda, utilise Child-to-Child methodologies to enhance inclusive learning, with a focus on lesson planning strategies, peer collaboration techniques, and classroom

adaptations. By analysing teacher practices, challenges, and contextual influences, the research aims to provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening inclusive pedagogy in high-diversity, resource-constrained settings. The findings will contribute to global discourse on equitable education while informing Uganda's education policies and teacher training programs.

Problem Statement

Despite the well-documented benefits of Child-to-Child methodologies in promoting inclusive learning, peer collaboration, and academic engagement, their effective implementation in government primary schools in Adjumani District, Uganda, remains a critical challenge. The central issue this study addresses is the disconnection between teacher training in Child-to-Child strategies and their actual classroom application, particularly in diverse, resource-constrained settings.

Efforts to address this gap have been made through teacher training initiatives supported by UNICEF, the Aga Khan Foundation, and other education partners since 1998 (Drajo, 2017). However, a study by Kinyara (2019) reveals that traditional, teacher-centred methods (e.g., lecture, chalk-and-talk) still dominate classrooms, while collaborative strategies like group work, peer teaching, and mixed-ability grouping are underutilised. This persists despite evidence that Child-to-Child methodologies enhance inclusion, particularly for refugee children and learners with diverse needs (Tromp & Datzberger, 2019).

Globally, similar challenges persist, where teacher training alone has proven insufficient without context-specific adaptations, ongoing mentorship, and resource allocation (Care et al., 2017; Dryden-Peterson, 2023). Without addressing these barriers, the potential of Child-to-Child methodologies to foster inclusive learning

remains unrealised, risking continued exclusion of marginalised learners, reduced engagement, and higher dropout rates. This study, therefore, examines how teachers in Adjumani implement Child-to-Child methodologies, identifying barriers, adaptive strategies, and systemic gaps to inform targeted interventions for inclusive education.

Purpose of the Study

The study was carried out to investigate how Child-to-Child methodologies promote inclusive learning in government primary schools of Adjumani District.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the Child-to-Child methodologies employed by teachers in government primary schools to foster inclusive learning.

- To assess the integration of Child-to-Child strategies into teachers' lesson plans and schemes of work for inclusive education in government primary schools.

- To compare teaching practices between trained and untrained teachers in implementing Child-to-Child methodologies in government primary schools.

- To explore learners' perspectives on Child-to-Child methodologies used by teachers to promote inclusive learning in government primary schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

The theoretical foundation of Child-to-Child (Child-to-Child) methodologies is anchored in Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory (1978), which emphasises that learning is a socially mediated process where peer interaction and scaffolding play a central role in cognitive development. Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of

Proximal Development (ZPD) explains how collaborative learning enables more capable peers or teachers to support less proficient learners, thereby enhancing knowledge acquisition and skill development (Vygotsky, 1978; Harland, 2003). This theory directly supports Child-to-Child approaches such as peer teaching, group work, and cooperative learning as they create structured opportunities for learners to construct knowledge together through dialogue and shared problem solving (Gillies & Boyle, 2010).

Complementing this perspective, Rawls' Social Justice Theory (1971) provides an ethical framework for inclusive education, stressing the principles of equity and fairness in access to learning opportunities (Terzi, 2005). Rawls' theory argues that educational systems must prioritise the needs of marginalised learners, including refugees, children with disabilities, or those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to ensure just learning outcomes (Artiles, Kozleski & Waitoller, 2011). In the context of Adjumani, where classrooms face high diversity and resource limitations, Rawls' theory reinforces the importance of Child-to-Child methodologies in promoting equitable participation and reducing exclusion (Tromp & Datzberger, 2021).

Child-to-Child Methodologies and Inclusive Learning

Research demonstrates that Child-to-Child methodologies, such as peer tutoring and cooperative learning, play a vital role in creating inclusive classroom environments. Studies in Portugal and Germany show that when teachers implement collaborative strategies like group discussions and peer assessment, learners with special needs develop stronger social competencies and feel more integrated into the class community (César & Santos, 2006; Kistner et al., 2015). These approaches align with social constructivist principles, where peer interaction serves as scaffolding for cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). However, most evidence comes from

developed nations, leaving a gap in understanding how these methods function in resource-constrained settings like Adjumani, where large class sizes and refugee populations present unique challenges.

The effectiveness of Child-to-Child methodologies depends heavily on teacher facilitation and classroom dynamics. While these strategies promote knowledge sharing and social inclusion (Marzouki, Idrissi & Bennani, 2017), their success is often hindered by negative peer interactions like bullying or exclusion (Marlina et al., 2019). In Uganda's context, where inclusive education research has focused mainly on disability rather than broader diversity (Lambrecht, 2020), there is limited understanding of how teachers adapt Child-to-Child approaches for mixed-ability classrooms with refugee learners. This study addresses this gap by examining the practical implementation in government primary schools in Adjumani.

Integration of Child-to-Child Strategies into Teachers' Lesson Plans and Schemes of Work for Inclusive Education

Effective lesson planning is crucial for the successful implementation of Child-to-Child methodologies in inclusive classrooms. Studies from Iran and Zimbabwe show that when teachers deliberately incorporate collaborative strategies into their schemes of work and lesson plans, they better accommodate diverse learner needs (Nesari & Heidari, 2014; Musingafi et al., 2015). However, these studies focused on secondary education and more resourced contexts, leaving unanswered how primary teachers in settings like Adjumani integrate peer learning approaches into their planning, given extreme teacher-pupil ratios and material shortages.

Research indicates that inclusive lesson planning should balance whole-class objectives with individual learner needs (Young & Luttenegger, 2014). Yet there is little evidence showing whether Ugandan teachers' preparation strategies explicitly consider Child-to-Child methodologies for inclusion, particularly in refugee-hosting schools.

This represents a critical gap, as unique classroom conditions in Adjumani may require specialised adaptations of these approaches that current literature does not address. The current study investigates this integration within the specific context of Adjumani.

Teaching Practices between Trained and Untrained Teachers in Implementing Child-to-Child Methodologies

Teacher training significantly influences the adoption of Child-to-Child methodologies for inclusive education. Studies in South Africa and Kenya demonstrate that continuous professional development helps teachers develop innovative, learner-centred approaches and improves their confidence in managing diverse classrooms (Kempen & Steyn, 2016; Keitany & Kiprop, 2020). However, research also cautions that training must be contextually relevant and supported by follow-up mechanisms to be effective in low-resource settings (Wheeler, 2001). This raises questions about how training translates to practice in the challenging environment of Adjumani.

Evidence suggests that untrained teachers often struggle with inclusive implementation, lacking strategies to address varied learner needs (Talmor & Feigin, 2005). In Adjumani, where some teachers have received child-to-child methodology training while others have not, understanding these competency differences is crucial for improving inclusive practices. This study will compare teaching approaches between trained and untrained teachers, providing insights into how professional development could be optimised for Uganda's primary schools.

Learners' Perspectives on Child-to-Child Methodologies and Inclusive Learning

Learner feedback consistently shows their preference for interactive, peer-based learning approaches over traditional teacher-centred methods. Studies in Ireland and Bangladesh found that learners respond positively to strategies like group work and role play, which increase engagement and make learning more enjoyable (O'Brien, 2015; Rahman et al., 2019). These findings suggest that Child-to-Child methodologies align well with learner preferences for active participation and social interaction in the classroom.

However, existing research has primarily examined post-primary learners' perspectives, leaving a gap in understanding primary school children's views, particularly in diverse settings like Adjumani. Given that learner attitudes significantly impact educational outcomes (Gorard & See, 2011), this study investigates how primary learners in Adjumani perceive Child-to-Child methodologies. The findings will reveal whether these approaches effectively promote inclusion from learners' perspectives in Uganda's unique context.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative exploratory case study design to investigate how Child-to-Child methodologies promote inclusive learning in government primary schools of Adjumani District. The qualitative design was selected to capture the nuanced experiences and perspectives of both teachers and learners regarding inclusive education practices. Grounded in a constructivist paradigm, the methodology prioritised understanding authentic classroom dynamics through direct engagement, detailed observations, and in-depth interviews (Creswell, 2014). Multiple data collection methods were employed, including classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and analysis of lesson plans and schemes of work. This methodological triangulation enabled a comprehensive investigation of how teachers implement peer learning strategies to support inclusive education.

Participants were purposively selected from two government primary schools (Primary School A and B), chosen not only for their diverse learner populations and teachers' prior inclusive education training but also for their representation of varying

academic performance levels and institutional commitment to inclusive practices, as evidenced by their participation in national inclusive education initiatives. The sample comprised six teachers (three per school) and twenty-four learners (stratified by gender/class level); a sample size deemed adequate for in-depth qualitative insights (Gundumogula, 2021). Teacher selection prioritised experience with Child-to-Child methodologies, while middle/upper primary learners were selected for their developmental capacity to articulate experiences; research instruments (interviews, observations, document analysis) were refined through expert review and pilot testing to ensure validity and reliability.

Data analysis followed established thematic analysis procedures to identify recurring patterns across transcripts, field notes, and documents (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The coding process was conducted manually and emergent themes according to key study focus were organised: teacher instructional practices, integration of methodologies in lesson planning, impacts of teacher training, and learner perspectives. This

manual approach ensured nuanced engagement with raw data and contextual interpretation, aligning with the study's small-scale, exploratory design. Classroom observations and lesson plan reviews provided further contextual understanding of teachers' strategies in relation to inclusive learning objectives. The study adhered to rigorous ethical standards, securing institutional approvals, written teacher consent, parental permission, and learner assent. Confidentiality protections included data anonymisation and secure storage protocols. This comprehensive methodological approach ensured study credibility while addressing the unique challenges of conducting research in refugee-hosting educational contexts.

RESULTS

Demographics Information

The study involved twelve teachers (six from each school) and twenty-four learners (twelve from each school) across two government primary schools in Adjumani District. Table 1 presents the key demographic characteristics of teacher participants:

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Teacher Participants (N=12).

Characteristic	Primary School A (n=6)	Primary School B (n=6)	Total (%)
Gender			
Male	5 (83%)	5 (83%)	10 (83%)
Female	1 (17%)	1 (17%)	2 (17%)
Training Status			
Trained in Child-to-Child	4	4	8 (67%)
Untrained	2	2	4 (33%)
Class Level			
P.4 Teachers	2	2	4 (33%)
P.5 Teachers	2	2	4 (33%)
P.6 Teachers	2	2	4 (33%)

Key demographic findings revealed a significant gender imbalance, with male teachers comprising 83% of participants across both schools. Regarding professional development, 67% of participants had received training in Child-to-Child methodologies through various education partners. The sample was

evenly distributed across primary levels 4-6, with four teachers representing each grade level.

Child-to-Child Methodologies and Inclusive Learning

The findings revealed that teachers employed various Child-to-Child methodologies to foster inclusive learning, with cooperative learning and mixed-ability grouping emerging as the most commonly used approaches. Teachers who had received training on inclusive education demonstrated more intentional implementation of these strategies, carefully structuring group roles and interactions to ensure participation from all learners. Classroom observations indicated that techniques like think-pair-share and reciprocal teaching proved particularly effective in engaging typically reticent learners and those with learning difficulties. However, several persistent gaps were evident in implementation. There was inconsistent application of methodologies across different subject areas, with teachers favouring certain approaches for particular subjects without clear pedagogical justification. Many teachers struggled to adequately adapt these methods for learners with special needs, often treating them as an afterthought rather than intentionally designing inclusive activities from the outset. Monitoring of group dynamics remained inadequate, with teachers frequently failing to ensure equitable participation among all group members. Teachers consistently cited large class sizes and insufficient instructional time as major barriers to effective implementation.

Analysis of lesson plans and schemes of work revealed that while the majority of teachers incorporated Child-to-Child activities in their planning, the depth and clarity of implementation strategies varied significantly. Teachers who had received targeted training demonstrated more structured approaches, explicitly detailing group formation techniques and facilitation methods in their plans. In contrast, classroom observations highlighted a recurring gap between intended and enacted practices, with many lessons diverging from the planned methodologies. Only a small proportion of observed sessions fully reflected the principles outlined in teachers' written preparations, suggesting systemic challenges in translating training into consistent classroom application. Other significant challenges included the lack of differentiation strategies within group work activities, leaving some learners either overwhelmed or under-challenged. Many teachers neglected to properly prepare learners for their roles in peer-learning scenarios, assuming they would naturally understand how to collaborate effectively. Perhaps most critically, there was minimal reflection on the effectiveness of different methodologies, with teachers continuing to use the same approaches regardless of their demonstrated impact. Teachers emphasised the pressing need for more practical, hands-on training that would help them adapt these approaches to their specific classroom contexts and constraints.

Integration of Child-to-Child Strategies into Lesson Planning

Examination of lesson plans and schemes of work revealed varying levels of integration of Child-to-Child methodologies into teachers' formal planning processes. Teachers who had received training showed markedly better alignment between their planning documents and actual classroom practice, with the majority including specific peer-learning objectives and detailed procedures compared to only a small fraction of their untrained colleagues. However, several persistent weaknesses emerged in how these methodologies were incorporated into planning. There was little evidence of intentional progression in collaborative skills development across terms or year groups, with activities often appearing as isolated exercises rather than part of a coherent sequence. References to assessing the outcomes of peer-learning activities were conspicuously absent from most planning documents. Perhaps most worryingly, adaptations for learners with special educational needs were rarely specified in advance, despite being crucial for genuine inclusion. Teachers frequently expressed frustration that an overcrowded curriculum left

insufficient time for the meaningful peer interactions they wanted to facilitate.

Classroom observations identified several critical gaps between planning and implementation. Teachers often dramatically underestimated the time required for quality peer-learning activities, leading to rushed or truncated exercises. The use of visual aids and concrete materials to support peer learning was inconsistent, despite their proven value for diverse learners. Opportunities for learners to reflect on and improve their collaborative processes were notably scarce. The most successful implementations shared common characteristics: explicit learning objectives that addressed both academic content and collaborative skills, clear success criteria for group work, and structured mechanisms for peer feedback. Many teachers requested access to exemplar lesson plans demonstrating how to effectively integrate Child-to-Child methodologies, as well as opportunities to observe colleagues implementing these approaches in their classrooms. The findings underscore that while many teachers recognise the value of peer-learning strategies, they require much more substantial support to translate this recognition into effective, well-planned classroom practice that benefits all learners.

Teaching Practices between Trained and Untrained Teachers

The research uncovered substantial differences in how trained and untrained teachers implemented Child-to-Child methodologies in their classrooms. Teachers who had undergone professional development employed a broader repertoire of strategies, including sophisticated techniques like jigsaw activities and structured peer tutoring systems. In contrast, their untrained colleagues relied predominantly on basic, unstructured group work with limited pedagogical intentionality. Interviews revealed that trained teachers could clearly articulate the educational rationale behind their grouping decisions, connecting them to specific learning objectives and broader inclusive

education principles. However, significant implementation challenges persisted even among trained teachers. Many reported receiving inadequate follow-up support after initial training sessions, leaving them to navigate challenges alone. There was minimal structured opportunity for staff to share best practices and learn from each other's experiences. The pressure to cover extensive curriculum content often forced teachers to abandon innovative approaches in favour of more traditional, teacher-centred methods that they perceived as more time-efficient.

Classroom observations highlighted that trained teachers were more likely to establish explicit rules and defined roles for group work, actively monitor peer interactions, and provide targeted support for struggling learners during collaborative activities. Yet several critical gaps remained in their practice. Formative assessment during peer activities was inconsistently applied, with teachers missing valuable opportunities to gather evidence of learning during group work. In classrooms with refugee learners, there was insufficient adaptation to address language barriers that could hinder meaningful participation in peer-learning activities. Gender dynamics in group formation received scant attention, potentially reinforcing existing inequalities in classroom participation. Both trained and untrained teachers identified large class sizes and resource limitations as major obstacles, though trained teachers generally demonstrated more creativity and resilience in developing solutions to these challenges. The findings suggest that while training makes a significant difference, it must be ongoing, context-specific, and supported by whole-school systems to yield lasting change in classroom practice.

Learners' Perspectives on Child-to-Child Methodologies

Focus group discussions with learners revealed overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward Child-to-Child learning approaches, with learners describing group work as more engaging and effective than

individual tasks. Learners particularly favoured structured methods like think-pair-share, which allowed them to develop ideas with a partner before sharing with the class, though some expressed frustration with random groupings that sometimes paired them with disengaged or dominant peers. Learners reported significant benefits from peer-learning activities, including better understanding of concepts through peer explanations, improved social connections across different backgrounds, and increased motivation from collaborative support. However, they also identified persistent challenges, including unequal participation in groups, language barriers for refugee learners, and insufficient teacher monitoring to ensure all members contributed meaningfully. Many learners demonstrated thoughtful awareness of group dynamics, describing how they adapted their communication to support struggling peers while requesting more varied group compositions and clearer guidelines from teachers to enhance inclusion.

The discussions highlighted how implementation quality significantly influenced the effectiveness of Child-to-Child methodologies. Learners reported that the most successful group work occurred in science and social studies, where teachers provided clear instructions, assigned specific roles, and allowed adequate time for collaboration. Learners emphasised the importance of teacher facilitation, noting that active monitoring and intervention helped prevent dominant learners from monopolising discussions while encouraging quieter peers to participate. While appreciating collaborative projects, some learners expressed discomfort with peer assessment components, fearing judgment from classmates. The findings revealed a clear learner preference for structured, well-facilitated group work that balanced academic and social benefits, while also identifying key areas for improvement, including more consistent teacher support across subjects, better accommodation of diverse learning needs, and strategies to ensure all

group members actively contributed to the learning process.

DISCUSSION

The study findings demonstrate that Child-to-Child methodologies hold potential for fostering inclusive learning environments, yet their implementation faces multiple systemic challenges. As highlighted by Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory (1978), peer interactions serve as crucial scaffolding for cognitive development, particularly for reticent learners and those with learning difficulties, a finding supported by classroom observations of effective think-pair-share implementation. However, inconsistent methodology application across subjects and inadequate adaptation for special needs learners reflect gaps identified in earlier literature (Marlina et al., 2019; Tromp & Datzberger, 2021), where researchers noted similar challenges in diverse classrooms. These implementation barriers were compounded by contextual constraints like large class sizes, echoing findings from Adjumani's education reports that identified teacher-pupil ratios as a major obstacle to quality implementation.

The disconnect between teachers' planning and classroom practice mirrors concerns raised by Nesari and Heidari (2014) regarding the need for more systematic integration of collaborative strategies in lesson design. While trained teachers showed better alignment between plans and practice, particularly in specifying peer-learning objectives, the lack of progressive skill development and peer-learning assessment in schemes of work reflects the "add-on" approach to inclusion critiqued by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2017). Successful implementations that incorporated clear collaborative skill objectives and structured feedback mechanisms align with Gillies and Boyle's (2010) findings about the importance of explicit structure in cooperative learning. The teacher's requests for exemplar materials and peer observation opportunities resonate with Kwesiga's

(2021) recommendations for context-specific professional development in Ugandan schools.

The disparities between trained and untrained teachers' practices support Kempen and Steyn's (2016) findings about the transformative potential of quality teacher development. The sophisticated techniques employed by trained teachers, such as structured peer tutoring systems, demonstrate how professional learning can translate into classroom practice when grounded in social constructivist principles (Vygotsky, 1978). However, the erosion of innovative practices due to curriculum pressures and lack of follow-up support validates Wheeler's (2001) caution about implementing Western-derived methodologies in developing country contexts without sustained support systems. The observed gaps in formative assessment during group work and accommodation of language diversity reflect persistent challenges noted in inclusive education literature (Artiles et al., 2011), suggesting a need for a more comprehensive approach to teacher preparation.

Learner perspectives powerfully reinforce the social justice dimensions of inclusive education emphasised by Rawls (1971) and Terzi (2005). Learners' reported benefits, from improved conceptual understanding through peer explanation to stronger cross-cultural relationships, demonstrate the dual academic and social value of well-implemented Child-to-Child methodologies. However, their experiences with unequal participation and language barriers highlight the implementation gaps identified in earlier studies (Marlina et al., 2019), where similar issues emerged in diverse classrooms. The learners' call for clearer guidelines and more active teacher monitoring aligns with Gillies and Boyle's (2010) findings about the crucial role of teacher facilitation in successful cooperative learning. These collective findings underscore that while peer-learning approaches align strongly with inclusive education principles, their effective implementation requires addressing both pedagogical and systemic factors in resource-constrained environments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance the implementation of Child-to-Child methodologies in government primary schools, several targeted recommendations emerge from the study findings. First, teacher training programs should be strengthened to provide ongoing, practical professional development that equips educators with structured peer-learning strategies. These programs should emphasise hands-on workshops demonstrating how to adapt methodologies like think-pair-share and jigsaw techniques across different subjects while meeting diverse learner needs. Such training would address the current gaps in pedagogical justification and inconsistent application observed across subject areas.

Second, greater attention must be given to integrating Child-to-Child methodologies systematically into teachers' planning processes. Education authorities should develop and distribute exemplary lesson plans that show how to progressively build collaborative skills throughout the academic term. This intervention would help bridge the concerning disconnect between teachers' written plans and actual classroom practice, ensuring peer-learning activities are intentionally designed rather than treated as afterthoughts. Training should specifically guide teachers in including clear collaborative objectives, success criteria, and reflection opportunities in their schemes of work.

Third, schools need to establish robust support systems to sustain effective implementation. Creating peer mentoring networks would allow trained teachers to share best practices with colleagues, while simple classroom observation tools could help all teachers monitor group dynamics more effectively. These measures would address the current lack of follow-up support and inadequate monitoring of group participation

patterns. Such systems would be particularly valuable for helping teachers manage large classes and diverse learner populations.

Fourth, specific adaptations are needed to make Child-to-Child methodologies work in challenging classroom contexts. Teachers require training in low-resource strategies like role rotation systems and visual aids that can help overcome language barriers. Flexible grouping approaches should be developed to accommodate varying ability levels while promoting positive social interactions. These adaptations would help solve the persistent problems of unequal participation and exclusion identified by both teachers and learners.

Finally, system-level changes are necessary to create an enabling environment for inclusive peer-learning. Education policymakers should consider curriculum adjustments to create dedicated time for collaborative skill development. Concurrent efforts must be made to address resource constraints by reducing teacher-learner ratios and providing basic materials for group work. These structural changes would support teachers in implementing Child-to-Child methodologies more effectively, moving beyond the current limitations of overcrowded classrooms and insufficient instructional time.

Collectively, these recommendations address the full spectrum of challenges identified in the study, from individual classroom practices to systemic barriers. Their implementation would help realise the full potential of Child-to-Child methodologies as both a pedagogical approach and a means of fostering genuine inclusion in diverse primary school settings.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the potential of Child-to-Child methodologies to foster inclusive learning in government primary schools, while revealing critical gaps in implementation that hinder their effectiveness. Findings demonstrate that while peer-learning approaches like cooperative group work and think-pair-share show promise in engaging diverse learners, their success depends on careful teacher facilitation, systematic lesson planning, and ongoing professional support. The research identifies persistent challenges that include inconsistent application across subjects, inadequate adaptation for learners with special needs, and a disconnection between planning and classroom practice, all exacerbated by large class sizes and resource constraints. Based on these findings, the study recommends comprehensive teacher training, improved integration of methodologies into lesson planning, strengthened school-based support systems, contextual adaptations for diverse classrooms, and policy-level interventions to address structural barriers. These recommendations, grounded in Vygotsky's social constructivism and Rawls' principles of equity, provide a roadmap for transforming peer-learning from an occasional classroom activity into a sustainable driver of inclusive education. By addressing both pedagogical practices and systemic constraints, education stakeholders can create learning environments where all children, regardless of background or ability, benefit from the academic and social advantages of well-implemented Child-to-Child methodologies. The study ultimately underscores that inclusive education requires more than good intentions; it demands intentional, well-supported strategies adapted to the realities of resource-constrained classrooms.

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