

A Proposed Inclusive Motor Skill Intervention Programme for Pre-schoolers in Low Resources Areas in Preparation of School Readiness

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Abstract : Gross and fine motor skill difficulties among children affect their ability to learn and progress in school. Research indicates that children in low socio-economic areas are at a higher risk of motor skill difficulties, while therapy resources are limited. The Hopscotch motor skill programme is a well-researched accessible in-school intervention developed by occupational and physiotherapists through complex intervention development. The development stage of the complex intervention development model firstly included a prevalence study in a low-resourced area in the West Coast of South Africa, indicating a high prevalence with significant motor skill difficulties among pre-school children at 14.5% with fine motor skill difficulties at 24.6%. A scoping review identifies motor skill interventions for pre-school children and a proposed a framework of fundamental concepts to consider when developing a motor skill intervention. a Delphi-study considered the framework and encouraged collaboration between therapists and educators to make the programme accessible, resource and cost effective, specifically geared towards a rural, low resourced area. The results from the Delphi study, together with the proposed framework from the scoping review was used to develop the Hopscotch programme, adopting a task-shifting approach. The eight-week small-group programme is facilitated by teachers with the support of therapists. The programme aims to improve the motor skills of pre-school aged children with motor skill difficulties to promote academic readiness through obstacle courses, ball skill games and fine motor games and crafts. A randomised controlled trial is planned as a next stage to determine the preliminary effect of the programme on the motor and early academic skills of pre-school children.

Keywords : accesible learning, motor skill intervention, school readiness, task shifting

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