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Evaluation of the Curriculum for Orphaned and Abused Children and Factors Affecting its Implementation from the Perspective of Teachers

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Abstract

The aim of the present study is to evaluate the curriculum of orphaned and maltreated children and the factors affecting its implementation from the perspective of teachers. The research method was a survey. The statistical population was all care home educators and education teachers in Mazandaran province, who were selected using the convenience sampling method of 60 people. To collect data, a researcher-made questionnaire was used to evaluate the curriculum of orphaned and maltreated children and the factors affecting its implementation. The one-sample t-test and Friedman test were used to analyze the data. The results showed that in the curriculum of these children, the factors related to the teacher, learning environment, planning, teaching method, and evaluation were in a better position, respectively. And among all these factors, the teacher has the best position and the content is the weakest. Also, teachers believe that supervision and follow-up, and the school environment have the greatest impact on the education of these children, while the strategies and practices of deprivation have the least impact. Therefore, it is suggested that education and training pay more attention to appropriate content and assessment in the curriculum of these children. Also, monitoring and follow-up in schools should be taken more seriously.

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

In the education system, attention to the special needs of all students, including orphaned and maltreated children, is a key priority. Due to their unique experiences, these children require specific curricula and support programs that can help them develop holistically. The success of implementing these curricula depends on several factors, and the perspective and experience of teachers, as the main executors of the education process, play a key role in identifying and removing obstacles. In today's world, we are witnessing an increase in the number of orphaned and maltreated children who require special attention in the education system. The main goal of education is to empower these children to lead successful and independent lives. However, studies show that existing curricula often do not comprehensively and accurately respond to the specific needs of this group of children. Previous research has focused more on the psychological issues of these children and has neglected the evaluation of various aspects of the curriculum (including content, teaching methods, learning environment, teacher role, and evaluation methods) and the factors affecting their implementation from the teachers' perspective. This is despite the fact that teachers, as the main implementers of these programs, have valuable insights into their strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the curriculum for orphaned and maltreated children and the factors affecting its implementation from the teachers' perspective and seeks to answer these questions:

1. From the teachers' perspective, to what extent has the curriculum (including content, teaching, learning environment, teacher role, and evaluation) been desirable for orphaned and maltreated children?
2. From the teachers' perspective, what are the factors affecting the implementation of the curriculum for orphaned and maltreated children in school?

Method

A survey method was employed. The study population consisted of all foster home educators and teachers in Mazandaran province who directly interact with these children. Participants were selected using convenience sampling. Based on the Krejcie and Morgan table, a sample of ۶۰ individuals was selected. Data was collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire assessing the curriculum for orphaned and abused children and factors influencing its implementation. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (one-sample t-test and Friedman test).

Results

The results indicated that the teacher component, learning environment, planning, teaching and training, evaluation, and content are significant challenges in the curriculum for orphaned and abused children, with content receiving comparatively less attention. Among the curriculum components, the teacher factor exhibited the most favorable conditions, while content ranked lowest in terms of favorable conditions. Furthermore, teachers perceived supervision and follow-up, along with the school environment, as having a high impact on the education and learning of abused children, while exclusion strategies and practices had the least impact.

Discussion

In response to the first question, the research findings showed that the "content" component in the evaluation of the curriculum for orphaned and maltreated children has a more unfavorable

status than the other components (teacher, learning environment, planning, teaching and training, and evaluation). In other words, the results show that the "content" component requires more serious attention and review, while the other components are in a relatively good condition. This is while the "teacher" component has been evaluated in the best condition. In analyzing the findings of this research, it can be argued that despite the pivotal role of expert and experienced teachers in facilitating the learning process and creating a supportive and motivating environment for students, the "content" component in the curriculum for orphaned and maltreated children, compared to other components, does not have a favorable status. This indicates that despite teachers' efforts to compensate for this deficiency through extracurricular and creative activities, the existing educational content is not sufficiently adapted to the unique needs, experiences, and challenges of this group of students. In response to the second research question, the findings indicate that from the teachers' perspective, the factors of "supervision and follow-up" and "school environment" have the greatest impact on the education and learning of maltreated children. The teachers' emphasis on the importance of supervision and follow-up, as well as the school environment, not only indicates the central role of these two factors in facilitating the learning process of this group of students, but also implicitly indicates that other factors (such as school culture and strategies for eliminating exclusion) have not been effective enough in practice. In explaining the findings of this study, it can be stated that several factors in the school environment affect access to education and the quality of learning of maltreated children. However, the emphasis on monitoring and follow-up indicates that this factor is, in a way, a prerequisite and necessary condition for the effectiveness of other factors.

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