

Differentiation in key learning areas for gifted students in regular classes: A project for primary school teachers in Hong Kong

Yuen et al., 2016

Abstract

Gifted students usually require much less time spent in practising and revising basic skills; instead, they benefit greatly from opportunities to work through the curriculum at a faster pace (acceleration). Teachers currently working with mixed-ability classes do not always find it easy to differentiate their teaching approach in this way, so there is a need to facilitate in-service professional development to provide teachers with practical strategies for implementing effective differentiation for gifted learners. In response, a project for primary school teachers was organized by a university in Hong Kong. The purposes of the project were (a) to *enhance the confidence of teachers* in planning and delivering differentiated lessons in specific key learning areas (KLAs) with particular reference to gifted students; (b) to *empower teachers with knowledge and strategies* necessary for designing and implementing a differentiated curriculum in KLA domains and (c) to establish a *professional development practice* that connects local academics with schools and teachers. The project was implemented by inviting curriculum leaders, panel chairpersons and subject teachers from primary schools to attend a 3-hour lecture and a 6-hour workshop in which differentiation practices were explored. The project was later evaluated based on feedback from participants and university consultants. Overall, the feedback was positive, but suggestions are provided here for enhancing future projects of a similar nature.

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