

Teacher-created, contextually-relevant mother-tongue storybook resources to promote children's rights in Uganda

Dr. Shelley Jones¹, Kathleen Manion²

^{1,2}Royal Roads University

ABSTRACT

This presentation presents on our 5-year participatory action research project on child rights education in primary schools in Canada and Uganda which has involved developing and implementing contextually-relevant learning materials with teachers to ensure that understandings about child rights are meaningful to children living in very diverse global contexts. In our Canadian site, resources are plentiful, and English is the sole Language of Instruction (LOI). In the Ugandan sites, however, resources are scarce and few of those that are available reflect the contexts of the children or are written in the Mother Tongue (MT) of the children. The right to language and culture is set out in Art. 30 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. Pedagogical instruction in MT, especially in the early years, promotes literacy and numeracy, alongside social, emotional and intellectual development (Jones, 2022), not least because “we gain our identity and self-image from the language of our community” (NCDC, 2005, p. 50). In response, the Ugandan teachers in our study created illustrated stories (that were then digitized) that provided contextualized learning about child rights both through the content of the stories and the language in which they were available (both MT and English). These stories were shared with children, parents, and community members in Uganda, which not only served to support children's learning about their rights in two languages, but also communicated to parents and community members that their and their children's local languages and cultures are valued and respected as part of child rights education.

Keywords: child rights education, Mother Tongue resources, social change, story writing, Uganda