Using Funds of Knowledge and Personal Books to Increase Student Engagement in Literacy
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1. Introduction
Students with developmental delays in a Montessori early childhood class participated in the program outlined in "Whole Child Reading" by Natalie Hale (2016). Research was conducted to determine:

- How does accessing a student’s funds of knowledge impact the implementation and learning outcomes of the "Whole Child Reading" program?
- What effect does including funds of knowledge information in personal books have on student engagement?

2. Funds of Knowledge

*Funds of knowledge* is a term “to refer to the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzales, 2001, p. 133).

- Student knowledge is valid and culturally relevant
- Utilization may be key to student engagement (Britcher, 2009)

3. Methodology

Participants
- Three students aged 4, 5, and 6
- Selected because of a developmental delay

Data Collection
- Qualitative, action research approach (Rosman & Rallis, 2017)
- Student interest inventory through a parent survey
- Student engagement scale
- Kindergarten Entry and Exit Profile (KEEP) and Individual Growth and Development (IGDIS) assessments

Data Analysis
- Constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)

4. Findings

Using funds of knowledge information in personal books led to:

- Increased student engagement
- Increased student confidence
- Increased interest in literacy activities
- Increased academic outcomes
- Greater understanding between teachers, students and families

5. Discussion

These findings can be explained by Vygotsky’s constructivist theory (Ultanir, 2012).

- Humans construct knowledge based on previous experiences
- Learners actively engage in making their own meaning
- Students learn through active, social, experiences

6. Conclusion

By accessing and utilizing funds of knowledge information to make personal books, educators can:

- Increase their understanding of students and families
- Make materials culturally relevant and engaging
- Build student confidence and success

References