



EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHERS' TRAINING PROGRAM OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ORGANIZED BY THE QUAID-E-AZAM ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the present study was to find out the effectiveness of Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers training programs organized by Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) in the Punjab. The study was qualitative in nature and case study method was used. The data was collected from the teachers who teach at early childhood education in public schools of Lahore. One interview protocol was developed to collect data in order to measure the effectiveness of teachers training programs on Early Childhood Education (ECE). Data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings of the results showed that most of the respondents were agreed about the improvement in their performance as a result of training regarding Early Childhood Education (ECE). The result of the study showed that the teachers were appreciated and valued the benefits of training programs. The results suggested that the training programs must be conducted annually and Government take initiatives for the betterment of Early Childhood Education (ECE) program in all public schools. The study recommended that Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers training programs may reshape and improved according to need and requirements of the children.

Key words: *ECE, Effectiveness, Educational Development*

Introduction

Education is a systematic process of establishing the pillar of the society. It plays a really important role within the progress of any country around the world. Early Childhood Education (ECE) relates to the teaching of young children (formally and informally) up till the age of about eight years. Its time of remarkable brain growth, these years laid the inspiration for subsequent learning and development. Early childhood development is influenced by characteristics of the children, the family, and therefore the broader social environment. An effective early childhood development program is a cohesive, comprehensive, structured, pedagogical, and appropriate curriculum with attention to cognitive and social skill development that informs young children's education (Iram, 2019). Early Childhood Education (ECE) consists of activities and experiences that are intended to effect developmental changes in children before their entry into a higher class, grade or primary schools. There is a general pattern or sequence for development that's true of all children. However, the character and quality of development varies from child to child. Early Childhood Education (ECE) refers not only to what is happening within the child, but also to the care what child requires in order thriving (Khan, Bhatti, Hussain & Bano, 2017). It is a general perception that before one can build a house, it's necessary to get foundation to support the whole structure. Similarly, before a child enters primary school, a similar foundation must be laid, embedded within their family,

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their community, and their cultural values, young children (from birth to eight) need support in their development of the physical, cognitive, emotional and social abilities which will enable them to survive and thrive in later years (Khan et al, 2017). The successful education of the child during these years of schooling depends on great degree upon the foundation laid during the pre-school years. According to Asghar (1994) Early Childhood Education (ECE) provides the bedrock and strong foundation not just for effective primary education however additionally for later life. Learning begins at birth; previous researchers found that 80% of the brain is developed in the early years, i.e. from the birth to the age of 8 years. The importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE) is well-recognized world-wide. It is now widely acknowledged that the effects of developments which occur during the prenatal period and during the earliest months and years of child's life can last a lifetime as the kind of early care a child receives from parents, preschool teachers and caregivers determines how a child learns and relates in school in particular, and life in general. It is during early care that a toddler develops all the key elements of emotional intelligence, namely confidence, curiosity, purposefulness, self-control, connectedness, capacity to speak and cooperative. Indeed, teachers at all levels are valued for the critical role they are seen to play in nurturing active, informed and responsible young citizens (Khan et al., 2017).

Currently Pakistan is focused on The Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000), the primary objective of which is to extend and improve far reaching Early Childhood Education (ECE) for all youngsters, particularly the individuals who are viewed as the most powerless and impeded. Pakistan has seen significant institutional progress over the past decade regarding the concept of Early Childhood Education (ECE). Early Childhood Education (ECE) now forms one of the three main priorities of the National Plan of Action for education in Pakistan and it has become a vital part of the National Education Policy 2009. Further major achievements are the introduction of a national Early Childhood Education (ECE) curriculum, the focus on Early Childhood Education (ECE) within teacher education curricula and the level of teacher readiness in certain provinces (Mahmud, 2014). Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED), as an apex organization, is rendering meritorious services in the field of teacher training for more than a half century. Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) aims to concentrate and a solid system of in-service training for public sector school teachers in public schools of the province (Sadu, 2004). The Early Childhood Education (ECE) program in Punjab is initiated by the Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) in 2009. This academy prepared a module for the training of teachers to teach at —kachil early childhood education level. Later, in 2011, this academy developed Early Childhood Education (ECE) rooms in 1000 schools in Punjab for the implementation of Early Childhood Education (ECE) program in an effective way and also arranged 3 days training workshop on Early Childhood Education (ECE) for teachers and head teachers at district level (DSD Punjab, 2014).

This study highlight the challenges faced in development of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Pakistan and to recommend practical solutions for the development of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Pakistan by emphasizing its importance. The present status of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Pakistan is not up to mark, Pakistan is struggling to cope with the present challenges of poverty, lack of awareness, weakness of policy makers, untrained teachers and budgetary issues. It is recommended that stakeholders including public institutes, NGO's,

private sector, religious scholars and parents may perform their role by collaborating with each other to improve Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Pakistan. An independent Early Childhood Education (ECE) policy and trained teachers are main ingredients. In Pakistan Early Childhood Education (ECE) is the first goal of Education for All (EFA). After Dakar framework of action for Education for All (EFA) in 2000, Pakistan prepared, approved and launched National plan of Action of Education for All (EFA) (2001-2015). This plan envisaged to establish 42,500 new Early Childhood Education (ECE) centers and to appoint 51000 new teachers, exclusively for Early Childhood Education (ECE) or —Katchill class. So after a long time, initiatives are taken by government into existing education system for Early Childhood Education (ECE) by Ministry of Education (2007). But unfortunately in Pakistan, not sufficient research has been done on Early Childhood Education (ECE). The reason behind it is that, in general, most of the developing countries and particularly, in Pakistan people are not aware about the importance of this significant concept. Even at ministry level they give more attention to higher education rather than giving importance to primary education and Early Childhood Education (ECE) (Dahlberg & Moss, 2004).

Statement of the Problem: This study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers training programs by the Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED)

Objectives of the study

Objective of the study was to

- Explore the effectiveness of Early Childhood Education (ECE) training program organized by Quaid-e-Azam Academy for educational development.

Research Question

What is the effectiveness of teachers' training program at Early Childhood Education (ECE) runs by Quaide-Azam Academy for educational development?

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of Early Childhood Education (ECE) training program organized by Quaid-e-Azam Academy for educational development. This study is qualitative in nature and case study method is used for this research. The sample of the current study comprised of 10 teachers from 10 public schools who teach at Early Childhood Education (ECE) level. In this study, purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample. The face to face interview was taken from the teachers of public schools at Early Childhood Education (ECE) level. Data was collected through interviews and all interviews were recorded. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis. Some interviews were in Urdu language which was translated into English language by the researcher. Firstly, all interviews were written than their grammar mistakes were corrected with the help of an English expert. Seven themes were generated from the data to analyze the effectiveness of Early Childhood Education (ECE)

teachers training programs by the Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED)

Results and Discussion

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is an important area within the lives of the individuals. It establishes the foundation from where the learning of the child takes place. The teachers who taught at Early Childhood Education (ECE) level in Pakistan are up-grade their qualification by getting additional degrees of B. Ed or M. Ed. They enter in teaching profession by their choice and willingness. Most of the teachers want to work with this age group because they attracted to teach the kids of 3 to 5 years old. They attracted the motherhood relationships with the kids of Early Childhood Education (ECE) class. Teachers' also experiences that their students' happiness at the time of activities felt as achievement.

Effectiveness of Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers training programs with its different aspect were being discussed in subsequent section.

Training in Early Childhood Education (ECE) The field of early childhood education is enjoying a time of rapid growth and new discoveries. Efforts to help practitioners remain abreast of new knowledge, acquire refined skills, and utilize evidence-based practices include specialized training, coaching/consulting, and Communities of Practice. Usually all the respondents took training on Early Childhood Education (ECE) conducted by Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) in year 2016 or 2017. All respondents admitted that trainings are very beneficial for professional growth, learning new things, strategies, methodologies and how to deal with kids and as well as their psychological needs. As I was a general teacher initially but after the training program I feel that there are different other things to treat child with care and in this case I felt that this training was beneficial for them as well.

Whatever there is the level of your teaching but it must be important that you need to know from start to bottom about this level students. Training is always beneficial for teacher because without training teacher does not co-me to know about the properties and the environment in which he needs to move on. These trainings are very important. By this, we learn how to bring a student to next level and teach them good manners. All respondents learn many new skills in the training session. As one teacher said, in our training session, we were being trained how should we have to show patience, how we should show our body language or take gestures to understand and maintain a requirements of an Early Childhood Education (ECE) class teacher.

Outcomes of Training in Early Childhood Education (ECE) Whereas growing evidence indicates that training alone is insufficient, and that ongoing support efforts are necessary to transfer knowledge and skill to practice, little is known about how various forms of professional development operate and interact to enhance advanced learning and generalization to behavior, and ultimately, improve program quality. After taking the training on Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers persuaded Early Childhood Education (ECE) students to work in groups. —Initially, the scheme of sharing proved successful to work in groups. Different groups were made and assigned different tasks to them and they started doing things by dividing the tasks and

sharing their knowledge with others. Children liked to work in group activities. Initially it proved very difficult but with the passage of time and training, they became easy and co-operative with one another and participated in group activities very well and effectively. As one teacher said, I learnt these techniques in training. In the training, they taught us that we must pick the most depressed student in the class and make efforts to overcome the kid. Then I implement this strategy in my Early Childhood Education (ECE) class and it worked 100% in the kid growth and in learning abilities especially in their attitudes and confidence.

Challenges in Early Childhood Education (ECE) teaching A research agenda in Early Childhood Education (ECE) is needed to unpack basic information on processes that promote the development of skills and competencies necessary to provide high quality, evidence-based early childhood experiences, and identify interactions that occur between form and process, and influence the outcomes of professional development efforts. Another problem which has affected negatively the system is the widening gaps and distance between the educational institutions and community. Parental involvement in the education process is vital for ensuring the quality aspect. Home is the first school of a child. Without parental involvement in the process of education the effective implementation of policies will remain a far cry. In Early Childhood Education (ECE), we must need to make a child mind by doing practical things so that he must understand anything more sharply than only reading.

Resources in Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teaching resources are the things which you can use to teach the children. They boost up the teachers learning techniques. Early Childhood Education (ECE) children learn more rapidly through experimentation and activity based learning. The Teaching Resource Centre (TRC) showed teachers how to recycle locally sourced and easy-to-store materials as resources to support cognitive development and fine motor skills. A resource kit for ECE, Pehla Taleemi Basta (First Learning Bag: PTB), was produced within the Early Childhood Education Pictures (ECEP) containing pictures, puzzles, magnets and magnifying glasses, beads, laces and threading cards. One teacher said, “ I have different resources like toys, different paintings on wall, clay and different kind of colors that attract the children and build up their attraction in doing any task. A class must need to be attractive so that children must learn up things smoothly. So many different resources have been assigned and these are DVD, puppet kit, computer games, flash cards and so many other things which have been provided. A whole kit of resources is available as well. Teachers are in the burden of different issues as the higher authorities gave us different tasks to perform but the teacher demanded many things except the quality level. Teaching remains under the burden of extra activities and this thing should need to be removed and teachers should be given some extra time for their ease instead of some pressure”. Some respondents also told for the betterment of the Early Childhood Education (ECE). —Almost everything was available there but the thing I realize most is the need of sanitary. Classroom must need to be more comfortable, and mostly students don’t have their lunch so Government needs to provide them with fresh juice and other things and there must be a separate room for activities. —As with the passage of time technology is going better and different new things come in-front so little different projects are given to the teachers according to Early Childhood Education (ECE) for the betterment of their students as well for the institute.

Professional strengths of Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teacher: It is very necessary to have some qualities to prove to a good teacher. “According to my experience, only the patience is the key for the early childhood staff. This is because each of the children has different problem and you have to deal with every single of them separately. If the teachers lose their patience they can never tackle the problems, understand her students’ gestures and mood swings of the child. So patience is very important thing. Explaining that each child is unique in terms of his/her social and cultural background, developmental milestones, experiences and learning potential. The attitude and skills required by an ECE teacher to engage with individual children as per their needs. Most important quality is that teacher should come to know about the technique that how to handle a student in different circumstances. First of all, the personality of a teacher must play much more important role. She needs to be attractive to become a role model for her students. Teacher needs to be patient with them so child must feel relax to ask any kind of query easily and all these strengths are very important to manage the children. Teacher must understand things by making his mind at child level and treat child with care.

Quality of Early Childhood Education (ECE) environment provides opportunities for children to form positive relationships with other children and with elders. Children are born with the ability to learn language but again conducive learning environment is essential to help them develop optimally. Learning to read and write the alphabets and make small sentences is just one component of language development. A child in Early Childhood Education (ECE) level is just like an empty slate we will write anything on his mind. So it is necessary for teachers that they treat their students according to their mental age, ability and class level requirements. For this, teacher must have command on content and teaching methodologies.

Conclusion and recommendation

Teaching Early Childhood Education (ECE) resource room has all necessary learning aids for kids in schools. All the respondents are in the favor of Early Childhood Education (ECE) training conducted by the Quaid-e- Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED). It is good step taken by Government. Based on the findings of the data analysis, it was concluded that the Punjab Government has effectively implemented the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program. Early Childhood Education (ECE) provide opportunity for children aged 3-5 to learn effectively in schools. Resources and learning materials were provided by the government for the implementation of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program. Rooms have been set up for Early Childhood Education (ECE) activities for student mental development.. The provisions of education policy (2009) regarding Early Childhood Education (ECE) have not been implemented in letter and spirit in all the schools of Lahore. Hence, Lahore Education Departments have started Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes in public schools in accordance with their own consideration. For example no additional teachers were provided 62 for Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes; already available teachers were given one or two weeks Early Childhood Education (ECE) Training. Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers training programs were organized either in collaboration with NGOs or financial assistance of International Donor Agencies in public sector in Lahore. Two-year specialized training to teachers as recommended in the policy could not be provided to the Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers in the Lahore (Clinton & Hattie, 2013). While exploring reasons for not providing specialized training to the teachers, it was found that in Lahore a single teacher policy in primary school was main hurdle, because being single teacher she/he could not be spared for training.

Other reasons include lack of financial resources with department is an aspect and distance of school from training institution is one of the important reasons of not getting appropriate Early Childhood Education (ECE) Training. Existing design of school buildings meant for class I to V or class I to VIII, this is a challenge for the Education Department because there is no separate provision for Early Childhood Education (ECE) class in existing school buildings they have only 1 classroom which is insufficient for the students of Early Childhood Education (ECE). Realizing the importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE) Education Policy 2009 recommended that additional rooms shall be constructed for starting Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes in all primary schools. On the basis of findings it is concluded that additional rooms were not constructed for Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes, from already available rooms in the schools one room has been reserved and decorated for Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes in Lahore (Ahmad, 2011). As per policy provision no additional budget has been provided for employment of specified Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers and other support for Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes i.e. learning material and A.V. aids, Early Childhood Education (ECE) kit etc. this requires further plan of action and thoughtful solution to this problem. It was observed during field visits that color pictures/cartoons were available in Early Childhood Education (ECE) rooms, colored activities books and toys were maintained in Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes and different corners, such as math corner, science corner, and home corners have been created in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) class rooms in almost all schools (Bailey, 2002). In Punjab province directorate of Staff Development (DSD) has decorated these room whereas in other provinces, Education Departments got assistance either from NGOs or International Donor Agencies for Early Childhood Education (ECE) rooms' decoration. All children are given admission in class one easily after completion of Early Childhood Education (ECE) class.

On the basis of this information it can be concluded that Early Childhood Education (ECE) provides base of enhancing enrolment at primary level and it should be started in all the public school of the country. Provision of separate Early Childhood Education (ECE) rooms, Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers, materials, facilities and supplies may be ensured in all rural/urban and girls/boys Primary and Elementary schools. In Punjab Caregivers have been provided in all Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes, this is very good example to handle matter of such small age children, therefore, it is recommended that other provincial/regional governments may make such arrangements in their respective areas (Bredenkamp & Goffin, 2012). The importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE) requires different strategies and flexible approaches in Early Childhood Education (ECE) provision for complete mainstreaming of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program. Proper system for supervising and monitoring the Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes may be introduced. Early Childhood Education (ECE) teacher training programs should be modified and improved according to the latest requirements. It is recommended that Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) should arrange trainings on regular basis for teachers to enhance their skills related to school improvement.

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