

A STUDY OF EFFECTIVENESS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME

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ABSTRACT

The study under question had the objectives like; identification of the initial characteristics of early childhood education program being run by the department of Elementary Education, to know the success of the early childhood education for the contributors of the program, to explore the potential teacher demographic variables effect on the early childhood education, and to find out the strengths, weaknesses in terms of curriculum inputs and processes for supporting the in-depth study of the program. For the achievement of the objectives, the mode for their fulfillment was the quantitative in nature but earlier than this exploratory research was undertaken to develop and finalize the items for the rating scale. The rating scale was deemed to be put before the potential teachers enrolled in the ECE teacher Education program of the University of The Punjab. Each and every teacher enrolled in the program was approached through all means. Those who showed their connivance were presented with the rating scale. Before filling in the rating scale a session was arranged for the facilitation of the potential teachers (respondents). The number of rating scales collected back was 119. The review of ECE in Pakistan through this study revealed that early childhood education practices coincide with realistic goals, which was one of the major conclusions reached. For biases in society to be eliminated, boys and girls must be treated equally.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Early Childhood, Teacher Education

INTRODUCTION

Young children's total development and who they become as adults are directly influenced by their physical, emotional, and social growth. To ensure the greatest possible chance of future well-being, it is crucial to comprehend the need to invest in very young children. According to neurological studies, children's brain development is significantly influenced by their early years. Babies start to learn around the world about

them at a very young age, as well as during the perinatal (the time proximately before and after birth), and postpartum periods. Early experiences in childhood lay the foundation for learning, cognitive development, and future outcomes (Kong et al., 2025).

Every study comes to the same conclusion: early childhood education has a big impact on how people turn out in the end. However, with no

improvement over the past 15 years, only 51% of 3- and 4-year-olds in the US are engaged in full-day pre-primary programmes (Zigler, 2000). The goal of early childhood education is to develop the whole child because this will eventually serve as the foundation for their entire life journey. Preschool educators and scholars have recognised 13 crucial advantages of early childhood education through the publication of proficient studies:

The first crucial advantage of early childhood education is the socialisation of children with individuals other than their family in a secure environment, which is a crucial building block for the following benefits. As parents, we have an innate understanding of how crucial it is to socialise our kids with other kids and assist them as they establish their own friendship circles. This should be done as soon as possible because it helps kids overcome shyness and boost their confidence. If we wait too long, we really prevent them from developing socially. (Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007).

The second vital advantage of primary childhood education is the effecting the concept of collaboration. Cooperation meets the requirements learning how to share, cooperate, take turns and persist within a safe learning environment, directed by professionals who have the children's best interests at heart. This is particularly significant for the first child, who may not be used to share with their siblings at home - while it can be a difficult lesson, it's so central to learn it early (Roseth, Johnson, & Johnson, 2008).

Early childhood education makes every attempt to support complete development. This approach aims to prepare children for adulthood by laying a strong basis for their emotional, social, physical, and intellectual development. Early childhood instructors are trained to classify the ranges in which each child needs provision and to create activities and programmes around these needs. Because infants are often cooperative, supportive, and comprehensive, their classmates are mostly important in this affection (Rodd, 2012). Children are inspired to be excited about lifetime learning in early childhood education. Children

are more likely to learn efficiently when teachers make lessons pleasant and attractive. We must be excited and eager in order to generate a thirst for facts.

Preschool is when a child's love of reading, learning, discovery, and nature starts to develop (Rodd, 2012).

Early childhood education includes all formal instruction and care provided to children before they enter primary school. This typically includes children from infancy to around seven years of age. Early childhood education is also not a legal requirement. Programs for young children come in a wide variety of forms. Others concentrate on education, while some concentrate on child care. In any case, the objective is to offer structured, supervised environments that offer learning and socialization opportunities that are developmentally appropriate. Let's examine early childhood education's history in more detail now that we know what it is (von Suchodoletz et al., 2023).

Early childhood program enables the child to act, react, adjust and readjust as well as communicate and reflect the mannerisms desired of him/her in the years to come. It is actually a play way method where the child is welcome with his/her inborn traits for transmission into a human being. Transformation needs education and training as the indispensable parts of grooming. The children are told and made to choose for adaptation to the situations they normally come across. The initial practice we find is that the child mimics, uses sign language with partial orientation and socializes with the peers both formally and informally (Bodrova, & Deborah. Leong, 2007). They are not only designed to speak, but also to select the best appropriate words within the confines of their culturally acceptable language. In order for language learning to be consistent with later life, it is made to coincide with social customs and rituals.

Children are taught certain very basic mathematical concepts, such as less, more, adequate, inadequate, short and long, etc., along with language. This provides a foundation for the intricate mathematical operations that give kids the appropriate orientation to their local

environment and culture. This gives the child the ability to adapt to the conditions that they may encounter, such as communicating with elders or finding a space in the family that can be adjusted to suit the needs of the family members. Children are taught the value of hygiene and physiological body needs, enabling them to be not only tidy and clean but also to follow the rules of the changing climate. Children spend their first two years of life developing their initial "sense of self," and by their second year, the majority of kids can tell themselves apart from other people. The ability of the youngster to decide how they should behave in respect to other people depends on this differentiation. As a child's first teacher, parents might be considered an essential component of the early learning process (Garland, 2012).

Many people disagree with the idea of learning through play because they believe kids are not picking up new information. In actuality, play is how young infants first begin to understand the world. Children observe how people behave around them and pick up on the subtle differences in their tone of voice and facial expressions. They are investigating various jobs, understanding how things operate, and developing their interpersonal and teamwork skills.

These skills must be acquired through the process of play because they cannot be taught through a conventional curriculum. Many preschools recognize the value of play and have built their curricula around it to give kids more flexibility. Early childhood facilities abound, providing children with a variety of services. The need to study a child education center with a full range of operations exalting the fulfilment of needs of the admitted children and aspiration of the parents as well as the call of institutions for further level of learning arises because the development of early childhood as a programme of teacher education is relatively new, nearly least attended to, and run by the private sectors with few expectations (Copple, & Bredekamp, 2009). As a result, this study was designed as a descriptive

analysis of the early childhood division at the Institute of Education and Research, with a particular emphasis on "The study of efficacy of early childhood teacher education programme."

Objectives of the Study

The following objective was designed for the study.

To find out the effectiveness of the early childhood teacher education program

Significance of the Study

This study would surrender multiplicity of information that may be used by institutional decision makers. It may reveal the characteristics of the early childhood program which help develop participants and enable them to meet the aspirations of various stakeholders such as students and employers. The study would release the strengths and weaknesses of the program with special reference to its elements and the practices followed by the University. As the program was started as a novel and utility-based innovation, it would lead universities to revamp it according to emerging needs.

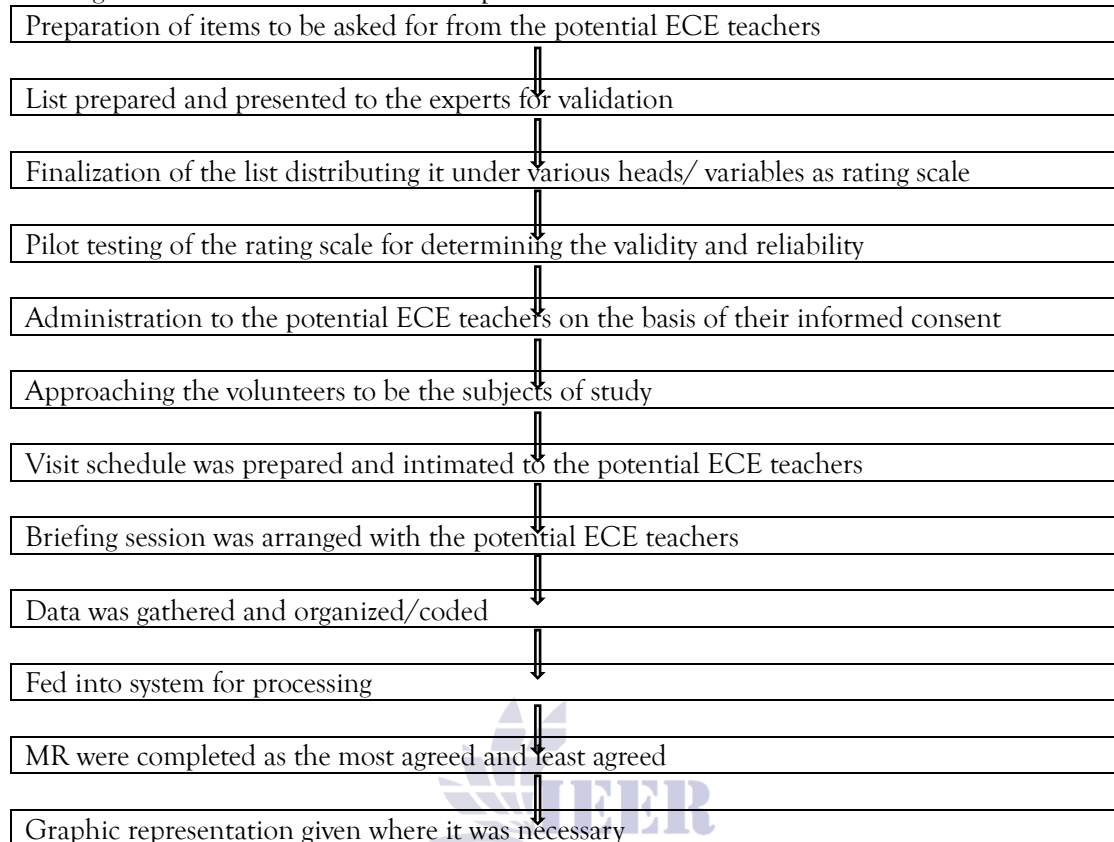
The study may divulge whether electives, professional subjects, and optional subjects meet the needs and aspirations of participants. It would reveal which subjects are taken up with zeal and how these help participants fulfill their aspirations, leading to better organization of courses. The study would also highlight how participants find opportunities in the job market, unfolding market needs and the value of the program, and providing an in-depth scenario of the program and its practices.

Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to the Early Childhood Teacher Education Program of the University of the Punjab. Its history, intents, courses being offered, tenure of the study, teachers and their qualifications, methods of teaching entrust of assignments, and evaluation.

Theoretical frame work

The following theoretical framework has been pursued in the research work



Methodology

Study Design

This study would address early childhood education in a variety of perspectives and would help seek out the effectiveness of early childhood education in different perspectives. This study would be of sequential explanatory research design where the quantitative data (rating of the ECE program by the potential teachers of ECE) would be collected first and supported by qualitative data (focus group interview and observation of the ECE processes by the researcher herself) thereafter.

Population of the Study

A research population is also known as a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics. All individuals or objects within a certain population have a common, binding characteristic or trait. The population for this study is 120 students of

Early Childhood Education. It was divided into two tiered the teachers of Early Childhood Education program and the potential teachers of Early Childhood Education.

Sample of the Study

The sample here would be two tiered i.e teachers of early childhood program and the potential teachers enrolled in the program (regular and week end, male and female both). Teachers for the focus group interview were selected on volunteer bases where as it was census sampling in cases of potential teachers.

Instrumentation

A list of factors bearing on early childhood education was presented to experts for finalization of items reflecting the effectiveness of childhood education. Forty items, grouped into five segments, were finalized as a rating scale for potential ECE teachers and reviewed by experts

to establish face validity, followed by a pilot test. Face validity of the focus group interview protocol and observation schedule was also determined through expert opinion. The reliability of the rating scale was established through a pilot test on 30 passed-out students of the programme, yielding an overall reliability coefficient of 0.81.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected personally by the researcher herself through the use of rating scale, the observation schedule and the conduct of focus group interview with the teaching staff of the Department of Elementary Education. Descriptive and inferential analysis techniques using SPSS were applied to analyze the data.

Results

Qualitative Findings

Question 1 Could the participation in ECE help you develop cooperative attitude towards colleagues and your future students?

Answer Participation in ECE supports the development of a cooperative attitude by providing professional development opportunities that enhance knowledge, skills, and perspectives related to working with young children. Through collaborative learning and skill practice, participants develop the ability to work effectively with colleagues, families, and students. The focus on social-emotional development, shared learning experiences, and reflective practice contributes to positive changes in attitude and promotes cooperation in both professional relationships and future classroom interactions.

Question 2 How could you find yourself socializing or developed the trait of socialization after participation in ECE program?

Answer Specialized training enhances the abilities of early childhood instructors, including their attitudes, knowledge, and skills. In order to provide training participants with opportunities to practice critical skills in a teaching setting and to personalize your critique and give quick or late feedback on the use of new teaching techniques.

Role-playing and behavioral repetition of new abilities are frequently acknowledged as crucial stages in staff development efforts. As indicated, this program's learning activities are activity-based. The participants are forced to interact with one another because of their participation in the events.

Question 3 Do you find yourself competent enough to go for the holistic development of the child on joining the world of work?

Answer Participation in the ECE programme has enhanced professional competence by developing the skills and knowledge required for holistic child development. While formal qualifications alone do not guarantee effective teaching, the programme supports comprehensive professional growth through practical exposure and reflective learning. This preparation enables future educators to address children's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development effectively upon entering the world of work.

Question 4 Did the participation in ECE program make you feel that it is essential to go for the life learning?

Answer Professional development initiatives typically take one of the following five shapes: formal education, certification, specialised in-service training, mentoring and/or consulting interactions, and communities of practise or collegial study groups. Although formal education (a degree obtained before employment). Our goal is to attention on the methods and related procedures of expert (or "staff") progress that are most frequently linked to employed practitioners. While credentialing (agency or structural experiences or values) and are comprised in the definition of a professional development structure. We point readers to additional in-depth websites that cover practises and research in education and certification in our recommendations. Because the needs and training requirements change over time, participants will need to attend in-service education at regular or irregular periods.

Question 5 Could you develop the attitude that learning through experience in ECE is more important?

Answer Participation in ECE helps develop the belief that learning through experience is essential by emphasizing coaching-based professional development and practice-oriented learning. Through guided practice, observation, reflection, and feedback, practitioners apply new skills directly with children and families. These experiential learning activities positively influence teachers' attitudes and behaviors, reinforcing the importance of learning through experience for both educators and children.

Question 6 Whether respecting others is more important to you as a teacher of ECE?

Answer It has been discovered that there is a correlation between a language and literacy intervention's training and procedural fidelity, notwithstanding the fact that the generalization primarily applies to more complex child language facilitators. However, there is still debate on the existence of a causal relationship between caregiver training and improvements in children's behavior. While some studies seem to support this theory, other research suggests that education and training are not the only factors leading to good results.

Question 7 How do you understand that the Teamwork makes the learning lifelong and enduring?

Answer Participants' intrapersonal traits and interpersonal relationships seem to be crucial in professional development activities. The "fit" between a person's coaching aims and preferences and the coach's coaching style and orientation has been linked to early childhood teachers' responsiveness to coaching. However, it is unclear which specific characteristics are most prominent in having a favorable or bad impact on the connection. The effectiveness of a particular professional development technique has to be better understood in connection to how the personal characteristics of the early childhood teacher and the trainer, coach, or consultant may affect the development of a professional

development relationship. Future teachers are taught the value of teamwork, which makes it possible to convey knowledge and ensure its endurance throughout time (participants of ECE).

Question 8 You have the potential after participation in ECE to develop the Skill of concentration among the students?

Answer The environments in which early childhood practice occurs are diverse communities, and the demands of professionals in these many environments probably differ depending on an individual's background, education, experience, perspective, and orientation. The characteristics of the workplace, such as the type of early childhood center (school-based, home-based, private, or state- or federally-funded), The type and organisation of professional development, as well as the success or failure of such efforts, may be influenced by the age of the children served the number of other adults present. The culture of the workplace is another aspect of the working context that may have an impact on how well various professional development operate, work environment, number of cases to be handled per which includes the agency's goals and mission, the standard of the workplace, cases to be handled per caseload, chances for teacher cooperation, the calibre of administrative direction, and agency-imposed demands that go outside promoting children's education. It would be possible to pinpoint the professional development strategies that are effective for specific practitioners in various and special work environments and situations with the help of careful research aimed at identifying context variables.

Question 9 Are you sure that you have become more patient after participation in ECE program?

Answer Research, practice, and policy communities are all very interested in the sustainability of professional development initiatives. The upkeep of abilities after initial training and support, as well as initiatives to foster circumstances that encourage continuous

improvement, are essential to improving the quality of early childhood environments. Information on the level and length of professional support is required to encourage long-term transformation, which would aid in setting appropriate parameters for both process and structure. It is likely that early childhood practitioners' capacity to maintain beneficial change in practise will be influenced, at least in part, by the professional development culture in the organisations or environments where they operate. Empirically based procedures must be developed in cases where external resources are employed to deliver professional development in order to sustain successful professional development activities and successful practice once external resources are no longer present.

Question 10 Are you sure that ECE education has made you more confident?

Answer Communities of Practice (CoP) models could offer a framework for creating internal resources or networks of support and enhancing an organization's capacity to support a culture of sustained and continuing professional development. However, if CoP models are to be viewed as tools for sustaining formal training and coaching initiatives, a number of empirical concerns need to be resolved. For instance, it is necessary to articulate the relationship between certain tactics (such as inquiry and problem-solving techniques), structures (such as time and membership), and abilities (such as facilitator leadership behaviours). Furthermore, empirical research is required to determine how they interact to affect the achievement of a CoP's goals and objectives.

Question 11 Do you think that now you have become more optimistic after participation in ECE?

Answer Participation in the ECE program has made us more optimistic about teaching. Through evidence-based professional development, practical training, and engagement with best practices, we feel confident in our ability to educate children effectively and meet the expectations of stakeholders while addressing future needs.

Question 12 ECE has developed not only your self-esteem, but you can help children develop their self-esteem too?

Answer Education has bestowed us with the potential to be respectful and make our students respectful towards others and not to surrender before the ills and odds.

Question 13 Now after participating in ECE you can manage the diversity among students?

Answer After participating in ECE, we are able to manage diversity among students effectively. Through professional development, practical training, and guided experience, we have learned to nurture individual differences, create inclusive learning environments, and support each child's growth according to their unique needs.

Observation Template for ECE Teachers to Potential Teachers' Class

Teachers are expected to develop through ECE the following traits in potential teachers. The observation of the teachers of ECE potential teachers made us known the extent to which the teachers of potential teachers reflect these traits themselves.

Table 1

Observation Template for ECE Teachers to Potential Teachers' Class

Sr.No	Items for observation	Nature of practices followed by potential teachers		
		Most frequent	moderate	Least frequent
1.	Cooperation among potential ECE teachers		√	
2.	Socialization		√	
3.	Encourage holistic development		√	
4.	Enthusiastic about lifelong learning		√	
5.	Valuing Education Through Experience		√	
6.	Respecting others	√		
7.	Demonstrating and instilling the importance of teamwork			
8.	Work together to develop resilience in children	√	√	
9.	Skill of concentration			√
10.	Patience revealed			√
11.	Confidence practiced			√
12.	Optimism maintained			
13.	Self-esteem reflected		√	
14.	Valuing difference and diversity			√

Table 2

Showing the Mean and Standard Deviation about the ECE Elements

Measures	Gender	Mean± Std. Deviation	p-value
Motive of Joining	Male	19.84±2.09	0.409
	Female	20.41±2.81	
Change as potential teacher	Male	23.53±2.84	0.431
	Female	24.14±3.11	
Teaching Philosophy	Male	15.89±1.85	0.897
	Female	15.98±2.70	
Socialization	Male	15.68±2.45	0.290
	Female	16.32±2.38	
Enabling adaptation	Male	19.42±3.01	0.575
	Female	19.81±2.72	
Following Ethics	Male	19.21±2.82	0.265
	Female	20.03±2.94	
Early Childhood components	Male	19.53±3.84	0.166
	Female	21.28±5.21	
Quality Maintenance	Male	20.05±2.32	0.339
	Female	20.67±2.59	

Mean score of different domains was not statistically significantly different according to gender

Table 3
Showing the Service Statues of Potential ECE Teachers

Measures	No Service	In Service	New Entrant	p-value
Motive of Joining	20.19±2.40	20.73±2.14	19.45±4.08	0.163
Change as potential teacher	20.19±2.40	20.73±2.14	19.45±4.08	0.148
Teaching Philosophy	16.51±1.77	15.91±2.71	15.18±3.19	0.155
Socialization	16.11±2.48	16.59±2.07	15.45±2.89	0.161
Enabling adaptation	19.59±2.91	19.75±2.77	20.00±2.58	0.864
Following Ethics	19.65±2.73	20.20±2.95	19.55±3.22	0.561
Early Childhood components	21.89±7.25	20.54±3.77	20.64±2.92	0.421
Quality Maintenance	20.05±2.44	20.86±2.60	20.68±2.57	0.323

No statistically significant difference was found between service status regarding Potential domains of teachers.

Table 4
Showing the Experience of Potential ECE Teachers

Measures	No or less than 5 years	Upto 5 years	Upto 10 Years	Upto 15 years	Upto 20 Years
Motive of Joining	20.11±2.97	20.72±2.17	21.60±2.51	18.83±2.56	21.20±0.84
Change as potential teacher	23.93±3.06	24.07±2.77	26.60±3.13	22.17±3.60	25.00±3.39
Teaching Philosophy	16.03±2.37	15.86±2.48	16.80±2.68	14.33±5.16	16.80±1.79
Socialization	16.34±2.32	16.34±1.68	16.20±3.27	14.33±3.67	16.00±4.18
Enabling adaptation	19.41±2.84	20.07±2.40	22.20±2.28	18.33±1.97	21.80±3.11
Following Ethics	19.69±2.77	20.62±2.82	22.60±1.82	17.33±2.73	19.00±4.24
Early Childhood components	21.09±5.90	20.69±3.52	22.80±1.64	20.33±2.50	20.40±4.56
Quality Maintenance	20.16±2.39	21.28±2.71	22.00±1.73	20.50±2.35	20.80±3.90

Enabling adaptation (p-value 0.043) and following ethics (p-value 0.019) were statistically significantly different. Mean score of following ethics was statistically significantly higher in subjects with service experience upto 10 years as compared to service experience upto 15 years (p-value 0.021).

Discussion

Research indicates that longer student teaching experiences enhance teacher preparedness and increase retention. Graduate-level full-year student teaching experiences make new teachers more likely to remain in the profession compared to four-year undergraduate programs. Effective pre-service teacher education requires comprehensive coverage of key elements,

including subject-matter expertise, classroom management, and addressing diverse learner needs (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004). High-quality induction programs—comprising mentoring, shared planning time, ongoing professional development, external support networks, and standards-based evaluation—improve teacher retention and student achievement. Liu and Meyer (2005) found that classroom management challenges and pay are primary factors affecting job satisfaction, but providing support for discipline and professional growth is more effective than increasing salaries. Better preparation in classroom management and professional development during pre-service education enhances first-year teaching experiences and reduces attrition. Current undergraduate programs vary in the extent and approach of classroom management training. This study highlights the need for targeted induction, mentorship, and professional support, allowing teacher education programs and school districts to improve teacher retention and job satisfaction, considering factors like gender, school level, licensure pathway, advanced degrees, and minority student populations. Teacher attrition refers to the replacement of teachers who leave a system within a given period (Heider, 2006). Understanding these factors is essential for planning effective pre-service education and induction programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Conclusion

The following conclusions could be drawn out of the findings; majority of respondent potential ECE teachers were in-service female new entrants to the job, Early childhood prospective teachers were of the opinion that “Learnt by them can be put into practice moreover teachers were of the opinion that they can identify students concerns to enhance their learning and develop proper learning environment. Finally it could be concluded that ECE teachers can develop strong nurturing and stimulating environment, develop activity and learning plans for the children in early childhood class.

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