

Evaluation of the Training Program for In-Service Teachers of Early Childhood Education Conducted by QAED in Punjab

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of an in-service teachers' training program imparted by Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED), School Education Department, Govt. of Punjab, Pakistan. Six ECE headteachers and six teachers from Punjab's rural and urban districts were selected through a convenient sampling technique. Semi-Structured protocol was developed and validated by five experts in the field. The data from the interviews was obtained using thematic analysis. The study's conclusions brought to light some issues, including a lack of funding, a continuous program for training teachers, ongoing caregiver hiring, a deficiency of rooms and staff, an ongoing monitoring system, and provision of an ECE kit. This study is captivating since it investigates the viewpoints of headteachers and teachers in Punjab's urban and rural areas. The results have significant implications for how the Punjab government's school education department (QAED) and policymakers should evaluate the current state of early childhood education in the province. The results of this study will motivate researchers to carry out additional research of this type and inspire legislators to create laws that will assist ECE programs in strengthening or changing their present practices.

Keywords: *Early Childhood Education (ECE), Head Teachers, Caregivers, Usefulness of ECE training, Advantages of ECE program.*

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Introduction

The discipline of early childhood education (ECE) is growing worldwide. In Pakistani public schools, it's referred to as the "Katchi" class. Early childhood education (ECE) has been an emotive subject in Pakistan since the time it was included in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Attaullah, 2015; Bhutta, 2020; MoE, 2017). Until the year 2000, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private educational institutions served as Pakistan's main suppliers of early childhood education (Arshad & Zamir, 2018). After signing the "Education for All (EFA) declaration" in the year 2000, Pakistan gave priority to early childhood education (ECE). In April 2010, the 18th Amendment's Article 25-A was enacted to ensure that elementary education is free and of high quality (Khan, 2018). Early childhood education garners significant consideration in both the National Education Policy (NEP) 2009 and the National Education Policy (NEP 2017) to comply with international obligations. The Pakistani government developed the National ECE curriculum in 2002, and it was updated in 2007 (MoE, 2017).

As a partner of the National Commitment on ECE, Punjab is likewise working hard to extend ECE outside its borders (Attaullah, 2015; Farooq, 2018). In all nine divisions and thirty-six districts of Punjab, the Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) launched the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program in 2013 under the name "Introduction of ECE in Primary Schools with High Enrollment and Improvement of School Environment to convert them into Child-Friendly Schools (CFSs)" (QAED, 2023).

The School Education Department, Govt. of Punjab is putting a lot of effort into promoting early childhood education across its boundaries. QAED has imparted training to 19,863 head teachers, 19,913 teachers, and 19,913 Caregivers, Orientation to 30,000 School council members, orientation to 150 DyDEOs as Master Trainers on ECCE, Orientation to 2921 AEOs on ECCE and trained 234 ECCE Master trainers (QAED, 2023).

Under the name Punjab ECE policy (PECEP) 2017," the province of Punjab in Pakistan has unveiled its early childhood education policy. It highlights the fact that "ECE is good for improvement in attendance and retention rates of the children who have received ECE before enrolling in formal Grade I of the primary school." Additionally, it says that "offering ECE can minimize resource waste and lower the drop-out rate." The Punjab public school system's dropout rates and student retention cannot

be stopped by the ECE program. The 40% primary dropout rate that persists in Punjab is a significant issue (Farooq, 2018; Bhutta, 2020; Malik et al, 2022).

Similarly, public schools lack physical amenities, an explicit budget, and the hiring of teachers with experience in early childhood education (Malik et al., 2021, 2022). In Punjab, there is a massive discrepancy between educational policy and practice. Most crucially, teacher training programs are unable to comprehend the gap because evaluation studies are not available. Without properly evaluating the teachers' motivation to participate in the training, the school education department plans teacher training programs. There are fewer research data available regarding the evaluation of the ECE program in Punjab i.e. (Bhatti, 2007; Bhutta, 2020; Ghazi, Ajmal & Saeed, 2018; Ismail & Awan, 2019; Khattak, 2019; Saif, Inam & Abiodullah, 2020; Shami, Ahmad, & Khyzer, 2014) (Malik et al, 2023). The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the in-service Early Childhood Education (ECE) teacher training program for Punjab's public schools, which is run by the Punjab government's School Education Department by its attach department "Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED)".

The research objective and questions under study are:

Objective: Evaluate the perceived satisfaction of in-service ECE teacher trainees about the training program.

RQ 1. How much has the program covered the trainees' felt needs?

RQ 2. How much are the trainees ready to apply learned knowledge in their daily practices according to the trainees themselves?

Rationale of the Study

National Educational Policy (NEP) 1998-2010, NEP 2009, NEP 2017, and NEP 2017 were among the policy reforms in Pakistan along with the formulation of Article 25-A of the 18th Amendment (which went into effect in April 2010) (MoE, 2017). However, Punjab is not the only region in Pakistan where there is a serious issue with primary school dropout and retention rates (Malik, Asghar & Khalid, 2022). Due to the increasing demand for early childhood education (ECE) at the provincial and national levels, as well as Punjab's lower enrollment in public schools compared with private ones, the quality of ECE has a question mark (Malik et al., 2021). There is a dearth of empirical study data regarding the evaluation of Punjab's in-service teacher training programs. Therefore, this study would be an addition to explore the prevailing satisfaction level regarding imparted training to teachers and the provision of ECE in public schools of Punjab.

Literature review

Professional development (PD) is one type of well-structured learning program that helps in-service instructors improve student outcomes (Allgood, 2020). Several studies have shown that improving teachers improves the quality of instruction (Dreer et al., 2017). One of the characteristics that equips educators with the skills they need to help children thrive is ongoing, intense, collaborative, job-integrated, data-driven, and classroom-focused professional development (Ekchian, 2019). Increasing productivity and improving instruction are the goals of effective professional development (Quiroz et al., 2016). Professional development improves the teaching paradigm, even though it doesn't always translate to the classroom (Jaramillo-Baquerizo et al., 2019).

"Training effectiveness" is enhanced training that satisfies the program's stated objectives and goals. Effective training improves trainees' skills and abilities, which they then apply to the work (Al-Mughairi, 2018). According to Al-Mughairi (2018), gauging the effectiveness of a training program is based on how much the employee's knowledge, ability, and behavior inside the organization have improved as a result of the program. (Al-Mughairi, 2018). According to empirical research, assessing the efficacy of training improves the perceived legitimacy of the instruction that is provided. Moreover, it presents an unambiguous image of both accomplishments and shortcomings (Al-Mughairi, 2018; Broussard, 2020; Homklin, 2014; Manyika 2014).

The effectiveness of training is determined by many factors, including participant feedback, information and skill development, application of acquired knowledge and abilities, and the training's effect on the organization (Al-Mughairi, 2018). Many models were presented by different scholars to gauge the success of training initiatives. For instance, a success case method by Brinkerhoff and Montesino (1995), input, process, and output model by Bushnell (1990), HRD evaluation by Holton (1996), and research model, Kaufman and Keller's (1994) five levels of evaluation, Kirkpatrick's (1959) four-level model, Kraiger et al.'s (1993) learning outcomes model, Phillips' (1996) return on investment model for evaluation, context, input process, product model by Stufflebeam (1983), context, inputs, reactions, outcomes evaluation model of Warr et al. (1970) (Al-Mughairi, 2018; Frye & Hemmeer, 2012).

The drive to apply the acquired behavior is another factor that has affected how effective training has been. "Motivation to transfer" refers to the focus, tenacity, and direction of effort toward applying knowledge and abilities in a work environment (Holton et al., 2007). The urge to apply

what one has learned in training to one's job is known as motivation to transfer (Muduli & Raval, 2018). Motivation is a critical factor impacting the transfer of learning (Botma et al., 2015; Tonhäuser & Bükér, 2016). Furthermore, motivation increased the likelihood of professional learning transfer and the personal attributes associated with teacher learning transfer (Dreer et al., 2017). Motivation to transfer was defined by Neo (1986) as the application of acquired information and skills by students in a training program on the job. According to empirical studies, about half of those with PD do not use what they have learned at work (Massenberg et al., 2017; Muduli & Raval, 2018).

The skills and expertise of ECE teachers, particularly in terms of preparing kids for academic success, are crucial for achieving the program's consistent goals. Thus, the training that ECE teachers receive is vitally important. Compared to other instructors, early childhood educators have fewer training possibilities available to them globally (Maroto & Brandon, 2012; Rhodes & Huston, 2012; Saif, Inam & Abiodullah, 2020; Thornton, 2019). In his survey of thirty-two ECE teachers, Boyd (2013) found that the teachers felt they needed to improve their professional development, work satisfaction, and educational background. The majority of ECE teachers believe they possess greater professional expertise and knowledge, which enables them to better assist young students.

Like other developing nations, Pakistan is having a lot of problems implementing ECE programs in public schools. In Pakistan, public school education is a depreciation. The public education system has not kept up with the evolving needs of education in the modern world. Regarding the adoption of new pedagogical trends and teachers' professional development activities, there are insufficient quality modifications in ECE institutions. A few studies, such as Releasing Confidence and Creativity (RCC), were carried out to investigate the efficacy of ECE training in public schools. USAID, Aga Khan University (AKU), a public teacher training institution, six local NGOs, and the Creating Democratic Schools Program (CDS) collaborated on the study. Both programs assessed the ongoing professional development in early childhood education (PDE) of public school principals and teachers in more than 200 public ECE schools. The outcomes of these initiatives show how principals and teachers in public primary schools may maintain a high-quality early childhood education program. Teachers' and principals' lack of participation in taking ownership of the project duties led to a poor quality ECE intervention program. They lacked the necessary training to recognize children's needs and boost ECE enrollment (Syeda, 2016).

Therefore, studies must be done on professional development programs for in-service and pre-service ECE professionals in Pakistan that can serve as a beacon of hope in the dark.

Methodology

A qualitative design based on the case study approach was found to be the most effective way to investigate and evaluate the beliefs and perspectives of the participants as well as the successes and challenges of the imparted ECE training to the in-service teachers of public schools. The case study is a design of in-depth inquiry in the field of program evaluation (Yin, 2009, 2012). In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. A fourteen-item protocol was verified by five subject-matter experts, and an interview guide was produced. The themes of the questions included the infrastructure of early childhood education (ECE), the advantages of the ECE program in public schools, the usefulness of imparted training to teachers and head teachers, and suggestions for improving the current program.

According to Mason (2018) and Patton (2015), qualitative research offers an explicit means of exploring the meanings people attribute to their actions, making it one of the greatest ways to learn about social reality. A qualitative method makes it possible to extract valuable information from interviews, such as "thick description," to provide a comprehensive, multifaceted knowledge of a complicated problem in its actual setting (Crane, 2017).

Participants

Participants of the study were selected through a purposive sampling technique. The researcher interviewed six headteachers (3 male, and 3 female headteachers, and six teachers (3 male, and 3 female) from urban and rural areas of Punjab within five months of this study.

Table 1
Headteachers' and teachers' Demographics

Participants	Gender	Post Held	Qualification	Total no of years in ECE Since
1	M	Headteacher	M.A Urdu, M.ED	2019
2	M	Headteacher	M.Phil. Urdu	2018
3	M	Headteacher	M. Phil Urdu	2018

4	F	Headteacher	BS (Hons), B.Ed.	2018
5	F	Headteacher	M.CS, M.Ed.	2018
6	F	Headteacher	M.Phil. English	2017
7	M	Teacher	M.Phil Economics	2018
8	M	Teacher	MSc Mathematics	2018
9	M	Teacher	M.A Urdu, M.Ed	2017
10	F	Teacher	M.A Urdu, M.A Education	2015
11	F	Teacher	M.A Islamiyat, B.ED	2018
12	F	Teacher	M.A English,	2018

Instrument

Data was gathered using a self-developed interviewing protocol. Five experts in the field validated the interview guides. The infrastructure of early childhood education (ECE), the benefits of the ECE program in public schools, the value of providing teachers and head teachers with training, and recommendations for enhancing the current program were among the subjects covered in the interview protocol.

Data analysis

All of the tape-recorded interviews with teachers and headteachers were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2012). Interviews were translated and transcribed using tape recordings; the transcriptions were accurate and confirmed by an English language expert (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Thematic analysis was used to assemble the participant responses. Participant data has been coded before grouping pertinent codes to identify groups and subcategories (Saldaña, 2021). The

process of contrasting and comparing categories and subcategories led to the emergence of several themes (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014).

Findings

The data have been divided into four broad categories after transcription i.e. ECE infrastructure, ECE Program Advantages, the usefulness of imparted ECE training to in-service teachers and headteachers, and suggestions for the improvement of the program.

Findings of teachers and headteachers

The findings obtained through the data of teachers as well as headteachers have been divided into four broad categories.

Table 2
Categories and Subcategories

Broad Categories	Subcategories
ECE infrastructure	ECE Room Trained Teachers Enrollment ECE Kit Parents Teachers Meeting
ECE Program Advantages	Benefits of starting the ECE Program A decline in Drop out Ratio
Usefulness of Training	Training measures (Trainer, content, and facilities of training) Change in Teaching Methodology (Child-friendly environment, Activity-based learning) Overall Change in Behavior (Willing to teach ECE class, Motivated to transfer knowledge) Social Support for ECE (Colleagues' support)

Suggestions for the
Improvement of the Program

ECE Infrastructure

All public schools now have extremely strict policies regarding the assignment of separate ECE rooms and teachers. Every participant has mentioned that their respective institutions are experiencing a room shortage. They have explained in detail how it is difficult to handle the six corners that are taught in an ECE program. One of the participants stated that:

I have a total of four rooms in my school and I have allocated one room for ECE. It was very difficult to manage a separate room for ECE. But MEO (Monitoring education officer; He is a retired army officer to checks the prevailing ECE classroom) visit made it obligatory for me to allocate a separate room for ECE along with the decoration of it. His visit makes it complementary to allocate a separate room because he is supposed to fill up his ECE-related Performa. (Participant 2)

After completing training, the majority of participants stated that they were not teaching ECE classes. Assigning ECE classes to qualified individuals has become problematic due to a monopoly held by senior teachers. Because of their incompetence, senior matric pass teachers are unable to teach the other classes. Therefore, head teachers make them take an ECE class at their adamant request. One of the participants narrated:

I was trained as an ECE teacher but I never teach ECE class in my school. The headteacher has assigned another matric pass teacher to teach the ECE class who has not received training. The reason behind assigning ECE classes to untrained teachers was that qualified teachers (master degree holders) should teach senior classes and matric degree holders teachers will be taught ECE classes (Participant 10).

All participants stated that the presence of an attractive classroom setting has resulted in a rise in enrolment in ECE. In the past, parents were more inclined to admit their kids into private schools than public ones. However, parents and their children find the ECE classroom fascinating with the installation of LED and the thematic room walls. One of the participants stated that:

Except for the year 2019, every year we were surveyed by our teachers to run a campaign for getting admission into schools. But starting ECE makes it easy. Now parents enrolled their children of 4 to 5 years old in school by themselves due to having an attraction to the newly decorated ECE room. (Participant 5)

All the participants were informed of the unavailability of the provision of ECE kits in their schools. One of the headteacher participants talked about the provision of the ECE kit such as; *“I don’t have received ECE kit till today. Although, it has passed two years of imparting training yet have not received ECE kit”* (participant 4). Another participant gave details on the provision of the ECE kit in such words: *Our department is very slow what it says doesn’t do e.g. ECE kit is not provided to us in two years after training”* (participant 3).

All the participants stated that they telephonically inform parents about the commencement of the parent-teacher meeting (PTM) in the school. But parents of public schools do not bother to attend it. One of the participants expressed his feelings on the absence of parents from PTM in a way: *We invite parents to parents’ teacher meetings (PTM). But parents of villages don’t bother to spare their time. There is a need to train mothers rather than children”* (Participant 10).

The Advantages of ECE

Every participant acknowledged the significance of introducing ECE into public schools. They voiced their opinions by saying they thought the program was excellent. These days, students in government schools enjoy their education just as much as those in private institutions. With the introduction of the ECE program in our public schools, UPE targets will be met. However, the success of this vital and effective initiative depends on real management. Every time a program is introduced, society benefits greatly. However, how much desire and accountability the government has to guide it toward success is up to them. All the participants endorsed the importance of starting ECE in public schools. One of the participants said,

We can divide the benefits of ECE between outcome and output. The output of this program is that we have become able to attract the public now. Previously parents were more willing to send their children to private schools. A little bit, we have competed in the private sector. We have shown them that we have also quality facilities and faculty as well. We have broken the traditional concept of public school i.e. corporal punishment. The outcome of it can be measured by observing the changed behavior of our staff. ECE has changed the tempo of our teaching staff. They are more keen and interested in teaching young kids as compared with the past. (Participant 3)

Almost every one of the participants believes that early childhood education (ECE) will have a role in the upcoming fall in the primary

dropout rate. They attribute the sharp fall in dropout rates to ECE. It is not now possible to say that it is having an impact on primary dropout rates. However, perhaps it will prove useful in this regard in the future. They claimed that the rising school retention rate was due to ECE. One of the participants endorsed by mentioning:

“Before ECE, the rate of dropout at ECE level was much higher in our public schools as compared with the present. Now children get excited to come to school the next day. They learn through play and activity” (participant 4).

Usefulness of Training

According to their satisfaction with the trainer, the materials provided, and the facilities during training sessions, every study participant has acknowledged the efficacy of training delivery. However, they have drawn attention to the dearth of tools available in public schools for using the acquired talent. It makes the program less successful. Additionally, they express dissatisfaction with the organizers' mentality. They operate under the premise that organizers and trainers are ignorant of the real circumstances that exist in our public schools, particularly those that are situated in rural areas. One of the headteacher participants discussed it as under:

Although it was incredibly beneficial in terms of information acquisition, the lack of resources in our public schools makes it almost impossible to execute. Trainees experience a lot of anticipation during training, but when returning to the field, they complain about a lack of resources (participant 1).

A few participants complained about the practicality of the given training. One of the participants disclosed her opinion regarding the standard of training in a way:

The training and material were good. But the problem is that they don't know the existing problems of schools in our villages e.g. they just order to do things as they plan. If they visit schools then it will be revealed to them that there are fewer numbers of enrollment in ECE which can be a maximum of 30-50 as compared with other classes. They have ordered to allocate one separate room for ECE. Although I was supposed to manage 100 children in a single classroom. These things make imparted training inapplicable. So the trainers, as well as managers, should keep these shortfalls in mind while planning and organizing training. (Participant 5)

Almost all of the participants have reported beneficial changes to their teaching methods, such as making their classrooms child-friendly, coming up with kid-friendly activities, and changing their behavior to better instruct ECE students. Teachers now create learning exercises that can be completed both inside and outside of the classroom. They used to be thought of as extremely qualified individuals who were unwilling to teach young children at the ECE level. However, following their training, they realized that serving the ECE community is more essential to them than instructing at a higher level. Compared to earlier times when they were hesitant to instruct ECE students, teachers now are more enthusiastic. One of the female participants reported the observed change in trained teachers' personalities,

Her personality has developed through training. She is a stance by herself that the training has proved helpful for her to not only teach in the classroom rather she uses her learned methodology for teaching her children at home. (Participant 4)

Most teacher participants have complained about being not supported by their colleagues in motivating and designing activities for ECE. One of the participants quantified that *80% of my colleagues are not inquiring about ECE. But the rest of the 20% show a little bit of interest. Headteacher does not ask it but AEO asks to do something for ECE in school (participant 9).*

Suggestions for the Improvement of the ECE Program

Every participant agreed that the ECE program in our public schools is essential. ECE teachers must have ongoing training. It is simple to start a software, but more difficult to maintain its updates. Therefore, the government should prioritize supporting the schools and allocating funds to uphold the standard of ECE. To get the best program outcomes, it is argued that hiring a skilled ECE teacher and caregiver on a separate basis is necessary. *"Trainers assume the ideal situation is lying in our schools but the actual situation of our public schools is entirely different which makes the program ineffective,"* said a participant, raising concerns about the program's viability (participant 5).

QAED is responsible for delivering ECE kits to all schools that offer ECE classes. It comes with a variety of materials to conduct activities in the school, such as book sets of poems, flashcards, and carpets. Every participant recommended that every early childhood education institution provide free ECE kits in addition to a robust, organized system of oversight by

higher authorities. It is best to hire a fully qualified ECE observer to watch the classes so he can appropriately mentor educators and caregivers. One of the attendees stated that:

"This is a wonderful program, but the staff and school selection specifications are the reason it didn't work out. Where distinct rooms and facilities for early childhood education are not available in the school, those teachers are receiving training. Before choosing which employees to train, proper feasibility should be examined (Participant 2).

All participants suggested hiring ECE teachers who are subject matter experts on an individual basis to optimize program advantages.

"An ECE specialist teacher would be the most qualified to work with the younger children," said one participant. Many universities produce thousands of ECE graduates annually. So why aren't they working for the government? They will be well-trained; therefore, they won't need any additional instruction. The government will consequently save money and time (Participant 11).

Discussion

The primary objective of this research was to evaluate the efficacy of Punjab's public schools' in-service early childhood education teacher training programs. A four-day training program has been established by QAED to train in-service teachers to teach at the ECE level and head teachers to oversee ECE in schools. The results of teacher and headteacher interviews showed that all public schools experienced extreme difficulty in assigning a distinct ECE classroom and teacher. There were reports of a room shortage at schools. Participants have clarified that following QAED's instructions on managing the six corners in the ECE classroom is not practicable. Because there aren't enough competent spare trained teachers to teach ECE, headteachers find it difficult to assign qualified teachers to ECE classes.

All of the participants stated that the reason for the rise in enrolment in ECE is because the classrooms now have more of an appealing atmosphere due to the installation of LED and themed colored walls that appeal to both parents and their children. They went into more detail about how their schools did not have access to ECE kits. Parents were notified over the phone when PTM commenced, but they decided not to turn up. Findings about the "benefits of starting ECE in public schools" nevertheless, suggested that this is a crucial step toward achieving SDG 4,

EFA, and UPE targets. Students in government schools take pleasure in their education just like any other child in private schools.

However, the success of this vital and effective initiative depends on real management. Every time a program is introduced, society benefits greatly. However, how much desire and accountability the government has to guide it toward success is up to them. They claimed that the rising primary school retention rate can be attributed to early childhood education.

All of the participants acknowledged the success of the training in terms of their happiness with the facilities and information that the trainer presented throughout the training sessions. However, it has been noted that public schools lack the tools necessary to put the acquired abilities into practice. It makes the program less successful. They also take issue with the training session organizers' pragmatic approach. They were at the standpoint that trainers, as well as organizers, do not know the actual prevailing conditions of our public schools, especially the schools that are located in rural areas. Where there are very tough conditions in terms of resources.

The skilled teachers identified improvements in the manner in which the material was taught, like creating child-friendly environments and activities. Under the theme of "suggestions to improve," teachers and headteachers emphasized the significance of hiring a permanent caregiver and separate, qualified ECE instructor in addition to offering an ECE kit given by QAED to obtain the greatest program outcomes. They also underlined how important it is for higher authorities to keep a strong, well-functioning system of checks and balances. An extensively qualified ECE observer should be employed to observe the classrooms to mentor ECE instructors and caregivers.

Kimmel's (2020) study concludes that "professional plans must include goals and an action plan to achieve these goals" and "professional development (PD) programs are believed to lead to improved instructor quality." According to Kashar (2018), professional development refers to enhancing or altering teachers' instructional strategies to enhance students' learning. According to Polly et al. (2017), there is a direct correlation between professional development for teachers and the enhancement of students' learning. Numerous studies have been conducted to determine the connection between professional development for teachers and students' learning, including "(Akiba & Liang, 2016; Hall et al., 2017; Polly et al., 2017; Yurtseven & Altun, 2017)" (Gilbert, 2020). Dreer et al. (2017) discovered the distinction between teacher professional development and the application of knowledge in the classroom. To transfer the knowledge acquired in the classroom, it is necessary to create motivation in the learning process.

Conclusion

The study's objective was to find out trainees' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of in-service ECE teacher training programs. This study found that while the participants appreciated the learning experience, they thought it was beneficial. Because the trainer presented material relevant to their professional needs, the trainees felt that the training was beneficial to them. The skills acquired during the program satisfied the trainees. They think it helped them become more proficient teachers. They believed that training enhanced their conduct relating to their jobs as well. The ECE training program caused a change in their professional manner. Early childhood educators were motivated by training programs to apply their newly acquired knowledge, skills, and talents in their teaching. Overall, it was the perception of the trainees that training helped them to improve the outcome of their professional lives. The research concluded that trainees' motivation to transfer training is of serene significance to transfer the learned behavior from training programs.

Implications

Based on the findings of this study, the below-mentioned suggestions were made:

1. All public schools should get distinct funding and resources from the government for early childhood education.
2. Individual hiring of qualified ECE teachers is necessary for ECE instruction.
3. Headteachers should assign only certified in-service ECE instructors to teach at the ECE level.
4. Training materials ought to be created with a realistic approach, taking into account the needs and resources of Early Childhood Education in our public schools.
5. The length of the training program for in-service ECE teachers ought to be increased.
6. Every ECE school should receive an ECE kit from QAED.
7. Teachers should develop a more child-friendly environment to retain their children.
8. Lastly, public university pre-service ECE professors ought to conduct their practicum as an essential requirement of a degree in public schools only.

It is suggested to carry out more ECE research in all of Punjab's districts to verify the validity of the findings.

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