

## The Role of Head Teachers in Implementation of Early Childhood Education Programme in Public Schools

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### Abstract

This research intends to scrutinize the UNICEF-led ECE (Early childhood education) program. The main area of this research was to examine the role of head teachers in the implementation of the ECE program in public schools of province Punjab. The implementation of ECE was done under the supervision of the SED (school education department) Punjab. Different data collection methods have been used to collect the most authentic data. The data methods include modern research paradigms, advanced instruments of data measurement, questionnaires, and past study samples. Research has been carried out in the 12 districts of Punjab that include Lahore, Jhelum, Kasur, Vehari, Khaniwal, Nankanshab, Sahiwal, Okara, Chakwal, and Layyah. The composition of data has been done by academic researchers. Selected schools have been visited in this survey with the abetment of fellows and colleagues. With overall feedback to the authorities and analysis of data, it has been concluded that the role of head teachers in the materialization of the ECE program goals is fulfilling and satisfactory. For the outshine implementation of the ECE program, through the developmental budget financial models and procedures can be improved also the performance of head teachers and caregivers should be evaluated.

**Keywords:** ECE (Early Child Education), UNICEF, Head teachers, Public schools

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### Introduction

Early childhood education ECE is the set of activities and experiences for the nourishment and early development of a child before the admission in secondary schools specially designed for the child of age between 3 and 5 (Deanna M. Swartout-Corbeil, 2005).

In addition, the holistic nature of ECE makes it important. It caters to the multiple needs of a child from its birth to kindergarten schooling. It includes physical, cognitive, emotional, and social spheres of the need of a child (Alvarado, 2010). Furthermore, to ensure a better environment and enhanced enrolment DSD introduced a new project of ECE in 2000 in the public schools of Punjab.

In the early developmental stages of a child's brain, every second, one million new neural connections are built (child, 2014). To

better utilize those connections and giving them a proper direction and a healthy environment, the ECE program will play a crucial role throughout the child's life journey. If the early nourishment has been provided well then the rest of the development will bring magnificent results (Cherry, K. 2012). Moreover, through autonomous and creative training, the harmonious, integral, and free development of a child can be carried out according to the particular pace and need of a child's personality (PLATFORM, E. N. 2019). Next, ECE also helps in the discovery of the personal identity of a child and creates a sense of autonomy in them. The skills, attitude, and all supportive qualities are injected through ECE that are needed to a child in schooling, and that follows the rest of the life. The early stages of the ECE program include community service to the children of grades 1-3 and age 3 to 5 according to

SED guidelines (Shakil 2002). Similarly, the case study was launched to understand the role of head teachers in ECE program implementation. Total 1.35 million of teachers force is working in Pakistan distinguished in the public and private sector (Mahmud, 2014). In the same way, teachers are always considered as the role model for a child. The first intellectual exposure of a child belongs to the teacher. Keeping the above number of teachers in mind, the role of the head teacher gets increased. The head teacher not only has to manage the affairs of a child but he also has to manage the resource of teachers in an impactful and intelligent way (Murtaza Sadu 2004).

This study explores the technical duties and responsibilities of head teachers regarding ECE. Evaluation of the work of subordinates, maintaining the instructions of SED, and UNICEF, noticing the changing trends in teaching and updating accordingly are the few basic roles of head teachers (Podgornik, 2017). Furthermore, the role of head teachers in curriculum implementation is crucial. First thing first, Curriculum development demands an immense level of grass-root understanding. Only formal intellectual capacities are not enough. The curriculum is the medium that facilitates teachers to impact generations. Its development and then execution is not an easy task. Head teachers as supervisors of all this process play a decisive role. Where the whole policy will lead to and what type of generation we are going to have? It depends on curriculum framers and supervisors (Haider, 2016). Keeping in view all the above matters ECE National Curriculum was developed in 2007.

### Research Questions

- 1) What are the supervision constraints of a head teacher in the implementation of the ECE curriculum in the Public schools of Punjab?
- 2) What is the delivery level of caregivers in the implementation of the ECE program in different regions of Punjab?
- 3) What is the administrative and managerial role of a head teacher in ECE terms implementation?

### Material and Methods

In this research, twelve districts of the four regions of Punjab have been selected. The selection has been made 1/3 of the total districts of Punjab. The reason behind selecting these particular districts was that the ECE program has been initiated only in these districts as a trial of reformation. Regions include Southern Punjab, Northern Punjab, Central Punjab, and Western Punjab. The selected districts are Kasur, Okara, Lahore, Vehari, Khaniwal, Nankanshab, Sahiwal, Jhelum, Chakwal, Bahawalnagar, Multan and Layyah. The complete design of the selected districts has been depicted in Table (4.1)

The method of random sampling has been adopted in twelve districts of Punjab for data collection. A total of 500 teachers have been chosen out of which (262) were males and (238) female head teachers. The sample has been taken from those schools of Punjab where the ECE program is functional in classrooms. The summary of the sample distribution has been given in Table (4.2)

A questionnaire was developed by our researchers on demographic variables of Punjab after reviewing the major ECE Policy published in 2017. This questionnaire was used as an instrument of research to collect authentic data and information and to better understand the management and administration of ECE policy. The questionnaire focused on the 6 core areas of the ECE program implementation terms. These include Supervision of ECE Program, Instruction used by head teachers to smoothly implement the ECE plan, Administration of ECE kit, Performance of Caregiver, Administration, and

Management of different activities held in the ECE classroom in public schools at four regions of Punjab. A bipolar scale of (Yes/ No) was used to collect the responses against the questionnaire. 40 head teachers had been tested through the questionnaire. Further to investigate the reliability of the instrument, the evidence is enclosed in Table (4.3)

The descriptive statistic technique has been used for the data analysis on the scale of SPSS (Statistics Package of social sciences) t-test. It has been depicted to identify the role of head teachers in the implementation of the ECE program by the evaluation of descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequencies. For ethical consideration, all the head teachers have been taken on board about the research before the questionnaire has been presented to them.

**Table 4.1****The list of selected districts of Punjab**

Name of region	No. of Districts	1/3 <sup>rd</sup> district as Population	
Northern Punjab	6	2	Jhelu
Southern Punjab	7	2	Baha
Central Punjab	20	7	Kasu Sahi
Western Punjab	3	1	Layy

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of selected districts in the four regions of the province of Punjab, Pakistan.

**Table 4.2****The summary of the sample distribution**

Name of Region	Name of District	No. of ECE Schools (Male )	No. of ECE Schools (Female)	Total
<b>Northern Punjab</b>	Jhelum	18	11	29
	Chakwal	21	17	38
<b>Southern Punjab</b>	Bahawalnagar	32	27	59
	Multan	21	21	42
	Kasur	32	14	46
<b>Central Punjab</b>	Okara	27	21	48
	Lahore	27	22	49
	Vehari	0	31	31
	Khanewal	35	18	53
	Sahiwal	19	26	45
	Nankana sahib	11	13	24
<b>Western Punjab</b>	Layyah	19	17	36
<b>Total</b>		<b>262</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>500</b>

This table shows the number of selected schools of male and female in each selected district of the Punjab, Pakistan. 262 Male while 238 Female schools (500 as a whole) have been selected for the purpose of data collection.

**Table 4.3****Reliability of the research Instrument**

Instrument	N	Total Items	Cronbach's Alpha.
Head	40	44	0.710

Teachers  
Questionnaire

Table 4.3 presents a reliability analysis of the tests. Here in this test, the alpha value of the test is 0.710 which is in the acceptable range

**Table 4.4**

**Responses of the Head teachers on Supervision at Central Punjab (N=296)**

Statements	NO %	YES%
Do you visit ECE Room daily?	24	76
Is supervision enhancing the effectiveness of learning?	1.7	98.3
Are teaching and learning resources available?	1.7	98.3
Do you assess implementation of curriculum and instruction?	1.7	98.3
Do you assess teaching, learning facilities and resources?	1.7	98.3
Do the children give you positive response?	1.8	98.2
Does teacher guide the students properly while using ECE Kit?	6.8	93.2
Do students share their problems with caregiver freely in friendly environment?	7.8	92.2

Does teacher co-operate in providing necessary information?	6.1	93.9
Does your mission of supervision assist teachers?	2.4	97.6
Are your teachers trained in ECE field?	96.6	3.4

Table 4.4 shows a percentage-wise response of head teachers in the eleven areas of monitoring has been displayed in the form of Yes/No. If we evaluate these responses in descending order, we found that on the question of supervision only 1.7 % of the head teachers think that supervision is not effective in the field of ECE according to its respective standards while 98.3 % of them think that they are effective. The rest of the 10 monitoring areas can be witnessed in the response statistic table. The findings are as below

1. From Central Punjab, 76% of the teachers visit ECE classrooms on daily basis.
2. From the survey, it has been found that 98.3% of head teachers show confidence that their headship is effective in the implementation process of the ECE program.
3. Data shows that 98.3% of head teachers trust that there are sufficient learning resources that have been provided by authorities for the genuine implementation of ECE.
4. Data displays that 98.3% of the head teachers believe that their assessment efforts enhanced the performance of the ECE program.

5. Data shows that 93.2% of the head teachers providing proper guidelines to students using the ECE Guide kit

**Table 4.5**  
**Responses of the Head Teachers on**  
**Supervision at Northern Punjab (N=67)**

Statements	NO %	YES %
Do you visit ECE Room daily?	23.9	76.1
Is supervision enhancing the effectiveness of learning?	1.5	98.5
Are teaching and learning resources available?	17.9	82.1
Do you assess implementation of curriculum and instruction?	9.0	91.0
Do you assess teaching, learning facilities and resources?	4.5	95.5
Do the children give you positive response?	14.9	85.1
Does teacher guide the students properly while using ECE Kit?	19.4	80.6
Do students share their problems with caregiver freely in friendly environment?	22.4	77.6
Does teacher co-operate in providing necessary information?	9.0	91.0
Is your mission of supervision to assists teachers?	4.5	95.5
Are your teachers trained in ECE field?	11.9	88.1

From Northern Punjab, we found that on the question of supervision only 1.5 % of the head teachers think that there is supervision is not effective in the field of ECE according to its respective standards while 98.5 % of them think

that they are effective. The rest of the 10 monitoring areas can be witnessed in the response statistic table. The findings are as under

1. From Northern Punjab, 76.1% of the teachers visit ECE classrooms on daily basis.
2. From the survey, it has been found that 98.0% of head teachers show confidence that their headship is effective in the implementation process of the ECE program.
3. Findings show that 82.1% of head teachers trust that there are sufficient learning resources that have been provided by authorities for the genuine implementation of ECE.
4. Data displays that 80.6% of the head teachers believe that their assessment efforts enhanced the performance of the ECE program.
5. Numbers show that 93.2% of the head teachers providing proper guidelines to students using the ECE Guide kit.

**Table 4.6**  
**Responses of the Head teachers on Supervision**  
**at Southern Punjab (N= 101)**

Statements	NO%	YES %
Do you visit ECE Room daily?	4.0	96.0
Is supervision enhancing the effectiveness of learning?	4.0	96.0
Are teaching and learning resources available?	2.0	98.0
Do you assess implementation of curriculum and instruction?	5.9	94.1
Do you assess teaching, learning facilities and	1.0	99.0

resources?		
Do the children give you positive response?	3.0	97.0
Does teacher guide the students properly while using ECE Kit?	6.5	94.5
Do students share their problems with caregiver freely in friendly environment?	2.0	98.0
Does teacher co-operate in providing necessary information?	3.0	97.8
Is your mission of supervision to assists teachers?	6.9	93.1
Are your teachers trained in ECE field?	11.9	88.1

From Southern Punjab, we found that on the question of supervision only 4.0 % of the head teachers think that there is supervision is not effective in the field of ECE according to its respective standards while 96.0 % of them think that they are effective. The rest of the 10 monitoring areas can be witnessed in the response statistic table.

#### Findings:

1. From Southern Punjab, 96% of the teachers visit ECE classrooms on daily basis.
2. From the survey, it has been found that 96% of head teachers show confidence that their headship is effective in the implementation process of the ECE program.
3. Findings show that 98% of head teachers trust that there are sufficient learning resources that have been provided by authorities for the genuine implementation of ECE.

4. Data displays that 94.1% of the head teachers believe that their assessment efforts enhanced the performance of the ECE program.
5. Numbers show that 94.5% of the head teachers providing proper guidelines to students using the ECE Guide kit

**Table 4.7**  
**Responses of the Head teachers on Supervision at Western Punjab (N=36)**

Statements	NO %	YES %
Do you visit ECE Room daily?	2.8	97.2
Is supervision enhancing the effectiveness of learning?	2.8	97.8
Are teaching and learning resources available?	3.0	97.0
Do you assess implementation of curriculum and instruction?	2.8	97.8
Do you assess teaching, learning facilities and resources?	4.5	95.5
Do the children give you positive response?	2.8	97.8
Does teacher guide the students properly while using ECE Kit?	4.5	95.5
Do students share their problems with caregiver freely in friendly environment?	3.0	97.0
Does teacher co-operate in providing necessary information?	2.5	97.5
Is your mission of supervision to assists teachers?	2.8	97.2
Are your teachers trained in ECE field?	3.0	97.0



From Western Punjab, we found that on the question of supervision only 2.8 % of the head teachers think that there is supervision is not effective in the field of ECE according to its respective standards while 97.2 % of them think that they are effective. The rest of the 10 monitoring areas can be witnessed in the response statistic table.

#### Findings:

1. From Western Punjab, 97.2% of the teachers visit ECE classrooms on daily basis.
2. From the survey, it has been found that 97.8% of head teachers show confidence that their headship is effective in the implementation process of the ECE program.
3. Findings show that 97% of head teachers trust that sufficient learning resources have been provided by authorities for the genuine implementation of ECE.
4. Data displays that 97.8% of the head teachers believe that their assessment efforts enhanced the performance of the ECE program.
5. Numbers show that 95.5% of the head teachers providing proper guidelines to students using the ECE Guide kit

#### Discussion

Throughout Early childhood education, ECE has established its core value in the whole educational process (Kessler, 2010). It has become the genesis of further nourishment for a child. Moreover, the growth of a child is not a constraint to its physical size; the child grows in different dimensions. This dimension includes an understanding of the people, the evolution of brain muscles, the complexity of ideas, and many more. For further child's nourishment and to get him/her prepare for formal education, SED introduced a proper policy in 2017 for the schools of Punjab. The policy revolves around the idea of making

child prepare for complex educational proceedings as per UNICEF directions (Chabbott, 2004)

The policy implementers have to ensure the availability of sufficient and relevant material required for the task. According to survey reports, it has been found that 98.3% of the teacher heads from central Punjab, 98.0% from Southern Punjab, 82.1% from Northern Punjab, and 97% from Western Punjab depicted their trust that source accessibility is sufficient in the implementation process of ECE program in Punjab (Syeda, 2016). According to policy checks it has been found that in the area of observation of ECE classrooms, feedback from the head teachers, monitoring and professional pieces of training according to ECE minimal standards the 90% role of head teachers is fulfilling (Ahmad, 2019).

#### Conclusion

Through the study, two kinds of conclusions have been drawn: conclusions that are supported by the data against the evaluation of teacher's responses and vice versa.

- 1) No noticeable variance has been found on the evaluation of responses of teachers on the role of female & male teachers regarding the supervision of the ECE program. **Central Punjab** (Mean=11.65, S=1.32 for female & male teachers (Mean=11.62, SD=1.37,  $t(294) = .199$ ,  $p=.842$ ). It has been concluded that it was supported by data.
- 2) There was no statistical difference between the evaluation responses of female & male teachers regarding the instruction of the ECE program at Public School at **Western Punjab** (Mean=1.601, SD1.66 for female & male teachers (Mean=7.46, SD=1.66,  $t(34) = -.515$ ,  $p=.608$ ) was supported through data.
- 3) No noteworthy variance between the evaluation responses of female & male teachers in the ECE program at Public

School at **Southern Punjab** (Mean=6.38, SD=.843) For female & male teachers (Mean= 6.428, SD=1.338,  $t(99) = -.199$ ,  $p=.843$ ) was supported through the data.

- 4) There was a statistical difference between the evaluation responses of female & male teachers regarding the instruction of the ECE program at Public School at **Northern Punjab** (Mean=6.102, SD=.307 for female & male teachers (Mean=6.50, SD=.962,  $t(65) = -2.41$ ,  $p=.018$ ) So it was rejected through data.

## Recommendations

After a deep research, we have found a few flaws in the implementation process. To overcome those flaws following recommendations have been made to achieve the desired targets.

1. For the outshine implementation of the ECE program, financial models and procedures can be made better through the developmental budget.
2. To achieve better ends, the role and performance of head teachers and ECE caregivers should be evaluated and investigated from time to time.
3. SED should hire ECE caregivers for the long term to maintain consistency in the implementation of ECE in public schools of Punjab.

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