

A Comparative Study of The Effectiveness of Early Childhood Education in Public and Private Schools of District Peshawar



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Abstract: *This research focuses on the comparison of the implementation of Early Childhood Education in Public and Private schools in District Peshawar. The objectives were to gain insight into the gap in Policy implementation, Present facilities, and Pre-Service Training by comparing Public and Private Primary Schools in District Peshawar. Quantitative and non-contrived method of research was used. The target population was all Heads and ECE Teachers of primary Schools in Public and Private Schools of District Peshawar. The study was delimited to the urban area of Town 3 Peshawar which includes Circle -1 Hayatabad and Circle -2 Cantonment of District Peshawar and female Teachers and Heads. A descriptive Study Survey and Stratified Random Sampling Technique were used. Analysis was conducted by Frequency, Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test calculation. The main finding of the study was that Awareness of the ECE Concept is very low in Teachers and parents of both sectors. The ratio of availability of ECE Classrooms, Teaching material, Physical Facilities, Funds Allocation, Teachers Training and Staff on Demand is found more in private schools as compared to public schools. So, for the implementation of ECE in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it is recommended sufficient Funds allocation, Teachers' Training Programs, awareness of ECE in all kinds of media, physical facilities and the material required for ECE classrooms should be constantly managed and organized by the schools' management. Public Schools need much attention in this regard. A collaboration Centre of excellence should be managed at the district level to check and balance the implementation and quality assurance in both public and private primary schools.*

Keywords: ECE, Public Schools, Private Schools, female heads, teachers, implementation

INTRODUCTION

Around the globe, there are 250 million children who are unable to achieve the target developmental growth in the first 5 years of their life due to poor childhood experiences and professional and social incompetence. All these are set in the early age either on school level or national level. Children in middle-income countries, including our country, can evacuate this sarcastic situation by implementing a comprehensive ECE Curriculum. So, it is an intense need of the day to implement the ECE Program as soon as possible in Pakistan and

especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where the literacy and dropout rate at primary level is much greater productive in the form of highly motivated and educated citizens who can run the machinery of the country (Ayub, Bano & Mukhtar, 2000).

Pakistan like many other developing countries was unstable and a post conflict country. ECE was the only solution and planned an integrated and operational system along with high profile Training Centers across the sector. Due to the scarcity of human and material resources, only

improved ECE Planning and Policy making could remediate the education system. Pakistan had made significant institutional progress over the past decade. The ECE Program is now one of the three main priorities of Pakistan's National Education Action Plan. This was the important part of the National Education Policy of 2009. There were many challenges for implementation of ECE Program in Pakistan but some of these challenges were drawn after research i.e., poor quality of education, lack of access to education, budgetary constraints, law & order situation, lack of awareness, un-trained teachers, law & order situation, weak governance etc. Hence the researcher felt that to conduct the study to find out the gap for implementation of ECE Program in Pakistan especially Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (Arshad & Zubair, 2018).

Educational system of Pakistan is constituted of Primary Level (kachi to 5th), Middle Level (6th to 8th), Secondary Level (9th & 10th), Higher secondary Level (11th and 12th) and BS from (13th to 16th) classes which is equal to 16 years of education. In Public Schools of Pakistan, Pre-School, Nursery, Montessori and Kindergarten are part of Primary Level. In 1988, preparation classes kachi and pakki were implemented which were known as awaadna and awaalna in Seventh Five-Year Plan. Gordon and Browne (2000) had concluded the age of a child in Early Childhood Education from two to eight years. Similarly, Essa (2005) has defined Early Childhood Education (ECE) from birth to eight years. He termed it as an encompassing developmentally appropriate Program which trains teachers effectively to work with little kids.

Early Childhood in the life of an individual is a critically important developmental stage in which the brain grows rapidly. Neuron Science shows that the brain development of a child begins before birth i.e., Prenatal Stage and continues after birth. At the birth of a child, there are 100 billion Neurons are present in his brain.. This is the pace which will never be repeated again in life. ECE Program is considered to be one of the most important contributors beside the others in human development due to its most important life era. The economic developments of the world

shows that it is a prime indicator for the development. The investment in these initial days of development will result in a high rate of success to their lives, communities, families, countries and even societies (Gordon & Browne, 2000).

It is revealed by the research in Medical Science that Healthy and Positive exposure or experiences in early childhood are more effective for permanent and long-lasting effects. It has adverse impacts in case of a negative environment which may cause poor mental and physical health e.g., cardiovascular disease, obesity and even type -1 diabetes. The substandard educational opportunities, economic issues, increased violence, crime and depression that can throw the society in trouble (Essa, 2005).

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study was to compare the Implementation of ECE Program in Public and Private Schools in District Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and respectively in Pakistan. The chapter presents the method and procedures used to carry out the research. The sample and population are described with the detail of the tool of research. Initially data from some schools was collected and Pilot Study had been conducted before collection of entire data to check the reliability, accuracy and procedure of data analysis. All the ECE Teachers and Heads working in Girls Primary Schools in Circle-1 Hayatabad and Circle -2 Cantonment Peshawar made the target population of the study. Total number of Public and Private Schools included 220 (90 Public +130 Private).

Sample of the Study was selected from the population by using Cluster Sampling Technique. The table for devising samples from the population by Krejcie and Morgan in 1970 used to draw and correct numbering of samples from the target population.

A Questionnaire was designed on Five-Point Likert Scale by the researcher in the light of available literature for the female Heads and the Teachers to find out the problems of ECE in Pakistan and their solution.

RESULTS

The collected data from the sample respondents was fed in SPSS-20 for data analysis. Appropriate Descriptive Statistics (like Mean, Standard Deviation and Percentage) for measuring variability and Inferential Statistics (like t- test or Chi- square) for measuring the significance level

to compare the policy implementation gape between public and private schools in district Peshawar.

It is divided in to 2 sections.

Section - A: Responses of Schools heads

Table 1. Comparison of Awareness of ECE Concept in Teachers between Public and Private Schools

| Schools' Type | Strongly disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly | Chi-Square P-value |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|--------------------|
| Public Schools' Heads | 2 (3) | 0 (0) | 2 (3) | 31 (45) | 35 (50) | 55.371 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Head | 1 (1) | 3 (4) | 1 (1) | 24 (34) | 41 (59) | 1.000 (0.000) |
| Total | 3 | 3 | 3 | 55 | 76 | |

The Table indicates the opinion of Heads about awareness of Teachers in Public and Private Schools under study 95% (66) Public Schools' Heads are agreed that Teachers are aware of ECE Concept and 3 % (2) Heads are not agreed that Teachers are aware of EE concept while 3% (2) are undecided that Teachers are aware of ECE concept. While in Private Schools' Heads 93% (65) are agreed about awareness of ECE Concept of Teachers whereas 5% (4) Schools' Heads

disagreed about the awareness of Teachers of ECE Concept and only 1% (1) are undecided. This shows that awareness of the ECE Concept in Teachers is more in Public Schools' Heads than in Private Schools' Heads. Chi Square value is 55.371. 0.000 is the calculated value of p which is quite low as compared to the tabulated value in Public Schools' Heads. While in Private Schools Chi Square value is 1.000 and p-value is 0.000 which is less than tabulated value.

Table 2. Comparison of Presence of ECE Certified Teachers of Public and Private Schools

| Schools' Type | Strongly disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly agreed | Chi-square p-value |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Public School's Heads | 13 (19) | 31 (44) | 2 (3) | 8 (11) | 16 (23) | 33.857 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Heads | 4 (6) | 4 (6) | 3 (4) | 25 (36) | 34 (49) | 81.543 (0.000) |
| Total | 17 | 35 | 5 | 33 | 50 | |

Table shows the Presence of ECE Certified Teachers in Schools. 63 % (44) Public Schools' Heads are not agreed. 3% (2) Public Schools' Heads were undecided and 24% (34) Public

Schools' Heads were agreed. In contrast 12% (8) Private Schools' Heads are disagreed, 4 (3) % Private Schools' Heads are undecided and 58% (59) Private Schools' Heads are agreed. This

indicates that ECE Certified Teachers are present more in Private Schools than in Public Schools. Chi Square Value is 33.857. The calculated value of P is 0.000 which is low as compared to

Tabulated Value in Public Schools' Heads. While in Private Schools Chi Square Value is 81.543 and the value of p is 0.000 which is lower as compared to tabulated value.

Table 3. Comparison of Availability of Specialized ECE Classroom in Public and Private Schools.

| Schools' Type | Strongly Disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly agreed | Chi-quare p-value |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Public Schools' Heads | 8 (11) | 32 (46) | 2 (3) | 13 (19) | 15 (21) | 36.143 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Heads | 2 (3) | 6 (9) | 3 (4) | 22 (31) | 37 (53) | 79.000 (0.000) |
| Total | 10 | 38 | 5 | 35 | 52 | |

The table 4.9 indicates the Caparison of Availability of Specialized ECE Classroom in Public and Private Schools 57% (40) Public Schools Heads are disagreed, 3 % (2) are undecided and 40% (28) are agreed while 12% (8) Private Schools' Heads are disagreed. 4% (2) are undecided and 84% (59) are agreed. The table indicates that the Availability ratio of Specialized

ECE Classroom is greater in Private Schools than in Public Schools. Chi Square value is 36.143. The value of p is 0.000 that is lesser than the tabulated value in Public Schools' Heads while in Private Schools Chi Square value is 79.000. The calculated value of p is 0.000 which is lower as compared to tabulated value.

Table 4. Comparison of Funds Allocation for ECE Classroom between Public and Private Schools

| Schools' Type | Strongly Disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly Agreed | Chi-Square p-value |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Public Schools' Heads | 4 (6) | 6 (9) | 23 (32) | 24 (34) | 13 (19) | 24.714 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Heads | 3 (4) | 5 (7) | 4 (6) | 22 (31) | 36 (51) | 19.286 (0.001) |
| Total | 7 | 11 | 27 | 46 | 49 | |

The table 4.10 indicates the Comparison of Fund Allocation for ECE Classroom in Public and Private Schools. 15% (10) Public Schools' Heads are disagreed 32 % (23) are undecided. 53 % (37) are agreed while 11 % ((8) Private Schools' Heads are disagreed, 6% (4) are undecided and 82% (58) are agreed.

The table indicates the ratio of Funds allocation

for Establishment of ECE Classroom is more in Private Schools than in Public School. Chi Square value is 24.714. The calculated value of p is 0.000 which is lesser as compared to tabulated value in Public Schools' Heads. While in Private Schools Chi Square value is 19.286. The calculated p-value is 0.000 which is lower as compared to tabulated value.

Table 5. Comparison of Availability of Required Material for ECE Classes between Public and Private Schools.

| Schools' Type | Strongly Disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly agreed | Chi- quare p-value |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Public Schools' Heads | 12 (17) | 30 (43) | 4 (6) | 12 (17) | 12 (17) | 26.286 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Heads | 0 (0) | 12 (17) | 7 (10) | 19 (27) | 32 (46) | 60.714 (0.000) |
| Total | 12 | 42 | 11 | 31 | 44 | |

The table indicates the Comparison of Availability of Required Material for ECE Classes between Public and Private Schools' Heads. 50% (42) Public Schools' Heads are not agreed. 4% (6) are undecided and 35% (24) are agreed while 17% (12) Private Schools' Heads are not agreed, 10% (7) are undecided and 73% (51) are agreed. This shows the of Availability of

ECE Required Material is higher in Private Schools than in Public Schools. Chi Square value is 26.286. Calculated p-value is 0.000 which is lower as compared to tabulated value in Public Schools' Heads while in Private Schools Chi Square value is 60.714 and calculated p-value is 0.000 which is lesser as Section - B: Responses of Schools' Teachers.

Table 8. Comparison of Awareness of ECE Concept between Public and Private Schools

| Schools' Type | Strongly Disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly agreed | Chi-Square p-value |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Public Schools' Teachers | 3 (3) | 1 (1) | 0 (0) | 49 (48) | 49 (48) | 86.7 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Teachers | 4 (4) | 5 (5) | 5 (5) | 54 (52) | 35 (34) | 101.223 (0.000) |
| Total | 7 | 6 | 5 | 103 | 84 | |

Table indicates the Awareness of Teachers about ECE Concept. 4 % (4) Public School Teachers disagree that Teachers are aware of ECE Concept, 0 % (0) are undecided and 96 % (98) agree that Teachers are aware of ECE concept. While in Private Schools' Teachers 9 % (9) are disagreed, 5 % (5) are undecided and 89 % are agreed. This shows that Awareness of the ECE Concept in Teachers is more in PublicSchools' Teachers than in Private Schools' Teachers. Chi Square Value is 86.7. Calculated p-value is 0.000 that is lower

as compared to tabulated value in Public schools' Teachers while in Private Schools Chi Square value is 101. 223. The calculated p-value is 0.000 which is lesser as compared to tabulated value.

Table 9. Comparison of Presence of ECE Certified Teachers between Public and Private Schools

| Schools' Type | Strongly disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly agreed | Chi-Square p-Value |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Public Schools' Teachers | 23 (23) | 53 (52) | 2 (2) | 7 (7) | 17 (17) | 78.392 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Teachers | 5 (5) | 6 (6) | 7 (7) | 51 (50) | 34 (33) | 84.718 (.000) |
| Total | 28 | 59 | 9 | 58 | 51 | |

Table 4.23 shows the Presence of ECE Certified Teachers in Schools. 75 % (76) Public School Teachers are not agreed, 2% (2) Public Schools' Teachers are undecided and 24 % (24) Public Schools Teachers are agreed, in contrast 11% (11) Private Schools' Teachers are disagreed, 7% (7) are undecided and 85% (83) are agreed. This indicates that ECE Certified Teachers are present more in

Private Schools than in Public Schools. Chi Square value is 78. 392. The calculated p-value is 0.000 which indicates that it is lower as compared to tabulated value in Public Schools' Teachers. While in Private Schools' Teachers Chi Square value is 84. 718. The calculated p-value is 0.000 that is lesser as compared to tabulated value.

Table 10. Comparison of Availability of Specialized ECE Classroom between Public and Private Schools

| Schools' Type | Strongly Disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly agreed | Chi-Square p-value |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Public Schools' Teachers | 18 (18) | 53 (52) | 2 (2) | 9 (9) | 20 (20) | 75.353 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Teachers | 5 (5) | 8 (8) | 8 (8) | 49 (48) | 33 (32) | 73.845 (0.000) |
| Total | 23 | 61 | 10 | 58 | 53 | |

The Table indicates the Comparison of Availability of Specialized ECE Classroom in Public and Private Schools' Teachers. 70 % (71) Public Schools' Teachers are disagreed, 2 % (2) are undecided and 29 % (29) are agreed while 13 % (13) Private Schools' Teachers are not agreed, 4 % undecided and 81 % (81) are agreed. The table

indicates that the Availability ratio of Specialized ECE Classroom is greater in Private Schools than in Public Schools. Chi Square value is 75. 353. The calculated Chi Square value is 0.000 which is lesser as compared to tabulated value while in Private Schools.

Table 11. Comparison of Funds Allocation for ECE Classroom between Public and Private Schools

| Schools' Type | Strongly Disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly agreed | Chi-Square p-value |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Public Schools' Teachers | 14 (14) | 11 (11) | 40 (39) | 21 (21) | 16 (16) | 26.137 (.000) |
| Private Schools' Teachers | 7 (7) | 8 (8) | 8 (8) | 48 (47) | 32 (31) | 67.146 (.000) |
| Total | 21 | 19 | 48 | 69 | 48 | |

The table indicates the Comparison of Funds Allocation for ECE Classroom in Public and Private Schools. 24 % (25) Public Schools' Teachers are disagreed 39 % are undecided 37 % (37) are agreed while 15 % (15) Private Schools' Teachers disagree, 8% (8) are undecided and 78% (80) are agreed. The table indicates the ratio of Funds Allocation for Establishment of ECE Classroom is more in Private Schools than in Public

School. Chi Square value is 26. 137. Calculated p-value is 0.000. It is lower as compared to tabulated value in Public Schools' Teachers while in Private Schools' Teachers Chi Square value is 67.146. The calculated value of P is 0.000 which is less than the tabulated value (13) Square value is 73. 845. Calculated p-value is 0.000 that is least as compared to tabulated value.

Table 12. Comparison of Availability Material for ECE Classroom between Public and Private Schools

| Schools' Type | Strongly Disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly agreed | Chi-Square p-value |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Public Schools' Teachers | 18 (18) | 53 (52) | 6 (6) | 13 (13) | 12 (12) | 68.686 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Teachers | 6 (6) | 12 (12) | 5 (5) | 47 (46) | 33 (32) | 67.049 (0.000) |

Table indicates the comparison of Availability of Required Material for ECE Classes between Public and Private Schools' Teachers. 70 % (71) Public Schools' Teachers are not agreed, 6 % (6) are undecided and 25 % (25) are agreed while 18 % (18) Public Schools' Teachers are not agreed, 5 % (5) are undecided and 78 % (80) are agreed. This shows the Availability of ECE Required Material is

higher in Private Schools than in Public Schools. Chi Square value is 68. 686. The calculated p-value is 0.000 which indicates it is lower as compared to tabulated value in Public Schools' Teachers while in Private Schools Chi Square value is 67. 049. The calculated p-value is 0.000 which is lower as compared to tabulated value.

Table 13 Comparison of In-Service Training between Public and Private Schools

| Schools' Type | Strongly Disagreed | Disagreed | Undecided | Agreed | Strongly agreed | Chi- Square p-value |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Public Schools' Teachers | 22 (22) | 53 (52) | 8 (8) | 6 (6) | 13 (13) | 72.608 (0.000) |
| Private Schools' Teachers | 9 (9) | 60 (58) | 4 (4) | 21 (20) | 9 (9) | 101.806 (0.000) |
| Total | 31 | 113 | 12 | 27 | 22 | |

The table indicates the Comparison of Conduction of In-Service Training between Public and Private Schools. 74 % (75) Public Schools' Teachers are disagreed, 8 % (8) are undecided and 19 % (19) are agreed while 67 % (69) Private Schools are disagreed, 4 % (4) are undecided and 29 % (30) are agreed. The table shows the Conduction of In-Service Training is low in Public Schools than in Private Schools. Chi Square value is 72. 608. The calculated value of p is 0.000 that shows that it is least as compared to tabulated value in Public Schools' Teachers while in Private Schools Chi Square value is 101.806. The calculated p-value is 0.000 which is least as compared to tabulated value.

DISCUSSION

The study is very special due to seeking the policy implementation gap of the Early Childhood Education Program in District Peshawar by the opinion of Heads and Teachers of Public and Private Primary Schools. ECE has been a highly dynamic goal for transformation around the world. Globally, Care of Childhood is considered as the responsibility of the families. Parents have a strong impact on the capacities of learning and overall development (Myers 2004, p.62). These starting years of children are very critical for parents, teachers, administrators and caregivers to provide positive and enrich experiences through various conducive activities of their interest and motivation. Children learn and groom faster during their early years than the old age (Gordon

and Browne, 2000). Due to the importance of ECE the sector wise analysis is administered to support findings of the study. The whole study revolves around the availability of ECE classes, presence of ECE facilities, ECE Training and feasibility of human and material resources to implement ECE in Pakistan and specially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Even there are long lasting imprints of ECE on the Children's future life i-e Profession, Skills and Learning (Govt; of Pakistan Ministry of Education, 2008) by ECE National Economic and Social Development goals are highly achievable. The Research found that learning in these early years of life had absolutely remarkable impacts on the later profession, economy and socialization of a child (Mustard McLain , 1999). Researchers also showed that ECE is a highly beneficial investment which returns a dollar to the Government for a quality ECE from 2 to 13 dollars more. A conducive environment from Conception onwards and supportive family lays sound basis for healthy child development. ECE also addresses the issue of health, male nutrition in early age which results in failure in learning, memory, reasoning and achievements (Asian development bank 2000). In Pakistan because of changes in economic situation, trends in family, fast media and scarcity of resources. Ayub, Bano and Mukhtar (2006) quoted Margaret (2000) that Pakistan is still relying on the old colonial system of Pre-Independence. This is totally inverse to the Ideology of Pakistan which consists of a very comprehensive and balanced

combination of all needs and requirements of an individual's development. So, it is a matter of fact that the Early Childhood Education Program has not been focused by the Educational Planners at Government Level. Individual efforts have been made by Private Schools in the name of Montessori, kindergarten and pre nursery without any supervision. Despite this there are some Schools running with proper curriculum and physical facilities. One could derive good lessons and develop more effective Programs. But due to lack of Supervision of Government, there is no coordination and co-operation for Programs, training, management between Public and Private Institutes.

The Awareness of Teachers about ECE Concept is found more in Public Schools by the Teachers and Heads of the Schools. .

CONCLUSION

Majority of Public Schools' Teachers are agreed about the Awareness of Teachers for ECE Concept. The Awareness of ECE Concept in Teachers is more in Public Schools' Teachers than in Private Schools' Teachers. Majority of Private Schools' Teachers are more in agreement about the Presence of ECE Certified Teachers in Schools than in Public Schools' Teachers. The ECE Certified Teachers are present more in Public Schools as compared to Private. Majority of Private Teachers are more in favor of the Availability of Specialized ECE Classroom than in Public Schools. The Ratio of Availability of Specialized ECE Classroom is more in Private Schools than in Public Schools.

Majority of Private Schools' Teachers agreed about the Fund Allocation for ECE Classroom than in Public Schools. Majority of Private Schools' Teachers agreed to the Availability of Required Material for ECE Classes than Public School Teachers. The Ratio of Availability of ECE Required Material is higher in Private Schools than in Public Schools. Majority of Public Schools' Teachers disagreed with the Availability of Proper ECE Trained Teachers than in Private Schools' Teachers. Majority of Public Schools' Teachers disagreed with the conduct of In-Service Training. The Conduction

of In-Service Training is lower in public schools than in Private Schools.

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