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An Evaluation of Early Childhood Education at the Provincial Level: Policies, Practices, Issues, and Challenges in Baluchistan

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Abstract: The topic of this literature review article is "ECCE Policy and Practice in Baluchistan". The article aims to critically analyze the existing policy framework and ECCE practices in Baluchistan and identify improvement opportunities. It provides recommendations and strategies for increasing parental and community involvement in ECCE programs. Overall, the article aims to provide insights and recommendations for improving the quality of ECCE services in Baluchistan based on a thorough review and analysis of existing literature. It involves conducting a comprehensive search for relevant literature on ECCE policy and practice in Baluchistan, evaluating the quality and credibility of the sources, synthesizing the information, and identifying common themes, issues, and challenges related to the topic. The review and analysis of existing literature also involve analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the existing policy framework and ECCE practices in Baluchistan, evaluating the impact of ECCE services on child development and future education, and providing recommendations and strategies for improving the quality of ECCE services in Baluchistan based on the findings from the literature review. Overall, the review and analysis of existing literature is a crucial aspect of this article as it provides a comprehensive understanding of ECCE policy and practice in Baluchistan and informs recommendations for improvement.

Introduction

Early Childhood Care and Education, or ECCE, is the abbreviation for the care and education provided to young children from birth until age eight. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines ECCE as "high-quality programs and services for young children from birth to age eight that promote their development and learning," A variety of activities, including play, exploration, socializing, and early academic teaching, maybe a part of these programs and services (Arshad & Zamir, 2018).

To give basic education to every child in Pakistan, early childhood education, also known as ECCE, was created (Farooq, 2018). Following

the National Plan of Action (2003), "Early Childhood Care and Education had been well organized and formalized in the nineteen seventies." For the pupils in primary schools, pre-primary classes, known as K.G. The young children did not obtain a decent education because there needed to be a professional method of teaching and development (Ahmad, Anjum, & Rehman, 2015). Old conventional methods were employed in rural sections of the nation, while the Maria Montessori approach was adopted in metropolitan areas. Students should become familiar with the school setting before entering class 1 since it is present in most public and private elementary schools. The Ministry of

Education (2001–2015) has created a National Policy Agenda (NPA) on Education for All.

According to Akhtar, Tanweer, Khaskheli, and Khaskheli 2022, Pakistan is committed to advancing literacy objectives, methods, pragmas, and activities, particularly in basic education. The first step in achieving Education for All's six objectives is to increase the number of preschools and early childhood education facilities. The European Board of Education defines Education for All as a strategy for preparing students for formal education by making learning enjoyable, enabling them to develop fundamental skills and attitudes, and supporting postsecondary education (Alam, Ashraf, Tsegay & Shabnam, 2022). This strategy was developed after consultation with the Ministry of Education. In the early years, ECCE is essential for brain development. Their experiences and relationships may significantly impact children's cognitive, social, and emotional development throughout this time. High-quality ECCE programs can prepare children for success in school by developing their cognitive and social skills and their love of learning. This can lead to better academic outcomes and higher graduation rates (UNESCO, 2016). According to Asghar (2021), children who receive quality ECCE are more likely to have higher earnings, better health outcomes, and lower rates of criminal behavior later in life. Investing in ECCE can benefit individuals, families, and society long-term. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds can

benefit from having access to high-quality ECCE. Giving early learning opens doors to all kids, regardless of their family's income or background, and we can promote greater equity and social mobility. ECCE can also positively impact economic development by increasing workforce productivity, reducing healthcare costs, and decreasing the need for social welfare programs (Sufian, 2018).

Research Objectives

1. To examine Baluchistan's educational policies with a focus solely on early childhood education.
2. To investigate and assess the current situation of ECCE classrooms in Baluchistan's public schools in light of educational policies.
3. Examining the credentials and abilities of early childhood education instructors at government schools

Research questions

1. What are the perspectives of ECCE teachers and heads on education policies concerning ECCE?
2. What facilities are available at primary schools to implement ECCE teaching practices?
3. What are the key challenges for ECCE teachers implementing ECCE teaching practices?

Terms searched with "Early Childhood Care and Education" for related research in the previous 5 years

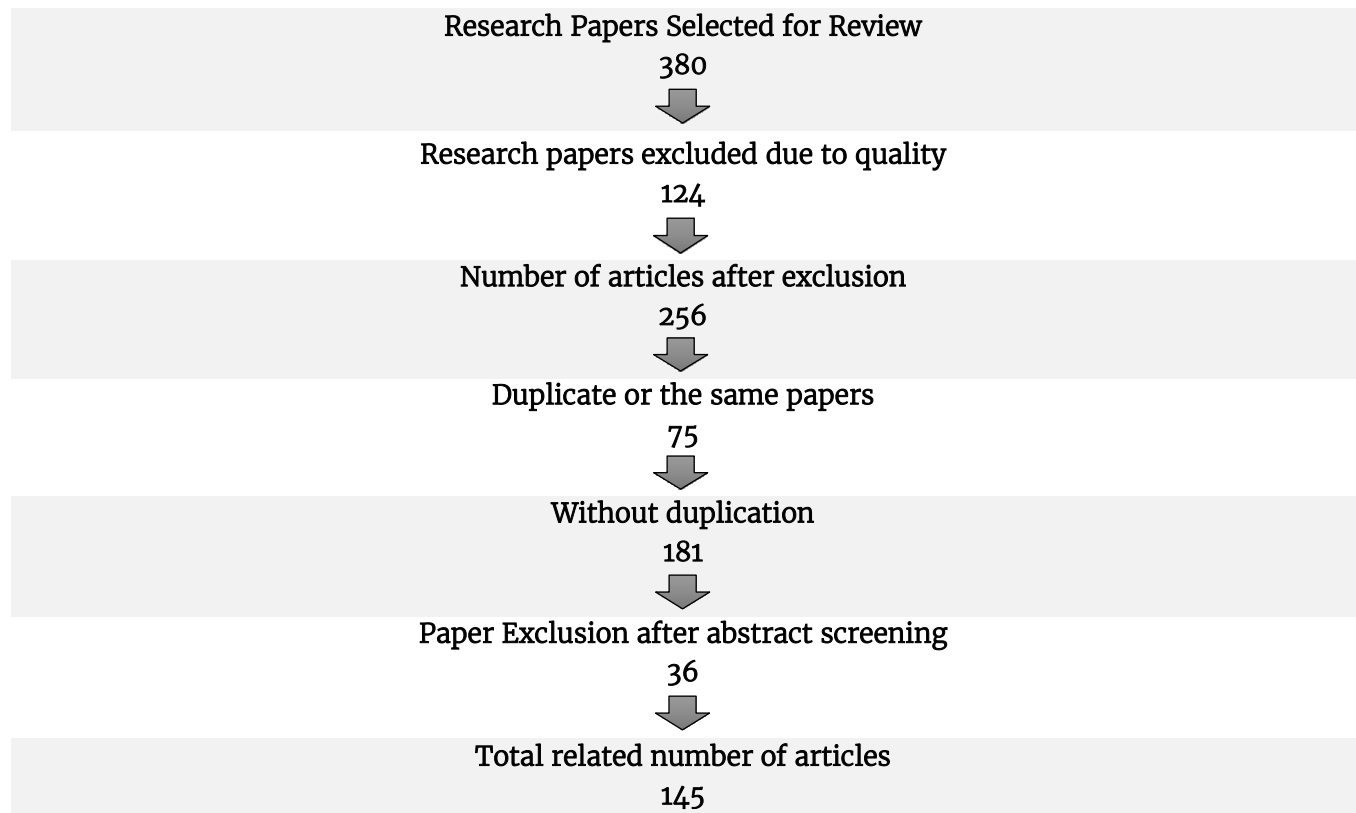
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Case studies 400

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Case studies 605





Related Research Articles

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“The State of Value Education in Early Childhood: The Challenges and Opportunities for Pakistan”	Sharifullah Baig, and Khush Funer,	2022	The Journal of Values-Based Leadership	Vol. 15: Issue. 2, Article 17
“Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education in Punjab: A Qualitative Study”	Saima Malik, Laila Khalid, & Muhammad Asghar, Zaheer.	2021	Revista Gestão Inovação e Tecnologias	Vol. 11
“Assessment in Early Childhood Education Classrooms: Perceptions And Practices of Teachers in Pakistan”	Uzma Dayan Bibi Kulsoom	2022	International Journal of Pukhtunkhwa	Volume 7, Issue II

“A Study of Existing Early Childhood Education System in Pakistan”	Naheed Wasi, Dr. Muhammad Yousuf Sharjeel Zaira Wahab & Dr. Abdul Nasir Kiazai	2018	Balochistan Review	Vol. 2
“Rethinking ECE in Pakistan”	Syed Salma Zaidi Mehwash Asif AmnaYousaf	2016	Journal of Elementary Education	Vol.21, No. 2 pp.65–76
“Early Childhood Education in Pakistan: Issues and Challenges”	Rana Navid Ahmad, Saeed Anjum, Shafiqur Rehman	2015	International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)	Volume 4 Issue 3
“The status of early childhood education in Pakistan: Inside stories”	Muhammad Afzal Khan	2018	Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood	Vol. 19(3) 310–317
“The Successes and Challenges of an Early Childhood Education Program in Punjab: A Qualitative Case Study”	Saima Malik, Razia Sultana and Misbaha Malik	2022	VFAST Transactions on Education and Social Sciences	Volume 10, Number 2
“Early Childhood Program for Pre-Primary Teachers of Karachi: Challenges”	Rehman, John & Latif	2022	Human Nature Journal of Social Sciences and Opportunities.	3(3), 346–360.
“Utility of Early Childhood Education Resource Rooms in Pakistani Public Schools: Analysis of Teachers’ Perspectives”	Hussain, Malik, & Ali	2022	Review of Education, Administration & Law	Volume 5(2), 137–147.
“Making Learning Visible: Role of Parents in Enhancing the Quality of Teaching at Montessori Level”	Naz and Parveen	2021	Journal of Early Childhood Care and Education	5(2).
“Exploration of teachers’ teaching practices of Early	Shah, Rafique & Bano	2022	Sukkur IBA Journal of Educational Sciences and Technologies,	2(1), 1–18

Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) utilize in different contexts; A literature Review”

“Early Childhood Care and Education in Sindh: Comparative Analysis with Punjab and KPK”	Mangrio & Tabassum	2020	<i>New Horizons</i>	14(2), 75.
“Causes of Primary Level Dropout in Balochistan District Jaffarabad”	Nisa & Nasir	2019	<i>Pakistan Study Centre</i>	10(2), 337-349.
“Analysis of National Education Policies: Issues and Challenges in Pakistan and Development of Science Education”	Kiram Shah, Nazir Ahmad and Nasir Khan	2019	<i>Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow,</i>	19(11), 77-85.
“Practices of Early Childhood Education and Development: Challenges and Issues in Pakistan”	Tahira, Ali, Latif, Iqbal & Jalal	2021	<i>Ilkogretim Online,</i>	20(3), 2210-2219
“Challenges in Implementation of Educational Policies in Pakistan”	Akhtar, Tanweer, Khaskheli and Khaskheli	2022	<i>Journal of Positive School Psychology,</i>	6(8), 8385-8395.

Early Childhood Education Access in Baluchistan

When it comes to providing early childhood education to its residents who are qualified for it, Pakistan, as a developing country, has many of the same problems and obstacles that other developing countries do. According to ASER Pakistan (2017), "between the ages of 3-5, 61% (rural) and 42% (urban) children in Pakistan are not attending school." This highlights the urgency of solving this problem and establishing a relationship that embodies and combines

important Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for everyone (Baig & Funer, 2022). Consequently, an exhaustive and multi-layered mindfulness crusade should encourage openness to participate in youth schooling programs. Ahmad (2011) emphasized that in this regard: To raise awareness of the issues that need to be promoted, "all possible modes and means" should be used, including workshops, conferences, symposia, forums, and the media" (Dayan & Kulsoom, 2016). Associations with non-government associations, the confidential area,

and generous associations can further develop amazing chances to participate in youth training.

Additionally, early childhood education could become a national requirement. Even if a values-centred educational intervention was offered on a national scale and made available to all young children, the research conducted by ASER found that "61% (rural) and 42% (urban) children between the ages of 3-5 are out of the school," and this was the case even in metropolitan areas. As a consequence, the instructional sector would only have the opportunity to reach 39% of children living in rural areas and 58% of children living in urban areas under the current conditions (Draper et al., 2022). This is the situation in the country, but in Baluchistan, just 45% of children living in urban areas and 25% of children living in rural areas have access to early childhood and primary education. (Dayan & Kulsoom, 2022) The government of the nation needs to work on expanding access to education in order to ensure that a curriculum centred on morals and ethics reaches the greatest number of youngsters possible.

Main Themes for Literature Review

Policy on ECCE

According to Hussain, Malik, and Ali (2022), the government of Pakistan has implemented policies linked to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) to support the growth and well-being of young children. A number of the more important components of the strategy of ECCE in Baluchistan, Pakistan:

Access and Enrollment: The policy aims to increase access to quality ECCE services for all children, with a particular focus on marginalized and disadvantaged communities. Efforts are made to improve enrollment rates and reduce disparities in access to ECCE programs (Javaid & Inam, 2015).

Curriculum and Pedagogy: According to Khan (2018) the policy emphasizes the development of age-appropriate and culturally relevant curricula for ECCE programs. To better children's cognitive, social, and emotional development, it promotes the use of interactive teaching methodologies, play-based learning strategies, and native languages.

Teacher Training and Professional Development: The policy recognizes the importance of well-trained and qualified ECCE teachers. In order to improve teachers' abilities and knowledge in early childhood education, it places a strong emphasis on the provision of training and professional development opportunities (Malik, Khalid, Malik, & Asghar, 2021).

Infrastructure and Facilities: The policy focuses on improving the physical infrastructure of ECCE centres, including classrooms, play areas, sanitation facilities, and safety measures. It also encourages the establishment of child-friendly and inclusive learning environments (Malik, et al. 2021).

Parental and Community Engagement: The policy acknowledges the contribution of communities and parents to children's early development. It promotes partnerships between ECCE centres, parents, and local communities to enhance parental involvement, awareness, and support for children's education (Malik, Sultana & Malik, 2022).

Monitoring and Evaluation: The policy emphasizes the need for regular monitoring and evaluation of ECCE programs to ensure their quality, effectiveness, and compliance with standards. It highlights the role of relevant authorities in monitoring and providing support to ECCE centres (Mangrio & Tabassum, 2020).

Teachers' Training

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) teachers can take advantage of a number of

different training and professional development opportunities thanks to a variety of programs and initiatives currently available. These initiatives focus on enhancing the skills, knowledge, and pedagogical approaches of ECCE teachers to ensure quality education for young children

Teachers' awareness

Nisa and Nasir (2019) say that there are ongoing efforts to make educators in the field of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) more aware of the importance of their jobs, the best ways to teach young children, and the needs of young children.

Resources for ECCE

According to Nabi (2018), there are various resources available for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Pakistan. These resources include curriculum materials, teaching guides, books, and online platforms that support ECCE teachers and professionals.

Curriculum of ECCE

The curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is designed to provide a holistic and developmentally appropriate learning experience for young children. The curriculum focuses on their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development (Naz, & Parveen, 2021).

Early Childhood Care and Education Policy in Pakistan: Issues and Challenges

The Early Childhood Care and Education Policy should be a top priority for every nation, but it should be especially important for Pakistan, where no policy has yet yielded positive outcomes for society (Nazir, Shah & Zamir, 2022). From 1947 to 2021, various Pakistani governments developed numerous educational policies with the goal of improving education. Additionally, agencies are established with the

intention of reviewing and monitoring procedures throughout the policy's implementation. Assessment reads are likewise made for the progress of the execution of the rules (Nasir, Khurshid & Zia, 2022).

Aamir and Saeed (2015) say that to understand how Pakistan's education policy is made and how it is put into action, it is important to understand Pakistan's stated goals and how they can be evaluated to help achieve them. Most of the problems with moving have to do with a lack of infrastructure, food, climate, safety, and crime. Even so, the early parts of the education meeting were spent talking about how important education was. The sentences that follow refer to the educational policies and other documents that were discussed (Rehman, John & Latif, 2022). Pakistan's present status requests that the assignments and assets for schooling be multiplied to address the difficulties. The Millennium Development Goals haven't been achieved yet at the latest by 2015. Natural disasters, political turmoil, provincialism, political motivations, bias, and mismanagement are the most significant obstacles to education. It is necessary as far as we're concerned to return to our needs to keep the nation on target of progress.

In order to liberate the majority of Pakistan's population from illiteracy, these changes and reforms to the country's educational system could not be carried out solely by the government (Shah, Rafique & Bano, 2022). Instead, they required collaboration between the public and private sectors as well as contributions from both formal and informal education. Likewise, more pressure and consideration, and the open door ought to likewise be paid to professional, logical, and specialized Preparing (Shah, Ahmad, & Khan, 2019).

Existing Documentation Analysis

The universal nature of the ECCE curriculum and school governance or administration are two main contributors to the ineffectiveness of ECCE in Pakistan. To effect the desired societal change, a more individualized approach to ECCE is required in light of the shortcomings of our public service delivery system (Sohil, Niaz, Rahmani & Sohail, 2022). To begin, it is essential to maintain pedagogical continuity between early childhood education programs and compulsory primary education in order to make the process of acquiring a basic education enjoyable and exciting for all children (Syed, Asif, & Yousaf, 2011).

Pakistan's education system and curriculum are greatly influenced by a tangled web of political, religious, and cultural influences. If it is mindful of indigenous ground realities, training can be a strong bringing together power in the making of a "joined country" that encourages resistance, regard, and connections. Curriculum issues in Pakistan typically receive Westernized solutions based on international educational models as a standard practice (Tahira, Ali, Latif, Iqbal & Jalal, 2021). The possibility of youth schooling shifts from one country to another and culture to culture, depending on the age at which children can start school. In this manner, attempting to carry out an acquired model being drilled in a formatively progressed State or to be sure, in a monetarily favored class of society, might be thoroughly inappropriate for the government-funded schools of Pakistan. ECCE must be integrated into the first six years of elementary education, rather than being considered as a one-year, stand-alone curriculum policy. If the goal is to promote literacy for the rest of one's life (Wasi, Sharjeel, Wahab, & Kiazai, 2018).

Key challenges to implementation of ECCE in Baluchistan

Baluchistan, being one of the largest provinces in

Pakistan, faces unique socio-economic, geographic, and cultural challenges that impact the implementation of ECCE programs (Baig & Funer, 2022). Political instability, the maintenance of the provincial education system, a system of education based on class distinction, a lack of resources, strict fanaticism, and psychological oppression are a few of the more significant issues Balochistan has been dealing with that significantly affect its educational system (Sufian, 2018). Because of the absence of political commitment, ECCE is not a top priority in government planning. According to the ECCE requirements, none of the public institutions in the province provide ECCE teaching degrees, graduate courses, teacher preparation programs, or access to world-class education research (Dayan & Kulsoom, 2022). The current infrastructure, together with the available personnel and resources, is insufficient in both public and private schools to manage successful ECCE programs. Most crucially, no framework for ECCE has yet been created to direct the creation, delivery, and assessment of ECCE services across the country. A budget is necessary, according to UNESCO (2006), to start offering proper ECCE services and to upgrade the current traditional Katchi classes into early years courses that satisfy requirements in all public schools throughout the province (Ahmad, Anjum & Rehman, 2015).

Conclusion of the study

Finally, in order to properly implement Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Baluchistan and maximize its beneficial impacts on children's development, a number of significant challenges must be solved. The main issues that prevent the province from implementing ECCE programs effectively have been brought to light by this research.

Socio-economic considerations are very important in determining the availability and standard of ECCE in Baluchistan, according to Asghar (2021). Limited financial resources, poverty, and lack of infrastructure pose

significant barriers to providing equitable and inclusive ECCE services. Efforts should be made to allocate adequate funding, develop sustainable financing models, and prioritize resource allocation to improve access to ECCE programs for all children in Baluchistan, irrespective of their socio-economic background.

Secondly, infrastructure limitations pose a challenge to the establishment of appropriate ECCE facilities in remote and marginalized areas of Baluchistan. Inadequate physical infrastructure, lack of safe and child-friendly learning environments, and limited availability of trained ECCE teachers impede the effective implementation of programs (Arshad & Zamir, 2018). It is essential to invest in infrastructure development, including the construction of classrooms, the provision of learning materials, and the training and recruitment of qualified ECCE teachers, particularly in underserved areas.

Furthermore, cultural dynamics and community attitudes towards ECCE can also hinder its implementation. Cultural beliefs, traditional practices, and lack of awareness about the importance of early childhood education may result in resistance or limited acceptance of ECCE programs. Building strong community engagement, promoting awareness campaigns, and involving local community leaders are critical strategies to address cultural barriers and foster a supportive environment for ECCE in Baluchistan (Akhtar, Tanweer, Khaskheli & Khaskheli, 2022).

Lastly, a comprehensive policy framework and effective coordination among stakeholders are vital to overcome the challenges in ECCE implementation. There is a requirement for clearly defined rules and regulations that take into account the unique requirements and circumstances of Baluchistan. Policymakers, educational institutions, and relevant stakeholders must collaborate and coordinate their efforts to ensure coherent planning,

resource allocation, and capacity building for ECCE programs.

Addressing these key challenges requires a multi-faceted approach, including targeted interventions, policy reforms, infrastructure development, community engagement, and capacity-building initiatives. By prioritizing ECCE and implementing evidence-based solutions, Baluchistan can improve access, quality, and inclusivity in early childhood education, ultimately contributing to the overall development and well-being of children in the province.

It is imperative that policymakers, educational authorities, and stakeholders collaborate to address these challenges and create an enabling environment that supports the successful implementation of ECCE programs in Baluchistan (Hussain, Malik & Ali, 2022). By doing so, Baluchistan can unlock the full potential of its young children, laying a strong foundation for their future success and contributing to the overall development and prosperity of the province.

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