IMPACT OF ECCE TEACHERS TRAINING PROGRAM ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF IN-SERVICE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the impact of "post-training on the in-service teachers of ECCE schools. Pre-school teachers encounter hurdles in the implementation of the ECCE teaching & learning practices in alignment with the Curriculum due to concerns & issues that are rooted and diversified into the traditional concept of schooling. ECCE plays a vital & significant role in the development of children in alliance with curricula education. The study implied a descriptive survey as a research design. A convenient sampling technique was adopted for which 50 primary school teachers were selected from District Jamshoro. The instrument was used to elicit information from respondents through a structured questionnaire for which validity & reliability were obtained through the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient. The Teachers of the primary Schools were selected as the unit of analysis for this study. The researcher selected 20 Schools for the population of this study. The no of the sampling population was N: 50. Quantitative mode of inquiry was applied for the data collection. In the quantitative research design researcher used a questionnaire with 20 close-ended questions for data collection. The list of options was given to the respondents respectively to select the suitable option from the list. The major findings of the study revealed that preschool / ECCE teachers are encountering challenges in the

implementation of post-training objectives of the ECCE curriculum. The most emphasized factors were that teachers have intra-capacity concerns, in understanding ECCE curricula & practice, training possess no adequate and appropriate material to foster ECCE teaching practices. The researchers recommended that stakeholders/authoritarians should organize & observe post-training implementation analysis & facilitation to root out barriers.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION
Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) has gained prominence and widespread adoption within the context of childcare and education, featuring prominently in scholarly discourse. Recognized for its rigorous curriculum, ECCE is seen as instrumental in enhancing not only cognitive aspects of learning but also encompassing holistic developmental domains for children. Contemporary circumstances have evaluated heightened demand and urgency for ECCE curricula, notably accentuated by authoritative figures, thereby signaling its efficacy to the broader populace. However, this surge in ECCE deployment has brought to light a plethora of challenges and complexities in effectively delivering desired educational outcomes. The expansion of ECCE has brought implications for teachers' intra-capacity education. ECCE teacher's education is an unregulated area of professional education (NCTE, 2005) the curriculum is the instrument for equipping the training with essentials of professional knowledge, education, skills & core values.

Research in the field of neuroscience reveals that brain growth is most rapid and extensive during the early years of life. During the initial three years of life, the neuronal connections in the brain undergo a process known as 'hard-wiring'. (Fleer, 2001, p. 12). The sphere of early childhood education is such a unique & diversified zone that entertains children's education from the age of consecutive eight years. These years have been considered crucial for child development, to participate in diverse types of care & education blended with appropriate situations & learning experiences. International research discovered that the initial stages of infant development exert a substantial influence on future academic aptitude. (Fleer, 2001). In Sindh, the ECEE situation is massively neglected, as noticed authoritarians & concerned stakeholders possess sound orientation regarding the impact & effectiveness of ECCE curricula perhaps there seems strong detachment of curricula from teaching practices in the implementation of instructional & teaching strategies, teaching & learning attitudes. However, teachers are major elements to part an effective role in implementing curricula in schools. The factors that affect teaching & learning practices shall not be ignored. Thus, this study indicates factors that affect teachers' practices.

According to the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS, 2009) conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Continuous Professional Development (CPD) refers to a productive process that encompasses meaningful activities aimed at enhancing a teacher's skills, knowledge, expertise, and other learning attributes." This study implemented various indicators to study & evaluate the elements that influence teachers' teaching & learning practices in ECCE curricula pertaining to challenges such as students' class & student-teacher ratio, physical resources, teaching aids & strategies, teaching attitude, and administrative support. Thus, the role of the teacher is essential in the architecture of society. The progress of curricula is associated with the development of students, this integration & systematical progression of content shall develop not only content information but impact effectively upon the behavior of students. Consequently, it's a priority to be top-notch in the professional development of teachers. The process of PD involves continuous & diversified purposeful engagement interlinked with formal & non-formal education that aims to nurture teachers' cognitive ability, skills & competencies to reflect on learners' attitudes in the classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Professional development

Professional development programs enhance & evaluate goals to achieve objective and effective learning outcomes (Samsudin, 2021). Samsudin in same year emphasized that professional development that it is the activating process of enhancing the ability to do work and preparing teachers with specific information and skills to achieve learning progression. Teachers' professional training is essential for the success of the school. Wong (2018) concluded that the rapidly changing environment for educational institutes have forced new tasks for school and implied multiple development pathways for continuing professional development (CPD). It was concluded from previous researchers, educational policymakers, and practitioners' professional development of teachers is the most important factor for school improvement focused on specific student learning outcomes (Bredeson, 2000). Training is part of structural planning and executed when workers have deficient skills or when an institute or department changes a system or emergence of updating of curricula draws attention to learn novel skills (Samsudin, 2021). The professional development programs are effective in providing a support system, professional links, information, and emotional support (Walker & Kwan, 2008, Wong & Peng, 2018). Within the school the head teacher is the one who directly influences the implementation of guiding principles, and affects the quality of professional development (Bredeson, 2000) and overall achievement of the students through continuous classroom analysis & observation.

Teachers' awareness

Hussain (2018) discussed that early childhood care & education' teaching & practice is a very crucial domain that emphasizes the holistic development of children. The holistic development approach nominates physical, socio-emotional, cognitive, and aesthetic domains that complete the orbits of learning needs. Setodji, Schaack and Le (2018) stated that the Montessori approach is referred to improve learning. Black et al., (2017) revealed that the Montessori level of teaching emphasizes diverse skills, theories & fundamental philosophies which teachers implement with the blending of material planning. Children in the Montessori level acquire not only prior or progression content information but proficiency, self-respect & collaboration. In the learning process, children use different learning styles and skills blended with listening, seeing, feeling, and gesture development. By teaching such lessons children are enabled to learn these skills

Context Knowledge

Fayyaz et al., (2021) Emphasize that ECE teacher context knowledge is the reference to concepts of theories of different categories of teacher knowledge, such as content knowledge, pedagogical understanding, knowledge of curriculum, knowledge of learning and of learners" style, and knowledge of educational philosophy is essential for the teacher to achieve learning objectives. ECCE teachers are a critical part of any educational system. Martinez-Beck and Zaslow (2006) stated that the professional development of teachers is fundamentally essential for the quality of learning experiences children receive during the classroom learning process. Lash and McMullen (2008) stated that early childhood education is so popular in the masses & oriented in common this it is viewed as "glorified babysitting". As a result, the expected outcomes from ECCE teachers and their pupils are not as per the level of learners. ECCE teachers according to many researchers are not traditional & ordinary teachers. But one who possesses certain intentionality, approach & skills to teach that make the process & experience effective and result-oriented (Burchina I, Hyson, & Zaslow, 2008; Vidmar, 2010; Allen, Kelly, & National Research Council, Knowledge & competences. McDonnell describes the early childhood teachers' role as consisting of various elements as foundations which include child development and growth, curriculum, health & hygiene, safety, and nutrition. The performance shall be evaluated through observation, record keeping, and implementing different assessment methods (McDonnell, 1999).

Curriculum of ECE

The productivity of the teaching and learning experience is inadequate as far as the outcomes & standards of curricula are concerned. Therefore, the implementation of unstructured teaching and learning methods is a result of using obsolete textbooks, substandard teachers' training, overcrowded classrooms not following a policy of

student-teacher ratio (STR) & student's class ratio (SCR), The lack of sufficient resources, the widespread impact of corruption on the transparent selection of instructors, the inappropriate use of the meager school finances, and the absence of an efficient monitoring mechanism (International Crisis Group, 2014). The International Crisis Group (2014: i) further explains that in Pakistan's public schools, students are burdened with an obsolete curriculum and are unable to achieve the desired learning objectives. The conventional approach to summative assessment promotes a learning style focused on rote memorization, which prioritizes achieving high scores without fostering deeper understanding and cognitive abilities. Furthermore, these scores are used as the sole determinant of educational quality.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
1. To analyze the impact of post-training practices in the classroom
2. To observe the behavioral readiness of academic stakeholders toward ECCE
3. To recommend realistic solutions for the development of ECCE education in Sindh

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1. What are the significant impacts of training on classroom teaching practices?
2. How effective are teaching practices in of holistic development of students?
3. What are the major challenges that you faced in the implementation of ECCE teaching & and learning practices?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Research methodology is the specific techniques applied to recognize, select, process, and evaluate knowledge regarding a topic (Niamatullah et al., 2020). In social sciences, mixed research methodology is preferred so is applied in this study. Both the quantitative and qualitative research approaches were applied for the attainment of the objectives of the research study (Yousaf et al., 2019). The main purpose of the present research study was to *examine the impact of "post-training on the in-service teachers of ECCE schools.* The survey questionnaire was borrowed and re-developed as needed for conducting this research study & checked reliability through SPSS which was greater than.

Population and Sampling
The population of this study was Government primary school Headteachers & teachers of district Jamshoro. The sample of the research study was 20 schools consisting of 50 heads & teachers. The purposive sampling technique was applied to collect data from those heads & teachers who have attended in-service training.

Research Instrument

Open-ended questions were developed for the analysis of head & teachers' experiences regarding the implementation & impact of training. The leadership & readiness of head teachers was measured by the "Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale" adopted from (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Yousaf et al., 2019) and was appropriately modified according to the current context. It would be a 5-point Likert rating scale (Yousaf et al., 2019). Reliability was calculated with Cronbach's Alpha which was reliable according to (Hair et al., 2013).

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1: *Cronbach's alpha*

S.No	Variable	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	Administration view on ECCE problems	04	.874
2.	Teachers Cognitive Understanding	10	.879
3.	Teacher's Problem-solving Approach	04	.779

Table 2. Demographic details of the representative sample

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	36	72.0
	Female	14	28.0
Age	Below 30 yrs.	10	20.0
	31-40 years	38	76.0
	41-50 years	2	4.0
Academic Qualification	Bachelors	24	48.0
	Masters	13	26.0
	Others (prof. Degree)	13	26.0
Experience	1 M to 5 years	09	18
	6-10 yrs.	18	36
	11-15 yrs.	20	40
	16 and above	03	06

The above table shows the demographic profile of the sample population. The ratio of male teachers' respondents were comparatively greater than the female respondent.

While the category of age shows mixed results. It shows maximum number of respondents falls in the category of (31 to 40 Yrs). Which indicates the mature group of teachers. The third category indicates that the maximum respondents are having bachelor's degree as their academic qualification, which shows the margin of reediness of pre-& pre-in-service exposure. The experience reflects that the maximum number of respondents have more than 11 years of teaching experience in ECCE.

Table 3: *Descriptive and Exploratory Analysis of Administration view on ECCE problems*

Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
AD-1	3.16	0.866	.666	.684
AD-2	3.08	1.027	.699	.661
AD-3	3.02	1.078	.750	.629
AD-4	3.98	0.515	.278	.842

The process of examining, cleaning, manipulating, and modeling a dataset to extract meaningful information is known as data analysis. Methodologies used to accomplish this include descriptive analysis (which provides numerical insight into the data), exploratory analysis (which provides visual insight into the data), and population insight (which involves acquiring information from a sample).

Literature suggested the acceptable mean value for 5 points Likert scale should be greater than 2.5. The above table reflects that the results of this study fall under the acceptable category. Literature emphasizes, that in a normally distributed data set majority of values fall closer to the mean. As in this study, the maxim values are shown within ± ISD. The corrected item-total correlation shows the correlation of a particular item with the composite score of all other items. Literature suggested that the values of the corrected item-total correlation should be greater than 0.2. The fourth column shows the impact of each single item on Cronbach's alpha (reliability). Based on the results of the above table all the items of administrative view on ECCE problems fall under the acceptable ranges hence the scale is finalized for further data collection process.

Table 4: *Descriptive and Exploratory Analysis of Teachers Cognitive Understanding*

The process of obtaining information from data through the use of numerical methods is known as descriptive analysis. The descriptive analysis summarizes the values of the numerical variables. Researchers will look for solutions to questions like mean, mode, and median of a data set in descriptive analytical literature. We can ascertain the central tendency and dispersion of the numerical variables in the data by using this

type of analysis. In most real-world data science situations, a descriptive study can help researchers get a general idea of the data and get used to it.

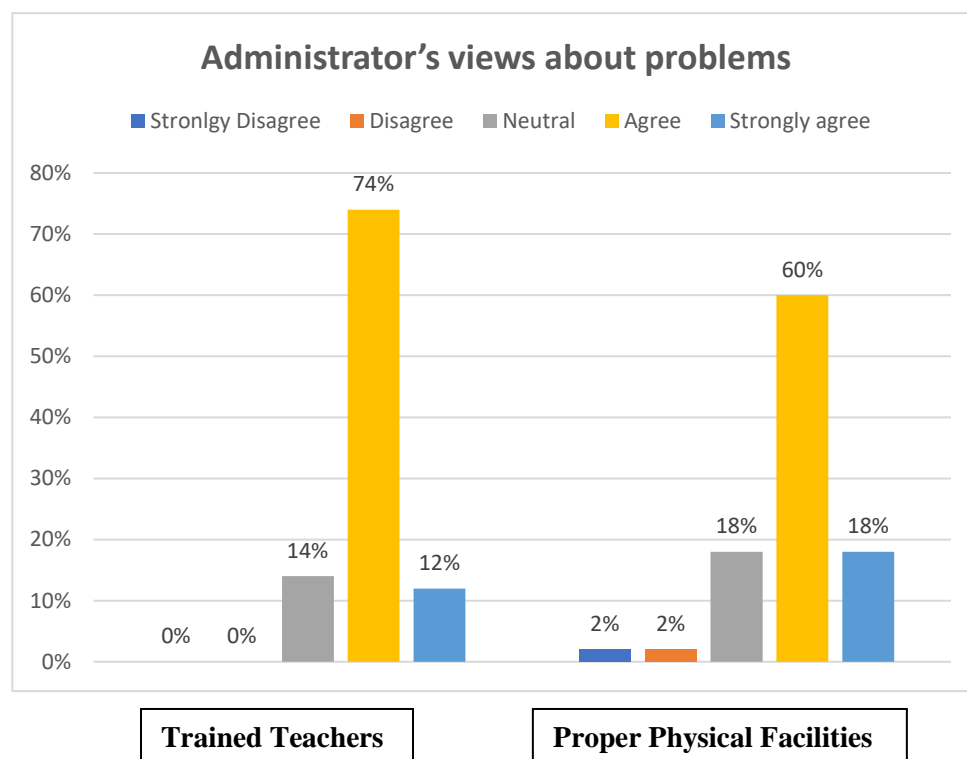| Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
COG-1	3.98	.685	.563	.871
COG-2	4.02	.892	.620	.866
COG-3	3.92	.877	.682	.861
COG-4	4.02	.714	.683	.863
COG-5	3.96	.832	.535	.872
COG-6	3.36	.875	.684	.861
COG-7	3.46	.885	.499	.876
COG-8	3.48	.886	.721	.858
COG-9	3.22	.910	.560	.871
COG-10	3.04	.925	.542	.873

As it has already been mentioned in the above description about the acceptable range of mean for the 5-point Likert scale. The analysis of the above table reflects that the results of this study fall under the acceptable category. As already described about the ranges of standard deviation, the values of all the items of cognitive understanding fall within 1SD. All the corrected values of the item's total correlation are greater than 0.2. All the items of cognitive understanding are positively contributing towards Cronbach's alpha (reliability).

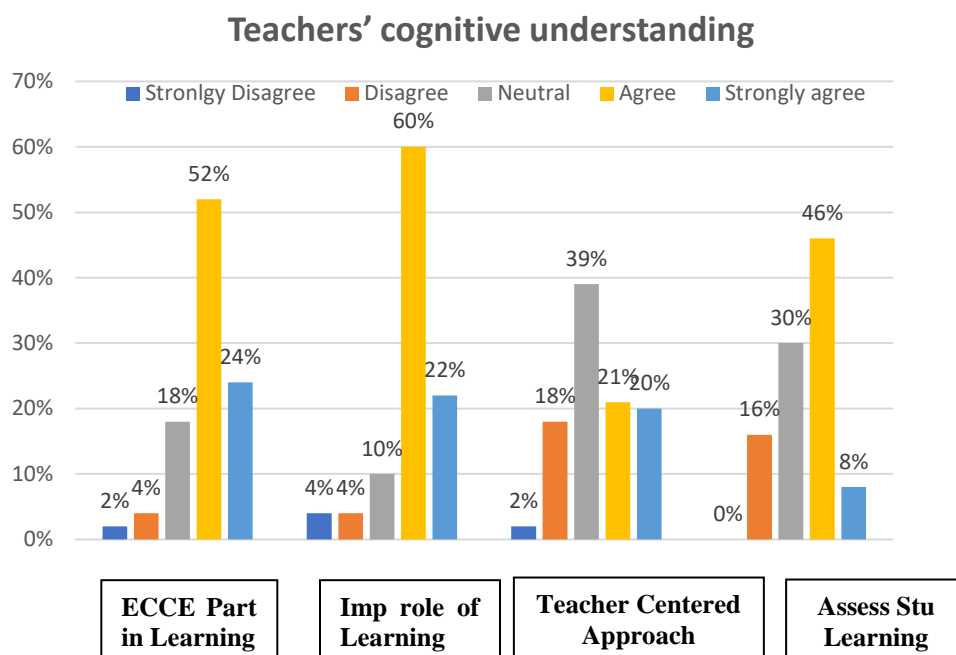**Table 5:** *Descriptive and Exploratory Analysis of Teachers' Approach to solve the problems*

The utilization of descriptive statistics simplifies the process of data visualization. It allows for the presentation of data in a meaningful and understandable manner, allowing for a more straightforward understanding of the data set. The examination of unprocessed data would require considerable effort, and the identification of trends and patterns could prove to be challenging. The raw data also makes it harder to visualize what is being displayed, which is another consideration. "Descriptive statistics" are results of data set analysis, synthesis, and presentation derived from a sample or entire population.

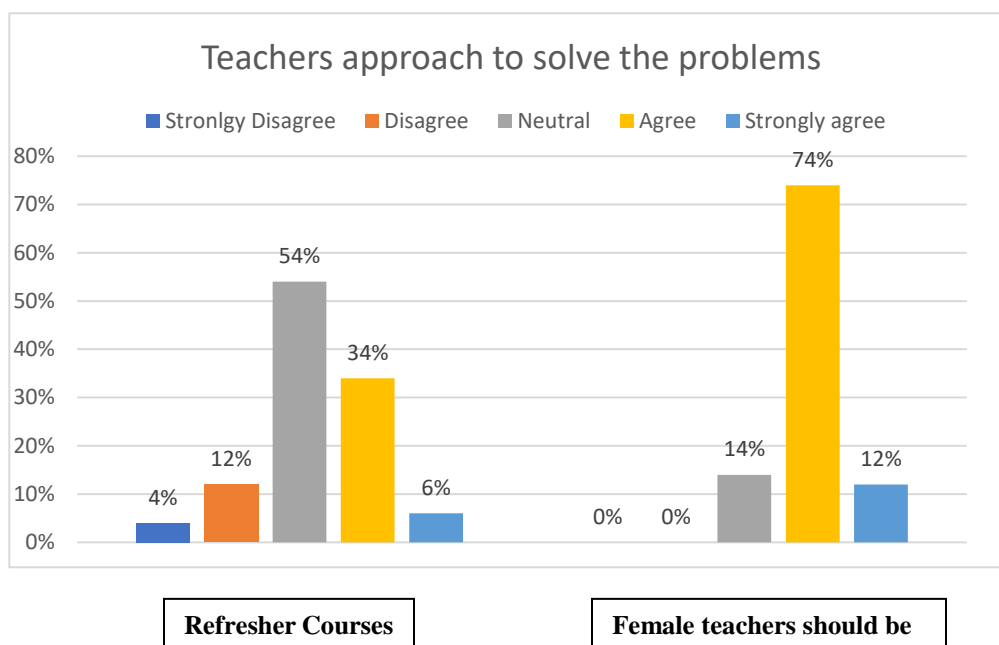| Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
APP-1	3.16	.866	.666	.684
APP-2	3.08	1.027	.699	.661
APP-3	3.02	1.078	.750	.629
APP-4	3.98	.515	.278	.842

The analysis of the given table shows the results the mean value falls under the acceptable range. The standard deviation for all items of the teacher's Approach to solving the problems falls within ± 1SD. All the values of the corrected item-total correlation are greater than 0.2. The items of Teachers Approach to solve the problems are positively contributing towards Cronbach's alpha (reliability). The process of data analysis is comprehended through SPSC to check the reliability of scale as well as for the descriptive analysis & EXCEL has been used for graphical representation of collected data.

Trained Teachers   **Proper Physical Facilities**

As the above chart depicts, the majority of respondents agreed as mentioned maximum percentage that there is an enormous lack of trained teachers for ECCE. It is the responsibility of the policy level to manage the gap & regularize the frequent professional developmental courses of ECCE Teachers. Whereas with the second indicator, the maximum percentage of respondents agreed about the insufficient & improper physical resources to plan & cascade the ECCE curricula teaching & learning practices in the classroom.

Teachers' cognitive understanding

The above graph represents the important segment, Teachers' Cognitive Understanding of the ECCE curricula & teaching methodology to address the learning needs. The first indicator shows that the majority of respondents agreed about the insufficient content & pedagogical knowledge to deliver the content as per learning needs & styles. As mentioned this portion is very important & all research questions have progression in the nature of their problem, each problem is interlinked with the other as the second question shows the majority of agreement of teachers that there should be functional & equipped learning corners as suggested in ECCE Curricula to deliver effective teaching & learning experience for students. Thus, it ensures that the unavailability of learning corners converts the teaching & learning process into a traditional process which is the teacher's teachers-centered approach. The learning outcomes & objectives of ECCE curricula could be achieved through alternative approaches as child-centered & high-scope approaches. By adopting such an instructed methodology, the whole process of teaching & learning might introduce meaningful learning experiences. A conventional teaching process achieves no such learning outcomes. The majority of respondents agreed that frequent refresher courses should be part of policy & planning of curricula whereas continuous post-training supervision & facilitation should be offered to measure the impact & effectiveness of training.

Refresher Courses   **Female teachers should be**

Referring to the above chart, maximum respondents show neutrality on the first item which reflects the negligence & unawareness about the impact of training. Whereas the second majority of the population agreed about the implementation of frequent refresher courses to address the immediate concerns and problems. Whereas the majority of respondents with the maximum percentage agreed about the recruitment of female teachers. The majority of teachers are women in Early Childhood & care Education, which is often regarded as semi-professional in society (Prentice& Theobald, 1991).

DISCUSSION
Based on the findings of the research, the study discussed & enlisted different elements that are affecting the teaching & learning experiences of the classroom. The study's final findings indicate that the implementation and execution of the ECCE curriculum are hindered by instructors' insufficient preparation and the low availability of teaching resources. Consequently, teachers lacked the necessary authority to effectively apply the ECCE Curriculum. Therefore, the research concludes that teachers of ECCE schools need frequent & sequential refresher courses to cultivate the learning outcomes blended with various skills through different teaching methods. The majority of the teacher's emphasis is upon factors, i.e., lack of teachers' cognition, lack of instruction resources, teacher-student ratio & admin. Support affecting the

teaching process. The results concluded that factors such as the teacher-student ratio affects the teaching practices & reduce the efficacy of teacher to engage students in hands-on activities. Similarly, the factors of teachers' attitudes, and instructional resources affect the learning quality, thus teachers manage to consume the learning process traditionally. The teachers' attitude was the foremost factor that affected teaching practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study on the basis of findings recommends that the teachers shall be provided with frequent & continuous professional development courses. The administration of the school shall continuously work to produce a conducive learning environment to deliver the quality needs of ECCE curricula. The teaching & learning process shall be equipped with adequate learning resources to deliver content in appropriate methodology hence achieving the specific learning outcomes. The impact of training shall be gauged by following the field supervision & clinical model to investigate the gaps & suggest grounded alternatives. Furthermore, the study concludes that female teachers shall be enrolled/recruited for ECCE teachings, for two most crucial & important factors, which are care & education. The learner in this specific zone of age needs proper care & attention which might shape & nurture the holistic behavior of students. The availability of female teachers in the classroom fills the gap between mothers & students with her existence sooner learn to detach from their home addictions & thus, it agitates the behavior shifts toward classroom learning experiences.

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