

## Challenges Teachers Faced in the Implementation of the Curriculum of Early Childhood: A case study in Iraq

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### ABSTRACT

The research studied the challenges that pre-school teachers experience within the usage of the primary childhood educational curriculums; investigating educating strategies utilized by pre-school teachers in Baghdad/Iraq. As the research design, the research used a descriptive survey. A 62 pre-school teachers got chosen out of 45 pre-schools in Baghdad/Iraq. The instruments utilized to evoke data from the respondents were organized surveys and a pilot study was utilized to guarantee that these surveys are valid and reliable as the uncovered alpha reliability coefficients were 0.73 and 0.71 for section B and C separately.

The main discoveries of research show that pre-school teachers have been confronted with an amount of challenges when executing the early childhood educational curriculums. An outstanding one among them is that most pre-school teachers don't get the early childhood curriculum, pre-school teachers haven't a sufficient educating and learning material to assist in the actualization of the early childhood educational curriculums, parents don't participate in the choices of instruction so it becomes troublesome for pre-school managers to carry out the tasks without help. Moreover, one can see that teachers, instructing and learning material represent the most significant components that impacted the usage of the early childhood educational curriculums. In this paper, it was prescribed that private supervisors and governmental specialists directing the pre-school curriculums ought to organize visit in-service preparing for both teachers and guardians in connection with early childhood instruction educational curriculum.

التحديات التي يواجهها المعلمون في تطبيق منهج الطفولة المبكرة : دراسة حالة في العراق

### الملخص

ان البحث قد درس التحديات التي يواجهها معلمي مرحلة ما قبل المدرسة في استخدام المناهج التعليمية لمرحلة الطفولة المبكرة. كذلك دراسة استراتيجيات التعليم المستخدمة من قبل معلمي رياض الأطفال في بغداد / العراق. لقد استخدم البحث المسح الوصفي كتصميم للبحث. لقد تم اختيار اختبار لـ 62 معلمة لمرحلة ما قبل المدرسة من إجمالي 45 مدرسة تمهيدية في بغداد / العراق. لقد كانت الأدوات المستخدمة لاستحضار البيانات من المستجيبين عبارة عن استبانات تم الحصول على صدقها وموثوقيتها من خلال دراسة تجريبية كشفت عن معامل موثوقية ألفا 0.76 و 0.73 للقسمين B و C بشكل منفصل.

لقد تم التوصل لاكتشافات رئيسية للبحث والتي هي أن معلمي مرحلة ما قبل المدرسة يواجهون جزءًا من التحديات في تنفيذ البرامج التعليمية لمرحلة الطفولة المبكرة. ومن أبرزها كون معظم معلمي مرحلة ما قبل المدرسة لا يفهمون منهج الطفولة المبكرة ، ولا يمتلك معلمو مرحلة ما قبل المدرسة مواد تعليمية وتنقيفية كافية لمساعدتهم على تحقيق البرامج التعليمية في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة ، ولا يتدخل الآباء في اختيارات التدريس فلذلك هذه الطريقة تجعل من الصعب بالنسبة لمعلمي مرحلة ما قبل المدرسة القيام بالعمل كله بمفردهم . كذلك تم اكتشاف أن المعلمين والمواد الإرشادية والتعليمية هي أكثر المكونات التي أثرت في استخدام البرامج التعليمية لمرحلة الطفولة المبكرة. وأوضحت الباحثة أن المشرفين الخاضعين والمتخصصين الحكوميين الذين يديرون برنامج ما قبل المدرسة يجب أن ينظموا زيارة أثناء الخدمة لجعل المعلمين وأولياء الأمور مستعدين فيما يتعلق بالمناهج التعليمية لتعليم الطفولة المبكرة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : التحديات، المعلمين ، مناهج، الطفولة المبكرة

**Keywords : Challenges , Teachers, implementation, Curriculum , Early Childhood**

## INTRODUCTION

### Literature Review

"Curriculum as a word comes from an old Latin word "curere" that could be a strict interpretation of contest course" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988.12). This allegorical depiction of the educational curriculum was there since children in most schools or preparing teachers consider that their curriculum or course curriculum as arrangement of impediments or foottraces need to get understood (Adentwi, 2005.9). Adentwi (2005) proved that to an awfully huge degree that the instruction of youthful children that we need to approach to be influenced by what we accept children are like to be and how they behave and carry on in life. Regularly, educational curriculums or curriculum for pre-schools are organized around a few fundamental presumptions almost nearby children' nature. For illustration, a thought that effective children learning can occur by investigating the environment they live in that would consequently cause a diverse sort of early childhood educational curriculums compared to one that depends upon the thought that children study latently by being instructed particular data and abilities. Similarly, an opinion that the behavior of children are essentially troublesome and require firm control in order to learn fittingly that would have resulted as a distinctive direction style than the idea that most children by and large endeavor to social acknowledgment by others by adjusting to sensible desires (Ibid).

Langenbach and Neskora (1977.66), defined the early childhood educational curriculums as an item of both long- run and brief term arranging. Numerous curriculums begin with a main idea that covers a significant amount of time, for occurrence a one year, and is at that point filled with subtle elements for shorter portions of time. So, young children's curriculum may be an item of the

children that are interested in. This implies that the lack of naturalness and elasticity are the symbols of arranging as distant as such educational curriculums. In both cases, pre-school educational curriculums has got to be integrals related to a few unmistakable components: curriculum's logic, objectives, destinations, and assessment. Exercises are hence assessed on an progressing premise, and thus recurring to the start points, objectives as well as goals are reevaluated plus balanced as required, beginning the same set once again (Lawton, 1988.12).

Pre-school teachers play as crucial actors in early childhood instruction and those take a pivotal parts to do in most early childhood educational curriculums usage. This might incorporate children direction and teach, regarding social differences, embracing the fitting strategies of educating and learning, empowering self-dependence (McDonnell, 1999.65). Setting up complementary connection with their families and teachers (Lundin, 2000.42). "Making a caring community of children, educating to improve advancement and learning within the schoolroom" (NAEYC, 2005.89). In pre-school educational curriculum usage, together individual along with natural components can be compelling. As a scholar I concur for the thought of National Affiliation of Instruction of Youthful Child that as teachers carry their previous involvement to the situations of the classroom, their discernments with respect to how most of these early children absorb then make a most effect quality of the preschool instructive curriculum execution. Kern, Kruse and Roehring (2007.25) moreover keeps up the thoughts that "teachers' recognition almost educating and learning are unequivocally impacting the execution of the early childhood educational curriculum". So, once the teachers are protecting the philosophy of the educational curriculums being actualized, at that point the execution of the pre-school teachers within the genuine schoolroom setting is influenced emphatically amid usage. Stop (2008.28) too proposed that "understanding of the early childhood instructive educational curriculums by the teacher is significant for true usage of the instructive educational modules to help fulfilling its objectives". This infers that when the pre-school teachers have no idea about the early children curriculum's speculative and reasonable framework in focuses of intrigued, those teachers will have no ability to viably actualize the early children instructive curriculums.

Regardless, the Service of Instruction, keeps up the thought that, Iraqi preschool educational curriculum gets organized to recognize the standards that the child at early organizes learning via dynamic investigation. This point arises from one reality that is, early children educational curriculum ought to be executed within an easy method that can give children a slight expressing exercises that requests their extreme participation then support any education exercise.

### **Problem and its significance**

Concurring to NAEYC (2005.11), guidelines for serving the great quality of instruction arouse. Subsequently there's a requirement for teachers to meet most those benchmarks particularly, when their important part is linked to educational curriculum implementation. Be that as it may, information in early children educational curriculum is more inspiring and denser when more prominent obligation makes on the side of the early childhood teachers. It shows up that in spite

of what has been planned and recorded within the early childhood educational curriculums, practices are not being realized of those teachers and occasions that happen within the classroom settings.

That regardless of all what was illustrated, the report of Educational curriculums Investigate and Improvement Division (2006.22) "holds the basis that, early childhood educational curriculums has been authorized to meet the formative requirements of children at the developmental stages a long time conjointly to assist children come out with colossal possibilities and encounters covering different region of human encounters". In any case , in Iraq, it shows up in their report of the early childhood educational curriculums isn't given the vital acknowledgment by preschool teachers. Accordingly, as an investigator, recognizing the challenges that preschool teachers confront within the execution of the educational curriculums needed and finding solution for it in of vital importance since the challenges were recognized absolutely, this can be simpler to bargain with such challenges by finding ways of overseeing those challenges then find ways to face those challenges by the help of ministry of education or those who are responsible for the process . Within such sense, this can be exceptionally basic to carry out an observational work so as to find out the challenges faced by preschool teachers within the usage of the early children educational curriculums inside a few chosen preschools of Iraq.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Investigating the challenges or obstacles that Iraqi pre-school teachers confront within the usage of the early childhood educational curriculums was the main purpose of the study. Moreover, the study try to supply data for arrangement makers as well as officials via the analyse of early children teachers' challenges that they confront within the classes.

### **Research questions**

1. What challenges do preschool teachers face during the implementation of the early children curriculum?
2. What are the basic elements that have an effect on implementing the early children curriculum?

### **Previous Studies**

#### **Early childhood education' concept**

"The definition early childhood instruction depends on the point that how one sees the concept. According to the child's life, early childhood instruction is considered from birth to six period which seems a long time of age" (Campbell, 1990.23). Grotewell and Burton (2008.12) moreover presented the same defining term since those scholars explained it appropriately as the period amid the zero and six , a long time of age. In any case, according school expressions, early childhood instructing combines the bunch situations for newborn children via basic school reviewing (Campbell, 1990.25). Within the words of Gonzalez- Mena (2008), "early childhood instruction may be an extraordinary department of instruction serving with children from earliest stages to rudimentary review level of three". As definitions as aforementioned experts propose, I accept that early childhood instructing gets or uncovered children (from birth to age of six) to the world.

Noteworthiness of the early childhood instructing expanded colossally all over the world inside the final twenty a long time. "This circumstance is complementary with questions about a long term impacts of early instruction to afterward life" (Gonzalez-Mena, 2008.45).

### **Significance of Early Childhood Education**

"Most early childhood instruction within the final few years considered as a distinctive area such as influential psychology, social psychology, childhood lessons, social human studies, history and reasoning" (Johnson, 2005). Agreeing with Clough, Nutbrown, and Selbie (2008.65), the researches focused upon "differing viewpoint of most children's life since young children has the capacity to recognize the world around them when they are born within the occasion that the fundamental environment and qualified educates tend to assist them when required". Also, Bredekamp and Copple (1997.12) "holds the thought that children's brainpowers are arranged to form memorization when all the conditions of the environment are met". The brain to them, handle, both the environment and qualities that take a vital part which consequently forms the brain, therefore, this helpless child has to be given the vital consideration and compelling educating in arrange for them to realize their possibilities completely.

Early children instruction moreover gets to be more advantageous particularly for the children how have poor financial circumstances (Botta, 2009.66). He "also distinguished that the great thing approximately children being revealed to early instruction coming from low-income families as that their cognitive advancement and school accessibility is exceedingly affected". Once more, "when youthful children are coming from moo socio-economic circumstances, and are given incredible quality of early childhood instruction with its genuine execution of the instructive curriculums, it quality their early perusing and science abilities, cognitive, positive self-image and offer help to oversee with the children from diverse environment". Early childhood instruction develops children in terms of socialization instead of absolutely scholastic improvement for example math and read activities (Webb, 2003.65). Webb (2003) once more, explained that "children learn cooperation through early instruction they get from child care centers and it makes contrasts to get the fundamental aptitudes in life. These aptitudes offer help to comply rules and stay secure inside the society".

Regarding Seng (1994.69), his research uncovered the most noteworthy causes for any parent who send their children to early children centers to initiate them socialized, energetic and secure few fundamental capacities in lifespan. Within a longitudinal research about by Kagitcibasi (1991.21), "it was clarified that children who gotten early childhood instruction gotten to be candidly and socially competent grown-ups compared to those who did not gotten early instruction".

Oppenheim and Koren-Karie (2002.65) proved in their research that "children who get early instruction are less likely to be included in wrongdoing and more likely to include up to their tall school instruction and get into college instruction".

## **Early Childhood Curriculum Implementation**

Most early children educational curriculums usage involves putting into hone the authoritatively endorsed courses of consider, syllabus and subjects. The method includes making the child obtain information or skill. It is critical to note that educational curriculums execution cannot happen without the child. The child is therefore the central figure to be handled within the educational curriculums usage. "Execution happen as the child experience, information, abilities, thoughts and abilities that are pointed at empowering the same child to operate efficiently in a society" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988.12).

## **Challenges faced by preschool teachers**

Concurring to Azzi-Lessing (2009.98), "in instruction, framework gives bases for the rest. Once the insufficiencies related to system happen, this may trigger other issues as well". Within the research about of Aktan and Comert (2007.22), "one of the sources issues relating to pre-school implementation of educational curriculum is the services that is accessible within the school".

Concurring to a research carried out by Gundogan (2002.11) in facility training that school chiefs organized isn't adequate to be side by side to preschool teaches along with the present advancement for the most early children instructive educational curriculums. Concurring with the research, it uncovered the sort of in service planning of preschool teachers get which isn't from the arena of most early children instruction. Hence the in service planning that teaches taken portion is unfaltering for them to find solutions regrading to the queries about instructive curriculums execution. Cisneros, Cisneros- Chernour and Moreno (2000) research uncovered that "preschool teachers' had issues in executing the early childhood instructive educational modules due to the truth that guardians consider that early childhood instruction as a playing ground for the children not as a learning setting and this parents' state of mind brought around in an issue between the school and residential collaboration". Concurring to Reid, Stoolmiller and Webster- Stratton (2008.69), educating involvement of pre-school teachers could too be tricky about executing the early children instruction in a practical way.

## **Variables that impact early childhood educational modules execution**

### **The Teacher**

Connelly and Clandinin (1988.13) "stated that teachers see their educational curriculum usage' role as an independent one". Those teachers choose and choose the items to instruct from the endorsed course outline or educational curriculums. The execution happens via interacting a child himself and the arranged learn chances, the affect besides the part of the teachers inside the method cannot be questioned. One can see clearly from the investigation of (Goodman & Brand, 2009.66) "that as the educators are social human beings and as they are coming from particular establishments, they bring their past experience into their classroom involvement to affect the instructive curriculums". Goodman and Brand (2009.22) shown that, "educators who are characterized as impelled, reliable, and organized and are open to present day learning chances, they were found to

be tall instructive educational modules implementers compared to teaches delineated as unmotivated, not open to change".

### **The Children (pupils)**

Children can moreover be an essential component in instructive curriculums execution. Though teaches are the officials responsible for the classroom preparing, the child's has the important answer to the thing to be truly transferred as well as grasped via the formal instructive educational curriculums. The formal instructive curriculums is exceptionally unmistakable from the instructive curriculums that's truly actualized. The child calculate impacts educates in their choice of learning encounters, subsequently they have to be consider the contrasting characteristics of children in instructive curriculums execution. Children (pupils) domestic establishment and their capacities can choose what is truly fulfilled inside the class (Goodman & Brand, 2009.46).

### **Resource Materials and Facilities**

There is not any imperative direction or learning that could happen with no course of action of palatable resource material. This can be applied to instructive curriculums execution as well (Instructive educational curriculums Examine and Headway Division, 2006.22). This suggests that for the definitively sketched out instructive curriculums to be totally executed as organized, the Government or Benefit of Instruction got to supply schools with palatable materials such as course readings, guideline makes a difference and stationery in orchestrate to engage teaches and children to play their portion palatably inside the instructive educational curriculums execution handle. The Instructive curriculums Ask approximately and Progression Division keeps up that the government must deliver physic workplaces like classes, investigate offices, workshops, lending library and sports zones to make a supporting setting to execute any curriculum and make it happen. The openness as well as assets' excellence along with the accessibility of suitable workplaces effect uncommonly on the usage of instructive curriculums.

### **Interest Groups**

The work of Fedoravicius, Henrich and Payne (2004.65) proved "the interested bunches serves as a key figure for fruitful early childhood educational curriculum execution". In other words, "collaborative environment is of a colossal advantage in instructive curriculums utilization". Discoveries from their research once more appears that collaborating relation and organizing had been recognized as encouraging features growing the teachers' demeanors and stimulus, and their instruction. Teberg (1999.9) asserted "the require of definitive offer assistance for a viable instructive educational curriculums execution by talking around the reality that educates require more than data and capacities, they require bolster and interested bunches to reach the goals characterized for their children inside the classroom to realize their full possibilities".

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## **Methodology**

The design research for the adopted work is the descriptive survey. This design was utilized or considered good since the research about gather information from a test of teachers from different pre-schools by using a questionnaire with respect to the challenges confronted by them in executing the early children educational curriculum in addition the components which have impacts on the execution via utilizing of a questionnaire.

## **Sample and sampling procedure**

62 pre-school teachers were helpfully examined from a 125 pre-school teachers in chosen schools utilizing randomized method. The organized surveys were the most suitable instrument for the research. An investigation instrument was created by considering each question. Each question was essentially open ended. A number of overviews were planned for teachers to answer the survey.

## **Data Collection**

The survey got online-administered at different schools. Any item within the survey was obviously clarified to the respondents some time recently they were made to supply any crucial responses to the questionnaire. Such procedure guaranteed constancy and precision of any response given by any pre-school educator. The information was overseen and gathered on daily basis. Such procedure got followed to make sure that teachers were ready to get to correct and most extraordinary return rate.

Checking all the data assembled from the research about utilizing the surveys was done to make sure of validity and reliability of expressions. The questions got completely answered by the respondents and it was discovered that the expressions are important and reasonable. By using a test-retest method to check the reliability of the questionnaire, it was reapplied to a sample of 20 teachers with an interval of 15 days from the first application and this was done to check the stability of questions over time.

Organizing plus analyzing the reactions to the surveys were done pertaining to questions on which the instruments were plan to consider. Essentially, the recovered surveys were serially numbered, coded and scored. (SPSS form 21.0) statistical product was utilized to analyze the information. Basically, data gathered in the study were analysed descriptively (using tables, graphs, frequencies and percentages).Results founds were translated appropriately.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The sample of the study, which included 62 primary school teachers, 41 females who represent 66.1% and 21 males who represent 33.9%, responded to the study.

## **Research question 1**



### **What challenges do preschool teachers confront during the implementation of the early children curriculum?**

The above question addressed the challenges that preschool teachers confront within the educational curriculums execution. The results are displayed below. The primary address was replied with information from respondent's data about the challenges preschool teachers confront within the usage of the early children educational curriculums.

**Table no 1 (challenges of teachers)**

No	Item
1	There is no understanding for the Early children curriculum
2	There is no sufficient teaching and learning material to assist me in implementing the Early children curriculum
3	The size of class that I teach is so large to go by the Early children curriculum
4	No in-service training is provided to me on the Early children curriculum
5	the learning conceptions are not understood by the pupils when I go by the Early children curriculum
6	There is no involvement by parents when implementing the early children curriculum
7	The services of schools don't assist in implementing the early children curriculum
8	There is no support from schools' administration when implementing the Early children curriculum

The table above shows the challenges preschool teachers confront in actualizing the early children educational curriculums. Then, the results obtained are as follows: on item no 1, 67.0% teachers agreed (they don't understand the curriculum) unlike, 27.3 % teachers disagree. On the second item, 90.0% teachers agree on it and 9.4% teachers disagree(no sufficient teaching materials). On item 3, 72.5% teachers agree and 27.3% teachers disagree(class size is too large). On item 4 (no in-service training) 74.1% teachers agree and 24.9% teachers disagree. On the fifth item (Learning conception are not clear), 22.5% teachers agree and 77.4% teachers disagree. On the sixth item (no involvement by parents), 95.0% teachers agree and 4.8% teachers disagree. On the seventh item (services doesn't assist), 88.6% teachers agree and 11.2% teachers disagree. The eighth and last item (no support), 75.7% teachers agree and 24.1% teachers disagree.

### **Research question 2**

#### **2. What are the basic elements that have an effect on implementing the early children curriculum?**

The cause behind above question is to examine and decide the components affecting the usage of the early children instruction educational curriculum.

Those factors was eliminated into four main factors: teachers, children, interest group and availability of teaching and learning materials. It was found that on the first factor which is (teachers have influence on teaching and curriculum), 88.6% teachers agree and 11.6% teachers disagree. On the second factor which is (the children have an influence on curriculum implementation), 46.7% teachers agree and 53.1% teachers disagree. On the third factor which is (interest group affect the implementation of the curriculum), 66.0% teachers agree and 39.7% teachers disagree. Finally on the last factor (availability of materials and resources affect the implementation of the curriculum )95.1% teachers agree and 4.8% teachers disagree.

### **Results and discussion of results**

Findings asserted that pre-school teachers have no complete understanding of the curriculum to handle it, in this way they go up against the issue of substance of the instructive curriculums. It was found that the pre-school teachers' information within the educational curriculum was uncovered within the work of Reid, Stoolmiller and Webster- Stratoon (2008) that "teaching information and involvement within the early educational curriculums is tricky within the journey of actualizing the early childhood education".

The discoveries once more found inside the investigation that guardians are unconcern about instruction at the preschool level. Bigger portion of the pre-school teachers protested nearly almost parents' state of mind regarding to early children instruction. Agreeing to the preschool teachers, that parents don't get early children instruction seriously, however they consider it as time consuming as they include themselves. A few parents' suppositions approximately early children see it as a playground not a genuine put for getting a knowledge. Such circumstance was too identified within the research carried out via Cisneros, and Moreno (2000) in their consider uncovered that "preschool teachers' had issue in actualizing the early childhood educational curriculums due to the truth that parents shallow early childhood instruction as a playing ground for the children not as a learning and this demeanor of parents come about in deterrent between the school and domestic collaboration".

The research presents apparent that preschool teachers don't get sufficient in-service preparing with regard to early children educational curriculums. Most examined pre-school teachers concurred that their school directors don't organize a visit about in-service preparing for teachers to be present on the modern patterns within the early children educational curriculum. This comes about loans bolster to research about of Gundogan (2002) that in- service training that school chairmen organized isn't sufficient side by side to pre-school teachers with the present tendency of the early children educational curriculum.

Services within the preschools in Baghdad/Iraq was affirmed by the pre-school teachers within the research that they don't encourage the usage of the early children educational curriculums. Such thing concurred with the discoveries of Azzi-Lessing (2009) that framework accessible at the preschool centers influences the education as well as learning.

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The research at last illustrated that teachers, educating as well as learning material can exceptionally be persuasive within the usage of the educational curriculum. The comes once more to gives prove to Educational curriculum Inquire about and Improvement Division (2006) that educational curriculums of pre-scholars have no effect with no satisfactory plus suitable educating and learning material.

### **Conclusions, Recommendations and Implications of the study**

To conclude, insufficient educating and most learning materials, need of insufficient in- benefit preparing for pre-school teachers, need of all parental inclusion, and most inadequate pre-school teachers' information within the early childhood educational curriculums serves as an obstacle for fruitful execution of the early children educational curriculums amid the preschools in Bagdad/Iraq. Additionally educates and missing the instructing and most learning material can be considered few of the significant components that affected early instructive curriculums utilization.

The researcher made recommendation about all private proprietors as well as government masters who coordinate the preschool curriculums must pay a visit in-service planning for educates and gatekeepers concerning early children instructive curriculums. This may offer assistance side by side by parents and teachers regarding the significance of early children educational curriculum as well as its effect on the childhood instruction.

It was also suggested to have the plausibility to help approach producers and instructive pioneers in finding all early children teachers' challenges stood up to with regard to instructive educational curriculums execution and discovering the way most preschool educates could get rid of such challenges.

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