



Exploring Global Education in Early Childhood: Perspectives of Preschool Teachers in Pakistan

Ushaque Ahmed¹

¹ Sindh Education Foundation, Government of Sindh, Pakistan. Email: saniushaque@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examined the perspective of Pakistani preschool teachers' perception including global education in early childhood curriculum. Utilizing qualitative research approach, Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers from both urban and rural pre-schooler centers across Pakistan. The analysis revealed several key themes: challenges and benefits associated with the implementation of global education, the relevance of cultural context, and teachers' perceptions of the significance of global competencies for young children. Furthermore, teachers highlighted various obstacles, such as limited resources, lack of training, and contextual barriers, but also emphasized the potential benefits, including fostering a broader worldview and promoting cultural understanding from an early age. Additionally, they harassed the importance of aligning global education initiatives with local cultural values to ensure effective integration. The findings suggest that while there is enthusiasm for global education, systemic support and comprehensive training are necessary for its successful implementation. Lastly, this study provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and government officials on strategies to incorporate global education into early childhood education in Pakistan, fostering globally competent future generations.

Keywords

Global Education, Early Childhood, Preschool Teachers, Pakistan, Qualitative Research

Introduction

Internationalization of education is gradually gaining attention in the early year's education as this prepares the children for a global society with competing global skills. They foster critical learning understanding, cultural sensitization and global relationships hence making the skills relevant in the modern world (Cheng et al., 2023). So, with the considerations of Pakistan where culture and demographics as well as education needs evolve with high speed the concept of the international education in the framework of preschool has the both perspectives and the challenge for the development.

Preschool teachers in Pakistan play a middleman role more in the integration process given that they are required to localize global education ideas that flood the system in compliance with the cultural context and specifications of education systems (Gay, 2018). Nevertheless, this implementation is always challenged with several barriers such as; low resources, poorly trained teachers, and low support from the education departments. Thirdly, there is no set curriculum adopted by schools and colleges, which also does not include global education in its curriculum make the task harder for educators (Ali, 2019). Studies shows that culturally relevant practices are important in cross-cultural education and demands from teachers to engage both global orientation and how cultural (Gay, 2018; White, 2021). This has a balance that is very hard to maintain especially in Pakistan where cultural and religious aspects dominate the education system (Farooq, 2021). This is because skills that are fostered in learners from their early ages are likely to offer them a solid

foundation hence impacting on their overall achievement in the future years (Qazi, 2020; Almhrzi & Al-Azri, 2019).

The purpose of this study is to explore preschool teachers in Pakistan's attitude towards globalization and implementation of global education in pre-schools in particular. The study expects to establish the difficulties which teachers encounter, the approaches they use and the perceived impacts of global competencies on young children after conducting semi-structured interviews with teachers from urban and rural preschools (Ahmad, 2022; Artipah et al., 2024). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify key perceptions from these perspectives and contribute knowledge that would be helpful for policymakers and educators to promote the implementation of Global Education in the early childhood facilities in Pakistan (Artipah et al., 2024).

Research Problem

The general research question under consideration in the present paper is as follows: What does the existing research tell us about how Pakistani preschool teachers conceive of and engage with the idea of global education in the classroom? Even though internationalization of education has been considered as an important factor in early child development, there is limited research done on the problems and prospects of teachers in early childhood education with some exposure to children from different cultures and in a changing education ambience of Pakistan (Hussain et al., 2020). The objectives of this study are threefold: first, to describe the difficulty and possibility that preschool teachers feel in implementing global education into their curriculum; second, to describe how cultural factors affect the teacher's perception and implementation of the GE and; third, to offer guidelines on how to better implement GE in the early childhood education in Pakistan for policy makers and educators (Samejo et al., 2023). Thus, the study seeks to meet the following goals and objectives: To achieve these objectives, the research seeks fill the existing gap in the literature and further the understanding of early childhood education, worldwide.

Objectives of the Study

1. Explore the challenges and opportunities teachers face in integrating global education.
2. Understand the role of cultural context in shaping teachers' perspectives.
3. Provide recommendations for enhancing the integration of global education in early childhood settings.

Significance of the Study

Thus, this research fills the gaps in existing literature with regard to the global education of children in the early years in Pakistan. Thus, the study draws out the policies and educational practices that may help foster Global Competencies right from the preschool stage through the voices of the preschool teachers.

Literature Review

Globalization and Early Childhood Education

International education in the initial years of children involve children in learning about international concerns, multiculturalism and globalization. The curriculum goal is ultimately to develop people in the world who are conscious and active in the global context. Synergy with the above findings, studies have shown that gains that stem from learning about the globe at an early age promotes brain, social and emotional development. For instance, primary learners who are encouraged to have the global education concepts inculcated in them from daily life, are more likely to develop more empathy, and better critical thinking ability, which is very vital for recognizing and solving for the main worldwide problems (Pan et al., 2023). Recent studies have also revealed that global education can make children responsible toward global economy and its affairs and help them to think globally not locally (Bhamani, 2017).

Children of the early years are in a position to benefit from the implementation of the global education, though it depends on the education environment. Lo and, some more about the topic of early childhood curriculum implementation of global education is well incorporated while in other parts of the world it is still in the process of implementation. Although there are such distinctions, heads of educational institutions and scholars worldwide state that the subject of global education is indispensable when it comes to guiding kids for their further successful functioning in a world that is turning into a single village (White, 2021).

The Role of Teachers in Implementing Global Education

Teachers play a very crucial role in implementing global education into early childhood learning system. They affect the delivery of global education in classroom practices in that their beliefs, attitudes and professional development do. It is inspiring to note teachers' demonstration of willingness and capacity to impart Global education to young children; this is due to the importance of Global citizenship concepts when imparted to young children. As we know educational facilities in developing countries such as Pakistan may be insufficient or facing a lack of qualified teachers, it is important now more than ever to listen to teachers' side and their experiences.

Studies suggest that teachers teaching globally in such context challenges they experience encompass the following: lack of professional development, and unacceptable pedagogy material that slow down the achievement of global education (Almuhzzi & Al-Azri, 2019). In addition, teachers' own perceptions and perceptions on globalization education students also have a tremendous influence on the issue. For example, teachers with passion in global education will provide for the education in their teaching even when facing difficulty while teachers who are not familiar with the concept of global education may fail to see its importance hence limiting its delivery (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2020).

Teacher training is important this will enable teachers to be equipped with the right knowledge and skills which they will require in the teaching of global education. You may wonder how teachers themselves can engage global education and enact it for children; the latter is best solved through targeted training (Pan et al., 2023). This is especially significant in countries such as Pakistan in regard to assumptions teachers have not been initiated to in their initial training.

Globalization of Education in Pakistan

Education in Pakistan is highly selective and qualitative with the rural areas worst affected as compared to the urban ones (Almuhzzi & Al-Azri, 2019). These disparities make it difficult to incorporate the world education into the preschool teaching and learning. While there has been a growing emphasis on integrating global competencies into education, this focus has predominantly been at the secondary and tertiary levels, with early childhood education receiving comparatively less attention (Saeed, 2019).

The education in early childhood around the world is yet to be/imported by Pakistan. As it was mentioned earlier, the term 'global education' is not part of the national curriculum and there is a lack of understanding regarding its efficacy for young children in teachers and policymakers (Almuhzzi & Al-Azri, 2019). This is partly because the available teaching resources and professional development are inadequate especially in the remote areas with poor school facilities. However, some endeavors by NGOs and international organizations are appreciable in this manners such as teaching about global education to impart awareness about the education structural worldwide and by training resources of the teachers that is undoubtedly a step towards taking part in early childhood education curriculum of Pakistan (Ali & Abbas, 2020).

Methodology

This research employs a phenomenological research design to understand the preschool teachers in Pakistan's perception of global education in their context. This is because phenomenology is best applied where emphasis is placed on how people perceive and experience a phenomenon, which in the present study is the integration of global education in early childhood curriculum. It offers the opportunity to look at the teachers' subjective experiences and the appropriation they make of the global education within their practices (Creswell, 2022).

Participants

The sample included 20 preschool teachers from different urban and rural centers of Pakistan including Punjab, Sindh, KPK, Baluchistan and Islamabad. The participants were recruited through purposive sampling in order to get a proportionately samples from the different educational setting. This sampling method was opted for to get the experiences of different teachers employed in different settings, with different resource endowment, and different cultures. The criteria used to make the selections targeted teachers who had different experience, education, and mainly the status of the school they taught in. Such diversity is important in ensuring that the data is collected from a diverse sample in order to get an overview of the issues that are likely to be faced in implementing the GE in early childhood schools (Delmas et al., 2024).

Data Collection

In this study, data were collected via semi structured interviews. This method was chosen as it allows for the flexibility in the interviewing process to bend towards what the participant has to say while at the same time, cover core issues as required. Semi structured interviews give a free flow of responses and provide a way of exploring and discussing complex issues, which is especially important for capturing the dynamics of preschool teachers' experiences. All interviews took 45 to 60 minutes on average, face-to-face or via telephone or video-conference, depending on the availability of the participants. Each interview was conducted with the participant's permission and was audio recorded and transcribed in full accuracy as well as translated where required.

Data Analysis

Interview data was analyzed using the method referred to as thematic analysis.

This method involves several stages to ensure a rigorous examination of the data:

1. **Familiarization:** This process was followed in order to have a direct impression of the data that had been collected and this involved re-reading of transcripts. It is useful in engaging with the details of the data and in spotting first ideas about patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2022).
2. **Coding:** Information was coded systematically by involving the N-Vivo software to name but a few. The first set of codes was identified in relation to the research questions, and derived sub-codes were developed through data analysis. In this process of coding, there is a focus of getting careful descriptions of data aspects that are relevant to the research objectives (Saldaña, 2021).
3. **Identifying Themes:** Themes were identified and were generalizations of codes that captured the essence of the participants' messages. This stage entailed categorizing codes that were found to be similar, in order to derive themes, which were representative of the study results (Braun & Clarke, 2022).
4. **Reviewing Themes:** Themes were adjusted accordingly in order to cover the data set and meet the objectives of the study. This step consisted of going back to the data in order to ensure that the themes developed were accurate and exhaustive (Nowell et al., 2017).
5. **Defining and Naming Themes:** Conclusion- The final themes were labelled well and clearly in a way that captured the tenor of the participant responses. It is important in making sure that each of the themes is well understood and that they are able to capture the major observations deduced from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

Findings

Theme 1: Implementation Challenges of Global Education

Linking the opinion of the teachers about the strategies adapted for the early childhood classroom towards the implementation of GE in the Pakistani context can be realigned to the following major challenges: These challenges are particularly pronounced in rural areas and can be broken down into three primary categories: These challenges are particularly pronounced in rural areas and can be broken down into three primary categories:

1. **Lack of Resources:** The teachers interviewed from both the urban and rural areas were unanimous in saying that they face a big challenge in implementing GE due to lack of the required materials. Global issues are not well explained in books, visual displays, or digital support materials which are few. As for better access to such material, urban school have it slightly better, but teachers interviewed said that supplies were often insufficient. This is especially true in the rural areas where schools are without even the most basic learning tools which makes it very hard to implement such concepts in the classroom.
2. **Inadequate Training:** The second is a lack of training of teachers on how to teach global education as a subject in the classroom. Several teachers stated that they were not able to enlighten themselves on the pedagogy that is needed in the implementation of GE. The training programs available are more of broad categories and little guidance on how to teach young children global themes especially children of preschool going age who may require simpler concepts Compared to older children, preschool children require more colorful and interesting materials. Lack of professional development in GE matter means the teachers are not so confident how to address such issues as global citizenship or international perspective.
3. **Limited Support from School Administration:** They also complained of inadequate support from their institutions with many administrators not giving enough emphasis on the teaching

of global education in schools. According to the results of the questionnaire surveys, in many cases, school leaders underestimate the role of GE in ECE or consider it as extra or even marginal activity. And in some rural schools there was outright opposition to develop new curricula at all since the administration of some schools claimed that it was unnecessary and irrelevant to the context of the rural schools. This means that teachers do not get support from the higher authorities and this discourages them from practicing the global themes in their classes.

4. **Access to Educational Materials:** In the rural areas, the teacher is in a very poor position as far as availability of teaching and learning resources is concerned. They know that some resources could be available in the urban schools, but rural teachers in particular teach in schools that hardly have any resources and, at times, even textbooks are scarce. Current infrastructural facilities for example internet/multimedia enhances the problem since it becomes hard to introduce let alone teach global concepts.

The second theme is the advantages of having an education in the global awareness:

However, it was found that teachers across the participating centers understood the value of integrating GE into FEC. These benefits were framed around the development of key skills and awareness among young children that would serve them in the long term: These benefits were framed around the development of key skills and awareness among young children that would serve them in the long term.

1. **Global Awareness:** According to the teachers, global concepts should be taught at an early age so that it will have a positive impact in teaching kids about the world. Through studying different cultures, issues that take place in other countries and how societies are linked, children open up to the world that is bigger than their surroundings. With this increased awareness it can help children to also turn out to be more curious and sympathetic towards issues in the world today.
2. **Development of Empathy and Diversity:** Development of Empathy and Diversity: Empathy was mentioned several times by teachers as one of the reoccurring positives in children as a result of the programme. The global education makes the students aware of the cultural differences and experience of other people in other part of the world; thus allowing for compassion. This is regarded as a very useful quality within a diverse society especially Pakistani where it would encourage tolerance from one culture to the other.
3. **Preparation for a Globalized World:** Teachers believed that GE could help children to be ready for challenges and further opportunities in the global era. This means that children should be taught world topics so that they could be in a better place to handle a world that is more connected than ever before. The skills I have obtained through GE like critical skills, problem solving and considering diversity makes GE important in preparing citizens around the globe.

The third theme was Cultural Context and Global Education:

While the benefits of GE were acknowledged, teachers expressed concerns about the cultural fit of global education concepts within the Pakistani context, especially in more traditional rural areas: While the benefits of GE were acknowledged, teachers expressed concerns about the cultural fit of global education concepts within the Pakistani context, especially in more traditional rural areas:

1. **Cultural Clash:** Respondents; especially those who teach in remotely located schools had apprehensions that global concepts in education appear to challenge cultural and religious practices. Such issues as inequality of women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex people and even environmental concerns such as climate change were considered to be alien or irrelevant in certain contexts. This brought about confusion among the teachers since some were afraid that they would be punished by parents or the community. Even in many occasions, the teachers themselves did not know how they were going to bring these notions in a way that would not seem as if they are negating their culture.
2. **Resistance to Global Ideas:** From analyzing the findings relating to the rural areas in particular, there was evidence that people rejected the ideas which the global village was putting across that might lead to the change of perception on certain aspects of life. According to character insistent teachers, parents, and guardians were sometimes very much unsafe to leave their children embrace the idea of global citizenship or even foreign culture since it

equalized the children to forget their cultural identity. Teachers, therefore, had to ensure that they allowed this kind of education and at the same time ensure that they did not offend any culture.

3. **Balancing Local and Global:** Teachers in urban areas which are more receptive to global education were also quick to point some elements of culture that should be retained. They argued that curriculum should be designed in a way that there is an amalgamation of the general concepts that can be taught to students from around the globe while at the same time preserving the true cultural color of Pakistan. They thought that the global as well as the local should inform early childhood education and care but were in a dilemma of how to come up with the balance.

Theme 4: Teacher's Perception on Global Citizen for Young Children:

Teachers were generally supportive of fostering global citizenship in young children, but there were questions about how appropriate certain topics were for preschool-aged learners: Teachers were generally supportive of fostering global citizenship in young children, but there were questions about how appropriate certain topics were for preschool-aged learners:

1. **Appropriateness of Global Topics:** Teachers in the study had some doubts about the relevance of global topics including climate change, human rights, or political conflicts in particular for children. They perceived that these topics are not appropriate for pre-schoolers or some of the topics are too complex for pre-schoolers to grasp. Teachers' beliefs about global education for young learners should extend far beyond political correctness; the most important global concepts for young learners to learn include being kind, understanding the other person's perspective, and learning about different cultures rather than teaching a child a certain political stance or something much more complicated.
2. **Age-Appropriate Teaching:** There was a consensus that teachers should use techniques that fitted the learners' age when teaching concepts regarding global citizenship. For instance, instead of themes such as wars and other conflicts, teachers could make young children learn about diversity through facilitating positive aspects, with elements of fun such as learning through relatable stories, songs, and exercises with the emphasis on embracing each other no matter the individual differences.
3. **Long-Term Impact:** Nevertheless, it was important for teachers to have long-term perspectives in developing the concept of the global citizen and included this idea into practice from an early age. They thought that even if the child cannot fully understand the concepts that are global in form, they should be made to set the seeds for the future and empower them to be responsible persons and global citizens in future.

Further, fifth and last theme covers recommendations to policymakers and educators that suggest strategies for implementing the concept of contextualized pedagogy:

Teachers shared a number of suggestions concerned with enhancing the enactment of global education in EC settings. These recommendations focused on balancing global concepts with local traditions and ensuring that teachers and schools are adequately supported: These recommendations focused on balancing global concepts with local traditions and ensuring that teachers and schools are adequately supported:

1. **Curriculum Adjustments:** Some teachers pointed out that as a part of the national curriculum; global education has to be introduced with respect to cultural representations that can be appropriate for children. It should not only be international oriented but should also have a concern to reflect the culturally diverse country like Pakistan. This would give a child an understanding of the global community as well as the need to respect his or her own ethnic background.
2. **Government Support:** Lack of proper provisions and particularly inadequacy of governmental support measured in terms of funds and materials was reported by the teachers. Thus, to facilitate teaching of global education, more input, time and resources may be needed especially in schools in developing countries particularly in the rural areas. Government policies should try to address the disparity between the urban and rural schools so as to improve on the quality of education across the globe.
3. **Collaboration between Stakeholders:** Thus, the educators suggested that the policymakers, educators and community leaders should join hands in enhancing global education. Global

education awareness should be promoted by collaborative efforts but with emphasis on a culture's practices. It could comprising of community activities, curriculum designing forums and awareness creation activities.

Discussion

Implications of the study prove that a global education is complex and is characterized by different influences among the preschool teachers in Pakistan. Teachers have realized the importance of global education though they have different views regarding this issue due to their different setting. Urban educators pay much attention to the cultural differences and most rural educators are concerned with the global issues such as the deteriorating environment and the proliferation of technology. Moreover, this d-synchronized development indicates a need for concrete benchmarks and specific training for educators, in order to promote common principles of schooling around the globe.

Lack of resources and culture comes out prominently as the key impediments with regard to implementing education for the globe. This environment exposes many teachers especially in developing nations to restricted resources in terms of materials and technology to facilitate the teaching of global concepts in classroom. Also, a worry may arise on the implementation of global themes that may be contrary to the culture of the society. Nevertheless, teachers come up with ways to address all these challenges including the use of technology and incorporation of global concepts into mainstream curriculum. It suggests feasible strategies for improving the education of young children across the world, in relation with the global context and local realities.

Conclusion

Thus, the following five themes offer a clear picture of Pakistani preschool teachers' impressions towards global education in the context of the EC-settings. Teachers acknowledged the value of global education but expressed a number of concerns as to resources, cultural context, and relevance of the topical for younger learners. These findings should be valuable for policymakers, educators, and other representatives of the government authorities who are planning and carrying out the international educational initiatives for the future success in both urban and rural preschool institutions in Pakistan.

Recommendations

To enhance global education in Pakistan's early childhood settings, several key recommendations emerge from the study:

1. **Professional Development:** Hence, further professional development programs that will provide skills and knowledge required by the preschool teachers to enhance implementation of global education. It also means that the programs that should offer down-to-earth solutions on how to infuse global themes in the curriculum and how to teach students in different educational settings should be available.
2. **Resource Provision:** Resource constraints are something that have to be addressed properly. Some schools, especially those in rural areas need teaching aids and or technologies for effecting the global education agenda. Such an investment will help teachers to introduce different global concepts in an enhanced manner and top it up with an involvement of the students through the use of pertinent and interesting materials.
3. **Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Design:** Thus the professional challenge of designing a curriculum that embraces and nurtures cultural values and practices of the community while at the same time exposing the learners to global standards is paramount. This approach helps avoid the conflict of the global approach with local cultures and traditions and makes the concepts well interpreted and accepted by students and their parents.

If these recommendations are incorporated and applied, then Pakistan's early childhood education system can be improved to include young learners to globalized environment. This approach not only adds values into students' perception of the global affairs but also assists the teachers in the provision of global education in a practically and cultural manner.

References

- Ahmad, M. (2022). Realities and possibilities of global education in Pakistan's early years learning environment. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 13(4), 45 – 60.
- Ali, S., Abbas, R. (2020). Teacher training and global education in Pakistan: Special education as current practices and future social initiative. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 74, 102–115.

- Ali, Z. (2019). Current void in international curriculum in Pakistan's early childhood education. *Pakistan Journal of Educational Research*, 7(2), 123-139.
- Almuhri, H. M., & Al-Azri, H. I. (2019). Conference report: second UNWTO/UNESCO world conference on tourism and culture: Fostering sustainable development. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 13(1), 144-150.
- Artipah, A., Sain, Z. H., & Asfahani, A. (2024). Early childhood education reform in Pakistan: Challenges, innovations, and future prospects. *Absorbent Mind: Journal of Psychology and Child Development*, 4(1), 57-64.
- Banks, J. A. (1993). Multicultural education. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 75(1), 21-28.
- Bhamani, S. (2017). Globalization and early childhood education: Urban families perceptions. *International Journal of Arts & Humanities*, 45(45), 71.
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2022). Thematic Analysis: A Handy Manual. SAGE Publications.
- Cheng, M. M., Tang, C. W., Wang, L. C., & Chuang, H. H. (2023). School internationalization in Taiwan: constructing assessment indicators and future application. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), 1-13.
- Creswell, J. W. (2022). Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Deciding between Five Strategies: A Short Guide (4th Ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Delmas, M., Wysocka, M., & Freitas, A. (2024). Relation Extraction in underexplored biomedical domains: A diversity-optimised sampling and synthetic data generation approach. *Computational Linguistics*, 1-49.
- DiCicco-Bloom, B., & Crabtree, B. F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical education*, 40(4), 314-321.
- Farooq, R. (2021). Cultural Sensitivity in Pakistan's Education System. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 11(5), 79-88.
- Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. teachers college press.
- Hussain, Z., Javed, M., & Ali, A. (2020). The Impact of Administrators' Leadership Styles in Provision of Quality Education in Secondary Schools Level. *Global Regional Review*, 3, 111-120.
- Kirkwood-Tucker, T. F. (2020). Preparing teachers to teach global perspectives: Historical development, advances and issues. *Educational Foundations*, 24(1), 5-20.
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 16(1), 1609406917733847.
- Pan, Q., Zhou, J., Yang, D., Shi, D., Wang, D., Chen, X., & Liu, J. (2023). Mapping knowledge domain analysis in deep learning research of global education. *Sustainability*, 15(4), 3097.
- Qazi, R. (2020). Linking global competencies to academic success: Some implications of early childhood education: A case of Pakistan. *South Asian Journal of Education*, 12(2), 215-229.
- Rizvi, F., & Lingard B. (2009). Challenges to educational leadership in the twenty-first century. *Globalizing Education Policy*. Routledge.
- Saldaña, J. (2021). The coding manual for qualitative researchers.
- Saeed, M. (2019). Barriers towards the integration of international education in Pakistan's rural early childhood education. *Journal of Education and Development*, 11(2), 89-102.
- Samejo, A. K., Lashari, A. A., & Mahar, S. S. (2023). A study of developing a prototype of Sindhi primer of early childhood education level in Sindh. *Global Social Sciences Review*, 8(2), 225-237.
- White, C. (2021). Social/Intercultural education. *Voices of Social Education: A Pedagogy of Change*, 329.