

Management of Early Childhood Care and Education in Punjab, Pakistan

Pervez Aslam Shami*, Mushtaq Ahmad** & Asma Khyzer***

Abstract

The study aimed at situation analysis of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme with respect to Education for All (EFA) in Punjab, Pakistan. The study was descriptive, exploratory and non-contrived. The study included all institutions of both public and private sector following indicators as prescribed by UN agencies. Whole the population was selected as sample. Ten year data from 2001-02 to 2010-11 was analyzed. Conclusions are that increase in gross enrolment ratio (GER) in Punjab is more than national level but not to the satisfaction level to meet the EFA targets by 2015. There was increase of enrolment and schools in private sector. Lack of networking, poor coordination among public and private sector is affecting ECCE. It is recommended that ECCE may be recognized as stage, facilities, and awareness of its significance may be promoted especially in rural areas.

Keywords: Early Childhood Care and Education, Education for All, Gross Enrollment Ration, Punjab

Introduction

All over the world education is recognized as the most influential and only instrument for social and economic development (UNESCO, 2010; Govt. of Pakistan, 2009). In the 21st century, to estimate the position of a country is not the count of the natural resources and oil reserves but the count of its students and teachers (Laghari, 2012).

The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973 focused the provision of education as the responsibility of the state and promised for it in Article 37 (B). The constitutional provision also corresponds with Article 26 (1) of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNESCO, 2008). According to National Education Policy (2009) state is to provide quality education to our children and youth. Now the question is that where are we standing in education among the comity of nations.

* Dr. Pervez Aslam Shami, Chairman, Department of Education & Research, University of Sargodha.

** Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad, Assistant Professor, Department of Education & Research, University of Sargodha. Email: mamalik27@yahoo.com

*** Asma Khyzer, Department of Education & Research, University of Sargodha

In the context of globalization, every country should honour international commitments in letter and spirit for an acceptable status in the international forums. Government of Pakistan had been a signatory of various international accords to make sure in providing literacy and basic education to people (UNESCO, 2010). Government of Pakistan is one of the signatories of the many international declarations which primarily focus Education for All (EFA). EFA is one of such international education movement in vogue with first goal about early childhood care and education i.e. expanding and improving early childhood care and education (ECCE), especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

ECCE is the “education transfer of culture and values as well as building up of self-esteem and self-confidence among children” (Syed, Asif, & Yousaf, 2011). ECCE is to start education in early age to foster local culture and values to prepare them for next educational steps. It contributes to human capital which strengthens the economic well-being of the society (Bennett, 2011). Students with early childhood education shows better academic performance, better retention power (McKey et al., 1985), improve the performance and benefits exceeding costs of disadvantaged (Karoly, Kilburn & Cannon, 2005) than those directly come to the school. The education in pre-primary years (3-5) becomes the base for development of more complex skills and aptitudes (Zero to Three, 2009). In this age children form values, attitudes and learn to attach meanings to actions and behaviors (Syed, Asif, & Yousaf, 2011). According to UNESCO and UNICEF (2012), “Due to the rapid neural connections, brain development and growth this age is considered a critical window of opportunity for optimizing children’s development through the combined impact of education, care, health, nutrition, protection and stimulation”. In short ECCE make rapid transformation in cognitive, emotional, social and physical development of the children (Elliott, 2006).

In Pakistan the early childhood education has been largely taken as *katchi* class and pre-nursery, play group etc. It remained functional since the beginning of the government school system in Pakistan. Traditionally, the *katchi* class was for the children of age 3 and 4. There were no special teachers for *katchi* class, one of the primary teachers having responsibility of teaching Class 1 and 2 used to keep an eye upon *katchi* class (Shakil, 2002).

EFA Context of ECCE

According to Government of Pakistan (2003) aims of National Plan of Action (NPA) 2001-2015, are to institutionalize and formalize *katchi* class. NPA also identified that an additional room, a teacher, textbook, audio-visual aids and teaching kit are needed for ECCE.

Major Programs and Initiatives in ECCE

In Islamabad Capital Territory a Pilot project for ECCD is being tested in 30 villages and in Lahore an Early Childhood Resource Center is established. The community-based Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers being facilitated by Plan International in Chakwal District (Punjab). In rural Sindh, the Improved Pre-Primary and Primary Education in Sindh (IPPS) project was being implemented by Agha Khan Education Service in Pakistan (AKESP). The Early Childhood Education Program (ECEP) being implemented in government schools in Karachi and other parts of Sindh by the NGO 'Teachers' Resource Centre' (TRC) (Shakil, 2002).

Pakistan has to achieve the ECCE goal of EFA till 2015 and now it is 2013, it seems quite necessary to find out the position of ECCE programs and enrolment in ECE.

Statement of the Problem

EFA was an international commitment and had greater significance for Punjab, the most populace province of Pakistan. Improving early childhood care and education (ECCE), especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children is the first goal of EFA. The study intended situational analysis of ECCE in Punjab with particular reference to prescribed indicators and targets by the world forum. The study implied to explore the management of ECCE program in Punjab during last decade (2001-11) and compare it with national standards regarding ECCE.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was to assess the expansion and improvement in early childhood care and education with respect to gross enrollment (GER), new entrants, private school enrollment, and trained teachers.

Methodology

This exploratory study was carried out to find out condition of ECCE with reference to EFA in Punjab, Pakistan. The data were collected through recorded facts of one decade (2001-2011) in natural setting. This study consist of quantitative approach, national quantitative data was used for year wise continuous assessment.

Population of the study included all types of public and private institutions of Punjab to explore enrollment, institutions, teachers, progression, retention, expenditures, and achievements at pre-primary level.

Data were collected from the sources: National Education Management Information System (NEMIS); Academy of Educational Planning and Management (AEPAM); Provincial Education Management Information System (PEMIS); Provincial Educational Assessment System (PEAS); National Educational Assessment System (NEAS); Program Monitoring and Implementation Unit (PMIU); and National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS).

Results and Discussion

Data analysis and results are presented according to prescribed four indicators of the first goal of EFA.

Table 1: Indicator 1-Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) for ECCE in Punjab both public and private sector 2001-11

Year	Enrollment in ECCE			Official age-group population (3-4+)			GER for ECCE (%)			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
2001-02	889,324	815,329	1,704,653	2,206,316	2,071,229	4,277,545	40	39	40%	0.98
2002-03	900,878	826,720	1,727,598	2,193,953	2,051,338	4,245,291	41	40	41%	0.98
2003-04	945,641	888,758	1,834,399	2,177,831	2,027,080	4,204,911	43	44	44%	1.01
2004-05	1,249,492	1,155,841	2,405,333	2,150,736	1,989,640	4,140,376	58	58	58%	1.00
2005-06	2,123,294	1,915,463	4,038,757	2,115,661	1,944,385	4,060,046	100	99	99%	0.98
2006-07	2,194,599	2,007,028	4,201,627	2,097,530*	1,919,016*	4,002,547*	104	104	104%	1.00
2007-08	2,190,348	1,954,730	4,145,078	2,079,399*	1,893,647*	3,959,048*	105	103	104%	0.96
2008-09	2,253,784	2,009,124	4,262,908	2,061,268*	1,868,278*	3,915,549*	109	107	108%	0.97
2009-10	2,290,361	2,049,369	4,339,730	2,043,137*	1,842,909*	3,872,050*	112	111	112%	0.97
2010-11	2,482,039	2,249,756	4,731,795	2,025,006*	1,817,540*	3,828,551*	122	123	123%	0.99

*Estimated Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2001-02 to 2010-11, Ministry of Education, Islamabad

Table 1 shows that in Punjab during 2001-02 total enrolment GER for ECCE was (40%) (Total enrolment=1,704,653; male=889,324 and female=815,329). Before the National education policy 2009, in 2008-09 GER for ECCE was 108% (Total enrolment=4,262,908; male=2,253,784 and female=2,009,124). After two years of NEP (2009) during the year 2010-2011 GER for ECCE increased to 123% (Total enrolment=4,731,795; male=2,290,039 and female=2,249,756). Graphic representation of the facts is presented in Graph 1.

Public schools except capital area and big cities had no formal arrangements for ECCE; indicated major contribution of private sector in this regard.

Table 2: GER at ECCE stage at National level from 2001-02 to 2010-11

Year	GER at ECCE stage (%)			GPI for GER
	Male	Female	Total	
2001-02	39 %	32%	36%	0.83
2002-03	41%	35%	38%	0.86

2003-04	47%	40%	44%	0.85
2004-05	53%	49%	51%	0.92
2005-06	97%	85%	91%	0.88
2006-07	104%	94%	99%	0.90
2007-08	105%	93%	99%	0.88
2008-09	109%	96%	103%	0.89
2009-10	122%	110%	116%	0.89
2010-11	114%	101%	108%	0.88

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2001-11, NEMIS, AEPAM, Ministry of Education, Islamabad

Table 2 shows that at national level during year 2001-02 total GER for ECCE was 36% (39% male, 32% female). Before the NEP (2009) during the year 2008-09 total GER for ECCE was 103% (male=109% and female=96% female). After two years of NEP (2009) during 2010-11 GER for ECCE was 108% (male=114% and female=101%). Total percentage point increase in GER at ECCE at national level from 2001-02 to 2010-11 was 72 % (male=75% and female= 69%). Reinforcement in education disparities was due to weak public policies in ECCE (UNESCO, 2009).

Table 3: Indicator 2 - Percentage of New Entrants to Primary Grade 1 who have attended some form of organized ECCE Program in Punjab from 2001-02 to 2010-11

Year	New Entrants to Primary Grade 1			% of New Entrants with ECCE Experience		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2001-02	1,234,718	953,764	2,188,482	60%	83%	70%
2002-03	1,267,943	981,132	2,249,075	52%	71%	60%
2003-04	1,145,273	919,921	2,065,194	58%	77%	66%
2004-05	1,235,061	1,074,586	2,309,647	55%	72%	63%
2005-06	1,139,708	1,135,813	2,275,521	84%	87%	85%
2006-07	787,338*	717,569*	1,504,907*	62%	62%	62%
2007-08	773,149*	706,190*	1,479,339*	62%	64%	63%
2008-09	730,580*	663,799*	1,394,379*	64%	68%	65%
2009-10	687,707*	609,469*	1,297,176*	64%	65%	65%
2010-11	670,781*	589,279*	1,260,060*	59%	58%	58%

*public sector only

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2000-01 & 2010-11, Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

Table 3 shows that during 2001-02 total new entrants to grade 1 were 70% (Total=2,188,482; male=1,234,718 and female=953,764). Before the NEP (2009), during 2008-09 total new entrants to grade 1 were 65% (Total=1,394,379; male=730,580 and female=663,799). After two years

of NEP (2009) during 2010-11 total new entrants to grade 1 were 58% (Total=1,260,060; male=670,781 and female=589,279).

During 2010-11 total percentage of new entrants with ECCE experience was 58 % (male=59% and female=58%). Total percentage point decrease in percentage of new entrants with ECCE from 2001-02 to 2010-11 was 12 % (male=1% and female=25%).

Table 4: Percentage of new entrants with ECCE Experience at national level from 2001-02 to 2010-11

Year	Percent of new entrants with ECCE Experience (%)		
	Male	Female	Total
2001-02	57 %	72 %	63 %
2002-03	51 %	62 %	56 %
2003-04	53 %	65 %	58 %
2004-05	52 %	64 %	57 %
2005-06	71 %	77 %	74 %
2006-07	62 %	61 %	61 %
2007-08	63 %	62 %	63 %
2008-09	58 %	58 %	58 %
2009-10	55 %	54 %	55 %
2010-11	50 %	49 %	49 %

Source: *Pakistan Education Statistics 2001-02 to 2010-11*, Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

Table 4 shows that during 2001-02 total new entrants with ECCE experience at national level were 63% (male=57% and female=72%). Before NEP (2009) during 2008-09 total new entrants with ECCE experience at national level were 58% (male=58% and female=58%). During the year 2010-11 total percentage of new entrants with ECCE experience at national level was 49% (male=50 % and female=49%). Total of new entrants with ECCE experience were decreased by 14% (male=7% and female=23%).

Data indicated that current situation was not satisfactory in Punjab. A huge number of children were not getting ECCE. On national level just near about 50% children had ECCE experience.

Table 5: Indicator 3 - Private schools enrollment as percentage of total enrollment in ECCE Program in Punjab 2001-02 to 2010-11

Year	Total Enrolled in Private Schools			Total Enrolled in ECCE Program			% Enrolled in Private Schools		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2001-02	-	-	-	889,324	815,329	1,704,653	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
2002-03	-	-	-	900,878	826,720	1,727,598	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
2003-04	-	-	-	945,641	888,758	1,834,399	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
2004-05	-	-	-	1,249,492	1,155,841	2,405,333	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
2005-06	892,862	807,674	1,700,536	2,123,294	1,915,463	4,038,757	42 %	42 %	42 %
2006-07	901,791	815,751	1,717,542	2,194,599	2,007,028	4,201,627	41 %	40 %	40 %
2007-08	906,098	823,909	1,730,007	2,190,348	1,954,730	4,145,078	41 %	42 %	42 %
2008-09	1,079,532	981,611	2,061,143	2,253,784	2,009,124	4,262,908	48 %	49 %	48 %
2009-10	1,187,690	1,079,958	2,267,648	2,290,361	2,049,369	4,339,730	52 %	53 %	52 %
2010-11	1,313,580	1,196,552	2,510,132	2,482,039	2,249,756	4,731,795	53 %	53 %	53 %

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2001-02 to 2010-11, Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

Table 5 shows that for the years 2001-02 to 2004-05 data was not available, during 2005-06 total enrolled in private schools were 42% (Total=1,700,536; male=892,862 and female=807,674). Before the NEP (2009) during 2008-09 total enrolment in private schools was 48% (Total=1,730,007; male=906,098 and female=823,909). After NEP (2009) during 2010-11 total enrolment in private schools was 53% (Total=2,510,132; male=1,313,580 and female=1,196,552). Total increase from 2005-06 to 2010-11 in private schools enrolment was 11 % (both male and female=11%).

Major causes of low enrolment were lack of coordination among organizations handling ECCE; access to ECCE was not equally provided to boys and girls in rural and urban areas (Syed, Asif, & Yousaf, 2011).

Table 6: Private schools enrolment at national level from 2001-02 to 2010-11

Year	% Enrolled in Private Schools		
	Male	Female	Total
2001-02	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
2002-03	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
2003-04	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
2004-05	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
2005-06	38 %	38 %	38 %
2006-07	37 %	37 %	37 %
2007-08	37 %	38 %	37 %
2008-09	43 %	44 %	43 %
2009-10	45 %	46 %	46 %
2010-11	45 %	46 %	46 %

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2001-02 to 2010-11 Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

Table 6 shows that for the year 2001-02 data for total enrolment in private schools at national level was not available. In 2005-06 total enrolment in private schools at national level was 38% (both male and

female=38%). Before NEP (2009) during 2008-09 total enrolment in private schools at national level was 43 % (male=43% and female=44%). After NEP (2009) during 2010-11 total enrolment in private schools at national level was 46 % (male=45% and female=46%). Total percentage point increase in private schools enrolment at national level from 2005-06 to 2010-11 was 8 % (male=7% and female=8%).

It was now being considered, under the formalizing of *katchi* class initiative, developing a standard curriculum, with child-friendly material and teachers' guides for nationwide implementation (Shakil, 2002).

Table 7: Indicator 4 - ECCE Trained Teachers in Punjab 2001-02 to 2010-11

Year	Total ECCE Teachers		
	Male	Female	Total
2005-06	187	853	1,040
2006-07	190	862	1,052
2007-08	192	871	1,063
2008-09	194	883	1,077
2009-10	196	896	1,092
2010-11	199	906	1,105

Note: Data of Private Pre-Primary is available only from 2005-06

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2005-06 to 2010-11, Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

Table 7 shows that during 2005-06, total number of trained ECCE teachers was 1040 (male=187 and female=853). During 2010-11 total number of trained ECCE teachers was 1,105 (male=199 and female=906). Data clearly indicated that the number of teachers at ECCE level was very low in Punjab. To meet targets of EFA situation was highly un-satisfactory. In government sector there were no separate pre-primary school teachers with proper training and primary teacher teach pre-primary classes with different focus. Total increase in EECE teachers in Punjab from 2005-06 to 2010-11 was 65 (male=12 and female=53).

The analysis revealed that very little effort had been done to expand the early ECCE in the country and particularly in Punjab to meet the specified target of EFA.

Development of ECCE in Punjab

GER for ECCE from 2001-02 to 2010-11, private schools enrolment and number of trained teachers increased but percentage of new entrants with ECCE experience decreased.

Table 8: Development in ECCE from 2001-02 to 2010-11 in Punjab

Aspects	2001-02	2010-11	Increase (+) or decrease (-) in percent
Gross enrolment (%)			
Male	40	127	+87
Female	39	126	+87
Total	40	127	+87
Percent of new entrants to grade 1 with ECCE (%)	60	59	-1
Male	83	58	-25
Female	70	58	-12
Total			
Private schools enrolment (%)			
Male	42*	53	+11
Female	42*	53	+11
Total	42	53	+11
Trained teachers in ECCE			
Male	187*	199	+12
Female	853*	906	+53
Total	1,040	1,105	+65

Table 8 shows that gross enrollment from 2001 to 2011 in ECCE programs increase was 87%. But there was decrease of 12% in new entrants to grade 1 with ECCE background while in private school enrollment increase was 11% which shows the increasing trend of ECCE in well to do people. There is also increase in trained teachers of ECCE which was 65%, which shows the efforts to meet the EFA goals.

Conclusion

Conclusions drawn from the data analysis are:

- The increase in gross enrolment ratio (GER) in Punjab is more than national level but not to the satisfaction level to meet the EFA targets by 2015.
- There was decrease in percentage of new entrants at pre-primary stage in Punjab. There was also a decrease at national level. On the other hand though there was increase in private schools enrolment but as compared to parallel group in population it appeared a hell of task to meet EFA target by the government of Punjab and Pakistan.
- In public sector there were no separate teachers for ECCE however in private sector there was increase in ECCE teachers in Punjab. It shows that recruitment of teachers was not according to need at ECCE level and quality of ECCE education.

In Pakistani first and foremost challenge with respect to EFA is recognition of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) throughout the country. It was not being attended at proper level and receiving no proper status or scope in Pakistan, not in public nor in private sector. To prepare children for primary education, proper curriculum, financial allocation, integrated programming, proper networking and public-private partnership is needed (Shakil, 2002).

Recommendation

Recognition of ECCE as stage, facilities, and awareness of its significance is required to promote pre-primary education particularly in public sector. ECCE recognition is needed especially in rural areas and public sector. Improvement in networking, coordination among public and private sector is necessary for ECCE.

Reference List

- Aly, J. H. (2007) *Education in Pakistan, A White Paper* [Online]. Available from: <http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Pakistan/Pakistan%20National%20Education%20Policy%20Review%20WhitePaper.pdf>
- Bennett, C. (2011) *A Practical Vision for Early Childhood Education and Care* [Online]. Available from: <http://www.pwc.com.au/industry/government/assets/ecec-Mar11.pdf>
- Elliott, A. (2006) *Early Childhood Education*. Council for Educational Research. [Online]. Available from: <http://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=aer>
- Government of Pakistan (2003) *National Plan of Action 2001-2015*. Islamabad: Ministry of Education. [Online]. Available from: <http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Pakistan/Pakistan%20EFA%20NPA%202003.pdf>
- Government of Pakistan (2007) *Population Projection 2030*. Islamabad: AEPAM, Ministry of Education.
- Government of Pakistan (2011) *Pakistan Education Statistics 2005-06 to 2010-11*. Islamabad: Ministry of Education. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.aepam.edu.pk/Files/EducationStatistics/PakistanEducationStatistics2010-11.pdf>
- Government of Pakistan, (2009) Education. In *Economic Survey of Pakistan, 2008-09*. Ministry of Finance. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/10-Education09.pdf>
- Govt. of Pakistan (2009). *National Education Policy (2009)*. Islamabad: Ministry of Education. [Online]. Available from: http://www.wfpak.org/pdfs/policies/education_policy_draft_2009.pdf
- Karoly, L. A., Kilburn M. R., and Cannon, J. S. (2005) *Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise*. Santa Monica: RAND. [Online]. Available from: www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND_MG341.pdf
- Laghari, J. (2012) Higher Education and National Development. *The News Education Expo Supplement*, June 13.
- McKey, R. H., Condelli L., Ganson H., Barrett B. J., McConkey C., and Plantz, M. C. (1985) *The impact of head start on children, families and communities*. Washington, CSR.ED 263 984. [Online]. Available from:

- <www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/recordDetail?accno=ED263984>
- Shakil, S. (2002) *An Overview of Early Childhood Care and Education in Pakistan (An Initial Survey and Situational Analysis)*. Islamabad, Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan. [Online]. Available from: <www.ecdpak.com/publications/sofia-shakil.pdf>
- Syed, S. Z., Asif, M., & Yousaf, A. (2011) Rethinking ECE in Pakistan. *Journal of Elementary Education*, 21(2).
- UNESCO and UNICEF (2012) *Early Childhood Care and Education: Asia-Pacific end of decade notes on education for all*. Bangkok: UNICEF EAPRO and UNICEF ROSA. [Online]. Available from: <<http://www.unicef.org/rosa/217145e.pdf>>
- UNESCO, (2010). *Five Year Strategic Plan for the Promotion of Literacy in the Province of Punjab (2010-2015)*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.literacy.gop.pk/docs/downloads/five_year_plan.pdf>
- UNESCO. (2008) *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009 Overcoming Inequalities: Why Governance Matters*. Oxford University Press.
- Zero to Three (2009). *Early experiences matter: A Guide to improved policies for infants and toddlers*. National Center for infants, toddlers and families. [Online]. Available from: <http://main.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/Policy_Guide.pdf?docID=8401>