

Resigning From School: Contributing Factors In Perspective Of Early Grade Teachers

Dr. Rukhsana Durrani* , Dr. Humaira Akram** , Dr. Nosheen Swar***

*Lecturer-Department of ECE & ETE, AIOU rukhsana.durrani@aiou.edu.pk

**Teaching/Research Associate, Department of Teacher Education, IIUI humera.imran@iiu.edu.pk

***Scholar Columbia college, Canada swar6826@student.columbia.ca

Abstract

Early childhood education is the most crucial period of schooling. It is the stage where children develop attachment with their teachers in school. Therefore, the teachers play an important role in their learning. But unfortunately, majority of the teachers of early grades of private sector in Pakistan resign from schools continuously therefore, the aim of the study was to investigate the factors influencing resigning of teachers from early grade schools. For this purpose, 189 teachers of early grades were selected through random sampling technique from private schools. A questionnaire was developed on five-point Likert scale and data were collected from the selected teachers through questionnaire. Data were analyzed by using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings of the study show that the major factors which became a cause of resigning from schools by the teachers were inadequate opportunities of professional development, excessive workload, lack of compensation and improper evaluation system for teachers. The research study recommends that the private schools may develop a proper system for retaining their teachers which include training programs for professional development, proper system of evaluation which provide positive feedback to teachers for improving their performance and a well-defined criterion for workload of teachers.

Keywords: Early grade schools, teachers, resigning, workplace environment.

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) has a long-lasting effect on children learning and lives. The adults who teach the young children are regarded as the crucial element of implementing high-quality early learning in ECE settings (IOM & NRC, 2015). Teachers who are trained in the ECE environments are vital to provide children with quality learning experiences that stimulate both school willingness and enduring wellbeing however regrettably, rates of teachers' resigning

are getting high in ECE level (Markowitz, 2019). High levels of resigning of teachers from early grade schools adversely influence learners and result in highly tense and distracted settings for educators and instructors who work at the school (Cassidy, Lower, Kinter-Duffy, Hegde, & Shim, 2011). Resigning of teachers limits the delivery of a safe and constant care challenging for ECE arrangements and compromises the investments in quality enhancement (Totenhagen, et al., 2016).

Recruitment and retention of teachers at ECE level has been a primary problem faced by school administrators. ECE schools find it hard to attract and maintain highly trained teachers (Hammer, Hughes, McClure, Reeves & Salgado, 2015). Resigning and retention of teachers is a global problem needing a significant emphasis from all stakeholders in the field of education. Hammerness (2013) viewed it a global challenge which must be addressed earnestly to ensure that instructors are hired and retained. Aragon (2016) asserted that some ECE institutions are facing consistent recruitment problems because of challenges, such as scarce indigenous teacher resources, absence of demand oriented planning and qualification as well as professional development opportunities, regional and social alienation. The training and retention of teachers is increasing the rate of teachers' turnover only in bad working environments. Horng's (2009) analysis reported a shortage of administration help, disciplinary issues, cultural malfunctions, lack of resources and a lack of readiness for teachers in many ECE schools. Because of these obstacles, it has been imperative to figure out whether teachers chose to stay or leave school. Teacher's resigning produces appeal for new teachers and makes school staffing issues. Teacher's resigning from school has been and keeps on being a continuous issue as viewed by Papay et al. (2017). When teachers' resigning occurs, schools often occupied positions by employing less competent and less qualified persons. These all factors; poor working environment, excessive workload and insufficient incentives for teachers, adversely affected students' academic achievement. Furthermore, the learners within institutions having greater resigning rates and a greater ratio of inexperienced teachers adversely affected students' learning. Thus, teachers' resigning from schools not only hampered partnership and instructional developments but also adding monetary stress to

the program, institution and administration (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

According to Collins (2019), the implementation of high-quality alternative training systems, enhancement of working standards, high degree of autonomy and administrative assistance, and the continual appraisal of school performance are tactics which can help increase retention levels and overcome resigning of teachers from school. The retention strategies include school initiative to assist new ECE teachers to transcend their feelings of alienation, achieve sense of community protection and improve professional competence. Teacher resigning is becoming a serious issue not only in developed countries but also in developing countries like Pakistan. It has a negative financial impact and leads to poor student performances due to changing of teachers in classrooms. The teaching profession in Pakistan is facing numerous problems especially at the stage of early childhood education and the high rate of resigning in recent years multiplied these problems. Therefore, this study was designed to investigate the factors contributing towards resigning of teachers from early grade schools in the private sector.

Objectives of the Study

1. To rank the factors contributing to resigning of teachers from early grade schools.
2. To find out the relationship of contributing factors due to which the early grade teachers resign from school.

Research Questions

1. Which factors ranked as high or low influence the resigning of early grade teachers from school?

2. Which factors correlate with each other to contribute to resigning of early grade teachers from school?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significance relationship between the factors contributing to resigning of teachers from early grade schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work environment which denotes to organizational climate; containing diversity of support from administration and staff, colleagues, parents, educators' impact over school events, teaching workload, demography of learners, employment security, school resources and facilities is one of the potential factors adding to teachers' resigning from the schools,. Hence, in determining to continue or quit teaching profession, teachers make constant assessments of attractiveness of teaching in certain school, or substitute activities they might follow (Smethem, 2007). In private schools, teaching is often associated with the work environment and poor work circumstances attain teachers' resignation. Teachers' retention can be upgraded through acceptance, coaching and work environment, execution, pay and monetary motivators and opportunity for teacher authority.

Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) identified several causes for teachers' leaving school or the profession. The greatest commonly quoted causes included discontentment with appraisal and responsibility stresses; dearth of organizational support; discontentment with the teaching profession, as well as shortage of prospects for professional growth & development; and disappointment with

working environment. Individual and economic causes were also mentioned, along with the need to take alternative type of career or to leave. Amongst the main factors that initiate teachers' resigning from school was the type of training, teachers have had earlier to entrance and the type of organizational support they obtain on the work.

Achieng (2018) viewed that workload remains the most significant aspect prompting teachers' judgment to leave the profession. Moreover, teachers liked teaching for they were qualified and trained to teach, they were contented with the job for the reason that is where they were getting their living. A supportive working environment that promotes commitment is attractive to potential personnel, best school administrators inculcate a philosophy of continuous progress, encourages professional development articulated by collective relationships among teachers. McKay (2019) conducted a multiple case study titled identifiable factors that impact teacher retention in middle schools. Findings included the significance of self-efficacy, collegial support, and administrative support as potential factors influencing teacher retention. The key finding showed support of administration was the predominant factor persuading teacher retention.

McMullen, Lee, McCormick and Choi (2020) reported that about twenty seven percent of ECE professionals leave job or the profession completely on yearly basis. Furthermore, among the factors or causes of teachers' resigning from school included inadequate payment, lack of benefits and poor work environments. According to Phillips et al. (2016), distinguishing reasons that add to the teachers' resigning percentage may decrease the ratio in ECE such as reward, the work setting, professional growth & development prospects and continuous learning prospects. Together with factors like less payment, awkward

timings and lack of suitable training, ECE professionals choose to leave positions in order to look for better opportunities. Hence, these problems not only affect the working situation, but also the learners within these institutions. Excellence within ECE depends on greatly on collaborations that take place among teachers and learners. Conclusively, teachers' resigning issues disturb the entire stability of standard of care, thus affecting emotional and educational development of students. In contrast, researchers (Kagan & Roth, 2017) believed that when highly qualified and trained ECE teachers retained in the profession, there is a decline in societal expenses to society in terms of well-being dependence and grade retention.

Tornuk and Gunes (2020), conducted a study on ECE professionals suffering turnover and stated feelings of professionals in terms of lack of; enthusiasm, liveliness, and opinion which in turn led to mental states of stress, depression and powerlessness. Hence, the peak of these feelings and mental state resulted in professionals leaving or resigning from jobs. Researchers (Barford & Whelton, 2010) purported that features of the institution as one of the most imperative factors in defining the possibility for teachers' resigning from schools. More specifically, institutional factors that impact on teachers' resigning from schools included excessive workload, role uncertainty, lack of collegial collaborations and poor compensation. In the view of Phillips et al. (2016), any blend of these factors surges the possibility for teachers' resigning within ECE. Jeon et al. (2017) advocated that support from administrators and colleagues can facilitate to safeguard job related stress and turnover.

Schaack, Donovan, Adejumo and Ortega (2022) analyzed factors that molded teachers' turnover and retention choices and noticed teachers' causes for resigning or retaining

were intricate such as workplace environment and domestic factors. Teachers who remained inclined to continue the same job obstructions as those who resigned, explicitly a mismatch between the resources and demands of job or position, but those who retained were more eager to engross innovatively in resolving workstation glitches. Teachers who retained placed superior value on professional growth and development prospects than teachers who resigned, and these crucial job rewards resulted into job retention choices. Teachers who resigned often felt that deficiency of crucial job related facilities and resources demoralized their competencies for being an efficient teacher and regarded the psychosocial workplace setting less favorably than teachers who retained.

Salma (2021) studied the factors affecting teachers' resigning in private schools in district Gujrat, Pakistan. The findings showed that very high percentage of teachers leave private schools before completing five years and similarly, more than half of private school teachers intend to leave within the first five years. The study also reported many work-related factors of turnover including, lack of support, heavy workload, poor work conditions, student issues, low salaries and lack of monetary rewards and incentives.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study was quantitative and survey type in nature. Survey type research is usually used to collect data from large population and make generalization about the results. The population of this research study comprised of those teachers who resigned from some ECE schools and were staying in the existing schools from the last one year. The selected schools for this study were private schools of early childhood level of education located in the urban areas. The sample of this study was 189 teachers who were teaching to children of early grades in private

schools. These teachers were randomly selected from 500 teachers of ECE schools. A questionnaire was developed after thorough review of literature. It was on five-point Likert scale and was used as an instrument of research for data collection. The validity and reliability of the instrument was ensured through expert opinion and pilot testing. The data were collected

through questionnaire from the sampled teachers by the researcher. Data were analyzed in the light of the objectives of the research. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysis through SPSS.

Results

Table 1: Ranking of factors influencing teachers' resigning from early grade schools

S #	Variables	Mean	SD	Rank Order
1.	Working Environment of School	2.92	1.37	6 th
2.	Autonomy of Teachers	3.22	1.31	4 th
3.	Professional Development	3.40	1.36	1 st
4.	Incentives and Compensation	3.28	1.29	2 nd
5.	Workload of Teachers	3.23	1.36	3 rd
6.	Evaluation Criteria	3.21	1.43	5 th

Table 1 shows the ranking of the factors which influence resigning of teachers from early grade schools. The values of the table indicate that professional development is 1st in ranking which influence the quitting of teachers from early grade schools while incentives and compensation is the 2nd in ranking influencing the resigning of teachers from schools at early childhood education. Similarly, workload of teachers in the early schools is the 3rd ranked factor which cause leaving of school of early

grades teachers. Furthermore, this table depicts that autonomy of teachers, evaluation criteria of teacher's performance and school environment are ranked as 4th, 5th and 6th in order which influencing the resigning of teachers from early grade schools. So, it is concluded from the analysis of the above table that professional development, incentives and compensation and workload are the most influencing factors which contribute towards resigning of teachers from early grade schools.

Table 2: Relationship of the factors contributing to resigning of the early grade teachers

	Working Environment of School	Autonomy of Teacher	Professional Development	Incentives and Compensation	Workload of Teachers	Evaluation criteria
Working Environment of School	1					
Autonomy of Teacher	.094	1				

Prof. Development	-.108	.415**	1			
Incentives and Compensation	.030	.288**	.170*	1		
Workload of Teachers	.198**	.107	-.001	.518**	1	
Evaluation criteria	-.150*	.096	.148*	-.214**	.062	1

Table 2 shows the status of correlation of different factors which contribute to resigning of early grade teachers from school. Moreover, the table 2 indicate that workload of teachers and incentives/compensation are highly correlate factors with ($r=.518$) towards contribution of resigning of teachers from early grade schools. While professional development and teachers' autonomy ($r=.415$) also found the major contributing factors towards quitting of early grade teachers from school. Similarly, compensation and teachers' autonomy were found the correlate factors ($r=.288$) which are contributing to quitting of teachers from school. The table also shows that workload and school environment are also correlate factors influencing the resigning of teachers from early grade schools with value ($r=.198$). The analysis further shows that compensation and criteria of evaluation have not any correlation with each other ($r= -.214$) which contribute to teachers' resigning while school environment and criteria for evaluation are also negatively correlate with each other ($r= -.150$) as contributing factors towards resigning of early grade teachers from school. Furthermore, the table shows that professional development and work environment are also negatively correlated factors in contribution of teachers' resigning from school. So, null hypothesis is rejected as the factors have correlation with each other but in case of evaluation criteria and workplace environment and compensation it is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that workload of teachers, incentives and

compensation given by school to teachers and autonomy of teachers which is given to teachers in school are the major contributing factors towards resigning of early grade teachers from school while workload and environment at workplace are the moderate factors contributing to resigning of teachers from early grade schools.

Discussion

Findings of this study indicated that professional development was the most influential factor contributing to teachers' resigning from early grade schools while incentives & compensation was the second and workload of teachers was the third most ranked factor in this aspect. Hence, this finding has supported earlier research study conducted by Achieng (2018) who viewed that workload as the most significant aspect prompting teachers' judgment to leave the profession. Furthermore, results have also showed that autonomy of teachers, evaluation criteria of teacher's performance and school environment were ranked as least influential factors in order which influence the resigning of teachers from early grade schools.

McMullen, Lee, McCormick and Choi (2020) reported that among the factors of teachers' resigning from school included less payment, lack of benefits and poor work environments. Thus, results of this study are also aligned with the results of McMullen et al, (2020). Likewise, Barford and Whelton (2010) identified institutional factors predictive of

teachers' resigning from schools such as; excessive workload, role uncertainty, lack of collegial collaborations and poor compensation. However, features of the institution were also one of the most imperative factors in defining the possibility for teachers' resigning from schools. Schaack, Donovan, Adejumo and Ortega (2022) analyzed factors or causes of teachers' leaving or staying were intricate and took into consideration workplace and family factors. Owing to the local context, Salma (2021) studied the factors affecting teachers' resigning in private schools in district Gujrat, Pakistan. The study also reported many work-related factors including, lack of support, heavy workload, poor work conditions, student issues, low salaries, lack of monetary rewards and incentives. Hence, it can be stated that results of this study are also in line with the findings of earlier researches.

Conclusion

Retaining the teachers at early grade schools is the most important aspect of good administration of any ECE school. The research concluded that the teachers at early childhood schools resign earlier as the school does not provide opportunities for grooming the teachers professionally. The workload of the teachers is also one of the factors which compel the teachers for early resign from school. Incentives and compensation policies of schools plays significant role to attract good workforce towards ECE schools. This research study concluded those private schools are not providing proper incentives and compensations to the teachers which led them to resign from schools earlier. Furthermore, it is also concluded that there is no autonomy for teachers say in private schools as well as there is a lack of proper evaluation criteria through which the teachers can be evaluated effectively for the improvement of their performance. The study also highlighted the

importance of a good working environment for the teachers which may stop the teachers' resigning from early grade schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, it is recommended that the private schools may establish a proper system of teachers' training in schools which provide opportunities of professional development to their teachers, and it may help in retaining of teachers in the schools. It is also recommended that the teachers workload may be reduced, and autonomy may be provided to teachers to participate in decision making activities related to teaching learning process. Furthermore, the school administration may improve their evaluation criteria used for teachers' performance and may provide positive feedback to their teachers without any biased approach.

References

1. Achieng, O. J. (2018). Influence of School Environment on Teacher Retention in Early Childhood Development Centres in Nyatike, Migori County, Kenya (Master Thesis in Early Childhood Studies) Kenyatta University.
2. Aragon, S. (2016). Teacher shortages: What we know. Education Commission of the States, Retrieved June 3, 2017 from <http://files.eric.edu.gov/fulltext/ED565893.pdf>
3. Barford, S., & Whelton, W. (2010) Understanding burnout in child and youth care workers. *Child Youth Care Forum*, 39, 271-286.
4. Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about

- it. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
5. Cassidy, D. J., Lower, J. K., Kinter-Duffy, V. L., Hegde, A. V., & Shim, J. (2011). The day-to-day reality of teacher turnover in preschool classrooms: An analysis of classroom context and teacher, director, and parent perspectives. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 25(1), 1-23. doi:10.1080/02568543.2011.533118
 6. Collins, T. (2019). Attracting and retaining teachers in rural areas. Charlestown, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural and Small Schools.
 7. Hammer, P., Hughes, G., McClure, C., Reeves, C., & Salgado, D. (2015). Rural teacher recruitment and retention practices: A review of the research literature, national survey, of rural superintendents, and case studies of programs in Virginia. *Appalachia Educational Laboratory of Edvantia*, 1, 1-83.
 8. Hammerness, K. (2013). When context has content: A case study of new teacher induction in the University of Chicago's urban teacher education program. *Urban Education*, 48(4), 557-584. doi:10.1177/0042085912456848
 9. Horng, E. L. (2009). Teacher tradeoffs: Disentangling teachers' preferences for working conditions and student demographics. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46, 690-717. doi:10.3102/0002831208329599
 10. IOM (Institute of Medicine) & NRC (National Research Council). (2015). Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying framework. The National Academies Press
 11. Jeon, L., Buettner, K., Grant, A. (2017). Early childhood teachers' psychological well-being: Exploring potential predictors of depression, stress, and emotional exhaustion. *Early Education and Development*, 29(1), 53-69.
 12. Kagan, L., & Roth, L. (2017). Transforming early childhood systems for future generations: Obligations and opportunities. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 49(2), 137-154.
 13. Markowitz, A. J. (2019). Within-Year Teacher Turnover in Head Start and Children's School Readiness. Working paper Retrieved from https://curry.virginia.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/epw/70_Teacher_Turnover_in_Head_Start.pdf
 14. McKay, A. B. (2019). Identifiable Factors that Influence Teacher Retention in Four Title I Middle Schools: A Multiple-Case Study (Doctoral Dissertation), Gardner-Webb University School of Education.
 15. McMullen, M., Lee, M., McCormick, K. & Choi, J. (2020). Early childhood professional wellbeing as a predictor of the risk of turnover in child care: A matter of quality. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 34(3), 331-345.
 16. Papay, J. P., Bacher-Hicks, A., Page, L. C., & Marinell, W. H. (2017). The challenge of teacher retention in urban schools: Evidence of variation from a cross-site analysis. *Educational Researcher*, 46(8), 434-448.
 17. Phillips, D., Austin, L., & Whitebook, M. (2016). The early care and education workforce. *The Future of Children*, 26(2). Retrieved October 18, 2020, from www.futureofchildren.org
 18. Salma, N. (2021). A study of factors influencing teacher turnover in private schools in district Gujrat, Pakistan (Doctoral Thesis), University of the West of Scotland.

19. Schaack, D. D., Donovan, C.V., Adejumo, T., & Ortega, M. (2022). To Stay or to Leave: Factors Shaping Early Childhood Teachers' Turnover and Retention Decisions. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 36(2), 327-345.
20. Smethem, L. (2007). Retention and intention in teaching careers: will the new generation stay? *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*, 13(5), 465-480.
21. Tornuk, N., & Gunes, D. (2020) Perception of professional support as a predictor of burnout level of pre-school teachers. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 12, 105-114.
22. Totenhagen, C. J., Hawkins, S. A., Casper, D. M., Bosch, L. A., Hawkey, K. R., & Borden, L. M. (2016). Retaining early childhood education workers: A review of the empirical literature. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 30(4), 585-599. doi:10.1080/02568543.2016.1214652