

**INVESTIGATION OF DOCUMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S WORK AT
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION LEVEL IN MOUNTAINOUS REGION OF
PAKISTAN**

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Abstract

Documentation of student's work makes them valued thus teaching and learning become more productive. Documenting student's learning encourages pupils to raise their skills, make them able to trace their learning and also help their parents to show more concern about their child's development. The recent study focuses on investigation of student's work at early childhood education level district lower Chitral of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The main objective of the study was Exploration of documentation of students' work at early childhood education level. The research was of quantitative survey design, where quantitative data were collected and analyzed through SPSS. The population of the study was early childhood education teachers in district lower Chitral. Quantitative data was collected through 5-point Likert scale containing, 45 items. The total population was 155 teachers and census data collection were used to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire for quantitative data collection was validated by subject experts and the reliability was checked through Cronbach's alpha test which was 0.935. It was found that documentation of students' work is practiced in early childhood education centers; however, the average mean score shows less practical documentation of students' work. It was concluded that the process of documentation of student's work is not practiced up to the mark in the area. The study suggested training the existing teachers in the area of documentation of student's work and early childhood education teacher's training institutes are suggested to include documentation of students' work in their curriculum.

Key words: Documentation, Children's work, Early Childhood Education.

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Introduction

Early childhood education starts from birth till the age of eight, which is marked as an important and diverse area. During these years, different education settings with diverse kind of care are experienced by the children. (Hashmii & Mubasher, 2020). It is the early childhood education which prepares a child with attitude and skills, helpful for the child's later school education. In the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of a child, the early childhood education plays a vital role (UNISEF, 2011).

The process of assessment in early childhood education is different from the assessment at higher age level which is due to the fact that the developing children not only read or write but also face different challenges that influence the choice of measurement strategy (Wortham, 2014).

According to SNC ECCE (2020) formal test are not perfect for the measurement of a child's abilities at early childhood level. Many students do not perform well in a situation where they have to complete a specific task or to answer some specific questions that they may not be familiar with the testing process, they may be frightened, shy in testing situation or they may be bored and unwell on that specific day. Due to these reasons the child may not perform well on a test and teachers attach negative remarks to a child which can be harmful for the child's development.

The progress of a child should be measured by the teacher through ongoing observation and the progress of a child should be compared to his/her own previous level of development. Strongly recommended methods for child assessment are record keeping, Check list of child's progress and Portfolio of children work. The results of such evaluation of a child's progress should be used to plan the future instructional practices for ECE. According to Pettersson (2013) in early childhood education center, mainly two types of documentation are used i.e Reggio Emilia inspired pedagogical documentation and portfolio documentation.

There are different theoretical foundations for the understanding of pedagogical documentation and portfolio documentation which were inspired by Reggio Emilia. The following quotations explain this:

There are many possibilities to develop pedagogical documentation from which the most important one is making practices of observing children through many forms of documentation, recorded or written notes, the work fashioned by children's, photograph or videos.

It necessitates a collaborative and inclusive process of interpretation, assessment, and critique that entails engaging in dialogue and constructive debates, actively listening, and engaging in reflection. Through these interactions, comprehension is enriched, and

judgments are collaboratively constructed (Moss & Dahlberg, 2008). A portfolio comprises a compilation of materials that commemorate the child. This collection encompasses various artifacts, documentation, and reflections suitable for young children, all of which provide proof of their comprehension and capabilities (Seitz, 2008).

The above said quotations show both similarities and differences. Similarities can be found in the nature of documentation and the materials that it contains, but keeping views on children we find differences. Children are regarded as an active participant according to the Reggio Emilia inspired approach. Where documentation is made in cooperation with children participation, while as portfolio approach stresses on the developmental view of a child where more stresses is given on learning and developmental aspects. These differences are found while observing a child, make a different impact on his/ her participation

A child's relationship with his/her teacher is considered as one of the basic aspects of teaching (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). According to Knauf (2020) the documentation is practiced in early childhood education centers throughout the globe to measure the learning and development of learners. The increasing importance of early childhood education in recent era led to an enhanced desire to observe and record the educational progress of early learners in a systematic way. Documentation includes sample of a child's performance at various stages of perfection, Photograph showing work and comments written by the teachers or other adults working with the, transcription of children discussion, comments and explanation of intentions about the activities and comments made by the parents (Seitz, 2008). Documentation of student's work occupies an integral part in education as it helps parents and educators to learn about the curriculum and also their child's performance is known to them. The exchange of information between parents and teachers proves to be an effective action where student's behaviour, skills and other aspects are discussed and acknowledged (Peeter & Formasinho, 2019).

A child exhibits hundred ways to express himself and learns through sharing thoughts, drawings, paintings and even through movements.

Documentation is defined as record of child's development on different areas, where teacher's comments and parent's involvement play key role. It is used as a tool to recognize children's way of learning and the way adults read children learning. It acts as a historical record of past events and provides with ideas for future experiences. The development of children, their responses to different learning input and the barriers and obstacles they face are the main points of concern while making documentation. Simply documentation helps to grasp child's learning, his current thinking and pays ways to new strategies that provides assistance while reaching next steps.

According to SNC (2020) during the entire academic year teachers should have the record of student's progress, they must involve themselves in evaluating student's

performance, behavior, skills etc. through different strategies and methods. It is necessary that student's progress should be compared and analyzed according to her/ his own previous record; comparison should not be made with any other student. This helps the teachers to frame planning for future EECE classes. Observation is a daily process, a teacher observes his/her students throughout the day while engaging them in different activities and all the progress of the child should be recorded, Therefore the researcher has proposed the area to investigate and explain the documentation of students work.

Objectives of study

- To explore the documentation of children's work at Early childhood education level in district Chitral
- To analyze the documentation of children's work documented by early childhood education teachers for different types of documentation.

Research question

Following were the research questions to guide the research process;

- Does documentation exist in early childhood education centers of District lower Chitral of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?
- Which type of documentation is mostly used by early childhood education teachers in District lower Chitral of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

Assessment and teaching are interlinked as the former informs teaching and considered as integral part of early childhood education (Lynn, Wurtz, & Shepard, 1998). Assessment refers to the practice of gathering evidence about child, organizing the collected information and interpretation to make decision about child learning and development (Sousa, 2019). Observation is a traditional tool, used in assessing childhood education. There exist pioneers of education that advocated the process of watching, listening and reflecting on children deeds and words. If we come to current era different theories have been developed to describe our thinking about early learning (Fleer, 2002). Recently many perspectives, specially related to early learning have been emerged like ecological perspective, socio cultural perspective and the activity theory perspective. The later one activity theory perspective have gets distinctive place. In all these perspectives the main emphasized factors are learning and assessment (Black & Wiliam, 2006).

It is a common practice from decades that the progress of a child in early childhood education is documented by the ECE teachers. The process of documentation is mainly associated with the displaying children's art work or posting photograph of field visit etc,

which are valuable for capturing a particular moment in time or reconstructing a specific event (Paananen & Lipponen, 2016).

The extensiveness and depth of children's work at early childhood education level can be well projected by documentation (Helm & Katz, 2011). The documentation can be used to point out how a child develops and respond to the learning opportunities and threats they face. Reflective and democratic pedagogy is exercised through documentation (Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence 2007). Through documentation the pedagogical skills of teachers can be improved. In the same way through documentation the behaviour and learning style and social interaction of child can be studied, (Venninen & Leinonen, 2012).

It seems that there is a prevalent, sometimes unquestioned conversation in research and preschool approaches over the use of documentation as a tool to understand preschool quality and children's learning (Alvestad & Sheridan, 2015). Preschool documentation research appears to share many characteristics with the Reggio Emilia approach. Documentation has multiple purposes, one technique to help a child recall, consider, and explore prior knowledge of events, learning content, and particular themes and scenarios is to pay attention to their expressions and activities. Giving teacher's knowledge on how their students are learning and how they comprehend various subjects, activities, and objects is another. A third objective involves furnishing parents, as well as society at large, with comprehensive insights into the preschool and its standards of excellence (Alaçam & Olgan, 2021). Teachers' critical reflection and group learning processes are said to be greatly aided by the documentation of students' learning. The ethical perspective of teachers' pedagogical activity is also included in these collective learning processes, and documentation is maintained to show how teachers and students jointly examine various learning objects (Emilson & Pramling, 2014). Documentation is utilized more frequently in everyday situation than evaluation (Sheridan, Williams, & Sandberg, 2012). A study from Sweden underscores the perspectives of preschool teachers regarding documentation. In this context, documentation was observed to serve a dual purpose: as a tool to understand the child better and as a method to showcase and validate the competence and efforts of teachers themselves (Schul, 2015).

Research studies have discovered the potential of educational documentation relative to diverse themes, such as narratives of learning (Moss & Dahlberg, 2008). Some practical data points to the paybacks of documentation as an assessment device and as an instrument for creating learner identities in early childhood sceneries (Carr, 2005). According to Picchio (2014) documentation helps to grasp child's learning, his current thinking and pay ways to new strategies that provide assistance while reaching next step. Documenting students work has a positive impact on the teacher's pedagogical skills and

how they made ECE visible for children's and parents (Rintakorpi 2016). According to (MacDonald, 2007) documentation is used as a tool where childhood pedagogical skills and practice are developed.

Formal examination system could not be regarded as an effective method to calculate the abilities of young learners. It creates fear among children of ECE that avoid them to express themselves and to response in according to their skills and abilities (Malik & Khalid, 2021).

The United Nations convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC) designated prominent position to a child and declared him a capable and competent citizen, possessed the quality of decision making and to affect his learning in a positive manner (Knauf, 2017). Documentation, as defined by Rinaldi (2014) as one of the processes through which pedagogical work is noted, recorded, interpreted to make it visible and relatable. Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, (1999) distinguishes it from mere observation and describes it as a process of analyzing and decision-making advocating. Dahlberg (1999) explained it a content making process where children's work is recorded and interpreted, keeping teacher, child and the parents as central roles.

Different countries like Sweden, Finland, Australia and England are exercising documentation in their early childhood institution. It has been found that each possess its own level & method of practices as there find carnations in context, educational philosophy etc. (Rintakorpi 2016; Pannanen & Lipponen, 2018;). Children's participation faces several hurdles and among them rules set by adults, lack of experienced teaching methodologies and daily schedules are distinguished one (Paananen & Lipponen, 2016).

Documentation offers various perspectives and positions children & teachers as co- constructors of knowledge; this is what gives a chance to children to participator in a more meaning full way (Paananen & Lipponen, 2016). MacDonald (2007) in one of his studies explained how documentation is useful for both teachers and parents. He introduces research in five kindergarten classrooms in British Colombia Canada to enhanced comprehend the benefits and defies as fragment of a movement headed for formative assessment. Teachers shared their experience and seem satisfied from documentation as they think it a source of getting information about children & to reflect that information to a better way, they further emphasized that teachers should use pedagogical documentation as a prospect to boost self-assessment and patrician assessment, (Macdonald,2007)

Buldu (2010) also introduce the same study on 141 kindergartens students along with 6 teachers and 67 parents in united states of emirates to infer how pedagogical documentation affect learning process. Through different sources I.e. questionnaire, interview etc data were collected and four points were recommended as its outcome.

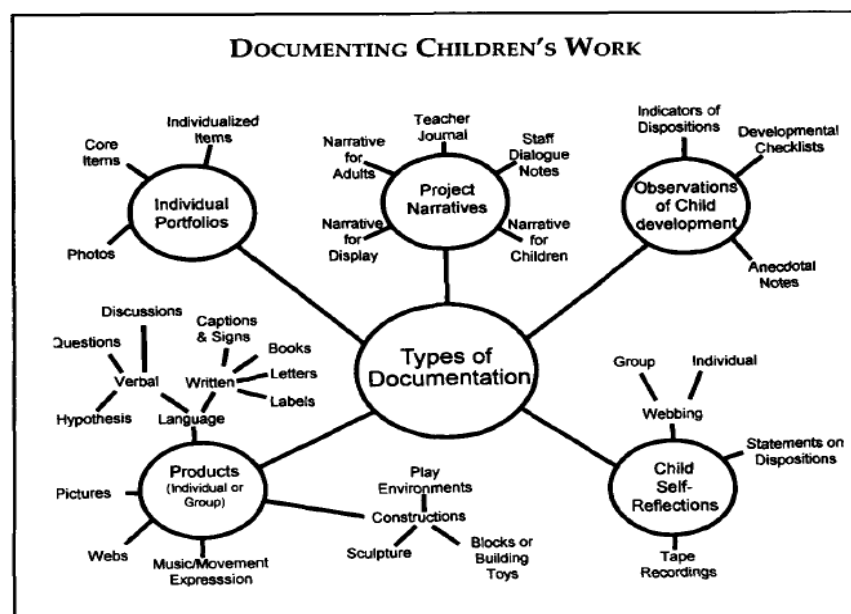
- 1: - Documentation talks about teacher instruction.
- 2: - self-reflection is encouraged
- 3: - Parents are informed about their children
- 4: - It gives a path way towards professional learning

Thus, it can be suggested through the above studies that parent's students & teachers are benefited through pedagogical documentation. It helps or encourages student to take an active part in both learning & assessment, students' self-awareness is facilitated through documentation as it provides a chance for self-reflection.

It is one of the significances of documentation that both children and teachers are known about what they have learnt and how they have been delivered. Indeed, documentation provides such environment where one is engaged in analyzing himself, other and the process a greater insight on the thinking process is achieved (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). Documentation is of great importance for parents as there exist many preschool children who are unable to tell their parents about their day-to-day school tasks and experiences, through documentation parents are made known about their children's practices at school (Gandini & Edwards, 2001). It is one of the important assistances of documentation that it helps teachers to know about the process of teaching, Learning and for this purpose it is referred as listening which makes the teachers able to formulate questions. Other person points of views are given respect & valued and mutual differences are welcomed (Edwards & Gandini, 1998). Documentation helps to grasp Childs learning, his current thinking and also pay ways to new strategies that provides assistance while reaching to next steps (Bowne, 2010). When documentation is carried out through generation stories about children it is regarded as the best method of documentation when the narration is done about young children, they not only concern with their development rather they are perceived as a citizen of society and co constructors of culture (Paananen & Lipponen, 2016). Individual portfolios, display panels etc. provide visible evidence of learning to children, teachers and parents, they recognize the process of learning and take them historical records of past events from where ideas about future can be achieved and recognized (Katz & Chard , 1996). Documentation contributes to the quality of early childhood education by enhancing child learning, providing basis for teachers continuous planning and assessing the child development (Paananen & Lipponen, 2016). Documentation has worldwide importance and around the world in the different educational environments i.e., preschool and elementary level, it is being exercised (Buldu, 2010). The programs for teacher's preparation are also used documentation. Goodfellow (2004) claimed it is a process that facilitates teachers to develop their professional

portfolios and helps to establish inquiry-based learning in schools. Elden, Aras (2024) and Eckhoff (2024) highlight that ECD teachers differ significantly in their documentation practices, shaped by their professional understanding and pedagogical goals. these variations reflect how teachers value documentation types differently depending on their classroom context and instructional priorities.

Documentation of a child's work is a valuable skill that a teacher can learn. Most of the teachers have some familiarity with this process and can develop documentation according to their need and perception (Helm, Beneke, & Steinheimer, 2012). The professional development team of Valaska Hinton early childhood education center in Peoria has developed a documentation web which explain different types of documentation. According to this web documentation can be done by the following ways.



Source: Helm (2012)

According to (Sisson & Whittington, 2017) during the process of documentation, some of the hurdles faced/experienced by the teachers are:

- a. Making time for documentation
- b. Deciding what forms of documentation to use
- c. Deciding what to document and when
- d. Considering how to involve families in pedagogical documentation

It can be concluded that documentation play a key role in the holistic development of a child and development of pedagogical skills of teachers, beside it, there exists different forms of documentation along with different methods of implementation.

Research Methodology

The research was quantitative in nature and was following survey design. It was conducted in 40 ECD centers of District lower Chitral of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Data was collected from 155 teachers through questionnaire. After thorough review of the literature on the topic of documentation, constructs were identified and on the basis of identified construct 45 items questionnaire was developed. The format of questionnaire was 5-point Likert scale. The developed questionnaire was presented to three experts in the field of education. The experts were from early childhood and elementary teacher education department. The questionnaire was improved according to the feedback given by the experts. The items were aligned to the research objectives and questions in light of the suggestions of the experts. Reliability of instrument was determined through pilot testing before administration to the participants. Twenty teachers were participated in pilot testing. The reliability of the instrument was tested through Cronbach's Alpha which was recorded as 0.935. The researcher personally visited all the sampled school for the collection of data, and the collected data was analyzed through SPSS.

Population and sampling

The population for this study were all the teachers, teaching at ECE level in private schools of district lower Chitral of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In district lower Chitral out of 76 private schools only 40 private schools are providing ECD classes with teacher strength of 155. Thus these 155 teachers working in 40 privately managed schools of District lower Chitral were the target population for this research study. According to Gay, Mills, & Airasian (2012) for the quantitative data if the population size is smaller say $N = 100 - 150$ there is little point in sampling; survey the entire population and according to Creswell (2014) the sample size should be sufficient for the statistical analysis the researcher plan to use, census is the collection of data from entire population to gather accurate information about the phenomenon under study (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022), therefore the whole population of 155 teachers were approached for the collection of data.

Results

The research was conducted on 155 early childhood education teachers in the target area. The demographic information of the research participants are shown in the following table.

Table 1.

Demographic information of the research participants

	SSC	FA/FSc	BA/BSc	MA/MSc	B.Ed	M.Ed	CT	PST	Nil
Frequency	2	9	38	106	46	22	24	30	33
Percentage	1.3	5.8	24.5	68.4	29.7	14.2	15.5	19.4	21.3

Out of 155 participants 106 were with the highest academic qualification of M.A/MSc while only 02 participants were having the lowest qualification of SSC. 46 were having B. Ed degree, 22 M.Ed degree holders, CT and PTC certificate holders were 24 and 30 respectively while 33 participants were those who had no any professional degree.

The descriptive analysis of all the 45 statements of the questionnaire as a whole and with respect to the types of documentation as per mean score, standard deviation score, frequencies and percentage is given below.

Table 2.

Mean and standard deviations of teacher's responses for types of documentation of students work

S.No	Type of documentation	Mean	Standard deviation
1	Project Narrative	2.44	1.29
2	Individual portfolio	2.96	1.46
3	Observation of child development	2.23	1.24
4	Product (Individual/Group)	2.84	1.35
5	Child self-reflection	1.95	.899

Table 2 shows the values of mean and standard deviations for the five different types of documentation of students work at early childhood development level. The table shows high mean value for individual portfolio and product (Individual/Group) which are 2.96 and 2.84 respectively, while the least mean value is of child's self-reflection and Observation of Child development which are 1.95 and 2.23 respectively. This indicates that individual portfolio and Product (Individual/Group) as types of documentation of student's work are mostly focused by the teachers at early childhood education level while

child self-reflection and observation of child development types of documentation of student's work are least focused by the teachers, teaching at early childhood education level.

Table 3.

ANOVA test statistic for teacher's responses for types of documentation of students work

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df ^a	Mean Square	F ^b	P-value
Between Groups	109.26	4	27.315	17.149	0.0000
Within Groups	1226.45	770	1.592		
Total	1335.72	774			

^aDegrees of freedom

^bF-statistic

From the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) technique, the above table shows that the results were highly significant since the p-value is 0.0000, i.e., the documentation of children's work by ECD teachers is significant in all types of documentation.

Table 4.

Test statistic for teacher's responses for types of documentation of students work (Post-Hoc Test)

Pair	Diff: statistics	95%CI	p- value
Project Narrative Vs Individual portfolio	0.5200	0.1282 to 0.9118	p=0.0028 ^a
Project Narrative Vs Observation of Child development	0.2100	-0.6018 to 0.1818	p=0.5857
Project Narrative Vs Product (Group/Individual)	0.4000	0.0082 to 0.7918	p=0.0427
Project Narrative Vs Child self-reflection	0.4900	-0.8818 to 0.0982	p=0.0059
Individual portfolio vs Observation of Child development	0.7300	-1.1218 to 0.3382	p=0.0000
Individual portfolio vs Product (Group/Individual)	0.1200	-0.5118 to 0.2718	p=0.9190
Individual portfolio vs Child self-reflection	1.0100	-1.4018 to 0.6182	p=0.0000

Observation of Child development vs Product (Group/Individual)	0.6100	0.2182 to 1.0018	p=0.0002
Observation of Child development vs Child self-reflection	0.2800	-0.6718 to 0.1118	p=0.2902
Product (Group/Individual) vs Child self-reflection	-0.8900	-1.2818 to 0.4982	p=0.0000

^a Bold letter are significant

From ANOVA test, the results showed an overall significance in all type of documentation, however, for pair-wise comparison of significance among the type of documentation, a post-hoc test was carried out. From the post-hoc test, it was observed that the project narrative documentation has significant difference with individual portfolio type documentation; product (Individual/Group) and child self-reflection type of documentation whereas no significance difference exists with individual portfolio documentation type. Further, the result showed that the individual type of documentation has significant difference with all type of documentation except product type documentation. Also, no significant difference exists between observation of child development and product documentation, and between individual portfolio and product (individual/group).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the documentation of student's work at early childhood education level in district lower Chitral of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Quantitative data were collected through questionnaire for research objectives 1 and 2 as well as research questions 1 and 2 which were validated through qualitative data. Quantitative data were analyzed through SPSS. Findings were made on the basis of data analysis and were presented in the preceding section. In the following lines the findings are compared with previous research studies.

The first objective of the study was related to the examination of documentation of student's work at early childhood education level and it was found that documentation of student's work at early childhood education level is partially carried out by teachers in the target area, this suggests that teachers might either be unaware of the process of documentation, or are not guided from the school administration. The previous studies showed that the process of documentation is beneficial from multiple sides: Bulda (2010) says that documentation tells us about the instruction, self-reflection, encouraged provides a pathway towards professional learning and aware parents about their children. According to Rintakorpi (2016) documentation enables a child competent, capable and decision maker in his/her own education. Knauf (2015) explains the usage of documentation and narrates

that student's learning becomes visible not only to the teachers, but also parents who become aware of the child's performance and learning growth. Black and Wiliam (2006) say that documentation is not a simple one, rather a complex process specially in preschool setting. Sission and Wilington (2017) also discussed some challenges in the documentation, which are: making time for documentation, deciding what form of documentation to use, what to document & when to document and how to involve parents in documentation process.

According to the findings drawn from the data individual portfolio is mostly focused and child self-reflection is least focused, as per Seitz and Bartholomew (2008) individual portfolio includes a variety of artifacts that are developmentally appropriate for young children and include evidence of their understanding and ability. This finding also strengthens the Pettersson (2013) finding that portfolio documentation is mostly used in early childhood education centers. As per Knauf (2015) in German early childhood education centers portfolio documentation is widely focused to support individuals. The ANOVA results shows a significant difference in how teachers perceive various documentation methods. This supports findings by Eckhoff (2024) who noted that teachers value documentation differently based on whether it reflects children's agency or adult driven purpose. Similarly, Elden and Aras (2024) highlighted that teacher documentation choices are shaped by their professional understanding and classroom context.

Conclusion

From the finding of the present study, it was concluded that the process of documentation of student's work exist in early childhood education centers in District lower Chitral of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but the process is not being carried out whole heartedly. The teachers are mainly inclined towards a specific type of documentation while other are neglected. Government and privately managed early childhood education centers are suggested to make ensure that documentation process is carried out effectively; teacher training institutes are suggested to incorporate documentation in their curriculum, Proper in-service trainings are suggested for teachers, teaching at early childhood education level in the area of documentation of students work to lay a strong foundation of early childhood education. the findings from ANOVA analysis, supported by literature, concludes that teachers' perceptions of documentation methods are not uniform but are influenced by pedagogical and contextual factors.

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