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In-service Trainings in Pakistani Private English Medium Schools: EFL Teachers' Needs

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Abstract
Pre-service trainings for EFL teachers may not be sufficient to equip language teachers with necessary pedagogical skills to meet the latest teaching challenges. This research study aims at investigating Pakistani private English medium schools' EFL teachers' needs on in-service training. To achieve this aim, mix- method approach has been adopted to carry out this research study.74 EFL teachers participated in this study who filled online survey questionnaire, and five of them were interviewed through semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative data. The questionnaire developed by Birjandi and Hesari (2010) has been adopted and necessary changes have been made according to the need of study. The study has highlighted EFL teachers' important needs about in-service training. This study has found that the consideration of EFL teachers' needs can be very useful to make future in-service training more constructive. It explores EFL teachers' needs related to only three areas about in-service training such as content, activities, and trainers. Future research can be conducted to identify EFL school teachers 'needs about in-service training in private and public schools together. It can also be carried out to identify EFL school teachers' needs in terms of other areas of in-service training such as venue of training, the role of administrators, duration of training, curriculum, needs of urban and rural teachers.
Keywords: In-service training, EFL teacher, English medium school, Content, Activity, Trainer.

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Introduction:

Pakistan, a densely populated country, is among the important countries of South Asia. Within its 881,913 square kilometers area of land, it accommodates about 225.2 million people. Pakistan is an underdeveloped country whose per capita income has been recorded at 1168.34 US Dollars in 2020. According to the World Bank report, Pakistan spends about 2 percent of its annual budget on education which may not seem sufficient to equip the education sector with the latest technology and adopt the changes taking place in the world of education. Teachers' professional development is very vital for the growth and development of education as they are considered to have a central role, with other factors, in educational system since the success of the system largely depends on them (Adey et al, 2004; Day, 1999). With many other factors, teachers' training is the major factor that plays its part in imparting quality education. Therefore, in-service training for EFL teachers becomes necessary to keep them up to date.

In-service training of the teachers refers to the professional development during service. Mohan (2011) describes it in the following words "It is a supplementary, additional training, which must be given in the teachers' spare time or in time made free by the school authorities" p. 92. The aim of an in-service training program is to improve the quality of teaching through bringing improvement in teachers' knowledge and sharpening their skills (Hustler, McNamara, Jarvis, Londra & Campbell, 2003), developing positive attitude (Joyce& Showers, 2002), and making them capable to deal with the change (Fullan, 2001).

In-service trainings and teachers need have a deep relation. The previous literature is full of the studies which underline the importance of in-service trainings and teachers' needs to be incorporated to make these training sessions

constructive and attractive for teachers to attend. As Mede & Isık (2016) highlighted the importance of teachers' needs on in-service training programs in the following words "INSET programs provide ongoing support for teachers' professional development, programs should be designed considering teachers' needs to provide positive changes in attitudes towards their profession." In this way, the in-service training programs can be made attractive and interesting if teachers' needs in terms of content, activities, and trainers are accommodated and made part of these training programs in this region of Pakistan.

On the practical side, the significance of this study might offer a very important explanation of private English medium schools' EFL teachers' needs to the current in-service training programs organized for these teachers. Most of the EFL teachers in these schools have articulated their needs which can be useful for future in-service training programs. This study is also significant as it highlights the needs of these EFL school teachers and hence, it underlines the importance of them being incorporated in in-service training programs to make these training sessions constructive and attractive for teachers to attend. As Mede & Isık (2016) highlighted the importance of teachers' needs on in-service training programs in the following words "INSET programs provide ongoing support for teachers' professional development, programs should be designed considering teachers' needs to provide positive changes in attitudes towards their profession." In this way, the in-service training programs can be made attractive and interesting if teachers' needs in terms of curriculum or content, activities, and trainers are accommodated and made part of these training programs in this region of Pakistan.

Understanding of the EFL teachers' needs is ignored, and thus makes in-service trainings unattractive, unconstructive and matter of non-seriousness. This study identifies the needs of the Pakistani EFL teachers with the purpose that future in-

service training programs must accommodate these highlighted needs to make them productive for EFL teachers. This background provides a rationale for this study to be carried out.

Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the study are to.

1. To know the in-service training needs in terms of content for Private English Medium Schools' EFL teachers.
2. To know the in-service training needs in terms of activities for Private English Medium Schools' EFL teachers.
3. To know the in-service training needs in terms of trainers for Private English Medium Schools' EFL teachers.

Research Questions:

1. What are the in-service training needs in terms of content for Private English Medium Schools' EFL teachers?
2. What are the in-service training needs in terms of activities for Private English Medium Schools' EFL teachers?
3. What are the in-service training needs in terms of trainers for Private English Medium Schools' EFL teachers?

Literature Review:

This study aims to investigate teachers' needs on in-service training in Pakistani private English medium schools. The primary focus of this section of the literature review is to critically discuss the previous literature on in-service training needs for EFL teachers and identify the gap.

Abbasi & Khosrowshahi (2018) asserted that the needs, perceptions, and expectations of teachers must be taken as a departure point and given preference in the design of INSET programs. They add that the one reason behind the failure of an in-service program is paying no attention to the needs, expectations, skills,

attitudes, and worries of participants in designing an in-service program. Mede & Isık (2016) emphasize that in-service education training programs should consider the needs of the teachers to provide them effective teaching skills, and strategies while designing programs. In a similar vein, Soodmand Afshar, Fazelimanie & Doosti (2017) argue that effective and successful PD depends on the identification of teachers' current PD needs through a careful needs analysis.

Mede & Isık (2016) have investigated the needs and preferences of primary English teachers. Their study aimed at identifying the INSET needs and preferences of EFL teachers, working in private and state schools, on the predefined concepts namely, the adaptation of teaching methods, emphasis on language skills, and utilization of technology, classroom environment, instructional practices, and material development through mixed design research methodology. They have shed light on the very important needs of the teachers which may be a useful addition to the previous literature in terms of improving INSET programs by making teachers' voices as part of the trainings. Among the important findings of the study related to the needs of English teachers include the efficient use of time during classroom activities, making students creative and unique and broadening the subject content according to the need of students, problem-solving, learning how to learn, and creative thinking, integration of technology in language classroom and organization of the classroom environment have been emphasized as important needs.

Zein (2017) has identified the needs of primary English language teachers in Indonesia on professional development. She has discovered the needs of EFL teachers in terms of language, pedagogy, and knowledge. Her study is very useful as it provides deep insight into investigating teachers' needs in terms of making PD useful, practical, and constructive. This study raises very important issues related to the needs of the language. The study reveals EFL teachers' deficiencies

in terms of accent and pronunciation, classroom management skills, lesson planning, integration of language skills, teaching material selection and adaptation and approaches to correct errors, and provision of feedback. This study is also important from the EFL teachers' needs perspectives on in-service teacher training. Teachers stress the need to have knowledge about learners particularly about learning styles and strategies and psychology, contextual knowledge such as dealing with an unusual situation, a knowledge base of teaching English to children, and knowledge about pedagogy.

The afore-mentioned literature review reveals that there is scarcity of research studies about in-service training programs for EFL teachers. All these studies have been conducted in public, private and, in some cases, in both sectors in various parts of the world. In Pakistan, there are two types of educational systems i.e. public and private. There is a further division of private schools into English medium schools for the elite class and poor. However, there is a need to conduct a study on English medium schools for the elite class to know EFL teachers' needs about in-service training programs. Identifying the needs of EFL teachers at these schools can be very important to make in-service trainings more constructive.

To conclude, it can safely be assumed, in the light of the afore-mentioned literature review, that the incorporation of EFL teachers' needs into in-service training programs can make them very productive.

Research Methodology:

This study aimed at identifying the needs of Pakistani EFL school teachers, working in private sector, on in-service trainings. To accomplish this task, a mixed methods design, having both quantitative and qualitative dimensions, was adopted. Cresswell (2003) stated that the mixed method is chosen because it draws on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative and minimizes the

limitations of both (p.297). By having both qualitative and quantitative data, the study gives a descriptive and statistical picture.

Instrument:

A questionnaire has comprised the initial stage of the data collection that informed the setting up of one-by-one interviews with the participants. A questionnaire developed by Birjandi and Hesari (2010) was adopted, and necessary changes were made according to the need of the present study. The questionnaire contains 32 items including four items on personal information and 28 items on EFL teachers' perceived needs. Qualitative data was collected from the five EFL teachers through one-by-one interviews for deeper understanding and to confirm the quantitative findings.

Population and Sampling:

The participants of this research are EFL teachers in Pakistani private English medium schools in Punjab, Pakistan where the medium of instruction is English. 74 EFL teachers who were working in private English medium schools have been made part of this study to collect data through a questionnaire. The convenient sampling technique was used to collect quantitative data because of the closure of the schools due to the spread of the pandemic COVID19. Another phase of the study was a qualitative one to have in-depth insight into the needs of the EFL school teachers in private English medium schools in Pakistan regarding the in-service training programs. Five teachers through purposeful sampling were selected for interviews.

Data collection:

Data collection was planned to be collected through Google forms through email and social networking site (Whatsapp). The EFL teachers at the schools were contacted in person and were requested to fill up the questionnaire. After that, respective EFL teachers from various private English medium schools in Punjab

were provided with questionnaire's link through WhatsApp and email. Face to face interviews have been conducted for qualitative data.

Data Analysis Procedure:

First, the quantitative and qualitative data was collected. SPSS software was run to analyze the quantitative data and for qualitative data thematic analysis was done. After that results and findings have been drawn. Based on the results of the study, discussion has been done and conclusions have been made.

Results and Discussion:

The questionnaire has three parts that inquire about the EFL school teachers' needs in terms of content, activities, and trainers of in-service training programs. This section helps to answer all three research questions set above. Descriptive statistics have been used to show the results of the study in the form of means, standard deviations, and percentages to answer research questions.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Responses to the Items Indicating the Participants' Needs in Terms of the Content of the In-service Training.

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	S.D %	D %	N %	A %	S.A %
1- I need to participate in an in-service training program to learn about the modern-day theories of language teaching and learning.	4.15	.715	0	2.7	10.8	55.4	31.1
2- I need to participate in in-service training programs to know how to deal with actual problems in the classroom.	4.20	.758	1.4	2.7	4.1	58.1	33.8
3- I need to participate in an in-service training program to improve my listening skills.	3.99	.986	2.7	9.5	4.1	54.1	29.7
4- I need to participate in in-service training to improve my speaking skills.	4.00	.951	1.4	8.1	12.2	45.9	32.4
5- I need to participate in an in-service training program to enhance my reading skills.	3.84	.993	1.4	12.2	13.5	47.3	25.7
6- I need to participate in an in-service training program to develop my writing skills.	3.91	.924	0	10.8	14.9	47.3	27
7- I need to participate in an in-service training program to develop my grammatical skills.	3.89	.915	0	10.8	14.9	48.6	25.7

8- I need to participate in an in-service training to learn about general teaching skills such as classroom management.	4.14	.728	0	2.7	12.2	54.1	31.1
9- I need to participate in an in-service training program to develop my lesson planning skills.	4.11	.786	2.7	0	9.5	59.5	28.4
10- EFL teachers' needs or needs analysis prior to training sessions is necessary for useful in-service training.	4.01	.712	0	1.4	20.3	54.1	24.3
11- I need to participate in in-service training to learn about the practical aspects of language because teachers are already familiar with basic theories of language teaching.	3.93	.816	1.4	5.4	12.2	60.8	20.3
12- I need to participate in in-service training programs to know about the use of modern-day methodologies of language teaching.	4.01	.712	1.4	1.4	12.2	64.9	20.3
13- I need to participate in an in-service training program to have opportunities to share and exchange my views and experience with other teachers.	4.22	.727	1.4	0	9.5	54.1	35.1
14- I need to participate in in-service training programs to develop myself as a confident and self-motivated EFL teacher.	4.19	.715	1.4	1.4	5.4	60.8	31.1
15- I need to participate in in-service training programs to enhance my computer skills and its integration into classroom practice.	3.92	.807	1.4	5.4	12.2	62.2	18.9
16- I need to participate in in-service training programs to learn about the handling of large-size classes.	4.07	.764	1.4	2.7	9.5	60.8	25.7
17- I need to participate in in-service training programs to develop my skills to deal with the students' individual differences.	4.09	.743	1.4	2.7	6.8	63.5	25.7

The first part of the questionnaire answers the first question of the research. The quantitative and qualitative data revealed that EFL teachers emphasized the need to include the practical type of material. It shows that most of the participants consider that the material for the in-service training should train EFL teachers in a way that trains them to deal with the actual problems of the classroom (M = 4.20). Similarly, the qualitative findings also suggest that actual classroom problems must be the focus of training material as four out of five participants have spoken in favor of it.

The research participants were also asked about their needs in terms of language and grammatical skills. If we look at the EFL teachers' needs in terms of the improvement of language and grammatical skills, they have also given a comprehensive verdict in favor of their need. However, the mean score of speaking skill (M= 4.00) is higher than other language and grammatical skills The qualitative data has offered similar findings as most of the interviewees stressed the need to include all four language and grammatical skills related stuff in training programs.

When the participants were asked about their needs related to the inclusion of material on lesson planning and classroom management, the quantitative and qualitative findings have revealed that a great majority considers the need to include material on lesson planning skills (M= 4.11).

The participants in the quantitative and qualitative phases have also been asked about their needs in terms of computer skills and their integration into classroom practice. The participants believe that this training should focus on the inclusion of material related to computer skills (M = 3.92) to equip teachers with the expertise to integrate these skills into classroom practices. In terms of needs, the mean score is higher which also makes it evident that EFL teachers consider computer skills and their integration into classroom practices very important.

EFL schoolteachers' participants were also asked about their needs related to the inclusion of material on handling large size classes (M = 4.07), students with individual differences (M = 4.09), lesson planning (M= 4.11). The quantitative findings suggest that a good portion of the teachers' population emphasize the need to include stuff on it. However, the mean scores of all three items are very higher which suggest that the stuff or material on above mentioned items must be made part of in-service trainings.

The EFL school teacher participants have also been investigated to talk about

their needs whether these in-service training courses should provide the opportunity to make them confident teachers and chance to share and exchange their ideas with others. The mean score of this item is very high (M= 4.22) in terms of their needs and the qualitative data confirmed the quantitative findings. Another important item has been designed to inquire EFL school teachers' needs about needs analysis. Quantitative and qualitative both emphasized the need to include teachers' needs in curriculum or material for in-service training.

Therefore, it is recommended that needs analysis is very important to make these programs successful and attractive for teachers. If teachers find that these training are based on their needs and they are being encouraged to become active participants in all phases of training from planning to implementation, there are chances that these training will be very useful and interesting for them.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Responses to the Items Indicating the Participants' Needs in Terms of the Activities of the In-service Training.

Items	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**S.D %**	**D %**	**N %**	**A %**	**S.A %**
18- I like to participate in one/short time activities because they are more effective.	3.96	.691	0	4.1	13.5	64.9	17.6
19- I like lecture-type training activities because they are more useful.	3.54	1.036	2.7	16.2	21.6	43.2	16.2
20- I prefer to participate in a guided observation-type activity.	3.97	.640	0	1.4	17.6	63.5	17.6
21- I need demonstrations as they are very important types of activities.	3.99	.608	0	0	18.9	63.5	17.6
22- I need workshops type of training activities because they are more useful.	3.97	.740	0	5.4	12.2	62.2	20.3
23-I need seminars type of training because they are very effective.	3.84	.828	1.4	4.1	23	52.7	18.9

Some items of the questionnaire have been designed to investigate EFL school teachers' needs on in-service training programs in terms of activities, six items have been designed to have the answer for the second main research study question. First, they were asked about the duration of the activities of in-service training programs through questionnaires and interviews. The findings revealed that a major part of participants believe that short time activities are useful as its mean score (M = 3.96). However, a contradiction has been found as the three interview participants out of five believe that long-time or continuous types of activities are useful. However, if we look at the quantitative findings of the items of activities of the in-service training, this item has the second lowest in terms of the mean score. Therefore, it can be interpreted that long-duration activities can be more useful.

The other items were related to the types of activities through which the needs of EFL school teachers in Punjab, Pakistan have been investigated. According to them, workshops (M=3.97), demonstrations (M=3.99) and guided types of activities (M=3.97) have been found the important ones. On the other hand, lecture type (M = 3.54) and seminars type (M=3.84) of activities have been found less preferred type of activities. Whereas the interviewees are concerned, the results suggest that four of the participants believe that workshops and demonstrations are very useful activities of in-service training according to their beliefs but one of the participants included seminars, lectures, guided observation with workshops and demonstrations in his/her needs. However, it is easy to predict that there is no contradiction in quantitative and qualitative data as they both confirm one and other.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of the Responses to the Items Indicating the Participants' Needs in Terms of the Trainers of the In-service Trainings.

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	S.D %	D%	N %	A %	S.A %
24- I need a theoretically well-versed instructor who has experience of teaching at the teachers' level.	4.20	.619	0	0	10.8	58.1	31.1
25- I need an instructor who can act as a model to see how theory is converted into practice.	4.23	.586	0	0	8.1	60.8	31.1
26- I want a native speaker of the target language as a trainer.	3.82	.984	2.7	8.1	17.6	47.3	24.3
27- I want to see a trainer in a role of a facilitator during training.	4.19	.676	0	2.7	6.8	59.5	31.1
28- I need a trainer in a role of an instructor /lecturer during training.	3.76	.873	1.4	10.8	12.2	62.2	13.5

The third important aspect of the in-service training in this research study is trainers. This part of the questionnaire contains five items that are related to the trainers of the in-service training programs. These five items of the questionnaire inquired about the trainers of in-service training as being a native or non-native, theoretical well-versed or practical expert, facilitator, or instructor.

When they were asked about their needs in terms of the trainers of the in-service training, they have also been found to give their verdicts in favor of theoretically well-versed (M=4.20) and practical who knows to convert theory into practice (M = 4.23). Although the mean scores of both items are very high, the practical trainer who could convert theory into practice is preferred need. The other two items inquired about the role of trainer as facilitator (M=4.19) and lecturer/instructor (M=3.76). The mean scores of two items show that the need to have trainers in a role of facilitator is preferred over lecturer type. The item which

asked about the trainers as being native, the mean score (M= 3.82) is satisfactory leading to the assumption of having trainers who are natives. The qualitative data has also revealed that the participants preferred to see the trainers in a role of a facilitator rather than a lecturer, native and theoretically well-versed who knows to convert theory into practice.

Conclusion:

The findings of the research study may enable us to reach some conclusions which could make future in-service training programs effective if the identified needs are accommodated. First, the study determined that material/content, activities, and trainers are the important aspects of any in-service training program as the majority of the EFL teachers have been found either complaining or appreciating about these aspects of in-service. Hence, investigation of teachers' needs, as mentioned above, becomes very important. These training are useless if their needs are not considered.

It is natural for research studies to have limitations, and this is not an exception. First, the scope of this study is limited to only private English medium schools in Punjab, Pakistan and the numbers of participants who solved the survey and appeared in interviews are not in huge number. Secondly, this study included only three aspects of in-service training such as material or content, activities, and trainers to know EFL teachers' needs.

This study has shown significant findings of EFL school teachers' needs on in-service training who work in private English medium schools of Punjab, Pakistan. Yet, it opens doors for future researchers to research in different areas as recommended below: First, Future studies can be expanded to two or more provinces to have a more vivid picture of EFL teachers' needs on in-service training. Secondly, future studies can be done on both the comparison of private and public schools' EFL teachers' needs on in-service training.

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