

# The Attitudes of Teachers towards English Language Training Programs at Primary Level in Pakistan

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## ABSTRACT

*Teacher training programs are the subject of heated controversy and criticism in Pakistan. A review of the research reveals that English language teacher training has a significant impact on the performance of teachers and their pupils. The primary issues addressed in this research piece are trainers' English language competency, the use of audiovisual aids and new technology, instructional methodologies, and microteaching strategies. The research has been conducted in primary schools of district Vehari and data has been collected through a questionnaire (aptitude scale). A questionnaire was organized and arranged based on the questions about trainers, training environment and training material. Likert Type Questionnaire which contains 21 statements. Teachers have been asked to mark the most appropriate answer. After collecting data, it has been analyzed in tabular form. The results show that training programs are effective in terms of upgrading knowledge, lesson plans and teaching materials. So the main purpose of this research is to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of English teacher training programs at primary level. Further recommendations are also provided for the betterment of conditions. Higher authorities should pay attention to improve the pedagogical conditions of teachers particularly in rural schools. Highly qualified trainers must be chosen for conducting the trainings in cluster centers furthermore it is highly necessary to adopt modern technologies and methodologies to improve the understandings of trainees.*

## KEYWORDS

Teacher's Training, English Language Training Programs, Likert Scale, Questionnaire, Statements

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

English language is one the most prominent and prestigious language of the world. There are many countries where English language is being spoken as native language and in many countries is being spoken as second language. In Pakistan, English language is being used as second language but on the other hand whether it is second language it is also being widely used as one of the medium of instructions in the educational system. Now days it is rapidly prevailing as solely medium of instructions in public and particularly private schools and colleges from lower classes to higher level. The starting of 21st century has been proven as a landmark in so many innovations so far. In this era none can deny the fact that teaching of English language has become an academic and scientific discipline. Furthermore, English Language Teaching (ELT) has become a part and parcel of our education system and it has also stand out for development, continuous evolution and strong dynamism. In this era of rapid development and innovations no one can deny the importance and significance of English as an international language. So, the status of English language, in the present scenario, is outstanding and recognized as the worldwide language over and across the globe in the more extensive social setting in context of its noteworthiness. Because of these reasons and prestigious status of English language, it has become the much favored and widely used language of the world. Most of the times, English language is being utilized as a second language and in different occasions it has been found out and utilized as a remote language. Haque (2000) stated in his research, "English being primary vehicle of international communication even among non-native speakers is a passport to international, cultural and metropolitan citizenship".

So far as the standard of English language in Pakistan is concerned, it is not very high and sub-standard but on the other hand government and other stake holders are continuously trying to meet the international criterion and standards of using English language. There are different factors and problems that are being faced in implementing the English language as medium of instruction in Pakistan like lack of knowledge on the part of teachers, teaching English language to the students in schools, is one of the major factors. Currently government is arranging different training programs for English teachers with the collaboration of different departments and national and international organizations like USAid, British Council, AusAid, DANIDA, DIFID, IKEA and many more. For this purpose Quida E Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) previously known as Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) is working significantly on such training programs including language teaching programs.

As English is seen a vital apparatus with a specific end goal to make due in the worldwide economy, the requests for



English language have developed (Paik, 2008). English has become a necessary tool in order to keep pace with the new world of technology due to the significance and need of English language in the 21st century. It has made the learning of English as a critical prerequisite for the students as no one get progress without knowing, learning and using this language. Currently the use of English language in communication has become a sign of prestige and progress (Crystal, 2003). But unfortunately in Pakistan the teachers and the educational system is not sufficiently equipped with this language tool although government of Pakistan is trying to improve the situation along with the collaboration of different partners and stake holders by helping the teachers different training programs. According to the study conducted and published in collaboration by UNESCO and USAID (2006) the quality of education provided by the Government of Pakistan is poor due to many factors including inappropriate training programs, lack of resources, ineffective educational policies, and low level of academic & professional qualification of teachers particularly at primary level. This report clearly shows that the primary teachers in Pakistan are not trained with the primary contemporary needs of the curriculum, as Pakistani curriculum is rapidly changing according to the needs, requirements and demands of time (UNESCO & USAID, 2006).

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Woodring (1975) states:

*"The oldest form of teacher education is the observation and emulation of a master. Plato learned to teach by sitting at the feet of Socrates. Aristotle, in turn, learned from Plato".*

A school which is created for the training of high school graduates and the teachers is called a normal school. The name of such type of school, normal school, shows its purpose of establishment, and that is to establish, maintain and develop teaching standards and norms in teachers. These schools have now changed into Govt. College for Elementary Teachers (GCETs). In the United States and Canada normal schools train primary school teachers, whereas in Europe they educate primary, secondary and tertiary-level teachers. (Dictionary, 2007) In 1834, Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton established the first teacher training college in Jamaica under conditions set out by Lady Mico's Charity "to afford the advantage of education and training to the colored and black population." Mico Training College is considered the oldest teacher training institute in the English-speaking world and Western Hemisphere.

Before that teaching was started as a separate profession, clergy people were considered suitable for this title role as they were thought to be highly educated. But by the middle of the 18th century the teaching was considered to be a tough and complex job and it requires complex feedback if expertise was to be encouraged resumed ability to guide religious instruction in schools and the teachers were considered to be as public/government servants, worker, and employee of the ethnicity. Administrators or supervisory groups were responsible of checking the nature of instructions. These authorities had almost endless energy to build up criteria for powerful direction and to contract and fire teachers. Since there was no vital understanding with regards to the significance or nature of educational ability, the quality and kind of input to teachers was exceedingly fluctuated, (Livingston, 2011).

There is a dire need for a proper sketch and framework for conduction of different trainings for the teachers teaching English at elementary and secondary levels. Many of the teachers face many a number of problems only because of lack of proper training in opting a suitable teaching method accordingly. According to this study teachers cannot go with a single teaching method rather they should be well versed with a number of teaching methods and techniques. Researchers also highlighted the fact that private school teachers were more concerned towards training to polish their teaching methods and techniques than public school teachers, (Arshad, Akram, & Hussain, 2022).

Regarding continuous professional development (CPD) and the result showed that CPD, along with other skills, also helps teachers to enhance their teaching skills. On the other hand, it also helps in promoting their multifarious skills in the field of teaching, (Fizza, Ahmed, & Arain, 2020).

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF PAKISTAN**

In Pakistan, importance of teacher education or teacher training for the first time emphasized in the report of the National Commission on Education 1959. This report states, "No education system is better than its teachers (Pakistan G. o., 1959). The Education Policy of 1972-80 had also suggested the assessment of teacher's need and the re-organization of teacher education (Pakistan G. o., 1972). The National Education Policy (1992) clearly focused upon teacher training by stating that "a regular in-service training program will be launched for teachers at all levels" (Pakistan G. o., 1992).

"The quality of education is directly related to the quality of instruction in the classroom. The teacher is considered the most crucial factor in implementing all education reforms at the grassroots level. Recognizing the deteriorating quality of education at various levels, efforts need to be intensified to accord adequate priority to the effectiveness of teacher education programs in the country" (Pakistan G. o., 1998).

In Pakistan **Quaid-E-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED)** is performing marvelous services with respect to the training of the teachers' preparation since last five decades. This institution was established in 1959 and at that time the name of this institute was Education Extension Center (EEC). One of its major functions is that it works as an evolving operator and a changing agent in the field of education and teacher training. It is contributing emphatically in the

movement of value instruction in the Province of Punjab. The Government has encouraged teacher improvement by developing a particular part and role for the Academy.

### **COMPULSORY ENGLISH EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN**

In March 2009, English was made compulsory subject in all public schools from grade 1. In this policy it was said that English would become the principal medium of instruction for Math, Science and Computer Science. The policy was amended in February 2014 when Urdu was reinstated as the medium of instruction for Grades 1-3 while English as medium of instruction would be started from Grade 4. Research studies in many countries have shown that a high level of proficiency in English language can lead to economic progress. Government of Pakistan argues that teaching English from the primary level will facilitate a smoother transition to secondary schooling, leading to higher levels of comprehension and ‘use’ of subject knowledge. The teaching and mastery of Urdu is of great importance, but at the same time English language skills can open up better job opportunities for young generation. It also helps them for further study and work. The purpose of The Punjab Education and English Language Initiative (PEELI) is to achieve better quality teaching and learning in primary and middle schools in Punjab, its main areas of focus are: teacher training & development, face-to-face training is one of the fundamental components of PEELI and the project and it tries to enable government school teachers to deliver high quality lessons in the classroom using English as medium of instruction and for teacher educators to train and provide continuous support to those teachers, (Peeli, 2014).

Another English language training program “English for Teaching, Teaching for English” (ETTE) was made compulsory part in induction training of Secondary school Teachers & subject Specialists in 2009. The above discussed two programs ETTE & PEELI are considered as remarkable English language training programs particularly in the province of Punjab which were introduced by Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) with the collaboration of British Council and Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objectives of this research article include:

1. To investigate teachers attitude at primary level towards English language training programs in Pakistan.
2. To analyze and evaluate English language training programs offered by different donors/sponsors in government institutes of Pakistan.
3. To determine the impact of attitude of teachers towards teaching English language skills at primary level.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What do the teachers at primary level to express their attitudes towards English language training programs?
2. How these training programs help English teachers to improve their knowledge and skills of the English language?
3. How the implementation of these programs can be improved and become more effective for primary teachers in Pakistan?

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The nature of this study was a descriptive type of research, i.e. the data was analyzed statistically and the results were deduced in numerical form. Results of the study were based on objectivity. A descriptive research identifies key characteristics and attributes of a product or service through analysis of these attributes by statistical analysis of answers given in a structured set of questions such as a survey or questionnaire. This study was designed to measure the attitudes of primary school teachers towards English language training programs. The quantitative methodology was adopted to assess the impact of attitude of the teachers. Likert scale has been used in order to measure the attitude of primary school teachers towards English language training programs. There are 482 primary schools for girls and 552 primary schools for boys in District Vehari of the Pakistan. In these primary schools 1459 male and 1407 female teachers are teaching to students. All the primary school teachers, male and female comprise the population of this study. 10% of the total population will be selected as the sample for reliable results. The sample for this study has been drawn by following the convenient sampling technique, one of the probability sampling techniques. Hence, proportionate purposive sampling technique was used to select the desired number of sample size. Total sample size has been 287 respondents including 146 male and 141 female teachers have been selected as sample of this study. By adopting the research procedure a questionnaire based on Likert scale was designed to obtain data from the male and female primary school teachers included in the sample of this study. The questionnaire was consists of 21 close ended statements and each of the statement having five options, i.e. strongly agreed, agreed, undecided, disagreed and strongly disagreed. There was an open ended question included in the questionnaire at the end of the close ended question. The questionnaire was tested through pilot study for the sake of validity and reliability. For this purpose 20 male and 20 female teachers were selected and these teachers were not the part of sample for the study. In the light of the results of pilot study, the questionnaire was modified as there were some of the statements which were not clear to the teachers and some were deleted. After having pilot study the research tool was finalized. Data has been collected by using research tools. Likert type questionnaire is used for survey as data collection tool. Teachers were given questionnaire. They were asked to mark the item which they considered as most appropriate. Data has been analyzed in the light of the responses provided by teachers. Data was organized and analyzed in tabular form as well as graphical representation. All the marked items were collected and organized according to the responses of the

respondents. Percentage, average and mean score using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) of total responses was calculated at the end in order to find out the results and conclusions. Total responses of the teachers were summed up and on the basis of these opinions, specific results were obtained. The results showed the effectiveness of training programs at elementary level.

### 3. DATA ANALYSIS

The obtained values against every statement were put in SPSS for analysis. The percentage and mean scores were obtained against the statement. The said data was arranged in the form of tables. There were 117 female respondents while 170 male respondents to collect the data.

Table.1. Frequency Table (Statement wise)

Sr. #	Statement	S.A	A	UD	DA	SDA	Mean Score
1.	English language training programs should be necessary for primary school teachers.	105	94	25	10	53	3.66
		36.59	32.75	8.71	3.48	18.47	
2.	Training programs can improve trainee teachers, proficiency in English language.	117	80	35	27	28	3.80
		40.77	27.87	12.20	9.41	9.76	
3.	Training programs should be conduct to improve the pronunciation skill of English better.	71	80	46	52	38	3.33
		24.74	27.87	16.03	18.12	13.24	
4.	Training programs should be a continuous source of latest pedagogical knowledge for primary teachers.	83	95	12	54	43	3.42
		28.92	33.10	4.18	18.82	14.98	
5.	Necessary equipment must be available for language learning activities in training programs.	23	45	25	65	129	2.19
		8.01	15.68	8.71	22.65	44.95	
6.	During training programs more focus should be given to the use of audio visual aids.	29	36	22	49	151	2.10
		10.10	12.54	7.67	17.07	52.61	
7.	Rooms for training should always be according to the environmental/physical conditions (adequate air, temperature control, and lighting).	45	29	63	109	41	2.75
		15.68	10.10	21.95	37.98	14.29	
8.	Seating arrangement in training programs should be supportive to the goals of training session.	22	15	30	108	112	2.05
		7.67	5.23	10.45	37.63	39.02	
9.	Rooms for training programs should be equipped with pictures and charts based on English language activities.	105	67	18	12	85	3.33
		36.59	23.34	6.27	4.18	29.62	
10.	Material provided in the training programs should be according to the contemporary needs.	145	60	10	45	27	3.87
		50.52	20.91	3.48	15.68	9.41	
11.	In training programs accurate pronunciation should be focused through teaching material & presenter/trainer.	112	57	24	53	41	3.51
		39.02	19.86	8.36	18.47	14.29	
12.	All skills of English language should equally be focused through the training programs.	38	52	7	123	67	2.55
		13.24	18.12	2.44	42.86	23.34	
13.	Handouts based on English grammar and language skills should be provided while conducting the training sessions which further help the teachers.	27	45	15	152	48	2.48
		9.41	15.68	5.23	52.96	16.72	
14.	These material/aids should be utilized properly in training programs to enhance teacher's understanding.	24	15	3	148	97	2.03
		8.36	5.23	1.05	51.57	33.80	
15.		153	55	2	23	54	3.80

	Energizers and icebreakers should be applied to enhance trainees' interest in English language learning.	53.31	19.16	0.70	8.01	18.82	
16.	Master trainers should always have a detailed plan of training program.	146	85	16	34	6	4.15
		50.87	29.62	5.55	11.85	2.09	
17.	Trainers should never criticize the ideas of trainees about the improvement of English teacher training programs during the session.	142	49	9	52	35	3.74
		49.48	17.07	3.14	18.12	12.20	
18.	Microteaching strategies should be used in training session.	76	28	2	97	84	2.70
		26.48	9.76	0.70	33.80	29.27	
19.	All the necessary training should be provided to fulfill the requirements of English text books for primary level teachers.	148	62	0	65	12	3.94
		51.57	21.60	0.00	22.65	4.18	
20.	English language trainers should have complete knowledge of lesson delivered in training program.	22	65	3	172	25	2.61
		7.67	22.65	1.05	59.93	8.71	
21.	English language trainers should always arrange necessary technological items and support to make training programs more interesting.	154	69	28	15	21	4.11
		53.66	24.04	9.76	5.23	7.32	

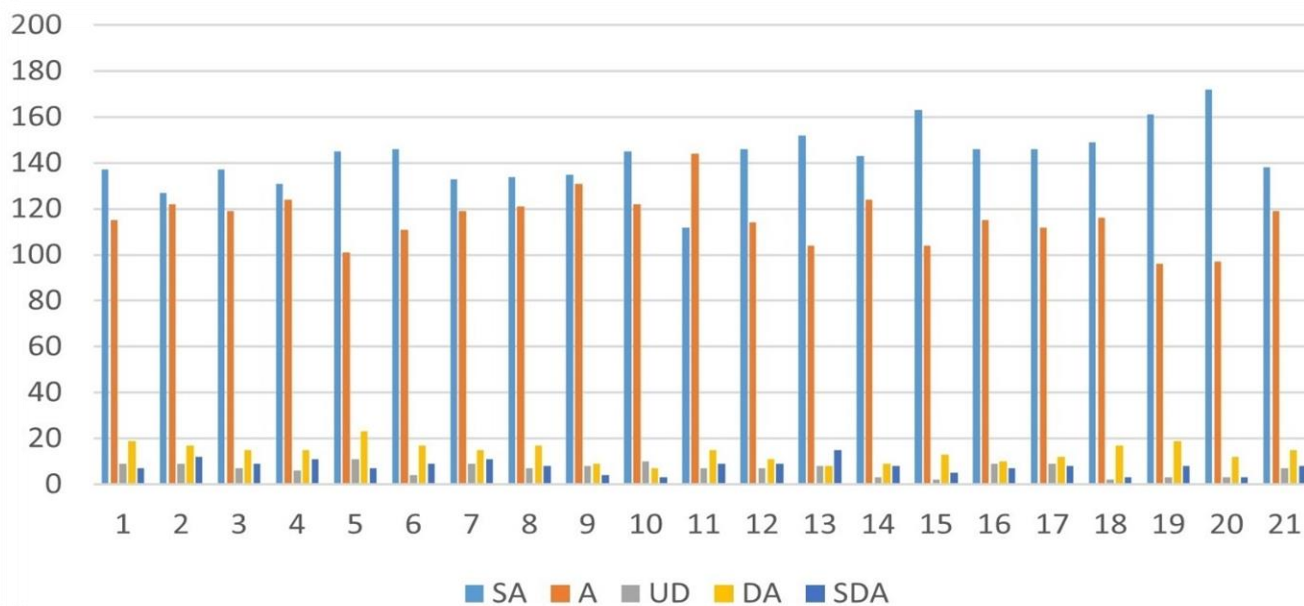
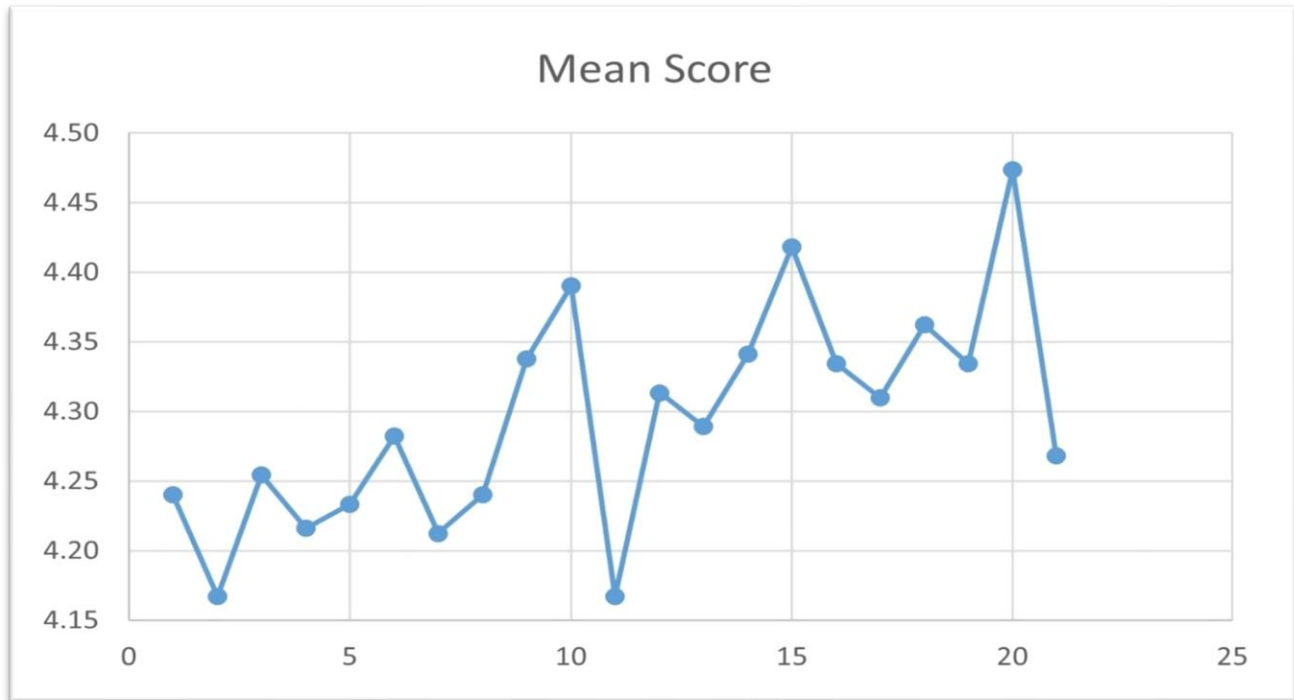


Figure 1. Frequency of the responses against each statement.



**Figure 2:** Variation of mean score against each of the statement

#### 4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The study showed that over all primary school teachers have positive attitude towards English language trainings programs. They declared their willingness to polish and enhance their teaching skills and techniques through getting trainings. Teachers remained confident that they wanted to attend English training courses and programs. The results made it clear that a very vast majority of teachers strongly agreed or simply agreed with the given statements and a very few disagreed or strongly disagreed. The largest value of mean score remained 4.47 whereas lowest remained 4.17 and average mean score remained 4.29. It has become clear that primary school teachers of Pakistan have a positive view towards English training programs because, to them, it is the only way through which they become familiar with contemporary trends and techniques in teaching.

The study has disclosed the fact that teachers need themselves to be trained in English subject through effective training programs. Now it is the responsibility of the government and other stake holders to arrange English trainings for primary school trainings and take necessary measures and steps to make them effective. While devising a training program, stake holders and educational formation must be consulted to make it more fruitful.

Previous studies on this issue have also highlighted that trainings are much needed in our educational system especially with respect to teaching English at primary level. Primary level is the basic level of education in Pakistan and if it remained flawed then how a concrete building can be built over it. Primary teachers must be trained enough so that they could meet the contemporary trends and compete with the new era of challenges. Trainers should also be well versed not in the relevant subject but also in training skills. Material, according to needs and requirements of the time, must be provided.

#### RECOMMENDATION

At the end the researcher suggests the following recommendations;

1. Government should consider into the matter as lots of funds are being allocated for English language training programs. The weak areas should be focused and the problems and issues should be solved.
2. Skillful trainers should be deployed to conduct the training programs who have possess the ability of coping with new trends and techniques and have the competence to apply contemporary teaching trends and methodologies for making the trainings more effective for the trainees.
3. The weakest areas of training programs are, use of audio visual aids, seating arrangement, problem solving and absence of handouts. Government and other stake holders must take initiatives to meet these deficiencies so that the goals of such trainings may be achieved.
4. The area of the research may be increased to other districts of the Punjab so that the results should be uniform and the application of such programs should be more effective.

5. Trainers should be given proper training in the light of the findings of this study so that they can train the teachers in such a way that their training enable those to teach their students with the help of new techniques and trends and it will ultimately show good results in English language.
6. The logistic and financial support at district level training programs should be improved.
7. The problems and hurdles of trainee teachers should be address while conducting these training programs. Physical environment of training programs should be improved.
8. ELT programs should be related to the syllabus of primary classes in order to make these programs successful. All the training material and guidelines should be revised after a specific time.
9. English language training programs should be evaluated so that it could be assessed whether objectives of these courses are achieved or not. Time and schedule management of these training programs should be feasible to trainee teachers.
10. Attitude of teachers must be considered while introducing any training program for primary school teachers and they must be provided an exemplary environment in training program.

## CONCLUSION

Teacher trainings are a compulsory part of education system throughout the world as it is very much important to equip the working teachers with new and prevailing trends and techniques. It was a study to evaluate the attitude of primary school teachers towards English language training programs. In Pakistan DSD is responsible for the conduction of such trainings with the help of other stakeholders. It conducts induction (training for newly recruited teachers) to promotion link trainings (Training for the officers who have to be promoted next grade / scale). Primary education is the base of our education system and similarly primary school teacher is the backbone of education system of Pakistan. The study was delimited to the primary schools of district Vehari. Total No. of primary school teachers in district Vehari is 2866 out of which 10% of the population 287 teachers were selected as the sample of the study by following convenient sampling technique. The design for this research was quantitative, a close ended questionnaire having 21 statements by following Likert scale (1932) (attitude scale/five point scale) and each of the statement has five options which were to tick by the respondents according to their own free will. The data was analyzed quantitatively into tables and also presented in graphs. Then the percentages and mean scores were calculated for each of the statement. The results of this study showed that such trainings may be improved and revised in order to achieve their goals and to raise the standards of education consequently.

## CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

**Samina Bashir:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Collection, Data Analysis, Drafting, Reviewing and Editing

**Muhammad Zahid Bashir:** Assisted in Drafting the Original Manuscript **Salma Naheed:** Proofreading, Data Arrangement

## COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

It is declare that all authors don't have any conflict of interest. Furthermore, informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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