Investigating In-service Early Childhood Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of a Training Programme in Saudi Arabia: a Case Study

By

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of an in-service training programme in Saudi Arabia. The methods included face-to-face interviews and focus group discussion with a convenient sample of in-service early childhood teachers who attended a training programme. Data collected during this research is used to explore the current provision of training programmes for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers and investigate the impact of available in-service training programmes on the teachers' professional knowledge. In addition to this primary data, secondary data in the form of documents and literature was also collected. Data, both primary and secondary, was triangulated to answer four research questions on current provision of training programmes, teachers' perceptions of these programmes, the impact of the training on teachers' knowledge and practice and recommendations of the teachers to improve in-service training.

Primary data collected through interviews from respondents was analysed thematically. Thematic analysis was summarized in five thematic maps. The study has found that the existing system of education within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is centralized and bureaucratic in nature. The Ministry of Education manages and oversees the administrative features of learning provision including training of early childhood educators. It was clear from the analysis that the experienced teachers who spent more than ten years in teaching, and also the graduates of a kindergarten education-related degree, were more likely to have the view that the in-service training was of limited value to their practice. Many sub-themes emerged to suggest that most, if not all, interviewees enjoyed at least some parts of the in-service training they attended. The reasons to attend the training reflect the desire and the will of the teachers to improve their teaching skills. The techniques used by teachers to improve or change their teaching practice include group and self-learning methods but also include in-service training. Overall, the research highlighted room for improvement and discussed some specific issues relevant to Saudi Arabia, e.g. gender issues and adherence to Islamic traditions. The socio-cultural theoretical framework that this research was based on proved to be appropriate and allowed for contextualisation of the findings.

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List of Abbreviations

ACEI	Association for Childhood Education International
AGFUND	Arab Gulf Program for United Nation Development Organization
BERA	British Education Research Association
CDA	Child Development Associate
DC	Developed Curriculum
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EI	Education International
EPPE	Effective Provision of Preschool Education
EPPSE	Effective Provision for Preschool Primary and Secondary Education
ETFO	Elementary Teachers` Federation of Ontario
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GPGE	General Presidency for Girls' Education
ISD	Instructional Systems Development
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Los	Learning Objectives
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NDC	Newly Developed Curriculum
NEA	National Education Association
NIE	National Institute of Education, Singapore
OLM	Open Learner Models
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
SEN	Special Education Needs
TPACK	Technological Pedagogical And Content Knowledge
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my late father (Fawaz) and my late mother (Fatama) who believed in me more than myself, my sons Fadhel and Alla who supported me all the time during this research.

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My greatest thanks to Allah who gave me this opportunity to learn more and gave me the ability to complete this work.

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Finally, special thanks go to my family for their encouragement, support, and prayers throughout the period of my doctoral journey; I extend my deepest thanks and love to my sons, Fadhel and Alla.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Early childhood is considered to be one of the most important phases of human development; it is the stage when basic abilities and personal traits and characteristics are formed. This period is particularly notable for children's flexibility and readiness to acquire and develop new skills and experiences. Therefore, as might be expected, many countries are concerned with improving the professional performance of their early childhood teachers and seek to update their pre-service teacher education programmes. In recent years in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), there has been a greater awareness of the significance of early childhood education. Research indicates that positive; high-quality educational experiences provide immediate benefits and enable children to develop into capable and dependable citizens (Sylva et al., 2010). Therefore, it is necessary for such teachers to be appropriately qualified, due to the specific individual features and requirements of their role as early childhood educators. This is especially because the position entails dealing with interrelated tasks that are not easily specified (Watef, 1994). As a result, the training needs of early childhood teachers vary widely.

Each province in KSA has its own licensing requirements. These range from a high school diploma to a college degree, but most require preschool teachers to possess a university degree. However, private childcare facilities and schools may have fewer requirements than state-funded schools. For instance, they may not require teachers with a college diploma, licence, or even experience. Early childhood education (ECE) programmes are also available from schools and community colleges offering one and two-year courses in ECE. It is no surprise, therefore, that KSA is interested in improving the provision of educational services through kindergarten teachers, by updating pre-service and in-service teacher-training programmes.

Given that teachers currently employed in early childhood services come from a variety of educational and training backgrounds, such as geography or history

majors, there is a considerable level of anxiety that a diverse workforce will not possess a shared theoretical understanding of how children learn, or the philosophy and objectives of ECE (Rabaah et al 2016). Research studies investigating the issue of teachers' education and training in KSA have concluded that there is a substantial need for in-service training, resources, and programmes for early childhood teachers (Al-Ameel, 2002; Al-Noain, 1996; Mahdly, 2001). Many of these studies comment on the absence of a national curriculum for such services and some suggest that early childhood studies should become part of the formal education system. This research also highlighted an important aspect: the lack of qualified teachers.

In another study, Swigh (2000) indicates that qualified teachers should be highly compensated financially. Swigh also points out that when qualified and experienced teachers leave schools to look for more lucrative jobs elsewhere, children end up being taught by unqualified and untrained teachers, which impacts negatively on children's educational and personal development. Taken together, these contextual features of ECE are not consistent with the government's drive to extend provision and raise quality.

1.2   Research Significance

Education is considered as a fundamental sector of social policy in all countries generally, and in the KSA in particular. Furthermore, the pre-school and compulsory school sectors are the place where improvements in the quality of education impact across the development of any country socially, economically and politically. Also, the efficient and effective teaching of students is necessary to enhance their abilities, both individually and for communities and society as a whole. Therefore, the quality of education and training received by teachers is central to high quality education, from pre-school onwards, to lay the foundations for children's learning and subsequent success in their education.

Based on these premises, this study investigates in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of a training programme in Saudi Arabia in order to gain a better understanding of the methods considered to be effective in in-service training. In doing so, this study seeks to investigate the opportunities and challenges in such training in addition to how teachers take

the messages conveyed in their training programme into their individual settings. Moreover, the longer-term aim is to inform the development of effective in-service education for pre-school teachers and improve the education system in Saudi Arabia. The research problem is therefore clarified and investigated through the lens of a socio-cultural framework, thus contributing to knowledge about the training of teachers in ECE settings. Moreover, this research is of particular importance, given its expected contribution to the field of preparation, training, and support of newly-qualified, as well as experienced, in-service early childhood teachers in the Saudi context.

A considerable amount of research has been conducted in Western countries, concerning the training of kindergartens teachers and this has been largely dictated by Western beliefs, perceptions, and values. While it may be assumed that some of these beliefs have had an impact on the system of early childhood education in the KSA, the present study is one of the first to investigate issues which are pertinent to current kindergarten teacher-training programmes in the specific KSA cultural context. For this reason, the methods and design of this research have been adjusted to comply with cultural norms and specifics of the KSA. Hence, the present study aims to gain a deeper understanding of teacher training needs, taking into account the effect of various significant cultural factors in that context. As a result, the study will contribute significantly to an understanding of teachers' knowledge and how this can be developed through in-service training programmes. Based on this and the findings obtained, recommendations are made in terms of the design and development of effective training schemes for kindergarten teachers, not only on a national, but also on an international level.

1.3   Research Aims

The overarching aims of the study are as follows:
- To explore the current provision of training programmes for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers;
- To explore Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of available training programmes in training centres;

- To understand the impact of available training programmes on Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional knowledge.
- To obtain recommendations from teachers, in order to develop a successful in-service teacher-training programme.

1.4   Research Questions

Based on the above aims, the current study attempts to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the current provision of training programmes for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers?
2. What are Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experience of the available training programmes in training centres?
3. How do the available training programmes impact Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional knowledge?
4. What do the teachers recommend for the development of in-service training programmes?

The "what" and "how" questions are congruent with the nature of and research in teacher knowledge and practice, as discussed by Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999:268):

> *The "what" is practical knowledge, craft knowledge, or knowing-in-action-that is, the knowledge that is generated by competent teachers as they deal with classroom situations that are inherently indeterminate...The „how" is deliberation and consideration/ reconsideration - that is, consciously reflecting on the flow of classroom action and invention of knowledge in action in order to take note of new situations, intentionally and introspectively examining those situations, and consciously enhancing and articulating what is tacit or implicit*

1.5   Research Problem

There are two types of kindergarten teacher working in preschool institutions in KSA. The first group possesses some form of educational qualification, while the rest hold only non-specialist educational qualifications. This indicates that the latter group might have significant gaps in their knowledge regarding appropriate and effective ways of teaching children and there is consequently a considerable need for this group of kindergarten teachers to undertake training

programmes. However, these programmes need to be specifically designed, based on the actual needs of teachers in pre-primary education in KSA. Due to complaints from different kindergarten teachers about the training programmes they have undertaken, the problem that I am exploring in this study is the provision offered by these programmes. At the same time, Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions of such programmes in training centres for kindergarten teachers (in Riyadh, the capital city of Saudi Arabia) will be investigated, with an evaluation of their impact on the professional knowledge of the abovementioned group (Almutairi, 2013).

1.6   Rationale of the study

It seems essential to conduct research on the role of in-service training for early childhood teachers in light of increases in provision, the policy focus on the effectiveness of high quality ECE, and the relationships between quality and qualifications of the workforce (Sylva et al., 2010). As discussed in the literature, several studies have focused on the significance of a first degree as a core qualification for early childhood teachers (Barett, 2003). In addition, it is also generally agreed that further postgraduate pedagogical training specialised in young learners should be integral to this career path.

With particular respect to Saudi Arabia, Al-Ameel (2002:307) believes that further research is required to investigate "the importance of pre-school teacher training and qualification including the role of in-service programme needs." Moreover, Al-Jadidi (2012) later pointed to the fact that Saudi kindergarten teachers do not always develop their beliefs and knowledge even after graduating from a four-year teacher preparation programme. This, therefore, tends to suggest that training programmes for pre-service and in-service teachers need to be thoroughly investigated and evaluated to determine why teachers are not developing as they should and find ways of overcoming any challenges to the effectiveness of such programmes for in-service kindergarten teachers. Also, Rabaah, Doaa and Alzahrani (2016) recommended that more research be conducted on early childhood education in Saudi Arabia to provide information for researchers and teachers, hence the need for the current study to provide more in-depth insights into this neglected, yet indispensable, stage in

learners' lives and educational careers.

Based on the above, it appears that a great number of factors affect the provision of early childhood education programmes including the quality of training of early childhood teachers. Moreover, in the context of Saudi Arabia, as far as I am aware, no research has yet to be carried out to investigate the effect of unqualified teachers on children's progress and academic achievements. My own career is particularly relevant to this research as during my five years as a lecturer at King Saud University, and based on my experience as a teacher supervisor, I have been able to notice the inadequate performance of certain teachers who seemed to have few of the skills needed to be effective teachers. For instance, many teachers do not seem to deal with children as individuals, each with their own psychological, physical and developmental characteristics. This prompted me to consider whether this was due to a lack of appropriate teaching methods or whether the criteria for selecting kindergarten teachers were inadequate and not professionally based. This experience subsequently gave me the impetus to conduct this study and explore some of the reasons behind this situation, with an ambition to develop teaching and learning standards and ultimately raise the educational levels of students. Having monitored student teachers during pre-training, I also became acutely aware of the paramount importance of investigating this topic, given the noticeable absence of appropriately qualified teachers in early childhood education in the KSA (Almutairi, 2013)

1.7   Overview of the thesis

The thesis consists of seven chapters that have been briefly summarised here in the form of an overview of the whole thesis.

In **Chapter One** I presented the background of this research, its rationale, and its importance, together with a brief precis of the methodology adopted the purpose of this study and the questions that this research seeks to answer.

Chapter Two delves into the contextual aspects of the study focusing on the following issues: the educational system in Saudi Arabia, the structure of early childhood education and in-service training programme. It also examines and discusses the topic of ECE in Saudi Arabia and highlights its main aims and

objectives. The chapter also sheds light on ECE teacher preparation programmes and the current policy framework for ECE.

Chapter Three critically reviews the relevant literature and sets the scene for, and informs, the methodology to investigate the research questions.

Chapter Four presents the research methodology employed in this study. It discusses the ontological and epistemological positions that provide the foundations of the theoretical structure of this research. The chapter also describes the design of the research, the participants, and the pilot study and outlines the data collection and analysis methods. Finally, it is concluded by a presentation of the challenges faced to conduct this research and its important ethical considerations.

Chapter Five presents an in-depth analysis of the qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews, group discussions, and documentary evidence. It includes interpretations of grouped and categorized data in an attempt to find answers to the research questions.

Chapter Six provides a detailed discussion of the major findings in relation to the relevant literature reviewed in Chapter Three and the study context in Chapter Two.

Chapter Seven presents the conclusion based on the findings and the implications of the research.

1.8 Summary of the Chapter

The above introductory chapter has presented the research topic with details of the background of the study and its rationale. In this chapter, I have also highlighted the aims of this research and the questions it seeks to answer. The significance of this study has also been presented, focusing on its potential theoretical and practical contributions. I have also put forth the personal and academic motivations for choosing to focus on this area. Finally, the chapter has provided a chapter-by-chapter overview of the whole thesis.

The next chapter (Chapter Two) sheds light on important contextual aspect surrounding the current research and describes the early childhood education and in-service training programmes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Chapter Two: The Context of Saudi Arabia

2.1   Introduction

In order to understand the Saudi early years teachers' practical knowledge in its broad sense and its relationship to in-service training programmes practice, it is useful to understand the educational context in which these teachers work, and the environment in which the current study was carried out. Therefore, this chapter sets the context of the current study. In this chapter I will describe and illustrate factual and background information about: country profile, the nature of the KSA educational system, structure, and organization of early childhood education in KSA, the in-service ECE teacher training and aims and brief outline of the ECE curriculum.

2.2   Country Profile

2.2.1   Saudi Arabia Geographical Location

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a large country that makes up four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula. It has its own unique geographical landscape, and covers an area of 2,250,000 square kilometres. The country borders Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait to the north; Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to the east; Oman and Yemen to the South and the Red Sea to the west (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). Saudi Arabia is a vast country and the landscape mostly consists of desert, with green areas to the north and south. The country has two main seasons: winter and summer. In the winter, temperatures in the north and centre can go below freezing. In the summer, temperatures can reach over 110 degrees Fahrenheit, and it can be very humid in the west and east coasts (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). Saudi Arabia's education system is arranged around the climate (Algamdi & Nooraldeen, 2002) and schools start early so they can avoid the extreme heat of the midday and afternoon (Al-Mutairi, 2013).

The following map shows the location of Saudi Arabia and its **borders:**

Figure 2.1: Map of Saudi Arabia (Source: Magellan Geographix)

2.2.2 Demography

In 2010, a census recorded a population of Saudi Arabia about 29,195,895 people, the majority of whom 67.1%) are under 30 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016; Oxford Business Group, 2007). In 2015, the General Authority for Statistics recorded a population of about 31,015,999, with a growth rate of 2.11% (General Authority for Statistics, 2016). The main and official language of Saudi Arabia is Arabic. According to Alghamdi & Nooraldeen (2002), the education system in Saudi Arabia makes the teaching of Arabic at every grade a top priority, especially in government institutions.

2.2.3 Religion and Philosophy

In order to fully appreciate Saudi Arabian education, it is crucial to realise how Islam is embedded in the culture, social structure, and laws of the country. The Quran is the literary centrepiece of Islam, and the religion's holiest cities are in Saudi Arabia. According to Prokop (2003), Islam has remained the main legal base for the Saudi Royal family, and religious education remains a central part of curricula. According to the official policy, education in the Kingdom should provide: Islamic doctrine and values, the history of Islam, the implementation of an Islamic character, developing positive personal characteristics, to allow its future citizens to contribute to the growth of their country in every way possible

(Educational policy article 28, Ministry of Education, 1976, cited in Gahwaji, 2013:335).

The government has given the religious establishment a degree of input into educational policymaking. For example, history lessons encompass the background to the Kingdom's creation, the role of Islam, and the importance of being unified. The government is now more conscious of the effects of education on its youngest citizens and is implementing a range of evidence-based strategies. In this regard, the government has been striving to introduce a more positive and compassionate ethos into classrooms. In addition, critical thinking and student-based learning are now educational priorities. One political factor that usually shapes education is the policy of the Saudi government to advocate for a moderate Islam. The Saudi Foreign Minister concluded, in a keynote speech to the Western media, that the education system in the Kingdom was not creating terrorists. In fact, the country's educational policy maintains that students should be moral ambassadors of their religion, deal honestly, fairly and openly with others and create positive interactions and relationships (Alshaer, 2008).

Several educational objectives in Saudi Arabia have been derived from the long history of Islamic education and based on the appropriate quotes of the Quran and the Sunnah, which is the collection of the Prophet Mohammad's sayings and deeds (Al-Sunbul et al., 2004). Despite the negative image of the country with regards to women's rights, education in the Kingdom for the last fifty years has incorporated an important tenant of Islam namely, the value of gender equality and justice. There has been a loud call for greater educational opportunities for females since education became a core element of the government policy in the 1960s (Rabaah et al, 2016).

2.2.4 Social System

Several societal changes have transformed the social construct of contemporary Saudi Arabia. For instance, according to Gahwaji (2013:336), "the rise of individual/family in-comes has affected the lifestyle of many Saudi families, particularly the middle and up-per classes." One of the most significant factors is the availability of jobs for both men and women, most particularly for

female graduates, whose educational qualifications allowed them to join the national workforce. Due to this rise in women in the workplace, a need arose for a system to take care of children while their mothers are working. Nannies and caregivers were in huge demand. Numerous of the maids, nannies, and caregivers working in Saudi Arabia are from foreign countries, such as the Philippines, Indonesia, India, and Ethiopia. Small families, with both parents working, are slowly becoming the norm in Saudi Arabia. According to Al-Sunbul, Al-Khateeb, Metwali, and Nour-Deen (2004), families in Saudi Arabia have now fewer children and are more independent than before, less connected to their relatives. These new nuclear families and increasing female attendance in the workplace have impacted on childhood education policy and there is now greater chance for children to be placed in nurseries and preschool education (Gahwaji, 2013).

2.2.5 Saudi Vision 2030

The Saudi Vision 2030 aims to raise the ratio of foreign direct investment (FDI) to the GDP from 3.8% to the global average of 5.7% and to move from 25th position in the Global Competitiveness Index to one of the top ten. In addition, with regard to investment, the objective is to raise the value of the public investment fund assets from 600 billion to more than 7 trillion Saudi riyals. The Vision also includes raising the percentage of local content in the oil and gas sectors from 40% to 75%. It is intended to increase the size of the Saudi economy and move from 19th to the top 15 ranking in the world. Saudi Arabia's vision is to increase the proportion of Saudis owning homes from 47% to about 52% by 2020. In addition, the Vision includes increasing the participation of women in the labour market from 22% to 30% and increasing the contribution of small and medium enterprises to total output. Domestic employment is hoped to be raised from 20% to 35%, reducing the unemployment rate from 11.6% to 7%.

As for the community, the Saudi Vision aims to build a vibrant society by building an average life expectancy of 74 to 80 years and raising the social capital index from 26 to 10. It also aims to increase the proportion of sports practitioners at least once a week from 13% to 40%, and increase the

expenditure of households on culture and entertainment within the Kingdom from 2.9% to 6%, and to double the number of archaeological sites registered at the UNESCO. In addition, the Vision aims to increase the capacity to receive pilgrims from 8 million to 30 million pilgrims a year. It also includes the term "ambitious homeland", which sets some objectives, including raising the contribution of the non-profit sector in the GDP from less than 1% to 5% and raising the proportion of household savings from their total income from 6% to 10%. As for the government, the Saudi Vision aims to reach the top five positions in the E-government Index, going from 90 in 2004 to 36 in 2014, and increase non-oil government revenues from SR163bn to SR1 trillion (Saudi Arabia vision 2030). Education is also central to this Vision, as outlined in the following section.

2.3   The Education System in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)

The government formally started an education system in 1932, according to Springsteen (2014).   In 1945, King Abdulaziz, the founder of Saudi Arabia, formally established schooling in the Kingdom.   At first, formal education was mainly available for males, usually from wealthy families, until female education was officially established in 1964. Now, girls' schools are around the country, and schools continue to be separated by gender (Springsteen, 2014). Education in the KSA remains segregated by gender as this is understood as an Islamic and cultural norm, especially when children reach the age of puberty (Alromi, 2000). Official government policy dictates that education serves the social and economic demands of the country, whilst maintaining Islamic guidelines and sensibilities and fighting illiteracy among adults (Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission, 2013). The Ministry of Education oversees all public, private, and special needs education (Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission, 2013). It provides schools for the whole range of special needs students while students with severe disabilities are schooled in specialist, private institutions. Students with mild disabilities are usually included in mainstream educational institutions (Alquraini, 2010). According to the US–Saudi Arabian Business Council (2009), education in the KSA can be classified into two main types: general education and higher education. All schools, private or public ones, follow the same strategies and policies in terms of curriculum and pedagogy. There is a strong focus on Arabic

and the Islamic studies, and as well as all the other standard subjects such as maths, sciences, history, geography, and English. The kingdom's general education development systems are divided into the following stages:

> *Today, Saudi Arabia's education system includes 25 public and 27 private universities, with plans to establish more universities; more than 30,000 schools; and a large number of colleges and other institutions" (Saudi Arabia Embassy, 2016).*

Table 2.1 Saudi Arabia's educational stages- source MOE

Stages	Duration	
Pre-primary education	ages 3 to 5	In 2018, 300,000 Children were enrolled within a total of 3,684 kindergartens.
Primary School	Six years - ages 6 to 12	In 2017/2018, the total enrolment in all primary schools was 3,166,986 students. From that total, 1,227,699 were girls.
Intermediate School	Three years- ages 12 to 15	In 2017/2018, there were a total of 2,320,613 students enrolled. Of that number, 1,227,604 were girls.
General Secondary School	Three years- ages 15 to 18	"In 2017/2018, there were 6,119 secondary schools, of which 3,077 for girls and 3,042 For boys.
University and college	Four years - ages 19 to 22 (U. S. – Saudi Arabian	In 2018, there were 1,320,000 students enrolled in Saudi universities and colleges, compared to only 7,000 in 1970.

On the other hand, the general education system is offered free to every Saudi citizen, including the provision of study materials and health services, as the US–Saudi Arabian Business Council (2009) indicate. In addition, the Saudi Ministry of Education (MOE) offer a regular allowance of around £160 per month to all Saudi students at all educational stages, including to university students, students attending Quranic schools (primary, intermediate, and secondary stages) and vocational institutions at the secondary stage to incentivize people to acquire their education. The government supplies books

and materials to all students. It is also in charge of the initial teacher training, promotion of teachers and payment of their salaries. The government also encourages student exchanges, funds and prepares international cultural events, and safeguards educational standards. Furthermore, thousands of Saudi students are sponsored by the government to study overseas to gain higher qualifications, understand the latest developments in their fields, and bring home the best working practices. Saudi Students constitute the most significant group of Middle Easter students studying in the USA (US–Saudi Arabian Business Council, 2009).

As set out in KSA's educational policies (MOE, 1976), under no circumstances is gender co-education allowed at any educational level, except for pre-school education (nursery and kindergarten). However, while attendance at nursery and kindergarten does not enforce segregation between boys and girls, all teachers and caregivers must still be female. These policies largely originate in Islamic teachings, which do not advocate gender co-education in learning environments, including religious spaces such as mosques. In KSA, schools and universities are supervised by the MOE and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and are therefore subject to the above legislation (Almutairi, 2013).

2.4   Challenges in the Education System in KSA

According to Howell (2014) the greatest obstacle facing Saudi Arabia is the weaknesses of its education system. Howell (2014) indicates that, despite billions of dollars being invested in educating Saudi citizens, the quality of Saudi teachers remains questionable. Saudi citizens are beaten by more qualified and better-educated foreigners in landing higher-paying jobs. This is despite the fact that other education indicators are suggesting otherwise. For example, in the years from 2008 to 2012, Saudi Arabia had an average literacy rate for the 15–24 age groups of 98%. Despite this, the lack of employment opportunities has led to apathy about the value of education in terms of job opportunities. Also, the best schools in the Kingdom are private and fee-paying, which has led to criticism that only the rich can afford to provide their children with quality education. This division in education is quite clear. Public schools are very

traditional and mainly focus on rote learning and do not attach a great importance to creativity while private institutions tend to adopt Western curricula with a wider range of subjects and an emphasis on critical thinking (Howell, 2014).

2.5 Early Childhood Education in Saudi Arabia

The Saudi Ministry of Education was formed with the establishment of the modern state. Girls' education began in 1964 (Al-Otaibi & Al- Swailm 2002) and the idea of kindergartens first appeared in 1974. Since then, the needs for early childhood facilities rose, resulting in 1975 in the founding of first pre-school units linked to existing schools (Aljabreen & Lash, 2016).

The success of the first KG school in Makkah in 1975 encouraged further developments by the government who saw the benefit and popularity of these schools (Aljabreen & Lash, 2016). As seen in Table 2, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools opened in 1980, attended by around 2,000 children along with 166 teachers. By 2013-2014, student intake had increased to 182,556 with 22,189 teachers, housed in 2,559 schools supervised by several agents across the country (King Khalid Database, 2015).

Table 2.2 The Growth of Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools in KSA-source: King Khalid Database, 2015.

Year	Number of pre k/k	Number of children	Number of teachers	Student: teacher
1975	1	200	14	14.3:1
1980	19	2067	166	12.5:1
2013-2014	2559	182,556	22,819	8.1

Alshehri (2014) explains the 1,385 public pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools are managed by the Ministry of Education. Although the private sector counts total of 942 schools, their enrolment rates are higher. In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs runs 232 schools, which corresponds to an overall total of 2,559 pre-kindergarten schools in all part of Saudi Arabia (see Figure1).
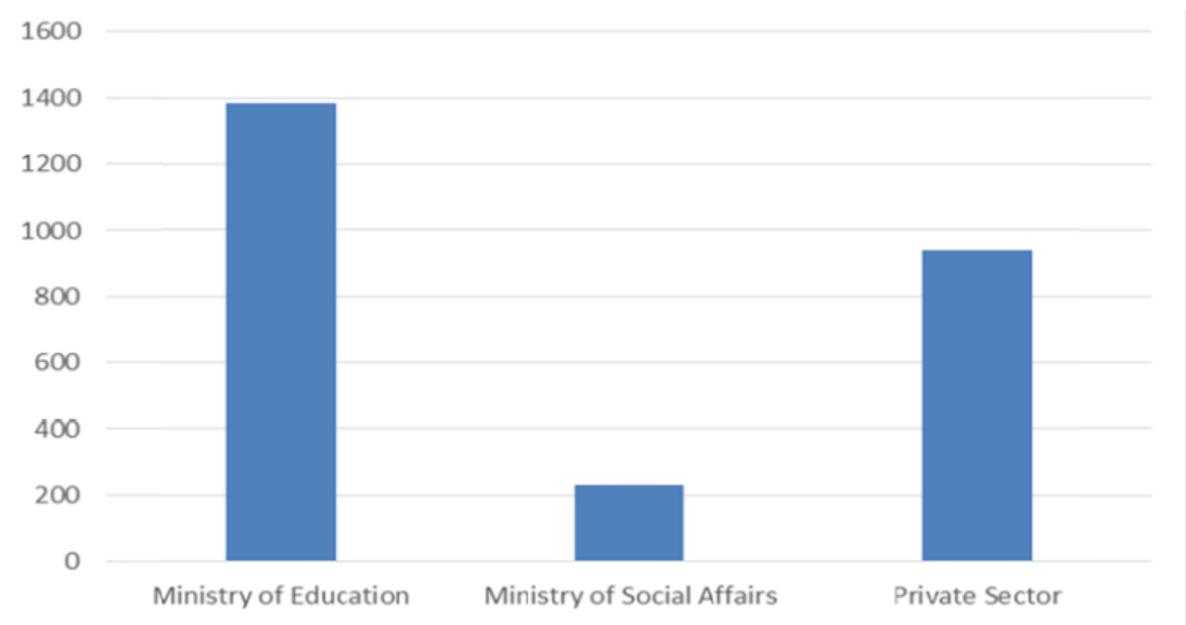
Figure 2.2 Number of Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools in 2013-2014 9source Rabaah, Doaa, & Asma).

According to Andrews and Slate (2002), one benefit of the kindergarten system is to decrease educational expenditure as it ultimately increases enrolment and reduces dropout rates. The 2015-2020 policies of Saudi Arabia have the aim of increasing the number of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools by 300 schools a year. However, the enrolment rate in Saudi Arabia at around 11% is very low compared to other countries (Qasabi, 2012). Therefore, the Ministry of Finance has approved the building of even more facilities and given interest free funding to the private sector. This process works hand-in-hand with the five-year plan and the draft of the National Strategy for improvement of public education this is in conjunction with existing policy and is in response to current demand and to government increase capacity (Ministry of Education, 2015).

2.5.1 ECE aims in Saudi Arabia

The education system of Saudi Arabia is structured around several government policies which include goals for Early Childhood Education. One of the major aims of ECE policy is to introduce children to the school environment at an early stage rather than to be solely brought up within the confines of their homes (Aljabreen & Lash, 2016; Ministry of Education, 2004). It is thought that schools

are the best places for children to be prepared and learn and acquire discipline, hence becoming socially aware.

In general, the principal goal of the kindergarten stage is to lay strong foundations for children's learning and start teaching the required skills, which will then enable the children to become successful in adulthood. This target could have positive consequences, not only on a social level for the individuals involved, but also economically for the society as a whole. Not giving an appropriately high level of attention to this issue would therefore be detrimental to the long-term prospects of the wider society. In accordance with this, there are several factors that should be considered in endeavouring to improve the current standard of kindergarten teaching. The Saudi Ministry of Education (MOE, 2006) has produced a series of objectives based around the goal of preparing children for diverse roles. These objectives aim to align pre-school education with more general education policies in KSA. These objectives are as follows:

1. To emulate the natural family environment of the child and the requirements of Islam to nurture his or her physical, mental and moral growth.
2. To follow the instincts of the religious beliefs of the child in the oneness of God.
3. To encourage, by example, the expected behaviour and virtues of Islam when teaching the child.
4. To foster a sense of sociability in the child, in order to ease the transfer from a life of self-centredness to a social life in the school environment.
5. To provide a range of expression, information and fundamental truths, appropriate to the age and surroundings of the child.
6. To prepare the child physically: to encourage awareness of the importance of exercise and good hygiene, and to help develop the child's senses.
7. To encourage the development of the imaginative world of the child, to allow space for his or her imaginative energies to grow.
8. To make the child happy through education, without spoiling or overburdening him or her, thus acknowledging the needs of childhood.

9. To face childhood issues appropriately by tackling the early signs of bad behaviour and shielding the child from dangers (Samadi & Marwa, 2004).

The objectives of kindergarten education in KSA have their basis in the Islamic religion which recognises that the main intention is to enhance the lives of children and encourage their awareness of other cultures and beliefs, thus having a positive impact on learning support during future stages. These goals are echoed also in the modern theory of kindergarten education. It should also be noted that the objectives are considered to be crucial in supporting the development of children understands and knowledge (Riley, 2007, cited in Al-Jadidi). It has been suggested by Fleer, Anning and Cullen (2004) that a robust and positive early learning curriculum uses the relationship between the teacher and the child as its foundation. In addition, curricula that include a high level of teaching and incorporate learning activities are believed to benefit children attending kindergarten (Almutairi, 2013).

2.5.2 Development of Curriculums of ECE Programmes

Programmes were developed to support the curriculum, which would encourage enrolment and show the advantages of a challenging and stimulating school environment over home education. To reach these aims, the design of the physical environment where this teaching should occur is of paramount significance. In addition, the curriculum has to be effectively constructed for maximum and effective learning.

According to Alshaer (2008), the following documents and institutes had given early years education the attention it deserves to emphasise on the importance of childhood by having a suitable curriculum for kindergarten and all that is required in terms of materials for students and teachers:

- A Royal Decree in 1988 with the support of the General Presidency for Girls' Education.
- A Royal Decree was introduced in 1988 with the cooperation of the General Presidency for Girls' Education.
- The Arab Gulf Program for United Nations Development Organization (AGFUND).

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Almutairi, 2013).

Improvement of the kindergarten curriculum was complemented by the establishment of four centres for the development and the training of the national cadres.

2.5.3 ECE Curriculum and Approach in Saudi Arabia

Curriculum and strategies in ECE passed through a number of stages. The first stage began in 1952 with a traditional approach taught in independent and unsupervised settings (Alomar, 2013). This approach was mainly based on the teaching of basic knowledge in numeracy and literacy using books or various courses.

The second stage, the project approach, started in 1975 and was very similar to the previous stage focusing on basic literacy skills (Alomar, 2013). Finally, the third stage was the Self-Learning Curriculum strategy, beginning in 1986 (Alomar, 2013) whereby it officially started with collaboration between the General Presidency for Girls' Education (GPGE), the AGFUND and UNESCO (Alshaer, 2008). The depth and scope of information and good practice made available for kindergarten teachers is a significant improvement and it shifted learning onto the students with teachers being facilitators and observers, rather than simply being instructors.

2.5.3.1 The Self-Learning Curriculum

Self-learning means children take responsibility for their learning and have a greater role in the classroom and school. This not only motivates children as decision makers, but also makes them responsible. This actually aids learning as the children are at the centre of their schools (Al-Jadidi, 2012). In addition, the Self-Learning Curriculum states that a "focus on the child's own activity, where the child interacts with various educational materials and toys that are available in the educational environment, which helps the child to discover her/his own abilities and develop them in accordance with her/his own growth model" (Samadi and Marwa, 2006 :16).

The Kindergarten Self-Learning Advanced Curriculum is made up of a range of different educational units. For example, learning about the environment around them encourages children to reflect directly and immediately with their everyday experiences. Each unit takes 2-4 weeks and is theme-based and takes place during the daily schedule. The timetable modules include a variety of activities and play times, both indoors and outdoors. Elements of the Self-learning Advanced Curriculum (Alomar, 2013), contain the following:

- Activity self-adopted curriculum expertise, where children are allowed to express themselves creatively through and start to experience the adventure of learning and discovering.
- Activity self-centred approach, where children are actually guiding their own learning both internally and externally, through interaction and experience.
- Comprehensive and balanced approach catering for the physical, mental, and social needs of the child.

2.6 ECE Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

There is considerable research that shows that pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers who have relevant academic credentials, such as a degree in ECE, are more effective and more aware about ways to deal with children than less qualified peers (Sylva et al., 2003).

Gomez, Kagan, & Fox, (2015) reported similar results where a positive relationship was reported between academic qualifications of teachers and educational success of kindergarten children. Abry, et al., (2015) concluded that educational background and credentials of teachers in pre-school have significant positive contribution on the educational attainment of children. Teachers with a higher academic background were reported to be more effective for children's academic adjustment and social adjustment. According to Ho, Lee, and Teng, (2016) when the number of teachers who are bachelor degree holders increases in school, the positive perceptions about the professional learning community also increase. The study also reported that teachers with higher educational background are more effective for the education system.

This is an important aspect of early childhood education internationally, because as shown in the UK, qualifications are aligned with the quality of provision and children's outcomes (Sylva et al., 2003). Although these connections have been made in international research, this topic needs to be explored further in KSA (Abry, et al., 2015).

Early childhoods teachers' education in Saudi Arabia has changed from vocational settings to being university based. According to Al-Jadidi (2012), seventeen of the twenty-four public universities offer first degrees in early childhood education while only four training centres run by the Ministry of Education provide in-service teacher training. These training centres provide training and professional development for KG teachers, regardless of their qualifications.

As mentioned earlier in the Saudi context, there are in fact two types of early childhood teachers. The first includes qualified teachers who are trained to develop children's knowledge and personality appropriately. On the other hand, the second type consists of teachers who are not qualified, yet are still teaching. This is because there is a shortage of early childhood teachers and when posts need to be filled, it is done at the expense of knowledge of children's development. The main reason for the shortage of qualified teachers is the fact that only female teachers are hired and appointed as a kindergarten teacher, even if they are not qualified. It was explained above that the Saudi education system is segregated at all stages, except at kindergarten level, where male and female children are mixed in the same class. However, due to Saudi culture, only female teachers can teach children at the pre-school level.

The above-mentioned information is important to this research as it establishes the Saudi Arabian context and its education system for the reader. As a result, the reader will understand the Saudi context and appreciate the justification of the methodological choices I made, since what is culturally acceptable in one culture, might not be acceptable in another. These cultural specifics relate to religion, habits, customs, and taboos, which will help clarify some of the findings produced by this research. For example, it could explain why the available training programmes offered to teachers are provided on specific dates as the women in Saudi Arabia cannot commute freely during certain periods when it is

unsafe or culturally unacceptable to do so. It could also help readers understand why Saudi in-service early education teachers perceive some issues in certain ways compared with similar studies from other countries (Almutairi, 2013).

2.6.1 Background of ECE teacher's preparation in KSA

The preparation of early childhood teachers in KSA began with a number of individual efforts exemplified in the foundation of the Gulf Girl Charity Association in Al-Khobar, under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the Kingdom (Al-Otaibi & Suwailem, 2002). The association began its first programme (1978/1979) in the city of Al-Khobar and then the process spread to other Saudi universities, such as King Saud University and the colleges of education, after the creation of a new discipline dedicated to training female teachers for pre-primary education (Almutairi,2013)

A decade ago, the number of qualified kindergarten teachers reached 873 Saudis and 32 non-Saudis, but the number of unqualified teachers has reached just 211 Saudis and 10 non-Saudis. The author would add that the number of educators with academic qualifications accounted for 121 Saudi and 450 non-Saudi teachers. She also added that teachers with no such qualifications in this sector totalled 762 Saudi and 821 non-Saudi (ibid). According to other statistics, in 2002, the number of early childhood teachers in other sectors was as follows: 28 in the Department of Defence, 42 in the National Guard, and 999 in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Al-Otaibi and Suwailem, 2002).

Rabaah, Doaa, & Asma, (2016) presented following table which summarises the growth of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools in Saudi Arabia from 1980. The study reported that in the beginning there were only 2,000 children and 166 teachers and other non-teaching staff in early 1980s but currently in 2013-2014, there are over 182,556 children in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools with more than 22,189 teachers working in 2559 schools. These statistics were obtained from King Khalid Database.

Year	Number of Pre-K/K	Number of kids	Number of teachers	Student: teacher
1975	1	200	14	14.3:1
1980	19	2067	166	12.5:1
2013-2014	2559	182,556	22,819	8:1

Furthermore, the study also reported that under the Ministry of Education there are approximately 1,400 public pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools operating. However, the number of classes in the private sector schools (942 schools) is higher than public sector kindergarten schools and the enrolment rate in private sector schools is also higher. Furthermore, there are 232 schools administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs, and thus there are about 2,600 pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools in total in the Kingdom. Following figure shows number of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schools in all Saudi Arabia in 2013-14.
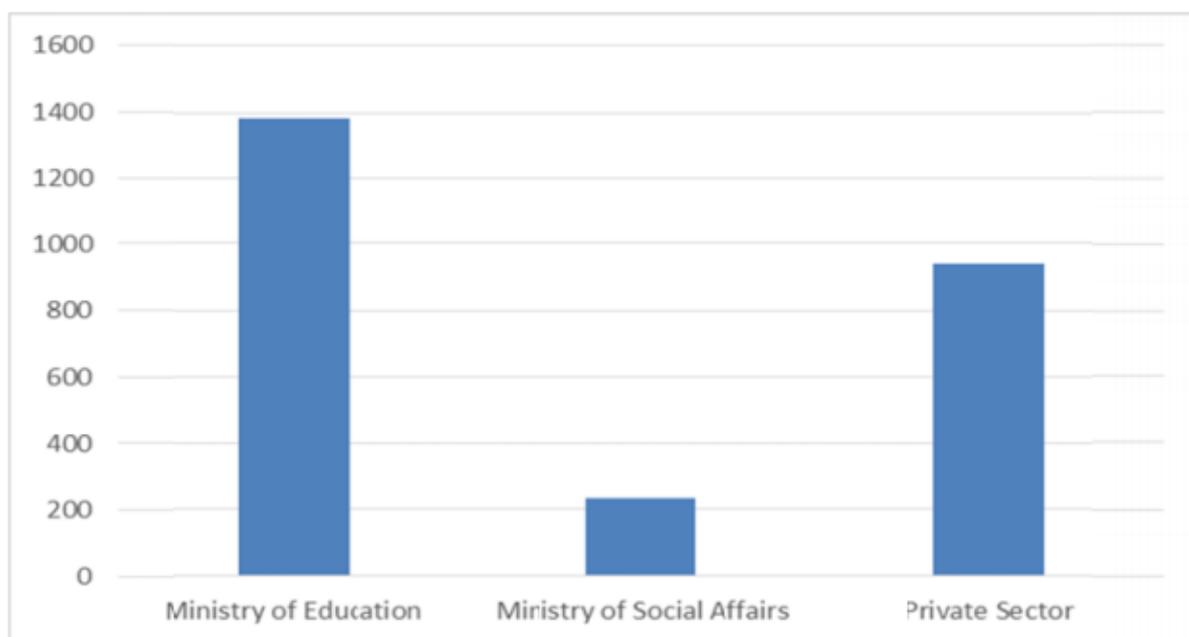
Figure 2.3 source: Rabaah, Doaa, & Asma, (2016.5).

The KSA has also sought to develop the expertise of early childhood teachers by launching training programmes and holding conferences to help raise standards, while terminating the contracts of temporary teaching staff (Almutairi, 2013).

On the other hand, before 1994 there was no official curriculum or guidance for early year's education despite the rise of the number of schools with kindergarten provision. In reality, every school independently developed their own teaching materials and curricula. In the early 1980s the efforts of UNESCO through several workshops demonstrated the need for kindergarten teaching education and unified curriculum across the kingdom (Doaa, & Asma, 2016). Hence, the idea of development of early childhood education in Saudi Arabia was formulated to ensure the continuity of development and the gradual expansion of teacher training cadres to include the largest number of kindergarten workers as supervisors, principals, teachers and administrators. Therefore, the first two centres were established in Jeddah and Riyadh in 1989-1990 to serve their respective areas. Then, three other centres opened in the eastern region and two in Qassim, and the last one was established in the north of Saudi Arabia in the city of Hail in 2017. Samples of pages the in-service training centres in some of regions of KSA are shown in figures 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6.

Figure 2.4: Piece of news about a training centre for early years' teachers' in Eastern region in Dammam city (opened on 1993: source).

Figure 2.5: Training centre in Qassim, opened in 2013.
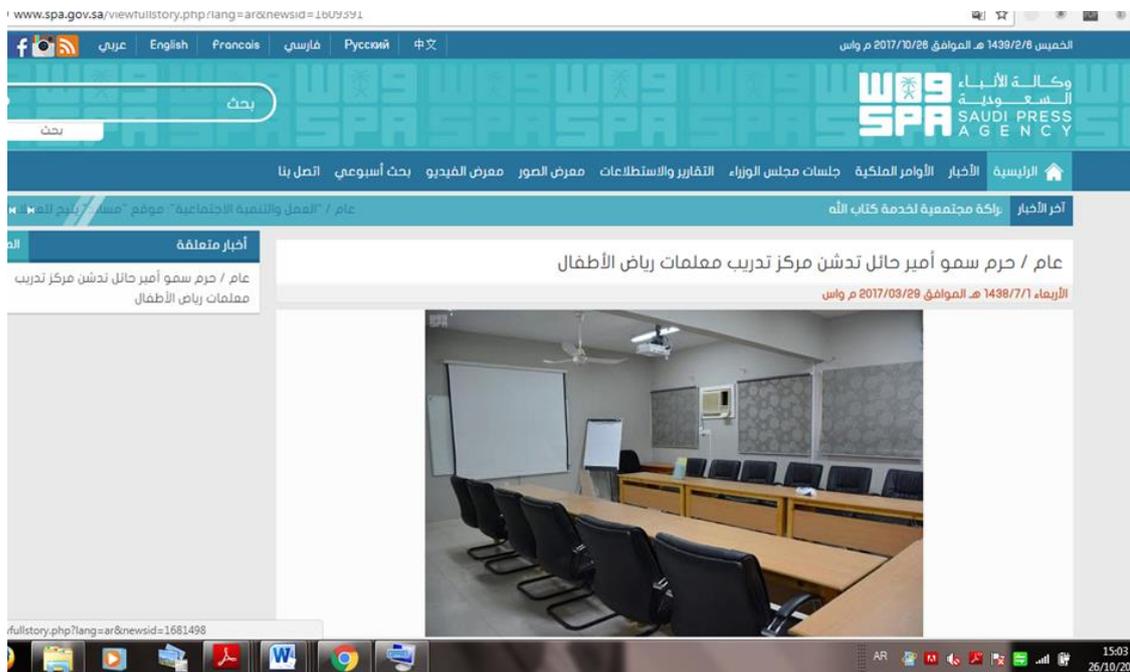
Figure 2.6: A classroom training centre in the North of Saudi Arabia in the city of Hail (opened in 2017) source: https://www.spa.gov.sa/1609391

2.7   In-Service Training Centres in Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia, training centres were established in 1987. Each is devised as a laboratory where the learning process can take place, in which every classroom is linked with a room having a one-way screen mirror that can be used for observations. This arrangement enables trainees to experience conditions of

real-life learning whilst this experience can not only be observed, but also thoroughly examined and assessed. The aim of the training programme is to provide in-service teachers with relevant information regarding the effective ways in which the Newly Developed Curriculum (NDC) can be implemented. The fundamentals of this programme are represented by the self-directed methodology in which participants gain knowledge by means of learning based on experiencing different situations. The training staff of these centres comprises Saudi teachers with high levels of teaching experience who have undergone training consisting of approximately 8 to 10 sessions in order to perform the role of professional trainers of in-service teachers in early childhood education (Al-Seiak, 2000; Al-Ameel,2002; Almutairi, 2013).

2.7.1 In-service training centre where this study was conducted

The centre in which this study is conducted is located west of the capital Riyadh, in the diplomatic district and it is in a single storey building. The centre has two sections: the training section and the kindergarten section; the training section trains all the workers in the early childhood education such as teachers, supervisors, assistant teachers, and administrators on the self-learning curriculum. The centre offers two courses in the year, with each course lasting two consecutive months. The trainees get a certificate of passage and they are usually followed up by the trainers to see the impact of training and promote positive aspects and address any negative points (See Documentary evidence Appendix 1).

The kindergarten section has a reflective mirror for the application of the self-learning curriculum through observation rooms (Sywelem & witte 2013) (see Appendix 1) where trainee teachers can observe children and adults. The trainee teachers are able to make notes on their observations and these are used for peer discussion in groups as part of their training process.

2.7.2 External Activities for the centre

- The centre receives visitors from different sectors of the country as well as from outside the kingdom.

- Leaders of training at the Dammam centre have been trained by the director of the Training Centre for kindergarten teachers for various subjects.
- The centre participated in the nomination of the leadership of Qassim Centre and the amendments in the building with the consultants from the Qassim Centre.
- Contribute to some courses outside the centre.
- Training course for employees of Bahrain Training Centre for two months of the year 1990
- Training courses for kindergarten teachers/theoretical course from 1991.
- Presenting educational seminars every year (Documentary evidence, see Appendix 2).

2.8   Summary of the Chapter

This chapter explained the context of the study. It started by giving background information about the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where the fieldwork of the current study was carried out, and some characteristics of the KSA society. Then, the philosophy of the KSA educational system was described. This was followed by a description of the structure and organization of the early childhood education system and objectives in KSA. It included a brief look at the curriculum material and the preparation of kindergarten teachers in KSA. The training of ECE teachers during the in-service programme was outlined. The chapter ended with providing background information about in-service centres in Saudi Arabia. The next chapter will consider literature review, focusing on areas linked to the research questions.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three forms an important part of an overall research. It provides a detailed review of the literature concerning the research domain while referring to scholarly work and theoretical frameworks to gain understanding of the topic under inquiry. As such, the purpose of this Literature Review is to provide a summary and assessment of the scope and quality of the studies conducted in both national and international contexts, in the field of early childhood education and especially in relation to the process of training early childhood teachers. However, the various themes in this chapter will be the most updated critical views of scholars and professionals in the early childhood education field and will be directly related to the research aims and objectives, as well as the research questions. Hence, this chapter critically determines and identifies the various content and perspectives, and sheds light on the research gap, followed by an overall summary of the whole chapter.

In order to investigate in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of a training programme in Saudi Arabia, the main rationale to collect primary data is to gather original information and perspectives of kindergarten teachers in Saudi Arabia about the in-service training programme provided to them. Therefore, this study selected methods that would yield data and research outcomes that could contribute to elicit responses from teachers and that could help Saudi Arabia kindergarten schools to devise suitable policies to provide in-service training programmes for teacher development and professional growth.

In general, many internet sources have been relied on to obtain information in this thesis, such as the University Library, Microsoft Academic Search, Google Books, Google Scholar, and others by searching for words like in-service early childhood, training programme in Saudi Arabia, early childhood education in Saudi Arabia, advantages and challenges of early childhood education. In this research, the definitions of the study concepts will be discussed, including early childhood education, in-service training, and knowledge and belief, followed by

the importance of teaching qualifications in the educational field. Then, a general overview of in-service training of teachers will be presented. After that, the advantages of in-service teacher training, the challenges facing teachers, educational supervisors, and faculty members in the training programmes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the development of early childhood curriculum aid approaches in Saudi Arabia will be presented. Finally, the proposed theoretical framework will be illustrated in order to fill the gap found in literature.

3.2 Definition of the study concepts

Various terms were used in defining the terms relating to the education of young children, such as kindergarten children, preschool children and early childhood education children. This study will use the term "During early childhood" where early childhood education is defined by "the education and the provision of educational services to children from the age of birth to the age of six. It includes programmes provided to children from childhood to third grade through different settings or environments". Accordingly, it can be argued that early childhood highlights the two main worlds of children, home, and school (Stephen et al., 1996: 55), but for the purpose of this study, however, early childhood education is understood to be the stage where children aged three to six years develop intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically in order to be prepared for entering the primary schools with KS (Almutairi, 2013).

3.2.1 Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Early childhood is the age period ranging from birth to six years, in which children acquire basic skills such as speaking, language, and the ability to be educated; during which their awareness of independence grows, the character of their personalities becomes determined, and they begin to rely on themselves in their actions and movements with confidence and spontaneity. During early childhood, both male and female children should have many characteristics in common, which indicate typical development, such as: repeated movement, the desire to imitate, stubbornness, non-discrimination between right and wrong, asking many questions, sharp memory, love of encouragement, love of play and fun, love of competition and rivalry, imaginative thinking, tendency to acquire skills, rapid linguistic development, tendency to disassemble and construct, and

intensity of emotions (Eurofound, 2015). Early childhood is the most important stage for children's learning and development. The first six years are of the utmost importance because the care and attention given to the child at this stage continue throughout life. Learning is not confined by time or place as the child's learning ability is developed from birth. Investments contribute to the development of the early childhood stage, through early education activities.

Previous studies have demonstrated that the desire to interact, explore, and observe in human beings starts in early childhood, long before secondary school, and may even start before primary school (Buchter et al., 2017). Children at this stage use questions and inquiries directed to those around them to learn more about the outside world. Each child has the so-called information bank, as the brain in this period is extremely sensitive, which makes it easy to store information, experiences and symbols of things to be used to gain, interpret and deal with future experiences. This stage is considered to be the fastest stage of linguistic development, in terms of expression, understanding, and comprehension; through which the linguistic expression starts to be clearly understood, and tends towards comprehension, improvement of pronunciation, and disappearance of childlike linguistic errors such as missing sentences, substitution, etc. During this phase, the child can acquire about fifty new concepts each month, thereby adding this tremendous wealth to his or her verbal output, helping him or her to communicate, understand and respond to others and with the demands of social life and educational process, and act as an essential element in healthy mental development. At this stage, the child is characterised by fertility of imagination and the ability to connect causes with results.

Moreover, cognitive growth at this stage is very rapid; children acquire a lot of information and gain the different cognitive concepts that help them develop knowledge, skills, and understanding, especially now that we live in the era of knowledge explosion. Children develop models of skills called general intelligence, as well as the stability of other skills such as cognition, memory, learning, problem-solving, and begin to form different cognitive concepts, which explains the need to expose the child to information and concepts of knowledge in an appropriate manner. This facilitates the process of acquisition, and to

ensure that the development of the knowledge is sound, as any misinformation acquired at this stage by the child is difficult to change later, which affects the child's worldview. In addition, depriving children of exposure to this information and concepts will negatively affect their knowledge development. The current trends in the education of pre-school children emphasise the importance of exposing them to the various sensory stimuli and providing them with the appropriate concepts will help them understand modern scientific and technological development, and extend their experiences before they reach school age.

The child tries to reconstruct everything that has been developed in the early years of life, whether it was in language development or in symbolic processes. However, the child's understanding of the concepts is still fragile. The child's understanding of the concept of learning is related to the formation of skills and practices, which are gradually corrected and refined, leading to cumulative understanding of generalisations and rules related to concepts. The child's process of conceptualisation is a process that utilises the experiences drawn from the family, peer group, school, media, and the surrounding environment.

The child takes these concepts into cognition and categorisation processes and puts them into categories of information according to their common and similar characteristics and emerges with a number of new concepts and attitudes towards life, through which behaviour and actions are shaped; as each person organises their own life based on the concepts that memory contains and the relationship between these concepts and the variables that govern these relationships. The concepts a child possesses always include something more than the particular meaning of a particular person or thing, a particular incident or situation. For example, the concept of a mother grows through the child's experience with the mother and experiences with other women who play the mother's role with the child and with other children (Murtha, 2017).

The formation of concepts during childhood is a social process that requires direct personal experience with other people, materials, and cultural tools to support children's learning and development. Psychological growth needs to combine direct experiences with other experiences.

In the words of Elango et al. (2015), early childhood is a phase in individual growth and development. It usually refers to young children and sometimes an age group after that. The age group is a more or less unrelated term in the domain of early childhood. In the field of psychology, the term childhood is generally described as the time that covers a period of birth until the age of 9 to 12 years, thus including phases of formative years, pre-school playgroup and early school time period.

Early childhood education (also known as early education) refers to the education of young children by non-family members in a place outside the home environment. Parents, teachers, educators, and service providers can determine the level of development of infants and young children through their involvement, which is of fundamental importance to the successful education of children later at school. The most important objective of early education is to support the psychological, cognitive, social, and emotional readiness of children to attend primary schools.

Pre-school and kindergarten education in KSA concentrates on children aged 3 to 6 years. Researchers and educators view parents in the early childhood stage as a crucial part of their children's development. Teachers usually see mothers and fathers as "the first and best teacher" for their children (Kangas, 2016).

The education of young children is supported by the strong foundation and development of a society in the words of Wortham and Hardin (2015). Trends confirm that nowadays families are more concerned about their child's education and seek to provide them with a quality education at an early age. In a real setting, as far as findings of the National Centre for Education is concerned, enrolment in kindergarten has increased significantly in the last thirty years (Buchter et al., 2017).

As far as the study of Elango et al. (2015) is concerned, it is not surprising that the field of education has changed over the last 10 years. Educators from around the world are making hard attempts to prepare the young generation with the essential skills considered necessary for a successful life in modern society. Moreover, infusing in learners the resilience to quickly accept the

changing face of contemporary technologies, educators should promote learning settings that foster skills like creative thinking, creativeness, problem-solving, communication, collaborative efforts, global consciousness, and social accountability. Early childhood education, according to research performed by Osamwonyi (2016), must be designed in a manner that fosters the aforementioned strategies in order to turn a learner into a responsible member of a society. In addition, educators in early education settings should become resourceful and innovative, and they should think outside their personal matured views and become capable enough to understand core needs of young learners in an effective manner.

3.2.2 In-service training

Teacher training and educational preparation in early childhood education (ECE) practices requires that teachers attend some professional training to be prepared for teaching in kindergartens. This could be done in training centres or universities. Teachers need training and guidance to be prepared for such needs, and part of their readiness is to examine teachers' perspectives on ECE education (Han et al., 2015) and the necessary knowledge, skills, experiences, and beliefs that teachers need to develop such integrated instruction. Accordingly, it is required that before getting kindergarten teachers to start utilising ECE pedagogical practices in their schools, it is important to begin by investigating their perspectives on the contextual factors of ECE integration, for being emotionally and intellectually prepared and willing to promote the interdisciplinary nature of ECE in their kindergartens' classes. This should require increasing their professional training on how to achieve early childhood education practices in their classes through detailed guidelines that fit with the current curriculum (EL-Deghaidy et al., 2017).

The need for in-service training of teachers in the early childhood education setting can never be overlooked in the contemporary scholarly work. It has become a necessity in improving work-based behaviour and encouragement of teaching staff across the world. Lack of in-service training of educators will hold back the professional development of educators along with the 'missing gap' between demands and expected accomplishment levels as far as the study of

Best and Kahn (2016) is concerned. In-service training for teachers allows for activities that might take account of roundtable discussions, practicum, practical workshop courses, exhibitions and much more. These in-service training activities are mainly designed to create and enhance teachers in an early childhood education setting to support children's learning and development in increasingly complex societies. It has now become important that detail must be given to developing in-service training programmes for teachers in order to support their long-term personal and professional.

In-service training is essentially developed for the staff development of the school and the educational organisation in general according to Alabi and Ige (2014). If teachers in an early childhood setting are to conduct their tasks successfully and creatively, it becomes essential for them to get innovative training so that they can develop new skills and come across new teaching methodologies. The higher the level of educational achievement by teaching bodies, the higher the degree of learning standards attained by the young learners. According to the Osamwonyi (2016), no standard of the learning process can rise above the excellence of its teaching staff members. To cater to the increasing and complex demands of education in a worldwide economy, it becomes important to offer quality in-service training for teachers to get adeptness in their respective areas, enhance their existing base of knowledge, and practical experience according to a study performed by Okolo (2013).

The concept of in-service training can be described as the suitable course materials and lesson plans in which a teacher in an early childhood setting may partake to develop his or her professional skills, abilities, and knowhow. As a result, in-service training includes all kinds of learning and teaching material provided to an educator who is already serving young children. In-service training is an ongoing process of identifying and addressing existing and future needs of teachers, in order to strengthen their career growth opportunities and try and ensure that they are satisfied with the teaching profession.

In general, teaching staff members are considered as the centre of the education process. Hence, in-service training is involved with actions and programmes in which a professional educator serving early childhood might take part in the rationale of developing his or her professional expertise and

interest, following the initial training. In this context, in-service training is developed to close the gap of professional insufficiencies of an educator. As Alabi and Ige (2014) have correctly indicated, the skills suitable for the generation before may no longer prepare young learners for the world further than the educational centre. Young learners are being tasked to become more resourceful and attentive in their routine performances.

Training is a necessary process to keep up with the latest developments in the professional career. It starts with determining the training needs, the target groups, and the planned goals. Then, it moves on to designing the training programmes that meet these needs, and then the implementation of these programmes. However, it is important to explore the ole that teachers' knowledge and beliefs play in their professional development

3.2.3 Knowledge and Belief

3.2.3.1 Teachers' Beliefs

Beliefs have been defined as "psychologically held premises, understandings, or propositions about the fields that are considered true" (Richardson, 1996:103). Moreover, Shafer (2004: 27) defined beliefs as "a comprehensive system of personalised assumptions regarding the students, the subject, teaching, and learning."

In this regard, Harste and Burke (1977) claimed that as beliefs are invisible, studying beliefs will not be easy to implement, because of the impossibility of getting inside teachers' minds to reach their beliefs, knowledge, and values (Feiman-Nemser and Floden, 1986, as cited in Bennett, Wood and Rogers, 1997:24). For this reason, the interpretation and understanding of student-teachers' beliefs in kindergartens will be of high importance.

Sparks (1984, as cited in Pehkonen, Torner, 1999: 261) reports that teachers can considerably alter their teaching ways after a mere ten hours of training. However, a change of belief in an adult is very unusual. All trainee teachers beginning a teacher education programme have at least 18 years of worldly experience and changing the tenets of their belief system is a considerable challenge (Deering, 1997). He adds that altering those beliefs is a gradual,

lengthy process. For this reason, researchers cannot study teachers' beliefs or thinking without studying their professional and social context (Mansour, 2008a). As noted by (Mansour, 2008a), in general, most research on teachers' beliefs is rooted in a Western perspective, rather than an Islamic perspective; therefore, relevant studies are scarce (Alzaydi, 2010; Abdelhafez, 2010; Ahmed, 2011; Kamil, 2011).

According to Judson (2006), there is a strong relationship between behaviours and beliefs. The importance of construct in the teaching process can be reached when the teachers' behaviours are influenced by their beliefs instead of by their experiences or knowledge. More clearly, constructivist beliefs including active learning, collaborative, and student centred may drive teachers to use constructivist pedagogical approaches and student-centred activities when they employ technology in their practices inside their classrooms (Hermans et al., 2008). In the same sense, the study of Caner et al., (2010) aimed to investigate the extent to which teacher beliefs will play a role in their practices when teaching in kindergartens and early childhood education classrooms. As it is a very broad research field, the researchers exclusively included teaching activities and teaching practices of teachers and their beliefs about teaching young children with respect to early childhood education fundamentals. The results of Caner et al (2010) study showed that the teachers considered how their children could learn best in consideration of their age category, interest, and level by using several materials and activities that suit teaching to young learners. Teachers utilised repetition, singing songs, role-play, colouring, and picture drawings in their classrooms with their children. They tried to do their best for their children in the classrooms, and therefore, they used different materials and activities in the teaching process.

In a study by Breslin, Morton & Rudisill, (2008) the teachers complained about the crowdedness of the classrooms, inappropriate and inadequate materials that were provided to children in their school. They stated that a specific training programme should be provided for teaching children because they encountered some difficulties while teaching. Thus, although they were experienced in teaching, they faced some adaptation problems in their teaching. They pointed out that administrators and officials should take some precautions such as

providing manageable lesson programmes. The study concluded that teaching in early childhood classrooms is very fruitful due to the enthusiasm of the children and observed classroom practices (Breslin, Morton & Rudisill, 2008).

3.2.3.2 Effective teaching and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

Al Rajhi (2006) defined knowledge as the set of facts, concepts, and information that man possesses as a result of frequent attempts to understand the things and phenomena surrounding it. There are multiple theoretical points of view that can be drawn on to inform education. The sociocultural point of view of knowledge provides kinds of knowledge which are valued by cultures and communities (Case, 1996). However, the nature of knowledge, including its variable nature, has turned into an issue of debate (Hedegaard and Chaiklin, 2005). This includes that which is related to the sociocultural early childhood pedagogy and curriculum. Paavola et al (2004) emphasised the dynamic nature of learning on transforming practice knowledge. Accordingly, there is a relation between participatory learning co-constructed in relation to knowledge creation and children's interests, which is supported by Bereiter (2002: 255), who clarified that both knowledge and learning should be meaningful, in addition to being collaborative efforts.

Traditional approaches to learning have existed since the beginning of the educational system and continue to the present. Traditional learning is based on the traditional culture that is focused on the transmission of knowledge, mainly though teacher-directed methods. The teacher is the basis of learning and his/her role is to transmit and teach information, where all students are present at the same time in one place. The student is considered as passive, and depends on receiving information from the teacher without any effort. From the researcher's point of view, traditional education relies on 'traditional culture', which focuses on using traditional methods based on using old teaching aids such as a blackboard, pens and textbooks, as the role of teachers is limited to the presentation of their information regardless of the cognitive levels or competences of students. The disadvantages of this method are that it relies on text books since it does not use any varied pedagogical approaches or technological methods; it focuses on the cognitive side of the learner at the

expense of other aspects as it neglects the skills of identifying and solving problems, critical and creative thinking and methods of obtaining knowledge. The traditional method is not based on social interaction with peers as it is only between the teacher and the learner, nor does it take into account individual differences between students. The limitations of traditional and formal approaches highlighted the need for new approaches to learning and teaching that address these weaknesses.

The co-construction of knowledge starts with the family, since children learn experientially from their parents through an extensive process of knowledge gathering. In the changing new world and the development of business environments, people work together to benefit from one another. Nowadays, efforts are made to share knowledge within large organizations, which may be geographically spread over the world and active in different types of areas. Knowledge can be understood as expertise, which can affect the quality of work. However, the knowledge emphasis tended to be on the individual, not on systematic considerations of broader work processes or knowledge instruments within organizations. In addition, knowledge can be defined by emphasising its relative, dynamic, and humanistic dimensions rather than solely focusing on traditional Western epistemology (the theory of knowledge) that is based on absolute, static, and non-human views of knowledge (Murray, 2017).

Likewise, knowledge management is divided into two types, which are explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge (Murray, 2017). Tacit knowledge, or intangible knowledge, is the intellectual personal energy that is more difficult to generate, capture, and allocate; it includes aspects such as values, relationship, norms, viewpoints, behaviour, and attitudes. On the other hand, explicit knowledge can be transmitted easily and articulated in formal language. Furthermore, tacit knowledge refers to feelings, implications, and insights that reflect on one's personal relations dynamically created diverted, assumed, and experience-based. Thus, it is more compatible with the extracted personal mind, which makes it difficult to share with other people. As tacit knowledge is subjective, situational, and intimately tied to individual experiences, it is therefore difficult to formalize, document and communicate with others (Murray, 2017).

Explicit knowledge, on the other hand, can be stated in words and numbers, as

it can be easily communicated and shared in the form of hard data, scientific formulae, codified procedures, or universal principles. This is in contrast to tacit knowledge, which is personal and hard to formalize. Explicit knowledge is considered to be formal and objective and can be expressed unambiguously in words, numbers, and specifications. Hence, it can be transferred via formal and systematic methods in the form of official statements, rules and procedures and is therefore easy to codify. Questioning the theory of knowledge began because of the article published by Edmund Gettier, entitled "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge", published in 1963, in which he called into question epistemology, which had dominated philosophy for thousands of years. However, looking at people's beliefs, one will find different reasons for knowledge, causes such as: desires, emotional needs, intolerance, and prejudice. Of course, if knowledge arose in such circumstances, it does not apply to the character of science, nor to the right knowledge; they contravene the natural conditions of knowledge, which must be determined in normal circumstances for good reasons, and must be recognized after perception, meditation, memory, and testimony (Gettier, (1963; Bhatt, 2001; Tamunosiki & Ariche, 2018).

Considering the context of the research domain, the knowledge base of young children or early childhood is unquestionably significant. Knowledge is important for theoretical development and long-term educational success (Britto et al., 2017). Young learners, who usually have an eagerness to learn new things, develop verbal language and reading abilities, critical thinking, and learning within educational content areas. It has been revealed in numerous studies that it is critical to provide young learners with a robust foundation of content-based knowledge for three reasons as far as a study performed by Carson and his colleagues is concerned (2015). First, knowledge is both combined and exponential: learners with a rich base of knowledge are more effective in gaining new knowledge. Secondly, previous knowledge aids reinforce the interpreting and recovery of a new base of knowledge. Third, rich information encourages skills of critical reasoning by supporting working memory and providing sources that could be dedicated to understanding and better command of new knowledge. Evidently, young learners' knowledge base is a crucial element of their long-term learning achievement. However, whilst

investigators from a range of fields now recognise that knowledge attainment should become a primary goal of an early childhood setting, current survey reports have documented a remarkable lack of instructional based curricula focused on creating learners' basic world knowledge, along with the development of core ideas and notions according to Otto (2017). This is a crucial oversight, as differences in content-based knowledge in early childhood might eventually contribute to difficulties later on in children's educational careers.

In a research on the knowledge bases that educators should have to teach in an effective manner, Koehler et al (2014) recognised pedagogical content knowledge as one of the most imperative knowledge bases that educators must have in order to teach young people efficiently. The author discussed that having acumen in the subject is not sufficient to teach it. Educators must also possess pedagogical content knowledge. This base of information, pedagogical content knowledge as far as the study of Herring, Koehler & Mishra (2016) is concerned, should include knowledge of students and their features, information of learning frameworks, knowledge of learning ends, rationales and values and their theoretical and historical foundations. This has directed investigators to think about pedagogical content knowledge as imperative as the subject matter information, knowledge base of pedagogy and on how the educator changes this knowledge into different formats that enable learners in different learning settings to comprehend the subject more clearly and easily. Herring, Koehler & Mishra (2016) argues that pedagogy-based content knowledge is challenging to separate from the core curriculum and determine its performance in an early childhood setting.

Blömeke, Suhl & Kaiser (2014) indicated that pedagogy content-based education forms a different and diverse set of knowledge domain with reference to educator's cognitive development. This kind of knowledge emphasises the way in which teachers in an early childhood setting relate their subject knowledge (what they understand about what they teach young people) to their pedagogical content knowledge (what they understand about teaching, how their students learn and develop new concepts and ideas) and how subject matter information is part of the procedure of pedagogy based content

reasoning. In the words of Herring, Koehler & Mishra (2016), the pedagogy-based knowledge refers to an education that is involved with the presentation and development of ideas, tools, and insights into what makes concepts hard or easy to understand, and knowledge of students' previous base of knowledge.

An in-depth review teaching effectiveness study was made on the connection between teacher characteristics (including teaching knowledge and behaviour) and student achievement gains (Hill et al., 2005). Investigating knowledge converts the teaching effectiveness from teaching behaviours to teachers' knowledge. As teachers' knowledge represents a significant part in learning and teaching processes, there are inconsistent connections between student outcomes and teachers' knowledge indicators; suggesting, however, that the experience of teacher preparation is not a good representation of how teachers' knowledge benefits the students' learning process.

PCK is defined as "knowledge required to teach a specific school subject" (Shulman, 1986). PCK is known to be a transfer of other fields of knowledge that aims to implement teaching, which includes subject matter content, pedagogy, and awareness, in which a mutual relationship between PCK and the base domains exists. (Magnusson et al., 1999) specified the following components of Pedagogical Content Knowledge: (1) knowledge of how to assess the scientific literacy, (2) knowledge about students' understanding of a subject, and (3) knowledge of instructional strategies.

Specifically, (1) beliefs about a curriculum are divided into objectives and goals, in addition to specific curricular materials and programmes; (2) orientation plays a key part in framing Pedagogical Content Knowledge; (3) the assessment knowledge means understanding criteria to evaluate and knowing strategies used to conduct evaluations; (4) knowledge of the understanding of students includes understanding fundamental skills and ideas to learn a subject, and difficult fields to teach students; (5) instructional knowledge is composed of three parts: topic-specific strategies, subject-specific strategies and topic-specific activities.

Teachers need these capabilities: 1) flexibly analysing, and justifying the processes of students' reasoning; 2) anticipating misunderstandings of

students; and 3) choosing the most appropriate instructional materials for promoting learning (Ball, et al., 2008).

On the other hand, Shulman (1986) stated the following two key aspects of Pedagogical Content Knowledge:

1. Ability to "convert" the subject matter knowledge through the use of various instructional strategies and representations for adapting to the different interests and needs of students.

2. Perception of the prior knowledge of students, containing common learning difficulties and misunderstandings.

Contextual knowledge is viewed as a vital knowledge base for Pedagogical Content Knowledge, which may involve several types of knowledge about the institution, curriculum, and society (Gardner and Gess-Newsome, 2011).

In addition, the literature on teacher knowledge shows that the words "belief" and "knowledge" are used frequently in research to indicate the same idea. For some researchers, however, the notion of belief relates to the unconscious form of knowledge that acts as a filter for conscious knowledge. For others, knowledge is described as a reasoned belief (Abedeen, 2015).

The concept of belief and knowledge can be used interchangeably in a context of the teaching process. Wortham and Hardin (2015) addressed educators' beliefs and asserted that such beliefs appeared from their prior learning experiences in different school systems which ultimately regenerated in early childhood class learning. Engel (2017) further commented that educators' beliefs might play a role of the filter through which they make their informed decisions instead of depending on their pedagogical knowledge content or curricula guiding principles. Britto et al (2017) observed that educators in the early childhood setting might adopt such beliefs by means of their experiences working with other faculty members. The authors expressed their considerations with the teacher training programmes with regards to give more concentration to pedagogy-based knowledge, but a limited or no consideration in altering their belief systems. Teacher training systems are not consistently effective in developing educators with belief systems in agreement with curriculum originality and research.

3.3 The Importance of Teaching Qualifications

In order to facilitate the social, intellectual, and physical areas of children's learning and development, as well as creating sound foundations on which a primary school can be built, it is of paramount importance that the provision of early childhood programmes is of a high quality (Almutairi, 2013).

In addition to parents, the teacher is primarily involved in and responsible for the pre-school education of children. In this period of a child's personal development, teaching methods must recognise and take into account individual personal characteristics. In any case, besides the direct benefits for children and families, a high-quality early education is a considerable asset for the whole of society, both in economic and social terms. Neglecting this issue can arguably be detrimental to any long-term prospects for the overall development of society and its citizens (Goodlad, 1999).

In accordance with what has been stated, numerous factors should be taken into account in the process of enhancing the current state of ECE and the quality of teaching at this level. Most importantly, teachers are considered as the main basis of knowledge, wisdom, skills, and aspirations, and are looked up to as role models for children. As a result, they play an important role in accelerating the process of meaningful learning; with teaching quality impacting children's learning outcomes, both in training and practice (Komba & Nkumbi, 2008).

To summarise, research has shown that over the years, teachers have had a major impact on children's learning (Hattie, 2002) and so, as stated above, this has resulted in a great deal of attention being given to the training and education of teachers (Goodlad, 1999), although this has previously received less emphasis in developing countries, Saudi Arabia included. In the US, findings from one research study have proven that when children attend pre-school under the supervision of qualified teachers, they develop early mathematics skills, self-regulation, and receptive language (Evaluating Preschool for All Effectiveness, 2013). These skills help in the effective preparation of children for the ensuing primary school stage. In addition, in New Zealand, the initial education of teachers is believed to influence the quality of

learning and teaching (ibid.). However, in other contexts, there have been different perceptions; for example, Kennedy (1999) ascribes the lack of influence to specific dimensions of ineffective teacher training, exemplified in the type of pre-service programme imposed and its design. Similarly, Lampert and Ball (1999) argue that initial teacher training has a negligible influence on classroom practice (Hattie, 2002; Lampert & Ball, 1999; Kennedy, 1999, cited in Cameron & Baker, 2004).

In addition, it has been reported that unqualified teachers also face a number of challenges. For example, in the Gambia (Qualifying for Quality, 2011), unqualified teachers may experience these challenges in relation to planning and preparation; teaching and learning; training and support for pedagogical skills; barriers to qualification; a lack of respect and status; a demotivating salary, and poor terms and conditions of employment. It is argued that if these challenges are removed, there will be better and more qualified teachers who can develop children in academic, social, and psychological ways (Hattie, 2002; Komba & Nkumbi, 2008).

One of the most influential factors in this regard is the provision of qualified teaching staff. Given their direct interaction with children on a daily basis, early years teachers need to undertake training focused on effective communication and interaction with their pupils. Furthermore, they require specific skills in order to accomplish the main objectives of early childhood education (ECE). It is therefore important to design specialised education and training programmes for early childhood teachers, preferably prepared by experts in the field of teaching young learners. Such programmes may consider, or even reflect, relevant contextual issues, such as the learners' religions, traditions and cultures, as well as the socio-political development of the countries concerned (Sakai & Kipnis, 2009).

Given the aforementioned rationale, it is not surprising that enhancing the quality of early childhood teachers' qualifications has been a subject of intense discussion within the field of educational research. In a study carried out in New Jersey, Coffman and Lopez (2003) argue that well-qualified teachers with specialised training in ECE can have a significantly positive effect on children's levels of academic and personal development. Such a view concurs with a

study by Carr and Mitchell (2010) in New Zealand, which suggests a correlation between the quality of the output of ECE and the qualitative level of teachers' qualifications. In addition, other researchers in many countries have underlined the importance and impact of early childhood teachers' qualifications on children's development. For example, the National Education Association (NEA) (NEA, 2010: 1) in the US summarises in the following points the possible advantages of having a specially-trained teacher with a bachelor's degree at the level of ECE:

- The classroom environment becomes conducive to the development of various attributes of the children's language and literacy;

- There is a higher level of engagement amongst the children and less need to utilise methods of punishment to maintain discipline in class;

- Children receive extensive and encouraging feedback;

- An improvement in the number of learning outcomes related to the education process can occur at this level;

- There may be an improvement in the key learning habits and competencies of reciprocity, resilience, and imagination (Almutairi, 2013).

It is important to emphasise that these benefits are by no means limited to children, insofar as even the teachers can gain substantial advantages, noticeably demonstrated by the possibility of financial reward for their qualifications (Whitebook, Gomby, Bellm, Sakai & Kipnis, 2009). There is an important concordance between the aforementioned views, while Barnett's (2003) argument is that teachers with a four-year college degree and specialised training may earn higher salaries than teachers lacking such qualifications. Furthermore, the NEA asserts that teachers' qualifications are an essential building-block in high-quality early childhood programmes. However, in the context of early childhood, alongside a good qualification, specialised training represents another crucial factor for the success of the educational process in early childhood settings (NEA, 2010).

A similar vision of the importance of teachers' qualifications is shared by members of the Ontario teaching community, who have explicitly acknowledged

that a better qualification can have a positive effect on teachers' performance in a class of young learners. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) has therefore established that early childhood programmes must be provided exclusively by teachers in possession of a specific certificate licensing them to teach. Moreover, ETFO (2001) emphasises that well-trained early childhood teachers have a greater influence on the social and physical development of young children. Additionally, the importance of a teaching qualification is underlined by Whitebook (2003), who concludes that recruiting novice teachers with specialised training in ECE has been found to enhance the learning outcomes of young children. In addition, researchers highlight a strong correlation between the quality of professional education for early childhood teachers and the level of early childhood care and education provided by these teachers (Walsh, 2005). In this regard, the Academy of Sciences Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy argues that young learners aged between two and five benefit substantially from the presence of B.Ed. or BA level teachers who have undergone specialised training, reflecting the requirements of ECE (NEA, 2010).

According to ETFO (2001:10), "there are several factors that can significantly contribute to the quality of delivery of early childhood education programmes: teachers' qualifications; classroom size; programme content; a programme appropriately adjusted for the ages and abilities of the children, and the ability of the teachers to identify a learning difficulty in a pupil and correspondingly intervene". Thus, it is apparent that a teaching qualification is fundamental for delivering an effective and high-quality programme in the context of ECE (ETFO, 2001). The higher the quality of the education, the better the child will develop socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically (Shue, 2007, cited in Pelletier, 2009).

In addition, policymakers in various parts of the world have acknowledged the significance of investing in ECE, whereby the main focus is on developing high-quality programmes for the preparation of early-years teachers at the level of a four-year college degree. In addition, there is an emphasis on the need for specialised training to become a core part of the whole system of educating

student teachers who intend to work in ECE (Whitebook, 2003; NAEYC's Standards for Programmes, 2007; Steven & Jung, 2007, cited in Dunlop, 2008).

To illustrate the advantages of investing in the education of early years teachers, Coffman and Lopez (2003: 2) present a summary of some of the apparently numerous benefits of having a qualified and trained teacher in the classroom, which include:

- The facilitation of the development of personal and academic skills, together with an increased level of engagement and enthusiasm on the part of the children during the learning process.

- Improved communication between the child and the teacher;

- A higher level of cohesion within the class, reflected in the children's willingness to share with each other;

- An enhanced learning experience amongst the children, particularly in terms of developing language and cognitive skills;

- Deeper parental engagement with their child's education process;

- More open and effective interaction and communication between parents and teaching staff;

- A higher level of awareness on the part of the parents regarding their children's education, leading to the provision of better support for learning activities within families;

- Finally, better quality ECE might substantially decrease the risk of having to enrol children in special education schools later in their lives, since highly qualified early years teachers might be able to identify and intervene in the case of a pupil's learning difficulty (Almutairi, 2013).

In a study of at-risk preschool pupils and their teachers' qualifications in New Jersey, researchers found a correlation between the teachers' credentials and students' language and cognitive experiences in the classroom (Coffman & Lopez, 2003). Teachers with four-year degrees and specialised educational credentials were found to provide the highest quality language and cognitive instruction, when compared to teachers without a degree or credentials. A

similar study conducted by the University of Louisville with state pre-school pupils, identified as at-risk of academic failure, found a strong correlation between the teachers' credentials and literacy skills. The correlation between letter identification and the teachers' credentials was the most significant finding (Brown & Molfese, 2008). In recent years, considerable attention has been paid to the role of professional teachers in creating a suitable classroom environment through the application of their knowledge, skills, and experience, conducive to effective and engaging teaching and learning (NAEYC's Standards for Programs, 2007).

Moreover, a significant number of research studies with international relevance have illustrated the impact of highly qualified teaching staff on children's academic progress and personal development. For instance, a study conducted in the UK over a period of five years between 1997 and 2003 (Sylva et al., 2003) investigated the effects of pre-school education on young children's development and their attainment of the desired learning objectives. The children in the Effective Provision for Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE) study were observed from the age of three or four years old and subsequently across their primary, secondary and tertiary education. The main findings of this research indicate a strong correlation between the performance and quality of a selected ECE centre and the degree to which the children can improve during a given period, with regard to learning outcomes. A similar relationship was found to exist between the level of qualification amongst the teaching staff and the centre's quality rating, insofar as better learning outcomes were recorded in cases where the level of qualification amongst teaching and managerial staff at a particular centre was reasonably high. Therefore, it could be stated that the presence of highly qualified teachers who spend a considerable amount of time to deliver pedagogically supported care and education to children can play a crucial role in developing children's skills and learning outcomes (Almutairi, 2013).

Several research studies conducted in the US have focused on the impact of effective ECE on the future personal and academic development of children. For example, a study conducted in Florida on 150 childcare centres showed that classroom settings with qualified and specially trained teachers proved to

be more suited to providing children with an environment where social interaction, communication with the teacher and engagement with the learning material was at a noticeably higher level than in settings without such qualified teaching staff (Coffman & Lopez, 2003). In another study in North Carolina, with 180 participating childcare centres, the authors came to the conclusion that the overall quality of educational services provided in these centres was largely determined by the level of experience and qualification possessed by the respective teaching staff (ibid.). These findings seem to highlight the importance of having good qualifications in relation to achieving the desired learning outcomes (Carr & Mitchell, 2010).

In spite of the aforementioned benefits of better qualifications on the performance and learning of young children, results produced by Bogard, Traylor and Takanishi (2007) seem to take a different direction. These researchers did not find a consistent relationship between the teachers' education and pupil outcomes in pre-kindergarten programmes in the US, although they emphasised that their findings did not infer that the teachers' education was irrelevant to the process of children's learning. However, they did not provide specific directions on the minimum requirements for teaching qualifications at the pre-kindergarten stage. They merely proposed that a BA or B.Ed. can serve as a starting point for pre-kindergarten teachers, as part of certification covering pre-kindergarten to grade three (Almutairi, 2013).

Kindergarten teachers are generally required to have certificates focusing on academic content and child development. This qualifies them to work in kindergarten and then right up to third grade primary, which is the case with the entry requirements for early childhood educators in New Jersey and Pennsylvania (Bogard et al., 2007), in accordance with a signature pedagogy which calls for more extensive teaching and mentoring (Shulman, 2005, cited in Bogard et al., 2007). This pedagogy seeks to standardise teacher training. In the same vein, it has been argued that it is not only teaching qualifications, but also teaching experience which can strongly impact children's development (Kane et al., 2007).

Another important point made by the authors (Kane et al., 2007) is that they assume improvements were facilitated by the more elaborate and intensive

communication with children that appropriately educated teachers can establish in the classroom. However, as illustrated by another study comprising of 800 students in the US, the benefits of higher teaching qualifications are not limited purely to improvements in children's language skills, but have also registered enhanced performance in mathematics (Carr & Mitchell, 2010).

3.3.1 Teachers' Qualification

Findings about teachers' academic degrees (doctorate, Master's, Bachelor's, and other degrees) are indecisive. Some research indicated a positive effect of the higher degrees (Betts et al., 2003). Moreover, some researchers maintained that the condition for teachers to have a second degree increases the cost, in addition to the time spent for teacher education, which may lead to preventing some quality candidates from selecting this career (Murnane, 1996).

3.3.1.1 Teacher education in the subject matter of teaching (in-field preparation)

It is the advantage of the knowledge of the subject matter that a teacher gains through their pre-service education through formal studies and educational courses, but the conclusions of different research are contradictory. Many studies concluded a directly proportional relationship between the preparation done in the subject matter by teachers and student academic achievement (Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000), while other studies have less undoubted results. In this regard, both negative as well as positive results due to teachers' in-field preparation were found on student achievement (Monk and King, 1994).

Goldhaber and Brewer (2000) concluded a positive relationship for students' achievement in some educational subjects, however Monk (1994) reported that while teachers having a major degree does not affect the student achievement, attending a considerable amount of undergraduate or postgraduate training course had led to a direct positive impact on students' achievement in some academic subjects.

3.3.1.2 Period of pre-service education

In spite of evidence that a five-year programme will result in career satisfaction and a higher continuation rate of graduates, there is no proof that graduates of a longer period programme can be effective teachers (Andrew, 1990; Carr & Mitchell, 2010).

3.3.1.3 Certification and licensing status

In many countries, accredited teacher education programmes grant the qualification certificate for teachers who attended and graduated from them. Nevertheless, some graduated teachers are required to pass a national examination test or attend an induction programme in order to get a licence. A debate has arisen among those who emphasise full certification (Darling, Hammond et al., 2001) and those who argued that the students of teachers who have full accreditation are very similar to those who are students of teachers with certification (Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000).

3.3.1.4 Number of years of experience

Research on the impact of the number of years of experience of a teacher on students' achievement has set up a positive relationship between the effectiveness of teachers and their years of experience, but the observed relationship is often insignificant or not a direct linear proportional one (Murnane and Phillips, 1981). The currently available evidence emphasises that although the less experienced teachers are also less effective teachers than their senior counterparts, it was found that the benefits of years of experience will become reduced after some few years, but the relation between a teacher's years of experience and students' achievement is not easy to be interpreted (Rivkin et al, 2000).

3.3.1.5 Participating in Activities of Professional Development

Many different organisations can implement Activities of Professional Development, whether in school or out of school, on the job or during holidays leave. During these activities, the participating teachers update their teaching skills and content knowledge, in order to meet the demands of new curricula, in

addition to considering modern research findings related to learning and teaching, and also to adapt to changes in the requirements of the student population. There are mixed conclusions in the debate regarding the relationship between student outcomes and participation of teachers in Activities of Professional Development. Some studies on in-service professional development have found no relationship with student achievement (Jacob and Lefgren, 2004). Other researchers have found a high level of student achievement connected to the participation of teachers in the Activities of Professional Development, which are related directly to the field of their teaching (Angrist and Lavy, 2001). Nevertheless, the positive impact of teachers' participation in Activities of Professional Development is not clear-cut, owing to the fact that this variable should be considered in relation to other teachers' characteristics, which means that teachers participating in these activities of Professional Development may also be more motivated and, consequently, more specialised in the subjects they teach.

3.3.2 Qualities of Effective Teachers

The concepts of quality teachers and quality teaching have been a subject of major debate worldwide. Qualities of effective teachers were regarded by Stronge (2007) to include definite characteristics that consider the teacher as an individual in addition to being a professional, and focusing on issues of teachers' job practices and responsibilities. Stronge's framework consisted of five main qualities and twenty-one factors. The main qualities are: 1. Teacher as a person. 2. Classroom environment. 3. Organisation for teaching. 4. Implementing teaching. 5. Checking students' progress.

In the words of Johnson et al (2017), effective educators in an early childhood setting aim to develop a child both emotionally and academically. This type of teacher looks forward to developing a learner that later becomes socially responsible. In their view, the main qualities of an excellent teacher include: positive expectations for learner achievement; performs extraordinarily in managing classroom environment; and designs interactive lesson plans for the learners. Given that successful educators believe that their learners are capable of the tasks designed before them, positive aspirations are the keystone of their

belief systems as far as Bredekamp's study (2016) is concerned. Successful educators evidently recognise that learners could attain their academic objectives if provided with appropriate, focused instructions and guiding children's individual pathways. Such teachers manage classroom activities in an effective manner and educate young children while adopting a fun and playful approach. The combination of child-initiated and adult-led activities marks out early childhood education from other phases, and demands that teachers are pedagogically skilled in engaging young learners in different ways.

Effective teaching design features innovative and interactive lectures and actively promotes learners' participation in academic activities. They have a determined set of processes for managing routine activities of learners that can otherwise be overwhelming and take time to instruct learners. Successful teachers are capable enough to recognise what should be done and discover teaching-learning methodologies to make learners active and dynamic. They comprehend that the primary disciplinary or managerial issues arise from a lack of formal protocols (Koehler & Mishra, 2016; Emmer et al., 2003).

Efficient educators also comprehend the content of their respective subject matters and what their learners should learn. They possess a level of mastery in their particular domain and know evidently how to deliver excellent learning content to young learners. Effective educators adhere to national educational standards and are capable enough to assess performance data in order to further improve their professional competencies and remove weak points that may impede the effective delivery of knowledge among learners (Blömeke, Suhl & Kaiser ,2014; Stronge, 2007).

Moreover, In Stronge's framework, the quality of the teacher as a person may be evident in the factors of fairness, caring, respect, motivation and enthusiasm, interactions with students, reflective practice, and dedication to teaching.

Effective teachers assign a considerable period of class time for establishing the procedures of classroom management, expectations for student behaviour, classroom organisation, which are the basics of the learning environment (Stronge et al., 2004; Emmer et al., 2003). In Stronge's framework, quality of

classroom environment is proven by the factors of classroom management, disciplining students, and classroom organisation.

On other hand, implementing instruction is what the teachers do in their classrooms, regardless of organisation skills, training, classroom management, and support students learning. On Stronge's framework, implementing instruction quality is proven in the factors of grouping, implementing instructional strategies, questioning, communicating high expectations to students, engaging students, and understanding complexity.

The responsibility of the effective teacher is not only monitoring students, but it is also considered as one of the basic responsibilities (Williams, 2010). Students' performance, motivation, and achievement are influenced through effective teachers' personal behaviour, organising for instruction, classroom environment, monitoring student progress, and implementing instruction (Stronge, 2007).

Furthermore, the significant obstacles in accurately evaluating the effect of school quality on academic achievement are: (1) to estimate a comprehensive measure of school quality for the multiple school properties, which affect the academic achievements, (2) applying an efficient identifying strategy, in order to isolate school changes from other disturbing unobserved changes, (3). Distinguishing what school properties matter when demonstrating differences of quality among schools. Teacher qualifications, in particular as outlined by their position, are shown to be significant predictors of student achievement (Lai et al., 2009).

It has been found in many studies that school plays a central role in enhancing the academic performance of its learners. Many investigations have discovered the consistently positive impact of education and pedagogical content knowledge on the effective performance of educators, as argued by Blömeke, Suhl & Kaise (2014).

In this context, the role of the teacher and related qualifications also contribute to quality a great extent (Bredekamp, 2016). An effective and qualified teacher is one who understands children's core needs and adapts pedagogical approaches and curriculum content accordingly. Teachers' qualifications are

also an important aspect to be considered in the context of the learner's academic performance. The reason is that a teacher transforms his or her learning experience to learners and shares prior knowledge with them in order to develop a strong foundation for young learners.

Rivkin et al. (2005) found a large difference in teacher effectiveness, but found small effects in teachers' qualifications, like their education and experience. Moreover, rankings of teachers by school headteachers were found to be better indicators of teacher performance than their observation about the teacher qualifications. In addition, when Harris and Sass (2006) examined how in-service training and teacher qualifications impacted student achievement, their observations indicated strong impacts of teachers on the student academic achievement, but indicated traditional measurements of teaching qualifications such as years in the job, type of qualification, and education.

A value-added gains model was utilised Koedel and Betts (2007), in order to assess elementary students' academic results in San Diego. Similarly to much other empirical research, teacher quality was found to be an important element for learner success, although the investigated teacher qualifications (educational status, experience, first-degree subject, and quality of university) have a small impact on the students' academic achievement. Consistent results were obtained from these studies pointing to the fact that the quality of teaching has a significant impact on students' academic results, but some particular teaching qualifications are not of consequence.

3.3.3 Qualifications of Early Childhood Teachers

It is apparent from the previously discussed research studies that the level of qualifications amongst teachers working in early childhood settings has an impact on children's learning outcomes and on the quality of their educational experiences in these settings. It is therefore not surprising that the education and training of early childhood teachers has been a subject of particular interest among educators and policymakers. As a result, many countries have requested teachers that wish to work in early childhood to have a four-year university degree or, as in France, to have a qualification equivalent to a master's degree (Barnett, 2003). In this regard, Barnett also asserted that "the

minimum qualification for a preschool teacher should be a four-year degree with specialised training in teaching young children" (2003: 4). The NAEYC's Program Standards (2007), however, pointed out that "a large number of early childhood professionals who work directly with children do not have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or a degree" (NAEYC's Early Childhood Program Standards, 2007: 2). Hence, there are differences in the minimum teaching qualification requirements for centre-based childcare programmes within and across different countries (Almutairi, 2013).

In 2000, the National Academy of Sciences' Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy called for raising educational standards for early childhood educators, in order to improve teacher efficacy and children's learning outcomes (NEA, 2010). The results of a study conducted by Yassin (2003) concurred with Al-Babtain's (1985, cited in Yassin, 2003) findings which showed a difference between teachers with educational qualifications and those without, in terms of their level of educational practice (Almutairi, 2013).

This suggests that, notwithstanding the level of awareness among educators and policymakers regarding the importance of teachers' qualifications in early childhood settings, there is considerable disparity between this awareness and the actual level of qualification that teachers currently possess in such settings. For instance, a study carried out in the US revealed that less than half of all early childhood teachers have a bachelor's degree (Barnett, 2003). In the KSA, Al-Ameel (2002) investigated teachers from various educational and training backgrounds currently working in early childhood institutions. The study highlighted a considerable level of anxiety in the Saudi context about how such a diverse workforce could possibly function without a shared theoretical understanding of how children learn, or without concurring on the key philosophies and objectives of early childhood education (Al-Ameel, 2002, cited in Nyland & Alfayes, 2012).

Earlier research by Suliman (1998) focused on the reality of pre-school education in the KSA. The research sample comprised eighty-eight supervisors, 119 pre-school directors, and 1,115 pre-school teachers. Of these, 31% of supervisors, 95% of directors and 12% of teachers had a degree in education, but not specifically in ECE. In fact, only 16.55% had a degree in ECE, while

39% had some kind of training and 14% believed that their training was sufficient. In addition, research indicated that there is a massive need for in-service training resources and programmes in the KSA (Al-Noaim, 1996; Nyland & Alfayes, 2012).

These concerns are also reflected in findings revealed in one study in the US, which indicated that pre-school teachers in that context are often recruited without prior participation in a specialised course or training programme for working with young children (McMullen & Alat, 2002). Furthermore, a previous study concluded that the absence of an adequate qualification or a lack of training might have a detrimental impact on the quality of educational services provided in institutions dedicated to ECE (McMullen & Alat, 2002). Thus, there is some concordance between these findings and the conclusions formulated by Al-Ameel (2002) who found that in 1999, only 7.81% of children in their first grade in the KSA had attended any state pre-school institution. One reason for this was the lack of qualified teachers (Almutairi, 2015).

On the other hand, Barnet's (2003) study revealed that Rhode Island is the only State in the US that requires a bachelor's degree for teachers in all early education programmes, including licensed childcare centres. This means that all teachers in state schools are obliged to possess a four-year college degree and a licence to teach in the form of an early childhood education certification. As a consequence of this measure, about 90% of all teachers working in pre-school institutions in this state are highly qualified, with many having training above what is required, in addition to completing courses that focus on improving the effectiveness of their teaching (Barnett, 2003).

It is apparent from the previous discussion that there are essentially two types of early childhood teachers. The first group comprises teachers who possess some form of educational qualification at degree level, whilst the second group refers to teachers who hold only high-school level qualifications, with no specialist training in ECE. This indicates that the latter group of teachers might not be equipped with all the necessary information regarding the most appropriate and effective way to teach children. Therefore, there is a considerable need for this group of early childhood teachers to undertake training programmes. However, these programmes must be specifically

designed, based on the actual needs of teachers in pre-primary education (Almutairi, 2015).

Furthermore, according to Sun et al. (2015), the main challenges found in relation to Early Childhood Education are:

1. The insufficient training and opportunities for initial and continuing professional development.

2. The lower qualifications of early childhood educators, in comparison to primary school teachers.

3. The lack of monitoring and regulation of staff in different settings of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

4. The severe lack of early childhood teachers in rural regions.

3.3.4 The importance of a Bachelor's degree with specialized knowledge of ECE

Previous studies demonstrated that bachelor's degrees are connected to high-quality early childhood education (Austin et al., 2015). Based on these studies, it is recommended that teachers of children from infancy to the third grade should have at least a bachelor's degree and a specialised training in early childhood education (Schilder, 2016). In addition, it is required that early childhood education teachers should have a bachelor's degree as a minimum qualification and also postgraduate training in early childhood education. The importance has shown the following:

- Classrooms taught by teachers having at least a bachelor's degree are of higher quality. This includes better teacher-child interactions, and enhanced literacy environments (IOM & NRC, 2015).
- Teachers having a first degree are more likely to teach in a more comprehensive and effective manner in addition to being less punitive, more delicate and more involved in their profession (IOM & NRC, 2015).

- specialised teacher training in addition to a bachelor's degree level, or higher, increase the quality of teachers and improve teacher-child interactions (IOM & NRC, 2015).

- strong child outcomes were demonstrated in early childhood education programmes employing teachers with at least a bachelor's degree (Minervino, 2013).

- Moreover, to increase the educational credentials and levels of early childhood education teachers, and ensuring that they have a bachelor's degrees and early childhood education credentials, the most frequent methods are as follows:

- legislation to require a bachelor's degree for early childhood education teachers, a certificate, license, or endorsement in early childhood education for teachers;

- providing incentives or scholarships as mechanisms for increasing the educational levels of teachers who work in the early childhood education field;

- State policies, administrative regulation, or rule require early childhood education teachers who work in some settings to be a bachelor's degrees holder (Schilder, 2016, p. 22).

On the other hand, the notion of preschool teachers' qualifications has become more important because of its significant effects on the quality of education and care provided to young children (Barnett, 2003a). In addition, higher qualifications help to achieve more long and short-term positive outcomes for children. Teachers who have at least a four-year degree give students the opportunity to gain high-quality teaching experience, which is essential in achieving student success as such teachers have greater knowledge about the appropriate teaching methods, as well as pedagogical content knowledge. Moreover, they display conducive characteristics, including enthusiasm for clear communication, the focus on sharing and learning tasks, and collaboration among learners. Highly qualified teachers have greater practical skills to encourage their learners to achieve their best, as they become more in tune with their students, more flexible and less strict compared to other teachers who have less qualifications and training. They provide their students with richer

cognitive experiences which yield a better overall emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and social development.

3.3.5 Most Important Types of Teaching Skills

Teaching skills are not innate, but are acquired through the processes of training, learning, and reflection. Types of teaching skills include planning, implementation and evaluation. Within these skills lie other skills, which include brainstorming as a preparation to the lesson, which involves teachers developing strategies to prepare the students so that they are mentally, psychologically and physically ready to receive and accept the new lesson. Although many educators focus on getting students ready for the lesson, for providing the teaching content, they miss an important aspect, which is the emotional aspect of their students (Rivkin et al., 2005). They should understand and respond to these emotions and interests so as to attract the attention of their students and guarantee their involvement and reply to them during the lesson. Research has shown that teachers who attempt to indirectly influence their students through, for instance, taking into account their feelings and showing interest in them, have achieved far greater success. The goal of classroom preparation is to achieve various purposes; perhaps the most important of them are (Rivkin et al., 2005; Harris & Sass, 2006):

1. Attracting the attention of learners to the new educational material, as a means to ensure their integration into classroom activities. A successful teacher motivates students to learn.
2. Creating a reference framework for organising the ideas and information that will be included in the lesson.
3. Linking the subject of the lesson to the previous subjects and experiences, thus providing continuity in learning.
4. Skill explanation "diversification of stimulants". The process of teaching is not conducted as required except only by using the teacher's explanation. Therefore, the teacher must know how to speak, when to speak, when to be silent, how to raise his/her voice and when to lower it, and how to use speech to effectively express his/her worldview since the response of students and their acceptance of the lesson rely on the way

that the teacher explains his/her lessons. This is achieved by diversifying the following stimuli: movement in the classroom; using verbal expressions; and making use of student participation. Also, making use of students' movement during the educational situation; as well as student silence class which permeates the teacher's presentation of a certain subject, the purposeful teacher's movement from place to place in the teaching position and the diversification of the senses and movement between the sensory concentration centres, such as transferring from hearing to watching.

5. The teacher's skill in using teaching aids. Teaching aids are the educational tool used by the teacher in order to improve the process of teaching and learning, including the blackboard (the optical blackboard, the ordinary blackboard, the electronic blackboard, the wood blackboard, etc.), the Holy Quran (with its prints and sizes), the plates, audio cassettes and recording devices, various cards, slides and the projector, computer apparatus and special programmes of the Holy Quran curriculum, sound clips, the lab, video and educational tapes, working papers, prize box, television and educational programmes, the internet, miscellaneous tours, exhibitions, various magnified images and illustrations, textbook, stereoscopic shapes or the telephone (Harris & Sass, 2006).

These methods and techniques contribute to improving the quality of teaching, help enrich experiences and gain development skills, and contribute to forming and building sound concepts in addition to increasing the learner understands and thinking, developing students' tendencies towards learning, forming desirable trends and expanding the student's range of experiences. Furthermore, these methods and techniques help learners use all their different senses, understand the meaning of the words used during the explanation, develop the student's wealth of new words, trigger the interest of learners and make them feel positively towards learning. These methods also encourage the learner's personal activity and practical application; enable educational communication media in order to make individual differences among students more apparent. Moreover, such methods and techniques enhance the

diversification of educational methods, which lead to affirming correct responses, confirming learning and addressing the low academic and professional level of some teachers (Rivkin et al., 2005; Harris & Sass, 2006).

Finally, researchers around the world have stressed the importance of early childhood teachers' qualifications on children's educational progress. The National Education Association (NEA, 2010: 1) in the USA summarised the advantages of specialist teachers with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education in the following points:

1. The existence of a higher level of participation amongst the children and less need to use methods of punishment to keep discipline inside the classroom;

2. The classroom environment becomes communicative to the development of different advantages for the children's literacy;

3. Children receive encouraging and extensive feedback;

4. There may be an improvement in the key learning methods and competencies of resilience, reciprocity, and imagination.

5. Fulfilment of improvement in a number of learning outcomes related to the educational process during this stage (Almutairi, 2015).

3.3.5.1 Available training programs for teachers and early childhood teachers in KSA

A plan was devised, in order to develop the curricula, which may affect the increase of education gradually for the better, when founding kindergartens. To implement these aims, an effective curriculum, and classrooms were necessary to be established for these kindergartens, for the aim of providing optimal learning (Rabaah et al., 2016).

A Royal Decree taken in the year 1988 featured the early childhood education curriculum, through the assistance of the General Presidency for Girls' Education, which is the highest authority for female education in the Kingdom, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Arab Gulf Program for United Nations Development Organization

(AGFUND), for the efforts made to encourage the development of children by preparing kindergarten curricula and related essential resources and materials (Alshaer, 2008). The development of the kindergarten curricula was enhanced by the creation of four training institutes.

In addition, it has been established that top quality academic courses can lead to greater student success. Indeed, several studies have highlighted the factors that contribute to the academic success of private schools; namely, attention given to the students' aspirations, suitable educational environment, school attendance, students doing more homework, a focus on improving students' skills, improving teachers' performance through training courses, in addition to the schools' emphasis on good relationships among teachers and students (Rabaah et al., 2016).

Studies on the correlation between school programme involvement and academic results have been mixed, and beneficial outcomes have been limited. In Bredekamp's recent study (2016), it was proposed that participation is best considered as a multi-dimensional concept that takes account of enrolment, attendance, and involvement, which aid to outline disparities in learners' academic results. The study of Grogan, Henrich & Malikina (2014) used data from a longitudinal research of after-school programmes in primary school centres to evaluate teacher ratings of learner involvement in after-school programmes and the relationship between involvement and school results. The factor structure of the teacher rated measure of learner involvement was assessed by exploratory factor analysis.

Moreover, a far better implementation of learning occurs with the support of an engaged and adequately trained teacher, who can assist learners and foster positive attitudes towards learning in the classroom (Bin Ali, 2013). Hence, the advantage of training is that it can enhance the knowledge and skills of teachers in order to improve their teaching strategies. Teachers are in agreement about the idea that training is critical to help them teach concepts to kindergarteners and pre-schoolers (Koshy and Murray, 2011).

Also, in the KSA, the basic goal of the kindergarten stage is to prepare an educated generation, which will be successful in the future (Al-Jadidi, 2012).

This aim is echoed in other ECE policy frameworks. For example in England, it is recommended that attention should be paid to the kindergarten or early childhood stage, for developing children's understanding, knowledge and skills, and to assist the them to gain more confidence for future studies (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2007).

In pre-school education, children participate in various activities which will lead to strengthening their abilities and personality, motivations, skills, interests, and inclinations. In addition, such activities will help children to gain various skills, which are suitable for their particular traditions and culture, communication skills and necessary methods (Brooker and Broadbent, 2007). There are many factors to be taken into consideration to improve the kindergarten teaching process. An important factor is providing qualified teachers who should be trained adequately in order to be able to design and manage the curriculum, understand and assess children's learning, and to develop and communicate with children (Sylva et al., 2003). Those teachers should have specific pedagogical skills and knowledge, to be able to implement the main aims and objectives of kindergarten and early childhood educational objectives, thus reinforcing the importance of providing well-qualified teachers in this educational stage.

Moreover, programmes for preparing teachers professionally in the field of ECE should be widely increased, with the aim of receiving new interest and policy attention, by designing a specialised teacher training/educational programme for teachers. Experts in teaching young learners can prepare these educational programmes; in order to include other important factors such as the children's culture, tradition, and religion, and to contain other important factors for the more comprehensive educational environment for both the teachers and children

As a conclusion, it is required to establish training programmes for preparing specialised teachers in the field kindergarten and pre-school education stage for improving the quality of early childhood teachers in the KSA.

Furthermore, with respect to teaching, four elements should be taken into account by educationalists: students, the curriculum, the context and teachers

(Murphy, 2000). Moreover, the professional and academic preparation and training of teachers should take the change of curricula into consideration at schools (Al-Jadidi, 2012). In addition, teachers who are dynamic, effective and competent in their field of education and teaching are required globally (Ajiboye and Tella, 2007:35).

The training requirements for assisting teachers for enhancing school performances were investigated through the study of Moswela (2006: 623) who maintained that to achieve their intended goal for teacher development programmes for improving the learning and teaching processes, they should be essentially based on the actual problems that teachers face in their classrooms. So, education and training programmes give self-confidence to teachers in classroom management; as they are specialised in training teachers to effectively manage their classrooms (Al-Karanseh, 2001:79). New student-teachers focus their prior beliefs and knowledge on the teacher training programme (Horppu and Ikonen-Varila, 2004).

If the professional preparation of programmes and training courses are not covering many factors of professional competence and skills of each academic subject sufficiently, the quality and contents of teachers' educational programmes will not be completely satisfying their aims and objectives (Bennett, 1993). Although content coverage is an important factor for the educational programmes and courses, time is also important, as it should be allowed for students and teachers to understand the curriculum, knowledge of subjects and knowledge of pedagogy.

3.4   General overview of in-service training of teachers

Al-malki and Williams (2012) opined that the strong structure of education depends on the support provided to the teaching faculty members.   It is considered necessary to gratify their needs and upgrade their abilities so that they can be able to deal with emerging educational challenges and enhance the learning standards. Effective use of contemporary technologies greatly depends on its users. Thus, it is important to provide them with training so that they remain updated with new information, skills, and abilities, which is essential for bringing innovation and creativity. Training actually boosts the users' self-

effectiveness, motivational drive, and computing skills as far as the study of Robertson and Al-Zahrani (2012) is concerned.

In-service training of teachers refers to a set of relevant course materials and activities in which an active teacher is encouraged to partake according to the study presented by Al-Hattami, Muammar, and Elmahdi (2013). In-service training of teachers is basically designed to support a serving teacher to further upgrade his or her proficiency, knowledge base, abilities, and competencies in the professional sphere of life. As a result, in-service training includes relevant education and knowledge provided to an educator who is already educating the learners and is part of the school system.

In the words of Okolo (2013), in-service training can simply be defined as a means to develop manpower in order to improve the teaching and learning process. It is an on-going activity that can be conducted on a continual basis or whenever the need arises. The in-service training of teachers involves the identification and deliberation of existing and future demands of human resources (teachers) for enhancing their levels of work satisfaction and job prospects. This enables them to promote the institute's educational programmes and activities in an effective and resourceful manner. In general, the teaching faculty is considered as the centre of overall learning activity as well as educational development as far as the study of Alabi and Ige (2014) is concerned. Thus, in-service training is involved with the programmes and materials in which an existing teacher might take part in the rationale of developing his professional know-how, abilities, and capacities, after the initial training session. In this circumstance, in-service training is determined to improve the performance, knowledge, and effectiveness of educators. As Ageel (2011) has correctly highlighted, the skills suitable for the generation before may no longer prepare young learners for the future challenges beyond learning environment. Learners are being expected to become more innovative and informed in their routine actions.

According to a research done by Ageel and John (2012), in-service training can simply be defined as a constant educational activity, which is mainly planned for the re-training, skill development, and restructuring the existing knowledge base of teaching faculty. The ongoing educational process could be termed as the

overall unit of learning procedures while considering the level of content, teaching methodology, and knowledge delivery. Such processes may be formal or they can replace initial teaching approaches in schools, colleges, and universities. In-service education or training for teachers is a continual process that facilitates the teachers, irrespective of their educational background or experience, to develop and supplement their existing knowledge base and professional qualifications (Al-Daweesh, 2011). It can also be referred to a strategic approach that can allow school management to retain a talented and experienced pool of teachers for a longer period of time.

3.4.1 Rationale for in-Service Teacher Training

The underlying principle for in-service teacher education cannot be overemphasised (Abdullahi, 2014). Al-Madani and Allaafiajiy (2014) argued that education serves as the key to staff development, and schools should experience reforms and reposition themselves, as static learning centres are unable to change communities. The rationale for the in-service training for teachers is pointed out by Al-Daweesh (2011). According to the author's views, it has been documented that existing pre-service teacher training programmes hardly prepare serving teachers with all they require for a lifetime of work in a class setting (Kabadayi, 2016). There is an increasing awareness of the impact of social, political, and technical changes and of the need for educators to become alert and sensitive to such changes.

Many authors indicated that educators who are members of an undereducated profession and whose work-based conditions do not support the types of peer interaction that will boost overall performance (Alabi and Ige, 2014; Wang, 2017). One more rationale of in-service education for teachers is that there is increasing anticipation that teachers must change their old practice of teaching students, so that a meaningful program of study can appear in the routine activities of a class as itemised by Al-Hattami, Muammar and Elmahdi (2013). There is an increasing number of specialised managerial functions that educators must have to adapt with time in the profession, for instance, departmental head, mentors, and counsellors. The successful performance of

these duties demands more focused and specialised in-service training since they call for the use of managerial abilities and capacities.

3.4.2 Main Beliefs of in-Service Teacher Training

In-service training is important in every developing nation like the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, considering the existing transformation in the field of science and technology. To actualise the predetermined goals of in-service training in any school or learning institute, some core beliefs must be considered, as discussed by Ageel (2011, p. 57) as follows: 1. In-service education or training initiative develops out of recognised needs of the school and society; 2. All schools' teaching staff need in-service training; 3. Proper management is an effectual way of increasing the in-service career development and prospects; 4. Enhancing the quality of teaching methodology is the direct outcome of in-service training; 5. In-service training for teachers directly to an on-going procedure of reassessment and reconsideration of the learning programme and curriculum. Moreover, it supports concerned parties to get self-realisation by means of competency, attainment, and safety.

Robertson and Al-Zahrani (2012) opined that in-service training has increasingly become the matter of local bodies, institutes, schools, educationalists, and faculty members. The in-service education must offer teachers with emerging opportunities to keep abreast with recent advancements in the field of education and technology. The in-service training programme for teachers is considered to be most successful when collaboratively acknowledged and implemented simultaneously.

3.4.3 Theoretical Underpinnings of in-Service Teacher Training

Learning theory refers to a conceptual frame itemising how knowledge is comprehended, processed, and retained over time. Cognitive and social influences, along with previous experience, all contribute to how a comprehensive, or a worldwide perception, is attained or changed and information and skills are maintained. Advocates of behavioural theories consider the learning process as an element of conditioning and will support a scheme of awards and objectives within the field of education according to Corno and Anderman (2015). Teachers who believe mainly in cognitive theories

assume that the description of the learning process as a change in performance is too limited, and prefer to study the student instead of their environmental setting and particularly the complications of individual memory. Teachers who support constructivism theory assume that students' capabilities to gain knowledge depends to a large on what they previously understand, and the attainment of information must be a personally customised procedure of construction. On the other hand, transformative learning theory stresses the changeover that is necessary in a student's presumptions and worldwide viewpoint, as far as a study performed by Newman, Fowler, and Thorpe (2016) is concerned.

Teachers' professional growth is a significant factor because they are the main players in the overall teaching and learning process. Robertson and Al-Zahrani (2012) opined that teachers' ongoing in-service training and education must precede the assimilation of ICT tools into classroom settings, in order to make certain the successful use of them. Theoretically, in-service education refers to a training process undertaken by a teacher after he or she joins the school and teaches. The in-service training aims at improving the skillset, knowledge, and overall performance of the serving teachers as opined by Anderson (2016).

According to learning theory, transfer of learning is a concept that what students learn in the school environment to some extent carries forward to cases distinct from that specific time and the situation. The transmission was among the first trend inquired in the theory of educational psychology in the words of Corno and Anderman (2015).

Considering the theory of training and development, it can be deduced that training helps people to close the gaps between their existing needs and expected performance, according to a study performed by Pollock, Jefferson, and Wick (2015). It enables them to deal with the shortcomings that may or may not hinder the present performance as well as future career-oriented goals and targets. Training and development are considered as an important tool to develop and upgrade skills of staff so that they can deliver optimal results and be retained for a long time with the organisation.

3.4.4 Types of Training

In the words of Landini, Brites and Rebolé, 2017), there are different kinds of in-service training or education for teachers. The list of different kinds of in-service training includes: 1. Training centres (where different lectures and learning activities are designed for teachers to provide them as much knowledge as possible in a limited time, generally one or two days); 2. Conferences and seminars (provide teachers with an option to raise questions and share views with others; 3. Intensive training courses (generally a moderate group of teachers, where every individual has a challenge related to his or her profession; 4. Teachers' meetings (may provide a practical in-service function, but usually employed to inform staff members about administrative rules and regulations); 5. Working groups (some people work on a dilemma that can be impracticable for a faculty to manage effectively); 6. Professional course materials (with the help of a relevant cases and learning resources); 7. Individual workshops and conferences (dependent on feelings of shared understanding and advocacy present between educator and supervisory body), and 8. Demonstrations (option to view real teaching methods and approaches).

In the same vein, Gaziel and Mendelevitch (2015) believe that other forms of in-service education or training for teachers include activity-based training programmes. In such a session, teachers as participants are encouraged to become able to perform required activities, either as an individual or as part of a team, in order to get the first-hand experience. Such training programmes are usually designed for new teachers who have just started their career and seek to give meaningful knowledge to the children in early childhood education setting (Newman, Fowler, and Thorpe, 2016). A participatory approach is another form of in-service training for teachers where a small group of teachers takes part in an active manner while raising a discussion on common issues related to the teaching profession. Such methods allow teachers to become active learners and remove any reservations or confusions while delivering course content to the learners (Landini, Brites, and Rebolé, 2017). Training can also be given in a form of peer group sharing where teachers are allowed to share their work-based experiences and creativities in a peer group setting. Such training enriches learning and allows others to learn from the valuable

experiences of other professional teaching members. Forming direct interactions with participants can result in a peer discussion for teachers which help to develop a close relationship and improved interactions among teachers from different school systems.

3.4.5 Advantages of in-Service Teacher Training

It has been claimed by Robertson and Al-Zahrani (2012) that in-service teacher training will continue to close the gaps raised between pre-service training and teachers' efficiency in the classroom. The Nationwide Educational Policy stressed the importance of in-service education of teachers who serve early childhood settings so that training program can be used to cater for the country's philosophical values and standards according to a study carried out by Almalki and Williams (2012). Therefore, educational reform asserts that teachers' training will continue to keep pace with changes in teaching methods, and in the programme of study. Educators will often experience innovations in their line of work. In-service education for teachers will be planned as an important part of continuing teacher's learning process. Regardless of the effectiveness of pre-service educational services given to educators, there will unavoidably be areas of weakness (Al-Hattami, Muammar, and Elmahdi, 2013). In-service training to educator's attempts to close the missing gaps by offering them library facilities, assessment tools, counselling services, exposure to new and creative teaching methodologies and much more.

The greatest benefit of in-service training for teachers lies in the knowledge sharing process as teachers become exposed to new teaching methods and communicate course content resourcefully to young learners of the society in the words of Arnold and Ducate (2015). Providing in-service education or training to teachers helps them to update their knowledge base and abilities towards better presentation and development in career, without having to leave their job. Moreover, in-service training enables school management to retain a pool of talented and qualified teachers for a longer period of time. Trained and polished teachers actually help to develop future productive members of the society according to Teo (2015).

Moreover, school management encourages teachers to get involved in these training initiatives and motivates them by providing additional incentives to those who actively take part in such training sessions. In-service training for teachers promotes constant improvement of the overall teaching profession within a school system. It removes inadequacies in the background preparation of educators and other proficient employees within the field of education. In-service educational programmes also keep teachers updated about the new knowledge gained and teaching methods and prepare to deliver content in a creative and dynamic manner to young learners (Baran, 2014).

3.4.6 Challenges of in-Service Teacher Training

There are numerous challenges associated with the in-service training for teachers. One such challenge is that in-service education programmes require substantial investment and many of the faculty members are self-supported according to a study performed by Barker (2010). As a consequence, many of the participants failed to manage expensive school costs and other related costs for training materials and personal records. The major limitation of the in-service training programme is time, as contact timings for instructions and assessments are not enough. As a result, the efficiency and range of instructional guides are open to question. There are several disparities in the tools and methods used by the different training institutes providing in-service education, which entails lack of standardisation in course delivery and teaching methods (Kabadayi, 2016). There is an issue of poor planning and management, where activities offered to teachers are unfriendly and not related to their work environment and classroom setting (Mohan, 2011).

Not only is it imperative to prepare effective teaching faculty, it is critically significant to generate quality learning-oriented results by means of in-service education or training for teachers. For this, one of the means is that teaching staff members become eager to work in partnership with other educators according to Marquez et al (2016). It has been stated by Neuman (2010) that many educators who are involved in discovering new processes of teaching and learning within their personal context are either not available, for personal issues, or not willing, for personal motives, to do cooperative work. On the other

hand, it has also been observed that teachers are often unwilling to work in partnership with other teachers according to Marquez et al (2016). One more challenging area is the lack of induction programmes for new and inexperienced educators after becoming part of the early childhood school environment.

Research tends to suggest that even country-wide programmes of study do not address the issue of new teacher induction programmes, and this state of affairs need to be rectified in order to improve the overall profession of teaching. The most important challenges facing the novice teacher when participating in training programmes are a lack of theoretical background, lack of familiarity with the regulations, lack of clarity of the qualifying objectives, a heavy teaching load, a lack of cooperation from the experienced teacher, and the absence of school administration monitoring.

Research also suggest that some of the challenges faced by educational supervisors when participating in the novice teacher training programmes are the burden and excess of academic work, filling the shortage in the number of specialised teachers, the existence of successive follow-up meetings, the pressure of work and its high demands by the public administration and the ministry, and the lack of a clear plan for qualifying novice teachers.

Moreover, challenges facing faculty members in faculties of education, when participating in novice teacher education programmes, are the engagement in scientific research, technical responsibility of the curriculum, and administrative responsibilities towards the students, the numerous lectures, and meetings throughout the day, the inappropriateness of the time of qualification, the supervision of practical education, and the lack of infrastructure. Finally, the common challenges of the novice teacher training programmes are weak infrastructure in most training centres, the excessive teaching duties, the inappropriateness of the time allocated for the regular work, lack of a clear qualifying plan and the extensive administrative and technical responsibilities (Al Mulhim, 2013).

3.4.7 Concluding Remarks on in-Service Teacher Training

Teachers are considered to be the knowledge providers and motivating force of education, and therefore contribute to the success of the economy. Scholarly studies have proved that the wealth of any country depends mainly on giving power to knowledge providers and developers. Training teaching faculty members on important skills and new knowledge for personal as well as professional growth is essential for sustainable community development. Considering the context of Saudi Arabia, one of its Development Plans is to change the society into an information-based society while using a range of mechanisms, particularly in-service training for teachers in early childhood settings. In-service training for teachers must be considered as a requirement to attain the nationwide goals of the educational scheme within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Considering the challenges associated with in-service training, it is advisable for schools to have a well-formulated in-service training programme with definite goals and improvement of direction and managerial abilities. In-service training programmes must be acknowledged as part of an institution or organisational activities planned by a governmental body for staff development and growth. Developers of in-service training must concentrate on work-based activities that are real, pragmatic, and relevant to the students. In addition, it is essential that a government should develop an effective working group to regulate the activities of in-service training programmes and to ensure standardisation in course delivery, teaching methodology, and assessment.

3.5 Early Childhood In-Service Teacher Training

Pre-school education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is faced with one of the biggest challenges, which is represented in the need to provide the appropriate training for kindergartens and pre-school teachers, in addition to providing a sufficient female staff (Bin Ali, 2013). In this regard, there are not adequate numbers of trained and qualified teachers to properly carry out the Developed Curriculum (DC), as there is no clear policy for controlling the licensing of teaching pre-school children teachers; and anyone can work as a pre-school teacher in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Al-Ameel, 2002).

There are many practitioners in early education, who are holders of university and college degrees and do not have specialised training courses that qualify them to work in this field (Al-Otaibi, 1997). This may be mainly owing to the lack of time allowed due to the classroom practice. In-service training centres should be provided for teachers, administrators, and headteachers, for updating their practice and to be in line with all the new in their specialisation (Al-Sunbl et al., 2008).

Al-Otaibi (2007) maintained that only teachers with an 'early learning' degree are permitted to teach kindergarten and pre-school children, but around half of them do not hold a relevant teaching qualification in early childhood studies. Moreover, non-specialised teachers remain in pre-school settings for the following reasons. First, working hours are less in the state pre-school centres, in comparison with the other state educational stages, represented in the primary, intermediate, and high school, which is a basic reason that makes the non-specialised teacher unwilling to transfer to the other stages (Al-Sunbl et al., 2008). Second, non-specialised teachers are not willing to move from the pre-school stage, arguing that they have gained the necessary knowledge and skills (Al-Otaibi, 2007). Third, non-specialised teachers imagine that the pre-school teaching stage does not require a great amount of educational preparation, especially because this period of education does not require students to pass tests in the final year. Thus, pre-school teachers tend to feel less work-related pressure than teachers in the subsequent stages of education (Al-Sunbl et al., 2008). Some of the most important factors that govern the quality of early childhood care and education are the qualifications and the number of hours and the working conditions of teachers. In order to create and maintain a body of teachers, necessary training and support must be provided, including adequate remuneration and improved working conditions.

Additionally, the training of kindergarten teachers before 1991-1992 was done in isolation from the training of primary school teachers, as after obtaining the baccalaureate degree, those who are wishing to pursue pre-primary education were enrolled in a two-year vocational training course which; and after success, they could be allowed to practice education only in kindergartens. In the new system, which entered into force in 1991-1992, the training of kindergarten

teachers and primary school teachers were brought together. As a result, every teacher has to get a three-year university degree after high school, followed by a two-year vocational training course. Thus, kindergarten teachers are now required to have five years of education, exactly as do the primary school teachers, which is the highest level required by OECD member countries.

On other side, the Government funds the training of kindergarten teachers and primary school teachers alike for 36 consecutive weeks. Most of this training takes place in the early stages of their job careers. They are also receiving a compulsory training by inspectors and educational counsellors for half-day training, four times a year. In addition, the General Association of Kindergarten Teachers "Association Générale des Institutrices et Instituteurs, des écoles matternelles), organises annual conferences and offers different types of professional support (such as the dissemination of educational materials).

Teachers have the right to choose between kindergarten and primary school education and can move from a school to school at any time during their careers. This flexibility had been achieved thanks to the new system in 1991-1992, and provided a positive development that has been welcomed by teachers. Moreover, teachers can also become school head teachers, trainers of teachers, school counsellors, or school inspectors, and can also become teachers in intermediate or secondary education after conducting internal examinations..

3.5.1.1 Early Childhood Development Project / Parenting Awareness

The project started in 1996 in Jordan with the support of UNICEF and in partnership with most sectors working in the field of childhood, in the light of the urgent need through a survey conducted in 1996, which showed that caregivers lack knowledge in the social, psychological, and cognitive development of children. The project aims to reach the largest number of parents and caregivers, in order to raise their awareness and educate them on the different ways and means of raising their children, training them at an early age (0-8 years) and providing a safe and stimulating family environment to ensure their growth properly. In view of the Ministry's important role in providing educational

opportunities for most Jordanian children and access to their families, the Ministry entered as a partner in the project in 2002.

The target groups are headteachers of the early childhood education stage, school headteachers, assistants to school headteachers, educational counsellors, kindergarten teachers, parents of kindergarten children and the first three grades of primary schools, community, and parents.

3.5.1.2 Training course of working with young children

The number of training hours is 160, consisting of five parts including the following topics: You and young children, Creating a safe and healthy environment, Guiding children, Learning experiences for children and other people that you will meet. Kindergarten teachers are trained on this programme throughout the second semester and are subject to practical and theoretical examinations. Upon passing all the requirements of the course, the teacher receives a certificate from the Ministry of Education.

3.5.1.3 Kids Mart software

IBM introduced 380 Kids Mart devices on nearly 7 stages from 2003 to 2010 distributed to kindergartens. Kindergarten teachers are trained in educational software that covers the following subjects: Mathematics, Science, Social studies, and Games of Reasonable Objects.

3.5.2 Hikayat Sesame Program

The Hikayat Sesame project was part of the initiative of the Ministry of Education within the "ERFKE" project, and was supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The project, which is suitable for the age stage of 4-7 years, aims to develop children and encourage them to learn by teaching them basic concepts and skills during early childhood stage, and preparing them to enter the primary school. These skills include:

Identifying the children's environment and developing their social relationships, identifying them to the concepts of health, hygiene, nutrition, safety and their importance, identifying them of the definition and understanding of the concept

of respect, identifying them of the heritage and customs of the Jordanian society, in addition to teaching them letters and numbers.

3.5.2.1 Arts course in child protection

The Arts in Child Protection is an educational initiative that aims to include the concepts of child protection against abuse in the curricula of the Ministry of Education - Early Childhood (5-8) years. It is achieved with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education and the Child Protection Program at the Jordan River Foundation and supported by the British International Development Service.

In spite of the aforementioned factors and issues, which need to be effectively readdressed, early childhood teachers receive some kind of kindergarten stage and pre-service training in some educational centres, in order to enhance their professional identities. However, generally the training for in-service teachers of kindergartens and early childhood stage leads to addressing their educational needs. As a general rule, the objectives of in-service training courses for the early childhood teachers may be summarised as follows:

- To increase the efficiency of those unqualified teachers who are working in kindergarten during the service, who are holders of other specialised certificates, although they are hired as early childhood teachers, due to the need for them;

- To identify some of the gaps in preparing early childhood teachers;

- To introduce new curricula or to adopt new methods (Mustafa, 2004: 14).

In fact, there are some in-service training programmes, which are available for teachers in kindergarten, which include the following:

- National Interactive Training Workshops;

- Workshops for the fresh teacher.

- The Project for Early Childhood Development.

- Kids Smart Programming.

- Workshops with young children.

- Training in child protection concepts.

- SemSim Story Telling Programmes.

These programmes may not be adequate for kindergarten and early childhood teachers to be in line with the more updated training programmes worldwide.

3.5.3 The Most Important Challenges Facing Teacher Training Programmes

One of the most important challenges, which represents an obstacle to raising the output of the teacher training programs in Kuwait (the College of Basic Education in Kuwait - National Institute of Education, 2013), is the quality of the input for these programmes, where the College of Basic Education has attracted students from low academic performance categories of graduates of secondary education. In addition, the responsibility of educating students in a rapid and continuous change era is not an easy process. For this reason, teachers have to demonstrate their performance against high standards and possess the desire and motivation to learn. Increasingly, the quality of the inputs to the College of Basic Education in Kuwait naturally lacks the necessary skills required to raise the level of performance, such as skills in dealing with modern technology and scientific research skills, in addition to the existence of a considerable difficulty in acquiring them. Moreover, there is a remarkable weakness between a large segment of female college students in the use of ICT in a way that serves the educational process, even in the use of simple basic programmes, which is one of the fundamentals of university education today, such as, for example, Microsoft Office software, or simply sending an e-mail. In the area of education, the use of ICT will enhance teaching and learning processes, which is a basic reason for teachers to have full knowledge in this area (The College of Basic Education in Kuwait - National Institute of Education, 2013).

The limited and insufficient duration of field training in schools is also a concern, and its limitation to only one semester, through which the male or female student spends in training in a school during the first year of graduation. This is considered another challenge that limits the quality of teacher training, as this period is not enough for a good preparation or for gaining a sufficient experience to practice the profession. In contrast, countries with outstanding

performance in PISA "Programme for International Student Assessment", have shifted their initial teacher-training programmes from an academic-based model to a more professional model, which depend on preparing professionals in the field of clinical settings, where teachers start early in schools and spend a longer time in training there, and obtain greater and better support in this process (OECD, 2011, p. 237).

In contrast, a study conducted by the National Institute of Singapore, confirmed that for a large number of teachers, teaching is not necessarily the first choice for the job they desire and may not have a passion for teaching (NIE, 2013). In this regard, it was found that the quality of students affects the quality of the outcomes of the teachers after completing their studies. These findings demonstrate the importance of developing a plan to strengthen the status of the teacher in the society and classroom, and put more stringent controls in the colleges of teachers to choose the best students and to attract the distinguished teacher educators, including transforming the profession of education to become the first choice for the career future. In this regard, Finland was able to make the teaching profession as the first desirable vocational choice among its youth through a combination of raising the ceiling for admission to the profession and granting autonomy to teachers in the management of their classrooms and working conditions, compared to their counterparts in other countries (OECD, 2011). This, in turn, enabled teacher training programmes to be selective about their intakes. As a result, the education profession in Finland became a highly selective profession, and consequently, highly professional teachers have contributed to the country's educational performance.

Moreover, the skills of scientific research is one of the main factors that led to the independence of the teachers in Finland, as their training programmes are based primarily on the skills of scientific research, which is the reason for their independence and quality of their training (OECD, 2011); where students are expected not only to acquire educational knowledge and human development knowledge, but they are also asked to submit a dissertation, which is based on research skills, as a project to be a master's degree holder, which is a requirement for all Finnish teachers (Sahlberg, 2011). The rationale for this requirement is that teachers are expected to participate in disciplined

investigations in the classroom throughout their professional career in teaching. In Singapore, after three years of teaching, scientific research skills are one of the three career paths, in which a teacher can specialise (OECD, 2011). In Finland, the study of teacher training takes a period of six years, including obtaining a university degree in addition to a master's degree, compared to only four years to only obtain a university degree in the majority of other countries (Sahlberg, 2011).

3.6 Early Childhood Education in Saudi Arabia

According to Nyland and Alfayez (2012), the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia was developed when the modern country was established. Education for girls was initiated in 1964 in the country. But before 1964, the idea of kindergarten education was never introduced. As a result, the requirement of programmes of early childhood was increased dramatically that resulted in the development of first kindergarten and pre-school classes in 1975 (Aljabreen & Lash, 2016). Because of the increased success of the kindergarten and pre-kindergarten programmes of Saudi government, which were established in Makkah with seventeen workers and ten classrooms in 1975, the Saudi government decided on improving the notion of a kindergarten school. In Saudi Arabia, the kindergartens, as well as pre-kindergarten schools, were opened in the year 1980, when two thousand children attended these schools. In addition to this, the number of both pre-kindergarten and kindergarten school going children was increased to 182,556 during 2013-2014, (King Khalid Database, 2015). The study of Alshehi (2014) showed that currently there are more than 1,000 kindergarten schools which are administered by the Saudi Ministry of Education. However; a greater proportion of these schools are administered by the private sector where these schools have higher enrolment and more provision than the government-funded sector.

On the other hand, the study of Keengwe (2010) stressed that the kindergarten education system in Saudi Arabia is known for lowering education costs. This is because the strategic plan of Saudi Arabia 2015-2020 aims to support the increased number of kindergarten schools with the goal of establishing 300 schools per year, while developing 1,500 schools in five years. The enrolment

of children in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten is approximately 10 to 12%, which is considered low when compared to other regions of the world (Rabaah, Doaa and Asma, 2016). As a result, funds have been approved by Ministry of Budget for seeking to increase the total number of kindergarten schools yearly while offering funds and loans to the private sector without interest so as to develop more kindergarten schools in the country (Rabaah, Doaa and Asma, 2016). This process works hand in hand with the Ministry's five-year plan of public education that also supports initiatives of the private sector, and underlines the importance of pre- and in-service training to improve the quality and quantity of provision in ways that will contribute to the Saudi Vision.

3.6.1 Development of Early Childhood Curriculum Aid Approaches in Saudi Arabia

Alameen, Male and Palaiologou (2015) argued that the expansion and growth of approaches and curriculum in the area of early childhood education has gone through many stages in Saudi Arabia where the initial stage was in 1952, which was a traditional approach when early childhood education consisted of individual and independent practices (Alameen, Male and Palaiologou, 2015). Such an approach relies upon its content across a wide range of courses and books, such as writing, reading, science, and mathematics. In addition to this, the second stage was mainly a project approach which started during 1975, but this approach was similar to the traditional approach which also focused on the child's ability to write and read (Rabaah, Doaa and Asma, 2016). The third approach was related to implementing the self-learning curriculum approach that was developed in 1986. In this regard, Alameen et al. (2015) stated that it becomes crucial to have a comprehensive and integrated source of kindergarten teachers who possess a wide range of technical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and child development knowledge which could allow teachers to understand the needs and characteristics of preschool children. All of these three stages represented the educational movement to learner-centred from teacher-centred pedagogical approaches, which also demands the ability to adapt to change processes during a teacher's career.

The self-learning advanced curriculum of kindergarten consists of various educational units including the sand, water, health and safety, and so on. Each of these units lasts for two to four weeks that offers children with theme-related experiences within their programme where each component of each schedule consisted of play-based centres, circle time, outdoor and indoor playing, as well as snack time. In addition to this, Rabaah, Doaa and Asma (2016) opined that characteristics of self-learning advanced curriculum include activity self-adopted curriculum expertise, activity self-centred curriculum approach, and a balanced and comprehensive approach to pedagogy.

3.6.2 ECE Goals in Saudi Arabia

Aljabreen Si Lash (2016) stated that the education system of Saud Arabia is governed by a wide range of policies that also involve the goals of early childhood education and extend children's experiences in their homes. The study of Aljabreen Si Lash (2016) highlighted that schools are considered as the best areas where a child can develop the rigour and discipline which prepares them for later life. The environment of the school allows children to develop effectively in the context of relations with social peers.

The study of Qadri, Nourallah and Splieth (2012) argued that preschool or kindergarten in Saudi Arabia must allow children to effectively absorb the benefits of good Islamic examples by means of instruction and simulation with neither overwork nor indulgence. Not only this, the authors also argued that early childhood education programmes must provide a wealth of linguistic expressions which are appropriate to the child's age. An aesthetic and creative kindergarten environment aims to offer children with an opportunity for healthy and vital development. The early childhood education programmes in Saudi Arabia relies upon the fundamental goals that curriculum at this level must sufficiently match with the stated objectives (Kashkary & Robinson, 2006). In addition to this, Kashkary and Robinson (2006) also recommended that curriculum is defined as an overall set of practised and planned experiences as well as activities which allow children to achieve the educational outcomes based on their abilities. Kashkary and Robinson (2006) also argued that the early childhood education curriculum for in Saudi Arabia is that it should

promote learning and development of across the cognitive, physical, social, and psychological domains, which is consistent with many other curriculum frameworks internationally.

It should also include a wide range of activities and experiences which could easily be absorbed and understood by young children. The curriculum must also consider the present and future of a child. AlMogbel (2014) points out the recent Saudi law confirming Saudi Arabia's commitment to enforcing its youth education programme, with the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia sufficiently involved in developing strong pre-primary education programmes to achieve this goal (Rahman and Alhaisoni, 2013). However, two components of preschool provision in Saudi Arabia are different from preschool in other regions, involving the introduction of religious education as a national perspective, the basis of the legal ethics, and the source of ethics and a study of the Arabic language. In this regard, the study in Alsharari (2010) also explains that the goal of religious teaching in Saudi Arabia involves improving faith in God and His Messenger in the hearts of pre-schoolers and recognising God's divinity, thanking him for His grace in addition to teaching good morals, behaviour, and habits in children.

3.7   Reviews of Initial Teacher Education Programmes

The importance of teacher education stems from the need to provide teachers with relevant theoretical knowledge, together with the practical skills required for effectively facilitating the educational process. The domain of ECE is no exception in this regard. For instance, Sylva et al. (2003) revealed a strong correlation between highly effective early education centres and the presence of trained and qualified managerial and teaching staff at such centres.

Earlier research in this regard has presented conclusions that highlight the level of difficulty that the process of training teachers for ECE might entail (Stephen et al., 1996). One of these difficulties is the wide range of early childhood education programmes, with content and focus that varies significantly from case to case. Pascal and Bertram (1993) examined the quality of training programmes for early years teachers across eleven European countries, as they emphasized the need to improve not only the provision of these

programmes, but also the conditions under which the teaching staff in ECE institutions provide educational services.

Furthermore, Aweys (2009) described the effectiveness of a training programme for kindergarten teachers in terms of developing thinking skills among their pupils. The aim of Aweys' study was to formulate a training programme for kindergarten teachers in the city of Damascus, and train them on the development of certain thinking skills among their pupils. In order to achieve this goal, the researcher trained teachers to use a number of modern teaching methods, such as the exploratory method, cooperative learning, and role-playing games, with a view to developing the children's grouping, comparison, identification of relationships and patterns assembling and extrapolation skills. Aweys' study sample was composed of two groups of children: (1) the control group, with teachers who had not gone through the training programme and were left to act freely in trying to develop thinking skills in children, using mainly traditional methods and (2) the experimental group, which involved teachers who had attended a training programme using modern educational methods. The results showed the effectiveness of the training programme in terms of instilling thinking skills in children and the need to employ that as an instructive tool in the education of kindergarten children. The study also gave rise to a number of interesting recommendations, most importantly, the need to use modern educational methods during the teacher-training process. These methods should focus on learners' confidence and self-esteem and the development of their thinking skills, as well as reducing the number of children in activity classes.

In a similar way, Dunlop (2008) pointed out that training courses are required to deliver appropriate knowledge and abilities for leadership of preschool settings.

Professional education programmes aim to create a space where theoretical and practical knowledge can be developed. In so doing, they can contribute to the effectiveness of teaching conducted at a professional level (Al-Jadidi, 2012). This is also indicative of efforts to encourage student teachers to generate new ideas concerning learning and teaching and assist them in elaborating and formulating more inclusive expertise, whilst applying the theoretical knowledge they have obtained from a foundational education programme (Almutairi, 2015).

According to the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and Education International (EI), "a fundamental reason for the gap in quality education is the severe lack of well-trained, well-supported teachers" (GCE, 2012:2), which is consistent with the findings of the previously mentioned studies in favour of better qualifications and training.

In most education systems, two forms of teacher training are required; namely, pre-service and in-service, which vary in the extent to which they place emphasis on theories of teaching and performing (classroom practice). In some countries, there may be variations in the approaches taken, and in feedback from students. Where fixed training packages are used, there may be limitations in how the content is delivered by lecturers to trainees. This was confirmed by Bayrakci (2009: 10) in a study conducted in Turkey, where the author also pointed out that "the most important problems facing in-service training activities in Turkey are a lack of professional staff, no collaborative partnership between teachers, no provision for feedback, and no systematic in-service training model".

In this respect, a strong correlation between the qualifications and training provided for the centre manager and the quality of service provision in early childhood settings was found based on data collected from twelve case studies in the Effective Provision of Preschool Education (EPPE) research project (Al-Jadidi, 2012). According to the World Bank (2014), the purpose of teacher training is to enhance the quality of education for all stages and promote the general governance of the education field, again highlighting the importance of both teaching and leadership within ECE.

Historically, the kindergarten curriculum of Saudi Arabia has lacked adequate coordination due to its significant underdevelopment (Al-Jadidi, 2012). On the other hand, teachers in Saudi Arabia were free to develop their own curriculum which was not supervised or monitored by the government, and not subject to any standards. In 1980, when the structure of education was subjected to the Ministry's direction and became more official, there was an increase in standardisation through developing a curriculum based on child development theories and objectives appropriate to the child's age. The goals of the Saudi ECE today can be compared with those of many other countries that have a

stronger education system.

The general objectives of pre-school education in Saudi Arabia, provided guidance in terms of giving children the opportunity to exercise sensory development that can support healthy habits building and attitudes about physical activity (Al-Jadidi, 2012). Moreover, these objectives consist of teaching children to enjoy sharing and being collaborative with peers, while caring for their mental and physical health and morale values. In addition, the objectives focus on preparing the child for the environment of elementary school by introducing language, social skills, academic subjects, and age-appropriate information. The study of Al-Shaer (2008) also explained the basic goals of early childhood education in the Saudi context whereby preschool or kindergarten experience is perceived as an addition to the family environment that could protect a child from danger in order to watch for signs abnormal behaviour, while being responsive to the Islamic environment. The social goals of these early childhood education programmes encourage the transition from family life to social life which is shared with peers and colleagues. As the following section indicates, theories of learning have shifted from individual acquisition towards social models in which interactions with peers, teachers, the environment and the culture all influence learning and development. These theories can be applied to children's and adults' learning, and have implications for teacher education in contemporary societies.

3.8 The Theoretical Framework of the Study

Several socio-cultural strategies have been suggested to help gain a greater understanding of learning in varied contexts. Certain theories of learning, inspired by the work of Vygotsky, are the source of debates and disagreements among scholars and academics (McInerney, Walker and Liem, 2011; Al-Nassar, 2011). According to Vygotsky (1978), learners gain knowledge and skills when they are engaged in learning with more qualified experts who guide them in the process of learning. This, therefore, suggests the importance of interactions between the learner and the teacher. According to Al-Nassar (2011:33), in this way, "learners find meanings not just through individual experiences but also through social interactions". Hence, Vygotsky claims that "development involves

learning much more than domain knowledge and includes becoming a contributing member of a community and society" (Hedges and Cullen, 2011:7). Therefore, according to Vygotsky: "interaction and collaboration could lead to the development of learning" (Al-Nassar, 2011:34), which means that collaboration and learning within cultural-social groups constitute a resource for learners and a source of knowledge, and the context contributes to this situation. More specifically, it can be seen that teachers interact and communicate within both university and school settings, during their preparation to teach, as formal educational contexts. However, a variety of other social and cultural groups such as family and friends, are usually informal, and also affect teachers' learning and teaching. Hence, teachers' development seems to greatly depend upon their experience of interactions among these social groups, which also suggests that role models and the methods used to form their experience contribute to enhancing their knowledge and skills.

Vygotsky wrote about "aesthetics, human and child development, language and thought, education and pedagogy, methodology and the crisis in psychology" (McInerney, Walker and Liem, 2011:4). His ideas were conveyed, developed, reinforced, or discussed by other scholars involved in the study of human understanding in relation to the variety of socio-cultural contexts to address contemporary dilemmas. His basic idea (McInerney, Walker and Liem, 2011) is that human thought and action are linked to fundamental socio-cultural factors inherent to the context which have an important impact on learning processes and outcomes. For Khomais (2007), this theory relates to the notion that because learning/teaching occur under different cultural settings, it is reasonable to expect different outcomes:

> *Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory described how human minds develop in relation to their interaction with their culture in general, which appears to be applicable to all societies, in developed and developing countries. From this point of view, the process of development is the same, but the difference is in the context where the development happens (Khomais, 2007:63).*

In this respect, Khomais (2007) agrees with John-Steiner and Mahn (1996) that learners' experiences differ in relation to varied circumstances. The perspective of the post-Vygotskian scholars understands "culture as a dynamic system of

meaning, with values, goals, and practices that promote particular approaches to education" (Hedges and Cullen, 2011: 5).

Thus, socio-cultural perspectives illustrate how social interactions, culture, and ideology impact on human processes or are likewise impacted by humans themselves (Schoen, 2011). Although Vygotskian theory states "that knowledge is formed in social interaction and broader cultural activity" (Hickey, 2011:139), socio-cultural research relates to a certain knowledge of forms of inquiry about specific issues and requires "the added dimension of thinking about the phenomenon in a way that sees the big picture of the embedded context in which it occurs" (Schoen, 2011: 18). Thus, socio-cultural research tries to see the whole picture, and the social and cultural factors which affect human activity.

Several researchers such as Winne have also investigated how socio-cultural contexts influence motivation, claiming that motivation needs a variety of goals where students challenge themselves and each other (Winne, 2004, as cited in McInerney, Walker and Liem, 2011). Likewise, Vadeboncoeur, Vellos and Goessling (2011) recommended a conceptual framework putting forward a socio-cultural perspective on identity construction, suggesting that learning was a form of social, cultural and historical practice that always involves an interaction of identity, knowledge, and values, even when the views of all parties differ. Knowledge alters the psychology of the teacher positively and/or negatively. As teachers' identities change, their value systems develop as does their self-appraisal (Vadeboncoeur, Vellos and Goessling, 2011; 247).

Based on this, socio-cultural theory is appropriate in this study because it views the learning context as a core element of teachers' learning (Goldhaber, 2000, as cited in Wang, 2007). Indeed, from this perspective, the context includes the physical surroundings, and the individuals evolving in it, in addition to the values and beliefs shaped by these cultural factors. Moreover, the notions of peoples' interactions with and transformation of people and context are fundamental aspects of this theory, whereby all the humans are deeply influenced by these processes and create different forms of meanings (Stevenson, 2004). Nonetheless, the socio-cultural perspective is more than the mere social level of analysis (Schoen, 2011:28) which is why this research adopts this framework

including data from a wide range of levels (Ibid, 2011) to enhance our understanding of how individuals evolve in this particular context of in-service education in KSA.

Hence, it can be seen that three main social contexts impact on teachers' learning and teaching, in addition to the KSA policy context. The global context may also have a significant impact on teachers in the Saudi context, despite the efforts of conservatives and religious authorities to preserve the local values and culture.

It has been argued that "people construct their identity through social interaction, and different sides of identity arise in different situation" (Kaasila and Lauriala, 2010). Burr (2003) states that knowledge comes from social interaction and is altered by the culture and history, as well as those interacting in this context. Moreover, for Alebaikan (2010:119) "religion and culture in Saudi Arabia not only shape people's attitudes, practices, and behaviours, but also form the construction of the reality of their lives."

Socio-cultural theory is relevant to this research because teachers are believed to be learning and teaching in a fairly unique context consisting of social, cultural, and historical specificities. Teachers' knowledge is formed, shaped, and co-constructed within the educational settings and training, and can be affected by teachers' social, cultural, and historical contextual aspects. Also, in Saudi Arabia being a teacher is a socially and religiously acceptable career for women, which means that they are likely to construct a teacher's identity that is aligned with the expectations of their community and society. Learning to teach involves replicating a set of prevailing Islamic and Arab values and beliefs in the KSA which are considered as founding principles influencing many aspects of Saudis' lives. At university, teachers learn about educational theories from other cultural perspectives, so it is worth asking whether these dominant ideas reproduced at the level of the curriculum may be a source of tensions or concerns.

According to Faulkner, Littleton, and Woodhead (2014), a socio-cultural paradigm has a benefit that features of early childhood are well-understood as a product of specific social, economic, and cultural processes. Through this, the

importance of universal maturation processes cannot be denied, nor could the particular vulnerability of young children to adversity be ignored. Nevertheless, the socio-cultural paradigm highlights that early childhood processes and contexts are shaped by human actions which are strongly social in character and are mediated by cultural processes at all times including competing cultural perspectives on the needs of young children, ethnicity, gender and other factors. In current times, all of these themes have become one of the significant catalysts for empirical and theoretical studies that originate within a variety of disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, development studies, and cultural studies (Faulkner, Littleton, and Woodhead, 2014). Among them, some of the studies were conducted within the traditional scientific disciplines, more specifically socio-cultural theories of early development. However, thinking related to early childhood is impacted by a much more major critique of conventional research and theory. Post-modernist, social constructionist and post-structural perspectives have become more influential, which has effectively liberated early childhood from narrow conceptualisations of what is normal, necessary, and natural, and has opened the door to more political and historical perspectives on policies, practices, and institutions and the ways in which knowledge, theories, and beliefs regarding young children regulate their lives.

On the other hand, Carnevale et al. (2015) discussed that there have been trends towards the interdisciplinary childhood studies which recognised that conventional studies based on discipline have fragmented the child as traditional professional specialisation. However, the inter-disciplinary studies have offered a meeting place for a variety of diverse standpoints on early childhood which is more consistent with the trend towards integrated services and more coordinated policies in education, health, and social care which are underpinned by a holistic view of the independent rights of children.

As discussed below, socio-cultural perspectives have been used extensively to theories adults' and children's learning in social contexts. According to the development of young children, which is a social process, children learn to feel, think, act and communicate within social relationships in the context of specific cultural practices and settings which are subject to interventions regarding beliefs of how children must be treated and what it means to be a child

(Peterson, McIntyre and Forsyth, 2016). Moreover, in early childhood, cultures are deeply social and can be expressed by means of peer group play, patterns of consumption of commercial toys, styles of behaviour and dress for instance (Kehily and Swann, 2003). McGurk (2017) discussed that childhood is basically a social phenomenon, since the practices in childhood contexts are constructed socially. Furthermore, these practices change over time, especially in contemporary societies with the expansion of digital technologies in children's home and family lives

Also, the notion of childhood has been understood, regulated, and institutionalised differently in various societies and periods of history. However, early childhood has been differentiated and re-invented constantly relying upon the cultural and social characteristics of children, their ethnicity and gender, poverty and wealth and other factors (Wood et al., 2014). In addition, early childhood is also a political concern which is marked by overall inequalities in resources, opportunities, and provisions which are shaped by global and local forces (Richter et al., 2017).

These viewpoints have drawn attention to the ways in which the concept of early childhood is developed and re-developed by and for children. Therefore, the settings, pedagogies, as well as practices of early childhood are shaped by the activity and creativity of human beings, which are additionally shaped by opportunities, constraints, and circumstances, and which are informed by multiple dialogues regarding the nature and needs of children. As a result, any specific requirements of early childhood services, pedagogy, and curriculum reflect specific combinations of cultural aspirations and assumptions, in addition to power relationships that exist in societies between children, governments, professionals, and families.

3.9 Filling the Gap

Based on the previous discussion, it can be concluded that further research on the role of in-service training for early childhood teachers in the provision of adequate educational services is essential. As demonstrated in this literature review, there are a number of studies emphasising the importance of a four-year college degree as a key qualification for early childhood teachers (Barrett,

2003). Furthermore, it is highlighted that this qualification should be complemented by further training, especially in methods of teaching young learners. In the context of KSA, Al-Ameel (2002: 307) recommends further research to be conducted with a particular focus on "the importance of pre-school teacher training and qualification including the role of in-service programme needs".

Ten years later in the same Saudi context, Al-Jadidi (2012) also highlighted those Saudi student kindergarten teachers' beliefs and knowledge, after receiving a four-year teacher preparation programme, did not appear to have developed. This suggests that training programmes for pre-service and in-service teachers need to be further explored, in order to identify the reasons behind the lack of progress and to find ways of overcoming any challenges to the effectiveness of such programmes for in-service kindergarten teachers; hence the need for the current study to provide more in-depth insights into this neglected, yet indispensable stage in learners' lives and educational careers (Almutairi, 2015).

The literature review indicated that numerous factors affect the provision of early childhood education programmes, but with consistent agreement that the quality of training for early childhood teachers is paramount to raising the quality of provision, and improving children's outcomes. Moreover, in the context of KSA, it seems fair to say that, to the best of my knowledge, there has been a lack of research on the impact of unqualified early childhood teachers on children's progress and learning outcomes. In addition, based on my five-year experience as a lecturer at the College of Education at King Saud University in Saudi Arabia, and through my experience of supervising students/teachers for a specific period in schools in Riyadh, I have noticed that some early childhood teachers lacked important skills and were limited in aspects of their teaching performance. For example, many teachers did not take into account the individual nature of the child and his/her growth characteristics, or even their physical condition. This prompted me to consider whether this was due to the lack of qualified teachers, whether the criteria for selecting teachers were unclear or whether the training programmes were inadequate in some ways. The experience subsequently gave me the impetus to conduct this study and

explore the possible reasons behind this situation, with a view to improving the quality of teaching and learning and achieving the desired outcomes. Through my experience in supervising student teachers for their pre-service training during five years, I have become aware of the paramount importance of investigating this topic, given the lack of qualified teachers in early childhood education in the KSA.

3.10 Summary of the Chapter

Within the broad field of studies on teacher professionalism, less attention has been paid to the construction of teacher professionalism for ECE specialists both locally and globally. Because ECE has only relatively recently been drawn into government policy frameworks, more attention is now being pad to the qualifications of teachers, and the relationship between teaching quality and children's outcomes. Although ECE is a distinct phase of education, there are similar concerns to other phases regarding appropriate pedagogical content knowledge, in addition to knowledge of children's learning and development as the basis for practice. Moreover, this study depended on different concepts such as "early childhood education," that is, education for children from birth to the age of six. Also, it includes programmes provided to children from childhood to the third grade through different settings or environments. According the aim of this study, early childhood education relates to the education and development of children aged three to six intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically, to prepare them for primary education in the KSA.

In light of research that links children's early education experiences with later school success, it is argued that the level of qualifications and the quality of teacher education for kindergarten teachers should not be less than the level of teacher preparation programmes at the other education stages. In addition, research on teacher education has indicated there is an urgent need to build criteria to develop a vision for an integrated programme for the preparation of kindergarten teachers in the Arab world. Moreover, after reviewing theoretical issues and related , it seems that kindergarten teacher preparation programmes should be independent from other teacher preparation programmes for the other education stages because of the specificity of the competencies required.

In addition, ECE teachers require content knowledge that relates to the curriculum areas as well as pedagogical knowledge that reflects contemporary theories of children's learning and development. The unique pedagogical combination of child-initiated and adult-led activities also presents challenges to teacher education. In addition, teacher education needs to incorporate elements of leadership so that teachers are able to lead the setting as well as leading the practice of other adults. These are some of the complex demands made of teachers in contemporary societies if ECE is to fulfil the goals that are set by governments and justify the economic investment.

Chapter Four: Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the strategy applied to achieve the research aims, and address the questions raised through this investigation. The different research paradigms are discussed and then followed by a justification of the paradigm chosen as the appropriate approach to answer the research questions. Also, the sampling approach and planned data collection methods is described, and arguments for the choice of these methods are discussed. It will also be essential to critically appraise the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen methodology, and therefore a section of the limitations is also included. Ethical considerations of this type of qualitative research are discussed. Finally, the potential implications for practice and the possible impact of this research on the education at the kindergarten level in Saudi Arabia and similar countries are illustrated.

The main aim of this research, as previously stated, is to explore teachers' perspectives and their experiences on the current approach of an in-service training programme for kindergarten teachers in Saudi Arabia. In other words, the current research is, in essence, an in-depth investigation of the impact, or lack of it, of in-service training on kindergarten teachers` knowledge, teaching practice, and beliefs.

Thus, the research questions under investigation are as follows:

1. What is the current provision of training programmes for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers?

2. What are the Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of the available training programmes in training centre?

3. How do the available training programmes impact Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional knowledge?

4. What do the teachers recommend for the development of in-service training programmes?

4.2 Research Paradigms

Guba (1990:17) states that a paradigm refers to "a basic set of beliefs that guides action."   Working through a specific paradigm is influenced by the researcher's view of the world and of the nature of truth; it helps to guide the researchers in selecting and managing their methods, collecting and analysing data and in concluding to inform the literature and potentially impact on practice.

Three main research paradigms are discussed in the literature: the positivist paradigm, the interpretive paradigm, and the critical paradigm. The positivist, scientific paradigm aims to generate general rules while the interpretive paradigm focuses on understanding and interpreting society (Wellington, 2000; Pring, 2004; Crotty, 2003); while, the interest of the critical paradigm rests on critical theory and includes philosophical positions applied to social situations (Cohen et al., 2000).

According to Grix (2004:80) the positivist and realist view of the scientific paradigm embrace the premise that: "the world exists independently of our knowledge of it." The main aim of the positivist paradigm it is to seek out, then generalize, results (Wellington, 2000). Three positivist assumptions about human's behaviour, if not in its entirety on many aspects of it, are that it can be expected, observed, and measured. There is also a trend in the social sciences suggesting that indeed the social world is similar in many ways to the natural world (Mansour, 2008). Thus, since the scientific paradigm originates from the natural sciences, it can be concluded that there are general rules or laws that govern human social life and therefore these rules can be examined scientifically in the same ways that scientists examined the physiology of respiration, for example. These assumptions, however, are the sources of criticism of this paradigm (Cohen et al., 2000). This paradigm ignores the fact that humans can be, to a large extent, subjective and their behaviour more often than not disobeys general rules.

By contrast, the interpretive paradigm, also known as the constructivist approach, seeks to create and construct meaning in social settings based on the views, observations, and interpretations of the individuals concerned with a particular social phenomenon being investigated. This approach does no rely on

the assumptions of general rules directing human conduct and is more concerned with the observation of actions and behaviours resulting from social encounters and interactions (e.g. documents produced by a school). The diverse qualitative methods available now are of more value to interpretivist researchers than quantitative methods. Furthermore, this paradigm highlights the significance of the investigator as a primary tool of data collection (Wellington, 2000). A drawback of this paradigm is the lack of objectivity and the prevalence of subjectivity in the research process. A third major paradigm, the critical paradigm, relates to the study of social phenomena resulting from the power issues and inequalities between different groups or individuals in society.

The question arises, which of these three paradigms is the most suitable. This study aims to describe, discover, understand and analyse the most important aspects of in-service training programmes for a sample of kindergarten teachers, but does not seeks to expand its findings to other contexts; rather, it mainly aims to shed light on and gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena under investigation within the KSA social context. Furthermore, part of the study explores teachers` beliefs. Interpretation of teachers' beliefs was attempted in the Saudi context and compared to other situations. This is in agreement with Nespor (1987) and Gahin (2001) who believed that studies of teachers' perspectives should be interpretive in the first place.

A socio-cultural perspective was adopted for this study which involves understanding the social and individual realities of the participants including their identities and the interpretations of their context as a reflection of their wider cultural and historical context. Hence it is assumed that Saudi Arabia has a different heritage and history from many countries of the Western world from which most early education theories arose. Mainly, understanding the way social elements interact is an important aspect that needs participants to be able to openly discuss their experiences and without prejudice.

Consequently, this study adopts an interpretive approach, I will need to delve deep into each participant's experience and gain an in-depth understanding of the knowledge and beliefs of the kindergarten teachers about in-service training programmes from the teachers' points of view. The interpretive paradigm was conceptually developed to allow investigation of people's perspectives to

identify shared experiences and understand social situations through the interpretation of participants' views and beliefs. The realities clarified in these situations are, therefore, socially constructed realities (Wellington, 2000).

In conclusion, I believe that this research is to be conducted from an interpretive paradigm as it allows for the best methods available in this context to fulfil the objectives of the research. Based on these assumptions, the next section discusses several ontological and epistemological principles related to interpretive research that underpinned the design and implementation of this study. A research paradigm is composed of three basic elements: ontology, that is, the study of being, epistemology, which relates to the knowledge making process, and finally, methodology, which is the overall approach to the research process (Crotty, 2003).

4.2.1 Ontology

Ontology is concerned with reality itself, its character and main attributes. Corbetta (2003) emphasizes the question 'What?' as a hallmark of ontology. Similarly, Crotty (2003) focuses on the question 'What is?', whilst Anderson and Biddle (1991: 10) have formulated the key question of ontology as 'What is there that can be known?' By philosophy, this study will adopt interpretivism as its ontological approach, as the study seeks to offer a meaningful explanation of some of the challenges and issues in in-service teacher education in KSA, from the perspective of early childhood teachers. More specifically, the study aims, as illustrated previously, to (1) explore the current provision of a training programme for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers; (2) explore Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions of the available programmes in training centres, (3) understand the impact of the available training programmes on Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional knowledge, and (4) knowing what do the teachers recommend for the development of in-service training programmes?

To fulfil the research aims, this study will employ semi-structured interviews and focus group studies together with the analysis of pertinent policy documents, namely the pre-school curriculum and the content of the curriculum used to train early childhood teachers at pre-school education institutes in KSA. As a result,

the study will construct multiple realities comprising participants' perceptions and the way I understand the studied segment of reality (Anderson & Biddle, 1991). The preceding complies with my objective to examine and eventually understand human experience from my own, informed, subjective perspective (Cohen et al., 2000), as well as from the participating teachers.

4.2.2 Epistemology

The critical characteristic of epistemological assumptions is their focus on the relationship between the questions 'Who?' and 'What?' and the product of this relationship (Corbetta, 2003: 12). The 'Who?' in this case is the researcher, while 'What?' signifies what can be known and observed. From another perspective, epistemology explains the essence of knowledge, "its nature and forms, how it can be acquired, and communicated to other human beings" (Cohen et al., 2007: 6).

Reflecting on the points presented above, it is apparent that this study's epistemological stance is social constructionism, based on the assumption that its generation and construction is rather conducted via interaction between the various subjects (Crotty, 2003). Thus, it is not possible for me, the researcher, to form meaning regarding the current provision of available training programmes offered to Saudi in-service early childhood teachers, without intensive interaction between the subjects, represented by myself, the researcher, and other participants in the research. Therefore, I am not positioned outside the reality of the participants but instead seek to approach the perspectives and experiences of the research participants through interviews, in which meaning is constructed through an interpretation of the work and the information provided by the interviewees (teachers). Therefore, I perceive my role as a researcher as a co-constructor of reality (Wellington, 2000).

4.2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that informs this study is social constructionism. Furthermore, social constructionism is a theory of knowledge that explains the role of social interactions in constructing our understanding of the world. Social constructionism therefore contends that a great deal of human life occurs as it does due to social and interpersonal effects. Genetically patrimonial factors and social factors are viewed as interacting with each other in dynamic ways. Hence, social constructionism does not reject the effect of genetic inheritance, but concentrates on examining the social influences on communal and individual life (Burr, 2018). There are four main principles on which social constructionism is based (Burr, 1995). Firstly, social constructionism encourages a critical position about the different ways in which we come to understand the 'real world.' This indicates that there is no such thing as conventional knowledge, which we are obliged to accept as objective and free of bias. Secondly, history and culture are the lenses through which we understand the world with its propositions. In the context of this research, the history of early year education in KSA is of paramount significance as it is relatively new compared to the developed world and it is also largely imported from different environments through the modernization of education in the Middle East, which happened in the middle of the 20th century. This modernization has largely confronted, and in many instances interacted positively with, the centuries-old teaching of religion and language. Thirdly, it is our everyday interaction with other people which helps us construct knowledge, especially through language. Finally, the social construction of knowledge requires a range of human actions and reactions (Burr, 1995: 3).

In this study, social constructionism was adopted for two main reasons. First, the rationale for the training programmes that Saudi in-service kindergarten teachers receive was socially constructed through this study by examining the teachers' various perceptions. Second, the participants' views were seen from different angles using methodological triangulation in the data collection and analysis processes (i.e., in-depth semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion, and documentary evidence).

4.2.4 The Role of the Constructivist Approach in this Study

Roberts (1998) proposes that the use of the constructivist approach offers the most acceptable framework for understanding teaching. This is because it recognizes the interdependence of the personal and social dimensions of teacher development. Effective knowledge is represented in the interpretation of several views informing what constitutes the knowledge base of the in-service training experienced by teachers. Drawing on research on the development of teacher knowledge, Freeman & Johnson (1998:411) understand that "a social constructivist view of language learning would seem to interface more directly with the nature of classroom language learning."

For constructivists, the context of knowledge is as significant as the constructed knowledge of the individual. Abdal-Haqq (1998) claims that constructivism views education as a form of social development where individuals evolve within their socio-cultural context. Research informed by constructivism discovers these perceptions and is not limited by what is traditionally accepted about the knowledge base needed, for example, by the experienced teacher in in-service training. Crotty (1998:15) emphasized that "instead, such research invites us to approach the object in a radical spirit of openness to its potential for new or richer meaning. It is an invitation for reinterpretation." Therefore, the truth is a not a discovery but rather a construction. Thus, the theoretical perspective informing this study is both interpretive and constructivist.

Interpretivism provides a chance for understanding teachers' knowledge and beliefs from the inside-out. This is by Pring (2004:100) who claims that "To understand particular events, one must see things from the point of view of the participants or the people who are involved – how they interpret events and thereby constitute those events of a certain sort." Moreover, an explanatory or interpretive method of inquiry is helpful in investigating and understanding teachers' knowledge and beliefs. A clear expression of, and making obvious, one's cognitive processes for lived experiences may lead to improved awareness of the practice and a better understanding of the reasoning behind it. It is this reasoning which is more significant than the learned practice itself. In many instances, the continuous reiteration of the same actions in a given

practice would become repetitive act devoid of any meaning. It is essential that a reflective exercise not be lost during the practice to avoid such a routine practice. If the actions are accompanied by a reflection, they become not sensitive to the context or the circumstances of the condition being encountered.

One of the proposals of interpretivism, which is particularly associated with qualitative research, is that our knowledge of reality relies on our understanding which is the result of reflection on surrounding events, and not just experience (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Thus, it is important to highpoint the interpretive phases of knowing and the significance of both the participants' and investigator's interpretations and understanding of practice and the underpinning knowledge.

Also, this research is informed by a constructivist stance. Constructivism in epistemology is matched with relativism in the ontology (Crotty, 1998). The reason for this is that the reality of an object is the sense made of it. Crotty (1998:64) elegantly stated to this effect that: "We will obviously hold our understandings much more lightly and tentatively and far less dogmatically, seeing them as historically and culturally effected interpretations rather than eternal truths of some kind." In the context of the research presented here, the reality of knowledge of training is constructed from the perceptions of the teachers. This knowledge is influenced by the context they work in and the experiences they go through. Moreover, the meanings they convey are personally formed and practically oriented. This could expose the culturally situated nature of their knowledge and practices and as a result, the many realities that exist in the cognizance and activities of the participants. This in fact applied to many teachers in different contexts as "[much of the teachers'] practical knowledge is situational, empirical, and related (Crotty, 1998, 64).

The need to involve teachers when investigating their knowledge is emphasized. Connelly, Clandinin & He (1997) argued that teachers are not just screens who translate others' intentions and ideologies into practice. This is sensible given that teachers come to the educational situation with their philosophies, values, and theories. Their previous experience, schooling, and education also work as filters before they adopt certain philosophies. So,

teachers' voices must be heard. Also, classroom and schools are sites where new meanings and understandings are created and shared (Fitzclarence, 2003). Teachers are not mere consumers of others' ideas. Besides, practical ideas about teaching are informed by what happens in real classroom practices.

If research on training and professional teaching is to highlight the practical aspects of teachers' work, it requests to acknowledge teachers as co-producers of knowledge. Rogers (2007) confirmed the significance of involving practitioners as integral players and leaders in developing the knowledge needed to carry out educational reform. In doing so, it is vital to acknowledge, respect and effectively seek, the expertise that practitioners bring to the difficult task of improving schools. Similarly, Sen (2002) raised the argument which says that teachers' opinions need to be recognized to increase educational reform in the post-modern age. With the development of technology, its impact on the lifestyle of younger generations is dynamic, and the demand for the teachers to improve their practice and accommodate these changes grows. However, without taking into account teachers' opinions and views, any educational reform initiative would lack an important source of knowledge to implement change.

Neglecting teachers' views could have a negative impact on the planned results of the introduced changes. Indeed, acknowledgment of teachers' opinions and actions will provide in-depth analysis and understanding of these views, and will ultimately contribute to helping them understand and reflect on their practice and transform their knowledge (Sonneville, 2007). In agreement with this premise, Husu (2004) highlighted that it is essential for those who want to understand teachers' practice and to learn to take a vested interest in teachers' accounts of the teaching and learning process.

Research on teaching, which is responsive to teachers' opinions, needs to adopt a constructivist rather than a positivist approach. Richards (1994:402) launches criticism against the positivist approach when researching teachers' knowledge and, instead, approves a constructivist approach arguing:

> *"A view of knowledge as an external body of information is likely to lead to a focus on imparting that information, on content; if the knower is not separated from the known, the focus is more*

likely to be on engagement and exploration. This rather crude formulation of a complex debate revolving around the rejection of positivism provides convenient distinction which applies as much to the investigation of teacher knowledge as to the knowledge itself".

Also, Freeman (1995:581) calls for a constructive approach when researching teachers' practice. He states that "it is imperative to examine how participants - teachers, students, parents, and others involved in schools and classrooms - construe their worlds, the actions they take, and how they explain those actions to themselves and to others." Likewise, Golombek (1998:447) believes that the teacher knowledge base should not be compulsory and argued that "L2 teachers' knowledge is, in part, experiential and constructed by teachers themselves as they respond to the contexts of their classrooms."

The arguments for constructivism stress the role of experience and context. Therefore, a practical epistemology could shed light on the connection between knowledge and action and how it is researched. Understanding the role of knowledge in teaching could be enhanced through Dewey's transactional theory of knowing, which is seen as one of the strongest and most complex epistemologies of practice available (Biesta, 2007). This theory states that the basic phenomenon is the co-ordinated transaction of organism-environment or act. Accordingly, the idea of knowledge is viewed from an action-theoretical perspective, whereby knowing relates to doing. The notion of knowing does not relate to a reality "out there" but revolves around the link between actions and their consequences. Therefore, planning actions rather than using trial and error seems like a better strategy, which is a critical skill for a practitioner who is unsure about how to behave or act. This could be true of teaching as the teachers are often faced with novel situations.

According to Dewey's transactional theory of knowing, a practitioner does not have any knowledge at all to act. This does not mean that practitioners do not learn from their interactions and actions within their realities. The whole idea of experience is that one undergoes the consequences of doings and changes as a result of this. This change conditions further behaviour by acquiring habits or predispositions to act. The essence of habits is an acquired predisposition to ways or modes of response, not to particular acts. Reflection with the use of

symbolic operations makes the difference between trial and error and intelligent action (Biesta, 2007). .

Problem definition is key to intelligent action and development of new habits. When a practitioner is faced with an indeterminate situation, a suitable response is needed to maintain coordinated transaction which was interrupted by the new situation. Defining the problem is essential to find the appropriate response. According to Dewey, finding the solution and finding the problem are two sides of the same coin because a practitioner will only know what the problem was after finding an adequate response. The best way to find the appropriate response is through the imagination of different competing possible courses of action. The success of the selected choice will be apparent upon acting.

Reflection on action is central to these processes. Problems cannot simply be resolved through mere contemplation. However, to reach a reasonable response, the thought process provides a better chance of success than trial and error approach. Knowledge is gained through problem-solving exercises and is informed indirectly, or directly, by similarities and differences with other settings and could contribute to addressing future problems. Thus, gained knowledge is not about the world, but about the relations between action and its consequences in a specific situation. This viewpoint could contribute to research of teachers' experience and knowledge. Biesta (2007:15) claims that "One of the main implications of this view is that inquiry or research, does not provide us with information about a world out there, but only about possible relations between actions and consequences." This type of research could tell us in the investigated context, or similar contexts, what worked, but could not inform us, at least directly, about what could not have worked or what will work.

4.3   Methodology

The methodology is defined as "the research design that shapes our choice and use of particular methods and links them to the desired outcomes" (Crotty, 2003: 7). The methodology adopted in this study is shaped and informed by the interpretive research philosophy and is based on a case study design. The focus of the proposed case study will be a Kindergarten Training Centre (Centre

1 will be used as a pseudonym for this centre, to preserve anonymity), in which many in-service kindergarten teachers are trained in a city in KSA.

A case study methodology is appropriate for this study because it enables a close examination of a specific phenomenon. This, in turn, will permit a detailed description and analysis of the case. The data yielded by a case study can be robust, as it represents the reality of participants' views, while taking into account different contextual factors. Wellington (2000: 90) defines the case study as "a detailed examination of one setting, or one single subject, or one single depository of documents, or one particular event." The case study is also defined by Robson (2002: 178) as "a well-established research strategy where the focus is on a case (which is interpreted very widely to include the study of an person, a group, a setting, an organization… etc.) in its right and taking its context into account". This author also adds that a case study methodology involves different forms of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.

Through this programme of research, the central belief is that the case study is considerably more beneficial in meeting the research aims, described above, than other potential methods which might have been considered. Cohen et al. (2000) argue that data derived from a case study have a strong basis in reality. Also, the subsequent data are usually easy to understand for a wide range of audiences, whether academic or non-academic.

4.3.1 Case Study

The current research was descriptive and employed interviews as an instrument for collecting data and answering the research questions so as to meet the main objectives of this research. A descriptive research design depends on more than one procedure to obtain results. Descriptive research designs include case studies, surveys, and observation. In order to address the exploratory nature of the research questions, the study employed qualitative methods.

Moreover, in this research, an illustrative case study design was adopted, as the focus of the proposed case study was a Kindergarten Training Centre (Centre 1 will be used as a pseudonym for this centre, to preserve anonymity), in which many in-service kindergarten teachers are trained in a city in KSA.

According to Denscombe (2014:54), the main characteristic of the illustrative case study approach is that it focuses "on just one instance of the thing that is to be investigated." This was exactly the purpose of the current study, given the time and resources available, as choosing a case study strategy allowed for the use of a variety of methods, each of which provided important data. According to McLeod (2008) the main strength of the case study is that it provides detailed, rich, and qualitative information and insights for further research.

According to Denzin & Lincoln (2008:204), a case study is an analysis of the effect of an event occurring in a neutral context. There is usually a focus and attention on obscure, social, or material boundaries that are vaguely defined. In this study, the geographical area of emphasis was the KSA. The social boundaries consisted of the in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of a training programme. However, Stake (1995:57) defined the case study as the "unit of study" of the topic to be examined. Each of these descriptions was properly applied to this research project. Therefore, the case study research was deemed an appropriate method of inquiry for this study.

On the other hand, I recognised the limitations of the case study, as the results might be restricted and not generalizable. Generalizations in case studies are not statistical, but analytical based on a previously developed theory as a model to compare the experimental results of a case study. In descriptive research, the factual description of a situation or area of interest is used to collect facts and test hypotheses or research questions (Fisher & Stenner, 2011). In addition, the current research collected data by conducting face-to-face interviews with a range of teachers.

Moreover, case studies enable a close examination of a specific phenomenon and provide data which cannot be collected by quantitative research. In addition, the case study methodology was adopted to investigate this issue because it involves many aspects of a subject, such as documents, work management and other elements which are capable of enhancing the way the research is conducted, as well as enabling me to better comprehend the subject matter (Wellington, 2000). Moreover, a case study can also provide insights into similar situations and be conducted by a single researcher, rather than a group of researchers (Cohen, 2000). However, there are some disadvantages of using

a case study approach; for example, it is difficult to generalize results, the process can be time-consuming, and it can lead to bias. Therefore, caution was exercised as far as bias and time are concerned.

This case study research consists of three phases. First, qualitative data collection methods were designed, including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and documentary analysis to yield insights into the current training provision for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers, the perceptions of Saudi in-service early childhood teachers about these training programmes and the impact of these programmes on Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional knowledge. Secondly, data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with teachers, focus group discussions, and documentary analysis. Finally, the data from all three research methods were analyzed, discussed, and interpreted.

4.3.2 Data Collection Methods

When carrying out research, selecting suitable methods to collect data is important because if inappropriate methods are selected and do not meet the study aims and objectives, research outcomes may be affected (Fisher & Stenner, 2011). Matthews and Ross (2014: 45) opined that primary and secondary data collection methods are the two important ways through which researchers gather data to make research results reliable and valid in order to answer the research questions.

With regard to primary data, Gray (2013: 78) explains that it is first-hand, original data that researchers can collect using various methods such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, and other methods. In contrast to this, secondary data collection methods reflect a way through which researchers gather data from sources which are already available, hence it is easier to collect compared to primary data. This is why secondary data collection is commonly known as desk-research (Gray, 2013: 89).

In order to explore the teachers' perspectives and their experiences on the current approach of in-service training programmes for kindergarten teachers in Saudi Arabia, this study made use of both primary as well as secondary data. The major rationale to collect primary data was to gather original information

and perspectives of kindergarten teachers in Saudi Arabia about the in-service training programme provided to them.

As Bryman (2015: 90) argues, primary data include specific and over-arching data which allow researchers to answer research questions in an effective manner; therefore, this study selected primary data collection methods to obtain results that can best contribute to elicit responses from teachers and help Saudi Arabia kindergarten schools to devise suitable policies to provide in-service training programmes for teacher development and professional growth. This is why primary data were preferred for this study as they yielded information that could not have been obtained through only secondary data. Not only this, the use of primary data collection methods allowed me to collect the necessary information about how kindergarten teachers perceived the in-service training programmes provided to them, which also allowed me to gather their suggestions about what ought to be done by their respective school authorities or by Saudi officials in order to make those suggestions a part of training programme development.

Also, Bryman (2015: 64) explained that information is readily available through secondary data, as previous researchers have already researched similar areas. Therefore, secondary methods to collect data in this study involved collecting most relevant information that could help in confirming the research outcomes of this study. In this regard, studies carried out in the education sector, specifically Saudi Arabia education sector, and those focusing on teachers' training programmes were incorporated to form the theoretical literature of this study.

The major rationale to collect secondary data in this study was to develop relevant themes that emerged through reviewing the literature in the area of teacher's training programs in early childhood education and their perceptions towards these training programs. Hence, previous studies formed a significant part to effectively analyse and interpret findings from literature review studies. In this regard, secondary data in this study were gathered from sources, such as journal articles, books, government reports in Saudi education, reports, magazine articles, statistics from the Saudi education sector, and all other relevant sources that could provide suitable and useful information to meet the

research objectives and help analyse the results. It should be noted that as access to some secondary data and information needed permission, I only used available sources that I managed to access.

4.3.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

The choice of study tools is consistent with research methodology and with considerations taken of all preceding discussions about methodology. In light of the previous discussions, the semi-structured interview and focus group questions designed to stimulate discussion among conveniently selected teachers were selected as the most suitable tools for data-collection for this study (Cohen et al., 2004). The semi-structured interview was designed to collect data to contribute to the answers of research questions about the current provision of an in-service training programme for early childhood teachers in KSA, and the positive and the negative impact of their perceptions about it. After analysing the semi-structured interview, a focus group discussion session was designed to consolidate the teachers' answers to the third and fourth questions about the impact of in-service training on the knowledge and beliefs of early childhood teachers, and to collect suggestions for the recommendations to develop in-service training programmes for early childhood teachers in KSA.

The interview has been defined as follows:

> *a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focused by him [sic] on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation (Kahn & Cannell, 1968).*

Conducting semi-structured interviews to collect research data is one of the best techniques a researcher could use to get a clear view of the aims of the research (Wellington, 2000). This view is reinforced by Kvale (1996), who suggests that the interview technique is the best way to investigate the opinions, feelings, and perceptions of interviewees. (Crotty (2003: 7) supports this view by maintaining that interviews enable researchers to "see things from the perspective of the research participants." Wellington (2000) gives another example of how the interview method can be an effective way to collect data, suggesting that:

Interviewing allows a researcher to investigate and prompt things we cannot observe. We can probe an interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings, and perspectives. We can also elicit their version or their account of situations which they have lived through: his/her story (Wellington, 2000: 71).

Similarly, Kvale (2007) claims that an interview is "a conversation that has a structure and purpose determined by the interviewer, [...] A careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining knowledge" (Kvale, 2007: 7). There are various discussions on semi-structured interviews as a research method, but in this instance, I will concentrate on how the interview technique complements the observation and documentary analysis. Accordingly, the focus here was on the semi-structured interview, which is useful for qualitative research. The interview questions were informed by the initial observation of the in-service training activity, to explore the current provision of in-service early childhood training programmes, teachers' perceptions of these programmes and the impact of such programmes on Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional knowledge and beliefs.

Brinkmann (2014: 1008) argued that interviews, especially the semi-structured interview, is one of the most interesting methods of data collection where the researcher can interactively talk "to people to find out what they have experienced and what they think and feel about something that they are interested in" (p. 1009). They rather define a semi-organised interview as a regular session usually operating with the researcher knowing what he or she wants to find in his or her research, such as a structured interview. He or she can have a series of questions to ask participants, but on the other hand, they are not organised as is the case in a structured interview, but the conversation is likely to vary with different members. This is consistent with the interpretivist paradigm of this research in that the views and experiences of the participants are socially constructed, and that they are able to communicate their own realities.

4.3.3.1 Description of the Interview

The semi-structured questions were intended to capture the teachers' beliefs about teaching, perspectives and their experience on how their knowledge and beliefs were developed after involvement in in-service training programs. The semi-structured interview questions were grouped into four parts as follows: general information; in-service training program content; in-service training program environment at the centres; and the impact of training programs and experience. The interview questions are included in Appendix 3. For privacy reasons, pseudonyms and codes were used to describe the female teachers, instead of the true names.

All the semi-structured interviews were individual face-to-face conversations with the kindergarten teachers and took place in quiet rooms that provided a comfortable environment for the interviewees. The timing of the interview was also decided as per the teachers' preferences in accordance with the following guidance: "The interviewee must establish an atmosphere, in which they feel to be safe enough to talk freely about his or her experiences and feelings" (Kvale, 1996:125). All teachers had the opportunity to read the information sheet which described the motivation for the research and what it involves. Teachers were also invited to sign in the relevant consent forms. I used an Olympus digital voice recorder which produced a high-quality recording of all my interviews.

The final part of this section examines the procedure of constructing the tool. The first phase in constructing the interview was to adapt the main study questions to four sub-questions: the first and second to be covered by the semi-structured interview, where the questions were further subdivided into four dimensions. Some demographic data were requested to purposefully group the teachers according to their qualifications. This was mapped on crude statistics suggesting that almost a third of all early years teachers in KSA were holders of a specialised KG qualification Diploma. The further information required from teachers was their specialty and previous teaching experience. This was done to obtain background data in order to categorise responses and compare and contrast participants in terms of their self-perceptions (Bell, 1999).

The first dimension, therefore, was general information including specialisation, teaching experience and courses attended. This was followed by the second, third and fourth dimensions, in-service training programme content, the in-service training programme environment at the centres, the impact of training programmes and experience. The semi-structured interview finished by asking an invitation question for respondents to add anything that was not mentioned in the interview questions.

As advised by various methodological literatures the questions were written in the participant's language, an understandable style, clear and free from vague terms. These questions were tested by colleagues before conducting the interviews. Items were organised logically, such as from generalities to specifics. The items were brief and meaningful with the aim that these enable teachers to deliver a clear response. The items were designed to give participants enough freedom to express their answers while at the same time would yield suitable data to the researcher. The semi-structured interviews were also designed to be interesting to the teachers, focused on education and avoiding confusion with general political or religious debates that are known to cause controversy and lead to a lack of cooperation of the teachers in the conservative Saudi Society. It is worth noting that the questions are semi-structured to give the participating teachers the opportunity to elaborate on the different issues that the questions stimulate. Therefore, rich data can be collected. Full validity examination is not required in this kind of research, but I was concerned to aim for trustworthiness and credibility.

After building the semi-structured interview in the light of considerations, the next stage was taken, namely: 1) translation of the interview questions from English to Arabic, 2) gaining permission from the Ministry of Education, and 3) accessing the research sites. The process for this stage is outlined below.

4.3.4 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics are an important issue in the field of educational research. There is a relationship between ethics and the quality of research in the qualitative method. As Uwe (2007) explains, ethical issues include data protection, avoiding harm to participants, respecting perspectives and privacy. Such ethical features should be considered when measuring the quality of the research. According to Pring (2000: 142), "the 'search for rules' is at least one important ethical dimension to any consideration of human behavior". Ethical concerns, therefore, should be a priority for a research project and should inform all its stages (Wellington, 2000).

In the Saudi context, there are some restrictions on researchers. First, video-recording is forbidden and one can never video-record teachers or children. Second, requesting parents' permission to take photos of their children at kindergarten is important, to the extent that they have the right to sue if such permission has not been sought. Also, teachers and parents are often unwilling to take part in research because they are afraid their names would be mentioned in the research report. It is actually very hard to convince them such personal data is highly confidential. Other teachers may refuse to be interviewed, precisely because they are unqualified and fear to lose their jobs if all their colleagues and other staff find out they are unqualified. Furthermore, male trainers are never allowed to train female teachers at any educational stage. This is culturally and religiously taboo in KSA, which is inevitably a hindrance if a good male teacher-trainer is found. Moreover, ethical issues were taken into serious consideration in order to complete the research and ensure that it conformed with the moral criteria of academic research in general and with Saudi ethical norms in particular. The only solution to this problem is to provide training via a video-conference, where the male teacher can be seen by the female teachers, but not vice versa (Wellington, 2000).

Considering the ethical implications when conducting research is important and in this study, an ethical issue was carefully considered throughout all the research stages from the very beginning. One comprehensive and useful source is the British Education Research Association (BERA) Ethical Guidelines

(2011), in which universities have established and outlined clear guidelines for research ethics. For example, they have instigated responsibilities for codes of inquiry, which should guide the ethical conduct of any prospective research.

Firstly, I requested Saudi in-service kindergarten teachers to sign a consent form for their voluntary participation in this study (see Appendix 10-11). Secondly, the research participants were informed of the main aims of the research, so that they understand there are no hidden agendas. Another important ethical issue to be raised is the protection of participants from harm. To this end, the participants were assured that their names and places of work would remain anonymous and confidential. This will then ensure their openness while expressing their views on the available training programmes. Thirdly, the participants were informed that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons and at all times, their personal information would remain anonymous and confidential, as nobody would have access to it except the researcher and the supervisors. Addition, to the measures previous, a Certificate of Ethical Approval from the Graduate School of Education at the University of Sheffield was completed in order to carry out the current study (see Appendix 12).

4.3.4.1 Gaining Access

It is essential, in field work, to get formal permission to access to the respondents. This stage started from Sheffield University where a formal letter was sent by my supervisor to the Saudi Cultural Bureau in London requesting approval to commence field work and data collection (see Appendix 3). Moreover, a letter was then sent from the Saudi Cultural Bureau in London to the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia to request approval (see Appendix 4). The letter explained the title of the study, its questions, and aims, and proposed a timeframe (see Appendix 5). The Ministry of Education, in turn, sent a letter to the Planning and Development Department in the General Directorate of Education in Riyadh, for approval (see Appendix 6). Finally, letters were sent to the Training Centre for Kindergarten Teachers in Riyadh and some Kindergartens in Riyadh requesting permission to conduct this research (see Appendix 7). After approval was obtained, the data were collected over a period

of ninety days from 15/02/2016 to 15/05/2016. Following this procedure, a list of the target teachers in seven kindergartens was obtained.

4.3.5 The Sample and Description of the Interviewees

4.3.5.1 The Sample

The selection of a suitable sample size is based on considering whether it would be subject to non-statistical or statistical considerations (Doody & Doody, 2015: 1075). While statistical consideration mostly involve assessment of possible events that take place during data collection, non-statistical consideration does not offer contact with property, labour, resources, funds, ethics and budget. On the other hand, Ritchie et al. (2013: 234) defined research population as "a large collection of objects or subjects that are the main focus of research findings". Ritchie et al. (2016: 265) also stated that it is in the interests of the research population that an investigation is being conducted. However, because of the size of the population, scholars and experts usually cannot have access to each one in a study. Therefore, they choose an appropriate sample size to conduct a study.

According to Cohen et al. (2000: 92) the "quality of a piece of research not only stands or falls by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation, but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted." They also note that other factors, such as time and accessibility, need to be considered when establishing the size of the sample to be used. Furthermore, the style of research adopted will play a significant part in determining the sample size. For instance, quantitative research may require larger numbers of participants if numerical data are to be statistically analysed, whereas qualitative data may require a smaller sample size. Moreover, other crucial factors, such as resources, the number of researchers, support, and expenses need to be considered (ibid. 2000).

In qualitative research, it is worth noting that the quality of the sample is of paramount significance. For example, when selecting teachers for interviews, the quality of teachers, and their experience and qualification, have to be taken into account to avoid selection bias and provide rich data. In the context of this study, choosing teachers with different experiences and qualifications, avoiding

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newly appointed teachers, was essential. Therefore, in this study, the participants were selected according to a stratified sampling strategy. This type of sample, as Cohen et al. (2000: 101) stated, is

> *"a useful blend of randomization and categorization, thereby enabling both a quantitative and qualitative piece of research to be undertaken. A quantitative piece of research will use analytical and inferential statistics, while a qualitative piece of research will target those groups in institutions or clusters of participants who will be approached to participate in the research".*

Here, the in-service kindergarten teachers were selected from different specialties, but all participants were females, as all kindergarten teachers in the KSA are women. Teachers who were selected for the interviews should have received training for eight weeks, four hours a day at this centre. They also received training at least twice in a year.

Thus, the teachers in the first stage of this study were observed to investigate their attitudes towards the training programmes and help answer the research questions. The second stage of the study involved interviews with purposefully selected teachers. Participants all volunteered to participate in all aspects of the study and agreed to sign an informed consent form. The exact number of teachers to be interviewed was decided after examining the lists of teachers who attended an in-service training programme. It was, however, anticipated that the sample size for the study would be fifteen teachers who had enrolled in in-service training at the kindergarten training centre for in-service teachers.

According to my experience in working with pre-school students in the city of Riyadh for five years, I have become aware that pre-school teachers are not specialized in the field of childhood. Therefore, this convenience sample included teachers with a range of qualifications.

4.3.5.2 Sampling Technique

Sekaran and Bougie (2016: 87) discussed that researchers can either make use of probability or non-probability sampling methods. The sampling method helps researcher to produce more accurate results for a particular study as a wrong sampling method selection can result in inconsistencies and unsuccessful results. In probability sampling, each member of the population does have the

chance of being selected for the sample for study. On the other hand, in the non-probability sampling method, a participant in the population does not have an equal chance of being chosen as sample for study.

The probability sampling technique involves three different methods: systematic sampling, random sampling and stratified sampling. A random sample is likely to be the purest form of sampling (Gray, 2013: 91). In this, each member has a known and equal opportunity to be chosen for data collection. Systematic sampling is the technique most commonly used instead of random sample, which is also recognized as a naming method, explained by Ary et al. (2013: 103): "Once the required sample has been reached and calculated, each name is selected from the list of members in the population in a systematic order." In general, researchers use systematic sampling to select a particular statistical method. The remaining subgroup of the probability-based sampling technique is the stratified sampling, since a low probability of error and sampling rate make the stratified sampling a more effective technique as compared to random and systematic sampling methods (Mertens, 2014: 76).

At the same time, different methods can be used to collect data from the target group using non-probability sampling (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013: 255). Such methods include quota sampling, snowball sampling, judgement sampling, and convenience sampling. The sampling rate, for instance, is equivalent and comparable to cover sampling to compile critical information to complete the study (Smith, 2015: 76). Similarly, the quota sampling generally recognizes the divisions and their relative proportions within the target audience. On the other hand, the judgemental sampling technique is defined as a common and simple non-probability sampling technique involves the majority of the sample, based on personal reviews, rulings, and results. Each time the investigation implements or uses a judicial review, there is great assurance that the chosen sample will truly represent the population successfully and completely. Simultaneously, non-probability sampling also includes the snowball approach whereby most snowball samples are used when necessary samples are rarely available in the research context (Marshall & Rossman, 2014: 77).

In the current study, participants from the population of kindergarten teachers in Saudi Arabia were selected with the help of non-probability sampling. In this

regard, this study used a convenience sampling approach whereby in-service early childhood teachers were chosen based on the researcher's convenience and their local availability. For instance, schools were selected where it was deemed easy for the researcher to get permission for interviews and focus groups and gather data about teachers' perceptions about early childhood in-service training programmes. Most importantly, using a non-probability convenience sampling approach was cost and time-effective compared to the probability sampling technique. Hence, the key rationale for using non-probability sampling was to approach the teachers who were the most accessible.

4.3.5.3 Description of the Interviewees

According to Alsaawi (2014), the number of interviews needed in a qualitative research ranges between 20 and 35, as it depends on researcher's objectives. In this research, the fifteen participants were all female kindergartens teachers with a range of experience from 2 to 21 years (mean ± Standard deviation, 13.5 ± 5.2 years). The participants belong to two categories of teachers according to their qualifications and their career development routes. The first group comprised qualified teachers who possess some form of KG educational qualification. They considered themselves qualified teachers, and most of them held the belief that they were more likely to positively influence children's learning and development process. The other group was composed of teachers who hold only non-specialized educational qualifications and come from a variety of educational and training backgrounds such as geography or history majors. These unqualified teachers have gained experience through teaching and interacting with children and through in-service training as they usually received more training than the specialized teachers (Figure 4.1).

Ten teachers (66.7%) graduated at a degree level (BSc) while the others graduated at a higher diploma level (Figure 4.1). Seven teachers (46.7% of all the sample) had not initially received relevant kindergarten education. All teachers with a higher diploma were specialized in early years of education. The number of training sessions received by non-specialised teachers was understandably almost double than that of training sessions received by

specialized teachers regardless of whether they had a BSc or a higher diploma (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.1 Type of interviewees' qualifications.
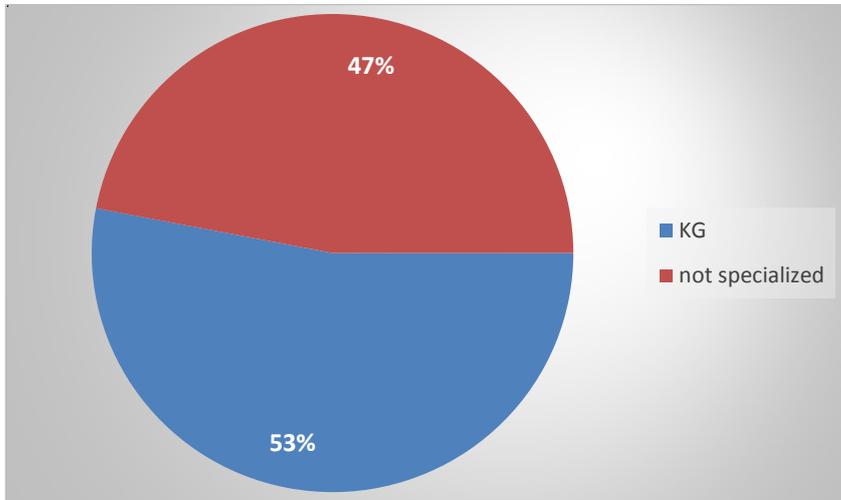
Figure 4.2: Type of interviewees' specialist KG qualified
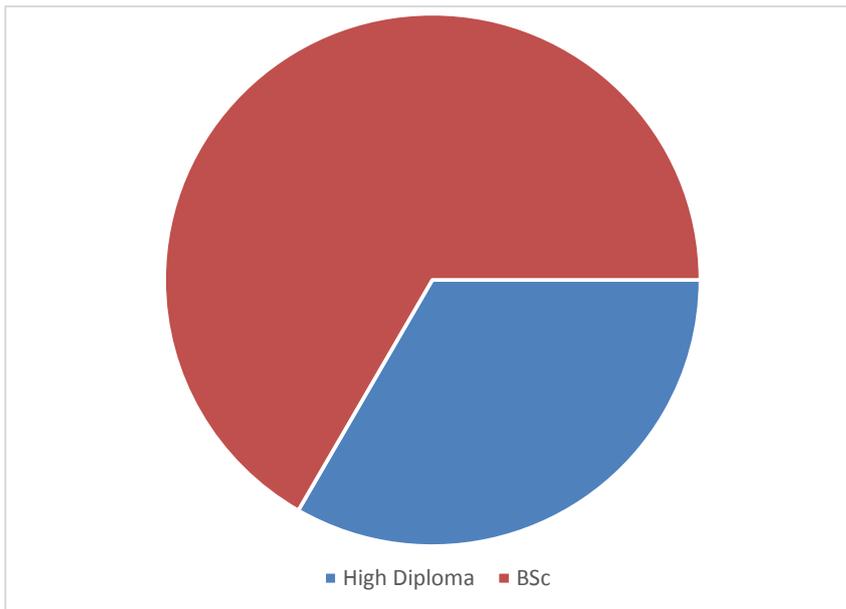
Figure 4.3: Number of training sessions received by interviewed teachers according to whether they were specialised on not specialised in kindergarten education.
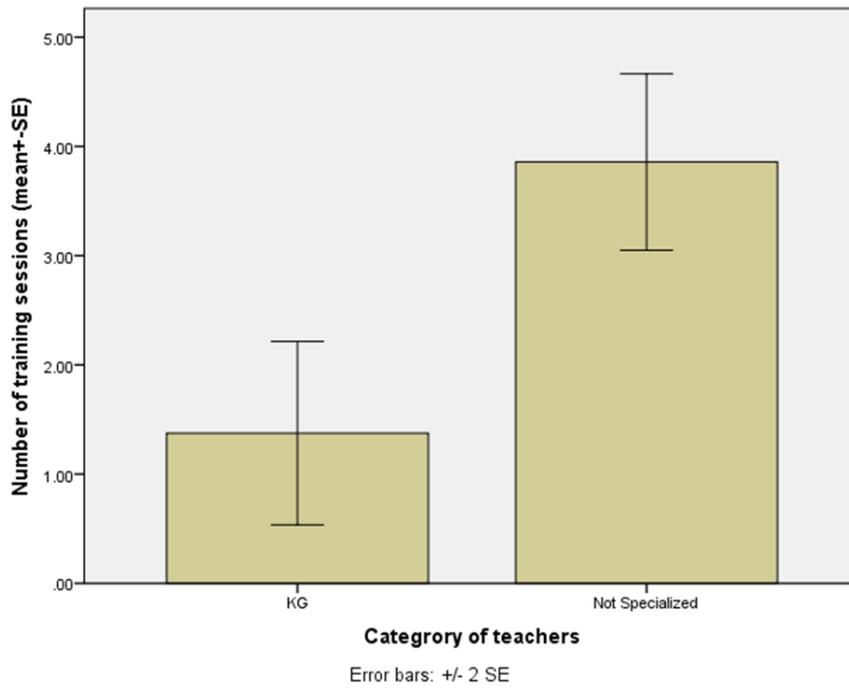
Table 4.1 Qualifications, experience and description of the training of the participating female teachers.

Pseudonym	Speciality	Years in service	Qualification	Period of the training course	No of courses attended
Huda	KG	2	high diploma	3 days	2
Mona	not specialized	12	BSc. certificate	two months	4
Nadia	KG	17	BSc. certificate	3 days	-
Sana	not specialized	14	BSc. certificate	two months	3
Asma	not specialized	8	high diploma	3 days	5
Nahla	KG	7	high diploma	two months	3
Halla	not specialized	20	BSc. certificate	5 days	2
Layla	not specialized	19	BSc. certificate	two months	4
Hind	KG	12	high diploma	3 days	-
Fatema	KG	21	BSc. certificate	5 days	2
Abeer	not specialized	17	BSc. certificate	two months	4
Sawsan	KG	16	BSc. certificate	5 days	2
Lamia	KG	12	BSc. certificate	two months	-
Wafa	not specialized	14	BSc. certificate	5 days	5
Areej	KG	11	high diploma	two months	2

4.3.6 Focus Group Discussions

The focus group or group discussion (Ritchie and Lewis, 2006: 170) is now "well established as a mainstream method across the field of social research, where they are widely used and are an extremely valuable research approach (ibid)." Moreover, Vaughn et al. (1996:4) pointed out that "the major assumption of focus groups is that with a permissive atmosphere that fosters a range of opinions, a complete revealing understanding of the issues will be obtained." Likewise, Denscombe (2007:178) has acknowledged that focus group interviews consist of small groups set by the researcher to investigate attitudes, feelings, opinions, and views about a particular topic. Denscombe (2007:178) also stated that several fundamental points about focus group interviews should be born in mind:

1. The group discussion ought to focus on a subject about which all participants have a similar level of knowledge.

2. To get insightful information, emphasis should be put on the interaction inside the group.

3. The moderator's role is to encourage and elicit interaction.

According to Lindlof and Taylor (2010:183), two main types of focus groups are commonly used in educational research. The most related one for the current study is the `complementary interaction` subsequently it has the advantages of allowing participants of the group to reach consent and add their own opinion about the topic under debate. Through adapting this approach, it is possible to examine the most important aspects of the experience of participants through interacting with each other. Unlike one-to-one interviews, focus group discussion allows for participants to agree on certain topics or arguing against each other and thus provides a different angle to the research question than face to face interviews may omit. Hence, the main role of the focus group or group discussion was to let interchange of information by interaction to reach a more in-depth perceptive understanding of phenomena. The participants in the focus group were also encouraged to engage in open conversations simplifying teachers' beliefs and expressions on the topic of an in-service training programme in the KSA.

Wellington (2000) argued that using a focus group has several advantages over other data collection instruments. For example, focus groups provide a safe and comfortable environment for participants to exchange ideas and interact with other individual. An additional advantage, particularly in this study's social-cultural perspective, is that focus group methods can enhance a variety of communication between participants, which ultimately encourages them to reveal more of their perceptions and experiences within their social-cultural context.

In addition to the fact that focus group discussion can facilitate rich exchange of ideas and experiences an interview procedure may fail to produce (Kitzinger, 1994), its dynamic nature has the advantage of real-time involvement of the researcher in an open debate between two different points of view and therefore can discover the different views in order to explain the reasons behind possible differences (Wellington, 2000). In this study the focus group conversations, like for the interview process, were recorded digitally and later transcribed. The aims were also fully explained. Three groups were composed of five teachers who had responded to an invitation attached to the one-to-one interview request. The aims were also fully explained. Three groups were composed of five teachers who had responded to an invitation attached to the one-to-one interview request. Teachers who participated in the focus groups confirmed their participation later by email and mobile phone. At the setting, participants were given the opportunity to address the research aims in the semi-structured discussion. The subsequent meeting was not just an addressed talk, but was planned to reach the study's objectives. Therefore, it proved a useful tool for collecting their views and debating topics related to the status and improvement of the in-service training in focus. I discussed the agenda at the start of the focus group session and highlighted the purpose of the meeting. The questions to the focus group were arranged as per the translation procedure detailed in section 4.4.1.3. The focus group interview was recorded, transcribed, and then translated as with the previous procedure.

As far as to the trustworthiness and credibility of the focus group interview is concerned, it has to be recognized that its questions had been presented to proofreaders, the supervisor, and a committee of referees and the translators in

exact the same way as with face to face interviews. Cohen et al. (2004) mentioned that two approaches can be adopted to validate focus group interviews. Firstly, the validation process can be achieved by comparing with similar instruments used in the same areas. The second was to reduce expected bias as much as possible, which is the chosen approach in this study

Several studies have pointed out that being a low cost and useful tool is the most advantages of the focus group. The focus group interview is less time-consuming and more cost effective that other methods of data collection; it is a flexible option that facilitates interviewees' understanding thereby allowing them to answer more easily. It gives the researcher the assurance needed to create the conditions for open responses while keeping the interviewees focused on the topics. The interview is interactive; group-based and can create an atmosphere of understanding between the researcher and participants, so increasing their collaboration. Finally, it is often easier to understand the findings of the focus groups than another type of research. In summary, the live meeting is a quick and effective way to generate richer data than other data collection instruments (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990).

Like other methods, the focus group has some disadvantages to be considered. The most critical is the lack of accuracy in the participants' self-representations that occasionally occurs in interview situations (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990, Burns, 2000, Cohen et al. 2004). The interaction between the participants can have negative effects, for example, feelings that some of them will have strong views or dominate the discussion. In the Saudi society, as in any other society, there is some professional and social hierarchy that can affect any given situation. In the focus group situation, and when speaking about education, teachers with more experience and higher qualifications are respected and can dictate a thread of discussion. I was aware of this but sought to trade between the different points of opinions. However, as biases can also originate from myself in over-emphasizing, intentionally or unintentionally, some points, this could affect participants' responses. Some authors are sceptical of the value of the focus group and its validity for over-generalization of the finding because of the dynamism involved in any discussion (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990, Burns, 2000, Cohen et al. 2004).

However, the focus group interview was cost and time effective and allowed me to gain rich insights into the teachers' perceptions about the positive and negative aspects of their in-service training and, in particular, consolidate further recommendations to improve this training. I was able to get a very good sense that the answers and discussions were authentic, as they were offered willingly and there was evidence that their answers were carefully formulated to ensure they conveyed the intended meaning. In fact, the meeting fulfilled the research purposes despite the fact that the follow-up process took a long time. The main advantage of the focus group was that I was able to observe the responses from the teachers in an interactive setting.

4.3.6.1 The Procedures of the Focus Group Interview

After the focus group interview has been justified as an adequate data collection method, it is important to consider several practical issues in light of the previous studies and the relevant literature. This section provides some comments in this regard.

In the beginning, planning involves the topics to be discussed to meet the research objectives and getting acquainted with the interviewees, making sure that the recording device is good and providing alternatives, for instance, having a spare recorder, mobile phone, and gaining written permission from the participants to use them. Cohen et al. (2004) pointed out that the data must be prompted by very careful listening and by motivating the participants to immerse themselves and give rich answers. Truly, the moderator's role is an important part of the management of the group, to get the necessary data without bias, as far as possible. Overall, successful application of the focus group interview depends on good planning and the training to write or record with understanding and accurateness.

Emails to participants were sent, to inform them about the interview objectives and related details including prospective location and timings. Fourteen days before meeting, emails were sent again with a follow-up phone call, and a date and time were confirmed. It is important to bear in mind, not only the verbal language, but also to carefully observe the facial expressions and body language of the participants. Moreover, it is important to record tones of voice,

and actions of the hands and eyes to reflect certain emotional state towards subjects, known as body language. Fifteen participants attended the interview from various specialties and working as early childhood teachers. The meeting started in a calm and relaxing atmosphere and participants were thanked and reassured that the meeting was strictly confidential, and that their anonymity would be strictly guaranteed. The purpose and details of the interview was outlined, and agreement was sought to record the conversations. I also went through relevant terminology and content related to in-service training, then I started asking the third and fourth questions and then the rest of the sub-questions (see Appendix 10). The participants started discussing the neutral topic and then moved to more debatable questions guided by the researcher. The focus group interviews lasted one hour.

Upon completing the interviews, I began transcribing (in Arabic) all the recordings (see Appendix 9), which took considerable time and effort, in addition to adding non-verbal aspects of the interactions and other field notes. These notes were seen as important additional sources. All transcriptions and notes were not entirely translated before commencing the coding process but the relevant extracts from the transcriptions were translated to serve as evidence for the themes and subtheme that emerged from the data. The use of coding was used as a means of classification, utilising the cut and paste technique suggested by Stewart and Shamdasani (1990). This phase is the most challenging and time-consuming part of this process as it involves repeated reading of the transcripts.

4.3.7 Documentary Evidence

Documents are created by people whether individually or in groups for their practical needs (Scott. 1990). Grix (2001) highlighted that researchers should be aware of the purpose, origins, and audience of these documents. Bailey (1994:194) distinguishes between two types of documents in the documentary evidence: primary and secondary documents. The primary documents are those created by people who directly experienced the event under study. As for the secondary documents, they are those created by other people who did not exist at the time of the event and did not witness it themselves.

Indeed, documents created by other individuals or group of individuals are essential sources of data which could assist the researcher in answering the relevant research question. Yin (2009) highlighted the role of documents in social sciences and argued for the systematic search of documents during data collection phase of a research project, specifically case studies. Documents are also crucial for verifying things noted in interviews such as names, programmes, and organizations.

Moreover, documents can also be used to support and to provide specific details concerning findings from other sources. Documentary evidence will, therefore, be used as a third source of data in this study owing to the major role it plays in the case study research and will, furthermore, help to extrapolate inferences from them (Stewart and Shamdasani ,1990).

A variety of documents can be used in case of study research, for example, written reports, agendas, formal studies, administrative documents, and news about training program for kindergarten teachers. These documents will include the following, in addition to other types of evidence that can be useful during the stages of my research:

- The Saudi Arabian educational system policy which can be collected from the website of the Ministry of Education in addition to all documents that provide instructions for kindergarten teachers and training program provided to them.

- The guidelines of the training centre of kindergarten teachers were collected from the Ministry of Education.

- Lists of teachers, who will attend training programmes

- Lists of trainers, who are preparing training programmes.

- Documents that relate to national projects of pre-school educational development in Saudi Arabia.

4.4 Data Analysis

For this study, I adopted a qualitative interpretive approach. Therefore, data obtained from the interviews and focus groups were transcribed and coded; "codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 56). In this respect, Auerbach and Silverstein (2003: 31-32) reported that "coding is a procedure for organizing the text of transcripts and discovering patterns within that organizational structure."

Coding allows researchers to see and examine patterns that are often difficult to recognise in the large amounts of data resulting from transcriptions, thereby enabling them to begin putting forward theories based on these patterns (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Consequently, the collected data was scrutinised following the very same procedures, to make general conclusions. The transcripts in Arabic were organized using NVivo software. The NVivo is software developed to help in the organization of qualitative data. One of its main advantages is to save time and offer the power of computing to search for relevant texts. It has been used in this research to organize the interviews and search for relevant texts when the initial codes were identified.

4.4.1 Interview Data Analysis

The analysis of qualitative data aims to find out the themes and assumptions that display the respondents' perspectives on the topic. The analysis is the most crucial and difficult aspect of qualitative research since it needs to combine creativity with systematic exploration. Accordingly, in this study, the transcripts of the final interviews were analyzed thematically by using an analysis approach described by Braun & Clarke (2006).

As explained by Braun & Clarke (2006) the main advantages of thematic analysis can be summarised as follows:

- Flexibility.

- relatively easy and quick method to learn, and apply

- accessible to researchers with little or no experience of qualitative research

- Results are generally accessible to the educated general public.

- Useful for working within the participatory research paradigm, with participants as collaborators.

- can usefully summarise key features of a large body of data, and/or offer a "thick description" of the data

- highlights similarities and differences across the data

- generates unanticipated insights

- allows for social and psychological interpretations of the data

- Useful for producing qualitative analysis suited to inform policy development.

Nevertheless, one of the most important disadvantages is that thematic analysis relies more on making poor analysis or questions, as it can be difficult for the researcher to determine what aspects of the data to focus on (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The phases followed in the analysis were:

1. Familiarize myself with the data.

2. Producing initial codes by identifying specific text segments and labelling the segments. The Initial coding method used in this case was intended as a starting point to provide analytic leads for further exploration.

3. Refined coding was attempted to finalize the codes and combine similar codes.

4. Codes were finally described by illustrating their frequency through a word frequency query in NVivo software.

5. Concepts (sub-themes) were identified from the codes manually and through using the search function in NVivo software to make sure that synonyms words (codes) and similar views are not missed.

6. The sub-themes were then organized in maps to obtain/reveal the main themes that answer the research question.

7. Reviewing and naming the themes.

8. Drawing the sub-theme and themes maps in NVivo software.

Data from the interviews with kindergarten teachers was preserved as an audio-recording on a recording device. This will enable the researcher to listen to the recorded data repeatedly, to achieve a high level of precision in analysing their content. Furthermore, the researcher will transcribe the data herself, before comparing it with the recording. Following this, the data was coded and categorized, adhering to the perspective of social constructionist theory. This means that a constant comparison method of data analysis was applied, providing the researcher with a broad overview of the issues and allowing the formulation of various themes and sub-themes, which should emerge during the process of data analysis (Boeije, 2002). To ensure the success of this process, a transcript was read carefully several times to cover all themes and subjects.

4.4.2 Focus Group Data Analysis

There are several methods to analyse the transcript of the focus group discussion. Krippendorff (1980:21) describes the "content analysis" of focus group interviews as a "research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context." The analysis of focus group data can be conducted quantitatively and qualitatively based on the objectives of the research. Other methods of analysis include approaches founded on semantic and discourse analysis or logical interpretations of the data (Bloor et al. 2001, Puchta and Potter, 2004). This study used a qualitatively based approach for thematic analysis. In the thematic approach used, semi-organized focus group interviews are the main medium of obtaining different views of respondents regarding research problems related to the perspectives of teachers about in-service early childhood training programs. Focus group discussions were chosen as it will help to offer new insights into research phenomena while allowing respondents in the study to discuss and debate diversity of opinions in a variety of ways. Consequently, focus groups with in-service early childhood teachers in Saudi Arabia are an important option, including insights into the research area in study. On the other hand, interviews form important part to collect data through which researcher was mindful of the data analysis technique being used.

As a result, significant method used for interview analysis in this study includes the approach of thematic analysis. Many researchers and practitioners have argued that "the thematic approach for analysing qualitative data is one of the most used technology the used in focus groups" (Guest, Macqueen and Namey, 2011: 346). Therefore, the conceptual framework for focus groups is based on taking into account the theoretical foundations discussed in Chapter 2. As stated by Smith & Firth (2011: 52), "the process of thematic analysis is first and foremost method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns or themes that exist within the data". The reason for selecting thematic approach as the analysis technique is because it provides a detailed insight to the theme formulated and presents relevant interpretations for answering research questions (Joffe, 2012: 210). Apart from this, this method best promotes answering research questions about current study as it will facilitate investigation of data gathered with focus groups from two angles. First, the data-related perspective is discussed as is based on coding inductively; later the perspective refers to the research interview to check whether collected data provides sufficient information and that information is consistent with the research questions. Another reason to use the focus area approach turns to identification of themes in focus groups data which is collected.

Therefore, in this research themes were identified to meet the objectives and coded, then these themes were checked against the data to ensure they were representing participants' views. Additional themes were identified according to the similarities and differences in teachers' answers which were not represented in the literature. The last check was then made for both accuracy and to reflect on whether the early childhood teacher's perceptions were being summarised and reported accurately by reviewing the transcripts and audio-recorder. This thematic analysis method is similar to the approach described above.

4.4.3 Strengths and limitations of the Analysis

As Braun and Clark (2006:79) stated, the thematic analysis technique, used to analyse interviews, is "not just a collection of extracts strung together with little or no analytic narrative." It is a method to formulate concepts, and lessons to learn, from rich data content by following a systematic approach. The thematic analysis requires the researcher to be creative to be able to answer the research questions.

I believe that through this analysis I managed to avoid too much overlap between themes, which is a pitfall of the thematic analysis. The themes were internally coherent and consistent and are centred on the main ideas that evolved through the research.

Another limitation of the thematic analysis is that sometimes the researcher fails to capture all available data. I have exercised extra care to code and refined code all data. I was able to cover all the text through a word frequency function in NVivo program.

The other weakness of the thematic analysis is that, in contrast to content analysis, it does not give weight or level of importance to different concepts or ideas by counting their frequency of occurrence in the data. I have tried to overcome this weakness by conducting a word count query and listing the refined codes in an appendix. I was also faithful to the theory of thematic analysis by summarising the central concepts and themes as the data reflect them.

4.4.4 Research Challenges and Issues

After careful consideration, I consider that the study is feasible within the given timescale. However, some potential challenges have been identified. Firstly, the data collection stage of the study needed to take place in KSA, which requires the researcher to move to the country for a period. However, KSA is my home country, and did not prove to be too difficult to organise.

Secondly, there was some conflict between the first language of the participants (Arabic) and the language of the study (English). This conflict required me to translate parts of the text, with the risk of a consequent loss of some meaning.

However, a translation expert was consulted for help with this stage, to ensure that the translated text is fully representative of the original. The translation challenge is well recognized in qualitative research. In a narrative of the challenges of translation in qualitative research, Van Ness et al. (2010) highlighted the fact that interpretation of meaning is the core of qualitative research and provided some practical solutions in the context of translation of interviews from a language to another. They recommended that coding of the transcripts of texts should be executed in the same language of texts and then carefully translate the codes with the cooperation of another bilingual academic. This should be followed by offering "Rich descriptions with the use of quotes of participants [….] to contribute to the trustworthiness of data" (Van Ness et al., 2010:315).

Thirdly, there is the potential issue of gaining access to sources required for the study, although active support was provided by the University of King Saud, mainly from the Kindergarten Department. I was therefore confident that the University would provide any required access and resources. Finally, I was concerned about the potential time and effort it might take to construct and translate the methods of data collection, especially as the main part of the study was conducted in the KSA and given the fact that the supervisors of the study do not speak Arabic. Furthermore, the amount of time it might take to gain approval from both the authorities and participants before the data collection stage was also problematic.

4.4.5 Translation

The procedure of translation of the interview questions designed to capture the required answers to meet the aims of this research is a challenging one because of the different cultural aspects of each linguistic group. This section summarises the core issues addressed by the research with respect to the language issues (Harrat, Meftouh, & Smaili, 2017).

Since the language of the participants was Arabic, I had to translate the formulated questions into Arabic, and when the interviews had been transcribed, they had to be translated back into English. This process was completed through several steps. Firstly, after the approval of the supervisory

team, the interview protocols were translated into Arabic and then from Arabic to English by a team of three independent translators who made several comments. Both versions were combined into one and returned to the translators for their approval, during which some consultation was required with them to clarify certain terms and issues. There was a further process of checking when the interview questions were sent to a committee of referees fluent in both Arabic and English to verify the accuracy of the translation. As a result, all the referees expressed their approval regarding the accuracy of the translation.

The other factor that might affect the interviews was the fact that in KSA, as in all other Arabic speaking countries, there is the challenge of the diglossic nature of the Arabic language (Al Suwaiyan, 2018). The translated version was in formal "standard Arabic", but during the interviews, it was common for both the researcher and the interviewee to speak in the colloquial Saudi dialect which, in many occasions, can be different from formal standard Arabic. The fact that all teachers were either college or university graduates made this process smooth as great care was taken during the interview to avoid vague colloquial words and replace them by standard Arabic terms.

4.4.6 Trustworthiness of the Study

With regards to a qualitative study, it is not easy to ensure that the study is correct or accurate. Therefore, the current study took into account four key considerations that are trustworthiness, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Joffe, 2012, Van Ness et al., 2010). The first concern, trustworthiness, or credibility involves developing results that could supposedly be true. Many methods could measure the accuracy of the results, but this study uses triangulation as it uses both interviews and focus groups. Another part relates to transferability of research outcomes, which is the extent to which research results can be transferred and generally to other settings or contexts. The current study secured transferability as researcher conducted a thorough analysis to describe the context as well as the criteria of the study, which forms the central part of this study.

To make the study trustworthy, dependability has been ensured as the results of research was carried out consistent with what is possible to repeat. This was provided by measuring the research standard and analyse as well as present the results. Any method used in the study was reported in detail that allows external research to repeat the studies and get the same results. By doing so, understanding on efficiency of research methods could be achieved. Finally, the component of confirmability is referred to the extent through which results of research can be confirmed and the results of the study confirmed by other researchers as well (Shenton, 2004: 63). To ensure this qualitative aspect, this study aims to document the various methods used to view and observe information about the study. There was also be a first audit finished while on the study was ongoing to show how each decision was taken.

For Lincoln and Guba (1985:290), the main idea behind the notion of reliability is "How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?" Also, qualitative research adopts trustworthiness criteria by which research findings can be examined and evaluated (Hoepfl, 1997). Therefore, in this study the issue of trustworthiness is addressed using a number of strategies and data resources, with the aim of maintaining adequate levels of trustworthiness and objectivity to limit the effects of bias and thus ensure enhanced reliability.

To enhance the trustworthiness of this study, a multi-method approach to data collection was adopted (semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and documentary evidence), which helped to reduce uncertainty and provide richer, more informed findings. In addition, guaranteeing anonymity enhance the honesty and clarity of the participants' views. However, the term bias differs in the context of qualitative research as this type of research is not concerned with generalizations but assumes that contexts exists within a never-ending process of change.

Likewise, the idea of credibility is an important notion in terms of the quality of qualitative research studies, insofar as they should maintain a high degree of trust and give priority to the points of view of all parties involved in the research and their surroundings. According to Hoepfl (1997), the notion of credibility in empirical research is critical and relates to the criteria of internal validity in

quantitative research. In this research, this principle is upheld using a number of techniques and varied sources. For instance, the most significant method for ensuring the credibility of the findings is triangulation, which involves using different data collection methods. According to Arksey (1999), the triangulation of data purposes, not merely the triangulation of data sources, can be extremely useful in knowing the various areas of bias, and recognising the areas of weakness and strength in each instrument of data collection so that a sound balance can be achieved. The idea is to provide a comprehensive account of the participants' views, opinions, and experiences. Therefore, this research involved the use of a variety of methods including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and documentary analysis. As explained by Denscombe (2007), the use of triangulation ensures to gain the confidence of readers in terms of trustworthiness of the data and conclusions of the study.

Member checking is also an important technique used for ensuring the credibility of the data and the findings, which involves the confirmation and review of the transcriptions and research conclusions. Also, this entails researchers continuously reflecting on their subjective thoughts by recording reflective field notes and/or keeping a diary of their thoughts (Lodico, 2006:274). In this study, member checks were regularly carried out. For example, through repeated interviews, participants were allowed to check my interpretations of their experiences and views and verify the notes I took about their ideas. Furthermore, I shared my conclusions as a vital step for both member checks and ethical purposes, so as to ensure that I was truly representing their views about in-service teacher training.

In terms of credibility, peer briefing was utilised as a technique to enhance the trustworthiness of this study to limit the effects of bias in data analysis. I sought the assistance of two Saudi colleagues, both doctoral students in the UK and asked them to identify potential bias in my interpretations. I explained the analytical process, showed them interpretations and received their comments on my analysis. Being both fluent in Arabic and English, they could also shed light on any linguistic areas that might need further consideration.

For Hoepfl (1997), the notion of transferability is a principle of qualitative research that relates to external validity in quantitative research. While the

qualitative approach is not concerned with the generalization of findings to other contexts, it is likely that the conclusions drawn for one setting might be transferable to another context. Nevertheless, qualitative researchers claim that this is the reader's responsibility to make such decisions based on the similarities and differences between various settings while researchers have to fully describe their study context. Beyond the use of a representative sample, the use of an in-depth description of the contexts allows the user and reader of research to use similar perspectives in other contexts (Lodico et al., 2006).

In this research, transferability was enhanced by reaching beyond the specific groups involved in the phenomena under investigation, giving a more complex and far more detailed account of the various perspectives within the socio-cultural context, accurately showing the specifics of the situation and presenting a detailed description of the experiences of participants. The main idea behind enhancing transferability is to ensure clarity and depth in the descriptions of the phenomena and allow the reader to make an informed decision about applying the findings to other research contexts.

With regards dependability, Thomas et al. (2005) refer to this notion as the consistency of the findings and the possibility of their replication in other settings. For Lodico et al. (2006:275) dependability refers to "whether one can track the procedures and process used to collect and interpret the data. Good qualitative studies provide detailed explanations of how the data are collected and analyzed." In this research, dependability was guaranteed by providing detailed explanations and clarifications about the procedures followed to collect, analyse and interpret the data. Details of all the steps followed throughout this research were provided, although it should be noted that in qualitative research it is impossible to cover all the data, as stated by Lodico et al. (2006). Another difficulty encountered in this research is that the interviews and other primary data were gathered in Arabic, whilst the conclusions and interpretations were completed in English.

4.4.7 Researcher's Positionality

It is worth bearing in mind that I have significant experience in working with pre-school students in Riyadh, and have expert knowledge of the fields of policy, practice and research. During my experience I learned a lot of the challenges and constraints such as complaints from different kindergarten teachers about the training programmes they have undertaken, which led me to conduct such research. Thanks to this experience, I have noticed that unlike other disciplines such as history or the Arabic language, the pre-school teachers' knowledge is not specialised in the field of childhood despite the availability of training courses in the field of kindergarten curricula and courses addressing the problems of childhood and how to face them. This motivated me to write about this topic. Therefore, I conducted a qualitative study by interviewing the teachers who teach kindergarten curricula in Riyadh to explore their views on and experiences of the in-service training programmes for kindergarten teachers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This was done by ascertaining the availability of current in-service training programmes for early childhood Saudi teachers, as well as investigating the teachers' perceptions and their experiences of the programmes held in a Training Centre. In addition, this study sought to assess and make some recommendations based on teachers' suggestions about the development of pre-school training programmes.

4.4.8 Pilot Study

The primary objective of a pilot study is to test research tools used to collect data before a real study is conducted. This makes it possible to determine the main strengths and weaknesses of the research instrument used in the study (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2014). Performing a pilot project in the current study worked with the design and implementation of large-scale research in a methodically accurate manner as possible. In addition, it also allowed to save both costs and time with a view to reducing risk factors for errors or problems that may occur in actual research. In addition, there were additional reasons for pilot study. One of the reasons is that pilot study enables identification and purification of research questions.

When pilot study is carried out, Bryman & Bell (2015: 46) showed that" a common issue in this context which was related to determining if a researcher should include pages or participants in the pilot project in the study". The problem at this point is that the chosen group of participants in the pilot project has already been influenced by research or research activities. As a result, this group of participants in the study can respond differently to contradictions with non-participants in pilot projects or research projects. However, researchers found that this issue might prove positive so that the participants in the study were adapted to use a new tool or method. However, it may be negative as participants in the study could adversely affect the research plan as it was no longer useful to them (Eldridge, Costelloe, Kahan, Lancaster & Kerry, 2016: 1039). Another issue concerns participation of participants who have participated in the pilot project. This is because only a group of respondents who were part of a pilot project would have experienced research instead of all groups. Therefore, respondents who participated in the pilot project cannot be excluded because it may lead to a small sample size in the study. Because of this reason, researchers in the current study included participants in the main study that has already participated in the pilot project.

The initial pilot study was designed to formulate and test the questions for the teachers' interviews and the suitability of their wording. Also, it will give an indication of the length of time it will take to fill in the semi-structured interview and to respond to the questions in the focus group. Furthermore, this stage was useful for gaining feedback from the participants on the particular areas of interest in the open questions concerning the impact of the training programme on early childhood education teaching. The trustworthiness and credibility of the closed questions in the interview will also be tested through the pilot study (Kahan, Lancaster & Kerry, 2016).

The intention of the pilot study is to test the questions throughout the interview for meaning and content validity, a quality that Pallant (2010: 7) defines as: "the degree to which it measures what it is supposed to measure." To this end, they were monitored by experts in both education training and experts in the study of early childhood education to assess their trustworthiness and credibility.

Yin (2003: 80) pointed out that "methodologically, the work at the pilot sites can provide information about relevant field questions and the logistics of the field inquiry." The pilot study allows researchers to revise, add, or modify interview questions. The wording of these questions can be revised to confirm that the participants understand the meaning. Furthermore, the pilot study gives the researcher the chance to test the ability in interviewing skills and techniques and managing the time during the interview (Gahwaji, 2007).

Moreover, a pilot study is a summary and limited copy of the planned study, the main object of a pilot study is to improve and revise the functions and procedures of the planned research. As Gardner, Côté, Gill, Grant, & (Watkinson, 2003) metaphorically depicted it, a pilot study can be considered as a shakedown cruise of a new ship. In a shakedown cruise, the ship is put to sea for a short cruise to find out if all the systems work. No sailor would consider a long trip on a new ship without first checking whether the ship is seaworthy. Therefore, the main object of a pilot study is not to gather research data, but to test and check out research procedures, so any amendments and modifications can be made prior the actual data being gathered. Furthermore, another goal of the pilot study is to identify if the planned statistical analyses work. Then, any problems or errors observed via the pilot study must be fixed by changing the data collection procedures or the statistical analyses (Zikmund 2003). On the other hand, the pilot study is not effective in estimating the effect of both the efficacy of an intervention and the strength of an association in an observational study.

The pilot study was carried out by emailing three teachers in order to get their feedback with regards the clarity and significance of the planned items in the interview protocol. Several revised versions of the protocol were sent to my supervisor for comments and feedback to ensure that the wording of the question was suitable to the interviewees and could potentially allow them to answer confidently and easily. These processes highlighted the importance of combining academic (e.g., my colleague) and field (e.g., teachers') experiences and international professional (e.g., my supervisor) experiences. A two-way commenting procedure was therefore used to consolidate the instrument and achieve the expected aims of this pilot study.

The pilot study was conducted over a period of fourteen days focusing on the interview protocol and the focus group questions and procedures. The pilot study was the initial phase of the main study to ensure that the data collection methods were adequate for the desired aims and participants bearing in mind the Saudi context. This was particularly useful to enhance the instruments and improve my time management skills, for instance, to assess the practical length of the interview. I carried out informal interviews and after each question I discussed with the interviewee in order to gain greater in-sights. Through this pilot study, I was able to evaluate whether the research questions, interview protocol, and methods were effectively related to suitable to generate rich data from the participants. At this stage, through the pilot interviews study, the feedback of the participants indicated the areas worth exploring in depth and that provided the rationale for the final interview questions. The plan of this research, and how every segment of it contributed to the whole thesis and provided the findings to answer the research questions, was presented at the start of the results chapter.

4.5   Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has explained the theoretical framework and paradigm for this study and the reasons for which the interpretive paradigm has been chosen. Moreover, descriptions of the methodology and methods have been drawn as well as the sampling approach, and the data analysis for each data collection methods. Ethical considerations have also been addressed. This chapter also offers an explanation for trustworthiness as a quality of the study.

Chapter Five: Findings of the Study

5.1 Introduction

The analysis of qualitative data is the most crucial and difficult aspect, that aims to find out the themes and assumptions that display the respondents' perspectives of the topic. This analysis needs to combine creativity with systematic exploration. In order to assist me to understand the interviewees' attitudes and perspectives, interviewees were asked about each topic, and sub-topic when needed

In the previous chapter, I presented the research design and methodology used in this study. The purpose of this chapter is to present the analysis of data from the semi-structured interviews and focus group with 15 Saudi teachers who were working in kindergarten schools and an in-service training centre in the capital city Riyadh in relation to exploring teachers` perceptions about in-service training programmes and the impact of these on the professional knowledge of teachers. How their knowledge and beliefs developed over the programme is also presented. A full description of the processes of interviews, focus group, and data analysis has been provided in Chapter Four.

This chapter presents the answers to the research questions. The analysis is derived from the semi-structured interviews and focus group data under relevant themes associated with a particular research question.

The semi-structured interview data were analysed and presented under four themes: general information, in-service training programme content, in-service training programme environment at the centres, and the impact of training programmes on teachers' experiences.

Once again, I will start by restating the research questions addressed in this study; the interview questions appear in Appendix 9:

1. What is the current provision of training programmes for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers?

2. What are Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of the available training programmes in training centres?

3. How do the available training programmes impact Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional knowledge?

4. What do the teachers recommend for the development of in-service training programmes?

In order to increase the trustworthiness of the findings, the study followed a triangulation process by incorporating three data collection methods: (1) semi-structured interviews with fifteen Saudi teachers working in kindergarten schools in the capital of Saudi Arabia (Riyadh); (2) A focus group session to further elaborate on the main themes resulted from the interviews; particularly about how the in-service training could be improved; (3) Documents about the duties of early childhood teachers'. Figure 5.1 displays the triangulation process.
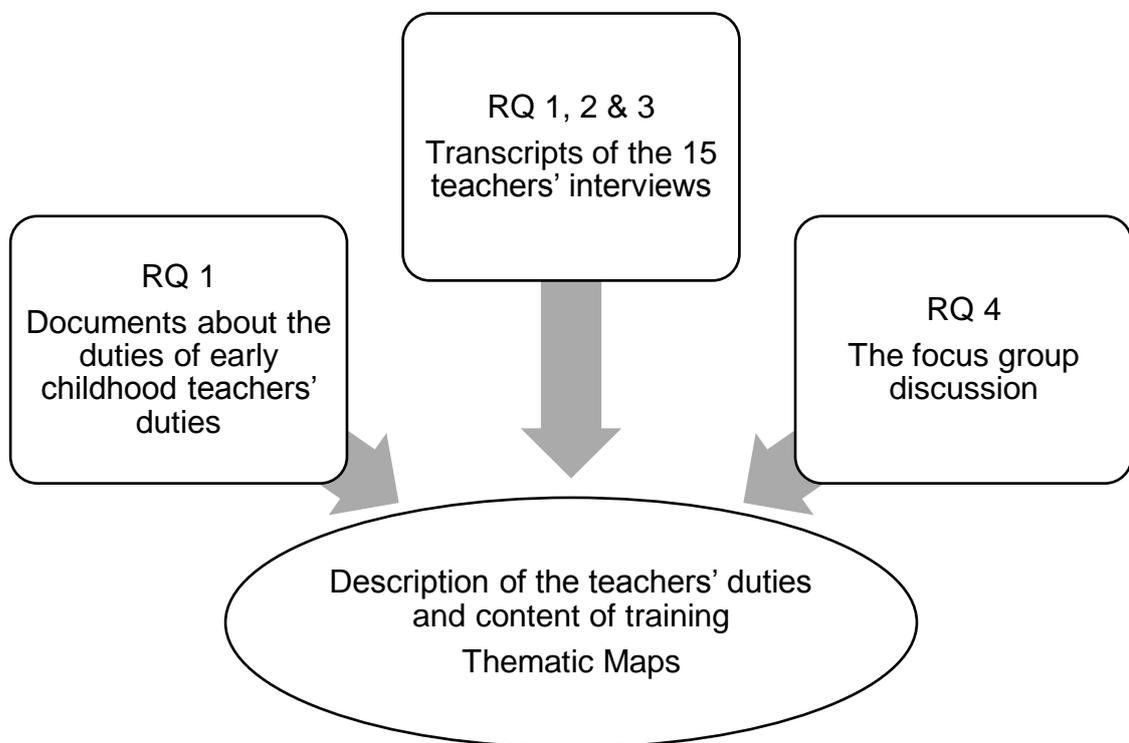
Figure 5.1: triangulation process (Numbers indicate the research questions).

The data were analysed step by step in order to provide answers to the aforementioned questions. To answer the first question, the role and duties of early childhood teachers in general, and the work undertaken by the participant teachers in particular, was described based on the materials and information provided by the teachers. Additionally, the content of the training programmes was captured from the interviews with 15 teachers. This was followed by *thematic map analysis* (described in detail in the Methodology Chapter) of the interviews and the focus group discussion. The thematic maps were intended to answer the remaining three questions.

Based on the main codes captured in the interviews, three themes emerged: reasons to attend in-service training; perceptions (positive and negative views) of teachers about in-service training; and their recommendation to improve the training. The analysis of the focus group provides another sub theme to answer this question. This is then triangulated with the sub theme arises from the analysis of the 15 interviews as illustrated in figure 5.1.

This chapter starts by describing the work undertaken by the teachers in kindergartens in Saudi Arabia and the roles of the participant teachers in the teaching process. It is followed by the results of the thematic map analysis, illustrated in four sub-sections.

```
                                                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                                                        │ Timing and duration │
                                                        │     of training     │
                                                        └─────────────────────┘

                                                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                                                        │ The impact of in-   │
                                                        │  service training   │
                                                        └─────────────────────┘

                                                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                           ┌──────────────┐             │      Trainers       │
                           │ Focus Groups │             └─────────────────────┘
                           └──────────────┘
                                                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                                                        │ Incentives for the  │
                                                        │ in-service training │
                                                        └─────────────────────┘

                           ┌──────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────┐
                           │  The Role and        │     │ Who should attend   │
                           │  Responsibilities of │     │ in-service training?│
                           │  Kindergarten        │     └─────────────────────┘
                           │  Teachers            │
                           └──────────────────────┘     ┌─────────────────────┐
                                                        │ Contents of in-     │
                           ┌──────────────────────┐     │  service training   │
                           │ Content of the In-   │     └─────────────────────┘
                           │  service Training    │
                           │    Programme         │
                           └──────────────────────┘

                           ┌──────────────────────┐
                           │ Knowledge, Belief and│
                           │ Understanding of     │
                           │ Attending Program by │
                           │ Teachers             │
                           └──────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────┐       ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Overall thematic │       │ Reasons for Attending│
│ Map of the       │       │ In-Service Training  │
│ Findings         │       │    Programme         │
└──────────────────┘       └──────────────────────┘     ┌─────────────────────┐
                                                        │ Positive views about│
                           ┌──────────────────────┐     │ in-service training │
                           │ Perceptions about in-│     └─────────────────────┘
                           │  service training    │
                           └──────────────────────┘     ┌─────────────────────┐
                                                        │ Negative views about│
                                                        │ in-service training │
                                                        └─────────────────────┘

                                                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                           ┌──────────────────────┐     │   Group learning    │
                           │ Technique used by    │     └─────────────────────┘
                           │ teachers to improve  │
                           │ their teaching       │     ┌─────────────────────┐
                           │ practice             │     │   Self-learning     │
                           └──────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────┘

                           ┌──────────────────────┐
                           │ Other emerging       │
                           │   concepts           │
                           └──────────────────────┘
```

Figure 5.2: overall thematic map of the findings.

5.2 Results of the Thematic Analysis of the interview data

The first step of the thematic analysis of the interview data was to generate initial codes; this process was guided by three criteria:

1. The code referred to a section of the text or a phrase that at least occurred twice in the text of the interviews.
2. The code was relevant to at least one the research questions.
3. The code covered various synonyms. For example, consolidation was a code that referred to refreshing of knowledge and revising information gained in the past.

Figure 5.3 presents the frequency of the initial codes discovered. Some examples of the refined codes, the sub-themes created based on them and the final themes are presented in Table 5.1. The full list of refined codes is presented in Appendix 13.

As a result, three main themes emerged from the thematic analysis:

1. Reasons to attend in-service training.
2. Perceptions about in-service training.
3. Positive views on in-service training.
4. Negative views on in-service training.
5. Recommendations to improve training.
6. The techniques used by teachers to improve (change) their teaching practice.
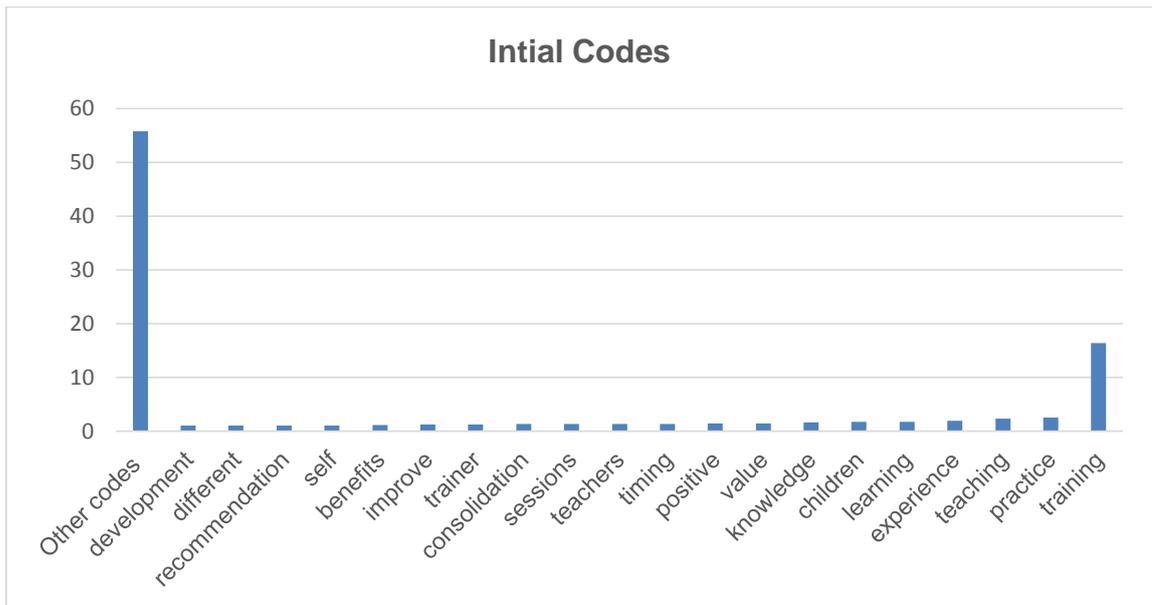
Figure 5.3: Frequency of initial codes. (The percentages represent the share/frequency of an initial code within the whole list of initial codes used to identify segments of texts.)

Table 5.1 Examples of emerged codes, sub-themes and themes from the thematic analysis of interviews.

Refined codes	Sub-themes	Themes
Seeing benefit in the training (relevance)	Training is of value to change practice	Positive view of in-service training to feed the main theme: perceptions of the teacher about in-service training.
Abeer Salem training is of great value in changing practice		
Some training sessions have immediate impact on improving teaching		
Positive view about Abeer Salem training		
Excellent style of teaching and training	Admiration towards a specific trainer	
Positive reflection of a trainee on training		
Lack of novelty	No new knowledge or ideas are offered in training	Negative view of in-service training to feed the main theme: perceptions of the teacher about in-service training.
No new information gained		
Training is similar to the college curriculum		

5.2.1 Reasons for Attending In-Service Training Programme

The thematic map in Figure 5.4 reveals that in addition to the mandatory nature of the training, many teachers stated that they attended training in order to improve their professional practice and increase their motivation. They also expressed a need to improve their knowledge about a specific aspect of teaching. All teachers pointed out that although they believed they had been improving their skills and knowledge about early childhood teaching in general, they still felt the need to attend in-service training to better serve children. For instance, two teachers, Nahla and Sana, clearly expressed this point.

"Facilities are useful and related to each other. Interestingly, my knowledge had already been developing and improving. However, I felt I needed to learn more because I am a kindergarten teacher. I believe that I still need to improve my knowledge" (Nahla).

"The reason for attending courses is to enhance self-development and functionality in my field" (Sana).

Although several interviewees underlined that they felt some pressure about attending training programmes, all interviewees stated that they attended voluntarily, without any external influence. For example, Asma said: "I prefer to teach to kindergarten children. I wish to continue in this career."

Another reason mentioned by the teachers to attend training programmes is the reputation of a trainer; as one teacher, Sawsan, expressed:

"Once I learned that the trainer of a proposed session was Mrs [####], I had no hesitation about attending the training, as I had heard good things about her last year. ... Attending such training would be very good for my reputation as a teacher in this school."

Another example of joining this programme based on the good reputation of a trainer is the quote from Lamia:

"Many teachers told me about Mrs [####] as a good trainer and they encouraged me to attend the course with her, honestly, I gained great benefits from these courses"

The last point she made was another reason to attend, that is, the validation of experience. Motivation and encouragement by colleagues to attend training were also reflected in the teachers' interviews. Asma, for instance, illustrated that her friends were behind her decision:

"My friends encouraged me to attend this programme, although I was hesitant to make a decision about long courses, or even a short course. However, I spoke to other teachers who attended these courses before. Then, I decided that the training programme would be best for me. After that, I can now say that I have learned many brilliant and satisfying things from it. I now feel that I have learned much about children and how to effectively deal with them."
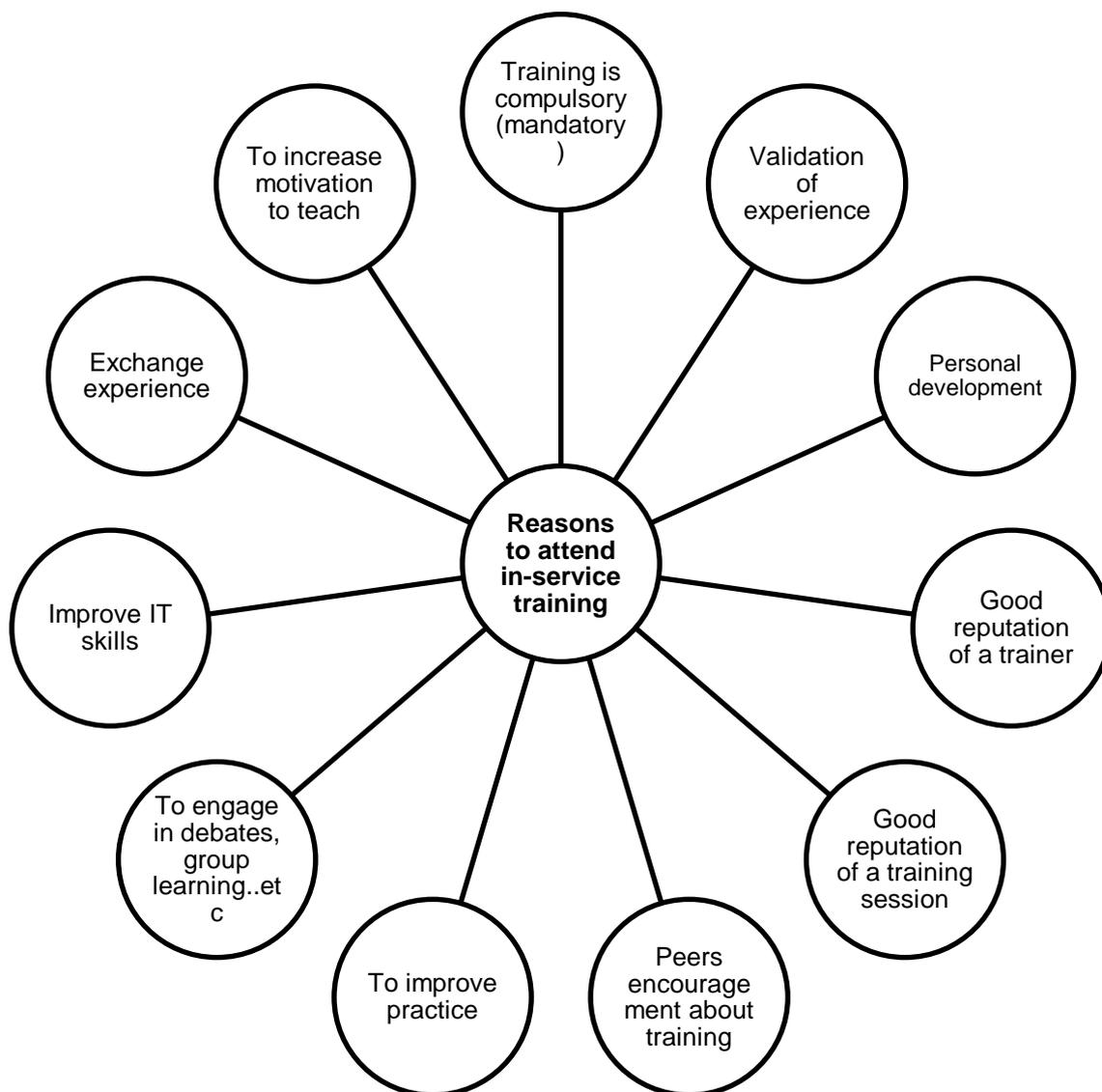
Figure 5.4: thematic map of reasons to attend training

5.2.2 Perceptions about in-Service Training

5.2.2.1 Positive Views about in-Service Training

The fifteen interviewees, in general, believed that the content of the programme that they attended was useful and could potentially lead them to change their teaching practice. They were aware of the reason why training was required. One interviewee, Halla, said:

> *"The concept of in-service training is intended to provide the teacher with the educational and behavioural qualification by using the ways and means that will help her to carry out her career at the required level and to gain the acquired skills in order to efficiently carry out the teaching process."*

Other teachers, Huda and Mona for instance, explained the purpose of in-service training in terms of self-improvement:

> *"… [it] is to continuously improve teachers' performance and professional [development] all along the practice of their profession" (Huda).*

> *"I think that in-service training courses are [needed] to continuously improve oneself [as a teacher]. Perhaps, it may be necessary and important for the teacher to attend them throughout her professional life." (Mona)*

In addition, the interviewee teacher Nahla emphasized how in-service training may compensate for the gaps in one's education:

> *"The university education may provide you with the opportunity to specialize in a particular area, but in fact, it gives you neither the required extensive knowledge in this specific area nor the adequate knowledge that would benefit you in your professional career. For this reason, training courses and specialized programmes are very important."*

Moreover, the thematic analysis of the interviews revealed that all teachers held positive views about the in-service training. While in general these positive views involved the subsequent impact of the training, other issues related to a specific teacher, course or training centre. The three main sub-themes that pertain to the first category are listed as follows: (1) the belief that training is of value to change teaching practice, (2) consolidation of knowledge and skills

gained through practice, and (3) motivation to teach. A thematic map of surfacing themes can be seen in Figure 5.

All the interviewees expressed that the content of the programme that they had attended was useful for them in one way or another. Two teachers, for example, stated that in-service training programmes helped them to improve their skills and keep in touch with the realities of life. Others underlined that it benefited them not only as kindergarten teachers, but also as mothers in raising and educating their children at home. For example, Mona expressed:

> *"I felt that this programme is interesting and helpful. It is the only programme that benefitted me in my daily life and in my children's education".*

Nadia elaborated on the same point by emphasising how she benefited from other participants' work experiences.

> *"The course's benefit is not limited to the knowledge and the material but involves others' experience as well. For example, we have discussions during the courses, we photocopy the tutorials, photocopy the workshops. It was pretty good for the same subject. ... When you meet teachers, who have various experiences in different courses – for example, one who has 10 years of experience and another one with 15 years of experience, you can benefit from their experience as a group".*

Furthermore, the view that the purpose of the training was to improve how teachers interact with children through practice using a child-centred approach was clear in most interviews. This was reflected in a statement of a teacher, Mona:

> *"I have learned from the in-training services how, practically, to interact with the children. Things like 'look directly into the child's eye' and 'speak to the children in their own language' and so on... And all child-centred stuff. I did not learn this at the University."*

Words such as "new skills", "child behaviour", and "speaking in children's language" were frequently echoed in the interviews.

A number of teachers mentioned how the training courses enabled them to change through self-criticism and reflective practice; but this view was not shared by all the teachers as the majority spoke about the change in the way they taught rather than how they could evaluate their own teaching methods,

and become critical of their own teaching methodology. For example, one teacher, Hind, said

> *"The training enabled me to improve how I deal with children, motivate them, and change their behaviour, but was not useful in providing me with self-criticism skills."*

Based on the interviewees' accounts, there seems to be a lack of focus on self-reflection and engaging with the trainees to make them more critical and innovative in improving themselves as teachers.

A number of interviewees underlined improvements in their teaching skills, specifically in regard to the methods of teaching and managing the classroom environment. Areej, for example, stated:

> *"I attended a child Intelligence course last year. In terms of the changes, it was a change in my methods of teaching when engaging with a child , the classroom environment, and how to deal with children. I'm working on this point because I am a mother. And children are different, it's necessary for a teacher to use different methods".*

Other participants, especially those with prior training in kindergarten education, emphasised that the training helped them to consolidate previously acquired knowledge and skills. For example, the Lamia stated:

> *"I have graduated from university with a specialisation in kindergarten education and I was one of the few who took a two-month-long comprehensive course at a later stage in my career as a teacher due to the suggestions of my colleagues and the principal who encouraged me to refresh my knowledge. Indeed, this was true even though there was not much new in that particular course"*

Finally, several teachers pointed out how the training had increased their motivation to teach. For instance, Nadia said, expressed the following view:

> *"Prior to my enrolment in a two month-long, in-depth in-service training, I was not sure of my skills as a teacher of young kids. The trainer in this course was very motivating indeed, and due to having attended [the training course] I am happier now as a teacher and much more motivated to work with children"*

Moreover, other sub-themes relates to the admiration towards some teachers, courses, or some centres' training facilities. One interviewee, Asma, for example, stated:

> *"It is a very rich environment; they have excellent materials and*

tools. Honestly, I was impressed. I asked them how they obtained these tables. They said that UNICEF supplied them with materials and helped them."

When I enquired whether the interviewee obtained similar tables and educational tools, she replied:

"We are in the process of renovating the kindergarten, but I assume it will be a long time before we get them, bureaucracy! You know."

In summary, the teachers expressed positive views about in-service training, and they, as a group, felt the need for some kind of training to refresh their knowledge, learn about new techniques, or acquire new teaching skills. However, as shown below, the experienced teachers and the graduates of tertiary education were less enthusiastic about the long duration and the level of training provided.
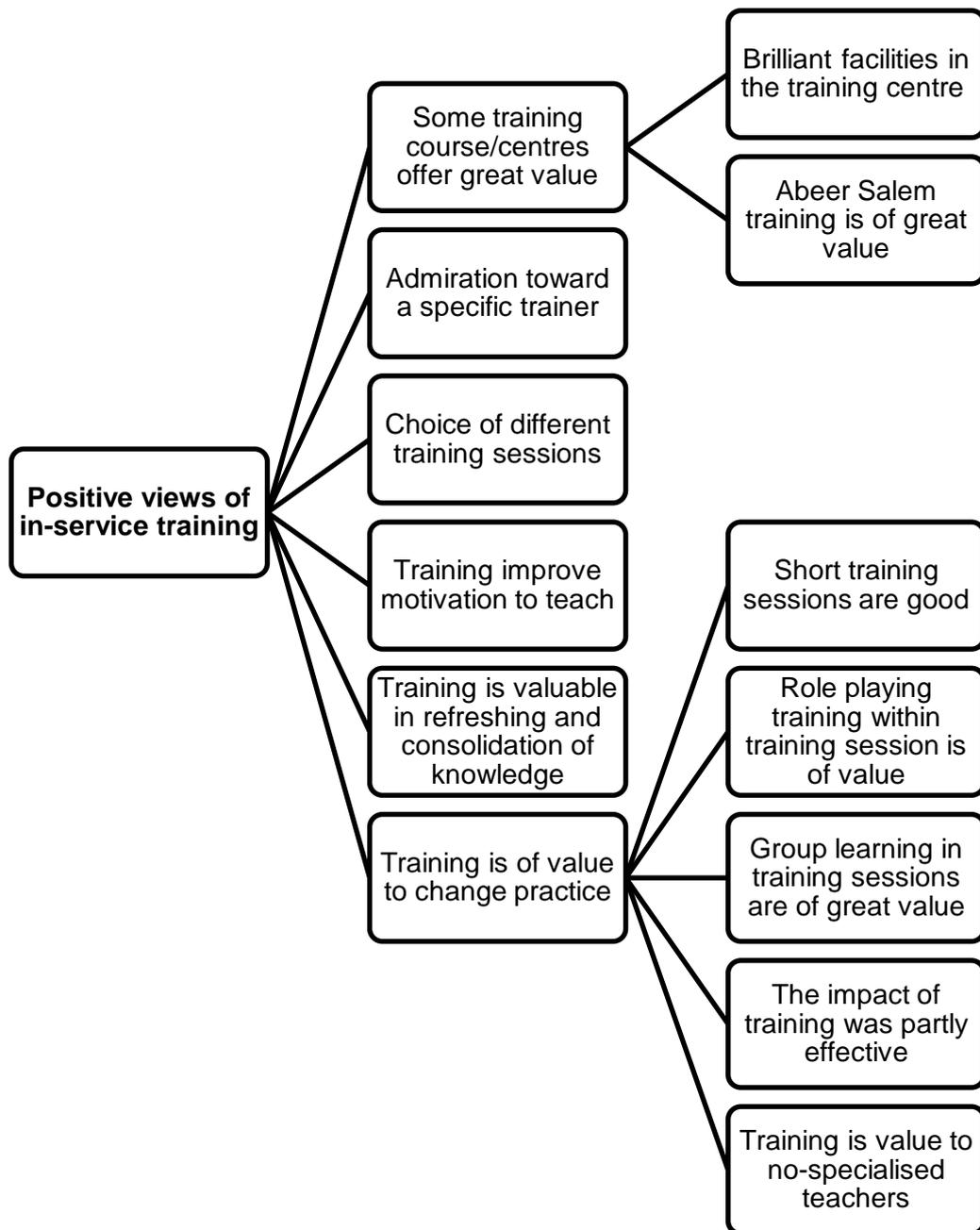
Figure 5.5: Thematic map of sub-themes related to the positive views about in-service training.

The figure above shows the sub-themes based on the refined codes applied to interview data.

5.2.2.2 Negative Views about in-Service Training

The thematic analysis of the interviews also revealed that several teachers highlighted the negative aspects of the in-service training they received. The main sub-theme within this group pertains to the irrelevance of training to teaching practice. Other negative views (i.e. sub-themes) include the absence of consultation prior to training, the poor quality of trainers and/or training centres, and the unnecessary long training duration for kindergarten education graduates, and other logistic challenges related to timing and place of training. A thematic map of surfacing themes can be seen in Figure 5.5.

The main sub-theme is the "irrelevance of training to teaching practice". In this regard, Asma, for example, stressed that the content of the programme she attended was out-dated.

> *"'Saudi in-Service Early Childhood Teachers' Training facilities are inadequate and weak. They should be updated and start before we start teaching in the kindergarten stage".*

About the courses and kindergarten children, she added:

> *"Really, if you are in the same environment that did not have any improvements or anything new, then you should go to another environment that has a different culture to learn about other ideas. This is from my experience. Training courses for teachers here have had the same curriculum for the last fifteen years. They have only added some simple topics from the UNICEF, but the content is still the same. Children now have fewer subjects. The curriculum is that of self-learning, but the presentation method is different. For example, 'the right way to plan' is different from before; that is, as a teacher, I can evaluate children because I have grades in my hand. The children are different and must have different training. The new thing related to planning training courses has slightly changed but has the same titles. Children have the same basics; and the same methods and ways of modifying a child's behaviour and problem-solving... although children have changed."*

It was not clear, at first, whether this teacher really referred to in-service training or kindergarten education training in general. Her further explanations about in-service training revealed that she referred to the whole practice of training kindergarten teachers in Saudi Arabia at all levels.

This negative view about the education of kindergarten teachers was shared by another teacher who is a university graduate, Fatema:

"Teaching in most educational courses, and this includes long duration in-service training as well, has not evolved away from the method of spoon-feeding information [to children], which is a characteristic of teaching in all areas in Saudi Arabia and in neighbouring countries".

Another negative aspect of the in-service training that the interviewees mentioned is the lack of prior information about the facilities. For example, when asked whether she knew the objectives of the course before attending it, Areej replied

"No, I searched about all what was available in specialised learning sites, or I went to someone who had already taken the same course so that they could tell me whether to choose the course or not and to know to what extent it is useful. Sometimes, I even ask about the lecturer, because you go to some courses expecting something and you're surprised to find out a different thing".

Two teachers, Wafa and Fatema, also confirmed that they received very limited information beforehand.

"No, I only knew the topic. For example, when we got the appointment, they only mentioned the target group and the name of the course" (Wafa)

"I only knew the subject of the course, but I was also aware of some of its content thanks to a colleague." (Fatema)

Another negative view that emerged from the analysis relates to the quality of trainers. For instance, during the interview when Huda was asked if, according to her, the lecturer was an important element in training, she replied:

"Yes, of course. But unfortunately, I am not given the chance to not choose a lecturer whom I don't know and don't want to be trained by. This happened to me in a course at the same training centre."

Finally, duration of the training is another issue that the participants expressed negative views about. Especially those who possessed some form of prior kindergarten education complained about unnecessarily long training periods. For instance, one teacher, Sana, expressed the following view:

> *"I'll tell you; kindergarten graduates don't need to take two months-long courses. But maybe only 2 to 4 weeks in order to add some topics based on their needs. I can identify my deficiencies and tell them what to focus on. I think that, before the course, they should make a survey with the teachers to find out what they exactly need; instead of wasting their time and the efforts of the trainer."*

The negative views were, in general, expressed by the teachers who were university graduates and had longer teaching experience and were, therefore, at a senior level in the school hierarchy. These negative views, however, can be viewed as recommendations to improve training programmes based on the teachers' own experiences. Overall, these recommendations are related to the content relevance of the courses, quality of trainers, and logistics of the programme, such as timing and duration for instance.

A major recommendation relates to the timing of the courses. For instance, Fatema stated: "the timing for such courses should be before the beginning of the semester, before teachers get busy, in the middle, or at the end of the semester."

In addition, teachers with prior formal training in the field found the duration of training too long. Abeer, for example, argued:

> *"a two-month course for a kindergarten education graduate is too long, because she wants to learn only the new topics that serve and are beneficial to her work."*

The interviewees also expressed a desire to be consulted about the training before being enrolled in it (Figure 5.6). Many interviewees emphasised that the training had to be in touch with the realities of educational life. In addition, they wanted courses that would be of help not only for kindergarten teaching, but also in terms of helping them as mothers to raise their children. Most of the interviewed teachers underlined that they should have been given sufficient information about the objectives and possible outcomes of a course before enrolling. Finally, they argued that because the Saudi Ministry of Education did not have a clear vision about education, a teacher had to know the content of the courses beforehand so that she could decide to attend or not, based on her own needs while still carrying on working. Figure 5.6 below shows the sub-themes based on the refined codes applied to the interview extracts.
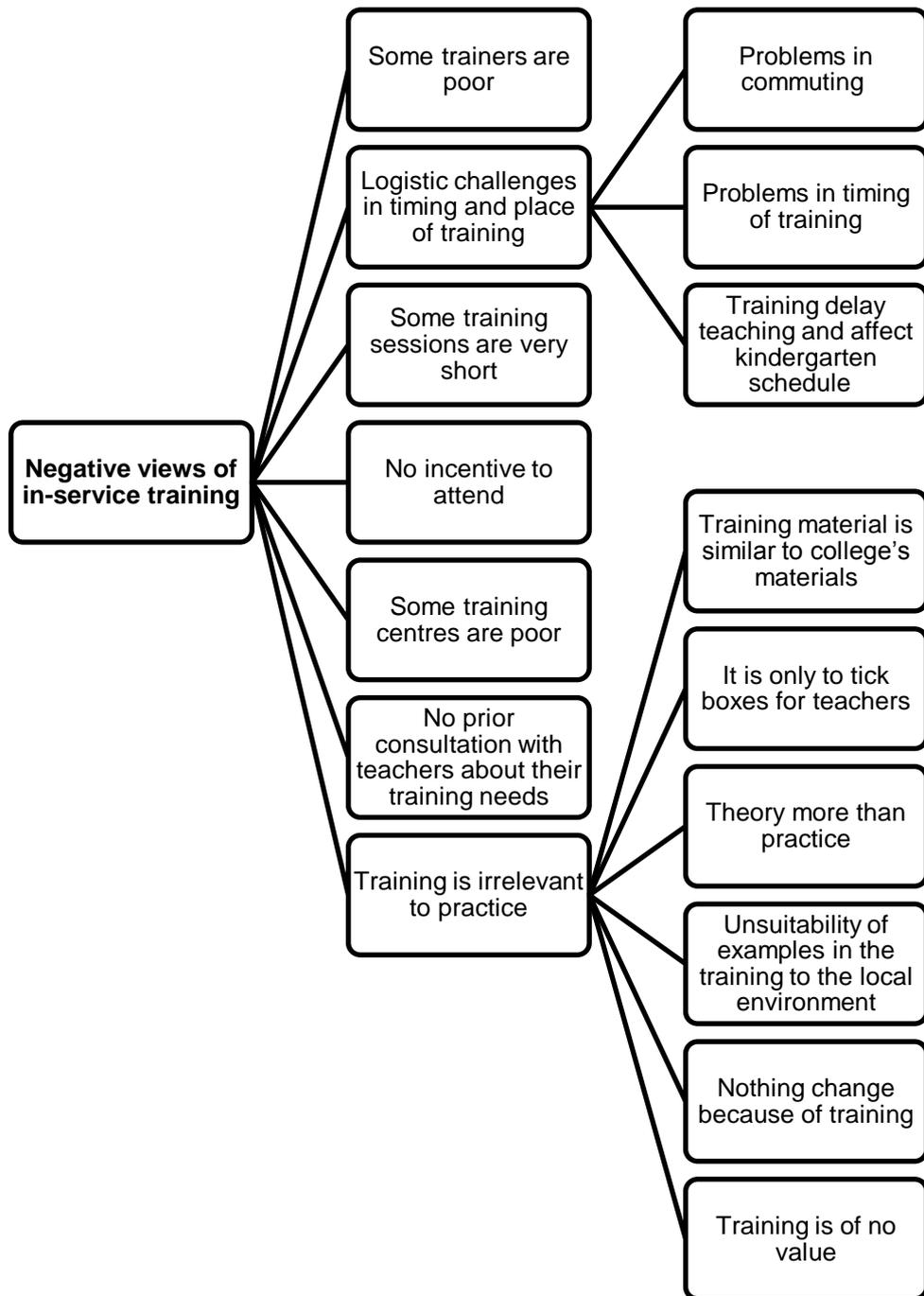
Figure 5.6: **Thematic map of sub-themes on negative views of in-service training.**

5.2.3 Technique used by Teachers to improve their Teaching Practice

The participating teachers also expressed the general techniques they might use to improve their teaching practice. For instance, group learning, which includes attending training facilities, peer observation, experience sharing and self-development, are the two major themes that emerged from the data.

5.2.3.1 Group Learning

In-service training was mentioned by the interviewees as an example of group learning and as a technique that improves their knowledge and teaching practice. One of the teachers, Sana, clearly explained how that process worked:

> *"The programme had effects from the beginning. When I was on the course, I took notes on what I thought I could use for improvement. I'm in contact with my friends all the time to crosscheck with what we studied. I've turned the classroom environment upside down. Actually, we don't have a planning corner [in the kindergarten classroom], but we've set up a promising reading corner".*

5.2.3.2 Self-learning

Several teachers, however, stressed that they preferred self-development, or self-learning, over group-learning environments. One teacher, Hind, for example, provided a rationale for her choice of self-learning:

> *"Self-development is considered as a substitute for the training courses since any teacher can improve her knowledge, skills, and efficiency if she has the will to do so. I have noted that attending training courses may not guarantee that the trainee teacher will be highly qualified; because her mind and degree of perception are the real sources of the acquisition of knowledge. Accordingly, the best solution, in this case, is that the teacher develops her abilities and skills alone, by using all sources of knowledge to achieve her goals within the limits of her abilities. And she can guide her capabilities to achieve her goals, especially with the advent of new technology and knowledge."*

Moreover, in terms of the available sources of self-development, Fatema provided a list, as follows:

> *"In order to gain knowledge through self-development, the following sources can be exploited: technological sources such as the internet can be an adequate source. Moreover, there are*

many appropriate beneficial and specialised audio and video training courses that can be found on the internet."

There seems to be a contrast between the teachers who stated that they learned from each other during group training, and a teacher who seemed to prefer learning individually. This is a point that will be discussed further in the chapter. A question which will be elaborated upon later is as follows: "Is there a difference between the free choice that teachers have when they search the internet for training, and the training that the government wants them to do to improve the delivery of the curriculum?"
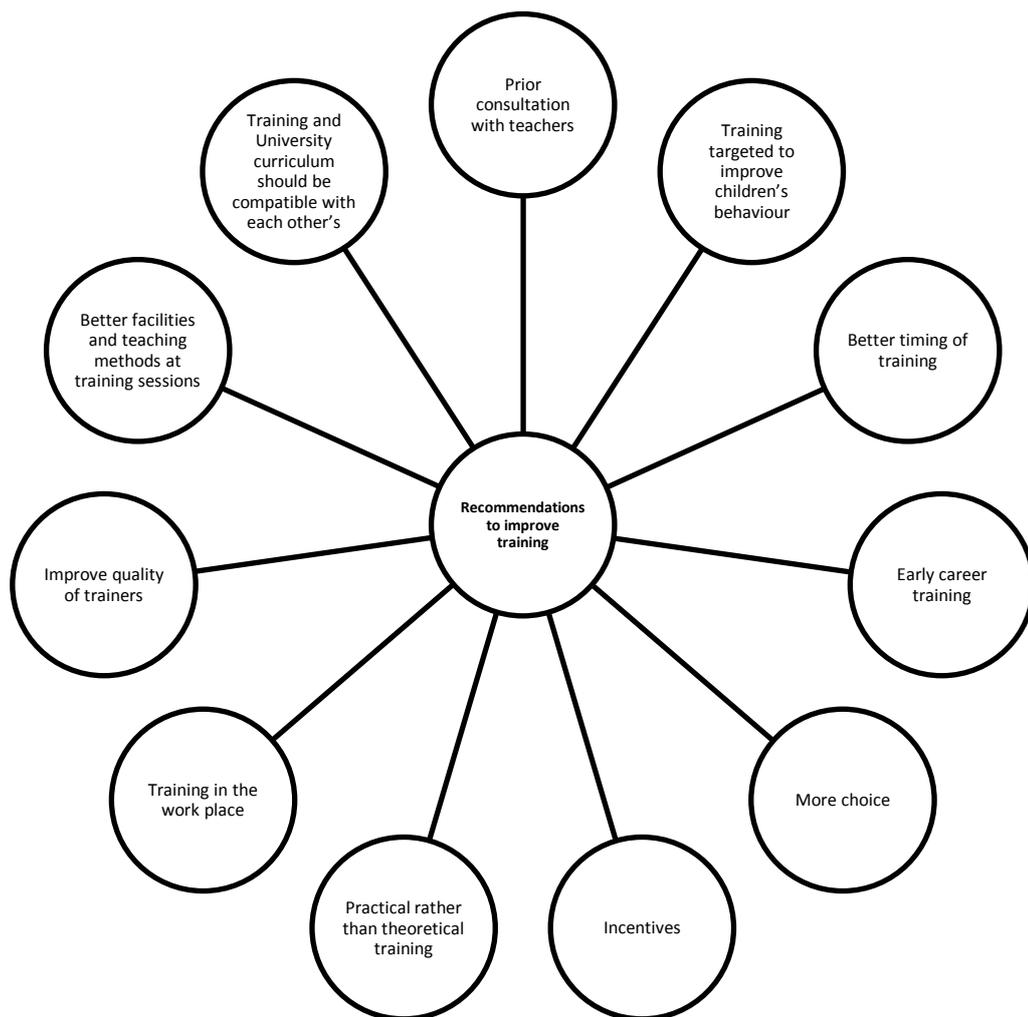
Figure 5.7: Thematic map of theme: Technique used by teachers to improve (change) teaching practice.

5.2.4 Other Emerging Concepts

A number of miscellaneous refined codes should be taken into consideration in that they indicate the teachers' dissatisfaction with the infrastructure and the senior managers of the schools they work at, and also their frustration about issues such as sexual harassment and health and safety in schools. A full list of refined codes is presented in Appendix 14.

Sexual harassment, and how to deal with it, was addressed by two teachers who emphasised that training was needed on this issue as despite the conservative nature of the Saudi society, male harassment in non-segregated workplace settings was not uncommon. Although the teachers who raised this issue did not elaborate on it, it is well known that harassment at the workplace is generally visual or verbal as far as media reports are concerned.

Lack of trust and/or dissatisfaction with senior managers, which most of the time were referred to as "the Wazara" (i.e. the Ministry of Education) and sometimes to the head teachers and directors of the school, was expressed by both experienced and non-experienced teachers. In particular, the interviewees were not happy about the high degree of control that the senior managers exert in dictating their training and duties and other measures implemented in their school environment.

5.2.5 The Role and Responsibilities of Kindergarten Teachers

The interviews reveal how teaching and learning occur at the kindergarten stage. According to the points which have been made in the discussion chapter, there are certain roles and responsibility of the teachers which have been specified by the organisation working for early education and kindergarten in Saudi Arabia. These roles and responsibilities are stated below in accordance to the discussion provided in the subsequent chapter of the dissertation:

1. As replacing the mother, the role of a kindergarten teacher is not limited to conveying information to children but includes different roles with multiple properties. She is an alternative to the mother in terms of dealing with the children who leave their parents and homes for the first time and

find themselves in a new and unfamiliar environment. Therefore, her mission is to help them to adapt to their new educational environment.

2. As an expert in education, she deals with young children who require a lot of patience, organisation, direction, and familiarity with modern teaching methods.

3. As a provider for the society values, she is responsible for raising children with the values and traditions of the society in which they live, and for using appropriate methods to teach them socially accepted behaviours.

4. As a communication channel between home and kindergarten, she is able to help parents in solving the problems they face with their children.

5. Balancing discipline and freedom inside the kindergarten classrooms. She is responsible for assuring discipline while at the same time providing a space of freedom for the children and encouraging them to freely express their opinions through the spirit of love, cooperation, and obedience.

6. As a teacher and as a learner too, she should be aware of the new developments in the field of education and renew herself accordingly. She should develop her capabilities by following modern educational methods and by exchanging experience with colleagues.

7. In the psychological and educational field, by determining capabilities, interests, and preferences of the children, she is responsible for identifying appropriate activities, and thus directing their energy, and at the same time investing in those capabilities. In addition, she has to identify problems children face, try to solve them, and also take the preventive measures to avoid the appearance of other psychological problems (Alghamdi and Higgins, 2015).

This is a view on the role of kindergarten teachers in Saudi Arabia (Alghamdi and Higgins, 2015). When it comes to how the participant teachers view their own roles and duties, there is an agreement among teachers about the routines and practices that are the minimum requirements in both public and private kindergartens. Central to the duties of teachers are planning and

implementation of teaching, and for principals and senior managers, is to carry out supervision and evaluation of teachers' practices. While some teachers were less assertive about the evaluation process and its value to inform further teaching, others viewed it simply as a process of observing teachers' behaviour rather than improving the teaching-learning process. Nevertheless, there was a reasonable agreement among the interviewees that the key role of a kindergarten teacher is, essentially, to develop the educational program according to the educational authority's plans to meet the children's needs – although some claimed that the plans that usually come from a government are clear enough.

What the teachers understood by "*developing educational program*" was limited to classroom logistics, for when they were asked about how they prepared for a new school year, one teacher said that they prepared classrooms, another teacher added "*also the lists of children,*" and a third one elaborated,

> *"Some corners in the classroom would stay the same, special the quiet corners. We need to change some other corners to accommodate any new activities."*

Thus, with respect to how the teachers perceive their role, two points emerged from the interviews: 1) There is not much change within the classroom environment from one year to the next; 2) The teachers understood 'preparation' as preparing the classroom only, rather than improving the teaching or the skills of interaction with children.

In essence, some of the role and duties described in the interviews were also reflected in the interviews, but as a whole, it looks like yet another ambitious job description that attempts to cover many aspects of a given job. This is the case because in regard to what is mentioned in the documents which are provided by the government and other organisations that deal with the training and roles of the early childhood teacher it is very broad. Based on the seven points which are presented in the section, the teachers of early childhood education are expected to fulfil a number of duties and tasks. From the analysis of primary responses which is obtained for this research, it can be shown that the teachers also are of an opinion that they have a vast range of duties to be fulfilled.

5.2.6 Content of the In-service Training Programme

Based on the participant teachers' accounts, the duration of in-service training courses ranges from three days to two months. The frequency of the training courses teachers enrol in ranges from two short courses to cover some urgent training demands, such as health and safety issues in kindergartens, or training on a new element added to the curriculum, to several courses of long duration containing various materials to train new teachers. These courses cover a variety of topics and are offered at different training centres. A number of the courses can be studied by teachers themselves. This means that the teachers of early education in Saudi Arabia can enrol in courses with the help of distance learning materials. Some of the participants thought their programme content was helpful, and thought these courses represented a catalyst for their improvement. They were beginning to discuss the relationship of theory and practice. Mona stated that:

> *"I did not think that there was a shortage of specialized programmes. I think that the courses taught to us were inclusive. They were helpful for all aspects. I think that all the courses provide me more knowledge to be a kindergarten teacher"*

There is evidence in these remarks of a common understanding of the content of training programmes.

There are different kinds of courses include short courses and long courses. The majority of the courses are delivered by trainers appointed by the educational authorities according to their own plan. It is usually the decision of the principals of schools to refer teachers to the training courses. Hind, one of the teachers, summarized the curricula of courses studied in the training centre as follows:

> *"The curriculum covered a full school day – children moving around the learning corners, daily program, episode corners, meeting, guided learning, and the playground. We attended all these in five sessions, plus there was a two-week long practice when we actually practiced in classrooms".*

Another participant, Nadia, stated that the training that the teachers receive could be grouped into three categories as those related to children's behavioural skills, educational problems, and solutions.

> *"They are self-learning courses about comprehension of children's behavioural skills, how to face educational problems, and how to resolve them.*

Some of the qualified teachers interviewed underlined that for them there was not much that was new. For example, when asked whether, as kindergarten education degree graduates, they were already familiar with the content of training, an interviewee Sana replied:

> *"Yes, it is the same course, nothing is new for kindergarten graduates; it is just like being refreshed and updated with the new information that they added. They are originally self-learning facilities that you have already studied in college."*

A frequency analysis on the number of training sessions reveals that the non-specialised teachers receive almost twice as many training sessions than specialized teachers (Figure 2), which implies that these teachers gain experience through teaching, interacting with children and also through in-service training. While it became evident during the interviews that it was not their choice to attend more in-service training programmes than the specialized teachers, it was not clear whether that is a government requirement or the principals or the senior managers of their schools oblige them to attend.

The interviews have revealed that the training usually consists of lectures and workshops, where participants receive some form of hands-on experience about the subject they study. Another teacher Nahla described it as follows:

> *"The first thing is a lecture, followed directly by a workshop. It is a practice in groups by using some supplementary tools. It is a positive method."*

Figure 5.8: A number of training sessions received by interviewed teachers,
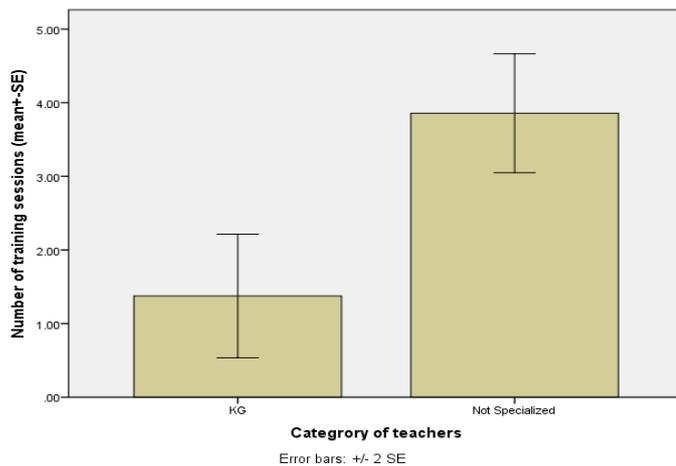
grouped by specialization in kindergarten education.

The graph shows that number of training sessions which are received by teachers who were interviewed. These training sessions were categorized into KG and 'not specialized' teachers. It can be seen that the mean and standard deviation of a total number of training sessions which were received by 'not specialized' teachers are high as compared to those teachers who teach KG class children. This finding clearly shows that teachers who are not specialized in dealing with children or effectively managing the behaviour of these children are more likely to attend these training sessions to improve their knowledge, skills, expertise, understanding, and belief towards in-service early childhood training programmes.

Therefore, the findings above indicated that that training material, as well as training content, is an important context that affects professional teacher training in in-service training programmes. If the content of the training is in line with the needs and expectations of teachers, it helps to influence their professional development, as teachers consider it useful to apply for real-life training materials that help them develop on a professional basis. As the teachers are already aware of the content which they are being taught hence they tend to become more efficient by gaining the same knowledge time and again. Therefore, these findings indicate that most teachers were in agreement

that the content of vocational training programmes is important, as is the length of the courses.

Table 5.2 content of modules and length of the training programmes

Course Name	Trainer Name	Duration
Planning for understanding		3 days
Intelligent control of child behaviour		3 days
Self-learning		2 months
Developmental skills of the child		2 days
Successful Leadership		4 days
Quality scale		2 days
Develop my skills		3 days

(See Appendix 12)

5.2.7 Knowledge, Belief and Understanding of Attending Program by Teachers

One of the themes that emerged from interviews is related to the knowledge, beliefs, and understanding of teachers that resulted from attending the kindergarten training program. In this regard, the study found that the training programmes positively impacted on their knowledge, beliefs, and understanding. This is illustrated during interviews where the findings clearly indicated that provision of training programmes significantly impacted on teachers' knowledge as the factors which were mostly highlighted for maximum training output included the length of training programmes and type of trainers

On the other hand, the beliefs of teachers on training programmes are maximized by the qualification of trainers which are available to carry out these

training programmes. The skills of the trainer in the available training programmes also affect the professional knowledge and understanding of teachers regarding the fact that teachers with less experience in training skills means that teachers gain less knowledge from the training.

Therefore, programme content and the experience of trainers were influential in modifying the knowledge and beliefs of teachers, who believed they were continually learning and gaining more experience. Amal noted that:

> *"My belief and knowledge have changed, and it was improving from one course to another. I think that I am utilizing this development in my working life. For instance, I used to think that any play (game) is appropriate for children, but now my knowledge has changed, not any play is suitable for children. The play should have an objective. And not any teacher is suitable to be a teacher of children"*

The results showed that learning is an important part of teaching for young children therefore teachers, and mentors should take good care of the fact that they emphasize children's learning in education and training. The results also showed that teachers are ready for the future and to create awareness of different cultures and attitudes. However, they also relate to understanding and knowledge of children through these training programmes. It is evaluated after analysing the results that the majority of teachers in kindergarten sensed that they used at least some of the workouts they attended. Not only this, the teachers repeatedly showed respect to a particular trainer or positive perspective of a particular training centre. Their positive behaviour towards the training facilities is evidence of positive impact of these programmes on their understanding, belief, as well as knowledge, either professional or for personal development. On the other hand, existing training plans also affect their professional development based on training materials.

During the interviews, Sana was asked how the training course impacts on her teaching methods, or whether she has changed her way of teaching children. In her response, she stated

> *"'Sure'. It had an impact on changing my teaching skills"*

This response can be interpreted with respect to the objectives which are provided in the introductory chapter of the research. This finding implies that

provision of training courses to teachers impacted on their teaching methods which are supported by their changing way to teach kindergarten teachers. From the analysis of this response it can be stated that particularly for Sana training sessions have contributed in terms of enhancing her efficiency. By modifying the way of teaching, the teachers believe that efficiency and effectiveness can be increased. In addition to this, the findings indicate that when teachers attend training, it helps to improve their knowledge of how to handle kindergarten children in ways that could improve their effectiveness due to how they change their approaches to teaching these children. On the other hand, Mona was asked as for why she prefers attending these training sessions where she answered:

> *"I want to benefit from Abeer Alsalem courses Honestly, I've heard so many good opinions about managing and changing a child's behaviour, she is giving you information that we needed."*

In this response, it is understood that provision of in-service early childhood training centres allows teachers to improve their understanding of how they can manage and even change the behaviour of the child. The training facilities which are attended by teachers provide them with sufficient, relevant, and important information which they mostly need for their professional development and that helps them to improve their knowledge and understanding. From the overall analysis of this question it can be stated that the majority of the respondents have stated similar responses. On the other hand, Mona was additionally asked about why not she depended on her experience as a mother to manage child's behaviour where she added that:

> *"We relied on our experiences. But all the teachers who attended the courses benefited us a lot, but we would like benefit personally by our own selves."*

As can be seen from Mona's response above, the teachers also rely on their experiences as mothers. However, those teachers who attend these training centres tend to get the increased benefit as these training centres allowed them to grow professionally and personally. For personal development, the training centres allow them to grow their belief towards successful managing and changing the behaviour of children. However, pertaining to their professional development, this training centre allows them to gain knowledge through which

they move ahead in their career ladder. The evidence of this claim can be determined from the responses which are obtained from the teachers who have participated in this research.

On the other hand, one of the teachers namely Nadia who participated to share her experience in this study responded that:

> *"I did not attend for her but this is from the words of our colleagues, they were really benefited God bless, it has some benefits, from the topics that she choose for the of interest of the child, the most important thing is the child, the child's interest, but they always say: The most important thing is the child's interest but in reality, they don't care about the child, the most important thing is the attendance of the teacher, the teacher should do so."*

The response above highlighted two perspectives, the pros, and cons of these training facilities or why teachers attend these training facilities. From the statement above, it is found that most of the teachers have positive word-of-mouth opinions towards the provision of these training facilities as they tend to get benefit from these facilities. The benefit comes from the choice of topics that interests the children as the most significant thing in kindergarten studies is to engage the child in studies by means of interesting activities and topics.

However, the statement also reflected the importance of child's interest, but the reality is that teachers report that they are not concerned about the child when they attend these facilities, but they just take care of their attendance in these facilities. The findings of this research that most of the attendants, especially those having less experience, in these types of training facilities which are important to attend by the organisation do not take sufficient interest to develop these ideas in their practice. Instead, the attendants are more concerned about their attendance in the training program so as to meet organisational policy or criteria. In this manner, it is also evident from the primary research which is carried out for this study with the help of interviews that some teachers in KSA who attend these kindergarten early childhood education training facilities held by the government do not consider it as important from the point of view of their own development, either professionally or personally. Therefore, the response of Nadia shows that for her, training facilities do not necessarily improve

teacher's knowledge, belief, and understanding which is opposite to what was discussed before.

However, when Asma was asked about if she had attended any training courses during the past three years, she responded that:

> *"I had attended the new course, of optimizing environments; it was a month ago, to improve education places".*

She further added about the thing which leads her to attend these courses:

> *"To improve myself, because I work as a teacher and classes supervisor, I have to keep up with them, I have to know what is new and improve myself."*

The response, it becomes clear that teachers also attend these training programs to improve themselves as they are keener about what is required to improve themselves for their personal and professional development and that can allow them to reap increased benefits from these programmes. This is in accordance to what was discussed previously which confirms that the provision of in-service early childhood training programmes can allow teachers to further improve themselves which enhances their belief about attending these training courses in the future. When asked about whether she really felt to attend the training program, Asma stated that:

> *"We have to search for short courses, what is the latest trend, because it is our curriculum the self-education, but we had changed it as teachers, we had improved it, because the new generation is cleverer, so you have to keep up with them, so we add classes each year, we should change because children are intelligent, and they learn quickly, and they are opened to the international cultures, so we have to be up to date, we need to be much improved".*

The response revealed a significant finding where Asma linked these training facilities for teachers with changing the environment that requires both teacher and children to learn quickly. In this regard, the findings suggest that teachers are more concerned about how they can keep up with the changing environment where children are cleverer and teachers need to learn quickly to meet their growing education demands. This is the reason why teachers today are more open to international cultures as their knowledge has improved which is considered as one of the positive impacts of these training facilities. It was

also reported by teachers that their knowledge has improved from undergoing different in-service training programs.

When asked Abeer about the reason why she attended the training program, she added that:

> *"For improving myself, for improving my work performance, for practical development in my career, or developing my children, for solving problems that I have faced with children, etc."*

Another respondent stated in this regard:

> *"When I attended the course, I benefited from the experience of my colleagues"*

The responses clearly show that training facilities improve teacher's knowledge, belief, and understanding as it allows them to improve their work performance while leading them ahead in their future careers. In addition to this, one of the critical things is whether teachers attend the course before or after getting practical experience. This is important because the extent of teacher's experience also impacts on their how they gain knowledge and understanding of these training facilities. Therefore, Areej stated that:

> *"When I attended the course, I benefited from the experience of my colleagues"*

The response above shows that teachers also get experiences from their colleagues about the training program benefits which allow them to improve their knowledge as well. Learning from peers who are more experienced or knowledgeable is an integral part of the in-service training course. So, it is not just the quality of the trainers but the opportunities to interact with others who have different levels of knowledge and experience.

5.3   Analysis of the Focus Group Discussion

The purpose of the focus group was to offer the opportunity to a group of teachers to discuss among themselves how to improve in-service training. As was discussed earlier in the methodology section, a major difference of the focus group approach from the one-to-one interview is that it allows for interaction between the participants. Five focus group members were selected based on the assumption that it had to be a purposive, rather than a

representative, sampling of kindergarten teachers in Saudi Arabia so as to expand on the theme of negative views, and to gain some valuable comments on the recommendations to improve training.

Both positive and negative views were identified through individual reviews and shall not be repeated here. The core theme of the focus group discussion was, therefore, pre-identified as the participant teachers agreed on the need for the in-service training to be improved. I have guided this focus group through asking some key questions and recorded and then transcribed the debate.

It is worth reiterating that the focus group study was intended to answer specifically the following research question:

What do the teachers recommend for the development of in-service training programmes?

The focus group debate here is presented according to the narrative approach to reflect the dynamic of the discussion. Yet it contributes toward a final thematic map which summarises the overall findings of the study.

5.3.1   Timing and Duration of Training

The first key question asked to the five members of the focus group was as follows:

> *Based on my conclusion from the interviews with 15 teachers, there seem to be some concerns about in-service training schedules and content. So, as a teacher, how do you see the increase in the frequency of in-service training sessions and the addition of more topics?*

I had to elaborate on this question as the teachers were hesitant to start a conversation. An experienced teacher (A) started the debate by saying

> *"Long training courses are disruptive. For example, any two-month course will, in essence, take the teachers away from the children. In-service training course has to be short."*

The same teacher, who seemed highly respected by other teachers continued, and as for the contents of the course, she said that they had to be focused on children's issues and behaviour. No other teacher added anything until I was prompted them to do so. Teacher (B) said

> *"I agree and I must add, in-service training have to be either at the start or the end of the academic year when the children are not around. .... Two-month courses are far too long".*

Other teachers engaged in the debate and all seemed to agree that in-service training had to be of short duration and on a variety of topics. Teacher (C) who agreed with other teachers on the disruptive nature of long in-service training also pointed out that training course had to take place before yearly programmes were finalized. She said

> *"As for the timing of in-service training, the training courses or sessions have to be before implementing new changes to the teaching and children's activity programmes in the schools"*

5.3.2 The Impact of in-Service Training

When I asked about the impact of short-term courses on their teaching in contrast to long-term courses, the teachers were not in agreement, as one said the short and frequent course will have more impact than long and random training sessions. In contrast, another one was in favour of one long-term in-service training course. A third teacher objected to the repetition of the teaching materials in those courses, and the fourth teacher was adamant that what counts is the content of in-service training rather than its duration.

5.3.3 Trainers

During interviews, I prompted the group to speak about the quality of trainers as this was among the sub-themes identified during individual interviews sessions. Teacher (A) started by saying

> *"Trainers should be good communicators, able to transfer the knowledge they have to the trainees".*

The debate that followed showed another agreement between the focus group members that trainers have to be experienced teachers with excellent communication and teaching skills. Teacher (D) alerted the group to her experience with Training Centre A trainers who in her opinion were excellent and in particular one of them who had an interesting method of teaching which led to the engagement of the trainees in the training session. Teacher (D) finished her statement saying enthusiastically

> *"every time we go to Training Centre A we were entertained. It is not at all boring stuff."*

When I asked if they, as teachers in kindergarten, could be trainers to other teachers, there were some reservations in answering the question, as a teacher (E) who did not participate in the debate of previous points said

> *"we can give other teachers some information about teaching but it is very hard to train them the way the professional trainers do if we can train another teacher why we take in-service training in the first place?".*

When I challenged this teacher by giving the example of 'sharing experience sub-theme' that was revealed in individual interviews, teacher (E) admitted that it might be possible for experienced teachers to help new teachers in some respect. However, the hierarchy in teaching was so evident in the subsequent discussion that, because of the differences in their qualifications, teachers think that having higher qualifications, or being appointed as a trainer by the Ministry of Education, is essential in becoming a trainer. However, at the end of the deliberation between the focus group members, it was obvious that they started to like the idea of sharing experience. One teacher also pointed out the impact of sharing experience between teachers of different schools or even teachers from different countries of similar culture. When alerted to the fact that sharing experience between countries could also include some countries which are very different from Saudi Arabia one teacher said reservedly:

> *"we may take only what will suit our culture".*

5.3.4 Incentives for the in-Service Training

The teachers in this focus group were keen on the idea of incentives given to teachers to attend in-service training courses. However, they emphasized that this incentive can be in the form of reducing the deployment hours and increasing the number of days-off. One teacher raised the issue of fairness in using the incentive and other teachers emphasized the need to take years of experience into account when deciding who get more days-off or less deployment. All teachers agreed that pay rise as a result of attending training is not desirable as it could cause some ill feeling between teachers and senior managers when the choice of enrolment for this training is a top-down decision.

It was found from the focus group study that many educators like Sana and Huda reported about the fact that incentives must be given to them for the in-service education or training facilities. It is true that training program is the biggest incentive that can be given to educators serving learners in early childhood settings, and this incentive is the pivotal one in terms of personal as well as professional development of early childhood educators. Focus group educators reported that they want incentives whenever they are provided with the training opportunities in terms of bonus payment, flexible working hours, job rotation option, and other related amenities in terms of personal and professional growth.

Mona and Sana, educators in the focus group, emphasized the role of educators and learners in collaborative training sessions, and how this collaboration can actually enhance the overall learning process of the early childhood education setting. These educators from the focus group diverted the need of considering the role of educators in terms of giving them empowerment when planning training content and materials. Many educators demanded active participation in the designing of training process and delivery. It is important evidently to understand the role of both educators and learners in a combined learning environment, and the role of educators needs to change from passive to active members in the training planning stage. It is important to empower them in the training facilities to share their insight and contribute to positive information sharing, and this needs to be supported positively by the school management.

Many educators like Sawsan, Lamia, Wafa, and Areej demanded that school must provide them incentives in terms of perks and benefits for in-service training. They need support and encouragement from the management and educational authorities to change their philosophical approach from transmission orientation, where the educator has insight and their main work is to distribute that information to their young learners in a practical and real manner. An educator presumes that their learners must look forward to practical knowledge with them and with class fellows. The educators now demand a cooperative learning environment as an incentive provided to them by the

authorities, and the learning setting must involve means of facilitating, modelling, and coaching a younger generation of the society.

5.3.5 Who Should Attend In-Service Training?

While unprompted, teacher (E) raised the issue of "who should attend *in-service* training" when she said

> *"The trouble of in-service training is that it is mostly focused on teacher while in my opinion the administrative staff and assistant teachers should take training as well as they work in the same environment and they are in contact with children in the kindergarten".*

Other members of the focus group refrained from discussing this issue apart from another teacher who said:

> *"if you are new to the kindergarten environment you should be trained."*

Considering the responses provided by educator Mona, in-service training refers to a range of education and training initiatives designed for secondary as well as primary school educators and management. The training is determined to follow their initial professional certificates and designed majorly or particularly to enhance their work-related capacities, proficiency, and approaches (Somers & Sikorova 2002). All educators must attend such training sessions, in order, to educate young learners and provide information in an effective manner. The same respondent stated that educators serving learners of kindergarten got the immense benefit while attending training courses of Training Centre A. The training material provided in this centre was rich and informative enough for kindergarten educators as it focuses mainly on managing and changing a child's behaviour (Rich 2015). The training provided the necessary information needed to mould the behaviour of young learners of the society as it trained educators about understanding the needs of young children and how best to make teaching-learning process interactive and dynamic.

As far as responses provided by a same educator (Mona), it is important that employers should realize the significance of investing in the workers who form their team or group. The constant education and training of the educators while using professional development courses show the organisation's support of

considering how the workers develop competently and become a productive as well as a useful member of the society, in general. When educators of kindergarten are capable to take part frequently in professional training, they are being ready for work-related growth in the school and look forward to growth opportunities to avail (Cropley and Dave 2014). Training provides in-service educators to polish their existing set of skills and capacities, and learn to develop new teaching strategies while integrating emerging technical and scientific tools.

Mona, during the interview, talked about a few things that need improvement and attention considering the level of personal development and skill building. Moreover, the same respondent talked about some weak points and things she wants to change specifically. Such educators who recognize their weaknesses really need training incentives as they identify a skill gap, which may impact their performance and deliverance of learning materials. Many educators identified the problem of understanding child's behaviour as every child comes with a unique need and learns things at a different pace.

Educators, prior to attending training sessions, failed to recognize individual needs and usually treated all children at the same level. After attending training sessions, kindergarten educators realized that all children are not same rather they are different and exhibit different manners of grasping new concepts and terms (Cropley and Dave 2014). It is essential to cater for individual differences found among young learners, and course content should be designed in a manner that satisfies needs of all learners. This was the main issue highlighted by educators serving learners in kindergarten and they really looked forward that school management should deal with the issue while offering them innovative training and learning opportunities. The school management should support their people to excel in their professional life as well as attain personal development.

5.3.6 Contents of in-Service Training

I prompted the group to discuss their input into the in-service training goals and materials. The teachers were in agreement that they had to be consulted prior to enrolment in any in-service training programmes. I asked at this stage who should have input in the in-service training other than the Educational Authority. The most experienced teacher (Huda) stated

> *"Ministry of Health, Civil Defence Department, and the Red Crescent for health and safety issues." When did I ask if UNICEF or The Arab Gulf organisation had some input?*

One teacher said, "We will be happy if any of these organisations have an input."

Finally, one educator wanted to tell me that staff members know that training is costly and need major efforts from a responsible authority, and she wanted to thank all those involved in managing it. During an interview with Sana, it was discovered that training content needs further amendment and modification, in order to include new topics and ideas. Depending on the type of work being performed, there is always a need to remain informed about changeovers in the field of specialization. Some educators like Huda, Mona, and Sana responded that professional certifications require recertification work, which can be achieved by means of constant training process and sessions. Along with the area of specialization, there are some work-related concerns that encourage school management to often send kindergarten educators to attend workshops and training facilities (Christofferson and Sullivan 2015:248).

Abeer Educator notified the need for content revision in terms of in-service educators serving young learners of the society. The educator highlighted the need for developing skills to deal with children having learning disabilities or problems. The staff members in early childhood settings need to develop the capacity to deal with challenges that may in form of addressing needs of difficult learners or situations. Whether it is a challenging state to make concepts clear to children or a conflict with a child's personality, educators need to develop skills in order to better resolve such issues (Christofferson and Sullivan 2015:249). The training content needs to include problem resolving skills and provide educators with an opportunity to learn more about addressing the needs

of the difficult child and how best to counter such cases when delivering lessons in early childhood settings.

Furthermore, it was reported by Huda and Sana educators that training content must include topics concerning communication and interpersonal skills. Staff members spend their day with children and other educators, in order to attain broad goals and aims of the early childhood education. The training content must take account of interactive activities, which support communication skills of educators and educate them about how to effectively communicate with other educators and young learners, both verbally and orally. A respectful organisational setting is only feasible when staff members communicate and act together with one another that seem reverential and professional. The educator plays a central role in the overall teaching and learning process. For the real implementation of the training content, the responsibility of an educator is catalytic (Ness 2016:58). A well-designed training content develops teacher effectively and it is true that well-developed and innovative educators can even teach without general textbooks or in the absence of other physical services.

"The core content of training should include core subject matter, pedagogy and learning methods, conflict avoidance, supporting learners' rights, catering for the special needs of young learners, application of community resources, and emerging needs in the educational sector "(Marquez et al 2016:87). The findings indicate that the content of training programs needs to be planned in a manner that provides room for educators' feedback with respect to training deliverables and outcomes resultant from the session. An in-service training program must be designed professionally as well cater for personal demands of educators serving young learners in their early phase of learning.

5.4 Summary of the Chapter

The main goal of the educational policy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is to make certain that learning process becomes more rationalized and updated with the passage of time, to cater for the religious, financial, and community needs of the nation and to remove rates of illiteracy amid older groups of the country (Alrashidi and Phan, 2015). The study has found that a number of government-based initiatives and organisations are actually involved in

planning, managing, and executing the overall educational policy goals across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The existing system of education within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is centralized in nature and supervised under the Ministry of Education. The educational system of the country is based on a hierarchy and is bureaucratic in nature with managerial control, local educational policy-making decisions, and education-based provision all being developed at the high government level. The Ministry of Education manages and oversees the administrative features of the learning provision, like the local education financial plan, the recruitment of early childhood educators, training of early childhood educators, and the provision of training services in primary, elementary and secondary schools.

The overall thematic map is presented in Figure 8 in order to summarise and triangulate the findings of these two studies. It was clear from the analysis that the more experienced teachers, who spent more than 10 years in teaching, and also the graduates of a kindergarten education-related degree, were more likely to have the view of the in-service training as of limited value to their practice. Their principal complaint against the training was that it did not offer any new knowledge and it was not different from the university curriculum. Yet, some of these teachers joined the rest to express the more recurrent view that training is valuable in refreshing and consolidation of knowledge. This finding will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Many subthemes emerged to suggest that most, if not all, interviewees enjoyed at least some parts of the in-service training they attended. For example, admiration towards a specific trainer or a positive view of a specific training centre was repeatedly expressed by teachers in the interviews and in the focus group discussion. In addition to these positive views, the teachers gave a plethora of reasons as to why they attended training, and all reasons reflect the desire and the will of the teachers to improve their teaching skills through in-service training. This theme is strengthened by the sub-theme exploring how teachers improve their teaching and also by the focus group discussion. The techniques used by teachers to improve or change their teaching practice included group and self-learning methods but also included in-service training.

The sub-theme '***recommendations to improve training'*** listed different refined codes about logistic challenges and general dissatisfaction of the more experienced teachers about the contents of training and how it is delivered. This was explored more in the focus group and it was clear that there is an agreement between the results of two stages regarding this sub-theme and this is a major point of the discussion in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

As a premise to this discussion, it should be noted that this study was carried out adopting a theoretical framework based on socio-cultural theories of learning and postulating that learning is socially and culturally modified to form knowledge or "making meaning". This proposed theory is largely based on the notion that the context of learning affects the formation of knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). Socio-cultural theory was used in this study because it views the learning context as a core element of teachers' learning. From this perspective, the context includes the physical surroundings, and the individuals evolving in it, in addition to the values and beliefs shaped by these cultural factors. Moreover, the notions of peoples' interactions and transformation of people and context are fundamental aspects of this theory, whereby humans are deeply influenced by these processes and create different forms of meanings. Nonetheless, the socio-cultural perspective is more than the mere social level of analysis, which is why this research adopts this framework including data from a range of individuals and sources to enhance understanding of how individuals engage in this particular context of in-service education, and what are their reported perceptions of the processes and outcomes.

Vygotsky stated that, "learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human psychological function" (1978, p. 90). Thus, for learning to occur, it must be experienced mostly in an appropriate and rich social and cultural environment. The integration of psychological systems, consciousness and unity of behaviour, is essential for learning as hypothesised by Vygotsky and these concepts have been used in this thesis to help understand the professional development of teachers in their workplaces. While these theories were largely thought of in the context of children's development and pedagogy, they are appropriate to form the framework of adult learning such as the in-service training which is the topic of this PhD research. Hence, this study considers that the in-service training of teachers is, in essence, a learning process that is experienced in the social and

cultural context of the schools' environment. For example, one of the main reasons that the teachers cited for attending in-service training was to exchange experiences with other teachers, which shows that social interaction is essential for learning to occur.

Furthermore, another theoretical dimension of this chapter is the socio-political context of Saudi due to the Vision 2030 strategic plan which is aimed at transforming the economy of the country (Alshuaibi, 2017). Additionally, this vision aims to develop areas such as an economic structure that could offer opportunities for all individuals in society with an emphasis on education. KSA 2030 goals, which are focused on the importance of education for preparing future generations to achieve excellence, have informed part of this research with the notion that educating the educators is highly significant. Therefore, the overall theoretical position of this study focuses on these theories reflecting how the knowledge of teachers may be changed through professional development. In this regard, the chapter will shed light on the developments on sociocultural grounds in KSA which have changed teachers' perceptions and knowledge of early childhood education.

Based on these premises, this chapter discusses the main findings related to each research question, along with the main conceptual issues that arise from these findings. To get meaningful insights into the findings of this study and its relation to the relevant literature and context, the discussion is divided under four themes in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the current provision of training programmes for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers?

2. What are Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of the available training programmes in training centres?

3. How do the available training programmes impact Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional knowledge?

4. What do the teachers recommend for the development of in-service training programmes?

Therefore, this chapter focuses on four main areas in relation to the research questions: (1) the current provision, (2) teachers' views about the current

provision (3) sources of professional knowledge and impact of training (4) teachers' recommendations. To that end, this chapter is divided into four sections as follows:

6.2 Current Provision of in-Service Teacher Training for Early Childhood Teachers

The teacher development process serves long-term purposes; due to the policies supporting early childhood development in the KSA, schools have opened in different places in the country, which has therefore increased the need for professional and well-trained teachers. According to the study conducted by Aldosemani and Shepherd (2014), the need for training for early childhood development for teachers is clear and it has also been confirmed by the findings of the current study. Educational opportunities for teachers have increased in the past few years by the establishing of four national centres for the training of kindergarten teachers. However, it remains the case that limited training activities are conducted due to the lack of trainers, time, budget, and support from the management to allow their teachers to attend training sessions.

6.2.1 Form and Content

With regards the current training provision for in-service early childhood teachers in the Saudi context, the results of this study showed that kindergarten teachers are provided with training programmes ranging from three days to two months, depending upon the nature of these programmes. In addition, different types of courses offered included short-term courses that could help in covering the short-term demands of training. These short courses range from health and safety issues in early childhood within an educational context to adding new elements in the curriculum. Long-term courses are also offered and use a variety of materials to train new teachers. Figure 6.1 below illustrates the map of main concepts.
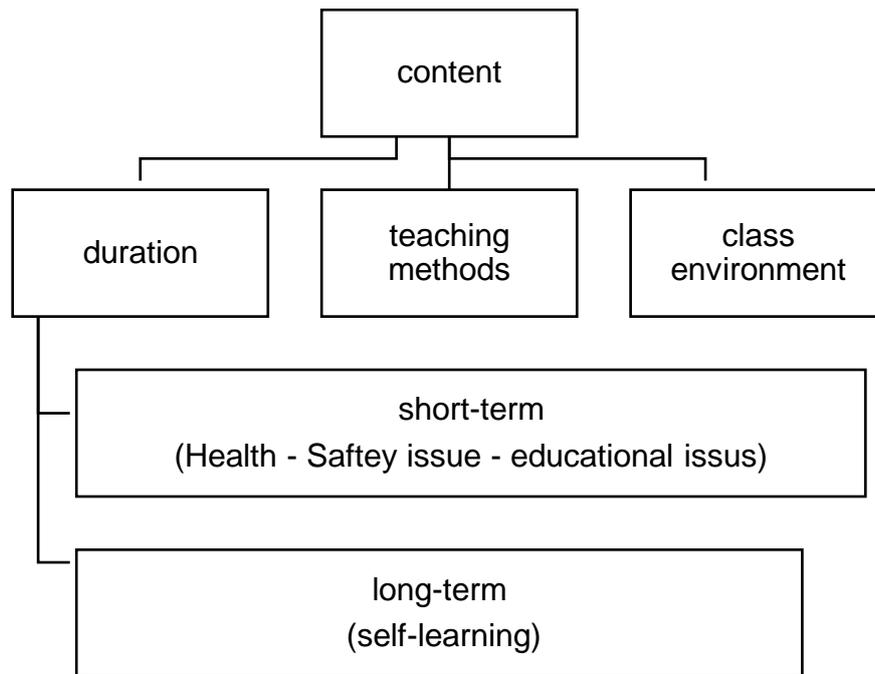
Figure 6.1: Map of main concepts

Moreover, the findings suggest that the training provision can be grouped into three main categories, mostly related to (1) educational issues, (2) behavioural skills and solutions to children's behaviour and (3) learning difficulties. However, it was found that the current provision of training programmes is not fully sufficient to provide training to kindergarten teachers based on the adequate qualification of trainers in the Saudi context. These findings tend to concur with Gahwaji (2013) who found that such kinds of training are more likely to be completed by teachers who had been trained specifically and have the required qualifications to teach young children.

In addition, it has been pointed out by the respondents that certain in-service training programmes are self-taught in nature while some of the programmes require extensive teaching practice which can help the practitioners. The current training and development programmes that are carried out in regard to the Kindergarten teachers shows that there are different kinds of topics that are covered from the programmes (Alghamdi and Higgins, 2015). From the consensus of the participants, it has been found that the safety and health of children and self-learning are two of the major topics. Another important aspect of the training and development programmes is regarding the behaviour of the children and how it can be altered in order to improve their learning abilities.

Nonetheless, the current in-service training sessions are more self-explanatory and certain teachers thought that the training sessions provided to them are not new and creative. It appears that the current provision is based on the same sessions that most teachers had been taught during their initial teacher training in the university. This means that in order for the achievement of the 2030 goals regarding early childhood development, the content of the in-service training programmes for teachers should be framed in such a manner that they are creative and new for the teachers so that they can add to their existing knowledge. This point is supported by the study of Abry, et al., (2015) which concluded that the good educational background and training for teachers have a significant positive contribution to educational attainment of children. Teachers with higher academic background were reported to be more effective for children's academic adjustment and social adjustment.

6.2.2 Lack of Adequate Resources

Because there is a great shortage of early childhood teachers in KSA, unqualified teachers are hired and, therefore, the education and development of children is at stake. This lack of human resources is a major problem that has implications for teacher education, and for children. In addition, the lack of adequate facilities is also a major characteristic of the educational landscape in the KSA which directly affects the current in-service teacher training provision. In addition, the findings of this thesis indicate that there are schools without basic infrastructure and systems to train teachers. In a wealthy country like KSA, this aspect is worthy of discussion. One has to compare the spending on training in KSA with other developed countries to simply reach the conclusion that, despite the efforts to train teachers, there is a need for more input in both the quality and quantity of training sessions.

Moreover, it has been found in this study that Saudi early childhood teachers lack facilities in kindergartens to apply what is learned during training programs. It is also worth noting that private kindergartens tend to have better facilities than those in the public sector. This, in turn, causes a significant lack of trust in the quality of in-service training, as evidenced by the interview data. There was also a trend identified through the interviews that a good training centre and

highly qualified trainer usually make an impact on the desire of teachers to engage with training (Figure 5-4) in chapter 5. This point is supported by Bin Ali's (2013) study about the benefits from any training programme if there is good training and a highly qualified trainer. Based on the findings of this study 'good training' encompasses new material that is creative and relevant to the needs of the teachers.

Furthermore, Dham (2013) emphasised the importance of the internet that helps in filling the gap between teaching and learning as it is an already established fact that the internet has provided a platform for teachers to learn and develop their skills through in-depth research and surfing. In this way, teachers are more able to apply their knowledge in classroom environments. Hence, there might be a case in that the Saudi educational systems lack sufficient internet and technological tools in classrooms that allow teachers to implement what they were taught in training programmes and better assist their students. Hence, a significant barrier to learning in the KSA is the limited availability of internet accessible sources for students and teachers, which means that they are unable to access mass information available on the internet. Various barriers have been identified in the study of Almalki and Williams (2012) including internet accessibility as a means for supporting the learning process in the KSA. For instance, it has been noticed from the study that the subject culture, school level, beliefs and attitudes and the adoption of the technology by teachers as well as students enables them to learn new things from the internet. Hence, it can be said that the teachers as well as students in Saudi Arabia have been affected by the barriers to using the internet for learning process.

6.2.3 Changes

In a study conducted by Borg, it was found that the current provision of training programmes for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers has changed and is developing in a way that there is an increased awareness among teachers about the importance of development in KSA. This process of development is on-going as changes take time to be implemented. Based on the findings, and as emphasised by Borg (2011), Saudi Arabia is trying to amend their policies

according to the global changes that are taking place in teaching and teacher development. The socio-cultural factors have influenced the educational system of Saudi Arabia and have facilitated the emergence of training activities involving the major and immediate requirements of the teachers to improve the areas that they lack the most. More workshops and training activities, including modern tools, are now encouraged by the Saudi Ministry of Education because a growing number of teachers believe that with the development of technology, conventional approaches should no longer be solely adopted and followed. Teachers who participated in this study put their comments about the use of modern technologies to support their learning by being engaged in using such technologies to support their learning.

This type of social change in the Saudi society is positively impacting on the lives and education of children; which implies that teachers need to become adequately and efficiently trained through modern educational technologies during in-service early childhood education. This would mean that the curriculum might more accurately reflect what children are engaging with and may be more likely to support positive learning outcomes through linking their interests with the kindergarten curriculum.

The community places pressure on the educators and tries to integrate their learning methods with the existing information available. In Saudi Arabia, the education policy has changed with time and changes are associated with the cultural demands of education. The developments taking place in Saudi Arabia are linked with the changes in the educational sector. However, the evidence from this study calls into question whether current approaches to in-service training for ECE teachers are adequate, or meet the aspirations of national policy to improve children's outcomes.

6.3 In-Service Early Childhood Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of Training Programmes Offered in Training Centres

6.3.1 Evolving Perceptions about Learning

In light of the socio-cultural theory of learning, it was found that learning was perceived by participants as an on-going process which involves interaction between people. Also, the analysis of educational theories suggests that learning is of great significance in regard to the early childhood training (McClelland, Acock, and Morrison, 2006). Based on socio-cultural theories, it is supposed that the learning process results in some specific perceptions about the overall learning process. Hence, this study argues that through the learning process, teachers' knowledge and perceptions are developed as well as changed. It was found in this current research that early childhood teachers' perceptions have changed not merely due to the external factors but also due to several internal factors. This view agrees with the study by Sparks (1984), who reported that teachers can create considerable changes in their teaching attitude after only 10 hours of training.

Over the past few years, a number of researchers have highlighted the importance of the learning context in classrooms. It has been observed that the content used in the classroom is discussed more as compared to the context. This shows that, traditionally, teachers are more focused towards the content of the curriculum rather than understanding the significance of its context (Waniganayake et al., 2018). The findings of the study provided some useful insights into the perceptions of respondents as to the growing importance they attach to the learning context in classrooms. According to Lin, Lawrence and Gorell (2003, 225), students should be provided with equal opportunities and learning context(s) should be taken into account when teaching the students. This also echoes the study of Alghamdi (2016) who has identified that not only teachers, but also students are also required to avail the learning opportunities in education and enhance their knowledge and education. Thus, it has been argued that the curriculum needs to contain various subjects in order to increase students' content knowledge; this reflects the argument made by Murray (2017) that the different forms of pedagogical knowledge and content

knowledge are significant for early childhood teachers. They need good knowledge and understanding of what to teach as well as appropriate pedagogical strategies and knowledge of early learning and development. However, the existing literature has shed light on the fact that curriculum content discussed in classrooms is of utmost importance and teachers should remain highly vigilant about different methods of teaching, as well as their content knowledge. This is applicable in early childhood education. The ECE syllabus for the students includes a number of areas of learning that are required to be taught to students. Therefore, it is important for the teachers to have effective knowledge of those areas of learning and how appropriate pedagogical strategies for the students.

It was also found that a child-centred approach within the context of KSA, as explained by the teachers, is necessary for the growth of teachers because it focuses on how the children should be educated and managed. Throughout the interviews and discussions, some keywords were constantly repeated such as the behaviour of children, children's language and new skills as content of training programmes. In research on the knowledge bases that teachers should have to teach in an effective manner, Koehler et al (2014) recognized that pedagogical content knowledge as one of the most imperative knowledge bases that educators must have in order to teach young children efficiently. Thus, knowledge of what to teach, and how to teach, are equally important in ECE, along with knowledge about children's learning and development, and about play.

With respect to this research, it can be argued that the KSA early childhood education focuses its attention on both content and context of the classroom (Aljabreen and Lash, 2016). However, Lin, Lawrence, and Gorrell (2003) argue that the learning context is of equal importance and should not be ignored in order to provide students with an excellent quality of education. According to Palardy (2016), the context of a classroom includes the composition of the student, class structure, and resources. As expressed by the participants, the "learning" context is of great importance because it impacts the achievement gap of the students. As the focus of this research was on investigating the in-service early childhood teachers with respect to the training programs in Saudi

Arabia, the background context of the traditional practices with a heavy content and unclear strategic goals has been pointed out by some experienced participants, along with the lack of adequate resources.

6.3.2 Teachers' Perceptions about the Current Training Provision

According to the findings, teachers appeared to have conflicting perspectives about their current in-service training. Some of them expressed positive views while others were more critical about the current provision. Nonetheless, generally speaking, most of the respondents expressed the belief that the in-service training sessions provided to them were interesting and stimulating while others believed that the current training sessions were not sufficient because they are kindergarten teachers, which requires them to have more knowledge, skills set and expertise because they have to build up a base for the children and enhance their knowledge. It is also worth noticing here that the majority of the teachers expressed the view that they do not attend the in-service training programs because they are mandatory, but because they feel that they need to improve their knowledge and skills. So, considering the theory of training and development, it can be deduced that training helps people to close the missing gaps between their existing needs and expected performance according to a study performed by Pollock, Jefferson, and Wick (2015). Training enables them to deal with the shortcomings that may or may not hinder the present performance as well as future career-oriented goals and targets. Training and development are considered as an important tool to develop and upgrade professional skills and knowledge so that they can deliver optimal results that are in line with KSA policy aspirations.

6.3.2.1 Critical Views

With regards the content of the training sessions, it is important to note here that not all the teachers were satisfied with this aspect. According to the data, this relative dissatisfaction with the content of the in-service training sessions that are provided by the Saudi Arabia education commission to the kindergarten teachers is partly due to the fact that they felt pressurised to attend these sessions. This means that a proportion of teachers are forced to attend these training sessions and do not find them interesting enough to join for self-

development. The teachers are forced to attend these training sessions by the respective schools and institutions they are associated with. Three participants talked about their experiences when their compulsory attendance was required by inspectors and educational counsellors. Irrespective of the teachers not finding these training sessions relevant and interesting, they nevertheless helped in terms of their monitoring and evaluating their performance. Ideally it appears that teacher should ideally be self-motivated to participate in in-service training, but that they gained some benefits when required to attend.

In addition to this, the findings further indicated that these Saudi in-service early childhood teachers also felt that the current training programmes require improvements that can effectively fulfil and meet their expectations while meeting their job demands. This is also expressed in the study of Latty (2012) who discussed that the Saudi educational system must fill the gaps that exist in the system to provide better teaching opportunities while enhancing the level of education for early childhood students. The participants also explained how traditionally, children were only provided with religious education during their early years, and that, over time, children's educational needs have expanded towards social and modern education. From the primary findings of this research it has been deduced that although the current provisions of in-service training are in some ways commendable, a number of participating teachers found the training sessions to be insufficient in regard to the needs and requirements of the nature of early childhood in contemporary KSA. Another negative aspect highlighted by teachers is that in-service training opportunities are very limited in the KSA and that most sessions do not require any input from the teachers and mainly rely on transferring information to the participants through lectures. Another major obstacle is the lack of active involvement, dialogue, and participation of teachers for implementing effective learning processes, which is not consistent with the socio-cultural theories of learning. This analysis appears to support the study undertaken in KSA by Sywelem and Witte (2013) who argue that there are several challenges facing the training programmes such as lack of teaching tools and some training places are not suitable. Moreover, in the majority of educational systems, two forms of training are for teachers; namely, pre-service and in-service. However, some research

studies indicate that there is a lack of effective approaches which may not allow any feedback. This was confirmed by Bayrakci (2009) in a study conducted in Turkey, where the author also pointed out that:

> *"The most important problems facing in-service training activities in Turkey are a lack of professional staff, no collaborative partnership between teachers, no provision for feedback, limitations, and no systematic in-service training model "(Bayracki, 2009: 10).*

Also, the majority of participants (10 out of 15) explained that they did not have information about the official content and objectives of the training programmes and their understanding of these courses developed gradually as a result of practice as they became acquainted with other participants. These problems seem to highlight the relative gap of information between the Ministry of Education and teachers regarding the training programmes and the teachers' lack of information about these programmes. This agrees with the study of Juma et al. (2017) in Tanzania, that existing pre-service teacher training programs hardly prepare serving teachers with all they require for a lifetime of work in a class setting

Nonetheless, in this study the responses indicate that teachers are keen to learn new methods and styles of teaching children, but they are not able to deliver the right concepts and values to the children or are unable to communicate with them as they need. This is because teachers have not attended any, or sufficient special training sessions for learning new methods of teaching. Past research also indicates that there is a need for teachers with a strong educational background so that they are more inclined towards attending training sessions. According to The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and Education International (EI) "a fundamental reason for the gap in quality education is the severe lack of well-trained, well-supported teachers" (GCE, 2012:2), which is consistent with the findings of the previously mentioned studies that argue in favour of better qualifications and training.

6.3.2.2 Positive Views

Likewise, it should be highlighted that the findings showed that certain teachers expressed the belief that the in-service training sessions allowed them to remain aware of the growing and changing needs of the children. It can be said after analysing the results, the majority of teachers in kindergarten perceived that they enjoyed at least some parts of the in-service training they attended. For instance, teachers during the training programs repeatedly showed respect towards a specific trainer or a positive view of a specific training centre.

According to the findings, most of the teachers that were part of the training sessions had enjoyed some part of the training, and had a positive approach. In total, there were fifteen respondents for this study and the overall programme was successful for the teachers, to some extent. In light of the training sessions, it was found that the teaching practice may have changed the perceptions of teachers along with their attitude, because the main purpose of training activities is to develop them professionally so that they are able to communicate more effectively with students. The teachers, however, were aware of the fact that they require further training sessions. This means that training sessions should not be 'one-off' events, but should be more, in order to enable teachers to build their repertoires of skills and knowledge over time.

Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed some positive views into how their perceptions are changing and how the teachers reacted to the changes. This study found that teachers have benefited from their coaches, as well as from the experience of other teachers. Through the focus group discussions, the teachers found the experience of other teachers to be profoundly helpful, which is consistent with international research (Biancarosa, Bryk and Dexter, 2010; Colmer, Waniganayake and Field, 2014; Suthers, 2014). The teachers felt that it was less demanding for them to interact, learn and learn more as various instructors cooperated on a similar mission, for instance to help them understand the nature of teacher-child interaction. This interactionist approach seemed to be favoured over a more trans-missive approach, which is consistent with socio-cultural theories of learning. However, this study did not follow up the teachers in their own settings, which indicates the need for further research to

evaluate the impact of in-service programmes on teachers in their own contexts, and what facilitates or hinders change processes.

Furthermore, the training programme was one of the components which formed their insight into what they did not know and what they needed to know. Through different educators, this implies they were drawing on "more knowledgeable others" to help their learning and advancement and were not entirely reliant on the programme content.

6.4 Training Programmes' Impact on Saudi in-Service Early Childhood Teachers' Professional Knowledge

Knowledge of how young children learn plays a vital role in teacher education. Teachers have expressed the view that it is important to pay special attention to training sessions so that they can transfer knowledge to their classroom practice. They emphasised on the fact that for them, teaching and learning includes everything from the interaction between the students and teachers to the content of the studies as well as the environment of the classroom (UNICEF (2018). Thus, they argued that they should be provided with efficient and effective training and development sessions for the purpose of equipping them with relevant knowledge, expertise, experience, and skills (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta, and Cox, 2000:147). This notion is recurrent in the result of the study and among the views of the participants as many of teachers commented on the importance of the content of the courses to provide them with a multitude of teaching skills. In this respect, various studies conducted in this domain indicate agreement about the importance of training programmes for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers (Alzaidi, 2008; Nyland and Alfayez, 2012). It is also argued that the quality and relevance of those programmes is significant, especially as teachers are central to policy aspirations for the KSA Vision 2030 strategic plan.

6.4.1 Professional Skills

It has been identified that the educational background and skills of teachers are important in influencing the quality of learning and teaching. This thesis identified that teachers in Saudi Arabia are aware of the need to improve their teaching skills in order to enhance the learning experiences of the children they teach. Generally speaking, the findings revealed that training courses have changed the perception of teachers and have encouraged them to adapt to new ways of teaching. Most respondents concur that on the job training helped them to become competitive in their professions. In light of a study conducted by Alghamdi and Higgins (2015), it was determined that the perceptions of teachers changed because teaching methods and techniques have evolved with time and Saudi Arabia attempted to integrate these changes. However, it is still unknown whether the development of these training programs would be sustained over time in the context of KSA. This is supported by the Saudi government's measures to integrate in-service early childhood training as a key growth aspect for teachers, and to reflect social and technological developments taking place in Saudi Arabia. In addition, in accordance with the literature, the findings of this study tend to suggest that most of the teachers' views have changed because they feel that after taking the in-service training sessions, they have become more aware of different methods and styles of teaching due to which they can better communicate with children and help them learn (Gahwaji, 2013).

Also, the in-depth analysis conducted during this study has determined that most of the respondents believe that in-service training activities have helped them to develop professional skills which should also help them to grow in their careers. Since the study was based in Saudi Arabia, the response of the individuals reflects the prevailing social and cultural factors which influence the activities of the teachers. Nonetheless, the findings showed that, irrespective of the pressing focus that is provided on the training of ECE teachers, there is still much work which should be carried out in regard to the training provision for teachers to ensure their development in both theory and practice.

The realization that educators and practitioners are provided with efficient training opportunities was a strong and recurring theme through the interviews, and teachers also reflected on what is happening in other regions of the world. There is an agreement between the findings here and in the literature that teachers should "not only have a relevant educational background but also have sufficient training in specialised areas" (Dotterer and Lowe, 2011:1649). In addition, according to Ward et al. (2015) the mission of the education system of Saudi Arabia in terms of Kindergarten is to provide a higher quality of professional development services so that the teachers are able to support children's learning and development, in a positive class environment; this, in turn, will ultimately help the children in regard to improvement their progress and outcomes.

6.4.2 The Particularity of Early Years Professional Knowledge and Skills

The findings revealed that teachers believed that educational training and effective curriculum taught to the teachers during their tertiary education are associated with better learning outcomes for students, and have the potential to improve the competencies of staff and provide them with better pedagogical learning opportunities. This is in fact in accordance with the literature whereby it has been found that in order to teach, it is important for the teachers to be trained in specialised education beyond the general education attainments (Litjens and Taguma, 2010). Early childhood instructors, in the KSA and elsewhere, are expected to have comprehensive and extensive information regarding child development, learning and early education, including pedagogical approaches and curriculum design (Murray, 2017).

The findings of this thesis showed that non-specialised teachers are less likely to deliver effective teaching if they are not adequately trained. This again was reflected in several studies which reported that if practitioners are not equipped with enough training and development, the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning environment are jeopardised (Early, Pianta, and Cox, 1999). This is because, as highlighted in the findings of the current study, in-service training enables teachers and practitioners to expand their knowledge and professional skills in order to create a learning environment for children that impact them in a

positive manner. Furthermore, Monk (1994) and Moyles (2001) reported that although many roles done by an ECE teacher do not require high qualifications and certificates, attending a considerable amount of undergraduate or postgraduate training courses had led to a direct positive impact on students' achievement in some academic subjects.

From the perspective of the participants, the early childhood stage requires particularly skilled teachers who are aware of different methods and strategies to deal with children. This belief is very present in the findings and is reflected in the international literature. This can be related to what has been found in this study regarding the need for teachers to gain relevant and sufficient skills that are required in early childhood education. For example, participants believed that such skills include better communication with the children, understanding their needs so as to better promote their education, and developing problem-solving skills in a way that enables them to cope with classroom issues. Similar beliefs and views about the skills required of early years educators have been reported in the literature, for example in a study conducted by Gahwaji (2013): the professional preparation of teachers for acquiring "the required skills for their career" is decisive.

For the purpose of this research, a frequency analysis was carried out in order to analyse the training sessions conducted for specialised and non-specialised teachers. The analysis showed that the teachers and practitioners that are non-specialised are provided with twice as many training sessions as compared to the specialised teachers. This shows that the government of the KSA is focusing on the provision of extensive and specialised training so that their practice regarding early childhood development is improved. This also signifies that the government of the KSA is giving special attention to the early childhood teachers' development and providing them with learning opportunities so that they can become proficient enough to make the learning activities more interactive and creative. Thus aspirations in KSA are consistent with international aspirations to professionalise the ECE workforce, and raise the level of qualifications in order to improve children's outcomes.

6.4.3 Training, Experience and Knowledge

Based on the socio-cultural theoretical framework of the study, if the context of learning is one of the significant elements that impact teachers' learning, then one should identify the kind of contexts that lead to improving their professional knowledge.

6.4.3.1 Experience

The development of teacher's knowledge, as the findings of the study showed, could be improved through several sources. One critical source was found to be experience. This concurs with Grangeat (2008) that professional knowledge is formed by proficient experience. It was argued by the participants that experience could enable the instructor to enhance learning. For instance, work experience in a team could assist the teachers with improved expertise and give chances to communicate with different instructors. Experience could likewise be a helpful source of direct learning about the children's individual differences and how to manage them in appropriate ways. Experience could encourage teacher's development by acting as an interpretive channel through which new encounters could be reflected on in discussion with peers and trainers. Moreover, experience was found to enable teachers to develop by providing a wealth of information, beliefs, values, and abilities. This finding, with respect to the role of experience in modelling and creating teachers' knowledge, replicates existing research evidence supporting experience as an indispensable source for the improvement of teachers' learning. For example, the notion present in the findings of the current research that experience plays a role in forming and creating teachers' knowledge echoes existing scholarship describing experience as a source of teachers' beliefs and a way of improving teachers' information. For instance, Rivkin (2000) claims that experience is essential for building up the learning base of instruction. In addition, Murnane and Phillips, (1981) relate accumulated experience of teaching as a source of teachers' beliefs, as shown in Figure 6.2.
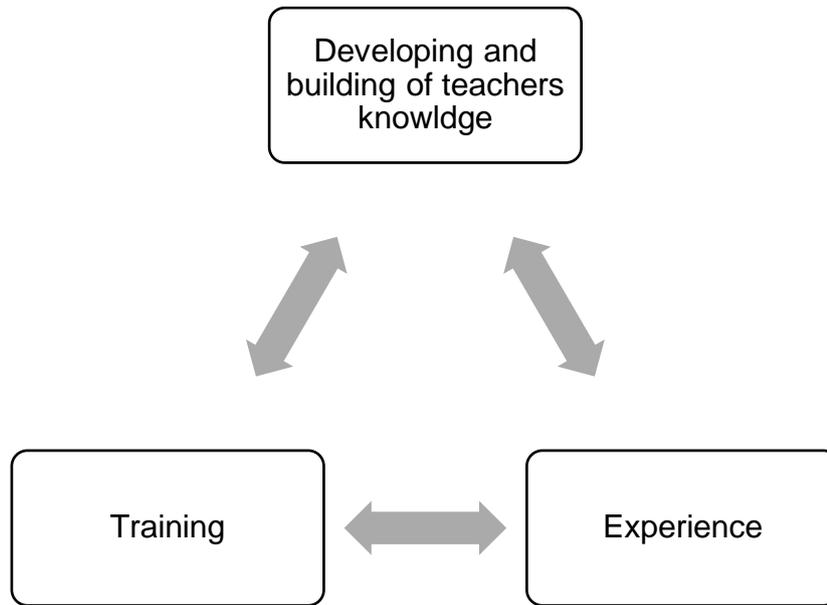
Figure 6.2: source of developing of teacher's knowledge.

6.4.3.2 Training

Furthermore, in-service training was found to be an additional source that added to the self-development of the teacher's knowledge. It was clear that the advantage from in-service training programmes came from effective participation in courses, assessing what was completed by the trainer, and utilizing this reasoning as a foundation for reflection to better comprehend one's own work. In-service training could also cause a state of lack of balance for the teacher, an indicator of change and consequently of learning. There were some teachers who responded that the in-service training programmes tended to help them in regard to their professional knowledge development. The participants believe that with the help of undertaking different training sessions their knowledge is enhanced, for example in managing children's behaviour. Teachers also expressed the view that attending in-service training sessions is important because it tends to keep them aware of the growing and changing needs of children, to improve their knowledge and support their professional development.

A number of the teachers were of the view that the space in which sessions are delivered have a significant impact on professional development. From the primary research which has been carried out in regard to the impact of in-service training programmes it can be deduced that there are a number of

changes which have been recorded in the behaviour and teaching style of the instructors. When the teachers were provided with in-service training programs and the necessary resources and teaching materials, they were able to understand ways of enhancing their performance. The teachers said that they were able to change classroom activities to become more beneficial and efficient for children's learning. Some of the teachers also stated that in-service training programs have helped them to improve children's learning. Many researchers have showed that a high level of student achievement is connected to the participation of teachers in the programmes of Professional Development, which are related directly to the field of their teaching (Angrist and Lavy, 2001).

The findings collectively show that training and development sessions for kindergarten teachers tend to have a positive impact on the professional development, progression, and competence of the teachers. In addition, it was found that there is a positive influence of available training programmes on Saudi in-service early childhood teacher's professional knowledge. This has been validated by different studies. Moreover, it was determined that the impact of training programmes on Saudi in-service early childhood teacher's professional knowledge was validated through the level of interest and change that was observed among the teachers. The teachers in this study expressed the belief that in-service training impacts the children's activities in the classroom and how they are managed. However, some researchers argued that the impact of training programmes on teachers is not very evident (Sywelem and Witte, 2013).

Nonetheless, the results showed the importance of the role of the trainers, the amount of the training programmes, the length and content of the programme and how these factors may affect teachers' professional knowledge in positive or negative ways. Hence, based on the results, for some teachers, conducting short-term training courses has a greater impact than long-term courses. However, some teachers also favour long-term in-service training courses that have a positive impact on their professional development.

6.4.3.3 Length of Training

With regards the length of the training and its impact on professional knowledge, the respondents shared different opinions about their activities and discussed during the focus group session that short-term courses and long-term courses offer differing significance as some of the teachers learn and gain knowledge through a slight guidance or push, whereas, other respondents feel that they need to be assisted through long-term courses so that they do not miss or forget anything. In a study conducted by Malihi (2014), it was found that short term-courses are compared with long-term courses and then evaluated for their importance for the teachers. When the teachers were asked about the length of the in-service courses there were certain contradictions among the participants. The short-term courses, according to these teachers, are more educational and add effectively to the professional development of the trainers and teachers themselves. Alternatively, the prolonged in-service courses have a tendency to take up almost all of the available time of the teachers and do not add significantly towards their development and operation. Hence, it has been identified that the main difficulty in terms of time is that training sessions need to be given sufficient time and to distribute the session for shorter time periods. This may help in acquiring better understanding of what needs to be adopted and to be implemented in the classrooms.

6.4.3.4 Content

Overall, it can be said that most of the teachers were in agreement that the content of the in-service training programs is of more importance and significance as compared to the length of the training sessions. This finding is in accordance to the research conducted by Koellner and Jacobs (2015: 51) according to which the content of the training session tends to have a major impact on the professional development of teachers. Indeed, the findings show that the content of the training needs to be matched with the training needs and expectations of teachers in order to contribute towards a fruitful impact on their professional development and enable teachers to apply the training content in real life scenarios. To some level, teachers, in the course of this study, agreed

that training programs with the right content offered helped them cope with the requirements of the policy of the kingdom in terms of professional development.

6.4.3.5 The Role of the Trainer

Moreover, most of the teachers regarded the role of trainers as an important element in terms of impacting their professional development. One of the teachers claimed that the efficiency of the teacher can be assessed from their communication. In order for the trainer to be efficient it is important that the trainer communicates the topic of the training session so that the teachers understand and are able to incorporate it in their professional life. From the discussions with the teachers it was found that they also regard the educational background of the trainers as an important element in regard to the efficiency and effectiveness of the sessions. The teachers perceived that if the trainer's educational background is not commendable then it is going to impact the training session in a negative manner and thus not contribute to their professional development. "The teachers also regard professionalism of the trainers as an important element in regard to the impact of in-service training session on the professional development of the teachers" (Van den Bergh, Ros, and Beijaard, 2014: 772).

Also, if the trainers of the in-service training programs have a sufficient educational background and they have the element of professionalism it is going to impact the professional development of the teachers in an efficient manner which is further going to help them in regard to teaching kindergarten students efficiently and effectively. It has been advised by a few of the trainers that the quality of teachers and trainers should be chosen for them in order that they have the ability to speak effectively with the educators. Learning and writing experience are the most significant areas of in-service training since they mandate the professors to learn and develop their professional skills. The instructors or trainers should target the way the training sessions help them acquire new skills. Based on the review conducted by Rena and Suleman (2015), it was discovered that trainer has a strong correlation with the effectiveness of training programs.

The teachers also believed that the professional attitude of the trainer is an important element because it shows the level of interest which they can bring and the tactics which they use to engage the teachers. On the basis of the focus group discussion, it was analysed that the skills and competencies of the trainers is one of the vital issues that are not taken into account and should be improved. For instance, in Saudi Arabia, most of the trainers are not ready to provide teachers with training sessions on the basis of social grounds, whereas some of the trainers are not aware of their target audience. Thus, it is argued that the skills and competencies of the trainers should be improved, and they should be engaging their target audience in order to provide the best possible solutions for development and growth. Since the teachers benefit from these training sessions because they are part of it, the trainers should be able to communicate with the teachers easily to support social interaction and engagement that are fundamental within socio-cultural theories of learning.

6.5 Teachers' Recommendations for the Development of in-Service Training

The last objective of the study was to identify and determine some of the solutions and suggestions for teachers to develop their professional skills through in-service training programs of early childhood. In view of the discussion regarding the perception of teachers and the impact of training programs on Saudi-in service training to enhance the professional knowledge of teachers, some recommendations were made. It has already been established by previous research that teachers should participate in different activities arranged by educational institutes for developing their skills. In order to provide a set of recommendations for further improvement, it is necessary that the socio-cultural environment of Saudi Arabia is taken under close consideration (Aldosemani and Shepherd, 2014). The focus group discussion highlighted that teachers provided recommendations based on timing and duration of training, the skills, and competencies of trainers, the rewards, or incentives for in-service training, and contents of in-service training.

Regarding the timing of in-service training, the sessions have to be delivered before implementing new changes to the teaching and children's activity

programmes in the schools. Regarding the trainers, the results show that they must be good communicators and are able to communicate the knowledge they have to the trainees. This is in accordance with the socio-cultural theory where Vygotsky (1978) argued that learners gain knowledge and skills when they participate in learning with the support of more knowledgeable others. The results also align with the study of Schoen (2011) on how social interactions and cultural and political forms impact involved people or being impacted by them. This is because teachers pointed out the impact of sharing experiences between teachers of different schools or even teachers from different countries of similar cultures. Some of the teachers shared their opinion that during the in-service training program, the time duration is very limited and the sessions are only conducted for a few weeks and not on a regular basis. Therefore, most of them shared that they required the duration of the training sessions to be extended. (Marquez et al. 2016) maintained that the major challenge of the in-service training program is the time is not enough.

The focus group discussion also revealed that in order to make the process of learning and development smooth and easy, it is advised that special rewards and incentives should be provided to the trainers. According to the study conducted by Richter, Raban and Rafaeli (2015), rewards and incentives are one of the most common methods of attracting individuals to perform tasks or be able to achieve goals. Rewards and incentives are of several types such as monetary, paid-leaves, token of appreciation or change of job description. However, it depends on the type of job as it helps to identify which type of reward or incentive should be provided to the individual. In this case, the in-service trainers should be provided with special rewards and incentives that may attract them to perform better and to provide insightful information to the teachers regarding teaching kindergarten children (Kabadayi, 2016). As stated by one of the teachers, the trainers are not self-motivated. Consequently, it is necessary that the trainers should be motivated and encouraged in the first place in order to motivate the teachers in turn (King, 2014).

Furthermore, in order to increase the overall effectiveness of their training, it is was suggested to incorporate new technological methods and use of the internet in order to broaden the scope of knowledge and help teachers to

acquire better understandings of the styles and methods that could be used for teaching children. The Internet is a realistic example of the ability to access information from around the world. For this reason, the education technology experts emphasized that the use of Internet and its multiple services in teaching and learning has many benefits, (Dham, 2013).

Some other recommendations suggested from the findings of the study are related to the environment of Saudi Arabia (Figure 6.3). As KSA is highly conventional and educational policies are designed with the culture in mind, trainers should show complete collaboration with teachers and in return, teachers should also make sure that they coordinate and show full support. Based on the findings, it was discovered that the coaches chosen for these responsibilities should be educated, skilled and most importantly, should have good communication skills. Furthermore, in the framework of the training theory that has recently been mentioned in other areas of this research, the goal of in-service training for kindergarten educators is to improve their skills and knowledge about the children and their own pedagogical approaches and activities. Also, based on the findings of the analysis, it was discovered that trainers should provide relevant information to the professors because the planning and implementation of programmes will have limited impact if the trainers do not learn anything useful. The findings of the study by Al Mulhim (2013) showed that the challenges facing the planning and implementation of the programs for teachers include lack of a distinguished trainer; the job may be part time, and the lack of time commitment by the trainer.

Overall, from the teachers' perspectives, it appears that in-service training in the context of Saudi Arabia needs to be improved to meet the expectations of the teachers, the demands of the service, and policy aspirations for improving early childhood education.

6.6   Summary of the Chapter

The collected information was discussed on the basis of the current situation and socio-cultural factors of Saudi Arabia. This was because I felt that their influence plays a vital role in shaping the educational institutions of the country.

The discussion also reveals some insights into the behaviour of teachers and why they are attracted to training programmes.

The current provision also reveals that for in-service early childhood teachers, the training programmes are necessary because they help to inculcate the skills in teachers and assist them in growing professionally. However, the discussion has also revealed that some authors questioned the effectiveness of training programmes that are conducted for short periods of time, and most of the respondents suggested that the duration should be increased.

In addition to this, I was able to find out the reasons why teachers should attend training programmes specifically for their knowledge of early childhood development. The crucial stage of a child in their educational career is the kindergarten or primary level stage where children develop their unique personality traits and learn from people, activities, and materials in their surroundings. In such a situation, the teacher plays a pivotal role. Therefore, teachers should be well-trained so that they are able to understand children's needs and capabilities. This finding reflects international research that links qualifications with the overall quality of the setting and with children's outcomes (Sylva et al. 2010)

Moreover, one of the most useful insights obtained from the study was that teachers feel that their learning is enhanced when they are given a chance to meet other more experienced teachers. The chain of development multiplies when teachers interact with more experienced individuals and share their experiences.

However, some of the recommendations that were suggested by the respondents were to firstly increase the time and duration of training programmes, provide prior training to the trainers, the training instructors should be confident and informative, and they should be able to communicate effectively with the audience. Furthermore, the trainers should not ignore the aims and objectives of the training session and should provide useful insights according to the socio-cultural environment of Saudi Arabia.

Along with this, the findings of the study also proved to be successful in terms of providing useful insights about teachers' suggestions that can be helpful for

them in designing future programmes. Overall it has been identified that the in-service training has, to some extent, been an effective strategy that provides the opportunity for teachers to enhance their professional knowledge and increase their experience. However, there is scope for improvements in many areas of in-service provision, especially in the context of the KSA Vision 2030 strategic plan.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter addresses the research implications and proposes practical recommendations for further inquiries pertaining to in-service early childhood teachers` perceptions and experiences of in-service training. The chapter represents concluding thoughts on the overall research project followed by a synopsis of key research findings and theoretical contributions of the current study. Moreover, the chapter also presents implications for teachers, school management, and students. Some practical recommendations based on the findings of this study are also given for concerned members to further enhance early childhood services. The chapter also provides directions for the future research along with a brief account of personal reflection concerning the journey of this research experience.

During my experience I learned a lot of the challenges and constraints such as complaints from different kindergarten teachers about the training programmes they have undertaken, which led me to conduct such research. This motivated me to write about this topic to answer the following questions:

1. What is the current provision of training programmes for Saudi in-service early childhood teachers?
2. What are Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experience of the available training programmes in training centres?
3. How do the available training programmes impact Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional knowledge?
4. What do the teachers recommend for the development of in-service training programmes?

7.1   Summary of the Study

The current study sought to investigate in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences while referring to a case study of the training programme in Saudi Arabia. Considering early childhood in the context of Saudi Arabia, the professional growth and learning of educators have now become important in the knowledge-focused society. Such modern societies focus more

on maintaining quality standards within the educational domain and teaching approach. The pre-schools within Saudi Arabia aim to provide high standards of professional expertise and learning opportunities to teachers so that they can successfully support young children's learning and development. The study discovered that teachers in the Kindergarten Section of Saudi Schools are often provided with training courses with the aim of enhancing their teaching methodology and the learning experiences of young children (Rabaah, Doaa and Asma ,2016; Alquraini ,2010).

The study concluded that a range of courses provided to Saudi teachers in the Kindergarten section including both short and long-term courses can help to meet the emerging demands of education. Teachers are given training and direction concerning the healthcare and security issues of children in the school environment, for example. Teachers who are educating young children or providing early childhood in-services are trained about how to make the curriculum more interactive and dynamic for children who have just started their learning phase. As far as a study performed by Keengwe (2010) is concerned, different training programmes are designed in this context to enhance the learning experience of teachers and encourage them to further develop their skills in managing behaviour. Teachers are supported to learn a range of behavioural tactics so that they can support the child to become an active learner.

On the other hand, it was found from the study that the existing provisions in training sessions are not completely effective at offering guidance to Kindergarten teachers based on sufficient qualification of trainers while considering the Saudi Arabian educational framework. The study found limited research evidence concerning the particular research domain of in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of a case study training programme in the context of Saudi Arabia. The study concludes that teachers who are providing education to young children must take training sessions on a frequent basis so that they can develop personally as well as professionally. The study findings showed that Saudi teachers are interested in becoming part of such informative training programmes that are designed to boost their

professional expertise along with giving the opportunity for personal development.

7.2 Summary of the Major Findings

As explained above, the study was conducted to investigate in-service early childhood teachers` perceptions and experiences relating to a training programme provided in-service training centre. The study reported a number of key findings concerning the research domain. A summary of the main findings is addressed below.

7.2.1 Current Situation of Training Sessions for in-Service Early Childhood Teachers in Saudi Arabia

The findings of the research concluded that training forms an important part of teachers' overall teaching experience as it provides them with a rich opportunity to gain knowledge about new ideas and transfer it to a younger generation of the society. In-service early childhood teachers within Saudi Arabia are more concerned about the nature of training sessions provided to them through the governmental sponsorship according to Alquraini (2010). Some of the teachers stated that training sessions must be divided into different themes in order to generate a better teaching-learning process. It can be concluded that, at present, the in-service training courses provided to Saudi teachers are in the form of intensive courses that are short-term and aimed at facilitating knowledge-sharing between teachers and young students. Teachers are provided with training materials to learn at their own pace and share views on a common discussion board about how to further enhance the intellectual capabilities of young children and make the learning process easy as well as interesting for them. Considering the current provision of in-service training sessions given to early childhood teachers, it was found from the research that these training courses are not mandatory for teachers to attend, as outlined by Bingimlas (2009). They are just an opportunity for those teachers who tend to enhance their work performance and get engaged actively in the learning process. In addition, some of these training courses are conducted by

specialised trainers in order to direct and enhance the professional expertise of early childhood teachers.

7.2.2 Saudi in-Service Early Childhood Teachers' Perceptions of the Available Training Programmes in Training Centres

The main focus of the existing study was to investigate the perception and experience of in-service early childhood teachers concerning the training programmes provided by schools in the context of Saudi Arabia. The study concluded that considering the basis of the socio-cultural theoretical framework of learning, the teaching-learning process in Saudi schools seems to be an interesting procedure where a range of people are involved along with the governmental body according to Al-Oteawi (2002). As a result, it was deduced from the study that the learning process brings in some particular viewpoints concerning the overall teaching process in an early childhood setting. The final results of this study confirmed that many teachers really enjoyed in-service training programmes, which they all considered as a growth opportunity both in terms of the personal and professional domains. For example, many respondents expressed their positive gratitude towards the particular trainer and they were convinced with their training style. Among them, many respondents believed that attending an in-service training session actually helped them to deal with learning challenges in an effective manner. Many teachers in an early childhood setting stated that there were certain challenges that they often face when dealing with younger children. To deal with such educational challenges, these training sessions are quite instrumental as they prepare them with suitable teaching strategies and styles. Many respondents talked about the teaching methodology that they have learned during the training session such as self-management learning and group study.

7.2.3 Impact of Available Training Programmes on Saudi in-Service Early Childhood Teachers' Professional Knowledge

The most important theme that was incorporated into the existing study was to analyse the impact of available training sessions on Saudi in-service early

childhood teachers' professional knowledge. The study concluded that training sessions positively impact the professional knowledge of teachers in the early childhood setting within the context of Saudi Arabia, according to the teachers' reported responses. However, the study findings did not discover any relationship with the physical framework of a training session that can impact the professional knowledge of educators, but revealed that the kind of people, duration of training sessions, and other related factors impact the educator's professional expertise. Many of the study respondents reported that the duration of training sessions, either short or long-term, hardly created any practical impact on their professional knowledge.

However, the study concluded that many respondents agreed that offered training material has always been rich enough, which strengthened their existing knowledge base and encouraged them to become more active while sharing their knowledge with young learners. The training content greatly impacts the professional knowledge of educators in an early childhood setting while considering the educational framework of Saudi Arabia, according to Bingimlas (2009). The current research activity highlighted the importance of training content and its usefulness in the professional knowledge of in-service early childhood teachers. However, the wider social and cultural context of KSA is significant because additional teachers and resources are needed to ensure that the Vision 2030 goals will be realised.

7.2.4 Propositions Made by in-Service Teachers for the Development of Training Programmes

The last key finding of the current study was based on looking forward to the propositions or recommendations made by in-service teachers concerning further enhancements in the training programmes. I conducted a focus group discussion to take a note of teachers' recommendations based on duration and quality of training sessions. The majority of the respondents reported that training sessions must be extended to a long duration and more practical activities should become part of it. New interactive training courses must be incorporated in order to make the learning process easy for the young learners. Moreover, the trainer must engage teachers in the session and there should be

more direct communication. The majority of the respondents seemed positive towards the existing training programmes and looked forward to further enhancement in terms of duration and quality of training courses. The study results evidently align with the theoretical framework of socio-cultural theory, which notes that social interactions and cultural values impact the process of learning and teaching in the context of adult learners. This is due to the fact that teachers highlighted the impact of sharing views between educators of different educational institutions or even educators from diverse nations of the same cultural setting.

7.3   Contribution of the Study

7.3.1   Theoretical Contribution

There are many studies that have been done in the past to consider the impact of training programmes on the professional growth of teachers both serving elementary and secondary levels of education (Rahman and Alhaisoni, 2013). However, limited research has been done to consider the teachers' perceptions and experiences in the context of the early childhood settings about such training programmes. This study has made a theoretical contribution based on a comprehensive inquiry on investigating in-service early childhood teachers` perceptions and experiences of a case study training programme in Saudi Arabia. The current research carries significance as it has attempted to fill the gap in knowledge and understanding of a sample of teachers engaging in one in-service training programme in KSA. In the field of education, this kind of study carries weight as it provides practical insights and concepts relating to the development of training programmes. The research findings can be used by different educationalists with the aim of further modifying or redeveloping their existing training sessions, so that the learning process becomes more interactive and dynamic.

The study has made theoretical contributions in terms of expanding the knowledge base of different educationalists and teachers of Saudi Arabia to better understand the significance of training programmes and how they actually contribute to the professional as well as the personal growth of teachers. It is intended that the research will ultimately create awareness

among policymakers to further invest in such training programmes so that teaching and learning process becomes more meaningful and pragmatic within the context of Saudi Arabia. Such investment is needed to support the 2030 Vision for education as kindergarten provision continues to expand. In addition, the quality of the workforce in ECE is central to raising the quality of children's experiences and outcomes.

This research activity has also shown the significance of using qualitative methods and implementing an interpretive research philosophy as a mode of investigating in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions on the available training programmes. The chosen approach has been used to perform an inquiry in an effective manner and conducted focus group discussion as a technique to collect rich data. It is expected that such kind of research studies will ultimately create awareness amongst concerned members within the field of education to develop and design more dynamic training programmes for early childhood teachers. The research project has the potential to inform the development of in-service education for early childhood teachers. Considering the research methodology used in the current study, the chosen qualitative research design made it possible to draw relevant data concerning the problem under inquiry. Some respondents were reluctant to share their perceptions concerning the training programme at first, but later on they were given assurance that their identities would remain hidden and pseudonyms would be used in the data interpretation section. This means that the research was ethically and culturally sensitive to reassure the teachers that they were not being evaluated or judged. As a result, it is likely that research projects like this one could make valuable contributions in the field of education and encourage academic scholars to further explore this particular research domain, coming up with further relevant findings and knowledge.

7.3.2 Pedagogical Contribution

The scope and nature of existing research reflect the aim of providing the highest quality education to young children, consistent with the KSA 2030 Strategic Plan. The study intends to direct the attention of policymakers and educationalists concerning the in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences about the training programmes available to them. The research activity has somehow identified the research gap and attempted to close the gap while performing an in-depth qualitative based inquiry. The study has identified some issues faced by teachers about the training programmes accessible to them. The respondents shared their views while addressing both merits and demerits of the training programmes, and how these can be further improved in the near future. The research findings provide valuable insight into how a training session can become more dynamic and interactive. It is expected that educationalists generally, and the management in an early childhood setting particularly, can benefit from a research study like this one in making informed decisions concerning training sessions and enhancing the learning process for young learners. This research has pedagogical contributions in terms of highlighting the need for training and development and informs the concerned members that it is important to take into account the perceptions and experiences of teachers. The study has highlighted the importance of quality education for young learners and for the sake of their personal development, it is important to invest significantly in the training programmes of in-service early childhood teachers.

7.4 Limitations of the Study

The present study faced a number of difficulties and has certain limitations. One of the principle limitations arose from the limited number of previous studies on the existing system of education within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which necessitated a deeper study of teachers' perceptions of in-service education. In particular, the focus on ECE in KSA is relatively recent in research so this study makes an important contribution, albeit on a small scale.

An additional limitation of this study was in its use, as the participation of teachers was voluntary through one preschool in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia. Thus,

the overall findings cannot be generalised due to the fact that these participating individuals came from one specific city in Saudi Arabia and do not represent all faculty members in the country. Furthermore, the applicability of the study's findings is limited because of the sampling method, which was only based on responses from teachers in Saudi Arabia, where the researcher did not take the opinion of educational experts specialised in this area. Also, the process of reaching teachers and asking for their help was not an easy task and required effort from the researcher. It may be that the participating teachers were more willing and able to articulate their perceptions, so represent just a small sample of ECE teachers' voices. Therefore, the results cannot be generalised to other ECE teachers in KSA, but do provide insights that could inform future research. Moreover, additional investigations into this topic are required through large sample sizes that can investigate significant relationships that exist between the variables of the study. Furthermore, longitudinal research would enable deeper understanding of the extent to which teachers are able to act on the knowledge and understanding they engage with in in-service programmes.

7.5   Implications of the Study

The major aim of the study was related to addressing the lack and insufficiency of research evidence regarding the in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions and experiences of a case study training programme in the context of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this study conducted interviews to elicit responses from in-service early childhood teachers about the impact of available training programmes on their professional knowledge. In this regard, the current study has several implications that could effectively inform policymakers to develop a successful in-service teacher-training programme in Saudi Arabia.

7.5.1   Implications for Early Childhood Training Programs

In the current study, the findings agreed with similar studies which argued that the process of ECE teacher's learning is of equal importance to teacher sin compulsory education, and should not be ignored so that students could be provided with high quality early-childhood education. In this regard, the present study has effectively obtained helpful knowledge and understanding of teacher training needs within the context of Saudi Arabia early childhood education,

taking into account the effect of various significant cultural factors. Not only this, this study has argued for the mandatory need for in-service training programmes for early childhood teachers in order to improve the quality of early childhood education and the overall education system in KSA. As far as the types of training programmes are concerned, the major implication of the study is that the techniques used by teachers to improve or change their teaching practice in the context of Saudi Arabia mostly included group and self-learning methods but also included in-service training. However, the successful implementation of these early childhood education training programmes require improvements that can help in effectively fulfilling as well as meeting the expectations of the teachers, and helping them to meet their job demands through improving their professional skills. With regards to the content of these training programmes, it is inferred that in-service training must aim to provide Saudi early childhood teachers with the qualification they require to enhance their skills and knowledge and ultimately improve quality. This is significant in the context of KSA because of the varied qualifications that ECE teachers hold, especially when they do not have a specialist ECE qualification. Accordingly in-service training sessions are needed for those teachers who do not have the sufficient knowledge and skills need to achieve their tasks and enhance communication with their students. Carrying out the early childhood training programmes for teachers can offer to effectively understand the theories and abstract concepts that underlie the teacher's practical skills and pedagogical content knowledge. Such programmes will allow new teachers to successfully adapt to the new situations while applying the knowledge of training programmes in changing and varying contexts of teaching, and with children of different abilities and needs.

The study also determined the impact of available training programmes on the professional knowledge of Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' where the key implication for these training programmes is that their professional knowledge could be improved by focusing on the competencies and skills of the trainer and length of the training programme. In addition to this, the study inferred that content of the training is an important element that impacts on teachers' professional development. The content of training should match the

needs and expectations of teachers in order to have a beneficial impact on their professional development. This is due to the fact that teachers find it helpful to apply the training content in real-life scenarios that help them to develop on professional grounds. Regarding the skills and competencies of the trainer, it is inferred that designers of these training programmes must focus on trainers' qualifications in available training programmes in a Saudi in-service early childhood scenario. This is because their knowledge impacts on the professional knowledge of teachers; trainers who have more experience in offering training, or those with greater levels of training skills, tend to support teachers in grasping the training knowledge more successfully and effectively.

On the other hand, the study carried out by Simonson, Smaldino and Zvacek (2014) in the context of early childhood training programmes argued that trainers can get sufficient help from research findings pertaining to teachers' training programmes that could reinforce as well as improve their provision and practice. Hence, in the case of Saudi in-service early childhood teachers, the trainers or those responsible for designing these training programmes can make a database that consists of reflective activities, and that could effectively motivate the critical thinking of these teachers while providing them with an opportunity to access the practices of experienced teachers. Using these techniques before actually implementing the training programme can help to develop awareness among teachers regarding the effect of their knowledge and beliefs on their planning and provision. In addition to this, the findings of this study also inferred that teachers valued the impact of sharing experience among teachers of different schools or even teachers from different countries of a similar culture. To address this, the implication for a trainer is that they must familiarise themselves with the language and everyday realities of teachers while focusing on the changing roles of trainers to meet demands and expectations of government policies. This would enable training programmes to support ECE teachers to develop the required knowledge for effectively performing the activities and tasks to support children's learning and development.

7.5.2 Implications for Teacher Adoption to Training Programmes

Apart from just exploring Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions of available training programmes in training centres, this study also focussed on gaining teachers' recommendations for the development of in-service training programmes through which they can further improve their skills and capabilities. Based on the findings of this study, it is implied that timing and duration of training, the skills, and competencies of trainers, the rewards, or incentives for in-service training, and contents of in-service training must be adequately focussed in order to help improve a teacher's professional and personal development. In this regard, the study demonstrated that the role of early childhood teachers is not limited to communicating information to children, but it also involves different roles with many features. For instance, early childhood teachers in Saudi Arabia need a greater amount of patience, organisation, direction, and familiarity with modern teaching methods. It should be considered that until and unless a teacher as a trainee shows interest in their professional development, it would be difficult for them to keep pace with the environment (Gorozidis and Papaioannou, 2014). Therefore, these in-service training programmes could only be fruitful if teachers balance discipline and freedom inside the classroom while being aware of the new developments in the field of education, especially in light of rapid technological developments and new ways of learning through digital technologies. In addition to this, the major implication is that these teachers must develop their capabilities by following modern educational methods and by discussing experiences with associates. The study also discussed that the key role of the early childhood education teacher is to develop an educational programme according to the authority plans of education so that needs and education requirements of children could be met. In addition to this, the early childhood teachers are required to be aware of the criteria which could be used to choose different courses in a training programme while understanding their significance. Before making a decision to attend a training programme, teachers are required to evaluate themselves regarding whether they need training on particular content, or what is the lacking for which they need training. Hence, the implication is that teachers must make wiser and effective choices to select training programmes that can

also allow them to ensure the achievement of objectives from that specific training programme. Pertaining to the techniques used by teachers to improve their teaching practice, it is implied that self-learning is more effective as compared to group learning activities as the concentration of teachers is lost when learning in groups, but group learning has its benefits too. In self-learning, teachers are advised to learn through online social media tools, design thinking or case method, and creating mind maps. All of these techniques of self-learning can help teachers to improve their knowledge and their classroom practice.

7.5.3 Implications for Incentives of in-Service Training

The study pointed out that Saudi Arabia early childhood teachers were keen on the idea of an incentive given to teachers to attend an in-service training course. Therefore, in order to make the process of learning and development smoother and easier for early childhood teachers, it is advised that the special rewards and incentives should be provided to both trainees as well as trainers. Richter, Raban and Rafaeli (2015) also supported this notion that rewards and incentives are one of the most common methods of attracting individuals to perform tasks or be able to achieve goals. These rewards to teachers could range from monetary rewards to paid leave, a token of appreciation to changing job description. However, among all of them, a token of appreciation and paid leave is considered to be most suitable to attract teachers to attend these in-service training programmes.

7.6 Recommendations for Future Research

This study has important implications for future research studies as well. In the context of Saudi Arabia, there is a shortage of quantitative studies. In this regard, future researchers are recommended to conduct surveys that cover not only perspectives of in-service teachers, but also involve the viewpoints and perspectives of trainers and those who design and conduct early childhood training programmes. This will ultimately help to increase the scope of study where findings could be seen from an overall perspective that also reduces the chance of bias in evaluating the provision of early childhood training programmes in Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, another recommendation for

future researchers is to focus on the factors that impact teacher's perceptions towards these early childhood training programmes. The current study only focussed on determining and investigating their perceptions but did not adequately cover the aspects or factors that could either positively or negatively impact teachers' perceptions towards these training programmes. Therefore, using quantitative research design can effectively allow future researchers to gauge these factors in a more precise way.

Additionally, there is a need to assess and evaluate the impact of political forces that hamper the successful implementation of these training programmes for early childhood teachers. The fact cannot be neglected that the socio-political context forms a major part of any organisation regardless of the industry in which it operates. In the context of teaching, there are also some political aspects that inhibit the professional growth of these teachers. Therefore, future researchers are recommended to involve this aspect in future studies that may serve as an important factor in uncovering the perspectives of teachers towards early childhood training programmes in different sociocultural contexts. Apart from just including the viewpoints of teachers, other stakeholders could be approached by future researchers who are responsible for designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating these in-service early childhood teachers' training programmes. Integrating the perceptions of these stakeholders can effectively gain sufficient understanding of how these training programmes are perceived before and after their implementation.

One of the important findings of this study posed by research participants is the inclusion of rewards and incentives that could be given to them for their maximum participation in training programmes. In this regard, future researchers are suggested to investigate these rewards and incentives that could prove to provide beneficial outcomes for both schools and teachers. Although this study discussed some of these incentives, such as monetary rewards, paid leave etc. they lack sufficient focus.

In term of policy, it is not a straightforward matter to take up findings from research by policy makers. So, this is problematic, especially as KSA wants and intends to improve the quality of the ECE workforce, and to do so through pre-service and in-service training programs. Hence, determining these incentives

and rewards for teachers may help policymakers to decide which rewards they should give to teachers for the ideal resulting training programmes.

In order to achieve future goals regarding early childhood education development, the content of the in-service training programmes for teachers have to be framed in such a manner that enable them to be creative, so that they can add to their existing knowledge. Moreover, bringing the opinions of Saudi women into research is also important, as their perspectives need to be taken into account in the reform processes. There is also a need of some longitudinal research that traces how teachers implement the key messages from their in-service training over a period of time and to see what change and effects result from their work.

7.7   Concluding Remarks and Personal Reflection

This doctoral journey and this research involved building, researching and making sense of this reality. This, of course, has helped me both personally, academically and professionally. Looking at the philosophical assumptions that support our belief system while controlling the interpretations and meanings that we ascribe to reality helped me understand how I felt about the world around me. This awareness is very important because I can now, more than ever, understand why I think as I do and how this thinking affects my choices, not only in terms of professional development, but also in life in general.

Throughout this study, specifically when I participated in administering interviews, writing the responses, interpreting these responses and analysing the data, I had to gain a critical lens to form meaning. Through this process, my reflective, assessment and analytical skills have been greatly developed. In addition, my knowledge has been constantly challenged with new insights and challenging questions from my supervisors. The discussions that I and my supervisor had about the subject matter of the study and related issues helped me to further improve my flaws and not lose sight of the wider picture and any forces that could affect the phenomenon being researched. As a result, I feel I have become more aware of my own assumptions and how different beliefs or prejudices can create different perspectives on the same research phenomenon.

In this thesis, I learned to accept reality in the moment, and instead of deciding how much of what is said, reflected the truth, as I saw it, I was excited to understand others' views and realise that participants who were involved in this study responded the way they did.

I have also learned to acknowledge that perception of a phenomenon or problem in learning implies an understanding of the socio-political structure of the study context. This is particularly important in countries such as Saudi Arabia where religion and tradition affect the policies and shape the lives of people. This understanding will certainly help me in future research projects and assist me to keep an open mind to all possible effects.

On a personal basis, this study has also helped me understand why I should challenge my own beliefs, customs, and traditions. In a conservative country like Saudi Arabia and as a woman, it is not always easy to question traditions and common beliefs. This study helped me understand what was happening in my mind and why I did what I was doing. It is only then that you are able to realise that appreciating other people is feasible in terms of different beliefs, values, and life experiences.

In the professional field, I have learned that philosophical arguments could be developed and applied to respond to diverse educational issues (Haydon and Orchard, 2004). This has helped me understand that in order to improve our education system and policy, people should know the philosophy and goals of education. In my opinion, this awareness has become an important requirement and an important part of teacher's' professional knowledge.

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Appendix 1: Training and Kindergarten Centre –Riyadh

Main entrance

Workshop Room

Registration Desk

lectures room

Appendix 2: Training centre for female teachers in Riyad

Appendix 3: Interview Questions for Teachers (English)

<u>**Interview Protocol:**</u>

- A brief introduction to the researcher's background

- Introduction to the research aim and objectives

- Assurance of confidentiality

- Instructions for the interview: sections; types of question

- Conclusion - thanking the interviewee for participation

<u>**Part 1: General Information:**</u>

1.   What is your specialty?

2.   How many years have you worked teaching children?

3.   How many years have you worked teaching children in kindergarten?

4.   What in-service courses have you attended in the last 3 years?

5.   What were your reasons for attending these courses?

<u>**Part 2: In-service Training Programme Content:**</u>

6. What modules have you taken in the training programmes?

7. What were the aims of the in-service training programme curriculum that you chose?

8.   What do you know about learning areas and educational units in the in-service training programme curriculum?

<u>**Part 3: The In-service Training Programme Environment: at the Centres**</u>

9.   What characteristics of in-service training programmes do you find useful for your training, such as lectures, workshops, and time?

10.   What characteristics of in-service training programmes do you find less useful for your training, such as modules, workshops, and time?

<u>**Part 4: The Impact of Training Programmes and Experience:**</u>

11.   What are the main changes in your knowledge and skills concerning children`s learning?

12.   What is the main change in your knowledge and skills concerning your teaching?

13.   Do you find that training programmes have added experience/knowledge? Give examples.

14.   Is there anything more you would like to add?

Thank you for your participation and cooperation

Appendix 4A: Study information (English) Consent Form for Early Childhood Teachers

Consent Form for Early Childhood Teachers

Research Project Title: Investigating Saudi In-Service Early Childhood Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of Available Training Programmes: A Case Study

_____

You are being invited to take part in a PhD research project. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please, ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What is the project's purpose?

This project is in partial fulfilment of my doctoral studies at the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom. This study aims to explore the current provisions of the training programme offered to Saudi in-service early childhood teachers; exploring Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' perceptions of what they have experienced during the training programme; and finally investigating the impact of the training programme on Saudi in-service early childhood teachers' professional practical knowledge.

Why have I been chosen?

I think you have some unique insight and special contribution to make to this study. You are one of the Early Childhood Teachers in the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, so it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep, and I will ask you, as part of the university regulations; to sign a consent form to prove that you have voluntarily consented to participate in this study. However, if at any time or for any reason you feel you want to withdraw or do not want to participate, you are free to do so. You do not have to give any reason for withdrawing.

What will happen to me if I take part?

After your permission, I will be requested to participate in a one-to-one interview and focus group interview (5 teachers) there may be some follow up questions.

What do I have to do?

You will be optionally requested to take part in interviews that aim to explore your points of view about in-service training programme.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no possible dangers or risks of participating in this study. However, if any unexpected discomforts or risks arise during the research, please let me know immediately.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in this study, it is hoped that it may offer some exploratory insights into in-service training programmes for Early Childhood Teachers.

What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?

If this is the case, the reason (s) will be explained fully.

What if something goes wrong?

If you feel unhappy about any aspect of my research at any time, please let me know immediately. I will address any concern as soon as possible. Feel free to contact me on 00966551709455 or afmalmutairi1@sheffield.ac.uk . In the event of you still not being satisfied, your enquiry can be investigated by my supervisor Dr. Elizabeth Wood, at e.a.wood@sheffield.ac.uk . If your enquiry has not been handled to your satisfaction, you can contact the University's Register and Secretary.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information that I collect during this research will be strictly confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications for any reasons. Furthermore, the data will be stored in secure places. If at the conclusion of the project you would like your data to be erased, please inform me.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

The results of this research will be used purposely for my doctoral thesis which will be available at the University of Sheffield library and as an e-thesis after completion. It may also be that some part of the thesis be published in a peer review academic or

professional publication. Reports on the research may also be shared at conferences or for additional or subsequent research projects.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is part of my doctorate scholarship granted by Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Who has ethically reviewed the project?

This research has been ethically reviewed in accordance with the University of Sheffield Ethics Review Procedure as operated in the School of Education.

Contact for further information

The contact point for further information: Dr. Elizabeth Wood, lecturer in the department of Educational Studies, School of Education, University of Sheffield, room 6.06, 388 Glossop Road, Sheffield, S10 2JA, Tel: (+44) (0)114 222 8172, email: e.a.wood@Sheffield.ac.uk

Appendix 4B: Study information (Arabic) Consent Form for Early

Childhood Teachers

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

بيانات الدراسة

المكرمة معلمة رياض الاطفال

انا الباحثة عائشة المطيري، طالبة دراسات عليا (دكتوراة) في كلية التربية في جامعة شيفيلد في المملكة المتحدة. أنت مدعوة للمشاركة في الدراسة الحالية ، والتي ستساعدني على معرفة اراء وخبرات معلمات رياض الاطفال حول برامج التدريب اثناء الخدمة ولقد تم اختيارك كمشاركة محتملة في هذه الدراسة لأنك عضوة في برنامج إعداد المعلمات اثناء الخدمة.

وصف الدراسة

إن تكرمك بالموافقة على المشاركة في المشروع البحثي الحالي، سوف تتطلب منك المشاركة في الإجراءات التالية والتي تعد جزءا من بحثي المتعلق بمعرفة اراء وخبرات معلمات رياض الاطفال حول برامج التدريب اثناء الخدمة في المملكة العربية السعودية..

1-   **المقابلة:** سوف تجرى الباحثة مقابلة معك، سوف تجرى المقابلات باللغة العربية. ستستغرق المقابلة الأولى حوالي ساعة واحدة وسوف تركز على مفهومك وارائك حول برامج التدريب اثناء الخدمة. لغرض جمع بيانات الدراسة سيتم تسجيل المقابلات بعد الحصول على تصريحك ومن ثم إعداد نسخ مكتوبة منها. سوف ترسل لك النسخة المكتوبة للتحقق منها و تعديلها للضرورة (إن وجدت) وذلك قبل عملية تحليل البيانات وكتابة البحث النهائي أو نشره. إن تحليل بيانات الدراسة الحالية قد يسلط الضوء على اراء وخبرات معلمات رياض الاطفال حول برامج التدريب .

السرية والإفصاح عن المعلومات

جميع البيانات المتحصل عليها والتي تتعلق بهذه الدراسة سوف تحفظ بشكل سري وآمن تماما. إن توقيعك لهذه الوثيقة يعني تصريحك و موافقتك على مشاركة هذه المعلومات مع مشرفي الدراسي في جامعة شيفيلد والممتحنين لإطروحة البحث. سوف تبقى المعلومات مجهولة المصدر حيث لن يتم الإشارة اليك أو الكشف عن هويتك خلال مراحل الدراسة ، وفي حال الاشارة الى مصدر المعلومات سوف تستخدم الباحثة الاسماء المستعارة او الرموز (الحروف).أيضا ستحرص الباحثة على استخدام الاسماء المستعارة او الرموز اذا دعت الضرورة الى تزويد المشرفين الدراسيين والممتحنين بنسخ مكتوبة او الكترونية (أدلة ملموسة) المقابلات المسجلة. فيما يتعلق بأي طريقة أخرى للنشر أو مشاركة المعلومات،فإن البيانات سوف تقدم بطريقة لاتسمح بالتعرف أو الإشارة إليك. سوف لن يتم الكشف عن أي معلومات لرئيس قسمك أو مديرتك أو غيرهم من العاملين معك. كما لن يتم اعلان او ذكر اسم الروضة في البحث.

ملاحظات للمشاركات

1-   عند انتهاء الدراسة الحالية سوف يتم ارسال نسخة من نتائج الدراسة للجامعة عبر البريد العادي او الالكتروني.

2-   إن قرارك بالمشاركة أو عدم المشاركة في الدراسة لن يؤثر سلبا عليك بأي شكل من الأشكال حيث أن مشاركتك يجب أن تكون مشاركة طوعية.

3-   لديك الحرية في الانسحاب من المشاركة في الدراسة في أي وقت من الأوقات إذا لم ترغبي في الإستمرار .

4-   إن موافقتك على المشاركة في هذا المشروع البحثي لاتتضمن حصولك على أي تعويض أكاديمي أو نقدي.

أمل أن أكون قد قدمت عرض وافي لجميع المعلومات المتعلقة بالدراسة البحثية الحالية.

لمزيد من الاستفسار يرجى التواصل مع الباحثة :

1-   رقم الهاتف السعودي :00966551709455

2-   رقم الهاتف في المملكة المتحدة: 00447454222948

3-   البريد الالكتروني: amotery2009@hotmail.com

4-   في حال الرغبة في تفاصيل أخرى يرجى التواصل مع المشرف الدراسي في المملكة المتحدة:

1-   الدكتورة : اليزابيث وود، البريد الالكتروني <u>e.a.wood@sheffield.ac.uk</u>:

سوف يتم منحك نسخة من هذا النموذج للاحتفاظ به

شاكرة لكن تعاونكن

الباحثة :   عائشة فواز المطيري

التاريخ :   1437/5/12ة

جامعة الملك سعود- كلية التربية

Appendix 5: Permission for data collection

The
University
Of
Sheffield.

The
School
Of Education.

HEAD OF SCHOOL
PROFESSOR CATHY NUTBROWN

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
388 GLOSSOP ROAD
SHEFFIELD S10 2JA

TELEPHONE: +44 (0114) 222 8172
FAX: +44 (0114) 222 8105
EMAIL: E.A.WOOD @SHEFFIELD.AC.UK

3.12.2015

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Aisha Almutairi   Student Number 130249850

I give my permission for Aisha to return to Saudi Arabia so that she can begin to the data collection for her PhD thesis. The dates she will be away from the university are 15th February 2016 to 15th May 2016.

Aisha has completed her Confirmation review and her Ethical Review, so she is now able to move to the data collection phase.

Yours sincerely,

E.A. Wood

Dr Elizabeth Wood
Professor of Education

Appendix 6: Letter of support from Saudi Cultural Attaché in London

ROYAL EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA
CULTURAL BUREAU
LONDON

سفارة المملكة العربية السعودية
الملحقية الثقافية
لندن

التاريخ 1437/03/17هـ

إفادة

رقم الملف R892

تفيد الملحقية الثقافية بسفارة المملكة العربية السعودية في لندن بأن السيدة/ عائشه فواز بن ميطي المطيري (سجل مدني 1043898871) والمبتعثة من قبل جامعة الملك سعود لدراسة الدكتوراه في تخصص الطفولة في المرحلة الإبتدائية بجامعة(Sheffield) وأنها تنوي القيام بجمع بيانات لإكمال البحث العلمي الذي تقوم به .

وترجو الملحقية الثقافية السعودية في بريطانيا من الإدارة العامة للتعليم بمنطقة الرياض مساعدة الطالبة في تسهيل مهمتها .

وتقبلوا فائق التحيات،،،

الملحق الثقافي
بسفارة المملكة العربية السعودية في لندن

فيصل بن محمد المهنا أبا الخيل

Appendix 7: Research plan (Arabic)

<u>دراسة لاستكشاف أراء وخبرات معلمات رياض الاطفال حول برامج التدريب أثناء الخدمة في المملكة العربية السعودية- دراسة حالة</u>

خطة بحث الدكتوراه

الطالبة: عائشة فواز المطيري

<u>مشكلة الدراسة:</u>

وجد نوعين من معلمات رياض الاطفال اللواتي يعملن في مجال رياض الاطفال في المملكة العربية السعودية , النوع الاول لدية مؤهلات تربوية بينما النوع الثاني يعاني من قلة ونقص المعرفة المناسبة وأساليب التدريس الفعالة ومن هذا المنطلق أستوجب تقديم بعض برامج التأهيل والتدريب التي تساهم في رفع كفأة هؤلاء المعلمات . ولكن من الضروري ان يتم تصميم برامج التدريب اثناء الخدمة لتتماشى مع احتياجات المعلمات الفعلية في المملكة العربية السعودية. ومن خلال العديد من الدراسات السابقة أبدا الكثير من المعلمات امتعاضهن حول برامج التدريب اثناء الخدمة وهذا هو المحور الرئيسي لهذه الدراسة حيث أن هذه الدراسة تهدف الى معرفة اراء وخبرات معلمات رياض الاطفال حول هذه البرامج.

<u>أهمية الدراسة:</u>

ترجع أهمية هذه الدراسة الى انها قد تلفت أنتباه واضعي خطط وبرامج التدريب أثناء الخدمة لمعلمات رياض الاطفال مما يساهم في تطوير الاداء المهني للمعلمات حيث يزيد وعيهن الفكري ومهارتهن التعليمية. وهذه الدراسة بادرة لأجراء مزيد من البحوث في هذا المجال.

<u>أسئلة الدراسة:</u>

1. ماهي برامج التدريب أثنا الخدمة الحالية؟

2. ماهي وجهة نظر معلمات رياض الاطفال حول هذه البرامج؟

3. ما مدى تأثير هذه البرامج على المعرفة العلمية والمهنية لمعلمات رياض الاطفال؟

4. ما هي توصيات معلمات رياض الاطفال لتحسين هذه البرامج؟

<u>تصميم الدراسة :</u>

<u>الإطار النظري:</u>

كما أسلفت أن هذه الدراسة تهدف الى معرفة أراء وخبرات معلمات رياض الاطفال حول برامج التدريب أثناء الخدمة . فأن هذه الدراسة سوف تتبع المنهج التفسيري والذي يعتبر ملائما لدراسات التي تنطوي على (النية لفهم العالم من خلال الخبرات والتجارب الانسانية) كوهين ومانيون 1994 ص 36.

<u>أدوات الدراسة:</u>

حيث ان هدف الباحثة فهم الموضوع قيد الدراسة من خلال وجهات النظر التي سوف تقدمها المشاركات فسوف تكون المعلومات النوعية هي المطلوبة . لذا تسعى الباحثة لتحقيق ذلك من خلال استخدام الأدوات التي تعتبر مناسبة لجمع البيانات النوعية كما انها شائع استخدامها مع منهج دراسة الحالة (ثوران وأخرون 2004, جويش وأخرون 2011) وهي كالتالي:

1. **المقابلة:**

سوف يتم أجراء مقابلات مع معلمات رياض الاطفال في مركز تدريب المعلمات في مدينة الرياض وبعض الروضات التي سبق للمعلمات فيها الالتحاق ببرامج ودورات التدريب اثناء الخدمة في مراكز التدريب لمعرفة آرائهن ووجهات نظرهن حول هذه البرامج. كل مقابلة متوقع ان تستغرق 30- 45 دقيقة.

2. **مقابلة المجموعات:**

سوف يتم اجراء مقابلات جماعيه لعدد من المعلمات المتطوعات ,خمس معلمات لكل مجموعه. تتطلب المقابلة 45 دقيقة.

3. **تحليل البيانات:**

للحصول على فهم ورؤية شاملة للموضوع قيد الدراسة سيتم جمع وتحليل مجموعة من الوثائق ذات الصلة على سبيل المثال , بعض

الخطط الدراسية لبرامج التدريب – التقارير السنوية .

عينة الدراسة:

سوف تتطلب الدراسة 15 معلمة سعودية والتي سبق لهن تلقى دورات في مركز تدريب معلمات رياض الاطفال.

الاعتبارات الاخلاقية:

يعد الحفاظ على سرية المشاركين خلال مراحل البحث من اهم الاجراءات البحثية لذلك لن يتم ذكر اسماء الاشخاص او المؤسسات التعليمية بأي صوره تمكن من سهوله التعرف عليهم . سوف يتم استخدام اسماء مستعارة عند الاشارة الي أي شخصيه في البحث. سيتم حفظ كافة البيانات المتحصل عليها في مكان أمن وسيتم اتلافها بعد الانتهاء من الدراسة ايضا سيتم التأكد من المشاركة الطوعية للمشاركات وسيتم اطلاعهن على كافة حقوقهن بما في ذلك حق الانسحاب من الدراسة في أي مرحلة من مراحل البحث.

المدة الزمنية لجمع البيانات:

سيتم تنفيذ الدراسة في الفصل الدراسي الثاني للعام 1437هـ -2016م في الفترة 6-5-1437هـ الموافق 15-2-2016 الى 8-8-1437هـ الموافق 15-5-2016م . سوف يتطلب ما بين 60 الى 90 يوم.

الخطة الزمنية لعملية جمع البيانات

الفصل الثاني للعام 1437هـ /2016

الاجراء	التاريخ	الاسبوع
الحصول على أسماء المعلمات و عناوين الروضات وطرق التواصل معهن	14-2-2016	1
تقديم عرض مفصل عن اهداف الدراسة وتساؤلاتها للمعلمات في كل روضة	21-2-2016	2
أجراء مقابلة مع 3 معلمات	28-2-2016	3
أجراء مقابلة مع 3 معلمات	6-3-2016	4
إجازة منتصف الفصل الدراسي الثاني لعام 1437هـ		
أجراء مقابلة مع 3 معلمات	20-3-2016	5
أجراء مقابلة مع 3 معلمات	27-3-2016	6
أجراء مقابلة مع 3 معلمات	3-4-2016	7
تقديم عرض مفصل عن كيفية أجراء مقابلات جماعية - أجراء مقابلة جماعية مع5 معلمات (روضة 1)	10-4-2016	8
تقديم عرض مفصل عن كيفية أجراء المقابلات الجماعية – أجراء مقابلة جماعية مع 5 (معلمات روضة 2)	17-4-2016	9
تقديم عرض مفصل عن كيفية أجراء المقابلات الجماعية - أجراء مقابلة جماعية مع5 معلمات (روضة 3)	24-4-2016	10
وقت أضافي لأجراء ملاحظات او مقابلات متطلبة	1-5-2016	11
وقت أضافي لأجراء الملاحظات او مقابلات متطلبة	8-5-2016	12

Appendix 8: Research authorisation form the Saudi Ministry of Education

إجراءات خاصة لتسهيل مهام باحثين وباحثات من خارج المملكة
مرفق رقم (5)

أولاً: مبتعث على حسابه الخاص :-

يعامل معاملة الباحث المعتادة (إرفاق خطاب الجامعة والمشرف ويشترط أن يكون

- نسخة مترجمة للخطاب باللغة العربية .
- أن يكون الخطاب رسمي (ختم الجامعة أو ما يثبت رسمية الخطاب)

ثانياً: طلب تسهيل مهمة من الملحقية :-

1. تزويد الإدارة بخطاب الملحقية ويكون رسمياً موجه لـ :
   أ- الإدارة العامة للبحوث .
   ب- إدارة التخطيط بتعليم الرياض , أو إدارة التخطيط والتطوير .

2. يمنح القسم الباحث/ة خطاب إفادة (ينص على الموافقة على تطبيق الدراسة)

3. في حال طلب الباحث/ة إفادة بانتهاء المهمة البحثية لابد من إرفاق مشاهد إنجاز المهمة رسمياً من الجهة التي تم تنفيذ الدراسة فيها سواء كانت إدارة أو مكتب أو مدرسة وتكون موقعة ومختومة من الجهة .

4. يمنح خطاب الإفادة بانتهاء المهمة البحثية بشرط أن لا تتجاوز مدة المهمة الأدائية ثلاثة أشهر منذ بداية تصدير خطاب تسهيل المهمة للجهة وحتى تاريخ انتهاء المهمة في مشاهد الحضور وإنجاز المهمة .

- قسم الدراسات والبحوث .

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Appendix 9: Completion of study certificate from the Saudi Ministry of Education

وزارة التعليم
الإدارة العامة للتعليم بمنطقة الرياض
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

الرقم :
التاريخ :
المرفقات :

إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

" إفادة "

الموضوع :

اسم الباحثة	
كلية / جامعة	
رقم وتاريخ خطاب التسهيل	
مهمة الباحث الواردة من إدارة التخطيط	
عنوان الدراسة	

المكرم مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير   حفظه الله

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته   وبعد ،،،،

بناء على خطاب تسهيل مهمة باحث/ة ذي الرقم والتاريخ الموضحة أعلاه نفيدكم أنه تم تنفيذ المهمة الأدائية من قبل الباحثة ، وقد أنهى/ت كافة إجراءات الدراسة وتطبيق الأداة في مجال البحث على عينة من (معلمات رياض أطفال) وبناء على طلبها/ـه تم منح الإفادة.

شاكرين طيب تعاونكم ،،،،

اسم المديرة :
التوقيع :
التاريخ :   ١٤٣٧/١/١٥

١١٥

Appendix 9: The Focus Group Interview Questions (English)

Focus group Interview questions

	Questions
	Main questions
1-	Do the training programmes have positive and negative impacts?
2-	What are your perceptions of challenges facing in- service training programmes and its requirements and your suggestions for the improvement it (Recommendations)?
	secondary questions
1-	Do you feel that the in-service training programme content was as you expected or more that?
2-	Do you face any obstacles to attend courses?
3-	In what ways do you think training help you to improve your teaching skills?
4-	Would you like to add or suggest anything else about professional training for kindergarten teacher?
5-	Are you aware of incentives, do you think it is important and why**?**
6-	Do you have any suggestions or comments?

Appendix 10: Interview transcript

In the name of Allah most gracious most merciful

27 March

University kindergarten, what is it and what's your specialization?

Kindergarten

2- Bachelor?

Yes, Kindergarten bachelor 1416 H.'

3- OK how many years you worked in kindergarten?

Until now 17

4- All as a teacher?

Yes, all

From the beginning?

Yes, but last year I've been promoted to a head teacher and now a candidate to deputy principal, God Willing.

6- God willing, you mean that all these years have been in the teaching field?

Yes, all have been in teaching.

7- Did you attend courses during the last 3 years?

Yes, I did, do you want to know them?

8- Which kindergarten?

Should I tell you about these courses?

9- Yes, but in brief.

I've attended Cooperating teacher, child portfolio, group of courses included creative thinking and cooperating teacher.

10- All these courses in the training centre in El Sefarat District?

No, just training centre that is teacher's course.

11- Is it self-learning, self-learning approach?

Yes, exactly, only this approach there, and also reading and writing, guided reading and writing, those in the Learning Centre.

12- Was it a short course or not?

Yes, it was short, three days.

13. The rest of the courses, did you attend during the last 3 years?

Yes, exactly.

14. Was the course in the service centre of the training centre, in the beginning of your recruitment, nor was it?

No, it was after seven years work not in the beginning.

15- Why you attended that course?

we have been named in the beginning, they told us how they are working on education which is self-education, and work on this course, and if you don't mind we want someone to attend it, so as to present after to other teachers, so I attended it with the Principal.

16- The one who attend it should give it, right?

To the teachers, exactly.

17. So have you worked as a trainer after ….?

Yes, of course we didn't strictly present it, because the same training centre said, after we've attended and concluded the course, you can choose teachers now for it, it is mandatory to attend it.

18. Then courses, the long course, which was in the training centre were compulsory for teachers?

To attend it, yes, they should.

19-Can she choose the time, or not?

No, no timing was twice a year, yes, in the first term, they usually choose the teachers, one by one, for example, a teacher and her friend, and for the second term, and may be next year.

20. This means one from each kindergarten, or nominate any number?

No, no, they weren't 2 but 4, the principal and deputy principal and two teachers, we were 4 that went there.

21. It's been a while from the beginning of the courses to date, almost who didn't attend, also didn't go?

Yes, yes, before

22- Non-stop?

Yes,

23- What were the curriculums of courses you studied in the training Centre, for?

Curriculums were about full school day, loop and corners, daily program, which of course we concluded these 5 intervals daily program, episode, corners, meeting, guided learning, and one about the playground, we attend it complete, 5 periods, plus two weeks practice, we entered classrooms. Training is focused on the self-learning curriculum. Delivering policy in ECE in KSA

24- With the children?

Yes, we entered the classroom and there was an assessment of the program, how you perform it?

25. Was it all in the same centre?

Yes, in the same centre.

26. because when I attend it lecture halls were out of the Kindergarten not inside it.

No, I attended it outside, having finished it we entered to the scene, after what we concluded that was 6 weeks.

27. During practice, you become a head teacher or assistant teacher?

Assistant teacher.

28- Assistant.

There was one teacher, inform the second teacher, and they were a team who are giving the session, at the same time they evaluate, the assessment was like an open speech, they speak collectively, of course without saying names, but they were saying the names through the observation of a certain teacher.

29- In the group?

of course, no, it was personal.

30. Should they give you a report about your performance?

Yes, but it is limited to giving you the notes that have previously been taken about the teacher.

13. Well, before you join the session of the two months program or short courses, do you have an idea about their objectives?

No, I know only its subject, for example when we got the appointment, they only mention the target group, and name of the course.

32. You don't know the objective of the course, what will you gain after you finish it, all this after you enter?

No, No, I search about all that in google or I search for someone who took the same course to be able to choose the course, to what extent it is useful, sometimes, I even ask about the lecturer, because some courses you go, expecting something and you 're surprised of something else.

33. You mean of course the lecturer is an important element in giving an information.

Yes, sure, so I can't choose a lecturer, who I don't know and don't I like to be trained by.

34. It happened with you?

Yes, yes

35-Just for the courses within the same centre?

I swear, it happened in the centre.

36. You told me that they 're mandatory so you don't have any other way?

No, no, that one no, they told us that someone should go, and no one wants to go, because it's difficult, for example, to go a two months course and doesn't know the subject, the teacher should follow a schedule, and if she's absent for 3 days, she should leave the course, it has some controls, that made them stay.

37. It made the teachers hesitate.

Yes.
38. Well, I don't know, Insha'Allah you remember, when you took courses, self-learning course, it was comprehensive of children behavioural skills, how to face up to the problem and resolve, or only aspects of education?

No, honestly, it was wonderful, very rich about controlling behaviour.

39. Has it covered all aspects?

Very much, the trainer was excellent, we've focused on controlling behaviour, we`ve spent about 8 days on it.

40. This part.

This part was excellent.

41-These were the behavioural skills, when you got to the practice phase have you almost performed well?

Yes, yes.

42. Have you really felt that it was useful?

Very much, I mean when I returned back, have you got it?

43. That's exactly what I'm asking you about, well, what information, do you have previous information before you go, but since you are a kindergarten graduate, have you studied kindergarten objectives in the Kingdom?

Yes, I did, it is the same course, nothing is new for kindergarten graduates, it is just like a refreshment, and to be updated with the new information that they added.

44. Because they are originally self-learning program itself that you have already studied in college.

Yes,

45-And it has just reminded you.

Made renovation.

46. Regarding the educational environment in the same training centre has it improved, what are the qualities, or methods they used and you felt they are more useful to you?

It is a very rich environment , Mashaa Allah, they have a very rich environment, i.e. they have very excellent things, materials and tools, honestly I was impressed, I was asking them these tables from where?, they all said from UNICEF, UNICEF supplied them with materials, these things helped them, so they had human and material potentials and all together, made it work. What works for this teacher?

47. Well, in courses, have they used educational workshops, for example, or focused on lectures with you?

It was a workshop, i.e. the first thing a lecture, after this directly a workshop, groups and practice, even they brought helping tools. methods positive

48- You have been working in groups, right?

Yes, yes.

49. I saw the hall, and a circular shaped table, have you been sitting in groups?

No, we have been sitting as a lecture hall, then when we studied the balance set between reading and writing they made it in group.

50. What do you think is better?

Groups were good.

51-As circular shaped table?

Yes, the first one explanation as a lecture, without interaction, but the circular one tools are easy to get.

52. What do you think was more useful for you, workshops, lectures, or all?

Some workshops, and some lectures in support of workshops, so when you take an information and practice this, it is pretty good, yes.

53. Well, do you like training courses during service?

Yes, it's pretty good, I tell you and agree, but it returns to the teacher, I want to develop myself and don't want to stop.

54-There are teachers when they don't develop themselves it reflects on the child.

Yes, those people can take a course and everything, and then not to apply it, this is a problem.

55. What do you think is the problem, when she came and didn't apply what you studied in the course?

She.

56. The same teacher or not?

No from the teacher, sometimes I attend courses and I recommend them for another one, and then she comes and tell me, I didn't like it, you know, some people even in the team.

57. On what grounds she decided that it was good or not?

It's for example, i mean…

58. Have studied it before is that what you mean?

No, she is only frustrated, many people at work have different behavioural patterns, people are different and have different views so it depends…. i.e. as some times the course is very good and interesting and you recommend for someone and then she refuses to participate.

59. Participation, on the ground that she doesn't want to develop herself, do you think the reason that when I take the course, I will return the same, I won't take incentives, raise, nothing?

Yes,

60. That's is why?

Yes, yes

61. The course is not linked to something material or moral for the teacher, so if the teacher took it or not it's the same?

Yes, I attended, child intelligences evaluation, multiple- intelligences, that had a workshop and we made scales, people were surprised that they gave us course and workshop and we worked on them, and then they forced us to make a scale, this was a problem.

Western influences and ideas – teachers being forced or required to do something

65-That's why when you don't know about the objectives from the beginning, what is the outcome, yes, outcomes can shock you, that's why you may refuse to go or don't go based on.

Yes, right, right, for me, for example, they called the principal and told her, bring quickly two brilliant teachers, bring an excellent teacher fast, and when you go there you feel that, this is special for you, you will be distinguished. When we have gone and took the course for 5 days, and then they said we need to practice the scale, the scale practiced on the 105 classes, that's it. Did they know why they were doing this?

66. Well, they didn't take your opinion, nor your approval, was it compulsorily? you felt frustrated?

Very much, in the beginning I was very frustrated, then I said, it is experience, the one can know how to make a questionnaire, and how the interview with the child, I can say that it was enrichment for me, but at first it was a burden.

67. Of course, this means you agree that the teacher before submission to course should previously have enough information about its objectives, and outcomes?

Yes, right

68. Where is the problem? In the same managers of the training centre program, or the Ministry?

I really don't know, it could be that the Ministry doesn't have a sufficient vision, or they think that the teacher can check out the courses, but I don't know, for example, if I'll attend a course on my charges, I should previously know what am I supposed to know, then what are the outcomes am I going to have, what are the benefits from it. Did they know why they were doing this?

69. (13:36) while you are on the job.

Yes

70- Do you think that timing, or methods they use, the methods used in teaching such as workshops, lectures, or sometimes working in a group, should they take the teacher's opinion in?

Yes, I see that the presentation method depends on the owner of the subject, how she wants to present, for example, her style that this course can only be presented by workshop, she can't sit and tell a story and there is no interaction, Yes, this is difficult.

71. Well what about timing?

Timing! I didn't get it.

72. The timing I mean, do you think that time for such courses should be before the beginning of the semester, before the teacher get busy? in the middle? Or at the end? and the duration: duration here in is good or you feel it is too much or less?

Look I 'll tell you something, two months out of the school for kindergarten graduate are too much, because I went only to the new emerging stuff. When I went there weren't the new things that they have worked on , this is what I benefited from, but things I've studied are okay, as a kindergarten graduate I practiced, and when we practiced I didn't feel it difficult, but I should say the matter is not about major, and the one whose major is different needs longer time.

73. Did non-specialized teachers attend?

Yes, yes many.

74. Have you felt that it was more beneficial?

Yes, too much.

75. Really, is it necessary for them to take such courses?

Yes, what I think that when she works in the same place, she is required to take it.

76. Ok, now tell me about the program, after you have finished two months, tell me what is the effect, and what are the changes in your information?

Direct effects, from the beginning, when I was at the course , I took down notes what I'll go back and change, I'm in contact with my girlfriend all the time, "see we have studied this and that, let's do it" I've turned the classroom environment upside down, I mean it was a passion, actually we didn't have a planning corner, we've done a promising reading corner, I was talking to her all the time, let the session always open with cubes, so it worked. Changes

77. This is all you during…

When I tell her about that she is very excited, I send her topics we learn to read, she took them and comes back again, of course the second term she attended. It was pretty good, I've written down notes in my

mind, what are the things I want to change directly when I come back, well it was very smooth thank God, and I've done such tasks once I returned and things not completed, I've finished with her.

78. These changes lasted with you?

Yes, I swear, until I left the class, I mean to this semester.

79. What about courses, when was the last course you attend?

Intelligence of the child a year ago.

80. A year ago, well, what were the changes, changes in methods of teaching the child himself, and dealing with the child, beside classroom environment, other…what else changed with you?

Dealing with children, I'm working on this point, of course I am, above all, a mother, and children are different, it's necessary that teacher uses different ways. Children now are not like those of the past, children now have google, right, so methods of a teacher should change, even if she didn't attend courses. Really, course is pretty good and stimulating, but the course gives you various skills to be always innovative. changes in children and childhood – changes in culture and resources, Children are different – many sources of knowledge. Some teaches find this is positive, and some teachers find this difficult.

81. OK then, I mean, you said that when you returned, it has affected on you, that you have changed the classroom environment?

82. The same teaching methods for children and dealing with child the same, it means you took advantage of behavioural skills, which is for example problem solving that you've learnt?

Yes, very much.

83. With children?

Yes,

84. Have you changed yourself? corrected any-thing?

Yes a lot, this thing was pretty good, once I came back we had a child that had a behavioural problem before I attend the course, and we made a toss because the child was in the second level was very nervous and irritable, and then the child is in my class, all the leave I was sad, despite that I don't like to have a previous impression about any child, because I tell myself in the vacation he may change, but I had my fears you know…, when I returned from the course the child is not a problem at all, I have been with him only two weeks.

85. Well, you say that you have dealt with him before and after the course, right.

Yes, it was so different.

86. Your dealings before the course was built on….

Background of teachers, then the child became completely different, maybe I became calm, and understood that he is special case, I found when I've studied problems, when I heard about problems that he is something very simple, he just needs to boost him boost boost and give him tasks, because he has extra powers. Change

87. Well, the child's problem that you have had to face, you found that during the course, that it's the same problem and how to resolve, and you practiced in class, I mean was this the effect of the program?

Yes, right,

88. You can display problems, and ask for help from different teachers with you from different kindergartens and have faced the same problem?

yes, right, the course group until now we are still in contact.

89. The course benefit is not limited to a scientific material, but also making use of others experience?

Yes right, What new things you've made? I have done …for example, have you done or practiced any other thing? do you know, it was really beautiful.

90-Do you have discussions in courses?

They have been very helpful, even we photocopy the tutorials, photocopy the workshops, it was pretty good for the same subject.

91.Well, when you meet teachers in different courses, who has various experience, one of 10 years, and another, for example, 15 years experience, you can make use of their experience as a group?

Yes, Right

92-Excellent, well, do you think that training programs during service has added to you and your experiences I mean the past one, has it improved?

Yes, right

93. Do you encourage and favor its existence?

Yes, sure I do.

94-Continuity of long time or not?

I'll tell you what, it varies according to kindergartens, kindergarten graduates don't need to have two months course, it might be 4 weeks and to add some topics according to their needs, If I want to expatiate, I can search for deficiency, and topics they need to focus on.

95-OK, Do you think they should make a questionnaire or a poll among teachers before the course, what they want exactly, instead of wasting their time and efforts of trainer?

Yes, right.

96. Does this happened, or not?

No,

97- Ever?

No,

98.Have you ever done this, have the ministry ever come to you and make a poll?

Once, they asked what do you need, but it was mostly about computer, that's it.

99. Have you make use of it?

Those girls, who haven't studied it before make use of it.

100-Well, do you use it in classrooms?

Computer?

101- Yes,

Yes,

201 Do you use in a presentation?

In the beginning presentations of lessons with computers were too much, now no, they provided us with screens, all became with flash memory, it was necessary to know how to download then come and display lesson.

103- Well Ms. do you have something to say?

Thank you so much, about what?

104- I mean about these courses.

I should say that course, program or anything that serves the child, serves the school. The important element is the teacher, her receptivity, willingness to apply that course, or what experiences will she acquire, this needs to be in mind. Motivation to change. Motivation may happen before, during or after the programme – to what extent are they motivated to change their practices as a result of attending the programme?

105- Can you give me suggestions, one or two, if new courses are held in the training centre during the service either short or long courses, about what do you think they should be?

I think that these courses should supply teacher with the new updates going on in education abroad, new programs they are working on, and we are standing still, forgive me, I feel sad we have a curriculum from 30 years.

106. The same never changed.

And you have to abide, ..abide…, I want to say that the mother of the past is no more of today, the mother who was cooking, washing, ironing, is not now, mother is now different.

107- Right, even the child him/herself changed.

Yes, even the child.

108- How long have you been working? 20 years?

17 years.

109- 17 years, child from 17 years is the same as of today?

No, no, children have changed; I gave them a game every day to work on. Once I gave them water and corn flour to write the alphabets on the table, then one student came to me and said I want this and what its name?, I said okay, I gave him a corn flour sack then he wrote it to go and ask his mom to buy it. So children became more aware. A child came to the teacher and said I want to make a secret file on PC, so children are completely different. I see that education should go with those children, they became passionate, curious, If I'm not a teacher, I wouldn't go with them.

110- That's why I asked you, they can say it's the role of the teacher, so she should learn by herself.

Okay, but if there's a help from the ministry to serve the child, it will be good, that's what I do, and they always say that kindergarten is one of the most important stages, it's the building of personality, and the information and teaches you.

111- Right, it's the most important stage, well, if teacher knows that there will be a course in Bahrain or Kuwait or abroad, and in her point of view it's a useful course, can she apply for this course and ask to go?

For me, I did it I wrote.

112- Did they agree?

I wrote many times, I told her honestly, let it be a promotion for teachers, i.e. for me as a principal if a distinguished teacher got 99 I will reward her and send her to an outdoor course.

113- Yes, I was asking you about abroad courses, are there or not?

she said, no, there isn't, only they send them to Jeddah.

114- You mean not outside the Kingdom?

They send her to Dubai

115- In Jeddah there are courses abroad?

yes, right.

116- The course on her expense or the ministry?

really, I didn't ask her, but she told me they give too much.

117-OK, it's a kind of sharing experiences, kind of, I mean, you said that we need to have knowledge of various theories and teaching methods used abroad. Well the teacher should, in your point of view, as a kind of exchange of experiences, attend such courses?

If she has the possibility they should go, her husband allows her, may be her conditions are okay with that.

118- It can be voluntarily.

Yes, voluntarily.

119- If she wants not mandatory.

Yes, I say that it's good that she attends it and transfer it to others with her own way.

120- This thing doesn't exist?

No,

121- Do you suggest that?

I suggested that.

122- You are as any ministry.

Any other place right, but we are independents, when one goes to attend I'm sure she 'll come back with something new.

123- Really when you are in the same environment and this doesn't have any improvements, or something new, we should go to another environment, that has different culture, not only comes with other ideas, this from my experience.

Yes, right, comes with other ideas, right, then even training courses for teachers, they told me that the curriculum is the same from 15 years, the same that is presented, they only add some stuff of the Unicef, just simple topics but the content is the same.

124- Well, Ms. now trainee students come to you from university, do you feel the same as you had studied 17 years ago?

NO, no

125- Different?

Yes, students now have less subjects.

126- The curriculum is that of self-learning?

No, the same self learning curriculum, but, presentation method is different, it has different items that direct behaviour of others, for example, the right way to planning differs from the first, i.e. we cooperative teachers evaluate the student, I can evaluate student, I have marks in my hand, you see the student was

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different, I had different training, the new thing is related to plan training that has changed, but the same titles.

127- The knowledge they have is the same you have, the same basics?

Yes, the same basics.

128- Directing methods and ways to modify the child's behaviour and problem solving itself?

I swear the same curriculum.

129- Although child has changed.

Although child has changed.

130- Are the problems faced by the child now, not the problems faced by the child before?

Yes, right, now sometimes you meet bored children.

131- Well, teachers that comes to you for training do you think they feel a jab between what they have studied and the truth?

Yes, for example a student say, I'm shocked, i.e. there is a rule I learn theoretically, and when I come to apply I was shocked, and even training was different at first, for example, I first practiced here, in this kindergarten, the teacher enters and give a watching week, and after this closes the door, and tells me you're the teacher, Bye, then it's her break, I act as a teacher, it means you're in the heart of event, you need to learn how to deal with children as a teacher, and shouldn't return to the teacher when she comes back.

132- Should you live and face all problems?

Yes, yes everything.

133- You should be creative in ways, i ask you about the original environment before the session and after the session, changed you told me you changed in the classroom environment, do you have before and after photos?

I will search if I have, Inshallah I do.

134- Ms. Do you have something to say about training and development programs?

training programs needs only outdoor courses.

135- You agree to persist?

Yes,

136- And you favor its development? teacher to attend it?

Yes, right.

137- A question about trainers who comes to you, are they teachers?

Yes, they were teachers

138 - Were they ?

Yes, and became trainers, now became teachers.

139- Excellent, they have been useful to you, because they have experience.

Yes, I'll tell you what they speak from a background and real knowledge and all that you can notice.

140- I tell you because it's theoretical in university or ..?

No, it's pretty good, in order to have it, I don't know if you attended this course or know it. When we practice it, they had a room called control room you enter and see the class.

141- Yes right I saw it.

It was pretty good.

142- Excellent, thank you.

143- Welcome.

Interview 1:

In the name of God, the most gracious the most merciful

First

Date: 8th March 2016

1-   first thing I want to ask about your specialty in Bachelor?

I have a kindergarten diploma.

2-   Not a Bachelor?

No.

3-   how many years Post-secondary diploma?

Two years.

4-   Where in?

Alkharj

5-   were you studying in Alkharj?

Yes, In a college.

6-   You mean Alkharj is well developed?

 Yes sure

7-   Two intensified years?

Yes.

8-   Ok, how many years have you been working in kindergarten as a teacher?

As a teacher 24 year.

9-   You had started as a Teacher, or you have worked in a different position before being a teacher?

Yes, I had started as a Teacher

10-   have you worked is management before?

No.

11-   Have you been laddering in labor scale?

No, Just a kindergarten school teacher.

12-   Ok, basic teacher?

Yes.

13-   Well, in teaching, have you started teaching kindergarten children at first, in the same field of teaching?

Yes.

14-   All right, have you attended any training course or program before?

Courses in the Center?

15-   Yes.

Yes, two months ago, I had attended Abeer Al Salem courses.

16-   What are Abeer Al Salem courses?

It is also about self-curriculum compression, about the way you treat children and modify their behaviour, encouragement and complimenting, methods of education.

17-   Okay who is Abeer Alsalem

From the ministry of education.

18-   the ministry or the university?

The ministry, we have a turn there.

19-   Does she come to give you the course here or you go to her in another place?

Sometimes we go, other times she come here.

20-   Well, what is the oldest? The courses in centers or Abeer Alsalem

Almost parallel.

21-   Do You mean that you had attended them both almost in the same year?

No, I had attended them in my vacation, it had been a year since the last lecture I had attended

22-   How many sessions are given?

5 days.

23-   5 days, of course you leave the kindergarten and go?

Yes.

24-   For a full day?

Yes all the day

25-   do you return to kindergarten?

No no, because it starts at 8 and ends at 12.

26-   OK, who decides you attend the program or the courses? You or else?

They send us a letter asking who want to attend Abeer Al Salem courses?

27-   Yes, with full freedom of choice?
Yes.
28-   Why do you choose to attend?
Why do I choose?
29-   Yes, what is the reason?
Frankly, her way of teaching is a wonderful, it helps a lot.
30-   Do You mean that sometimes the lecturer itself is the reason that you are attending the course?
Yes, because it is related to my methodical way of working, it serves me and the kids too.

31-   OK when they give you a letter for a Abeer Alsalem course for example or a course in the centre, do they mention the course background? what are the goals of the course are and what will be discussed.
Yes sure
32-   And You are free to choose
Yes, you choose between curriculums.
33-   You choose.
Yes.
34-   You choose to join; do you mean that the manager does not force you to attend?
No forcing, in Abeer al-Salem courses there is no forcing.
35-   And what about the courses of the Centre?
The courses in the centre were almost obligatory, it must be attended by all teachers, we all kindergarten teachers had attended.
36-   Almost obligatory, what do you mean by almost obligatory?
It means that you should attend the course, if you didn't attend this year you should take it in next year
37-   It means that you should attend but you can choose the time.
Yes.
38-   Ok, do they link the attendance of courses with promotion, or incentives, or anything something?
No, we don't have incentives, nor promotions.
39-   But it is for you to develop yourself, and your way of teaching?
Yes.
40-   Well, when you started to attend these courses, you had a stronger motivation, and then after this your desire or motivation strength had decreases? Or you attend because your colleagues went or because another reason?
It all depends on the subject; some subjects serve me and serves the child as a useful curriculum I love to go for it.
41-   If the subject is just for improvement and you feel that you know it too well?
If the course is not going to add a benefit or help me in improving my way of teaching, I will not attend it, even if it is an obligatory, I will search for any excuse.
42-   Do they Accept?
Yes.
43-   OK, I will talk about the same program that you had attended in the courses, does the content has certain curriculum like certain subjects you teach? Or is it all for one curriculum?
In the courses?
44-   Yes.
The courses in the centre was most about curriculum.
45-   I am of course the most thing that I ask about is the courses in the centre, because they are...
Yes, the courses in the centre is all about curriculums.
46-   Like what? do you remember?
Yes, I have to retrieve the things that we have, I have their sheets.
47-   For example, something about language skills, give me an example,
About thinking.
48-   Self-learning, have you attended something about a child's critical thinking, how do you develop it and how?
No.
49-   About Teaching methods? modern, teaching methods?
Yes, it is all the same approach that we had studied.

50-   Do you mean at the university?

At the university, they repeat themselves at the centre, just refreshing information.

51-   They didn't come up with anything new?

We didn't see anything new honestly

52-   Do they bring new programs such as Bwakir?

No, no, we have Bwakir here, we've applied it and we haven't taken any course about it.

53-   How did you apply it and you didn't have any course about it?

We did it

54-   I mean have you depend on yourselves in that?

Yes.

55-   Nobody had come to teach you?

Never, I came along, and Bwakir curriculum was applied in the kindergarten, I applied it with them, I taught myself, I worked by my own self.

56-   Do you have something called a teacher's book, right?

Yes, we have Bwakir teacher's book. Oh, but Doctor Hayat (may God forgive her and bless her) teach us Bwakir.

57-   Who is doctor Hayat?

I cannot remember her full name maybe Dheim, Hayat Al Dheim, she was from the centre, and she was a consultant and teaching courses, she gave us the course, they give us courses at the centre we all attended.

58-   Bwakir right?

Yes, we attended. We applied it for two years, but I have not taken a course, I came as a teacher and applied Bwakir.

But we started applying it before we took any course.

They gave us a teacher book, but they said you read it and apply it, and they choose a group and that group applies everything in the curriculum without knowing, we all abide what's in the curriculum but, we rely on reading from books, and from sheets and they give us a book we applied all written instructions, they gave us instructions for application, but we didn't attend courses, after we applied the program,

they didn't enable us before two or three months and they said that they will divide us into groups, no, they didn't meet with us, and sometimes they compress our colleagues time of work, I mean we leave and a colleague stay, and Bwakir program needs more than a teacher of course in class; because, it has many works needs to be done.

59-   I mean, for example, you come together, the director says: We have a program and we must apply it?

Yes, Bwakir and we must apply it.

60-   Did they just give it to you? for example, they didn't tell you start by the next week or next month?

No, only within 3 or 4 days, they said start to implement it and we applied it.

61-   Is this a decision of the Ministry?

Yes, it is, from our department, from the feminist guidance not from Ministry of Education, the ministry has nothing to do with it.

62-   Not related to the Ministry?

Yes, but from the supervision of kindergarten department, the kindergarten department choose some schools, some managers refuse it, they didn't apply it, some managers have accepted it, and we've applied it.

63-   Ok, we will come to this point later, let me ask you, do they mention the goals before choosing to attend the course?

Do you mean the course?

64-   Yes

No, we went to ask about the goals, the topic and everything.

65-   Do you know about the course orally or in writing? Do you receive a letter by the course, it's goals, and the date, the time schedule, about the objectives and what will help the teacher after attending the course?

No no.

66-   Only the name and location of the course?

Yes, only name and location of the course.

67-   You know nothing about it?

Only the name of the course, its location, the lecturer, and the supervising Professor.

68-   Do you mean only information about the location but not about the goals?

Yes, there is no information.

69- And when you go to their place?

They give us information about topic and goals

70- Did it happen before, that when you went and took information about goals, have you felt before that it is not going to serve or benefit you? And it was just a waste of time?

Yes, some topics

71- Many?

Yes

72- OK, what is your background about the aspects of Kindergarten child education, educational units of the kindergarten curriculum in the Saudi kingdom? What do you remember from the program?

Information about what? Program.

73- Aspects of child education, I mean the methods of educating the child, and the objectives of the educational units related only to the Kingdom. Of course, not all of them have special goals, because it is derived from international public objectives, it has special objectives because of the nature of the religious and social community, we have special goals, do you have any idea about it? I mean had you studied it in college so you remember it while teaching in every lesson? Is it clear? Sure, you have an idea about the educational units and their goals, right?

Yes, they have the goals, but I didn't have this information.

74- Not even one?

Do you mean (9:20)

75- Give me an example, for example, water unit, how do I link it to the goals of Saudi society?

Not wasting water, the importance of water in life, water uses.

76- Do you mean to link it to the general objective?

Yes, to the overall objective and religious and social objectives.

77- The Social objective, does your college related to Saudi society?

Yes, all our goals are related to the same educational units.

78- And by teaching children in kindergarten, is it a good way?

Yes, teaching units

79- Educating children in kindergarten, by direct teaching?

Yes, teaching by direct instructing

80- Yes, do you have a lot of ideas about it? and what is the most one you use, and feel that it is effectively useful for you with the children, you've been working for 25 years, right?

Yes, self-education. They have useful things, flash players, we download programs and watch YouTube videos.

81- Masha Allah, this generation varies a lot from the generation 20 years ago, I mean now.

But I swear to God the first generation was better in receiving information, keener to know information and good listeners, they were not busy doing anything else more than education.

82- Because this generation, I mean, has different personality, they can discuss and speak, not just a recipient, ain't I right?

I noticed from 4 years the child can't receive anything from you because the child became distracted

83- Oh, you mean the kid is mentally distracted, why?

Yes distracted, impossible, we shall give them back their devices.

84- Are they allowed to bring devices with them?

No, it is not allowed to bring devices but at home they take time on a device

85- You in the educational environment, inside the classroom, are you trying to make the child in the classroom not distracted, for example, when you are teaching a lesson?

Of course.

86- Do you try to grab kid's attention by the existing tools?

yes, by my own sensory tools.

87- Well, does that help you in not getting the child distracted?

Yes, it helps a lot, depending on your role as a teacher.

88- Sure, it is its primary role of the teacher.

Or how you attract the child to be listening well to you

89- Yes, I'm listening to you, OK let's go back to the centre, what about the center's educational environment, what are the things that improved you more, of course you told me that you didn't take other than lectures, that means there was no workshops?
Yes, there was no workshop, we asked them about it.
But we used to sit, the lecturer speaks and that's all.
90- OK what are the tools the lecturer uses in the lecture? Only oral like this you sit they talk? Do they use any tool?
Just Oral
91- Don't they use power point presentation? No projector? No tools at all? Do they divide you into groups?
Yes, they divide us into groups and they let us do activities.
92- Like workshop you mean?
Yes, that's it
93- It means that when she has a certain idea, and ask you to apply it.
I mean, it's all about paper everything by writing in a paper
94- As a group together?
Yes, contests in the paper, solve questions or solve a problem that is equal to a child's problem and we look for how to solve it.
95- Excellent, does she give you examples?
That's sweet, when we did this it made our brain active.
96- Yes, that is the benefit
Yes, But
97- Yes, and it made you get more benefit out of it.
Yes
98- Does she introduce international experiments examples by videos?
Yes, once I attended a lecture with a video examples
99- Excellent, that means that they are using tools?
Yes, they use tools, according to the lecturer, Bushr said that there is a very good lecturer, I will not forget her but I forgot her name
100- Did she used many tools?
Yes, and she delivered information as if we were living in reality
101- did She give you an experiment and told you to imagine it?
But there are some staff that are not suitable for us
But all the environment was good and useful.
102- Almost all the world's children are similar.
I will give you an example, once she said they were sitting and studying by a tree, but we don't have such place to let children gather and sit under a tree, so we can teach them about the tree.
103- In spring this can be available
But I don't have trees in the kindergarten
104- Really? No trees
Yes, this is an example, and sometimes atmosphere is bad, and no good environment, or a well-prepared place, we don't have this environment but in other countries they have a lot of it, they sit under trees and take their lessons, for example we need at least a toilet that children cannot do without it, and we don't have water.
105- Of-course for his age
I said we don't have water.
106- Do you mean toilets that suits children in KGs here?
No, I am saying that we don't have water, there is no water in toilets, everyday no water. Can you imagine no water in kindergarten? We get disappointed, we are the ones who suffer, that is why we ask ourselves what is the benefit of what we studied, and what we attended courses for while the environment is like this.
107- Did the directorate tried to help you?
They couldn't, they used water tank and tried to bring it, but sometimes bad smells came out at classes, the building is not prepared well, and not good for putting tanks, I am telling you the toilets are not good no water and they let us see pictures from international kindergartens all over the world, that's why we became disappointed.
108- So, you want to go to better kindergartens?
Sure, I wish that this building is smashed and rebuild.
109- They build it to be a kindergarten, but how?
Yes, it doesn't have (14:31) not even one door, there is no safety here.

110- Even safety instructions are not followed here in the building?
No safety
111- Did you experience accidents before?
The responsibility is all on us, we suffer a lot we have to walk beside children so they may not get hurt.
112- Did any accident occurred before?
No, Thank GOD
113- No accidents?
No, But still (14:47)
114- After you attend courses my sister, what was the most useful thing to you? What about the timing of the course?
Not suitable.
115- As a whole you mean or what?
Yes, because most of these courses starts at the end.
116- Do you mean, at the end of the school year?
Yes, at the end of the school year.
117- They prepare you for the coming school year
No.
118- Not during the school year?
Not while I need it, or at the beginning of the year
119- Not even in holidays?
It can be at the beginning of the year, but what is the use of it when the year ends? Just keeping us busy?
120- How?
Keeping us busy doing something that is not useful.
121- Yes, you mean at the end of the school year?
Yes, a program while I finished lessons and education of the child, and our year program has ended.
122- Do you mean in the vacation?
Yes
123- You had just started vacation?
Depending on courses.
124- What does this mean?
Some courses last for 3 days, others for 5 days.
125- Do they give you courses in half term vacations?
Yes, there are courses in the center, at the beginning of the year, in the half term vacation and at the end of the year.
126- Are there courses before the school year begins, for example a week before school?
No chance to get prepared, before school year begins we should be here preparing classes, for a classroom environment.
127- Do you have workers to help you in cleaning?
Only one in the whole kindergarten place.
128- Really?
Yes, see how we suffer a lot, no environment neither good level at the beginning of the year, you wait for a whole month, they are little kids, had just entered school not finding a bathroom, this place is a new one, no one help him at the toilet, no matrons, this make teachers suffer a lot. They said every child must have a meter square, come see our classes?
129- How many children should be at the class?
About 24 or 25
130- Do you mean that this is the number of children?
Yes 25 in the class
131- Maximum 25?
Yes 25
132- But they didn't compress children at class?
No (17:09)
Good
The class have no extra space, we have 18 in a class, the biggest classroom has 25 children, some classes have 15 or 18, but here only 16 are ok, because 16 children is very crowded according to the class space.

133-   Yes 16 children are a big number for this class area, ok let me ask you a about the effect of the programs, training during working, how it affected your skills, is there any improvement after you finish a program or a course, is there any change?
Yes, frankly speaking there is a change.
134-   Change for a small time or longer according to you?
Sometimes for short time.
135-   Depend on the way.
Speaking about courses in the centre really it made a short time deference.
136-   I can find your words….
Yes, but talking about Abeer Al Salem courses it serves me somehow, because of that I said I like the way of Abeer Al salem
137-   Stay with you longer?
Yes. Because it solves many problems. because she's a specialist.
138-   What are the changes you have, improvement related to the teaching methods? Did you try to improve your teaching method? Or did you use the same way for 25 years? For example, in reading the story, in delivering information, have you tried to change? or you used the same way? Have you used modern tools like videos? like projector, or laptop, I-pad?
No no.
139-   you don't use any of it?
No, I don't use any
140-   Why then?
Because I feel that I am successful this way.
141-   Do you feel that you don't need it, did you usually use TV?
Yes, A flash player, but not with modern devices, they gave us devices, that's our diligence, because there is no (18:58) We don't even have projector in the kindergarten (19:03).
142-   With regard to problems, you have problems with children, for example some children are nervous, some children are introvert.
Or Stubborn.
143-   Yes. or stubborn, God help you, do you feel that these courses helped you to change your way of dealing with a child? Solve the problem?
Yes.
144-   Or you depended on your experience and your age?
Sometimes I used my experiences and other times on courses.
145-   Have you used the scientific method that you studied?
Yes, sure
146-   that means that courses helped you positively to improve and changed the way you treat children in solving their problems.
We had benefited from Abeer al Salem courses.
147-   Do you mean that Abeer Al Salem courses are more useful?
Yes, Very much
148-   which university it is related?
 the Ministry of Education, not a university. I guess that the ministry supervisors bring it, I don't know, I think she comes and give her own courses with money I mean
149-   And if the course is paid, will you attend it?
No, I will not, I already have courses outside of the working hours.
150-   Well, of course you felt that you had improved after each course you attend, or, at least at the last course, a year ago, right?
Yes, after Abeer Al Salem course that I have attend.
151-   Well, you like to add anything? Of course, I am not talking about the kindergarten nor education, I'm talking to you about programs and courses.
Courses are good and useful, refreshes your information, improve and support you somehow it improves the level of the teacher's thinking, but if you attend many useful courses while not having a suitable environment you will not benefit from it honestly
152-   Excellent.
The environment is the most important.
153-   In order to apply what you studied in the course.
Yes
154. Thank God and good luck.

Interview 2:

In the name of God, the Most Gracious and the most Merciful

participant number 2, Date: 8th March
.
1- Are you in the same specialty? kindergarten, right?
Bachelor of Kindergarten.
2- Have you got bachelor degree? How many years have you been working in kindergarten?
Almost 20 years.
3- you were an art teacher before?
Yes
4- For how many years?
When I graduated from college I worked, three years, then I got the job of the ministry.
5- Was it a temporary job?
It was a contract
6- A contract, I got it
At first, I was employed on item 105, it had been just few years, thank God, I have a contract now.
7- Alhamdulillah, for how many years have you been working with a contract? 20 years?
Not for 20 years.
8- Do you mean more?
I stayed working by the item for about 6, 7 years, and then I signed the contract.
9- Have you been appointed somewhere else or directly in this kindergarten?
Yes, I was working in another kindergarten
10- Does This kindergarten location is a suitable place for you?
Yes, because it is so close to home.
11- Excellent, did you choose it? Or they chose it for you?
I asked to be appointed here and thank God, I mean it was easy because moving from one place to another is difficult but the kindergarten was in need for teachers and they were assigning teachers, so we asked for signing contracts for stabilization.
12- Do you mean that you graduated, then worked in kindergarten before you were lodged? Or you have been lodged then you worked?
Lodged then worked.
13- Excellent, have you worked directly in teaching or you worked in the administration before teaching?
I have been appointed directly as a teacher.
14- Since you were studying in the university?
Yes, since I was at King Saud University, and I stayed.
15- Didn't you work in any administrative position?
But I am managing the workshop, I mean that I am working for a month or 2 months in only the workshop.
16- What do you do in the workshop?
Of course, the workshop needs permanent maintenance for toys.
17- Let me ask you first, what is this workshop?
The workshop contains cognitive games, artistic things, tools, that the teacher need in the classroom, and needs to be renewed and need maintenance.
18- All right, how long have you been managing it? What are you doing in it? Do you organize it?
Of course, we organize it, remove defected toys, buy new toys, I mean changing them.
19- For How many years?
No only for some months we manage it and go back to classes.
20- And do you also work in teaching while you manage workshop?
No, in case of covering a colleague absence.
21- In case of absence?
Yes, I cover the absence
22- Had you attend many courses?
Not a lot, I didn't attend any course for Abeer Alsalem.
23- Have you attended all the courses at the training centre?

I did not attend any course for her, All the courses I had attended are official, once they said go to attend a course, and we went for one day, then the next day they said that the course had to be postponed because of the crowd, she is a very good lecturer.

24- Do you have any means of communication with her?

I guess that the kindergarten management have, because they write a phone number on the sheets of courses, and you can attend to benefit.

25- Take it from her and see, so when was the last course that you have attended?

Almost seven years ago.

26- & years? Do they offer courses later and you didn't want to go?

No, it's not a matter of wanting to go at all, but they didn't give us permission, once they said that they have too many other time they said too small to start the course

27- Why do you attend the courses?

I want to benefit from Abeer Alsalem courses Honestly, I've heard so many good opinions about managing and changing a child's behaviour, she is giving you information that we needed.

28- What are the things that you would like to improve in your work? or what are the things that you feel that your skills are weak in? and you like to change it? Is there something specific?

Probably some behaviors.

29- Teaching methods?

Yes. dealing with children

30- ways of dealing with children?

Yes

31- why didn't you depend on your experience as a mother?

We relied on our experiences. But All the teachers who attended the courses benefited us a lot, but we would like benefit personally by our own selves.

32- Do you have any prior idea about the courses that you will attend before attending them?

No, Just name of the course, its date, its location.

33- No stated goals, no?

Also, the lecturer

34- Without mentioning the objectives.

No objectives are stated.

35- You mentioned that you are a kindergarten teacher. With a Bachelor in kindergarten, you have an idea about education aspects of children in kindergarten in the kingdom and its relationship with objectives, right? Try to apply it.

Of course, social and religious things benefit children, even in his life and practices.

36- Methods of educating the child in kindergarten that you had studied in collage, do you feel that it has changed or improved or the same? Do you review your books to develop yourself?

No, Actually I rely on my own experience more than books.

37- Have you found that what you studied differs from reality?

things I studied some of them need a special environment, let's stress again about environment, environment is unprepared, not valid, but these are some things we can apply with the cooperation of our colleagues.

38- Do you say that in most methods of dealing with the child, you have depended on your accumulated experience, but at first you relied on scientific methods, right?

Of course, we have a book about goals, general and special goals, we always have this book with each teacher.

39- You usually return to?

Yes, we return to it, plus the training centre course, I remember, the lecturer was Mayson, I remember, she gave us a course about dealing with children behaviors. sometimes I feel there is contradiction in the courses.

40- What do you mean by contradiction?

I don't remember well but every lecturer tells you about a different stuff like a Second alternate method.

One says deal with this problem by this way, the other one says no this is wrong, so we got confused, we don't know what is the right method.

41-   Is there any supervision on you?

Some supervisors come to attend with us, but they had stopped two years ago, no supervisors come now.

42-   But the manager submits reports, right?

Yes.

43-   Reports and staff.

The Director and the assistant may prepare some lessons.

44-   Talking about the centre, and the environment, do you find that the environment of the centre is well prepared for the courses?

Of course.

45-   Is it Good?

Yes, well prepared, and they have teachers, and they have special people in workshops, and they have assistants in workshops preparing for the teachers.

46-   Do You mean the kindergarten that belongs to the centre, no, I'm talking about the centre? When you as a teacher come to attend the course, do you feel that the class is prepared?

Yes, classrooms are ready and well prepared.

47-   The Room is prepared, they won't let you (7:03)?

Yes, they let us apply lessons. We applied lessons before.

48-   With children?

We acted like children a group of teachers act as children sitting and a teacher and an assistant helping her, making a lesson as an example

.

49-   But when the teacher stays for two months, some courses last for two months.

Yes, in the training centre it lasts for 2 months.

50-   But you don't deal with any child at all?

No, because the kids are with their teachers, I mean they're studying, but we don't, if we're dealing, we don't deal with the child directly.

We just go for watching

We just go to watch children, only monitoring their behaviour

Surveillance, like surveillance rooms.

Yes, we see, how teachers treat them, for example, how she replied.

But only a teacher in the centre, because sometimes that makes us depressed, the teacher there is only a supervisor, supervising the children.

It means dealing with children only, not her responsibility to prepare tools, and not bring things to the artistic place, everything comes cut and prepared for her but here you should prepare everything.

51-   do you feel that they are better?

Of course.

Yes, because she is exclusively occupied with the child the teacher that we saw in the centre was dedicated to the child.

For the child only.

But here you work as a teacher and a matron

Yes, I swear, you have to watch over kids, maybe when a baby gets dirty. You have to change his clothes, or stand beside him giving instructions. Sometimes you put on the kid's shoes, you help children in the bathroom,

Also, you're responsible for meals and everything.

You put food on the table and remove it also the art work (8:36).

Here you are a mother, a teacher and a servant.

52-   Okay, do you have a break, or you don't have?
Yes, we have a break.
15 minutes. a shift with the second teacher, we are 2 teachers in a class, one of us has a break at a time and the other one has her break in another time.

53-   Ok let's return to the centre, what is the most useful thing in the centre lectures or workshops in groups that you apply?
Of course, the application is better

54-   Great, what about the timing? Is it good?
For me not, I attended it at the beginning of the year. it started, but by the return of children, I mean there were children, but the one who gave me the course, had to sit alone by two months I mean two months are not a short time.

55-   Yes, you mean here?
Yes, I was going to the course and leave the kids here.

56-   She has 25 children.
Yes.

57-   Does she have anyone to help her?
Sometimes there's no helper, but they bring another free teacher. but only when she is free, they cannot bring another teacher if she is in the workshop, she is not her fixed assistant, but no teacher will be like the class teacher, she knows the children and spend all the time with them, knows her colleagues, and how to deal with them together.
58-   What are the changes that improve you in the programs?
When I first go there, there are new things, but they have contradiction as I mentioned before, we asked them once at the centre, we said: that some lecturer said a different way, but she answered:" Don't do her way, just apply the way that I told you about.
59-   Training that is related to the scientific material? And you as a teacher, Have You learned new skills? Or do you have a better educational material? don't You have time to read?
Honestly There is memory refreshment, remind us of what we studied at university, because even in college, we were training. I mean we used to apply these ways with our kids, we were all trainees.
60-   OK, do you think that the courses need improvements to be changed?
Yes, it is necessary.
61-   Need to be improved?
Yes, devices should be renewed, also tools, somethings have to change, curriculums too. I mean for example we had applied Bwakir program, we applied some of it but and some were not valid at all, stories were not nice, but we can be able to choose between them, It will be better if someone specialized in kindergarten filters what is good in the program, the names of Allah, was good, but the way it is displayed is not nice because it has some things have nothing to do with the name of God, far a little bit, but it was a nice educational way of teaching the names of God, if it continues
62-   Do you mean the curriculum?
Of course, the whole curriculum is not perfect, we should choose from it, yes.
63-   Do you Mean that the curriculum should be modified?
Maybe why not, it has to be modified.
64-   Why did you suggest this? did they ask you to give them a feedback or your opinion on it?
Yes, we did, we told them about gave us the most important pros and cons.
65-   Has there been an interaction or nothing happened?
No, they didn't tell us what happened then, the teacher Hayat Aldehiem (May God have mercy on her) was a great advisor, she had a background on good ways of dealing with children and the curriculum, and she was receptive to our opinions, in some stories we say to her: that it is not nice, and it is not religiously purposeful, but the curriculum we don't know what happened in it, we have submitted our opinions about pros and cons, and we don't know what happened.
66-   When have you submit these reports? A Year?
When first we received the curriculum, from the moment we applied it, we write cons and cons, weekly or monthly.

67-   Why have it stopped? Or it has a fixed time?
In our school it was applied for a specific duration, and they extended it for another year. They said: because we didn't apply it from the beginning of the year. Then other schools are applying it now and there are programs other than Bwakir, I expect that the administration will give us a new program called the Indian, and there is another one called the creative program and the Princess Nora University applying it.

68-   OK if you apply a new program other than the one you studied in the university, do you feel that it is better and benefiting children or your first curriculum was better?
Of-course change is better, but when you have a background, I mean if you apply the new program without having a background, you will never know whether you are applying it right or wrong, you only read from books, they should give you names

69-   Ok talking about you as a teacher, when you receive a new program, do you sometimes feel that is better to omit some staff?
Of course, I reject some staff, for example, there were stories harmful to the child, not good for children. A non-pedagogical, affecting the mentality of the child, I skipped it, and even when the supervisor Hayat Aldehiem came to us, we told her that these stories have bad things, she said, "Ok, you as a teacher are capable of choosing from what is right and what is wrong. I mean some of them were flexible.
Yes, some staff are obligatory, I mean they said to the teacher just apply it and tell us about your opinion.
Some of the stories have religious staff.
I mean it enters in religion a little and you enter the mind of the child, it's hard to teach it to the child, the kid receives information about this staff and believe that this is the right thing, we have to omit it as teachers, but we are obliged to apply classes, and we tell them about our observations, about pros and cons.

70-   OK God bless you, do you want to add anything?
No thanks.

71-   Back to the program, I mean training programs in working times of the year, do you want it to be the same or you want to change the timing?
Yes, sure.

72-   Or you want them to terminate it?
We want it to continue and improve.

73-   When you heard that the centre will be closed and there are no courses anymore, do you agree with that or against it?
That doesn't affect us.
Yes.
because it didn't give me my right to improve as a teacher.
I mean maybe Abeer Alsalem courses are very good
Very good, like I fifth of her courses will not be forgotten, the way of encouraging and flirting the child, the effective method, all was serving me and the child, frankly develops me.
But the centre added nothing to me.
But we wish that Abeer Alsalem courses continue, and We hope we can attend these courses constantly.
Yes, it renews our information.

74-   Does it depend on the conversational way with the child or just receiving information?
No, not a conversational way, and there are public and light workshops she was going to make to us in the same course, when no one participated, she said.
Because it's short, but in the centre, it lasts for two months.

75-   What do you mean by short?
5 days for 4 hours, for example.

76-   In the whole year or a term?
Depending on the courses, when I attended a course, it was for 5 days in a term, 5 days. and 3 days course only, it was useful, gives you information, it benefits you.

77-   Does it give you scientific facts, on CDs?
The courses in the centre last for two months and it is only a reminder of what we studied, as if you are just a trainee. There is nothing new

78-   Do you mean that the courses of the Centre are often a mere reminder of information?
Yes, what we took and studied before.
It works for non-specialist teachers.

Yes.

79-   There is nothing about new programs?
there are really teachers that are specialized in kindergarten, they studied in another specialization, this could add to her a value and increase her information; because she didn't study the things we had in the collage I mean, courses that we attend in the centre are the same that we had already studied and two months was too long.
 (6:17) Abeer al-Salem.
80-   Because these are methods, and this is a incouraging technique.
Yes, encouraging.
81-   Do methods and techniques of learning the education of the child benefit you?
Benefit me and benefit the child, and we said to Abeer Alsalem We hope that these courses will be constantly attended.
We hope that a teacher like Abeer Alsalem will be here with us in the kindergarten (16:34) came back, but the kid has a problem, if we have a kid (16:40) already his key.
 if Abeer Salem is here she will give you the technique how to deal with this kid.
(1650) , treating the child.

82-   Can communicate with her and ask her for courses? Or is it necessary to be through the management?
No, it has to be through the management.
we haven't tried.

83-   You haven't tried?
We went once and they said the number is not enough and we got back (17:02) Once we submitted our names and they didn't mentioned them, I mean that it is not that easy to attend the course.
84-   It means that you do not attend the courses and you need to take courses, are you keen to attend or you just wait for the administration or the ministry?
No, we are waiting for our turn.
85-   If, for example, you heard about a new course.
I cannot attend it, because I have to go through my school, I mean if the course is in working times and it must be through school.
86-   . What about attending a paid course, on your expense? Have you tried?
No, we didn't attend at our expense, because we're out of working times.
87-   Or do you feel that it is not worth it? Attending a paid course at your expense because the environment is inherently useless?
Yeah, of course, honesty Sometimes we need to attend for our kids. Talking about Abeer Alsalem courses not only benefit us in school, but even in your home and your life.

88-   Because her courses are offered to kindergarten teachers or anyone can attend?
No kindergarten teachers.
Specially for them.
who attends in general.
But not related to the ministry, just teachers.
And generally, the kindergarten must be well prepared, the environment helps, so the teacher can perform well and because the kids and the teacher comfort, but this is unfortunately is not available in our schools, because the kindergarten building is neglected, they think that you only put kids they had started recently to care.

89-   Unfortunately? what do you mean?
They think that you bring your kids and come to take them back, just come and go, that is why they don't care, but they must take care of schools, because it is child's formative stage, a child's personality building.
already some children have changed, I mean because we hear from their mothers that kids have changed.
Yes, they had benefited.
From this education.
Not religiously.

90-	Do you mean as a teacher that you feel of the importance of kindergarten education? but it lacks.
Education raises it.

91-	Yes, of course, or something that includes the educational ladder, Here the educational ladder starts from elementary school not from kindergarten, sadly it is not obligatory, although mothers feel that it is important even mothers who are house wives want their children to go to kindergarten more than the educated mother I've noticed that a lot, I'm wondering: why we are studying at the university as a specialty of kindergarten and in the society there are no kindergartens and there is no recognition that it is a very very important stage for the child.
(19:35) for the Nursery, important hopefully, the kindergarten needs it.

92-	Insha'Allah, we are as researchers, hopefully can benefit and do some change but of course as they say one hand will not clap
Of course, it should happen

93-	A decision is required.
of the ministry.
94-	Ministerial decision.
We consider it the best stage honestly and the best thing for the child personality and it lasts for a life time in the kid's personality, this stage is not important in learning letters and numbers, what really matters is the child personality.

95-	Of course, because of this I studied about the teacher, because the teacher is the important milestone for the child is this stage.
Child-building.
96-	She is the most important thing, because she is the example.
Building a person, building a lifelong personality, the kindergarten stage is the stage of building the person.

97-	6 years.
Yes, it is the foundation, the environment should be good, tools should be available, and all means that leads to success in order to become useful.

98-	The most important thing as I told you: the teacher is the base, because she is the one who has a direct relationship with the child. I have to comfort the teacher like I said to have a good teacher, so after this (20:39) the child, my study is really like this, does the teacher actually benefit from the courses, you told me about the educational environment importance.
If it is the first stage of learning ladder.
The first stage in learning is Kindergarten.
99-	Is it the most important thing, for the teacher, to be able to achieve and succeed.
Yes, of course, gives more.
100-	. Thank you.
You're welcome.

Interview 3:

Sample No. 3 - Date 8th March.

1-   Are you specialized in kindergarten?
Yes.
2-   Bachelor or else?
Bachelor of Kindergarten.
3-   Ok Kindergartens, well how many years have you worked in teaching?
23 years.
4-   Spend it all in teaching? as a teacher, nothing else?
Yes, after graduation along.
5-   Masha Allah, after you finish education you worked right ahead?
Yes.
6-   Have you been working in an administrative work in kindergartens?
Do you mean in the same teaching field? Yes, sometimes in workshops, simple works.
7-   No, I mean administrative work that has nothing to do with children, Ok when was the last time you attended a course?
5 years 7 years ago.
8-   Were they at the center or outside the center?
It was in the center for two months.
9-   5years for two months, were you want to attend or not?
I wanted to attend, for a change, although I hear from my colleagues the same things that I had studied for 20 years it is the same thing, that happens in the course, there is no change.
10-   Do you mean that they give the same course since the time the center have established to date?
When I first get employed I was 20 years old and it was the same I mean through their questions they told us that it is the same, there is only a little change in practical application.
11-   Do you mean workshops?
Yes workshop, this is the only thing that has changed.
12-   20 years ago, the center goal was to develop, are you saying that it did not develop until now?
Yes, because it is still using the same programs, what I heard from my colleagues I realize it is the same in the term, except the practical field has changed a little bit, they put us in groups, and we apply.
13-   You mean it's ways?
But the general goals are the same
14-   Do you mean that they used to depend on the lectures, then they started to do workshops as groups working together?
It has the same general goals, only workshops and groups.
15-   The content is the same?
The same, I mean the nature of the elements, the names elements, contents of elements, all our discussions about these things.
16-   And The same way with your colleagues, that you have nothing to do with the child, you are a trainee in the lecture, I mean that you have nothing to do with children in the center, you don't deal with. Children?
No, except by watching, the surveillance rooms. We used to have activity and we go and see this example, like a story, or a practical activity in the lecture or a practice.
17-   For example, they tell you that the teacher in the specific class applies a new method.
Yes, on the same activity.
18-   We're in the lecture, come and see.
Not a new way, but an activity, activity, yes.
19-   or a method, activity, solving a particular problem, come and see how.
Yes, a teaching method for example, how to narrate a story.
But no problems.
20-   Of course, the reason you attend courses that you like doing so, right?
I like the section, I love change.
21-   Do they relate it to promotion, or a certificate, is it linked to anything?
No.

22-   Do you mean that you are free to attend or not? or you feel that it's the same thing? Same program? Or the content as you said: You have an idea of what you are going to attend the curriculum, the goals?

Yes, the course name, it's date, and the lecturer, but it didn't happen to me. in the trips, they told us about the behavioral goals once it was good for the lecture, workshop, how to put behavioral goals, general goals, special goals and it was for Nawal al-Zamzami.

23-   And how you put the target?

Yes, this was one time, at the beginning of my work may be 15 years ago.

24-   Ok what is right, and you also have it when you study in the Bachelor?

Of course, but in a nice way, it was only in 3 days it was more concentrated.

25-   The course content all focused on the child or on the teaching method, or on the goals?

On how you deal with children

26-   Yes, with the child.

No, unfortunately, a lot of theoretical lecture, I feel as a kindergarten teacher, the most important thing is behavior. the most important thing that if the teacher succeed with the child is enough, I mean the other things to be forgotten, of course, the environment and costs, but I guess the most important thing honestly is the child behavior, if the teacher couldn't apply this. And the first time she learns it in the courses, I feel that it won't work so why to make the course?

The course depends (4:34) the course, giving you the course.

27-   Do you mean the lecturer?

Yes, Of course.

28-   As you said Masha Allah, the lecturer is giving you the course, even though she is not (4:40)?

I mean we haven't attended a course for her yet.

I did not attend for her but this is from the words of our colleagues, they were really benefited God bless, it has some benefits, from the topics that she choose for the of interest of the child, the most important thing is the child, the child's interest, but they always say: The most important thing is the child's interest but in reality, they don't care about the child, the most important thing is the attendance of the teacher, the teacher should do so.

29-   The most important thing what do you call it? the report, for example, you submit it at the end?

Yes, I mean that they don't care about the child, these courses for example, we come to work and apply Bwakir, they didn't give us courses for it before we apply it, they don't care about the child, the most important thing is that we apply the program, no matter we applied it right or not.

In terms of planning, sometimes it's not the right time, same subject that we've studied before. Does the environment suit the application of this program or not? for example not any kindergarten we can apply on it, whether its financial capabilities, the environment, teachers, I don't know sometimes I feel that it is not well planned.

yes, an extemporaneous application.

30-   Do you mean the course?

Yes, like Bwakir, frankly, it was very inappropriate, when they first came it was in the regular study time, even the child, they didn't study the child, the program has changed for the child, I mean distracting the child.

Even the daily program of the child has changed.

31-   But they had started it with you since the beginning of the year I mean with new kids?

No, it wasn't. it was in the middle of the year, we were shocked, we received a letter, and we had signed that we will apply the program, the program was compressed, teachers were not prepared, and environment was not appropriate. About application of the program they come (6:35) said: We are no longer care about children, It means I don't have time to listen to the child his problems, behaviors modification and guidance, the most important thing is to fill the child head with information and apply this program, we have to apply it, I am obliged to apply it today, I don't care about the child, what matters to me is his behavior, how to deal with him, even the child, I didn't give him his right, we gave a little attention to the program, this is bad planning like what she told you, there should be planning, including the teacher.

Of course, honestly, we have well prepared kindergartens like those in airport and in Dakhlya, I mean honestly this is what we studied in our curriculum in kindergarten.

32-   Do you mean that kindergartens should be managed by private sector, and buildings should be prepared to be kindergartens?
The airport kindergarten is managed by a private sector honestly this is what I studied in the kindergarten department
Yes, it is managed by them it was well prepared.
33-   You even noticed that the kindergarten in Khargia, the one of King Saud because it is (7:37) OK, managed by the government, but it is prepared as a private sector.
If a Private sector build the kindergarten it will be by people who knows well about kindergartens the building should be built on a proper space, for sure the one who built it doesn't have any background about kindergartens and really when I talked to the administration they said: "it is normal kids enters classes." You feel that they have no background about the child and what is the program they are learning; how do I get him into class?
34-   Do you mean that the most thing you noticed that the environment is negatively affecting you?
Of course, the environment is the most thing affecting us, Also the contradictions in what we studied because it is the same from the very first time we get to work until we retire it is the same thing never change.
The same contradiction that we were talking about before from some lecturers saying different instructions, and different ways to solve problems.
Sometimes a supervisor come who is non-specialized in kindergarten, honestly, I was astonished, a manager should be specialized in kindergarten, even the assistant should be specialized in kindergarten, sometimes they employ people who know nothing about kindergartens.

35-   Comes to monitor you as a teacher?
She works with elementary and medium classes, she doesn't know about kindergarten, she doesn't know what are the activities we are implementing, and comes to say directions to the teacher, how come? This is so frustrating to the teacher.
36-   Does this mean that the administrative body sometimes is not prepared to deal with the teacher?
Of course, but I'm frankly in general, our manager here is excellent,
Because she studied in kindergartens specialization.
I mean she is a good boss, and she understand us,
Female managers must be specialized in kindergarten, also assistants have to be specialized in kindergarten, they're working on the teachers now. Sometimes teachers work as kindergarten teachers while they are not specialized in kindergarten, that is why we say that this course is useful for them for two months duration, because they didn't study they take a course for two months equals what we studied for 4 years in just two months.

37-   . All right you have teachers with a bachelor degree in kindergarten and teachers who did not study kindergarten, do you feel any difference?
Of course.
38-   From what point? From a cognitive standpoint?
Dealing with a child, how much she spent.
39-   More or less?
less frankly.
And frankly I can notice.
40-   Well, with experience?
After experience, but when she first come, with no experience.

41-   After having good experience.
What's wrong, we have many teachers graduated from kindergarten why did she take an assistant who is not specialized in kindergarten and employ her in a kindergarten so that she can deal with the child, when the child is out, and when the child enters, she come to the class and attend classes with the teacher. how she evaluates me while she is not specialized?
 really.
42-   You are right in this point, okay. What are the qualities that improved you in the program, is it the groups and workshops more than lectures?

Of course, the practical application is better, mean anything in the practical application in any field.

and entrenches in mind.

Of course.

43-   was the time right for you?

What time?

44-   I mean it's Timing, when they put the course schedule during working times, do you like it when it is at your working times, or you like to attend it in the vacations so you can be prepared then start working?

No, I prefer it to be at the beginning of the year.

45-   At the beginning of the year?

Yes, I mean, not at the end of the year.

46-   or in the middle?

I feel that the best timing for the course is at the beginning of the year.

47-   At the beginning of the year, do you mean before kids start the school year?

Yes, possible, or at the beginning of the school year, I mean the first week of the year, I mean this is the best timing, but at the end of the year this is not worthy at all.

48-   Do you want it to be at the beginning of the year not in the middle nor at the end?

Of course, at the beginning, even the courses that we are attending now speaking about me for example it is my 20th year in service and I took these courses, it should be for those who spend three or four years only, I'm about to get retired, and they oblige me to attend a course.

50-   Do you feel like you don't need courses?

At the end of the service.

51-   No in general?

Of course not, the course is like development for teachers but it would be better if I take it at the beginning I mean as a benefit in the way of instructing.

The beginning of the teaching stage, because it is refreshment for information that I took at university

Then I feel that it is the most important thing is courses.

Teaching, for teaching, because it benefits me more.

52-   In your point of view, when the teacher stays for 15 or 20 years in the teaching field, she doesn't need courses?

Of course, she needs courses, but not courses like these that lasts for two months.

53-   Do you mean the basic courses?

I mean like Abeer Alsalem courses, which lasts for 3 days, gives you behavior instructions, behavior modification, encouragement, effective compliments, all things that benefit the child.

54-   Not the theoretical courses

Of course, and recall all the curriculum that I already studied before.

I studied and I benefit from experience, practical application experiences are the best teacher's school, courses at beginning of teaching stage are better.

55-   Well, what do you think if the teacher participates in courses? What if she teaches courses?

Some teachers are capable, and there are experts I mean most teachers who were giving us courses were teachers at the center, but at the same center they teach children and giving us lectures.

56-   Do you mean the teacher must be in the schooling member or a teacher who studied at college, I mean the teacher herself who lives in the environment who spend every day with the child for 20 years is better? I feel that she should give the course?

Equally with other members.

most of teachers in the center were my college colleagues. I think Ahlam Alshbib, and (13:24) were my colleagues, they instruct us for an activity called building pillar, activity, each one is specialized in something, and I really feel that they are perfect, they really have experience, for example.

the child, when he first come to the kindergarten it is his first time to speak, interact or deal with another child, but reality is different in application.

57-   Ok let's get back to the courses, what are the benefits in the courses that made deference to you, even the short courses that you attended?

Of course, the most important thing is teaching methods.

58-   Does it have direct impact on you? Or takes long time, I mean after you finish the course or can it last for years?

I didn't attend behavioral courses, but I think theoretical lectures for teaching is good, I mean it continues with me, teaching methods.

59-   Did it affect you?

honestly, I didn't attend, I was hoping to attend a course about behavioral problems for kids, I mean this was what I was really needy of I mean sometimes a child come and I couldn't deal with him, this is the most thing that the teacher needs, but she already studied methods of teaching how to introduce the material in a different way that's all.

60-   what is the most important thing that improves your personality and skills after the course? What is the most important thing?

I became able to give more. I became more professional.

61-   What do you mean by professional?

Capable of teaching a material by two ways I mean, I narrate a story differently than before, not abstracted.

I mean I am not obliged to do things as instructed, in a solid way, But I can be flexible or change in it.

62-   Do you really feel that the programs and courses that you had attended really benefited you? You say thank God that I attend this course and it was the same nothing new added?

No, on the contrary, it renews the information honestly its nice, developing my personality and my way of dealing with children, on the contrary I feel that it is really good, but I wished to attend more courses

63-   Do you mean more courses?

Yes, more courses, I feel they are renewing information, breaking for the Routine.

64-   Well, the content of the courses, do you wish to be the same or change?

No, of course to change.

65-   Like what? what do you wish to change? you mentioned courses other than behavioral skills?

Yes, teaching methods, for example, dealing with children.

Child guidance. I mean, this is important.

Often how to deal with children, for example some stubborn children.

about behaviors.

behaviors, child orientation.

66-   I mean the center when you went to the center you didn't see their books? Their time is tomorrow right?

I expect it is Units.

67-   I understand from your words that the content of the courses in the center is what you studied in the Bachelor of Self-learning of the child, do you study about scholars or do they divide them? I mean what have you studied in kindergarten?

I mean whatever the characteristics of children, we studied psychology of growth.

68-   Stages of growth.

Yes, educational psychology, we took a second way to deal with kids. this is the most important thing in the curriculum.

69-   They care more about curriculums?

Yes, but I really was shocked when I found that it has been 20 years and the program is the same, only a little change the ways of discussion.

How they changed it, does it become better when they changed it? it includes workshop, with a little practical application.

The teacher started to apply a little

Yes, now they developed it a little bit, their become training for the teacher, means more than just receiving solid information.

70-   Okay, now, is there anything in your mind that you want to add? About the Training center, about courses?

Who told you that (17:09)

71-   They told me, and by the way they are upset, do you have anything you want to add on the program or the courses?

Nothing in particular.

72-   Do you wish it continues or stop?

On the contrary, I feel that the courses are important

73-   Is it important also for the teachers of the next generations?
Of course, I feel it's important, but the most important that the teacher should attend it in the beginning of her work.
74-   Even if she was a kindergarten teacher? In your opinion it is important for her too?
Of course, teacher always needs to developed.
75-   What is the most useful course time to the teacher? When she gets employed? Or after 10 or 15 years? Or when.
Yes, at first, frankly.
76-   At the beginning of her work?
Because the most important thing is the beginning.
77-   And you
Of course, in the beginning, and in particular, Abeer Al Salem courses
78-   Why?
Because it serves the teacher in how to deal with children.
79-   coordinated the environment between her and the children, it is a reality.
I mean from their talk about her Masha Allah, she gives you a solution for every behavioral problem that you face in class, with children, how do you encourage children, every child is deferent than the other.
80-   And you like it to be at the beginning or continuously?
at beginning is better.
81-   For the new teacher?
Of course.
82-   Focus on children?
Even if she is specialized in kindergarten, the course is good at the beginning, because she gets improved when she attends course.

83-   Do you want the course to focus on the child, not focus on the curriculum that you had already studied, or on theoretical topics?
On the child, the most important thing is the child, and frankly the most important for the teacher is to love the child, for kindergarten it is the most important point, because some courses are not useful, that's what I believe.
And we are suffering from it.
the most important point in the kindergarten teacher is that she must be specialized in kindergarten, really, she must love the child, she shouldn't refuse dealing with certain child, some people can't bear to deal with a child and she shouldn't do (19:1910) this thing and she shouldn't enter this department.
Yes, I mean sometimes she screams at the child, and the kid in this stage shouldn't be yelled at. She could cause problems to the child.
The kid reaction is that he doesn't want to go to school anymore so it is not enough to be specialized in kindergarten, but she must love this department and likes dealing with children.
84-   Meaning.
We studied it in our first curriculum in kindergarten that you should love children.
85-   Before university, or before you choose the department in university there must be a personal study for who want to become a kindergarten teacher
I mean not for her looking or color even the tiring person for the child if you change it, that means you're a successful teacher, I'm focusing on behavior regardless anything else, what's the point of doing something while I'm not capable.
Some of the teacher enter and say: Yes, it is easy to teach kindergarten children, they enter because it is the easiest department.
86-   When I give lectures in university, I suffered from the same girls.
Because it's easy.
Excuse me I want to finish because, time is out, OK.

Interview 6:

In the name of God the most gracious, the most merciful,

Teacher No. 2.

1- First thing, your specialty of course is kindergarten, right?

Kindergarten Yes.

2- How many years have you worked in teaching field?

I started working 15 years ago, 4 of them were in management.

3- Yes, you worked as...

An assistance.

4- At the beginning of your work.

Yes, at the beginning, after I spent a year as a teacher, first year teacher, then four years as an assistant.

5- And After this?

I returned to teaching again.

6- As a first teacher?

Yes.

7- The field of management and teaching made deference to you?

Of course, it makes a difference but I always see myself as a teacher

8- Do you like the field of teaching?

Yes I changed to teaching.

9- When was the last time you attended a course?

Almost 3 years ago I attended Abeer Alsalem course but I forget the name of the course.

10- A short term course?

Yes only for three-days.

11- Why did you attend it?

Abeer Al Salem?

12- Yes, you needed to attend it or not?

No, I was evaluating the kindergarten before teachers and we attended it.

13- And you like to attend it?

I don't feel the courses, especially courses held here or even lectures held outside (1:15) Of course so much related (1:19) it causes me crisis.

14- Do you mean by here inside the kindergarten?

Yes, Inside the kindergarten.

15- Outside you mean in another place?

No, I didn't attend any course outside.

16- With regard to courses in the training center in the embassies district, during working times, have you attended a two-month course?

Two months from 13 years.

17- 13 years ago, what was the reason for your attendance?

It was first when I got employed as an assistant, they nominated me to attend it, but it didn't help me a lot as an assistant, I wish it could be useful for the teacher. I decided to use it when I get back to my work and with kids, it was better especially in my first years of service, I had only worked for a year in teaching, It improves many things in me.

18- Do you mean that it is better for the teacher than the management employee, because when you came back you couldn't apply it as an assistant?

(02:14) I mean Purely administrative, It can help me with a local evaluation that affects me but i can't (2:20) But it was a whole bunch of teachers they didn't attend the course that I was (2:24) when I attend it, there was a big group didn't attend the course it is hard to say that these things, these teachers needed it The group that used to say you should give them a background about the course that you attended so you can apply it.

19-   Now I understand that when you attend the course, you were working as an administrative employee, so you felt that it wasn't useful, right?
Not much, when I attended it then I didn't feel that it was useful for me a lot.

20-   Do you feel that it would be better if you attend it when you get back to teaching work?
Yes, I attended it. Then I stayed working in the administration for a while, and then (2:55) teaching, then I begin to retrieve information gradually.

21-   Have you attend the same course again as a teacher?
No, I feel it's the same things that we studied in the university, application is more useful because there is new things.

22-   Is the course dependent on self-learning as theoretical information, or as behavioral skills or solving problems in the child?
It included everything, we were taking lessons in classes then we apply them with kids
.
23-   OK let's talk about other courses that you attended after a while?
Do you mean in the center?

24-   No, you attended one only in the center, right?
Yes, only this one three-year ago, about the behavior guidance, I forget the title.
25-   Do you remember the courses that you were attending in the center, was it divided?
About elements for example, we attend workshops for example about an element, workshops on the perception element, of course the beginning of the course is about child's development stages, about how (4:01) directing behavior, behavioral problems of children, then the elements, (04:05) teacher (04:06) an element after another, for kids, then evaluating a teacher, develop any element, I mean development is a must, after this we take notes with the kids, we go to monitoring rooms, we enter and start to apply what we have been taught us.

26-   Before you attend the course or before you joined it in the center, had you any idea about its goals, its outputs and how it can benefit you?
No, I remember I was from the first batch that attended this course.

27-   13 years ago, you went and attend without knowing what the course is about?
No, I knew its content, it was about directing the behavior and related staff, I had an idea about it before, they told me.

28-   Had They gave you this information in written?
I mean we were hearing about it in the training center.

29-   I mean officially by a document, about objectives of the course? Expected?
No.
30-   The lecturer also was giving you information before and after the course, about the aspects of Child development, did the courses benefit you?
Do you mean courses that I had attend?

31-   Yes.
Of course it benefits me

32-   Child development aspects?
Of course we studied it but it refreshed our information.

33-   Was it a repeat of what you studied at the university?

Almost yes. but I also heard that in the last few years, things have been developed and changed, I didn't take it in the course that I attended, so many things have changed from what I learnt in the course before, even the same course (5:41) things have been developed in it, not the same information.

34-   Methods of educating the child before what, although you have told me 13 years ago I mean I expect that nothing has changed, I mean especially that you didn't returned back to teaching but to administration.

When I finished the course yes.

35-   When you finished the course, did you benefit from methods of teaching a child or not?

It was almost close to the things that we apply at work, I mean for me I measure (6:06) central activity, I don't measure it with the level of teaching like kindergarten in the university, because the method of teaching in kindergarten of the university is generally advanced, they always develop it continuously. things we look for and apply, this is way better compared to the rest of the kindergartens.

36-   I mean from about 13 years till now the child sure changed, right?

Child.

37-   Your children that you work with before?

Do you mean the kids level?

38-   The child himself.

Sure of course, yes sure.

39-   Do you feel that methods of education is keeping up with these changes from generation to another, or it is the same curriculum that since 13 years until now?

Teaching methods are suitable but the information you submit to the child, for example, what kind of information we should submit to the child.

40-   Do you mean teaching methods and communicating information?

Yes, and there are many methods, yes.

41-   Is the teacher supposed to change?

This is due to the teacher of course

42-   But the same information.

Topics and information have been enriched with new things especially subjects methods changed, it is impossible to submit the same information that were submitting since 10 or 3 years ago; because (7:26) means in a simple example I might told you about, for example when we talk about the mailman First he was in a post officer, in a mail courier that I might understand, we are now saying via email, via Internet, or via another programs, we explain these things to them that we can deliver a message from a person to another.

43-   Okay, now you lead me to ask you about the curriculum, curriculums that was since13 or 20 years ago.

the same.

44-   Well, why curriculums don't change, like what you've just said, some curriculums include units that cannot be useful because things have changed, for example as you said the postman are now ways of communication

This is not usual, for example, the unit itself has concepts that need to be developed, for example, I say cancel a concept and put another.

45-   Are you free to do so?

Or a new concept is included, but we as teachers specialized in this field, I mean with diligence teachers are keeping up with development here. We submit a report about a unit, we include these things in a way that does not contradict with the lesson, and enter the class talking about these new things, I am not obliged to be restricted with the content of the old curriculum.

46-   This means you are free to do so?

Sure there is freedom yes, for example I have a unit in a curriculum that has a book, it is the same book that had been used for years ago I mean for kindergarten stage (08:40) I can

merged between the two (8:42) second, or change the objective. a simple change of course I mean, I put different objectives for weak children and other objectives when I feel that the child considered obvious thing (8:52) at this point, in this time.

47-   Do you remember the Teachers training center, so far, do you remember the educational environment? The classroom environment?
Years ago?

48-   Yes, do you remember? Did you go there again?
I went a couple of years ago but I returned quickly, it was on the vacation, I didn't stay with them.
49-   Do you remember when you attended a course there? Types and attributes of the program they were presenting courses through, for example lectures, workshops, timing and did you feel that it improved you?
Do you mean It's timing?

50-   Timing, teaching methods?
They were workshops, groups, yes, it was effective, and it was dividing us to groups, (9:39) groups, (9:41) lecture style and indoctrination, what was it, even 13 years ago, there were groups, workshops, we used to apply things, enter classes and apply chapters for example, like if we take any information about any element, the lecturer enters the class and apply it with children, or monitors how it is applied

51-   Have you started the two-months course, by lectures or direct workshops?
We started by lectures then goals yes.
52-   Then you returned?
Then workshops, that's what I recall.

53-   Dis the exchange of experiences between you and other teachers in different kindergartens benefited you? different experiences I mean
With my colleagues with me in the course

54-   Yes, in the course
Do you mean they were presenting their experience?
55-   Yes, teachers from different kindergartens, the same?
11 years ago, of course a long period, but I always wished to apply it, I would like to be a teacher.

56-   While you were a teacher.
as teacher, it benefits me more I mean, solidify information that I have learned is more here (10:39)

57-   Was there any other group worked as managers and assistants?
Yes, assistants were attending, some assistants really (10:47) there was an assistant working in the same place with me.

58-   Why they were nominated to attend courses, they loved it or what?
(10:53), I was nominated by a turn. And then each term another two teachers attend, until it was my turn.

59-   What is the negative thing that you didn't like about courses?
The negative things it was just a long time, but the level was so good and useful for me if I was a teacher, Do you mean me personally?

60-   Yes, for you as a teacher?
It gave me new information, for things I've been doing during the college and Training, I mean, it assured me information, things now are amended and developed, I mean, there are things that have been developed. We are applying it now, they adopt experiences of colleagues, other trainees, we benefited from them.

61-   timing and duration is two months?
For me it was from 8 to 12, it was a good time for me.

62-   two-months period was sufficient?
Yes, It was enough.

63-   Did you feel that it was concentrated, and you wanted a longer time?
This is very enough, two months from 8 to 12.

64-   Have you taken full-time of courses that you do not work in kindergarten?
No, It was a full term, I started working from the other term.

65. Ok you told me that when you came back you felt that it didn't affect you and it wasn't beneficial to you because you got back?
I've applied many things with the teachers, but of course I couldn't do with the director because the teachers are mostly were still attending this course and they needed teachers to organize training workshops, while I couldn't organize it but the director forced me to organize training workshops but it was necessary (12:48) must be someone capable to be courses lecturer, I've tried but there was some rejection from some groups of teachers I couldn't apply things I used to study in the training center I am (13:00) because they didn't received these information yet and they didn't learn about and still (13:03) take a background about it, specially this kind of courses.

65-   In the course or enrolment?
No, In the things that I didn't want to change in the elements for example, the way the element is prepared.

66-   After you have returned.
After I came back, right, so we started to be patient to finish with the group I mean it was necessary to attend to make a change, inside the school, to evaluate things you learned in the course, your crew must be cooperative, and they should join yes.

67-   Why? (13:32)
Of course yes and then don't take (13:34) for example the one I present or me, once or twice, in a lecture or two, a workshop or two, no, I mean they should know it as I learned it, they take enough time.

68-   Well, for you, as a person, you have a skill, does any of your skills have changed, or your way of thinking?
After the course?

69-   Yes, After the course.
Maybe I earned more self-confidence, I mean when I do something I became sure that it is right, knowing that it is right made me more confident, here is according to the child if it doesn't work with a child, I look for a second alternative.

70-   What are the things that absolutely changed, because that time your experience was little, two years, right?
Yes Short.

71-   But it may have added to your experience?
Of course, it added a lot to my experience but maybe the years of working in the administration was an obstacle.

72-   There was no direct contact with children?
Yes, it doesn't consolidate information in your mind, you should be a teacher to apply what you studied when you get back to work.

73-   Do you agree with or against the long courses? and which is better? The short or the continues courses?

For this course I feel that it qualifies a teacher from all aspects, especially this course I feel that it is much useful, it benefited me although I am a kindergarten graduate, It has reinforced information that I already have, and have added many information to me, but I feel that the long course is intense, it also benefit teachers that are not specialized in kindergartens, when I was a lecturer and I have in my group teachers specialized in kindergarten (15:17) she got shocked by the information she is learning, and for me this information I already learned and trained.

74- So the curriculum of the program?
It is useful for teachers especially those who are not specialized in kindergartens.

75- Self-learning curriculum, which is held in the program of the training center is more useful for the non-specialist teacher?
Sure it added to me, sure if it is a long time (15:39) but also it is more useful for the non-specialized.

76- OK you as a teacher specialized in kindergarten is there any courses you wish to attend? And you want the center to do it?
Yes, sure I need. not anyone can (15:58) for example the lecturer should be have nice personality who can attract the listener with a new topic not just solid instruction.

77- Do you mean the lecturer?
Yes, the lecturer, I feel like she has to give me new information, that I need.

78- What is the content that you want it to be there, And what is the most thing that you need to develop in your work?
I need a good lecturer. I mean the coaches here are normal, I mean when (16:29) outside courses, when they brought lecturers from outside for example Hayat Aldheem, May God have mercy on her soul.

79- Who?
Hayat Aldheem the director of the training center, her style was very interesting, and even when (16:43) gave me a new method, it was my first time to know it.

80- was she the former director of the center?
Yes, the former director of the center, also she was a lecturer, the way she submits information, Coach spirit, I miss her frankly.

81- Do you mean the trainer herself?
Yes, frankly the personal trainer
.
82- Do you mean that the content depends on the trainer in a way how she submits information?
Yes, the delivery of information, sometimes we attend courses and the trainer has just read it from the Internet or a book.

83- After 13 years, I mean good experience in the field of kindergarten what is the special course that can make you really want to get out of kindergarten and go to a training center to attend?
You mean to learn it?

84- Yes.
Sure, as a teacher no matter how the human learns he is missing many things. I mean I cannot say that I know everything, maybe the method of (17:39) A method of modifying behavior, child inclusion at this age, especially at the beginning of the year, how (17:53) The teacher.

85- Have you dealt with all the ages in kindergarten?
No, I'm only dealing with the second-level age, which is 4 to 5 years old, the first Level is with (18:03) The third level This is the first year to deal with.
.
86- The third level, which is from 5 to 6?

Yes from 5 to 6 pre-school, (15:13)

87-   Are the third level the most difficult?
There is nothing difficult and easy, it is all about ..

88-   Your acceptance and treating children.
I got used to a certain age, if I worked with a different age I feel that i don't know how to deal with them because I was very honest (18:25) level two, I knew them. I mean I knew how to deal with them from the beginning of the year, I mean I know their characteristics and dealt with it, speaking of me.

89-   What about the bigger age? OK talking about courses if they suggested that you take courses for example outside the kingdom, for example in Bahrain, or Kuwait, or within the kingdom's cities, that can help you, do you agree with that? To develop teachers and benefit from experts in other countries and different environments?
Sure I will benefit from it, of course.

90-   Do you agree with this, that the teacher should take courses outside?
Conversely, because the courses are mostly the same, I mean same content, it only varies by the way of the lecturer.

91-If you heard or read about a course, for example in Kuwait, and for a good lecturer, and you wanted to attend it, have you suggested this to the administration or on, you can go but on your expense, in a personal way, and you want to benefit?
If the work nominated me, sure I will go.

91-   You want to do so?
Yes.

92-   Do you mean that you agree with exchange of experience.
when I went to the center two years ago, there was a course in the UAE (19:46), Some were nominated to go, and I wanted to go with them, and there were courses abroad.

93-   That means that there are courses abroad?
yes in the centre sure but (19:56) they said no it doesn't include teachers or trainers there was also courses in sharqya but I don't know which city maybe in Khobar of-course in the centre but I wasn't nominated.

94-   Wasn't it for teacher?
There was only one teacher, only one teacher among trainer.

95-   Ok I have a last question are you with attending courses during working times for teachers?
during work?

96-   After I graduate from University and I work at as a teacher if I stayed 10, 15 or 20 years working do I need so? Do you think teachers needs to be developed continuously through long or short courses?
 of course, long term courses but it's a burden on the teacher that you take a course and come back (20:46) you feel like this, sometimes as a teacher when I get back to work I feel there is many stress in work, when I am back to work (20:57) you have been waiting just to do it, the work accumulate

97-   Why is there nobody to cover your absence?
Cover!, only one teacher was the children there is even some information that she doesn't tell children about.

98-   is that why you don't get encourage to attend courses?
no also (21:10) courses have the same content and same topic, I care about more about the lecturer who gives us the course, not only solid instructions.

99-	for you as a teacher the lecturer sometimes is more important than the content of the course?
Sure, her way of submitting information in a special way.

100-	do you have anything to add?
 No, God bless you I wish I could've helped you.

101-	you already helped me hundred percent thank you so much
May God give you wellness, thank you.

Interview 7:

In the Name of God, the most gracious, the most merciful
Third teacher in university nurseries, March 27

1- First, I would like to ask about your specialty?
Welcome, do you want me to tell you my age or just specialty?

2- Only specialty.
Kindergarten from King Saud university.

3- How many years have you worked in Kindergarten department?
14 years

4- have you spent it all in teaching?

yes, all as a teacher

5- haven't you worked in administration department

no

6- when was the last course that you attended?

at the beginning of this year I attended one course

7- last one was in this year?

yes, at the beginning of this year I attended a course, for a week, it was on an experimental

curriculum that is applied in Kindergartens, I attended the course but they didn't apply it at

school, in the last year I went out during working hours to attend the course, but they didn't

apply at my school

8- what was the program?

program was like stations.

9- does it called stations?

no, its name was not station but it is like stations, like this chapter is cognitive, the other chapter

is for art skills, the third chapter was for self-dependence, you take group of children and put

them in a class for an hour, then you take them to another class, then to the third class, etc.

10- was this advised?

yes, a foreign program

11- but it's not applied until now?

in my school they didn't apply it, they should have try it first

12- was it a week long?

Yes, A one-week course

13-   were all Theoretical?

theoretical and practical inside the chamber

14-   inside the same chamber, inside the training center, in embassies district?

yes

15-   have you attended courses?

yes, I attended the long-term course, it was two or three months, this was 6 years ago.

16-   was it the only course that you attended in the center?

yes, it was the only course in the center, but I had attended around 6 short courses, for a day or two.

17-   outside the training center?

yes, outside the training center.

18-   what was the reason that you attended the course?

because it is useful to a teacher, because from a time to another you need refreshment for your information, it reminds you what you have studied.

19-   was it by your own Desire, or you were nominated?

it was a nomination from the administration, and it was so useful at that time for teachers.

20-   most of kindergarten teachers attended this course.

they wanted to benefit from it and to improve their nurseries.

21-   you're the kindergarten teacher, do you feel that this course benefited you, it is all about self-education that you had already studied at university?

yes, it was the same thing that I studied in university, but it was as a refreshment for my information, I can forget things by time, or stop applying it, it reminds me many things.

22-   do you remember other things beside self-education? like behavior skills or solving problems, do you remember them?

yes, in the same course in embassies district, there was children problems solving, for example they give us papers for a problem, and each group of us think for a solution to the problem, and that means that you share your experience with others, and gain experience from others.

23-   Was there experience exchange?

Yes, there was experience exchange.

24-   Was it delivered to you as one curriculum?

What do you mean?

25-   when they teach you how to solve problem with children, or how to deliver information to a kid, were this all under the curriculum of self-education, not separated?

No, under the same curriculum.

26-   And was experience exchange with other teachers useful?

Yes, it was useful for me, it gives me information about how she dealt with children, and maybe I face the same problem in my class, then you remember all solutions that they used.

27-   was there discussion?

yes, there was discussions and solutions, and at the end the Lecturer gives you the last solution that's you can benefit from it as a teacher.

28-   before you attended the course, do you know about the course backgrounds, objectives, and why it is made for you, and the reason for giving this course to you, and what you will benefit after attending the course?

no, I didn't have any background about it.

29-   You knew objectives after attending it?

yes, when I attended the course, each day I realized what are the objectives, but before sending the course, I had no idea about it.

30-   you know nothing about it before attending?

all I know is that it is related to Kindergarten.

31-   what about timing and place?

yes

32-   have you ever tried to ask about objectives?

you mean the course objectives?

33-   yes

after I went to the center, I felt that it's related to kindergarten, so sure it will be useful for me, any course related to kindergarten is an addition for my information and can improve my skills.

34-   as a Kindergarten specialized teacher, you have a background about aspects of children education, and methods of teaching, after you attended the long-term course, was useful for you, or the same?

Do you mean that it added for me?

35-   yes

subjected education writes letters and numbers, by our experience as teachers, buy practice with children, but I benefited from the course, best mobile in another thing like not subjected self-education, in elements, in class.

36-   ok, what about the learning environment in the center? I mean the training center in embassies district, the learning environment, there was a building for courses, and another building for kindergarten classes, it was educational environment for children, have you seen the class room, that is consists of tables for groups, and a place for rest, was the educational environment comfortable? tools that they use and educational materials?

yes, it was uncomfortable

37-   Projector?

it was the ideal Kindergarten

38-   I am asking about the center.

yes, same Kindergarten.

39-   where you took the theoretical lectures, then you return to the kindergarten to apply what you studied, right?

yes, yes, I understood.

40-   a place where you took the theoretical lectures?

the place was good

41-   why?

it was so long since I took the last course, but I remember that the place was not well prepared to take courses.

42-   were groups sitting on round tables?

yes, round tables

43-   as groups?

yes, as groups, we were taking the course and doing everything in the same place, we even take our rest in the same place, I guess it would be better if you take the lecture in a place and have your breakfast and take your rest in another.

44-   I've seen an attached kitchen to the classroom?

Yes, But I didn't like it.

45-   Didn't they use it?

No, they didn't because …

46-   Didn't they do tea or coffee in it?

That was available, but when everything be in the same place it became boring.

47-   Do you mean the 4 or 5 hours between morning and noon?

Yes.

48-   All were in the same place?

Yes, the same place.

49-   This is when you take the theoretical lectures? And training was in classes, right?

Yes, at the end of the course.

50-   It was around only one month, right?

Yes.

51-   What about the way of teaching or the methods of delivering information in the course, lectures and workshops, what do you think about it?

It was nice, but the course room was big, you need complete silence so you can listen carefully, I guess it is better to add microphones so the voice would be clearly heard, it also needs a projector I mean the teaching tools were rudimentary.

52-   Didn't they use projectors or screens?

No, at the time that I attended the course, there was neither a projector nor screens.

53-   Nor smart board?

Yes, but it was primitive.

54-   What did you depend on?

Just voice.

55-   Only the voice of the lecturer? Ok, about the time, do you think the 2 months period was sufficient or not?

Yes, Sure it was good, hoping it will not be more.

56-   When have you attended? At the beginning of the year or at the middle?

I went at the beginning of the year and other people attended at the middle of the same year.

57-   Is the course held twice a year?

Yes, twice

58-   During the term?

Yes.

59-   Ok, what about the number of people attending the course? You said that the voice was not clear, is it related to the number of people attending the course or what?

Yes, because of many people attending, the group was big, and all were divided to groups, when a group start talking it was noisy for other groups, it was hard to hear the lecturer, or the trainer of the workshop, the voice was not clear.

60-   Ok you have told that you attended short courses, were the number of attendance bigger?

No, Of course not, short courses were...

61-   Was it more effective?

It was all effective, courses benefit teachers so much.

62-   Do you prefer short or long-term courses?

The short ones, but not too much short like for one or two days, I think it is better to make it 1 or two weeks, because long term courses are a stress for the assistant teacher, it is hard for her to be in the class alone for 2 months.

63-   Also, when y0ou come back, you find additional work or the same?

No, But I feel sorry for my assistant, when one teacher goes to attend a course, all the class work became on the other teacher, it is too much stress, I think the management should send a backup.

64-   What was less value, lectures or workshops?

I think the lectures, Because I benefited the most from workshops.

65-   Do you mean that application is more useful?

Yes, workshops

66-   Ok, after you returned back, have you worked directly as a teacher or administration work?

No.

67-   Have the courses benefited you in the way of teaching or dealing with children?

Yes, Sure

68-   What is the most thing that impacted you?

Sure, like solving problems, when the lecturer gives you a problem and you solve it, it was useful for me with children, when I face the same problem I solve it in the way of organizing sectors, and how you organize the sector, before I was putting activities in cognitive sector, but

320

when I attended the course I realized that the highest shelf was for muscles, small, big and self-dependence. I knew how to put things in their right place. Ii was actually so useful for me.

69-   Does this mean that it enriched your skills and added more skills to you?

Yes, it was refreshment for my skills, not addition.

70-   Did it give you more ideas?

Yes, it gives me new ideas.

71-   Experiences that you had exchanged with your colleagues?

Yes, sure.

72-   Ok, About the information, have you studied it before?

Yes, in kindergarten department.

73-   Even the methods of teaching, was it modern?

There was a projector, but all were the same topics that I had already studied in the university.

74-   Do you think that the training programs are useful for the teacher, and adding to her skills and information?

If it is all about improving, it is so useful for the teacher.

75-   It depends on the content?

Yes, on the content of the course, hoping that there will not be duplication for your well-known information, but when it is improvement, it will be useful.

76-   Would you like to add anything?

No, God bless you

77-   I have another question, about courses inside and outside KSA, have you ever attended any course outside KSA?

No.

78-   Or another town?

No.

79-   Do you think that it is useful for the teacher to go to Kuwait for example, or Bahrain, to different cultures, for exchanging experience? Or just in different societies?

The idea is good, and it can add to the teacher more experience, but it depends on the teacher's circumstances.

80- If it happens, it will be optional, and the teacher is free to choose.

Yes, Optional

81-   Depends on her circumstances.

If I have the choice

82-   As a teacher, do you prefer to take a course or to be assigned for sometime to go and work in another kindergarten? For example, in Kuwait or Bahrain for one term, to have new skills and be more opened for another culture. Do you think that this is good?

Yes good, but also it depends upon the teachers own situation, if she can do it, then its ok, it will be so good for her, but for me it is going to be hard.

83-   Ok, regarding courses, do you have any opinion, are you asked what do you need to learn before making a course? Or you ask the ministry that you need certain course to improve you? Is the course based on teachers needs?

No, not based on what the teacher wants, courses always are listed in a schedule, and we see the suitable time and the place for us, and we either accept or not, sometimes you right that you want to take this course but your name will not be listed, if you say yes that doesn't mean that you will attend it.

84-   Did it happen before in your full working life that they sent you a survey about aspects that you want to improve in your work so they choose a course that suits you? Not even once?

No,

85-   Really

I don't remember that I had a survey about courses.

86-   They just inform you about courses when they are already set?

Yes, as I told you before, there is a list of courses, where the name, place timing and topic, and you only see what will be suitable for you.

87-   There is no survey or questionnaire about the needs of teachers?

Before the course, No.

Before the course no. Ok thank you so much, God bless you

Interview 8:

In the name of God the most gracious, the most merciful

Nursery, 27th March

1-   What is your specialty?
Kindergarten.

2-   Bachelor?
Yes, Bachelor of kindergarten in 1416

3-   How long have you been working in kindergarten?
It has been 17 years until now.

4-   All as teacher?
Yes, All as teacher.

5-   From the beginning of your career life?
Yes from the beginning, Only this year I became a first teacher, and I am nominated to be the deputy.

6-   Yes Insha'Allah, all were in teaching?
Yes, All in teaching

7-   Have you attended any course in the past 3 years?
Yes, Do you want to know about them?

8-   Yes, what courses?
Shall I tell you about them?

9-   Yes, But not in details.
Courses about cooperative teacher, Child portfolio, and some courses about creative thinking.

10-   All in the training center in embassies district?
No, No I had only one course in the training center.

11-   About self-education?
Yes, exactly, it was about reading and writing, and directed writing, was in the training center.

12-   Was it short or long course?
It was short, only for 3 days.

13-   And what about the rest, have you attend it all in the past 3 years?
Yes, exactly

14-   And was the course in the center in the beginning of your career life?
It was in my seventh year at work, it was not at the beginning.

15-   And why have you attended them?
I was nominated among others, it was about self-learning, and that they need teachers to attend it, to be presented by teachers, that is why me and the manager attended it.

16-   Who attend it can present it?
Yes, for teachers.

17-   Have you worked as a trainer after you attended the course?
Yes, of-course it was not the same that we studied in the course, but the center stopped it after that, and they asked us to nominate teachers to attend it as an obligation.

18-   Then the long term course was a commitment that teachers must attend it?
Yes, It was.

19-   Is she free to choose the time of attending?
No, it was made twice a year, one at the first term and another in the second term. A teacher and her friend attend then the other two in the next term or next year.

20-   Do you mean 2 teachers from one kindergarten? Or nominate the ones who haven't attend it?
No, they were not 2, they were 4, the manager, the deputy and 2 teachers, we were 4.

21-   And now from the beginning of the program until now, most of teachers that didn't attend stayed at their same place?
Yes

22-   Is it nonstop?
Yes

23-   What were the curriculums in courses that you attended in the center?
It was a full school day, it was a lecture and aspects, the daily program, we have finished all the five periods of the daily program, lecture, aspects, Khair meeting, directed learning and one in the playgroup, we fully attend it, 5 periods plus additional practice, it was for 2 weeks we entered classes.

24-   With children?
Yes, we entered classes to be evaluated, and also program evaluation, and how you apply it.

25-   All were in the same training center?
Yes, in the same training center.

26-   Because when I attended the lectures were in chambers outside the kindergarten not inside.
Yes, I attended them outside, and after we finished we entered classes, after 6 weeks.

27-   In practice, you are first teacher or an assistant?
No, as an assistant

28-   Assistant
Yes, only one teacher was there, the lecturers were evaluating us, and they were discussing it openly for the group benefit, without mentioning names, but they were saying based on our monitoring for teachers.

29-   In a group
No, personally

30-   Was there a report, do they give you a report about your performance?
No, they don't, but maybe some of them write points for you.

31-   Did you have any idea about the course before attending it? Do you have any idea about its objectives?
I knew only about its name, and topic, when they nominated us they just mentioned the targeted teachers and the topic of the course.

32-   You didn't know anything about the course before attending?
I was searching in google about the topic, and I know how can I benefit from it, I was asking about the trainer, because sometimes expectations mislead you.

33-   Trainer is a very important element in the course, for delivering information.
I don't choose trainers that I don't know

34-   Happened to you before?
Yes

35-   Only in courses inside the training center?
Yes, in the training center.

36-   You said it was an obligation, then you have no other option?
No, Not this one, the other one was for establishment, they said someone should attend, but no one agreed, because it is hard to attend while you know nothing about it, also it was 2 months long, you have to be committed by attendance and if you are absent for 3 days you will not take the certificate, it was strict that is why they didn't want to attend.

37-   Teacher fear It then?
Yes

38-   When you attended the course, was it comprehensive, containing children behavior skills and problem solving or it was just about learning aspects?
It was nice, and comprehensive all about controlling behavior.

39-   Did it cover all aspects?
Yes, sure, the trainer was professional, we spend about 8 days learning the behavior control in details.

40-   This part
This part was excellent.

41-   This was behavior skills, and did you apply it?
Yes

42-   Have you really felt that it benefited you?
So much, I returned as a new teacher.

43-   That is what I was asking about, what are the information that you have before attending, as a kindergarten dept. graduate, you have learnt kindergarten objectives in KSA?
Yes, it is the same course, nothing new for kindergarten graduates, just refreshment for their information and adding only new staff.

44-   That it is because it is the same curriculum that you had already studied in university.
Yes

45-   She reminds you of information.
Yes, renewing

46-   Ok about education environment in the training center, what are the materials or tools they have used and you feel that it benefited you?
It was a rich environment, they have excellent materials, tools and equipment, I was shocked when I first seen it, I was asking them from were did you get this table, they answered from UNISEF, they have tangible and human abilities, all together made very good outcome.

47-   When you attend the course, do they use education workshops or they depend on just lectures?
At first, we attend the lecture, then workshop for the same lecture, we divide to groups and apply what we had just learnt, with tools.

48-   You were divided to groups?
Yes.

49-   I've seen the class, you were sitting in round tables, as groups.
It was a lecturer class, and when we learnt the balance between reading and writing, they made us as groups.

50-   What was the best thing?

It was better as a group

51-	Do you mean in the round table?
Yes, the other one was like a lecture, but there was interaction, but this one has a table, and bring tools and that's all.

52-	What was the most useful for you, lectures or workshops?
Some of the workshops, some lectures are supporting workshops, when you took new information then apply it just after taking it, that is so effective.

53-	Do you agree with courses during working times?
Yes, So much, If the teacher needs to improve her skills and experience.

54-	But when the teacher doesn't want to improve her skills, that affects the child negatively?
These teachers might attend the course and return back without applying it, this is the problem.

55-	What will be the problem if she didn't apply the course?
She?

56-	Yes, the teacher that we were talking about.
I mean the teacher, for example in courses, I nominate her to take the course, she answered that she didn't like the course, even in the same team.

57-	How she decides if it will be good or not?
For example, …

58-	Maybe she had already studied it?
No, she was just frustrated, people are different in behavior, have different views about the same point, sometimes the course is so useful and interesting and you nominate someone who refuse to participate.

59-	Because she doesn't want any progress, or because it is the same that she had already studied at collage, nothing to be added?
Yes

60-	This is the reason?
Yes, right

61-	The course is not related to anything tangible or moral for the teacher, it is the same if she attends or not?
Yes, this is the main reason, weather I apply it or not it doesn't make any difference. I just leave school early for 2 days.

62-	But in the same time why she doesn't consider that she will be a better teacher inside class if she attends and applies it?
Some people do this and some not, I am not obliged to attend the course, or she leave school to attend but she refuses to apply, or if you attend the course then you are told to train it, it will be astonishing for her.

63-	Because you are alike to train it?
Some people have ability to do so.

64-	For another group?
Yes, for example, I attended the intelligence evaluation for children, types of intelligence, we did workshops and evaluations, we are asked to teach the lecture and the workshop, and they obliged us to make the measurement, and it was a problem.

65-	Is that why you don't know about the objectives of the course before attending? Because the conclusion may shock you? Is that why you may refuse to attend?

Yes, right, they asked the manager to choose two good teachers, when they said good then I thought I will be in good place but they quickly gave us a 5 days course, then just after finishing they said we have to apply the measurement, I have to apply it on 105, it was …

66-   Did they ask you, or took your approval? Was it a commitment?
It was frustrating at the beginning, but I said to myself it is a new experience, I wanted to know how they make the questionnaire, and how you meet children, it makes me gain experience but it was a burden at the beginning.

67-   This this means that the teacher should know the objectives of the course before she

attend it, and what are the outcomes, and how she would benefit from it, before ...

yes this is right

68-   where is the problem, in the training centre or in the ministry?

I don't know, maybe the ministry doesn't have enough Vision, or they think about letting the

teacher know the course before attending, but I don't know, when I take a course on my own

expense I have to know everything about it, and what will I benefit from it.

69-   (13:36) do you mean during work?

yes

70-   what do you think about it's timing, the method that they use, like workshops, lectures

for working in groups do they have to take the teachers opinion first?

yes, I think the way of presenting depends on the trainer, and how she wants to present it,

sometimes the Workshop is a must in a lecture, so she will make a workshop, she cannot just

say solid information, where there is no interaction at all, this is hard.

71-   what about timing?

timing, I cannot understand you

72-   I mean timing, do you think that the course is better to be at the beginning of the school

year before the future Starts, or in the middle of the year, or at the end of the school year? what

about the period, you think 2 months are sufficient or too much or short?

for kindergarten 2 months is too long too much for her to be out of school for 2 months because

it's duplication for what she had already studied at university, just little new things, when I

attended the course there was nothing new when we apply it it was not difficult at all it was

normal but it's not about speciality, to whom not specialised in kindergarten they need this long

course.

73-   was there any not specialised teacher?

yes too many

74-   do you mean that they benefit the most of it?

yes sure

75-   is it really essential for them to take this courses?

yes if she's going to work in the same department she should take this courses.

76-   ok I'm talking about the program after you finish the two months and you came back what are the changes happened in your information?

many things I was writing notes in the course what I will change I'm connecting with my assistant always telling her what's new I changed the class environment, we had no planning aspect, we improve the reading aspect, I was always in connection with her, lesson was opened, blocks, it worked so fine.

77-   all of this during the course?

yes and she was so interested, I sent her everything we are studying in the course, she applied it quickly, and in the second term she attended the same course, it was so useful, I wrote notes about what I'm going to change in class, when applying was so easy, I completed things with her, and we worked on everything.

78-   and what about these changes, did it last?

yes until this term

79-   when was the last course that you have attended?

last year about child intelligence

80-   last year what are the changes in methods of teaching children, dealing with children, nice environment, did you change anything of this?

about dealing with children, first of all I'm a mother, children are different, so teaching methods shall vary, children became more intelligent, they surf in internet, search in Google, so teaching methods shall be different, even if she didn't attend courses, but the course renew your information.

81-   you said when you returned from course you changed the class environment?

yes a lot

82-   the way of teaching children and dealing with them have you gained new behaviour s skills? solving problems if you had already studied in the course?

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yes too much

83- with children?

yes

84- how do you change anything in your personality?

yes many things, when I came back from course, I had a child that has behaviour problem, this child was nervous, we made a toss because no teacher wants to take him in her class and he became in my class I was so frustrated because I don't want to take a wrong opinion about a child, I say to myself maybe The Vacation will change him, but I was afraid, returns back from the course, I found out the problem was not in the child, I only spent two weeks with him.

85- have you dealt with him before and after attending the course?

yes and it differs a lot

86- your dealing with child was based on ..

the background of any teacher, but after attending the course, it differs a lot, i solved bigger problems with my colleagues in the course, he wants you to care about him more, independent him in many activities, the problem was that he has more energy.

87- how do you solve the same problem at course and when you came back from the course you applied it?

yes right

88- so you can come up with a problem and you ask for your colleagues help?

yes in the same group we are always connected.

89- this means that you don't benefit from course only as a lecture you also get experience from other teachers.

yes, I asked them about what day changes in there class? what did they apply with children? it was so interesting.

90- you mean that there are discussion inside the course?

yes they were so Co-operative, baking with food bags documents about workshops they copy everything it was so useful I mean the materials.

91- I mean when there's many teachers from different experiences, one has 10 years of experience, another one has 15 years, another have only two years, do you benefit from their experience in your groups?

yes sure

92-   extent I think they're training course during working times added to your experience, do you think you are better now?

yes right

93-   Do you agree with making courses?

yes I wanted to continue.

94-   the long-term course or?

depends on the kindergarten, 2 months is too long, me for 4 weeks, and additional things according to their needs, and to concentrate about what they really need.

95-   do you think that there must be a questionnaire or a survey for teachers before the course? what day exactly need, instead of losing time?

yes right

96-   did it happen before?

no

97-   never

no

98-   not even one time you have a questionnaire from the Ministry?

about what we need, only once, it was all about the computer.

99-   did it benefit you?

it benefited only girls that didn't know about it.

100-   do you use it in class?

I mean the computer

101-   yes

yes we do

102-   do you use it in presentations?

yes for presenting lessons, now there are many monitors, we work by usbs, I have to know how to download and upload, to know how to present the lesson.

103-   I have anything to say?

no thanks god bless you.

104-   I mean about courses

let me tell you, the course, the program and any you thing, is helping the child Ember School, and what's most important is the teacher and her readiness to apply the the course, and her experience she must put this is her consideration.

105-   do you have any suggestions about new courses in the training centre during working, long or short courses, and what do you think? and what should be made?

it is must be updated with everything new in learning internationally, what are the new programmes, we shouldn't stand still, I'm really frustrated from the curriculum, 30 years and the curriculum didn't changed.

106-   the same?

yes and I'm obliged to stick to it, the mother has changed now.

107-   right even the child has changed it.

yes even the child

108-   how much years you spend in teaching 20?

17 years

109-   has the child been the same since 17 years?

No, children have changed a lot, they you work everyday by different toys, sometimes you give them water and starch, they play with it making letters, one child wanted to make this paste at home, another child told his teacher that he wants to make a secret folder on the computer, children had changes a lot, I hope that teaching can keep up with their mental change, if I'm not a teacher I was never going to cope up with them.

110-   that is why I am asking you, they can see it is the teachers role, she must be updated?

yes but if the ministry give us things to help the child, will be doing it, because kindergarten the most important stage in the child life, it builds his character, gain information and make the personality.

111-   most important stage right, teacher heard about a course in Bahrain, Kuwait or outside the Country, and she thought that it's important, can she ask to attend it?

I have wrote this before

112-   and did they accept?

more than one time, I asked for it as an improvement for teachers, I am as a good teacher who has 99 can be rewarded by an outside course.

113-   yes I was asking about courses abroad, is there any courses outside KSA?

she told me no, there's no outside courses, only in Jeddah.

114-   you mean there's no courses outside KSA?

I suggested Dubai or any place else.

115-   yes do you mean in jeddah then abroad?

yes

116-   on her own expense or the ministry?

I didn't ask, but she always tell me it might be a course

117-   it is kind of experience exchange, you said that we have to be up to date with all teaching methods internationally, so the teacher should go and learn?

if she has the ability to go, her husband except and if all circumstances are ok so it will be good for her to go and attend this course abroad

118-   will it be volunteer?

yes

119-   if she likes to go, not an obligation?

yes, I mean if she go and bring experience and transfer it to her colleagues, it will be so useful

120-   this is not available?

no

121-   do you suggest this?

yes I did

122-   like any ministry?

any other place, we are separate, if anyone goes out and bring experience I believe that she will transfer it here among us

123-   when she is in the same environment there's no improvement and there is nothing new, but if she moves to another environment different culture she will come not only by new ideas new experience this is from my own point of view.

yes she comes with new ideas right, even the course of training teachers they told me it's the same since 15 years the same curriculum only few things that added from that UNICEF only few things but the course has the same content.

124-   do you have any training request from the University, do you think it's the same that you have studied from 17 years?

no

125-   does it differ?

yes, now it became easy to students

126-   is it the same self education curriculum?

it's the same self education curriculum, but the way of presenting it is different, different items different behavioral control different populations, I evaluate the student my grades they're different because the plan of training but still the same topics.

127-   but I'm talking about the basics are they the same?

yes basics are the same

128-   but ways of instructing , changing children behavior and solving problems are the same?

I swear is the same curriculum

129-   even children have changed?

yes even children have changed a lot

130-   problems faced by the child now are different than the problems faced by children then?

yes right, problems are now complicated

131-   do students feel the gap between what they are teaching and the real environment?

yes, one of them told me I used to take only theoretical lectures but when it comes to application, it is way different, at first even the training was different, when I first get trained over here this kindergarten, I used to take one week of monitoring, and after a week closes the class door and told me you are a teacher that's all, and I handle the class as if I am a teacher, to know how to deal with children as a teacher, no way back.

132-   your face all the problems?

yes everything

133-   I'm asking you about the real environment before the course, and after the course, have you been creative? you said that you change it a lot in the classroom environment, you have pictures for before and after?

I will search for it, hoping I will find some.

134-   you have anything to say about the improvement and development program?

we only need outside courses

135-   do you want courses to continue?

yes

136-   and to improve, and want the teacher to be a part of it?

yes right

137-   about the trainers, are they the same teachers?

they were teachers

138-   were teachers?

yes and they became trainers, and now they are back to teaching.

139-   excellent, they helped you because they already have experience?

yes they speak out of a good background.

140-   talking about theoretical lecture in university.

no it was good, I don't know if you attend the course or not we were applying he had a watching

room you were entering the room and monitoring the class

141-   yes I have seen it.

it was so good

142-   great, may God bless you
thank you, God bless, you too.

In the name of God, the most gracious, the most merciful.
Teacher Number 2

1-   first of all, I would like to ask about her specialty?

kindergarten

2-   how much years do you spend in teaching?

I've been 15 years working four of them in administration work

3-   what test do you have you worked?

as an assistant

4-   in the beginning of your work life?

Yes, after one year, I spent one year as a teacher, then four years as an assistant.

5-   and after this?

I returned back to teaching

6-   as a first teacher

yes

7-   working in administration, does it make any difference?

yes sure, I always see myself as a teacher.

8-   Do you like teaching

yes

9-   when was the last course that you have attended?

3 years ago, with Abeer Salem, but I don't remember the name of the course

10-   was it a short course?

yes only 3 days

11-   why did you take it?

which one Abeer Salem

12-   yes, do you wanted to attend it?

I was evaluating kindergarten, and we attend it me and other teachers.

13-   you wanted to go and attend?

I don't think it's useful, it's exactly the same thing that we have studied in university, outside

courses are more effective (1:15) they are so linked (1:19) it is frustrating.

14-   do you mean here inside the kindergarten?

yes here

15-   and outside you mean in another place?

yes, but I didn't attend it

16-   what about the training center in embassies District, have you attended the two months course?

yes 13 years ago

17-   13 years ago, why did you attend it?

when I was nominated to be an assistant, they nominate me to attend this course, but it is not useful, it was more useful to teachers, the application was with children, it was better when I was young, I had only spent one year then in teaching, I prefer to be three years, it would have enriched my skills.

18-   do you think it's useful for teacher than assistant, because when you came back from it you didn't apply?

(2:14) solid administration work, was going to invite me only in evaluation, but I cannot (2:20) a big group of teachers, haven't attended the course (2:24) at the time when I attend it. many teachers didn't go to the course, it is useful to teachers more than me, I used to tell me to transfer what I have studied in the course to them so I can apply, got it?

19-   I now understand, when you took the course you're not working as a teacher that is why it is not useful for you?

not much, it was not useful that time.

20-   Do you feel it would have been better if you attended as a teacher?

I have attend it, and I spent 4 years in administration work, then I got back to teaching again (2:55), and I recall information every now and then.

21-   have you attend it again while you are a teacher?

no, is the same thing that we apply every day, I think that students in university benefit us a lot, because of the connection with the university.

22-   was it a course for self-learning all solid information or there were behavior skills and solving problems?

it was comprehensive, we were applying with children after lectures.

23-   what about the other courses that you had attended, were they short?

Do you mean in the training center?

24-   No, in the training center was it only this course?

Yes, only this one, 3 years ago, I think it was about directing behavior, Oh I cannot remember the topic.

25-   Do you remember the curriculums that you have studied in the training center? was it divided?

It was all about aspects, for example we attend workshops about the cognitive aspect, of course in the beginning we studied child growth stages, about how (4:01) directing behavior, children behavior problems, (4:05) the teacher, (4:06) an aspect after another, this aspect is related to children, teacher evaluation, we have to develop any aspect we study, after this we take notes with children, we inter monitoring rooms, then we start and we apply everything we studied.

26-   Before you attend the course in the training center, had you any idea about it's objectives, outcomes or what will benefit you.

No, I was from the first groups who attend the course.

27-   13 years ago, you went while you know nothing about the course?

I knew about it's content, about directing behavior, I had an idea about it.

28-   Had you received a note about the course?

We heard about it in the training center.

29-   By official documents about the course objectives, or was it already known?

No

30-   What about what the teacher told you before or after the course, did the courses benefited you after knowing the aspects of children growth?

Do you mean what I studied in the course?

31-   Yes

Sure, it benefited me

32-   Aspects of children growth.

Yes of course, it was only refreshment for our information.

33-   It was only information refreshment that reminds you of what you already studied in university?

Yes, But I've heard that things have changed recently, but I didn't take anything new in the course. Even the course (5:41) many things have been improved, not the same information.

34-   what about children teaching methods? you said that nothing has changed for 13 years, especially when you return back you returned as an administrator.

yes, after finishing the course

35-   when you finish the course, has the children teaching methods an impact on you?

it was the same thing that we apply during work, for me I measure (6:06) the core activity, I measure it by teaching level in our nursery in university, if the teaching methods here in the

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university nurseries are developed, they are always developing things, anyway search for it and apply it another nursery.

36-   the children have changed from 13 years ago till now, right?

the children

37-   yes, the children that you have tough before and now?

Do you mean the children intelligence?

38-   the child

yes sure

39-   Do you think that teaching methods are modernized from one generation to another, or it is the same curriculum for 13 years?

I think that teaching methods are suitable but the type of information that will deliver to children needs to be modernized.

40-   do you mean teaching methods, the way of delivering information to children?

yes, there are many ways.

41-   should the teacher change her way?

this depends on the teacher

42-   But information is the same

topics and information should be modernized, teaching methods are changing, you can never give the child the same information that you were giving children from 10 years, or even 3 years because (7:26) I will give you a simple example, when we talk about the post officer, in the past there was a man working as a post officer, but now we are saying via email, or via any program in internet, we told the children that these means deliver a message from a person to another

43-   Ok, now you are leading me to ask you about the curriculum, about curriculums from 13 or 20 years ago.

the same

44-   why it's not modernized as you said, some programs have elements which are not useful at all, because it changes by time, as you said the example of the post officer, which is communication methods.

this is not usual, the element contains definitions needs to be modernized, I can see a definition and put another one.

45-   are you free to do so?

or add to a definition, teachers must spend some effort, teachers are up-to-date with any improvements, we make reports for elements, we add things that don't conflict with the lesson, in into the class talking about this new thing, I'm not committed to the old content of the curriculum.

46-   do you mean that you are free to add or change things in the curriculum?

yes sure, when I have an old book for a curriculum or an element in the kindergarten stage (8:40) I can integrate old books with new ones (8:42), change the objective a little bit, (8:52) now I can be flexible and change things in the curriculum.

47-   Do you remember the Teachers training center, so far, do you remember the educational environment? The classroom environment?

Years ago?

48-   Yes, do you remember? Did you go there again?

I went a couple of years ago but I returned quickly, it was on the vacation, I didn't stay with them.

49-   Do you remember when you attended a course there? Types and attributes of the program they were presenting courses through, for example lectures, workshops, timing and did you feel that it improved you?

Do you mean It's timing?

50-   Timing, teaching methods?

They were workshops, groups, yes, it was effective, and it was dividing us to groups, (9:39) groups, (9:41) lecture style and indoctrination, what was it, even 13 years ago, there were groups, workshops, we used to apply things, enter classes and apply chapters for example, like if we take any information about any element, the lecturer enters the class and apply it with children, or monitors how it is applied

51-   Have you started the two-months course, by lectures or direct workshops?

We started by lectures then goals yes.

52-   Then you returned?

Then workshops, that's what I recall.

53-   Dis the exchange of experiences between you and other teachers in different kindergartens benefited you? different experiences I mean

With my colleagues with me in the course

54-   Yes, in the course

Do you mean they were presenting their experience?

55-   Yes, teachers from different kindergartens, the same?

11 years ago, of course a long period, but I always wished to apply it, I would like to be a teacher.

56-   While you were a teacher.

as teacher, it benefits me more I mean, solidify information that I have learned is more here (10:39)

57-   Was there any other group worked as managers and assistants?

Yes, assistants were attending, some assistants really (10:47) there was an assistant working in the same place with me.

58-   Why they were nominated to attend courses, they loved it or what?
(10:53) ‹I was nominated by a turn. And then each term another two teachers attend, until it was my turn.

59-   What is the negative thing that you didn't like about courses?

The negative things it was just a long time, but the level was so good and useful for me if I was a teacher, do you mean me personally?

60-   Yes, for you as a teacher?

It gave me new information, for things I've been doing during the college and Training, I mean, it assured me information, things now are amended and developed, I mean, there are things that have been developed. We are applying it now, they adopt experiences of colleagues, other trainees, we benefited from them.

61-   timing and duration is two months?

For me it was from 8 to 12, it was a good time for me.

62-   two-months period was sufficient?

Yes, it was enough.

63-   Did you feel that it was concentrated, and you wanted a longer time?

This is very enough, two months from 8 to 12.

64-   Have you taken full-time of courses that you do not work in kindergarten?
No, it was a full term, I started working from the other term.

65-   Ok you told me that when you came back you felt that it didn't affect you and it wasn't beneficial to you because you got back?
I've applied many things with the teachers, but of course I couldn't do with the director because the teachers are mostly were still attending this course and they needed teachers to organize training workshops, while I couldn't organize it but the director forced me to organize training workshops but it was necessary (12:48) must be someone capable to be courses lecturer, I've tried but there was some rejection from some groups of teachers I couldn't apply things I used to study in the training center I am (13:00) because they didn't received these information yet and they didn't learn about and still (13:03) take a background about it, specially this kind of courses.
66-   In the course or enrolment?
No, In the things that I didn't want to change in the elements for example, the way the element is prepared.
67-   After you have returned.
After I came back, right, so we started to be patient to finish with the group I mean it was necessary to attend to make a change, inside the school, to evaluate things you learned in the course, your crew must be cooperative, and they should join yes.
68-   Why? (13:32)
Of course, yes and then don't take (13:34) for example the one I present or me, once or twice, in a lecture or two, a workshop or two, no, I mean they should know it as I learned it, they take enough time.
69-   Well, for you, as a person, you have a skill, does any of your skills have changed, or your way of thinking?
After the course?

70-   Yes, After the course.

Maybe I earned more self-confidence, I mean when I do something I became sure that it is right, knowing that it is right made me more confident, here is according to the child if it doesn't work with a child, I look for a second alternative.

71-   What are the things that absolutely changed, because that time your experience was little, two years, right?
Yes Short.

72-   But it may have added to your experience?
Of course, it added a lot to my experience but maybe the years of working in the administration was an obstacle.

73-   There was no direct contact with children?
Yes, it doesn't consolidate information in your mind, you should be a teacher to apply what you studied when you get back to work.

74-   Do you agree with or against the long courses? and which is better? The short or the continues courses?
For this course I feel that it qualifies a teacher from all aspects, especially this course I feel that it is much useful, it benefited me although I am a kindergarten graduate, It has reinforced information that I already have, and have added many information to me, but I feel that the long course is intense, it also benefit teachers that are not specialized in kindergartens, when I was a lecturer and I have in my group teachers specialized in kindergarten (15:17) she got shocked by the information she is learning, and for me this information I already learned and trained.

75-   So, the curriculum of the program?
It is useful for teachers especially those who are not specialized in kindergartens.

76-   Self-learning curriculum, which is held in the program of the training center is more useful for the non-specialist teacher?
Sure, it added to me, sure if it is a long time (15:39) but also it is more useful for the non-specialized.

77-   OK you as a teacher specialized in kindergarten is there any courses you wish to attend? And you want the center to do it?
Yes, sure I need. not anyone can (15:58) for example the lecturer should be have nice personality who can attract the listener with a new topic not just solid instruction.

78-   Do you mean the lecturer?
Yes, the lecturer, I feel like she has to give me new information, that I need.

79-   What is the content that you want it to be there, and what is the most thing that you need to develop in your work?
I need a good lecturer. I mean the coaches here are normal, I mean when (16:29) outside courses, when they brought lecturers from outside for example Hayat Aldheem, May God have mercy on her soul.

80-   Who?

Hayat Aldheem the director of the training center, her style was very interesting, and even when (16:43) gave me a new method, it was my first time to know it.

81-   was she the former director of the center?

Yes, the former director of the center, also she was a lecturer, the way she submits information, Coach spirit, I miss her frankly.

82-   Do you mean the trainer herself?

Yes, frankly the personal trainer

.

83-   Do you mean that the content depends on the trainer in a way how she submits information?

Yes, the delivery of information, sometimes we attend courses and the trainer has just read it from the Internet or a book.

84-   After 13 years, I mean good experience in the field of kindergarten what is the special course that can make you really want to get out of kindergarten and go to a training center to attend?

You mean to learn it?

85-   Yes.
Sure, as a teacher no matter how the human learns he is missing many things. I mean I cannot say that I know everything, maybe the method of (17:39) A method of modifying behavior, child inclusion at this age, especially at the beginning of the year, how (17:53) The teacher.

86-   Have you dealt with all the ages in kindergarten?
No, I'm only dealing with the second-level age, which is 4 to 5 years old, the first Level is with (18:03) The third level This is the first year to deal with.
.
87-   The third level, which is from 5 to 6?
Yes from 5 to 6 pre-schools, (15:13)

88-   Are the third level the most difficult?
There is nothing difficult and easy, it is all about ..

89-   Your acceptance and treating children.
I got used to a certain age, if I worked with a different age I feel that I don't know how to deal with them because I was very honest (18:25) level two, I knew them. I mean I knew how to deal with them from the beginning of the year, I mean I know their characteristics and dealt with it, speaking of me.

90-   What about the bigger age? OK talking about courses if they suggested that you take courses for example outside the kingdom, for example in Bahrain, or Kuwait, or within the kingdom's cities, that can help you, do you agree with that? To develop teachers and benefit from experts in other countries and different environments?
Sure, I will benefit from it, of course.

91-   Do you agree with this, that the teacher should take courses outside?
Conversely, because the courses are mostly the same, I mean same content, it only varies by the way of the lecturer.

92-   If you heard or read about a course, for example in Kuwait, and for a good lecturer, and you wanted to attend it, have you suggested this to the administration or on, you can go but, on your expense, in a personal way, and you want to benefit?
If the work nominated me, sure I will go.

93-   You want to do so?
Yes.

94-   Do you mean that you agree with exchange of experience?
when I went to the center two years ago, there was a course in the UAE (19:46), Some were nominated to go, and I wanted to go with them, and there were courses abroad.

95-   That means that there are courses abroad?
yes, in the center sure but (19:56) they said no it doesn't include teachers or trainers there was also courses in Sharqiyah but I don't know which city maybe in Khobar of-course in the center but I wasn't nominated.

96-   Wasn't it for teacher?
There was only one teacher, only one teacher among trainer.

97-   Ok I have a last question are you with attending courses during working times for teachers?
during work?

98-   After I graduate from University and I work at as a teacher if I stayed 10, 15 or 20 years working do I need so? Do you think teachers needs to be developed continuously through long or short courses?
 of course, long term courses but it's a burden on the teacher that you take a course and come back (20:46) you feel like this, sometimes as a teacher when I get back to work I feel there is many stress in work, when I am back to work (20:57) you have been waiting just to do it, the work accumulate

99-   Why is there nobody to cover your absence?
No coverage, only one teacher with the children there is even some information that she doesn't tell children about.

100-   is that why you don't get encourage to attend courses?
no also (21:10) courses have the same content and same topic, I care about more about the lecturer who gives us the course, not only solid instructions.

101-   for you as a teacher the lecturer sometimes is more important than the content of the course?
Sure, her way of submitting information in a special way.

102-   do you have anything to add?
 No, God bless you I wish I could've helped you.

103-   you already helped me 100% thank you so much
104-   May God bless you, thank you.

In the Name of God, the most Gracious the most Merciful.

30th and 31st March
In Nursery 11

1-   Are you specialized in kindergarten?

no, teachers Institute

2-   two years after secondary school?

No, the in the Institute is the secondary school, it is called secondary teachers Institute.

3-   how much years have you been working in kindergarten career?

28 years

4-   all in teaching?

yes all as a teacher.

5-   have you attended courses?

yes sure

6-   the program?

courses, programs and workshops

7-   could you tell me a brief about it all?

horses in the kindergarten training centre, the training centre for kindergarten teachers, self education curriculum, courses about directing behaviour, controlling behaviour, also we have attended workshops, workshops for discovering education elements.

8-   you have attended the long-term courses, and after some years you attended the short-term courses, was there a time gap between the courses?

sometimes courses are close in time, sometimes there so much time between them, not a fixed time.

9-   when was the last course that you have attended?

last year, it is called controlling behaviour.

10-   was it in the training centre?

no, it was in the North supervision training centre.

11-   how much time you spend in the course?

3 days

12-   was it full day?

Yes, full day, almost full school day.

13-   why have you attended these courses?

for improving myself, for improving my work performance, four practical development in my career, or developing my children, for solving problems that I have faced with children, etc.

14-   wasn't it obligatorily? from the management, or you liked to attend?

no, it wasn't obligatorily, they always ask who likes to go.

15-   I think that it's good to make attending courses obligatory?

some people don't like to go, and some always go, got it?

16-   did you used to go every year, I'm talking about the report?

of course, the management evaluate us annually.

17-   report submitted to the ministry?

I don't know, but I think so.

18-   Talking about training programs during work, or short courses that you have attended, did you know anything about its objectives before attending it?

no, sometimes the objective is not clear, they don't send points that we will talk about intercourse, got it? they only send the topic and the place of the course.

19-   topic, place and the timing of the course, nothing more?

yes

20-   have you ever attended a course and then you realized that the objectives will not be useful for you?

yes, it happened once, but I don't remember where, only two days.

21-   about the training center courses in embassies District, you also attend the course and you don't know about its objectives or any background about it?

no, we used to know the objective, but it's always changing.

22-   with no details?

no

23-   what about the curriculum?

you know the curriculum, but we don't know details.

24-   before you go to the courses, you know the lessons that you will take that day, because it's two months course?

when I attended the course, they give us a schedule

25-   they give you details?

yes, details and topics, what we're going to discuss tomorrow...

26-   when you went to attend the course you know anything about aspects of children education?

yes

27-   depending on your experience?

yes

28-   and then you learnt?

no, depending on my experience, ending on the courses that I have already attended before appointing me as a kindergarten teacher, from the first month in working I attended a course and we applied the course.

29-   do you know about stages of children growth?

yes, stages of growth, controlling behavior, problems and everything, it also taught us teaching methods, how to encourage the child to learn, and how to make the environment suitable.

30-   have you any idea about kindergarten objectives in KSA, I mean the main objectives of the kindergarten?

I didn't know it at the beginning of my career.

31-   at the beginning?

yes, when I start working.

32-   and how you knew it, through your experience or from courses?

from both experience and courses.

33-   you knew about the objectives?

yes

34-   also, about children teaching methods, you said that flexibility in teaching children is better?

yes, make children dislike learning, but we here are flexible, better environment, better tools and the kindergarten is well prepared for children, and everything in the environment is available and suitable for the child, this is aside from the Direct lesson, indirect teaching, because the self-learning is indirect.

35-   I think that the more you have experience the more you can come up with teaching methods?

yes sure

36-   depending on experience or courses?

both, maybe I do the right thing, but when I attend the course I became sure that what I'm doing is right, by learning you know how to teach children the right way.

37-   what about teaching environment in the training center in embassies District?

yes

38-   I mean the Education environment in the training center, did they give you courses by many methods, lectures and workshops?

yes

39-   did they use another ways like groups?

yes groups

40-   what are the positive things in the courses of the training center?

It was all positive

41-   all of it?

yes, I benefited a lot, and you the right way to narrate a story, many ways, and how to run the lesson, how to ask questions, how to take information and change it, and how to encourage children.

42-   this was all in courses?

yes, all was in courses

43-   what about workshops?

workshops

44-   have you attend workshops?

yes, workshops for applying the theoretical things that we have studied in courses, but it was not rich enough.

45-   what about the timing of courses and the program, is it always at the beginning of the year?

during working times in the first term or in the second term for two months.

46-   and is the timing suitable for you?

yes

47-   and was two months sufficient for you?

yes, it was sufficient, but it would be better if it is followed small courses for support, I mean two months is enough, but I need more small courses as information refreshment.

48-   followed by courses?

yes, as training, just small courses for recording information and training.

49-   do you think it's better than depending when only the two months course?

yes, much better

50-   do you think that two months course from the morning till noon was suitable for you?

yes, it was suitable for me

51-   Do you like it to be after working hours or not?

no, it will be so hard, maybe I can attend it but it will be so hard for others.

52-   during working hours is better?

Yes

53-   what are the other negative things in the training center?

horse in the training Center is hard, it's hard to apply what we have studied on children in the nurseries related to the training center, what's the child doesn't like changing teachers, we are not in a laboratory we are dealing with humans.

54-   you said that they don't let you deal with the children directly?

no, we don't deal with the children

55-   do you like dealing with them?

it would be better if give us a chance to go to our kindergartens and our classes to apply and train our children, then we can go back to them with the feedback.

56-   Do you think this would be better?

yes sure

57-   do you mean that I apply while I'm taking the course?

yes, during these two months I can go to my nursery and apply and then return back to the training center, so there will be no gap of time, I can take one week or one months to apply on children in my kindergarten, and then go back to the training center will tell them a feedback about problems that I had faced, and do I really understand the course.

58-   what about the impact of the program on you, after you finish the 2 months course, you feel that your information has been changed, your skills, Reading, narrating, teaching or any skills?

it depends upon your Readiness to change, some people attend the course and come back with no change, depends about the personality, I feel that I have already changed with my own children, in dealing with them in giving them directions and so on.

59-   have you gained more information?

in work there is no new information

60-   yes, in work in dealing with the child?

dealing with the child I guess there is Shortage in it.

61-   you haven't take any course about dealing with the child?

no

62-   during the two months course dealing with the child is not mentioned?

little bit, in the growth stages.

63-   growth stages?

Yes, growth stages

64-   a little bit, they referred to it quickly, you mean the two months is Not Enough?

when we finish course and we read about it, they didn't explain it, it should be as the first level, example you know at this age they like privacy, I like to play alone I don't like sharing, but after a while they get developed and they're like social life. we like to know it in details.

65-   in more time?

no in details.

66-   in details yes, remember the content of the program, was it divided to materials and curriculum? or it was all-in-one curriculum? like what you have said, the psychology of growth, in university they study it as a separate curriculum, stages of growth the separate curriculum?

it was comprehensive and it'll summarized, all in one day, but it needs more time, like children behavior problems, like stubborn child we are trying to solve this problem stubbornness, studied the successful ways to deal with the child, another example a child that fears Society you have to know more about these issues, you don't read about it, we cannot solve it.

67-   do you mean you depend on yourselves?

yes, sometimes we depend on ourselves

68-   Do you read?

yes, we read

69-   have you ever wanted to attend courses without any ...?

no

70-   I mean you heard about it?

here after working hours?

71-   yes

yes, only once

72-   great, it means that you want to improve yourself, and you want to be better teachers.

yes, sure but not all of us, some have the listed courses in the schedule, and they don't like to

go, they are so few.

73-   I felt this.

some people don't like changing the working environment and go to another place, have you got

it? I hope courses will be in our working place, trainers from the training center come and give

us the course in our kindergarten, because some teachers don't like to go outside the

kindergarten, she says that going out is not suitable for her, her husband doesn't accept.

74-   that is why it is optional.
yes, what about the teacher who didn't attend the course, it's better to be an obligatory.

Interview 12:

Ok, she has learnt already, she thinks that she knows everything.

1-   what are the are the useful things inter training center?

I don't know, I've been working here since too long.

2-   from your experience, are things you felt that it's not useful, example in lectures in programs or workshops.

I think that workshops are weak

3-   were the weak?

yes

4-   How weak could you please explain?

last weak

5-   I mean its content all the tools that they use or the time?

no tools are good, they mentioned some points and only apply one point, you got it?

6-   do you mean that it was quick?

yes, let me give you an example, like exploration aspect, they told us how to let children into the Aspect like prison things experiment they show it to us in details, with little application.

7-   what do you mean?

I'm talking about the cognitive aspect as a whole, but I once opened the cognitive aspect and it was so useful.

8-   do you mean after the 2 months course?

no within the two months, off for 2 weeks, it's solidated information rightly, it differs from the two months course, there was improvement for the cognitive aspect, now I organize the workshop of the cognitive aspect.

9-   see me now you have more information about the Aspect?

yes, I gained more information, in my kindergarten I organize the workshop, I know how to classify, I know what the children need, and how to choose things gradually, I improved it more than what we took in the training center.

10-   better than the training center?

yes better, and it's more comfortable for me.

11-   when you went and attend the course in the training center, it was some teachers from another nurseries, does exchanging experience have a positive impact on you?

yes sure, went to another nursery some Nurseries made fairs, some Nurseries organizing the Workshops in a different way. it was useful.

12-   do you mean exchanging experiences with other nurseries?

yes, exchanging experiences.

13-   inside the training center when you wear groups of different nurseries that is what I was talking about.

no, it was not useful

14-   haven't you benefited from their discussions in the Workshops?

cos they have no clear View, they didn't talk about their place, some of them talk about their experience and the way of their work, they were few.

15-   ok do you like to add anything, as a kindergarten teacher, you like to suggest anything in the future for you or for other teachers that will come after you some improvements during courses or during work?

I wish there will be incentives for development of teachers, because there's nothing in college it has to be improved.

16-   like what?

Incentives

17-   Do you mean monetary incentives or encouragements?

everything, monetary incentives for improving your level, for example, me and my colleague, she's a university graduate but I'm not I hold a diploma we both are not specialized, that I attended courses and I improve myself I got improved I have to have incentives I guess in this point this is unfair, I became improved no I train university students, why I'm not rewarded.

18-   what's wrong to be a trainer?

nothing wrong

19-   you mean there's no reward?

no, nothing, nothing encourages teachers to get improved.

20-   what about you?

if you don't have an inner motivation to do a good work with children, there will be no other motivation, there must be financial support, I'm not talking about only myself I'm talking about all of us we should be rewarded for improvement.

21-   Do you mean that if there's monetary incentives that this will encourage teachers?

yes sure, when a teacher got improved, and develop herself, and gives more, she must be rewarded.

22-   but I'm less than here financially because she holds University certificate?

yes, sometimes they ask me about things that they don't know.

23-   what about the use of experience, it's not countable?

no, it's not, the problem of working in teacher, it's a big problem for the exceptional teacher who gives a lot who improves what involvement in every aspect.

24-   yes, but there's a report about the teacher at the end of each year.

yes, but it doesn't add anything

25-   what is the use of it?

Something the teacher mock at, it is just a document that is put inside files, that is all, no use at all.

26-   No benefit from it at all, all teachers are equal? the one who works accurately like the one who works wrong?

yes, the one who works good like the one who works bad, that is why they are frustrated, some people need motivation to work hard, some other have inner motivation, even if there's no incentives she works because she wants to work good, there must be encouragement for general benefit, or exclude a teacher for not improving herself.

27-   But when there was a decision for excluding the not specialized teachers from kindergarten, your colleagues refuse and said that they attended courses for this reason.

this has nothing to do with what I'm saying, some teachers didn't attend courses, and they didn't get excluded, because that has nothing to do with what I'm saying, needs a new different decision.

28-   Do you find it good or not?

no, it's not good, it depends on the teacher.

29-   you mean it's unfair? to ignore all experience?

yes, there was no kindergarten department, then they improved courses, university students used to come and apply in our nurseries and we gave them from our experience with children we used to tell them Arabize this and that, you still show them what is suitable and what is not, why a decision come to exclude us who's we are not specialized, specialization came out of our

experience, we are about to get retired, and this is unfair, and as long as we develop ourselves and as long as we get improved, we are better.

30- Do you mean that you already took equal certificates when you attended the course?

there are some specialized supervisors in our kindergarten but the level is lower than me and you can ask anyone even the management. she even asks any teacher that specialization made her better than the Institute graduate, she will answer No for sure.

31- no one ignore experience, this is very important?

yes experience

32- when you relate to experience with self-improvement.

yes improvement, it means I do many new things for children, and as long as I'm keeping in improving myself it has nothing to do with my first Certificate or my specialization.

33- thank you, God bless you

Interview 13:

Kindergarten 11, Ministry of foreign affairs, 31st March, The second teacher.

1-   Mrs., you already have the questions, but I would like to ask about your specialty?

 Kindergarten

2-   Bachelor in kindergarten?
No, Kindergarten diploma.

3-   From where?
From a middle school in Shigella.

4-   how much years have you spent working in kindergarten?

all my working life.

5-   what?

since 1413, equal 23 years

6-   all were in teaching?

yes, all were teaching in kindergarten

7-   have you been working in administration?

no

8-   what are the courses that you have attend in the past 3 years?

basic course in the kindergarten training center, in three days in the same Centre the cognitive

aspect.

9-   were they separate?

yes, there was one year between them.

10-   since when approximately?

about

11-   10 years or less?

a minute

12-   from so long ago do you mean?

yes, when I first start my career.

13-   have you attend any course in the past 3 years?

no

14-   on your own expense or in the training center?

no

15-   why you attend courses?

355

it was a nomination from the manager, sometimes she nominates some teachers who needs the course, maybe because of the specialty, we need to know how to deal with the child, I wanted to go, oh thank god it happened.

16-   after how much time of your appointment you took the course?

about seven years

17-   you are specialized in kindergarten and you already have information about teaching children in about stages of growth?

yes

18-   after 7 years you attended the course, I think it's the same curriculum that you have already studied in the university or there is addition?

it was completely different from what we studied in the university.

19-   what about the curriculum in the programme content all the courses that you had attended do you remember the curriculum? was it divided or all in one package?

one package the trainer was explaining about the self-education for children, and how the child learn by his own self , and the teacher only gives him guidelines if needed, by questioning opened questions we don't ask him for choosing between yes and no, we let the child into the topic, of course there was a monitoring room and we apply this with children, can we apply what we studied in the lesson like the cognitive toys, we were making these days by our hands, cognitive toys we're not developed as today.

20-   what was useful in the cognitive toys for children

life classification, puzzles it is so good for improving children intelligence.

21-   when you said that you were applying it in the in the training center, this for not taking the lessons theoretically a solid information?

yes, theoretically and practically

22-   does it mean that you monitor teachers and then you go inside the class and deal with children?

at first the lecturer explain to us the lesson as one group, we have job papers, lessons for us, little things to discuss, and then after this we go to the monitoring room, we were just sitting and watching without into classes, we watch teacher of the training center and how they deal with children, and how she deals with the other teacher, the way of solving children problems, how did she show didn't interfere and let both children solve their own problem, this is about

behavior, controlling behavior, we were watching this all through the monitoring room, and after we understand this all, we entered classes.

23-   you became teachers?

not official teachers, because the children will not accept us, just a little bit, and the trainer sit in the morning room watching us, how we deal with children, course for a little time, even in activities or arts, within our last session, we do few things not everything, but we watched children every day.

24-   and what happened after the lecture?

after the lecture with into the washing room, and she asked us to write notes and then talk about these points, sometimes to grab our attention while we are sitting in the washing room, for example cedars Child Who sitting there what he's doing and how the teacher gives him freedom to choose, and how she didn't insist to let him enter, another example this child has problem and how does heater interfere she's grabbing our attention because she knows children, also she knows her teachers, I remembered her now, it was very useful in directing behavior, it was a great improvement for us in the lecture about directing behavior.

25-   do you mean that you attended most of the course by a theoretical way?

By theoretical lectures and watching

26-   was it important in cognitive aspect?

yes it was important frankly, because when you deal in the right way with children everything became easy, like to direct his behaviour and you know how to deal with him you only give him the information he accept you know how to deal and absorb his anger you know what the child feels in this moment all these things we learnt about it from the course, I knew what I watched it and I applied it, I feel that I can handle my class, and we work peacefully.

27-   you mean you became able to control the class?

yes, a lot, thank God, in every problem we faced in the first phase of our working life, bad behaviour problems, we solved it all thank God.

28-   do you think that you solve these problems because of courses or your experience?

I already had experience and I know what I want to give to the child I love children as if they are my own children and I know how to deal with them better than my own children this is for me thank God I love them and I hug them, I'm not dealing with them as a teacher how to gain Their

Hearts from the very first moment they enter the class because when the child loves you he will accept anything from you and will listen to everything you say.

29- you mean dealing with love with children

yes, love is the most important

30- As you are a teacher and specialized in kindergarten, you know about the kindergarten objectives of the Kingdom, what you studied it?

yes, specialized in kindergarten and the first elementary grades.

31- first elementary grades?

yes

32- and you know about Ground about kindergarten objectives in KSA, of course it's related to international objectives, what we have is special situation as Saudi Society?

there was a course that clarify everything for me, when I entered the kindergarten, it was better than studying, you are just said studying solid information for example accounting or health, like if when the child is sick how to deal with that, there was a medical material in our study in kindergarten specialty like chemistry, physics and electronics.

33- what about educational aspect?

we had studied of children psychology and behaviour.

34- entrance of kindergarten education?

entrance, everything we learnt about everything in our specialty, who's we are specialized in kindergarten and first grades of elementary, grade 1,2 and 3. and we already have studied everything even application, we had an application stage in kindergarten, it was not long, because it's only two years diploma, we applied in the second term for two months.

35- was application in only one term?

yes, one term, it was divided into two parts 1 in kindergarten and the other in elementary.

36- It wasn't too long?

In application no, I'm telling you that the kindergarten gave us all experience.

37- what about children teaching methods, you have a diploma and you know about teaching methods how to indirect education and self-learning, did you have a lot of information before attending courses, or after courses?

after attending courses

38- potato two months course?

yes

39-   do you agree that the two months course should continue?

yes, because it's so useful, if any teacher goes without any experience, or even she doesn't like her work, some of them came back happy with working in kindergarten and saying that it's easy, it encourages them to go to the kindergarten and work easily in many ways, when she attends the course she got changed.

40-   improved?

yes, right improved

41-   ok let's talk about the content of the training program, what is your opinion about the Education environment of the training centre in embassies District? what are the positive things in it? in the building or in the Education environment there, when you attend courses like lectures, workshops, what's the timing suitable or not was it too long or too short, what about the education environment, the kindergarten?

they had a strategic place, it was well prepared, many nurseries are not prepared well like it, the building was so good, it serves its objectives a lot.

42-   was it built to be a kindergarten?

everything the child needs is available like school's classrooms, bathrooms and art rooms, it is nice to present the children arts at the backside of their class, they have a good environment and they work as a team.

43-   what about the place that you attend lectures in it, was it suitable?

yes, we have a private room, like a big meeting room.

44-   how do you sit in round tables?

Oval

45-   as groups sitting with each other's?

yes, one full group, sometimes the lecturer asks Two of Us to do an activity like a questionnaire sometimes she ask me and my colleague to do an activity together.

46-   what about tools that you use in presentation like projector or smartboard?

no, they didn't use the projector only the normal board.

47-   only?

yes papers

48-   normal board?

normal board and writing in papers

49-   didn't you use the smartboard in the computer?

it wasn't available then

50-   what is there any videos he presented as examples for facing a problem and how the teacher faced it and solved it, didn't they use any videos at all?

it wasn't available when I attend there.

51-   what about the time, was the period of two months sufficient?

yes

52-   was it from morning till noon?

yes, but we would like a small course every 2 years or 9 months, only for two days.

53-   As a reminder?

yes, refreshment, sometimes people forget, because supervises are different than the training course, sometimes the training contains how to solve problem in this way, and we applied in the kindergarten, but the supervisor came and say no, and she asks us not to apply what we studied in the training centre, so why we attended the course, and this is a training centre that is Approved from the Kingdom, it's not business.

54-   give me an example for the confliction?

I don't remember

55-   like preparing classrooms, aspects or organizing elements or something about directing children behaviour?

I just remember that once we got astonished from a confliction.

56-   about how to deal with children in the classroom?

I guess classrooms.

57-   Do you mean the educational environment?

yes, I guess

58-   what is the negative thing, timing is 2 months at the beginning of the year or in half the term or at the end of the year?

do you mean what a suitable for me?

59-   yes

it has no pics of time, but when I attended there it was in the middle of the year.

60-   do you think the time is suitable, or it's better to be before starting the school year to make the teacher ready, because sometimes there are corruptions?

of course, there are corruptions, because it's two months long.

61-   do you mean shortage in teachers?

yes 2 months is not a short time, it is better to be at the beginning of the school year.

62-   what are the negative things that you don't like in the training centre and do you like it to get developed? or in courses, the content of the programme or in the centre the place or trainers, was everything ok?

generally, it was good, because it was our first time to attend there.

63-   are you amazed?

yes, amazed by the place, tools and everything.

64-   you like to attend this course again the same place for two months, do you like to take this course again as it was before?

no, we here in our kindergarten as if we are in the training centre, of course it is (18:07) it is a good luck to be in this kindergarten, I don't know about other kindergartens.

65-   what are the positive things here in the kindergarten?

that's a big, lighting is good inside the class.

66-   does anyone came regularly to give you short courses? and you gather in holidays?

yes, many visitors

67-   visitors to train you?

yes, there are many short courses, always.

68-   in the same kindergarten?

not in the same kindergarten (18:34) the course

69-   for example, before starting the school year, or in short holidays?

it was outside courses, in the application nursery, and in the supervision Centre, for two days, some teachers attend according to the class, but if the class needs to teacher we cannot go, and some of the teachers want just to go out, it's not always obligatory.

70-   what about "fatn" the program, I suddenly told you that there's a program and you have to apply it, or you attend courses about it before?

there were no courses

71-   how come you up light, did you depend on yourself, you read?

No, the assistant went and attend the course.

72-   Do you mean only one person who can attend the course?

yes the manager went and took one teacher with her, and she explained to us, that it is for elementary phase, and told us about the points of "fatn" , but here in kindergarten, children are still young many things are not suitable for their age, things like drugs not suitable for their age, because "fatn" it's about drugs and terrorism things like that it's not suitable for kindergarten children, I guess the objectives are to let the child know things in life, everything that we choose for "fatn".

73-   do they give you the freedom to choose the content of "fatn", and what are the information that you like to teach the children?

yes, all information we divided into units.

74-   yes, like safety unit and so on?

everything, we let the child know a background about everything.

75-   have you added to the content of this program? I can see here parents honoring and special needs.

everything is available, special needs are in the unit of health and safety and we have the King in the unit of my country we have the expiry date in the unit of nutrition we have the road safety in the units of my health and safety and so on.

76-   what about harassment, how did you let it into the "fatn" program?

yes, it is already in the program, in a unit

77-   My body?

no in my safety and health, how the child keep himself safe, and also with interred it in the activity.

78-   yes, god bless you.

in me, you have interred it 2 years ago.

79-   you're only as the kindergarten teachers, I did someone came from the Ministry and told you to include this in the curriculum?

no, we did it by our own selves, and they applied it in the kindergarten a year ago, is a lesson and short course about harassment, maybe about all problems, not in the nursery, they took a

teacher or 2 and they told us there is a course about harassment, and they explained it to us and I got back to the nursery.

80- and did they transfer it to you?

yes, they clarify everything

81- I think it is good, to let 2 or 3 teachers go and they transfer information to all of the teachers? or it's better to be gradually, and every teacher has the right to go?

it depends

82- on the content you mean?

when you talk about a content like harassment it is easy, an open YouTube or read about it, you don't have to go out and leave my class to see children, the only things that the teacher should go out and attend the course for is to see how the trainer deals with other children, like courses is workshops an application, but I sit and hear lecturer say a lesson, it became easy was the new technology, I don't need to go anywhere to attend the lecture

83- the general objective of courses it's not just sitting and listening to a lecture it is the information that the teacher can gain and then how to improve herself, it is all about application and experience exchange many teachers came from different kindergartens gathered in one place we discussed many things together, do you think that this is useful?

right, experience exchange, application and interaction, but only solid information in a lecture, if you didn't write the problem you may forget it, if all teachers attend the course and leave their work all working instead of them letters are in YouTube you can watch and learn from internet.

84- do you think after all your years of experience don't you have the right to be a trainer for new teachers if you are capable of training a part in a curriculum, some teachers are good in one aspect life cognitive skills or solving problems skills, she's the best at it, what a teacher is an expert in one aspect you prefer that she gives you the course because she's an expert?

yes, if she's an expert she will be the best to give the course.

85- after you returned back from the 2 months course, or even short courses, what are the difference ore what is the positive impact on you, do you feel that your information have been changed? improved, do you feel any development in your skills?

I feel it is renewing refreshment for my information, I wanted to apply what I studied on children in my kindergarten.

86- It is good to attend a course and I apply just after I finish?

yes, last year I was outside of the Kingdom, and I saw libraries in classes, I liked the idea, that the child take a book and sit to read, we have an element called a library but it's not a big room, when I came back I was excited so I told the manager what's your opinion if we make the library here, she liked the idea of putting books in shelves and the children go and choose from many books, after a little while the manager got retired, but we made this year, the children borrow books from the library take it home and return it back.

87-   does this mean that you took the idea?

yes, and I apply it.

88-   Do you mean that the library shouldn't be related to the class it should be a main library for the kindergarten?

yes, children into the library take the book that he wants, he's not committed by the books that teaches ordered him to read, we put a large variety of books sample if the children are 15 I must put 20 or 25 stories, I shouldn't put stories as their exact number, it's better for him to enter the library and see all the variety, sometimes children choose strange books, but at the end it's his choice.

89-   you applied the idea?

yes, children now can borrow stories, weird instructions for parents of course to keep books neat, and to be returned after 2 days for example.

90-   travelling abroad was so useful for you, outside KSA, you gained a new idea and you applied it?

yes, there are good ideas

91-   do you think the teacher better to go out of the country for experience exchange, to other nurseries in Bahrain or Kuwait, to attend courses there, or to go to study there for a period of time and then come back?

yes great

92-   it's a good idea?

yes

93-   of course, if she can, ok let's talk about teaching methods, children teaching methods, we know that most important things are how you deliver information to the child, has it been improved after attending courses?

yes of course

94-   like story for example?

yes, a lot

95-   do you think that attending training programs during working times if useful and improves the teachers experience and information?

yes, it's so useful, it also depends on the person.

96-   Depends on the 1st and you mean the teacher?

yes the teacher, she may only go to the course for changing, she only wants to go out of her kindergarten, and see new people, she may benefit a lot, but you will not be interested to apply what he studied at the course, it depends on the person, some people attend the course full of life and anxiety apply what they studied in the course, and they wanted to do everything, so eager to apply every point.

97-   what about the timing of courses? should it be annually, or every two years?

for a person

98-   for all teachers?

it should be every year, each kindergarten teachers, because when the teacher go and attend the course and came back she transfers information for her colleagues, sometimes she reminds us with things that we had already forgot, when she came and talk about the course and application I remember that it was not at my time when I attended the course, so letting her attend the course is useful for every teacher, I can ask her about new things that she studied.

99-   do they ask the teacher who attended the course to go and transfer information to her colleagues?

yes, we do this always

100-   you told me that you have changed your kindergarten any became like the training centre?

yes, we have received many courses documents, and the manager told us to go, not is an obligation, who went and attend the course benefit her colleague the manager makes a meeting with the teacher who attended the course, and she asked her to transfer information.

101-   would you like to add anything to the program, like improvement of teachers, the timing of the program during working times, the teacher should improve herself continuously through long and short-term courses, would you like to add anything?

it's better to do a course every year, even for one teacher in the kindergarten.

102-   one teacher?

yes, because this one teacher will spread information among us all.

103-   is this related to incentives?

no, she left her work in the kindergarten for a while, and went to another place, is all called work, she may be working in her kindergarten but if she goes in her overtime she already gets out of her home to go to attend the course maybe then she will need incentives, but now she attends the course instead of working in her kindergarten.

104-   the incentives are for her leaving.

you left her work and went to another place, she's using her working hours in taking the course, is not after working hours, it is the same working hours that she works in her kindergarten, she goes out of the course at 12:30, and there's no extra time, I shouldn't ask her to stay after her working hours.

105-   thank you so much god bless you

you too, thank you

Interview 14:

In the name of God the most gracious, the most merciful
31st March- teacher no. 3 Kindergarten 11

1-   What about your specialty?
General management

2-   Bachelor or diploma?
No, Bachelor from King Saud University.

3-   how much years do you spend working in kindergarten career?

about 16 years

4-   all were in teaching?

yes

5-   when you first began working?

not as a teacher, what is kindergarten.

6-   what did you work?

first I worked as a teacher for 3 years, and I worked as an assistant for two years.

7-   teacher assistant or management assistant?

No, management assistant.

8-   with the administration?

yes

9-   and what did you work after 2 years as an assistant?

then I worked as a kindergarten teacher

10-   was it by your own will? you loved working as a teacher?

yes I requested this

11-   what about courses that you have attended, when was the last course that you had

attended?

at the past year I guess

12-   in 2015?

yes, it was about positive behaviour, I forgot the name of the course, the trainer name was

Fatma Elwan.

13-   name is not important, how much time was it, was it long or short?

3 days

14-   only 3 days?

Yes

15-   was it in the working day or after working hours?

it was during working day, but there was no children then, it was at the end of the day there was no children.

16-   for 3 days?

yes

17-   outside?

yes

18-   in the training centre or where?

no in the supervision

19-   why have you attended the course? did you attend the course in the training centre?

sometimes I go there but I didn't ask to go to any course there.

20-   have you attended the two months course?

yes, you're so useful for me, it is like safety for me, I'm still applying what I studied in it.

21-   Do you mean safety for your career?

yes, because I'm not specialised in kindergarten, I might be executed, the manager told me to attend the course not to be executed from my work, if someone not specialised in kindergarten you just attend this course and that's all you will become specialised, but nobody excluded from the teachers, I went then for this reason, but it benefited me a lot.

22-   ok and the short courses why did you attend it?

I like to learn, and I want the training centre no more short courses for the big 2 month course, sometimes we forgot information by time, so useful for me, especially in cognitive aspect, before attending the course it was difficult, I'm talking about myself, many teachers said that they didn't benefit from the cognitive aspect, I mean that they went to attend the course but it was not useful in the cognitive aspect, but it was son useful for me.

23-   What about the content of the curriculum?

is the same, they said that they didn't benefit from the cognitive aspect, maybe the content has changed, I don't know

24-   where they teachers specialised in kindergarten? who said so?

no they attend the same course that I attended, they knew it , the manager then was Alajlan, it was not their speciality, but they don't know.

25- but they said that it's not useful?

they were not specialised

26- concerning programs, do you have any background before you went and attend the course, I mean before you went to the two months course do you know anything about is its objectives, content or the curriculum they are going to study or not?

no I had no idea

27- when you know about it?

when I went there

28- about the long-term or short-term course?

when I first went there, they gave us the content, sheets and everything, is all about what we will study within the coming two months.

29- objectives?

yes

30- before you attend the course have you any idea about objectives of the program of kindergarten in KSA?

I was always reading about kindergarten, I wanted to learn, both main objectives, I learnt it from here, the course was so useful for me.

31- children teaching methods and how to deal with children did you benefit from it?

yes a lot

32- from experience?

yes because there was only theoretical, we do not apply, we applied only in the last two days.

33- you didn't enter the washing rooms?

yes, but we didn't apply, the trainer asked us to apply in the last session, we didn't apply the whole program, I don't have complete application.

34- Do you mean that the theoretical took longer?

Yes, but we didn't apply much, they told us that we will apply in the last session, but we didn't apply the whole programe.

35- an application in the last weeks before the end of the two months course?

yes, we in the last face, at the beginning it was all theoretical.

36-   children educational aspects, children growth phases, psychology of growth and facing problems?

yes it was so useful

37-   before or after the course?

before the course I knew nothing about it, if I studied in the course characteristics of each growth phase, and children skills, and what the child needs in this age, I benefited a lot from this course.

38-   what about children teaching methods and what are the methods that you use?

in teaching children I learnt more from here, when I first got appointed, they let me inter classes with teachers, I gained experience from them.

39-   at the Beginning you were an assistant we were just inter class to watch the teacher?

not much watching, about one month, and then I applied, there was continuous instructions, I should have do this and stop doing this instructions from the management.

40-   what about the national environment in the training centre in embassies District what do you think of it?

environment as classes you mean?

41-   Classes?

it was all suitable and well prepared

42-   what about the lecture places will you attend lectures and workshops as trainees, was the training place suitable?

generally it was suitable, I don't remember because it was so long ago but the environment was suitable.

43-   where you gather the way you sit and tools that they use the lecture, about the modern tools?

is there was..

44-were you watching videos?

It was like a slideshow, there was no modernised tools, there was only a projector, and they just presenting a slideshow, that is what I remember.

44-   having to use videos?

no I don't remember

45-   they presented a problem?

yes like a child behaviour.

46-   yes

with the teacher

47-   yes

no

48-   did they depend mostly on the lecture?

yes

49-   approximately 80%?

almost yes, there was many theoretical lectures, but we went once or twice to classes and watch in the monitoring room, most of the two months we were studying theoretical lectures, there was no much practical.

50-   what are the positive things that benefited you in the training centre, like teaching methods, how you transfer information to children, building, lectures, workshops, timing or working as groups?

time in Warsaw suitable, but there was a problem.

51-   from morning till noon and 2 months long was suitable for you?

everything was beautiful, if they give us practical work it would be better, the term is about 3 months, if they give us 3 months course and more practical work it would be better, second Point all the negative things in the training centre, the place what sort annoying I'm getting inside and outside, you know about the gate it was so annoying, what about the classroom environment it was excellent and it was very well prepared, but children were few, outside was very difficult, parents didn't like to come.

52-   what about educational environment for you as a trainee, call the place, about the class that you took lectures in, where is comfortable, you're sitting in a proper way?

place where we take lectures what's the same place we take our rest in, there was no match places only one lecturer, they give us a break but in the same place, it was suitable because it has a kindergarten attached to it, better than being offices, it is better to have an educational environment, number of children was so little, don't know how it became now, when there is no much children, and we should do practical work on children, it's not easy to go back to our Nurseries and apply, we Face more problems, the more the number of children be the more

behaviour problems show up, but the place of the training centre was good, number of children was so little, I cannot apply class of five or six children only, I mean educational environment should be like 24 children in class, how can you compare a class of five or six with 24 office more behaviours it's not even comparable, when teachers are facing many children coming from different cultures, issues in the training centre we relaxed when dealing with children, that is why I didn't benefit a lot from them, because the the teaching environment or so different.

53-   you mean when you are applied?

we applied only to show her what we understood from what we studied in the lecture, it was not useful for us, I mean in application.

54-   I mean that theoretical lectures were more than application?

yes

55-   was this negative, have you felt any changes after you came back from the course?

of course, I became a new person in my class, I benefited a lot, for example when I do blocks we were choosing any picture (14:00) block, she told us no, it should be the same picture so it would be easy to the child to put it back in its place, how did a child know from the picture, she told us that the picture should be live, define torso useful in the cognitive aspect, the course was so useful for me in many aspects.

56-   but because you're not specialise in kindergarten, how to gain more information about children, and the way of dealing with children, teaching methods, directing behaviour and solving problems?

yes sure

57-   what about teaching methods, I think the training programmes are useful for kindergarten teachers?

yes, and I wish it will be not only two months, for example it had been many years after I finished the course, if there is a refreshment course every 5 or 6 years is a reminder for information, because people forget, and we need information refreshment.

58-   would you like to add anything?

no thank you, courses wear so good and so important, we need always to learn and get improved, and courses were excellent.

59-   you mean long term or short-term courses?

no I'm with the long-term courses, because the theoretical short courses are not useful for us.

60-   ok thank you so much god bless you.

Interview 15:

18th April, time: 09:59, the 9th kindergarten.

1-   You said that you are kindergarten dept. graduate, right?

yes bachelor

2-   have you begun to take courses, by how much years the course is after your graduation?

around 6 years, I was appointed three years outside, then came back here maybe two or three years, and then I got nominated to attend the course, you asking me if I had benefited from the Education environment or not, on my point of view sometimes the educational environment is not committed by a place, sometimes they give you instructions or the class environment, and it's so hard to be applied in our classes, so it's not an obligation.

3-   you mean what you have studied?

you can choose some things in Educational environment that you can apply, is concerning my benefit from the course.

4-   why did you attend the course?

they told me that it's a chance, because I never went to a course, maybe this is the only course I've attended, I told myself maybe it will be useful, from my colleagues from experience exchange.

5-   do you mean after you got the experience you attended the course? or while you're attending the course?

when I attended the course, I benefited from the experience of my colleagues.

6-   who attended the course with you?

yes

7-   where they from other kindergartens?

yes, what about the program, it was only information refreshment.

8-   number of years you've been working in teaching career?

about 16 or 17 years

9-   all you spent in teaching?

yes

10-   haven't you work in administration? when you attend the course What about the content and the curriculum?

it was self-education curriculum

11-   self-education curriculum ok, have you any idea about the course before attending it? for example about its objectives?

no, I got nominated to attend it but I didn't know anything about it.

12-   only the topic?

guess the topic, it was just a course for training kindergarten teachers.

13-   topic, time and place?

yes

14-   what you know nothing about objectives?

when I entered and attended the course, I knew it's about the self-education.

15-   I mean before you went to the training centre and attend the course, you know nothing about its content or objectives you only know that it's a course in a specific place.

yes, it is for training kindergarten teachers, and it was for 3 months in the training centre in embassies District.

16-   has it added for you in methods of teaching children in the kindergarten, like teaching skills, had you benefit from it, or was it the same that you studied in your bachelor?

from what aspect?

17-   Indian education aspects, methods of teaching, teaching elements?

no, it was the same

18-   was it just recalling information, ok what about the learning environment in the training centre the place where you took lectures and workshops, what was the most thing that benefited you?

workshops, of course

19-   what about timing, what's 2 months suitable for you, was it in the middle of the year?

it was aggregating of the term, the program was 3 months as I remember, but in the end, it was so boring.

20-   3 months was suitable for you?

it was good for dividing the curriculum, the plan where they divide the curriculum was good, first it was about behaviour, it was so long ago I don't remember exactly.

21-   what about dividing the content?

it was suitable, and lecturers were excellent

22-   do you mean trainers?

yes, they were so accurate, and you know that about information but you're sitting and hearing them while talking it was interesting, and I benefited a lot from workshops.

23-   And also, when there were colleagues from another kindergarten, there was experience exchange?

sure, because colleagues apply their experience in workshops.

24-   what about the course timing was at the beginning of the year or in the middle of the year?

I attend it in the middle of the year.

25-   was it suitable? at when you start working you stop and attend the course?

there was nothing unsuitable.

26-   wasn't it hard for your assistant in the class, or other colleagues in your kindergarten?

yes, if we are 3 teachers in the class, it won't be hard, at the time I attended the course, we were three in the class, so it wasn't a big deal.

27-   you spent a full term 3 month?

yes

28-   what about things that you remember about the place where you attend lectures?

it was an outer room, Hitachi digger training centre, any tools repaired for sitting and lectures, they used to give us a break for half an hour, and the workshop was in the same place.

29-   where are you sitting in round tables?

at first it was ...

30-   like the shape of letter U?

yes, like U, but in workshops there were tables.

31-   to work as group?

yes groups, in the last session.

32-   what about the means that they used, projector and smartboard?

no there was no smart board.

33-   what about videos, or it was all theoretical?

yes, all theoretical and workshops.

34-   what did you do in workshops? could you give me an example? did she give you a problem, I told you to think and solve it?

no, it wasn't behaviour problems, workshops were about cognitive toys.

35-   how you do a cognitive toy?

like the last meeting

36-   Do you mean how you manage the last meeting?

there were little things, but I don't remember them.

37-   have you benefited the most from the Workshops? what was the negative thing that you like to change in the training centre, timing, curriculum, trainers or everything?

to be frank it was so organized, maybe our attendance was the problem, and they asked us to buy CDs by huge amount.

38-   you didn't want to attend the course for free?

he asked us to pay 400SAR for a CD.

39-   I got you mean tools?

not tools it was CDs, she was recording the lecture.

40-   if you wanted to take the CD and keep it do you mean that?

yes

41-   but 400 for 1 CD?

yes, for one CD

42-   not for registration in the course?

no registration was free, you attend all the course for free, recall lectures you have to take a CD.

43-   wasn't it optional?

yes, a group has rejected it, a small group but the rest already paid.

44-   and you paid and took the CD? did you keep it for recording information in the future?

no, it was for spreading information.

45-   and the ones who didn't bought it?

it was for 400 SAR. some people took it and give it to another people like me, I took it and give it to another one.

46-   is 400SAR much for a CD?

so much for one CD.

47-   you didn't know about it before? was it a surprise for you?

yes, we all got surprised

48-   when they said so?

the first week of the course

49-   yes, at the beginning of the course?

and I suggested, instead of giving every training a different lecture, you should have her education bag, and spread it to all trainees, and we all can follow her properly.

50-   wasn't there organization?

only in this part

51-   what about the CD, was it only for the trainer?

No, for all of us.

52-   did it cover all the programme?

yes, it covered all the program

53-   and was it from the negative things your point of view?

yes

54-   what about the place?

this was available, we took break, it was suitable.

55-   what about interaction with children in the training centre? was it permitted or not؟

no

56-   at all?

we never entered classes, the only watch it through the monitoring room, to see few things.

57-   monitoring room?

yes, you have nothing to do with children

58-   haven't they asked you to apply?

no, they asked us to go and watch only.

59-   and write your notes?

yes, and to write our notes

60-   what about the impact of the 3 months programme on you as a teacher, on your skills after you came back from the course?

it was useful to me, I gained many skills it was an addition for me, more experience, in application like the last meeting, and experience exchange between me and other colleagues.

61-   how could you please explain to me?

they were giving you new information, and the nice way to apply it was useful for me how to speak in the class, fingers game and many things.

62-   Did you benefit from learning about teaching methods?

yes

63-   specially in the topic of the meeting?

yes, of the last meeting.

64-   the last meeting, the lessons, and aspects like cognitive aspect?

I don't know what about cognitive aspect.

65-   designing the aspects?

cognitive aspect, but my kindergarten is rich.

66-   your kindergarten is what?

is rich, by cognitive toys, it was not a problem for me, maybe other people suffers from that problems, about teaching lessons that we have studied, how to make cards big and covered, I

benefited a little bit but now education has got improved, what is available not up to date, I'm concerning lessons.

67-   and have you change it for the new generation different children, because it differs from the children that you had already reached from 6 years?

of course, they always carry their iPads, no discussions like before, of course I have to change the cope up with them.

68-   what about the impact of this course on your information, did add to your information, or your skills even a little bit?

yes, I benefited a lot from it

69-   what about ways of dealing with children, solving problems, the child because it's the basic element of the kindergarten?

they give us information, ways of solving specific problems that you may face it, and you may face a new problem, all about experience, years of working add to your experience and you benefited the aspect of controlling children behaviour, how are you gain his heart and make him love going to the kindergarten, through only your experience.

70-   not from courses?

let me give you an example different from taking a course about narrating then spending years doing the same thing every day you gain more experience,

71-   work experience is important, what about experience exchange with other teachers who were attending the same course with you, is it benefits you in controlling children behaviour or amending it? ways of dealing with children, new teaching methods when you sit with them and make workshops did it benefits you?

I didn't feel ...

72-   were you making groups and working together?

yes

73-   you think that training program even if it's short or long during working time is useful for the teacher? is it important?

It depends upon the programme, for example computer courses, it is useful for you in work, it all depends about the type of the course, not every time controlling behaviour in directing behaviour.

74-   do you mean new programmed shall be applied and you should take courses for it?

no new courses

75-   About the idea of making courses during working hours is it good or not?

it is useful for us, new and going to add to our information it will be ok, if it is the same that we take every time directing behaviour and controlling behaviour it's not going to be useful.

76-   keeping the employee?

especially when you are experienced, maybe it is good for beginners.

77-   what about keeping the employee for ten or fifteen years on working, I think it's better to let him out for taking new courses, see what's new in the world and not stay the same?

it depends on the person

78-   the teacher

yes,

79-   have you thought about searching?

Some people are ambitious, they like renewing and searching and some people like just to finish their work to get retired.

80-   But I have to perform work, have you thought about searching for courses outside the training centre, even on your own expense?

No

81-   Do you agree that the teacher should get improved and attend courses?

It depends, if he is ready, and like to go, why not?

82-   for being up to date with new development worldwide, he should search and learn, he shouldn't wait for his working place to ask him to attend a course?

If he likes, he will search, some people have huge experience, and years of working and they are still searching, improving they attending courses, like computer courses, and they don't wait for their manager to ask them to go to attend courses. this all depends on ambitiousness of the person and his love for work.

83-   Do you think that it is important?

sure, it is important, if I want to be up to date, if a person is not ambitious he will not search.

84-   if you ever worked in administration, or in the ministry, would you commit teachers to attend courses?

I don't work in administration.

85-   I'm just saying assume, do you think that it is better to let teacher go to courses and other kindergartens to gain more experience?

if it is useful, why not.

86-   if it is useful?

she should go, but if not, useful it would be management dysfunction, it is better for her to stay.

87-   do you prefer courses inside the kindergarten, if you attend a course outside the kindergarten should you come back and transfer information to your colleagues, and be a trainer for a little while?

because I'm talking for myself

88-   did it happen in your kindergarten?

I took a course for First Aid and I came back and applied it, but speaking of me as a personality ...

89- did you apply it inside the class?

inside teacher's room, we need the course here also teacher Hoda made a very nice course here in the kindergarten so useful to us, the trainer was Hayat (may God have mercy on her) fool if it's new information.

90- what about your opinion on the kindergarten teachers training centre in embassies District?

from what point?

91- everything, you have you send it short term courses there?

just

92- and after this you didn't go there again?

no never, about the course I told you all about it

93- where they excellent?

trainers were excellent, all of them, headed by teacher Wafaa before she got retired and teacher Sawsan and ...

94- all the content good?

yes, and trainers were ...

95- ways?

they are excellent, except what I told you about, I wish that the teacher gave us the teaching bag, and I wish there were more organization, because it was random they asked to gather papers it should be more organized.

96-   this mean that you didn't teaching bag contains all information about objectives, how did you know about objectives did they said it orally? the objectives of the course and the program you said that when you just went there you didn't know about the content or the objectives?

yes sure

97-   how did you know about it? orally?

they spread papers and CDs, I don't remember

98-   did they give you a paper listed by objectives?

yes, and the CD, told us to start counting, I use the project once or twice, I also don't remember this.

99-   yes, I know it was so long ago that's why you were trying hard to remember, have you taken any course in the last 3 years?

I'm from teachers that don't like to go out for attending courses, so few.

100-   would you like to add anything generally about courses during working times about the training centre do you like to add or suggest anything do you like anything to be changed?

I don't understand, what is the theme curriculum what would they add?

101-   do you suggest anything?

maybe new stuff like new methods

102-   do you like teachers to go out to attend courses for new methods?

if there is anything new, ok.

103-   about your colleagues, who are not specialized in kindergarten, who didn't have bachelor degree?

all teachers who didn't have bachelor degree in kindergarten, attended the 2 months course.

104-   they took it?

yes

105-   they benefited more than you?

of course

106-   because there was many new information for them?

yes, new information, and who came from urban places benefited a lot from it.

107-   do they come from urban places having any degree?

some of them holding kindergarten bachelor, and some of them have a diploma, somewhere specialized in Elementary before there was a specialty called kindergarten, they benefited a lot from this.

108-   what about your colleagues here, I guess three of them already attended the course?

I am the only one who is specialized here, and the two others are not, it came from teachers Institute or a secondary school.

109-   they didn't work in kindergarten?

no

110-   and when you compared your benefit to their, have you found that they benefit a lot more than you?

yes, because I attend this course from so long ago, when there was firstly making kindergartens.

111-   do they have more experience?

of course, experience and practice are so important, you can benefit from them a lot, when you sit with one of them, you can benefit from her experience.

112-   do you think that experience is more important than specialization?

of course

113-   what specialty is a base?

A base is giving you only basics but experience gives you ...

114-   experience is more important?

in my point of view yes.

115-   have you felt any time that they made anything wrong conflict with what you studied?

never

116-   did they improve themselves through years of experience, did they count on themselves and they changed themselves never go back to any trainer to ask them for support?

who are you talking about?

117-   them?

Do you mean my colleagues?

118-   Did they improve themselves?

my colleagues yes

119-   Do they used to learn and read a lot?

Yes, read a lot, one of them was so ambitious, she attended a computer diploma, while she is an old lady, she has an objective and energy. that is why I am telling you, if she has ambitiousness and will to improve herself, she shouldn't wait for anyone's help.

120-   she attends courses on her own expense?

Yes

121-   Do you think that it is your right that the ministry gives you annual courses or short courses, like refreshing information courses?

If it is useful yes, but if not, it will be time and money lose, and it will be better of teachers stayed at their kindergarten, sometimes you go and hear the same lecture nothing new, application is different, teachers work life differs a lot in application.

122- why, in your point of view, maybe because it's coming for another culture and they're trying to adapt it here?

I guess the trainer herself doesn't have experience, she didn't apply the course.

123- you mean that she only gives you solid information?

yes, only theories.

124- and he haven't dealt directly with children?

yes, she didn't deal with children and she have no experience.

125- Only talking from a perspective?

theoretical perspective, the difference from real workstations.

126- when you attend a course like that, can you discuss it with the trainer as a teacher?

yes, we can discuss a lot of things

127- do they give you a theory?

yes

128- maybe they transfer information from another culture or another societies?

maybe, right, you didn't suffer from this point, but they now applying more than the curriculum, they do more effort to apply it.

129- like Bwakir.

yes, Bwakir and something else they cancelled this and they applied that.

130- did they take it?

they studied it, and applied it in some nurseries, and they spend much effort to apply it and then it's cancelled.

131-   what is negative about this? do you mean it was just losing the teachers time?

yes, lose in time and money

132-   do the teacher needs to go out of the kindergarten and come back?

yes, and to study these new things, I don't know if some new curriculums are useful or not, I don't know about it, I only know that it's losing the teachers time.

133-   why do you think they stopped application and cancelled it? did they take teachers opinion about it? they realized that it's not suitable and cancelled it?

I think so

134-   have they sent you a questionnaire or a survey asking you about the skills that you want to improve, and courses that you want to attend?

do you mean the ministry?

135-   yes

I don't think so

136-   not even once, along all your years of experience?

a survey about course is that you like to attend? no most of our surveys in from outside.

137-   do you mean researchers?

yes researchers

138-   so, they are not Directly related to the ministry to improve you or make a course for you, and even when they cancelled the 2 or 3 months course they haven't took your opinion before cancelling it?

it was made because there was no kindergarten specialty in colleges, it was so important then, when they built the kindergarten teachers training centre, the courses where an excellent idea, because there was no specialty, and you cannot have experience from anywhere else, they were applying International curriculums, experts were giving them the course, it was excellent.

139-   but now students are studying the same curriculum for 4 years in university in kindergarten bachelor, and specialized people need this long-term course, about self-learning, Tuesday already study self-learning for 4 years?

and they add to it by experience.

140-   it's better to let them take courses?

about new things

141-   thank you so much god bless you, you like to add anything?

I just hope I helped you.

25th April, Kindergarten 45, First Teacher

1-   First, I would like to ask about your specialty?

Bachelor of kindergarten, King Saud University, on 1415 AH

2-   how much years do you spend in working in kindergarten specialty?

20 years

3-   years, all as a kindergarten teacher or your work in administration?

No, I spent all of it in teaching

4-   from 1415 till now you spent all this time dealing with children?

yes

5-   what about the courses or short term or long-term programs in the past 3 years?

Bwakir

6-   since how long?

before three years

7-   in the training centre?

yes, in the training centre.

8-   kindergarten teachers training centre, when you attended 2 months long course about self-learning, and Bwakir the last course that you attend, what was the reason that you go and attend courses, why did you go?

Bwakir was obligatory, I was obliged to apply Bwakir in my school. and about the self-learning, I was nominated.

9-   Did you like to attend?

of course, to develop myself

10-   concerning the content of the programme before you attended the two months course, did you know anything about its objectives, or you know everything after you attended it?

after I went there

11-   before you go when you're nominated to attend the course, you didn't have any idea about it?

no, I just heard my colleagues talking about it.

12-   but you didn't take any document from the centre?

no, I just took a main background from my colleagues

13-   I mean the training centre, if they give you any document about objectives or any background about the course?

no, I only knew that it was 2 months course

14-   it's topic it's place and date?

yes

15-   ok, before you attend the course, did you know anything about its objectives? curriculum that you are going to study?

no

16-   when did you know it?

one day when we went there, I copied paper about the program and objectives they divided the program.

17-   what were the curriculums, do you remember it?

the daily programme

18-   the daily program from the first lesson?

yes, in every trainer has a program, each week there were one trainer.

19-   what have you studied?

directing behaviour, how do you ask a question, how you deal with children.

20-   that is what I want to know, is it the same like what you have studied in university?

yes

21-   divided into units?

units, no beginning of the roads to children, about directing behaviour.

22-   did you have previous idea about the course, and when you attended it changed your idea about children education aspects, and methods of children education?

partially

23-   how?

(3:19) the course (3:20) changed, development.

24-   have you gained more information, or it was just refreshment for your information?

refreshment for my information and support

25-   what about methods of children education, did it change it, or it's still the same before and after attending the course?

I was graduated so long ago, and appointed as a teacher just after graduation.

26-   you are graduated from the University and after this you worked as a teacher then you took the course after how much years?

after 7 years

27-   did the course remind you of what you studied?

Yes

28-   concerning the educational environment in the training centre in embassy District, remember anything about the place, what way are the advantages, methods of teaching used there, about the curriculum and workshops, what was the most useful thing?

Classes were.

29-   what?

classes.

30-   for you as trainees?

same classes for children?

31-   no, I mean for you as a trainee, the place where you get trained?

there was a prepared place (4:35)

32-   how?

it was big with two rows No, no

33-   wasn't it containing of round tables for groups?

first, we attend lectures, then we apply (4:35) lectures.

34-   what was the most useful thing? lectures or when you apply with the groups?

I liked the groups

35-   groups where better, what was the worst thing in the training centre then, was it the curriculum or the content or teaching methods?

maybe the timing, timing was (5:01) the middle of the term, who has a class already, they take you from your children.

36-   yes, you mean in the middle of the term?

yes

37-   and you already started the school year?

and 2 months

38-   was timing the worst thing?

yes.

39-   what was the impact of the programme on you after you attend the course, after you finish the two months course, did you find any change in your information?

yes, it was good and improving.

40-   your skills?

yes

41-   could you please explain to me how?

it was consolidating my information, refreshment, actually in dealing with children, important thing is organizing ideas.

42-   have you found yourself change it, and understand the child more? have you changed your way of teaching children? did you feel that you got improved?

it was refreshment for the information that I already studied in university.

43-   that's all?

for me yes, because I worked as a teacher just after my graduation, saying that I already applied, it was just recalling and consolidating information

44-   Do you mean that it was just refreshment for your information?

Yes

45-   have you used the same methods that used to work with before attending the course?

No

46-   have you changed it?

not much

47-   like what you remember? you attended the course during working times, I think that the teacher better goes too long or short courses during working times or stay at her workplace?

attend courses, but timing of the course should be suitable, maybe it would be better if it's at the end of the term, it shouldn't be in working times, it put so much stress on the other teacher in the class, is stage 3 to 6 days working alone this also harms the children.

48-   do you think that the course during working hours for the teacher will it to her and improve her? it's not going to be effective? will it improve the teacher's information; will it give her motivation? yes or no?

Yes

49-   sort of?

yes

50-   does it depend on the time she spent at work?

First Years ok, but after 20 years it's really improving.

51-   how?

after 20 years I feel that it's not effective, what in the first years of her work it improves her so much.

got excited?

yes

52-   do you mean excitement؟

yes, but after 25 years, there's no excitement

53-   will she stay the same?

for example, me (8:02), it's not going to be useful for me, it should be for newcomers, they're excited and eager to get improved.

54-   Do you like to add anything about courses during working hours specially for kindergarten teachers?

it was good, the timing is not suitable, and maybe place is very far from where you live (8:39) a common attend the course, exportation problems, the place is for, if it is (8:46)

55-   is it being it better to make more than one training centre?

every course (8:35) in the training centre in the same place where she works, first issue is the place, then timing, it shouldn't be in working times, because this cause so much trouble to the assistants in the class, that is all.

56-   what else? about the environment of the training program, during working times, you like them to add anything to improve teachers?

anything that serves kindergarten, sometimes we attend not useful courses.

57-   why?

sometimes courses be about information, it's not made specially for kindergarten or something that we want to learn about in kindergarten (9:35).

58-   what are the general courses that you think that the teacher might attend but will not be useful for her?

sometimes, we received papers for courses like ...

59-   ok thank you so much god bless you

Interview 17:

In the name of God, the most gracious, the most merciful

Teacher no.2 kindergarten 45, 15th April

1-   first, I would like to know about you, what is your specialty?

Islamic studies

2-   bachelor in Islamic studies?

No, a diploma

3-   diploma ok, how much years do you spend in teaching or in administration in kindergarten?

no, I'm not an administrator I'm a teacher, about 25 years.

4-   have you worked before as an administrator?

no

5-   spend all your working years as a teacher?

yes

6-   from the beginning?

from the beginning I was an Elementary teacher, then diploma, and return back to teach kindergarten children.

Interview 20:

1-   Your specialty is not in kindergarten?

no, not kindergarten

2-   how much years have you worked in in the kindergarten teaching career?

since I was graduated about 23 years ago

3-   you spend it all as a teacher?

yes, as a teacher

4-   what are courses that you have attended in the past 3 years?

The last courses that I had attended?

5-   in the past 3 years, have you attended a course or not?

just Bwakir curriculum

6-   have you applied it in the same kindergarten?

some of them were in the training centre, and some in the applying kindergarten for whom are

responsible for Bwakir

7-   have you attended any other short courses?

no

8-   why have you attended the two months course and the short courses?

I was committed to attend the two months course, I was nominated and I have to attend, but it

was not considered as an addition, it was better to stay at my work, I benefit more from my

work, just redundant, the centre doesn't benefit me at all.

9-   you attended a course after how much years from your appointment in kindergarten

teaching?

like 5 years

10-   no, I mean after you get appointed?

after 18 years

11-   and then you attended the course?

yes, then I attended the course

12-   that means that you have already experienced before going to the course? not Bwakir, I

mean the two months course?

yes 18 years as a teacher then...

13-   but you told me that you are not specialized in kindergarten, it was based on education and curriculum?

yes, all related to children.

14-   but you had more knowledge because of your experience?

of course, my experience is better than anything else.

15-   have you any idea about the content of the course or the programme before you went there? like curriculum that you are going to study, objectives of the course?

no just the course name, and please in the embassies District missing for two months starting from…: am to...: pm.

16-   even about teaching units, about kindergarten curriculum?

I already have a background and experience

17-   did they give you any idea about it, before you attend the course?

no when we went there, at the first day, they told us for example this is for cognitive aspect and this is for behaviour.

18-   do you mean that they divided the curriculum?

yes, they divided it on days

19-   about methods of teaching children in the kindergarten, I'm your knowledge?

about what?

20-   teaching children, methods of teaching children, before and after you attend the course, have you any idea about it?

nothing has changed, the same that I already apply.

21-   what did you apply? how to teach children, how to educate them?

for example, teaching him indirectly, a lesson about a concept (2:56), then I can support this with elements, and when I enter he gives me the last meeting, I let him into the lesson, so when we finish the information will be already absorbed in the child mind.

22-   is this only in the lesson?

no in everything, all the day must be fruitful, not only (3:14).

23-   do the Direct or indirect way in educating children? and which one is better?

the indirect way

24-   concerning the educational environment in the training centre in embassy District, the educational environment was it related to the kindergarten? was there a specific classroom that you take lectures in?

yes, there was a small hall.

Do you feel that it was suitable for you as trainees, was it prepared and has educational tools like paper board?

yes, there was paper board, they didn't use projector (3:58)

25-   what about videos and other educational materials?

sometimes they have videos, it was not prepared, and they have to make the hall suitable.

26-   Do you mean it wasn't prepared that you can sit in it for four or five hours from morning till noon?

sort of, another place for small they have known well prepared Hall.

27-   what about the methods that they used in lectures, working in groups?

they were using the method of working in groups, sometimes they enter (4:32) then we went and apply inside classes, if children go to the playground.

28-   what is the most useful thing, was it lectures or working in groups?

it was not useful at all, just refreshment what is already in your mind, it didn't add for me anything, maybe (4:51) but I can add better.

29-   what about the trainer was she good, where the experts? or just saying the same thing about the self-educational curriculum?

it was the same, nothing was new.

30-   about your colleagues from another kindergarten attended the course with you, did you exchange your experience with them, was that good?

not much, it was good the teacher is coming from different places, I have (5:28) maybe they are who benefited, some of them said the trainers are saying great things, and they have new

things to give (5:36) no, maybe it's because are coming from different kindergartens, but it's the same curriculum they didn't add anything.

31-   what was the worst things in the training centre, that you wanted to change, or you wish it was not there from the beginning, is about timing? the course or the trainer? the lectures hall? what's the worst thing?

curriculum, nothing new in the curriculum, it is the same since 1425.

32-   what about the content of the curriculum?

the content of the curriculum? you mean the hall? it was a small place this is not suitable it has only one bathroom for like 30 Trainees.

33-   this do you mean that the place was not prepared well?

no, it wasn't prepared, only one bathroom, the hall is not good, the air conditioning was bad, wasn't a good place to sit inside it for a long time, we have no other place to sit, it was not a good training centre at the expected level for Riyadh

34-   was it only one lecture's Hall?

there's only one, and another one for application.

35-   what about the impact of the programme on you, if you that anything has changed in you? after attending the two months course, your information, your skills or any addition?

I am not evaluating myself, but I'm evaluating it, and it doesn't add anything for me, just showed me that I have better, and experience is better.

36-   do you mean that I didn't add anything for you?

nothing, the 2 months cores added nothing for me.

37-   you haven't learnt anything?

nothing, nothing new.

38-   didn't it change your methods of teaching children are solving problems?

39-   we depended 100% on your experience, although you are not specialized in kindergarten?

yes, my experience

40-   only experience?

I need you to help I'm not flirting myself, only was excellent, I might experience and my search, as a mother, I benefited also by dealing with my children.

41-   do you mean that being a mother is an addition to you as a teacher?

yes

42-   this means that it will prove yourself and attend courses outside of the training centre?

only one course with Abeer Salim, then the world of internet is opened, I search for everything, and you read everything about it, then you absorb everything about it and became perfect.

43-   and you are now improving yourself and depending on internet?

if I face any problem, or anything I need to understand better, I surf internet, and I use my experience.

44-   you spent 20 years in teaching?

23 years

45-   23 did children change all the time that you start teaching till the day?

of course, they have Changed

46-   does this made you keen about improving yourself, so you can deal with them?

is anything that I don't know I surf internet, in children differ (8:55), I faced new situations I faced problems, I searched for it in internet and problems were solved, what is new in this.

47-   Does this mean that you depend on improving yourself, not anything else?

48-   do you think that training programs short term or long-term courses during working hours are useful for teachers or not?

it is important for teacher, if she doesn't have the motive to improve herself, and also the trainer must be an expert, the trainers should add to the content of the course, directing behaviour I took this chorus like 100 times, and nothing was new, and the trainer didn't add anything.

49-   do you mean that the course depends on the trainer?

the trainer if she has anything new to say, she has something useful, before the child was sitting here listening to the teacher, now he's telling the teacher I saw something on the iPad, this behaviour, how can I address this situation, how come they are teaching us controlling behaviour it is the same from so long ago.

50-   do you mean that they rely on old information?

this is from my point of view

51-   of course, your point of view is important to us, and I'm doing this interview to know your opinion as teachers, I don't like to read or put my point of view. do you think that it's useful to make experience exchange with other teachers I mean you are from Riyadh travel to Kuwait or Bahrain, and have training there, and be assigned in another kindergarten there for a little while?

why not, I can benefit others

52-   For example, like experience exchange, one teacher from another environment, of course similar in culture, but our environment is different.

why not if it's going to improve us and improve children, I agree with this idea.

53-   do you agree with courses?

I agree to go to another place and benefit from it.

54-   courses outside and inside KSA?

yes, inside and outside, this is normal.

55-   are you with teachers that said that they must have intensive? financially word must be added to them, when they attend courses, or it's not important for you, or even a promotion?

depends on the person, I guess that they must take intensives make the teacher productive, and some others say no, they want to go and get improved, some people need intensive and, some don't, just want a value to be added to his skills and his information, why don't we give them intensive and they give us development in return an educational environment, why don't we give them and they give us back, I have spent 22 years working in kindergarten with children and nothing has changed it.

56-   the same?

the same

57-   But children changed and the way of their thinking changed.

of course, the way of thinking has changed a lot.

58-   and teachers are still the same?

curriculum

59-   curriculum?

if I do something, the supervisor inter and told me to do with the same way, ask me why I've changed it.

60-   who are you working under the supervision of someone?

yes, the supervisor came and told me to follow the plan.

61-   Not with your convince, you don't agree because the supervisor doesn't want you to change the curriculum?

if I was obliged to teach the Old curriculum as it is, then for example I will come and tell you this what I'm committed to teach, but I write additional things on papers, and this is right (12:26) sometimes I add things, that I don't write in my preparation notebook.

62-   Do you mean paper work?

work is exhausting to teachers.

63-   are you preparing it every day?

I write it after 11:30, it has to be delivered at the end of the day, and you finish work at 12:30, I may write another work, or have assignment for another work.

64-   how to write everything you do during the day?

I prepare the lesson and questions day by day.

65-   do you think that it's loss of time?

I find it a burden, I have an experience that's all, I know how to write my lesson, what are the tools that I'm going to use, sometimes questions come discussion between me and the children different from what I wrote yesterday, sometimes I write something but I don't say it in the lesson.

66-   do you know what a goal from seeing everyday teacher preparation notebook? is it a kind of control or what?

I don't know, it's not going to benefit the city, I don't know it's kind of control, or the presented material and tools.

67-   Do you think that they read it?

what?

68-   do they give you their opinion about your preparation notebook?

sometimes they give us their opinion, but I don't buy it, I have an opinion and they have another opinion.

69- is there anything you like to add, anything related to the training courses or teacher improvement you like to suggest anything to improve kindergarten teachers?

they must get us updated trainers, you must have something new, the coolest must have something new that benefit kindergarten children, what about the cause of directing behavior from 23 years ago, if there is something new, that place, to go to for courses sometimes timing is not suitable sometimes the course is in the examinations period, after I finish elements, sometimes there's a free week, I can attend this course, Katrina and must be an expert in kindergarten, and has something to add to improve children, everything needs improvement.

70- it's the most important phase.

according to my experience as a mummy, my daughter and I have children in university now kindergarten department is the same nothing has changed, I can feel a slight change, but kindergarten needs accuracy are not specialized to say what exactly needs to be changed.

71- do you think that teacher can be a trainer by experience? find yourself good in running the lesson or anything like directing behavior or solving problems, can you deliver lectures in what you are specialized in?

why not, my experience is not bad, where are Professor come, I didn't benefit anything from her, I didn't attend many courses, but I attended one for a doctor and it doesn't add anything for me, sometimes a trainee came and benefits me, this is not a condition.

72- Do you have anything else to add?

no thank you God bless you

Appendix 11: Ethical Approval

Aisha Almutairi
Registration number: 130249850
School of Education
Programme: PhD in education

Dear Aisha

PROJECT TITLE: Investigating Saudi In-Service Early Childhood Teachers` Perceptions and Experiences of Available Training Programmes: A Case Study
APPLICATION: Reference Number 006451

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 26/01/2016 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 006451 (dated 14/01/2016).
- Participant information sheet 1013215 version 2 (14/01/2016).
- Participant consent form 1013216 version 2 (14/01/2016).

If during the course of the project you need to deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation please inform me since written approval will be required.

Yours sincerely

Professor Daniel Goodley
Ethics Administrator
School of Education

Appendix 12: Training schedule at the training centre for female teachers in Riyadh

Appendix 13: Main Themes

Main themes

1- Positive views on in-service training

2- Negative views on in-service training

3- Reasons to attend in-service training

4- Recommendations to improve training

5- Technique used by teachers to improve (change) teaching practice

Refined codes:

1-Abeer Salem training is of great value

1-Admiration of a specific trainer

1-Admiration of a specific trainer

1-Availability of different types of learning and teaching eg flexible and direct

1-benefits of the lectures

1-brilliant facilities in the training centre

1-continual short training courses is of value

1-continuous development in the training session

1-Excellent style of teaching and training

1-good facilities in the training centre

1-Group learning

1-group training is of some value

1-In the training the children classes were purpose built

1-May be of value to non-specialised teachers

1-positive comments about a trainer

1-positive comments about Abeer Salem

1-Positive reflection of a trainee on training

1-Positive reflection on training

1-Positive remarks about training

1-positive view about a training centre

1-Positive view about Abeer Salem training

1-positive view about the training

1-Positive view of a trainer

1-positive view of a trainer

1-positive view of a trainer

1-positive view of a trainer

1-positive view of a trainer

1-positive view of a trainer

1-Positive view of a training centre

1-Role playing training

1-role playing training

1-short training sessions

1-Some training centres have brilliant and up to date facilities for teaching

1-Some training session have immediate impact in improving teaching

1-some training sessions are very useful

1-Some training sessions are very valuable

1-sometimes they ask us about our development needs

1-The impact of training was partly effective

1-The impact of training was partly effective

1-There are some changes in practice due to training

1-there is a value in training

1-there is a value in training

1-training can be of value in improving teaching methods

1-Training could be valuable

1-Training could improve skills of teaching

1-training courses don't offer new knowledge and are not suitable

1-Training improve motivation to teach

1-Training is valuable in refreshing and consolidation of knowledge

1-Training is valuable to enrich experience

1-training time was good

1-Workshops and group learning are valuable

1-workshops are of better value

1-Training has an impact (e.g. consolidation of knowledge) but the teaching environment is poor at our schools

2 months training is enough

2-bad timing of training

2-Challenges of timing of the training sessions

2-conflicting messages from trainers

2-Contents and learning outcomes of training were not known before training

2-Contents of training were not previously known.

2-difference in display of trainers affected training acquisition

2-disadvantages of place

2-disadvantages of place and type of training

2-do not use technology in teaching

2-Irrelevance of training

2-Irrelevance of training does not help

2-It is the same contents as the degree contents

2-lack of facilities

2-lack of high tech in training

2-Lack of information about the training

2-Lack of new information

2-Lack of novelty

2-limited practice

2-limited pre-training information given

2-Logistic challenges in training

2-Logistic problems of training e.g. need long commuting

2-Logistic problems of training, e.g. needs commuting

2-Long period between getting the degree and training

2-Long period between getting the degree and training

2-methods of delivery of training is no of value

2-need to attend is for trainers and managers more important than the value of training

2-need to know in advance about the training session

2-No changes in practice due to training

2-No consolation with trainees prior to training

2-no consultation prior to training

2-no consultations about our needs

2-No incentive to attend

2-No information about training available before training

2-no motivation or incentive to engage in training

2-No prior consultation with teacher about the training they are going to get

2-no prior knowledge of the contents of training

2-no prior knowledge of the learning outcomes of the training

2-No value in training

2-No value in training for me

2-nothing changes because of training

2-pre-selection for training is controlled by senior management level

2-problems in timing of the training

2-Problems of timing of the training

2-slight practical changes

2-Some stories were not good

2-some trainers are not qualified

2-Some trainers are poor

2-some trainers are poor

2-Some training is irrelevant

2-Some training sessions are irrelevant

2-Some training sessions are very short

2-Story telling technique is poor

2-theory more than practice

2-there is a need for more information about training before choosing it

2-tick boxes mentality

2-Timing of the training was inappropriate

2-Timing of the training was not appropriate

2-trainers are poor

2-training centre is poor

2-training delay your work and could cause an overload when you get back to work

2-training is of no value

2-Training material is similar to college's materials

2-Training of teachers who spent too long in teaching may be ineffective

2-training sessions outside SA may be more attractive but not everybody can travel

2-Training timing can affect teaching schedules at kindergartens and disturb children

2-Unsuitability of examples in the training to the local environment

3-Compulsory training

3-Consolidation of knowledge

3-Consolidation of skills

3-Consolidation of skills

3-Debates, workshops

3-different teaching methods in training

3-exchange experience

3-exchange experience

3-Good reputation of a training session

3-If the training is irrelevant I don't attend

3-Improving skills

3-In-service training is compulsory

3-Keen on training and improvement

3-limited practice during the study at the college

3-need to improve IT skills

3-Need to improve skills is the reason for seeking training

3-Peers encouragement about training

3-Peers encouragement about training

3-personal development is the reason that I attend training

3-Positive comments about a trainer

3-pre-selection from senior management

3-reason to attend long training to secure job

3-reasons to attend trainings: self-development, professional development

3-Refreshing and consolidation of skills

3-Seeing benefit in the training (relevance)

3-seeking new knowledge

3-Teachers who attended the training session gave us positive feedback

3-to increase awareness about specific topics (e.g. sexual harassment, health and safety)

3-training can boost self confidence

3-Training improve motivation to teach

3-Training is mandatory

3-Validation of experience

4-Better timing of training

4-Early training is better

4-flexibility in training and purpose built training

4-logistic problems of training, bad timing of training

4-most of the long training is for new teachers

4-prefer short training sessions

4-recommendation for early career training

4-recommendation for incentives for training training

4-recommendation for mandatory training

4-recommendation for short follow up training

4-recommendation for training about growth in the early life span of the child

4-recommendation for training with practice

4-recommendation of follow up training

4-recommendation of long training with practice

4-recommendations to attend training with practice not theory topics

4-short refreshing training for those who are experienced are better value for money

4-short training courses are better

4-Short training sessions are better for teachers with long history of teaching

4-short training sessions are better for those with enough experience

4-Teacher very selective of training

4-there is a need for motivation and incentive to engage in training

4-there is a value in short course of training about new ideas, methods..etc

4-Trainer quality in teaching is essential in successful training session

4-Training have to be both theoretical and practical

4-Training in the workplace is better

4-Training in the workplace, better timing

4-Training is beneficial but they have to improve its timing to avoid disturbing the children we teach

4-Training is not always available

4-Training of teachers who spent long time in teaching may be too late, they lack motivation

4-training personality and method of teaching is essential in the success of training

4-training places need to have a kindergarten linked to it

4-training should be for those in early career development

4-training should have a target to improve children behaviours

4-university and training should apply similar methods

4-use expert teachers as trainers

5-Change of practice as a result of training

5-Changes of practice as a result of training

5-changing practice as a result of training

5-debates and group learning

5-experience and practice

5-experience and practice

 5-experience is better than training

5-Experience is valuable in teaching

5-gaining experience from interacting with children

5-Group learning was the best

5-groups learning

5-Groups learning is valuable in changing practice

5-knowledge gained through practice

5-learning by doing

5-learning by doing

5-learning from each other

5-learning from each other and share experience

5-learning from each other's

5-learning from each other's

5-Learning from each other's is valuable in improving practice

5-Peer observation

5-peer observation

5-peer observation but no learning by doing

5-positive effect of experience

5-practical skills gained through interacting with children

5-practice is essential

5-Practice is essential in improving quality of teaching

5-practice practice

5-practice practice practice

5-Reflective exercise on teaching

5-Self training

5-self-development is of better value than the existing training sessions

5-self-improvement in teaching methods

5-self-learning

5-Self-learning of new approaches

5-self-training

5-share experience with others

5-the real improvement occurs when I interact with children

5-the role of the teachers' self-developing

5-Total reliance on own experience

5-use of learning experience and self-develop skills

5-use of social media and exchange expertise for self-developing

5-workshops are better than lectures

5-Youtube

Miscellaneous refined codes that were not assigned to themes:

Children now are confused

Conflict with non-specialised senior managers

Continuous maintenance of playing grounds

Doubts about the suitability of some children stories used in teaching

Early education is very essential to the children

Experienced teachers use love as a strategy to deal with the children

External short training - specific topics

First generation of children is better in many ways

Forced to apply teaching programmes without training

Health and safety issues

How to deal with children's behaviour is the most important part of being in kindergarten and training should focus on this

Importance of empathy with the children

Lack of facilities

Lack of facilities and teaching environment in local schools

Lack of facilities in nursery

Lack of infrastructure in kindergarten

Lack of IT and high tech facilities

Negative impact of the school settings

Negative view of senior management

No water in wc: lack of infrastructures

Public sector kindergartens are in poor conditions compared to private sector's

School building and environment are inadequate

School setting is poor

Some schools refused to apply programmes

The teaching system in SA does not value the nursery and kindergarten stages

Appendix 14: Examples of Coded Transcript

<u>Transcript: Interview 7</u>

Interview	Coding Categories
In the Name of God, the most gracious, the most merciful Third teacher in university nurseries, March 27 1- First, I would like to ask about your specialty? Welcome, do you want me to tell you my age or just specialty? 2- Only specialty. Kindergarten from King Saud university. 3- How many years have you worked in Kindergarten department? 14 years 4- Have you spent it all in teaching? yes, all as a teacher 5- haven't you worked in administration department no 6- When was the last course that you attended? at the beginning of this year I attended one course 7- Last one was in this year? yes, at the beginning of this year I attended a course, for a week, it was on an experimental curriculum that is applied in Kindergartens, I attended the course but they didn't apply it at school, in the last year I went out during working hours to attend the course, but they didn't apply at my school 8- What was the program? Program was like stations.	The nature of kindergarten teacher duties. The location of in-service training program whether in the school or outside.

9- Does it called stations?	
no, its name was not station but it is like stations, like this chapter is cognitive, the other chapter is for art skills, the third chapter was for self-dependence, you take group of children and put them in a class for an hour, then you take them to another class, then to the third class, etc.	The essential component of in-service training program.
10- Was this advised?	
yes, a foreign program	
11- But it's not applied until now?	
in my school they didn't apply it, they should have try it first	
12- Was it a week long?	
Yes, A one-week course	
13- Were all Theoretical?	
theoretical and practical inside the chamber	The duration of in-service training program.
14- Inside the same chamber, inside the training center, in embassies district?	
yes	
15- Have you attended courses?	
yes, I attended the long-term course, it was two or three months, this was 6 years ago.	
16- was it the only course that you attended in the center?	
yes, it was the only course in the center, but I had attended around 6 short courses, for a day or two.	
17- outside the training center?	
Yes, outside the training center.	
18- What was the reason that you attended the course?	The reasons for attendance of in-service training program.
Because it is useful to a teacher, because from a time	

to another you need refreshment for your information, it reminds you what you have studied.
 	
    19- was it by your own Desire, or you were nominated?
 	
It was a nomination from the administration, and it was so useful at that time for teachers.
 	
    20- most of kindergarten teachers attended this course.
 	
They wanted to benefit from it and to improve their nurseries.
 	
    21- you're the kindergarten teacher, do you feel that this course benefited you, it is all about self-education that you had already studied at university?
 	
yes, it was the same thing that I studied in university, but it was as a refreshment for my information, I can forget things by time, or stop applying it, it reminds me many things.
 	
    22- do you remember other things beside self-education? like behavior skills or solving problems, do you remember them?
 	
yes, in the same course in embassies district, there was children problems solving, for example they give us papers for a problem, and each group of us think for a solution to the problem, and that means that you share your experience with others, and gain experience from others.
 	
    23- Was there experience exchange?
 	
Yes, there was experience exchange.
 	
    24- Was it delivered to you as one curriculum?
 	
What do you mean?
	The impact of in-service training program on kindergarten teacher's knowledge, skills, and experience,

25- when they teach you how to solve problem with children, or how to deliver information to a kid, were this all under the curriculum of self-education, not separated?	The practical benefits of in-service training curriculum.
No, under the same curriculum.	
26- And was experience exchange with other teachers useful?	
Yes, it was useful for me, it gives me information about how she dealt with children, and maybe I face the same problem in my class, then you remember all solutions that they used.	
27- was there discussion?	
yes, there was discussions and solutions, and at the end the Lecturer gives you the last solution that's you can benefit from it as a teacher.	
28- before you attended the course, do you know about the course backgrounds, objectives, and why it is made for you, and the reason for giving this course to you, and what you will benefit after attending the course?	The experience background of kindergarten teachers in in-service training program.
no, I didn't have any background about it.	
29- You knew objectives after attending it?	
yes, when I attended the course, each day I realized what are the objectives, but before sending the course, I had no idea about it.	
30- you know nothing about it before attending?	
all I know is that it is related to Kindergarten.	
31- what about timing and place?	
yes	
32- have you ever tried to ask about objectives?	
you mean the course objectives?	

33- yes
 	
after I went to the center, I felt that it's related to kindergarten, so sure it will be useful for me, any course related to kindergarten is an addition for my information and can improve my skills.
 	
    34- as a Kindergarten specialized teacher, you have a background about aspects of children education, and methods of teaching, after you attended the long-term course, was useful for you, or the same?
 	
Do you mean that it added for me?
 	
    35- yes
 	
subjected education writes letters and numbers, by our experience as teachers, buy practice with children, but I benefited from the course, best mobile in another thing like not subjected self-education, in elements, in class.
	The experience background of kindergarten teachers regarding in-service training objectives and aims.

36- ok, what about the learning environment in the center? I mean the training center in embassies district, the learning environment, there was a building for courses, and another building for kindergarten classes, it was educational environment for children, have you seen the class room, that is consists of tables for groups, and a place for rest, was the educational environment comfortable? tools that they use and educational materials?
 	
yes, it was uncomfortable
 	
    37- Projector?
 	
it was the ideal Kindergarten
 	
    38- I am asking about the center.
	The characteristics of Learning environment.

yes, same Kindergarten.	
39- where you took the theoretical lectures, then you return to the kindergarten to apply what you studied, right?	
yes, yes, I understood.	
40- a place where you took the theoretical lectures?	
the place was good	The characteristics of Learning environment.
41- why?	
it was so long since I took the last course, but I remember that the place was not well prepared to take courses.	
42- were groups sitting on round tables?	
yes, round tables	
43- as groups?	
yes, as groups, we were taking the course and doing everything in the same place, we even take our rest in the same place, I guess it would be better if you take the lecture in a place and have your breakfast and take your rest in another.	
44- I've seen an attached kitchen to the classroom?	
Yes, But I didn't like it.	
45- Didn't they use it?	
No, they didn't because …	
46- Didn't they do tea or coffee in it?	
That was available, but when everything be in the same place it became boring.	The daily schedule of in-service training course.
47- Do you mean the 4 or 5 hours between morning and noon?	
Yes.	

48- All were in the same place?	
Yes, the same place.	
49- This is when you take the theoretical lectures? And training was in classes, right?	
Yes, at the end of the course.	
50- It was around only one month, right?	
Yes.	
51- What about the way of teaching or the methods of delivering information in the course, lectures and workshops, what do you think about it?	Teaching methods in in-service training course.
It was nice, but the course room was big, you need complete silence so you can listen carefully, I guess it is better to add microphones so the voice would be clearly heard, it also needs a projector I mean the teaching tools were rudimentary.	
52- Didn't they use projectors or screens?	Teaching tools used in in-service training course.
No, at the time that I attended the course, there was neither a projector nor screens.	
53- Nor smart board?	
Yes, but it was primitive.	Evaluation of the effectiveness of in-service training course.
54- What did you depend on?	
Just voice.	
55- Only the voice of the lecturer? Ok, about the time, do you think the 2 months period was sufficient or not?	
Yes, Sure it was good, hoping it will not be more.	
56- When have you attended? At the beginning of the year or at the middle?	
I went at the beginning of the year and other people attended at the middle of the same year.	The number of times in-service training

57- Is the course held twice a year?	course was conducted.
Yes, twice	
58- During the term?	
Yes.	
59- Ok, what about the number of people attending the course? You said that the voice was not clear, is it related to the number of people attending the course or what?	The number of participants in in-service training course.
Yes, because of many people attending, the group was big, and all were divided to groups, when a group start talking it was noisy for other groups, it was hard to hear the lecturer, or the trainer of the workshop, the voice was not clear.	
60- Ok you have told that you attended short courses, were the number of attendance bigger?	The types of in-service training course.
No, Of course not, short courses were...	
61- Was it more effective?	
It was all effective, courses benefit teachers so much.	
62- Do you prefer short or long-term courses?	
The short ones, but not too much short like for one or two days, I think it is better to make it 1 or two weeks, because long term courses are a stress for the assistant teacher, it is hard for her to be in the class alone for 2 months.	
63- Also, when y0ou come back, you find additional work or the same?	Evaluation of the methods of in-service training course.
No, But I feel sorry for my assistant, when one teacher goes to attend a course, all the class work became on the other teacher, it is too much stress, I think the	

management should send a backup.	
64- What was less value, lectures or workshops?	
I think the lectures, Because I benefited the most from workshops.	The outcomes of in-service training course.
65- Do you mean that application is more useful?	
Yes, workshops	
66- Ok, after you returned back, have you worked directly as a teacher or administration work?	
No.	
67- Have the courses benefited you in the way of teaching or dealing with children?	
Yes, Sure	
68- What is the most thing that impacted you?	
Sure, like solving problems, when the lecturer gives you a problem and you solve it, it was useful for me with children, when I face the same problem I solve it in the way of organizing sectors, and how you organize the sector, before I was putting activities in cognitive sector, but when I attended the course I realized that the highest shelf was for muscles, small, big and self-dependence. I knew how to put things in their right place. Ii was actually so useful for me.	The impact of in-service training course on teachers' skills and experiences.
69- Does this mean that it enriched your skills and added more skills to you?	
Yes, it was refreshment for my skills, not addition.	
70- Did it give you more ideas?	
Yes, it gives me new ideas.	
71- Experiences that you had exchanged with your colleagues?	
Yes, sure.	
72- Ok, About the information, have you studied it	

before?	
Yes, in kindergarten department.	
73- Even the methods of teaching, was it modern?	
There was a projector, but all were the same topics that I had already studied in the university.	
74- Do you think that the training programs are useful for the teacher, and adding to her skills and information?	The content of in-service training courses.
If it is all about improving, it is so useful for the teacher.	
75- It depends on the content?	
Yes, on the content of the course, hoping that there will not be duplication for your well-known information, but when it is improvement, it will be useful.	Mechanism for improvement of in-service training program.
76- Would you like to add anything?	
No, God bless you	
77- I have another question, about courses inside and outside KSA, have you ever attended any course outside KSA?	Openness to other experiences in the same field.
No.	
78- Or another town?	
No.	
79- Do you think that it is useful for the teacher to go to Kuwait for example, or Bahrain, to different cultures, for exchanging experience? Or just in different societies?	
The idea is good, and it can add to the teacher more experience, but it depends on the teacher's circumstances.	
80- If it happens, it will be optional, and the teacher is free to choose.	
Yes, Optional	

81- Depends on her circumstances.	
If I have the choice	
82- As a teacher, do you prefer to take a course or to be assigned for sometime to go and work in another kindergarten? For example, in Kuwait or Bahrain for one term, to have new skills and be more opened for another culture. Do you think that this is good?	
Yes good, but also it depends upon the teachers own situation, if she can do it, then its ok, it will be so good for her, but for me it is going to be hard.	Teacher readiness for in-service training program.
83- Ok, regarding courses, do you have any opinion, are you asked what do you need to learn before making a course? Or you ask the ministry that you need certain course to improve you? Is the course based on teachers needs?	
No, not based on what the teacher wants, courses always are listed in a schedule, and we see the suitable time and the place for us, and we either accept or not, sometimes you right that you want to take this course but your name will not be listed, if you say yes that doesn't mean that you will attend it.	
84- Did it happen before in your full working life that they sent you a survey about aspects that you want to improve in your work so they choose a course that suits you? Not even once?	
No,	The needs and opinions of kindergarten teacher.
85- Really	
I don't remember that I had a survey about courses.	

86- They just inform you about courses when they are already set? Yes, as I told you before, there is a list of courses, where the name, place timing and topic, and you only see what will be suitable for you. 87- There is no survey or questionnaire about the needs of teachers? Before the course, No. 88- Before the course no. Ok thank you so much, God bless you	

Transcript: Interview 14

Interview	Coding Categories
In the name of God the most gracious, the most merciful 31st March- teacher no. 3 Kindergarten 11 1- What about your specialty? General management 2- Bachelor or diploma? No, Bachelor from King Saud University. 3- how much years do you spend working in kindergarten career? about 16 years 4- all were in teaching? yes 5- when you first began working? not as a teacher, what is kindergarten. 6- what did you work? first I worked as a teacher for 3 years, and I worked as an assistant for two years. 7- teacher assistant or management assistant? No, management assistant. 8- with the administration? yes 9- and what did you work after 2 years as an assistant? then I worked as a kindergarten teacher 10- was it by your own will? you loved working as a teacher? yes I requested this 11- what about courses that you have attended,	The specialty of kindergarten teacher. Years of experience of kindergarten teacher. The nature of kindergarten teacher responsibilities.

when was the last course that you had attended?	
at the past year I guess	
12- in 2015?	
yes, it was about positive behaviour, I forgot the name of the course, the trainer name was Fatma Elwan.	Information on teacher's past experience of In-service training program.
13- name is not important, how much time was it, was it long or short?	
3 days	
14- only 3 days?	
Yes	
15- was it in the working day or after working hours?	
it was during working day, but there was no children then, it was at the end of the day there was no children.	
16- for 3 days?	
yes	
17- outside?	
yes	
18- in the training centre or where?	The reasons for attendance of in-service training program.
no in the supervision	
19- why have you attended the course? did you attend the course in the training centre?	
sometimes I go there but I didn't ask to go to any course there.	
20- have you attended the two months course?	
yes, you're so useful for me, it is like safety for me, I'm still applying what I studied in it.	
21- Do you mean safety for your career?	

	The effects of in-service training program.
yes, because I'm not specialized in kindergarten, I might be executed, the manager told me to attend the course not to be executed from my work, if someone not specialized in kindergarten you just attend this course and that's all you will become specialized, but nobody excluded from the teachers, I went then for this reason, but it benefited me a lot.	
22- ok and the short courses why did you attend it?	
I like to learn, and I want the training centre no more short courses for the big 2 month course, sometimes we forgot information by time, so useful for me, especially in cognitive aspect, before attending the course it was difficult, I'm talking about myself, many teachers said that they didn't benefit from the cognitive aspect, I mean that they went to attend the course but it was not useful in the cognitive aspect, but it was son useful for me.	
23- What about the content of the curriculum?	Curriculum contents for in-service training course.
is the same, they said that they didn't benefit from the cognitive aspect, maybe the content has changed, I don't know	
24- where they teachers specialised in kindergarten? who said so?	
no they attend the same course that I attended, they knew it , the manager then was Alajlan, it was not their speciality, but they don't know.	
25- but they said that it's not useful?	
they were not specialised	
26- concerning programs, do you have any	The experience background of kindergarten

	teachers in in-service training program.
background before you went and attend the course, I mean before you went to the two months course do you know anything about is its objectives, content or the curriculum they are going to study or not?	
no I had no idea	
27- when you know about it?	
when I went there	Types and objectives of in-service training course.
28- about the long-term or short-term course?	
when I first went there, they gave us the content, sheets and everything, is all about what we will study within the coming two months.	
29- objectives?	
yes	
30- before you attend the course have you any idea about objectives of the program of kindergarten in KSA?	
I was always reading about kindergarten, I wanted to learn, both main objectives, I learnt it from here, the course was so useful for me.	The impact of teaching methods on children.
31- children teaching methods and how to deal with children did you benefit from it?	
yes a lot	
32- from experience?	
yes because there was only theoretical, we do not apply, we applied only in the last two days.	
33- you didn't enter the washing rooms?	
yes, but we didn't apply, the trainer asked us to apply in the last session, we didn't apply the whole program, I don't have complete application.	Differences between theoretical and applied methods.

34- Do you mean that the theoretical took longer?	
Yes, but we didn't apply much, they told us that we will apply in the last session, but we didn't apply the whole programe.	
35- an application in the last weeks before the end of the two months course?	
yes, we in the last face, at the beginning it was all theoretical.	
36- children educational aspects, children growth phases, psychology of growth and facing problems?	
yes it was so useful	
37- before or after the course?	
before the course I knew nothing about it, if I studied in the course characteristics of each growth phase, and children skills, and what the child needs in this age, I benefited a lot from this course.	Teaching methods used in in-service training program.
38- what about children teaching methods and what are the methods that you use?	
in teaching children I learnt more from here, when I first got appointed, they let me inter classes with teachers, I gained experience from them.	
39- at the Beginning you were an assistant we were just inter class to watch the teacher?	
not much watching, about one month, and then I applied, there was continuous instructions, I should have do this and stop doing this instructions from the management.	The characteristics of Learning environment.
40- what about the national environment in the training centre in embassies District what do you think of it?	

environment as classes you mean?	
41- Classes?	
it was all suitable and well prepared	
42- what about the lecture places will you attend lectures and workshops as trainees, was the training place suitable?	
generally it was suitable, I don't remember because it was so long ago but the environment was suitable.	
43- where you gather the way you sit and tools that they use the lecture, about the modern tools?	
is there was..	
44-were you watching videos?	Teaching methods tools used in in-service training course.
It was like a slideshow, there was no modernised tools, there was only a projector, and they just presenting a slideshow, that is what I remember.	
44- having to use videos?	
no I don't remember	
45- they presented a problem?	
yes like a child behaviour.	
46- yes	
with the teacher	
47- yes	
no	
48- did they depend mostly on the lecture?	
yes	
49- approximately 80%?	
almost yes, there was many theoretical lectures, but we went once or twice to classes and watch in the monitoring room, most of the two months we were studying theoretical lectures, there was no much	

practical.	
50- what are the positive things that benefited you in the training centre, like teaching methods, how you transfer information to children, building, lectures, workshops, timing or working as groups?	The practical benefits of in-service training course.
time in Warsaw suitable, but there was a problem.	
51- from morning till noon and 2 months long was suitable for you?	
everything was beautiful, if they give us practical work it would be better, the term is about 3 months, if they give us 3 months course and more practical work it would be better, second Point all the negative things in the training centre, the place what sort annoying I'm getting inside and outside, you know about the gate it was so annoying, what about the classroom environment it was excellent and it was very well prepared, but children were few, outside was very difficult, parents didn't like to come.	
52- what about educational environment for you as a trainee, call the place, about the class that you took lectures in, where is comfortable, you're sitting in a proper way?	
place where we take lectures what's the same place we take our rest in, there was no match places only one lecturer, they give us a break but in the same place, it was suitable because it has a kindergarten attached to it, better than being offices, it is better to have an educational environment, number of children was so little, don't know how it became now, when there is no much children, and we should do practical	The effectiveness of educational Learning environment.

work on children, it's not easy to go back to our Nurseries and apply, we Face more problems, the more the number of children be the more behaviour problems show up, but the place of the training centre was good, number of children was so little, I cannot apply class of five or six children only, I mean educational environment should be like 24 children in class, how can you compare a class of five or six with 24 office more behaviours it's not even comparable, when teachers are facing many children coming from different cultures, issues in the training centre we relaxed when dealing with children, that is why I didn't benefit a lot from them, because the the teaching environment or so different.

53- you mean when you are applied?

we applied only to show her what we understood from what we studied in the lecture, it was not useful for us, I mean in application.

54- I mean that theoretical lectures were more than application?

yes

55- was this negative, have you felt any changes after you came back from the course?

of course, I became a new person in my class, I benefited a lot, for example when I do blocks we were choosing any picture (14:00) block, she told us no, it should be the same picture so it would be easy to the child to put it back in its place, how did a child know from the picture, she told us that the picture should be live, define torso useful in the cognitive aspect, the course was so useful for me in many aspects.

Differences between theoretical and applied methods.

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56- but because you're not specialized in kindergarten, how to gain more information about children, and the way of dealing with children, teaching methods, directing behaviour and solving problems? yes sure 57- what about teaching methods, I think the training programmes are useful for kindergarten teachers? yes, and I wish it will be not only two months, for example it had been many years after I finished the course, if there is a refreshment course every 5 or 6 years is a reminder for information, because people forget, and we need information refreshment. 58- would you like to add anything? no thank you, courses wear so good and so important, we need always to learn and get improved, and courses were excellent. 59- you mean long term or short-term courses? no I'm with the long-term courses, because the theoretical short courses are not useful for us. 60- ok thank you so much god bless you.	The impact of in-service training program on kindergarten teacher's knowledge, skills, and experience, Types of in-service training course.