A mixed study on the level of coping strategies among preprimaryteachers in Early Childhood Education: A Case study of KasunguDistrict

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to investigate the coping mechanisms used by preprimary teachers in Early Childhood Education (ECE) settings in Malawi's Kasungu District. The study collected information from preprimary teachers about their coping strategies, experiences, and perceptions of stress in the workplace using a combination of surveys and qualitative interviews. Quantitative analysis of the survey data showed that preprimary teachers in Kasungu District used a range of coping mechanisms to deal with stress at work. The most frequently mentioned mechanisms included asking for and receiving social support from coworkers, taking care of oneself, and applying problem-focused coping mechanisms. These results highlight how crucial personal wellbeing and interpersonal support are for preprimary teachers in early childhood education settings to be able to cope effectively.

Qualitative interviews provided more profound insights on the contextual elements affecting teachers' stress experiences and coping mechanisms. The difficulties preprimary teachers in Kasungu District face such as few resources, packed classrooms, and strong demand for their services became recurring themes. Teachers showed tenacity and resourcefulness in overcoming these obstacles, frequently *turning to personal* coping strategies and social support systems to manage the demands of their line of work. Preprimary teachers' ability to effectively cope was also shown to be significantly aided by supportive leadership and a healthy work atmosphere.

The results of this study have significance for educators, administrators, and policymakers who want to improve the quality of care in early childhood education settings in Kasungu District and beyond while also promoting the well-being of teachers. Interventions intended to enhance preprimary teachers' coping mechanisms should include the particular contextual elements and difficulties that teachers in Kasungu District encounter, such as little resources and high demand for their services. Promoting a culture of cooperation and peer support, offering stress management training and resources, and pushing for supportive policies and practices within ECE facilities are a few strategies to boost teacher well-being. Policymakers and administrators may foster a more meaningful and long-lasting work environment for teachers and staff by addressing the underlying causes of stress and providing support for appropriate coping methods among preprimary teachers.

Key words: Mixed-Methods Study, Early Childhood Education, Coping Strategies, Preprimary Teachers.

I. INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is a critical phase in a child's development, and pre-primary teachers play a crucial role in shaping the learning experiences of young children. However, the demands and stressors associated with this profession can impact teacher well- being and, consequently, the quality of education provided. This proposed study aims to investigate the coping strategies utilized by pre-primary teachers in dealing with the challenges they face in ECE settings. Through understanding these coping mechanisms, we can better support teacher well-being and enhance the overall quality of early education.

Research indicates that the teaching is a high stress profession (Jepson & Forrest, 2006; Klassen, 2010; Lambert et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2009). According to Jepson and Forrest (2006), 41% of teacher's report having high stress, which is more than individuals in other professions such

as nursing. While teaching in general is reported as highly stress, specific research regarding the context of early childhood education classrooms has suggested that teachers of young children face unique challenges (McCarthy et al., 2009). This job stress among children of young children has been linked to both individual factors (Jepson & Forrest, 2006) as well as environmental factors (Moriarty et al., 2001).

Early childhood educators experience a higher risk of burnout than other occupations (Johnson, S. et al., 2005). On average, about one-third of qualified educators intend to leave the teaching profession within four years (Jackson, 2020). There is well-established evidence that teacher burnout is detrimental to children's education, and the turnover associated with it poses considerable training and replacement costs to educational systems (Jackson, 2020). Overall, early childhood services in many advanced industrialized nations face a high turnover and constant shortage of early childhood educators.

In order to offer high quality ECE, it is not only necessary to assure adequate education of the employees who work in the ECE profession, but also to promote and ensure their mental and personal wellbeing at work (Corr, et al 2014). The wellbeing of ECEs at work might be threatened by occupational stress. Occupational stress can negatively influence an employee's physical and psychological wellbeing. Scholars have found that childcare work in general can be seen as being stressful, difficult as well as mentally and emotionally exhausting. This is mainly because ECEs face several challenging working conditions. Stressful working conditions are for example the following: noise, physical demands, reduced privacy, and isolation from other adults. Besides, employees who work in childcare face increasing bureaucratic tasks, and at the same time decreasing and limited financial resources, as well as shift work and long working hours (Schreyer et al., 2016). Also, a lack of public appreciation and low status of the profession are described as being perceived to increase feelings of stress Consequently, the experience of occupational stress seems to be a current issue among ECEs.

In an attempt to promote early childhood teacher training, the government of Malawi decreed early childhood teachers and care givers to work on voluntary basis. The government offers to provide on job training to ensure that early education is owned by the community members (Ministry of Gender, children and Social Welfare, 2012). However, there are a number of problems related to quality of teachers of early childhood education is to be deemed meaningful (UNICEF, 2007). Problems related to delivery of instruction, children being forced to memorize things, which lead to assimilating concepts beyond their age, failing to group learners according to their stages of development and use of teacher centered approaches. This contradicts Driscoll, (1994) in Wool-folk, et al., (2006) who believes in encouraging ownership in learning through children centered instruction. In support of the views, Barnett, (2006) posit that children learn better through play. In contrast, some early childhood teachers in most early childhood development centres in Malawi, fail to mix play and education activities. This is denying children chance to exercise free play instead focus much on cognitive development

In Malawi Public programs are government sponsored programs, these are dedicated to a large extent towards the communities within the rural and other backward areas. There has been initiation of Community Based Child Care Centers (CBCCs) in order to promote Early Childhood Education, usually teachers involved in CBCCs are Volunteers and the schools are free of charge. This program has been the main objective to lead to advancement in ECE in an integrated manner.

This program aims at meeting the needs and requirements of young children on a continuous basis. There has also been a proper consideration of what kind of services to provide, which includes, health, nutrition, nourishment, diet supplement and provision of basic necessities.

Private programs that are involved in ECE are fee charging and project making programs. These institutions are recognized by names, such as, kindergartens, day care, nurseries, play schools, preparatory schools and pre-primary, elementary. It has been assumed approximately that 10 million children are enrolled in these initiatives.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The field of early childhood education (ECE) plays a crucial role in shaping the development and well-being of young children. Pre-primary teachers, in particular, are responsible for creating a nurturing and stimulating environment that supports children's growth and learning. However, the demanding nature of their profession can lead to various stressors and challenges. Coping strategies are essential

resources for individuals to manage stress and adapt to challenging situations. They enable teachers to effectively navigate the demands of their profession while maintaining their own well-being. Despite the recognized importance of coping strategies in promoting pre-primary teacher resilience and job satisfaction, limited research has specifically explored the coping strategies employed by pre-primary teachers in the context of ECE.

It is vital to comprehend the coping mechanisms employed by preprimary educators in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) profession in order to safeguard the welfare of both instructors and young students. Of spite of the importance of this subject, there is a deficiency of thorough study that particularly looks at the coping strategies used by preprimary instructors. The creation of efficient support networks and treatments suited to the particular pressures and difficulties encountered by educators in this field is hampered by this gap (Adam, 2010). The difficulty of the pre-primary teaching profession is a key component of this problem. Preprimary educators work in contexts that frequently call for ongoing modification and responsiveness to a variety of requirements in order to nurture the holistic development of young children. Existing problems may get worse if coping mechanisms aren't given enough consideration in the preprimary educational setting. In the absence of a comprehensive comprehension of how educators manage pressures and preserve their wellbeing, establishments can find it difficult to offer sufficient support systems. As a result, this affects instructors' mental and emotional well-being in addition to having an effect on the standard of instruction and general classroom dynamics.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW
Studies related to Early childhood education Challenges in Malawi
Government of Malawi (2014) Suggests that Early childhood education (ECE) in Malawi is an essential component of the country's education system, aimed at providing young children with a strong foundation for their future learning and development. The government of Malawi recognizes the importance of early childhood education in promoting holistic child development and improving overall educational outcomes. Despite the efforts made, there are several challenges facing early childhood education in Malawi, including limited resources, lack of qualified teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and cultural barriers that may affect parental attitudes toward formal early education.

Heckman (2016) applied an economic principle to early learning and showed that early success begets later success. This implies that children who do not have good early learning experiences are more likely to fail. In fact, there is strong experimental evidence, primarily from early childhood demonstration programs, that high-quality interventions beginning in the earliest years help children learn and achieve. Young and Enrique (2009) who alluded that providing basic health care, adequate nutrition, nurturing and stimulation in a caring environment helps to ensure children's progress in primary school, continuation through secondary school, and successful entry into the work**.**
Bloemen (2010) points out that early childhood education is crucial for the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development of young children. It prepares them for formal schooling by fostering essential skills and a love for learning from an early age. Studies have shown that early childhood education has great potential in improving the quality of both compulsory education and people's lives in general. This is the reason the development of early childhood education is a hot issue for the nation, society and parents, and an important subject in educational theory across the world The author made it more clearly in his argument that an investment in early childhood care and development not only transform a child's future prospects but makes a significant difference in a country's development

Studies related to challenges/ stressors pre-primary teachers face in ECE Caregivers in Early Childhood Education (ECE) settings face a range of stressors and challenges that can impact their well-being, job satisfaction, and overall effectiveness in providing quality care and education to young children. These stressors and challenges are experienced by caregivers globally and can vary based on cultural, socio-economic, and institutional factors.

The researchers examined the many difficulties faced by pre-primary teachers in Early Childhood Education (ECE) in the Smith et al. (2019) study. In-depth interviews with pre-primary teachers from various geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds were conducted as part of the qualitative investigation. The study shed light on

the complexity of pre-primary teachers' professional experiences by identifying numerous common issues that they confront via the use of theme analysis.

Inadequate resources was one of the major issues the investigation brought to light. Pre-primary educators regularly lamented the lack of instructional resources, classroom space, and educational equipment, which made it difficult for them to give young students a high-quality education. Teachers who had limited access to resources were less able to teach effectively and were more likely to experience frustration and burnout. Pre-primary teachers also noted that a major obstacle they faced was the absence of administration and policymaker assistance. Numerous educators conveyed feeling underappreciated and disregarded, with few chances for growth and promotion. Besides, lawmakers' inflexible curricular requirements and bureaucratic obstacles frequently inhibited teachers' creativity and liberty in the classroom, adding to their sense of stress and disappointment. The purpose of Johnson et al. (2020)'s quantitative study was to evaluate the frequency and effects of work-related stress on the job satisfaction and general well-being of pre-primary teachers in early childhood education (ECE) settings. The study looked at the causes of stress and how it affects teachers' mental health and morale by surveying pre-primary teachers in different areas and contexts.

The results of the study showed that pre-primary teachers were very concerned about work-related stress, with many expressing high levels of stress and burnout. Stress-inducing factors included having a lot of work to do, not having enough resources, and receiving little help from officials. Furthermore, educators in areas characterized by political unrest and socioeconomic inequality reported higher stress levels, underscoring the influence of environmental variables on the health of instructors.

The study by Hall, (2008) also demonstrated the effects of crammed classrooms and big class sizes on the workload and stress levels of pre-primary instructors. Stress and job discontent increased as a result of teachers' struggles to satisfy the different requirements of their packed classrooms. Teachers' difficulties were made worse by the fact that pupils in these environments received little personalized attention or assistance. Overall, this study's findings highlight how critical it is to address the structural issues pre-primary teachers in ECE settings confront. Pre-primary teachers may work in a more supportive atmosphere if administrators and legislators invest in resources, offer sufficient assistance, and cultivate a culture of appreciation and teamwork. This will eventually benefit the teachers as well as the students they educate.

Studies related to demographic variables and work-related educators' stress

Studies have found links between demographic variables and work-related stress experienced by teachers in general (Jackson et al. 2010). Stress is caused by the existence of pressurizing factors, the personality type and demographic variables of the individual and the availability and quality to utilize the coping mechanism (Aftab and Khatoon 2012). Jackson et al. (2010) established that there was a significant relationship between the prevalence of teaching stress and the demographic variables of gender, age and teacher qualifications. For instance, there is a link between gender and teacher work related stress.

A study by Mondal et al. (2011) found that there is significant difference between male and female teachers in terms of their psychological and physical stress. Male teachers were revealed to be more insecure and emphasized financial worries whilst in Rosenblatt et al. (2009) study; females expressed worries about intrinsic facets of their jobs. Observations were that males had higher stress and anxiety than females. Females tended to complain more about burnout than male teachers. In contrast Samad et al. (2010) revealed that female teachers had poorer mental health than male teachers and hence were more susceptible to stress than their counterparts. Studies also indicate that age of a teacher has a relationship with teacher work related stress. Darmordy and Smyth (2010) found that teachers in their forties had higher stress levels than younger age groups.

Studies related to coping strategies

A review of the literature suggests that teacher stress is a widespread, universal problem in ECE programs (Bernard, et al 2016). Pre-School teachers report one of the highest levels of job-related stress when compared to all other professions. As concerns related to job-related stress increase, the need also emerges for research

related to combating and preventing these stressors from resulting in disruptions to classroom quality and teacher turnover. Previous literature reviews have investigated broader trends in research focused on early childhood educators' well-being (Cumming, 2017; Hall-Kenyon et al., 2014). (Kyriacaou, 2010) suggest that there is a need for future research around teacher stress including prevalence, coping strategies, and career development despite stress.

Lindqvist et al. (2020) found that new pre-school teachers experienced conflicts that were both interpersonal (with children, parents and colleagues) and intrapersonal (being 'good enough'; establishing boundaries related to time and engagement; suppression of emotions) as they started out in teaching. In order to cope with these challenges, the beginning teachers used various strategies including collaboration, conformity, influencing and autonomy.

III.   Significance of the study

The study seeks to understand the different coping strategies that pre-primary teachers employ in ECE. The study will be significant to preschool teachers and early childhood education in general as they affect the child's success at primary, secondary and tertiary education. This is because Pre School acts as a foundation where children acquire basic skills that may later help them effectively function in the society.

Despite the academic value attached to the study, the research will be important in various ways. Most importantly the study will make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge and literature on the challenges and different coping strategies that caregivers use, the findings will help service providers such as Non-Governmental Organizations, the government to develop project interventions that address challenge, despite having programs in place.

The findings will help the communities to understand how they can play a role to help caregivers to overcome different stressors and challenges they meet in ECE. Furthermore, the findings will enable the policy makers to come up with policies that will really sustain them in addressing the challenges that caregivers face in ECE.

And this research will help to investigate the weaknesses that the policies/programs in place have, thus it will help in finding ways of strengthening them or adding/introducing some more programs to promote caregivers well-being in ECE.

IV.   Scope of the Study

It is very important to understand the level of Coping strategies among preschool teachers because they face a lot challenges and stressors in their work. They manage children at school, the have to look after their homes, nurturing their families, meeting community and parent's expectations this adds a lot of pressure on the day to day work of preprimary school. Teachers. The stressors and challenges that these preprimary school teachers meet are usually not visible. Therefore, the caregivers have to develop positive factors like coping strategies to overcome the challenges. Hence the findings of this study will be an eye opener to caregivers to understand the different coping strategies they can use. It will also be useful to bring about new interventions, policies and system that support the caregiver's well-being..

V. Aim and Objectives of the Study

This sstudy aimed to evaluate the level of coping strategies among Pre-Primary Teachers in Early Childhood Education in Kasungu Districtand hinged on the
following objectives;

- To identify common challenges and stressors faced by caregivers in ECE.
- To explore coping strategies currently employed by caregivers to manage stress and challenges in their work.
- To assess the effectiveness of Various strategies employed by caregivers in ECE

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study targeted respondents from Kasungu districts. Kasungu has 526 Community based child centers and 31 private preschools. It has 3210 Volunteer caregivers and 96 preschool educators that is according to Kasungu district council.

VII. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study used follow the mixed approach which will comprise of both quantitative and qualitative. Mixed research studies are advantageous because as stated by Creswell, Vick and Clark (2007) they provide more comprehensive evidence for studying a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative research alone. In quantitative research, the researcher relies on numerical data (Charles & Mertler, 2002). The researcher uses post positivist claims for developing knowledge, such as cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables, hypotheses and questions, use of measurement and observation, and the test of theories. A researcher isolated variables and causally related them to determine the magnitude and frequency of relationships.

Types of ECE settings
Table 1 Types of ECE settings

ECE Setting	Frq	perc
Preschool	10	20
Daycare center	12	24
Montessori school	0	0
CBCC	28	56

Daycare facilities of 20%, which are frequently hive of activity, offer full-service care and educational programs to kids of all ages. They promote early learning and socialization via play and scheduled activities. Preschools (24%) offer a more organized curriculum aimed at preparing kids for the move to formal schooling. They are distinguished by their emphasis on early academic abilities and school preparation. On the other hand, family childcare centers offer a loving and cozy environment, sometimes run by a single caregiver or small group, providing individualized care and flexibility catered to the requirements of each kid.

Main Challenges and stressors faced by caregivers in ECE
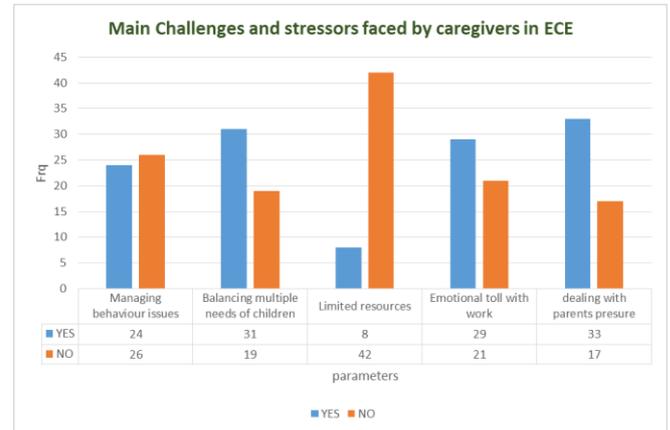

Figure 1 Main Challenges and stressors faced by caregivers in ECE

Early Childhood Education (ECE) providers deal with a wide range of challenges and constraints as while navigating the intricate world of raising and instructing young children. Managing the many demands and behaviors of children each with their own distinct personalities, learning preferences, and developmental paths is one of the main problems as cited with 62% (31) of the people. It is frequently necessary for caregivers to balance a variety of tasks, modify their pedagogical approaches, and offer tailored assistance in order to guarantee the welfare and development of every kid regardless of the setbacks faced by over half respondents regardless of their experience. In addition, caregivers may experience stress and exhaustion due to the physically taxing and emotionally taxing nature of their work, which includes long hours
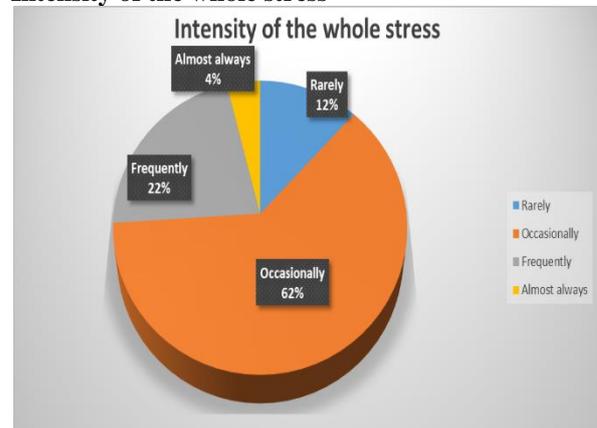
Intensity of the whole stress

Figure 2 Intensity of the whole stress.

There is 22% report on high degrees of emotional strain, including guilt, despair, worry, and irritation, are commonly reported by caregivers citing Seeing a loved one struggle or lose health may have a significant and long-lasting emotional toll. Correspondingly, fatigue and tiredness can result from the physical responsibilities of caring, which include helping with daily living tasks, administering medicine, and offering continuous monitoring.

The results counter argues that the wellbeing of caregivers depends on using proactive techniques to control difficult behaviors and foster strong connections in the classroom. Ideally, Children may learn in a supportive and loving environment when caregivers use evidence-based behavior management strategies including positive reinforcement, redirection, and modeling proper conduct (Lazarus, 2003). Besides the ideology, cultivating a culture of open communication and cooperation with families enhances the caregiver-parent relationship by enabling reciprocal understanding and assistance in meeting the needs of the kids.

In the classroom or learning places, caregivers may reduce stress and improve their efficacy by concentrating on proactive strategies for fostering positive conduct and fostering solid relationships. Furthermore, chances for continuing professional development and training enable caregivers to expand their knowledge and abilities, improving their ability to handle the challenges of their jobs (Folkman, 2014). Folkman, 2014 further explains that Caregivers who get training in topics like trauma-informed care, cultural competency, and social-emotional development are better able to serve children from a variety of backgrounds. Also, caregivers who have access to mentorship and coaching programs receive individualized help and direction in putting best practices into practice and overcoming obstacles. Caregivers may boost their competence and confidence in their work by investing in professional development and training, which will lower stress and increase job satisfaction

Coping Mechanisms
The results reveals wide range of mechanisms, initially, over 82% concurred with ideology on practicing self-care as another coping strategy that caregivers commonly employ. This might be engaging in physical activity, practicing meditation, or engaging in interests and hobbies outside of their duty as caregivers. Caregivers may

effectively manage stress and avoid stress by placing a higher priority on their own physical and mental health requirements.
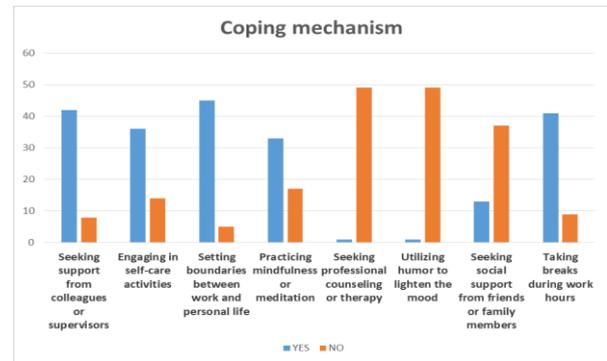

Figure 3 Coping Mechanisms

Effectiveness of coping mechanism
The results attributes that 90% of people views many mechanisms as moderately effective for instance, Caregivers moderately benefit from mental and physical rejuvenation by making time for hobbies, exercise, relaxation, and mindfulness practices. Caregivers may strengthen their resilience and more skillfully handle the day-to-day pressures of their work by putting their own health first.

Table 2 Effectiveness of coping mechanism.

Scale	Affirming		Not affirming	
	Frq	prc	Frq	perc
Not effective at all	3	6	47	94
Somewhat effective	24	48	26	52
Moderately effective	45	90	5	10
Very effective	6	12	44	88
Extremely effective	1	2	49	98

Barriers to coping mechanism
Early Childhood Education (ECE) caregivers face a variety of challenges to coping mechanisms, including systemic issues like restricted access to resources and support services, low staffing levels, insufficient support for professional development opportunities, and limited availability of mental health resources. Also, organizational issues including heavy workloads, administrative responsibilities, and rigid scheduling policies might make it difficult for caregivers to use coping mechanisms. Furthermore, societal elements in early childhood education settings, such the shame associated with self-care and the prevalent expectation of self-

sacrifice, may deter caregivers from putting their own wellbeing first. These obstacles make it difficult for caregivers to handle stress and may be a factor in feelings of stress, unhappiness at work, and worse mental health.

Peoples satisfaction on support system on *ECE caregivers*

Table 3 Peoples satisfaction on support system on ECE caregivers.

Likert scale	Frq	prc
Very satisfied	10	20
Satisfied	12	24
Neutral	11	22
Dissatisfied	18	36

From the Table 3, 24% of the people say they are happy with the support networks that allow ECE caregivers access to resources including learning materials, classroom equipment, and chances for professional growth. Sufficient resources empower caregivers to improve the standard of care and instruction they offer to young children, hence augmenting the degree of satisfaction with the support network. On the same, 20% of interviewed respondents are averaging complete satisfaction citing that the support networks that provide thorough training and growth opportunities for ECE caregivers are frequently valued by the public. Through these programs, caregivers may get the information and skills needed to assist children's learning and development in an effective manner, which increases their confidence in their abilities and work satisfaction.

The influence that different tactics used by caregivers in early childhood education (ECE) have on caregiver well-being, job satisfaction, and the quality of care given to young children has garnered significant attention in the writing by Diamond, 2014. Diamond in his thesis aired out that using positive behavior management approaches is one important tactic. He further argued that caregivers in early childhood education (ECE) settings may successfully promote good behavior and lessen problematic behaviors in children by using positive reinforcement, redirection, and modeling proper conduct. Caregivers may improve children's social-emotional development and foster a positive learning environment by providing a loving and caring setting.

The findings by Diamond, 2014 constantly a lines with the scholarship that self-care routines have been found to be essential tactics for enhancing caregiver efficacy in early childhood education. Exploration by (Michie & Williams, 2003) suggests that caregivers who place a high priority on self-care practices including physical activity, mindfulness, and hobbies report feeling less burned out and more satisfied with their jobs

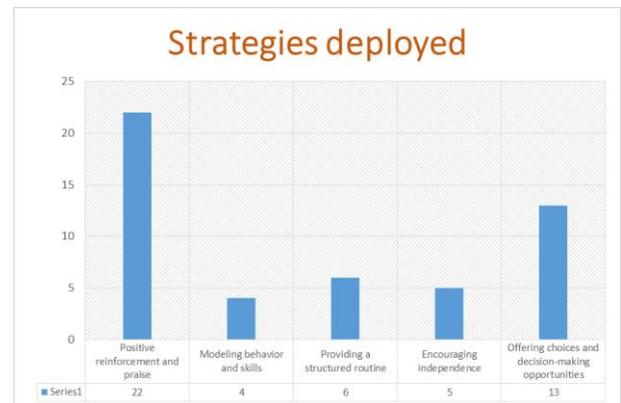**Various strategies employed by caregivers in ECE**

Figure 4 Various strategies employed by caregivers in ECE.

In early childhood education (ECE) settings, strategies including rapport-building, communication, and trust-building with children help to strengthen the teacher-child bond. For the arena, 26% (13) says that Positive connections are the foundation of a caring and supportive atmosphere that fosters children's sense of security, worth, and motivation to participate in learning activities. This, in turn, improves the children's general well-being and academic performance. However, few people have voted for use of structured routine. 12% of the people says that Parent-teacher conferences, family gatherings, and frequent contact are just a few of the tactics that caregivers use to encourage parental involvement in their children's education. Caregivers enhance the home-school connection and increase children's results by forming connections with families, but, such efforts are in vain.

A variety of viewpoints were expressed by those questioned on the efficacy of different caregiver-focused Early Childhood Education (ECE) tactics. Numerous individuals conveyed gratitude for approaches that emphasize providing

personalized attention and cultivating strong bonds between caregivers and kids, highlighting the significance of caring surroundings in bolstering kid's growth. Furthermore, agreement was reached about the importance of continuing education and professional development for caregivers in order to improve their abilities and adjust to changing best practices. Recognizing the critical role that families play in fostering children's learning and wellbeing, a number of respondents also stressed the importance of tactics that encourage parental participation and cooperation.

Summary

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is a crucial developmental period during which young children need caregivers to be there to nurture and educate them. Caregivers in early childhood education (ECE) settings, however, can face a variety of difficulties and pressures that can affect their well-being on a personal level as well as their ability to function professionally. The purpose of this study was to present a thorough overview of the typical difficulties and tensions that ECE caregivers encounter, highlighting the intricacies of their jobs and the demand for supporting interventions.

Managing young children's varied demands and behaviors is one of the biggest problems faced by ECE caregivers. Early childhood educators may find it emotionally hard to deal with the vast range of behaviors that children in these settings display, from tantrums to learning challenges. Also, because caregivers frequently have to manage numerous activities at once while maintaining the safety and well-being of the children in their care, the lack of sufficient resources and support workers in ECE facilities adds to the stress faced by caregivers.

The emotional and mental strain of raising young children can be detrimental to caregivers' mental and emotional health. Since caregivers frequently develop strong bonds with the kids in their care, it can be difficult for them to keep their personal feelings apart from their work obligations. The pressure to reach developmental and academic goals, together with the ongoing need to offer emotional support and direction to children, can cause feelings of weariness, worry, and burnout in caregivers.

A variety of coping mechanisms are used by caregivers in early childhood education (ECE) settings to deal with the pressures and difficulties they face on the job. Asking coworkers and superiors for social support is a typical coping strategy. Developing close bonds with other caregivers fosters a sense of solidarity and camaraderie that enables caregivers to talk about their experiences, give each other advice, and support one another emotionally. Furthermore, caregivers' coping skills and job satisfaction may be greatly improved by having supportive supervisors who recognize the difficulties they confront and offer support and direction.

Another crucial coping mechanism that caregivers use to control stress and preserve their wellbeing is self-care. This involves giving physical and mental health-promoting pursuits like exercise, meditation, and hobbies top priority. Caregivers can lessen the detrimental effects of work-related stress on their general health and happiness by making time for self-care. In addition, caregivers must set boundaries between their personal and professional lives in order to avoid burnout and preserve a good work-life balance. Caregivers may maintain their resilience and energy in the face of challenging work settings by learning to delegate duties when needed and setting reasonable goals for themselves.

In ECE settings, caregivers frequently use a variety of ways to effectively handle stress and problems. Professional development and training programs are one such tactic; they provide caregivers with the information and abilities they need to improve their work performance and encourage lifelong learning. Research results has indicated that caregivers who regularly attend seminars and training sessions report greater job satisfaction and confidence in their capacity to address the varied needs of young children. Furthermore, peer support groups and mentoring programs offer caregivers priceless chances to share ideas, ask for guidance, and get criticism from peers all of which further their professional development.

Caregivers' well-being have been demonstrated to be positively impacted by the adoption of supportive policies and practices in early childhood education (ECE) institutions, such as flexible work hours, sufficient staffing, and chances for growth. These regulations foster a more encouraging and productive work environment by addressing structural problems that lead to caregiver stress and burnout, freeing up caregivers to concentrate on giving young children the best possible care and education. Improvements in outcomes for caregivers and the kids they look after may also be attained by cultivating a culture of cooperation and communication amongst caregivers, parents, and administrators.

IX.   CONCLUSION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) preprimary teachers' coping mechanisms were the subject of a mixed-methods study that provided insight into how they manage the pressures and difficulties that come with teaching. Quantitative examination of survey data suggested that preprimary teachers adopt a number of coping techniques to handle work-related stress. Seeking social support from coworkers and indulging in self-care activities like exercise and relaxation methods were the most often mentioned coping mechanisms. These results imply that preprimary educators understand the need of both personal wellbeing and interpersonal assistance in managing the demands of their line of work.

Qualitative interviews yielded valuable insights into the fundamental elements that impact teachers' coping mechanisms. Recurring themes were how crucial support networks and company culture are in influencing instructors' coping mechanisms. Numerous educators underlined the importance of having a supportive workplace where they are treated with respect and feel appreciated by administrators and coworkers. Teachers in settings with high stress levels and little assistance, on the other hand, reported depending more on personal coping mechanisms like time management and mindfulness.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS

ECE facilities should place a high priority on putting in place continuing professional development programs that give preprimary teachers the tools and resources they need to effectively manage stress at work. These courses might cover conflict resolution tactics, mindfulness exercises, and stress management approaches.

Preprimary teachers should be encouraged to emphasize self-care techniques in order to preserve their well-being, even while institutional improvements are crucial. Administrators may provide teachers access to wellness programs, mindfulness training, and relaxation areas, among other tools and assistance, to assist them in incorporating self-care practices into their daily schedules.

It is recommended that mentoring programs and peer support networks be established inside early childhood education facilities by administrators and lawmakers. Preprimary teachers can develop a sense of camaraderie and support from one another by having opportunities to interact with colleagues, exchange stories, and ask for guidance. In order to encourage cooperation and teamwork among instructors, administrators should also organize frequent group talks and team-building exercises.

In ECE settings, administrators ought to give priority to resolving systemic problems that lead to teacher burnout and stress. This might entail taking steps to lessen workload, enhance lines of communication between administrators and teachers, and ensure that there is enough staffing to assist teachers in their positions.

Understanding the changing requirements of preprimary teachers and developing practical methods for enhancing their well-being need ongoing study and assessment. It is recommended that administrators promote continuous research endeavors in early childhood education environments to investigate the effects of diverse interventions on teacher job satisfaction, retention rates, and overall work performance.

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