

# The overseas pakistanis foundation education essay



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The overseas Pakistanis Foundation is an organization which was established for the welfare of Pakistanis working abroad and their families living here in Pakistan. This organization comes under the control of Ministry of overseas Pakistanis labor and manpower. Its objective was to give poor Pakistanis the vocational training in the fields that are required and demanded overseas. It aimed to give scholarships, stipends to the children of the poor workers working abroad. More than 7 million Pakistanis working overseas and about 5 million families are dependent and living in Pakistan. This overseas Pakistani community is a major source of earning foreign exchange. The OPF feels privileged to help this community in providing them with the best possible education.

There are more than 15 educational institutions of OPF in Pakistan. OPF endeavor to cater to the educational needs of Overseas Pakistani workers? children at all levels starting from early childhood education to post graduate level. OPF Girls College Islamabad is its one of the best institutions of Pakistan. OPF Girls College is located in one of the best sectors of Islamabad with a network of its junior branches in many sectors. It starts from pre nursery class to the post graduate level for girls only; boys study here till class 5 only and after that they are promoted to OPF Boys College in another sector of Islamabad. OPF Girls College is a huge campus for more than 5000 girls and the small children are studying in its junior branches. The ideal and congenial environment of the school/college promotes learning activities. It is equipped with up to date libraries, computer and science laboratories. The audio visual aids, models, transparencies, overhead projectors and multimedia facilitate teaching and learning processes. Curricular and co-

curricular activities to promote physical and mental growth of the students are the additional attraction of the college. There is an auditorium for seminars, annual parents' day and other college functions. This auditorium provides a seating capacity for over 600 people. Huge play grounds, tennis and basket ball courts enable the students to enjoy games along with their untiring study schedule. It also provides hostel and transport facilities. Refreshment cafeteria, water filtration and chiller plants and full time doctors medical help students to maintain their good health.

? The Mission of the OPF education system is to ensure excellence in teaching and learning so that each student will participate with responsibility in a diverse and changing world.?

It says that the college endeavors to disseminate the best knowledge and provide students with solid foundation. To enable the students to excel in every field of life by meeting and exceeding rigorous performance and achievement standards. It will try to ensure the highest level of performance for all teaching and non-teaching staff. It will develop and implement curriculum and evaluation system that are relevant and challenging. To create a stimulating and nourishing learning environment. A congenial atmosphere to form a student- teacher friendly community. To make sure that diversity and commonality are valued.

OPF Girls College was established in 1986 with an initial start of total 200 students of all level. At present the total strength is more than 5000 from Pre Nursery to B. A/B Sc. Including children of overseas Pakistanis and locals of Islamabad. It has outlet its four branches in different sectors of Islamabad for

small children of the nearby localities. Four hundred well qualified teaching and about 200 non-teaching staff is engaged in raising the standard of the institution.

Doing SWOT analysis of the institution the strengths of OPF Girls College is its highly qualified faculty; the syllabus that is being disseminated. The motivating and pleasant environment adds to its beauty. The hard working and devoted staff ensures the best and hundred percent results of all class levels. The college is affiliated with Federal Board of Examination Islamabad. Grade 9th, 10th and F. A, F. Sc. exams are conducted through this board. Moreover, it has O? Levels and A levels affiliated with Cambridge University England. The Overseas people get 50% fee concession. Local citizens also enjoy a nominal fee as compared to other private schools of Islamabad. It gives a handsome amount of salary package to the teachers so a good lot of teachers are attracted.

The weakness of the institution is the slow recruitment process. If a teacher goes on a long leave for any reason it becomes hard to get her substitute in time. By the time the substitute teacher is arranged the teacher on leave rejoins. Vacancies of teachers? posts are not timely. This slow process does at times affect students? performance. The appointment criteria for teachers are B. A/B. Sc. with B. Ed for junior classes and M. A/M. Sc. with M. Ed for senior classes. This criterion is not appropriate for Preschool as it does not fulfill the requirement of small children. Some teachers coming with only B. Ed degree are not suitable for small children. There has to be some other qualification along with proper training to work with younger lot.

There is a set of procedure for promotions of the teachers that is written in Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) booklet. Awards and promotions are not done on performance basis. Annual Confidential Reports (ACR) is written by the Section Head and is submitted to the Principal and then finally to the Director. For this very reason teachers are not motivated to improve themselves. They keep on working on their own regular pace and on old set routine. Some old teachers are not even ready to accept innovations.

In the fast paced era of 21st century and to cope up with the International standards of education; the educational institutions have to foresee twenty years ahead when their product would be competing in their job market. Most of the teachers are not computer literate.

The other private schools around could a potential threat to the college as they could attract more admissions. But due to a very good reputation of the college and that it is purely for female students; people prefer sending their girls to this college.

For this reason continuous Human Resource Development is necessary. HRD is one of the major functions of HRM. It not only consists the development of the employees but also the development of the organization. Also It can only be done when there is a regular process of appraisal. Organizational development is done by developing structure, system and improving its functions in order to achieve the desired goals.

Before planning a formal training and development process we have to analyze the college in following aspects:

At Organization level:

Whether the college is working in the right direction where it could achieve its own aims and goals. Whether its curriculum is upto the mark where it meets the requirement of the students at international level. The product it will generate after 20 years would be useful not only in the job market but also be the useful citizens of the country. Is the Human Resource Planning done appropriately.

At Task level:

The analysis is to be done to check if the tasks are done to achieve the purposes of the college.

At individual level:

The Human Resource is the best asset for any organization. Analysis at individual level is done to see in which areas training and development is needed. It is done to determine the training needs.

The purpose of HRD program for any organization is:

1. To increase employees? status and performance.
2. To identify the areas need to be improved.
3. To give awareness to the employees of their weak areas.
4. To make them realize and enable them to make optimal use of their potential.

5. To increase employees? efficiency and efficacy.

To identify the weak areas of the teachers the data was collected from the teachers of OPF Prep section F-10/2 by interviewing them, by learners? feedback and teachers? appraisals. They were asked in the interview to make a critical self-assessment of their needs and goals for the new academic session so their development program could be planned accordingly.

Using the evidence from this assessment the professional development activities were organized; keeping in view the rationale for each activity; time-line; outcomes and the measures of success.

Same exercise of selecting out teachers for HRD program was conducted in the other Preschool section in Sector F-8 of the college.

Objectives of the HRD program to be conducted in OPF Girls College Prep Section F-10/2:

1. To polish teachers? knowledge, skills, abilities and behavior.
2. To improve the quality of teaching.
3. To raise the standard of the college.
4. To enhance the students? performance.
5. To promote the use of technology to support professional development.

The expected outcomes of this HRD program in the school are:

To make the teachers critically reflective on their teaching-learning process so that they continuously improve their practices and develop their personalities as teachers. The teachers shall keep them abreast with new technology and modern teaching methodologies. They would realize the demand of the 21st century learner. The teachers would make themselves ready to absorb latest information and update knowledge.

Although we do not follow completely Madam Maria's Montessori methods in our school rather we apply both the nursery and Montessori methods in the class. The workshop was based on the same methods. Exercises and activities from both the methods would be taught. This workshop would encompass the teachers learning areas such as knowledge skills abilities and behavior. Teachers coming from the B. A and B. Ed. background are not able to understand small children's psyche. Through this workshop the background and need of the children at different developmental stages are taught through the theory. The presentation given by the resource person using a variety of tools would develop the skill area of the teachers and then the teachers would be asked to prepare a simulation of the class in the form of a joint activity. This would help them in handling the children and polish their behavior.

The teachers would not only be given the practical demo rather they would be asked to prepare a low cost budget material for their own classrooms.

A group of 20 Pre School Teachers are selected for the 15 days Teachers' Training Workshop. This would be conducted in the school premises during the 15 days winter Holidays the Resource Persons are the senior Montessori



trained teachers of the school. Timing would be 9: 00 am to 1: 30pm which includes half an hour tea break and discussion session in which teachers from both the branches exchange their views and discuss their experiences with the children.

15 days teachers training program

Expert trainers: mrs. Asma janjua; shehnaz shahid; Mrs. Razia Jamil

DATE

Welcome Address

Breif Introduction to all subjects

What is a prepared environment

Break

Greeting children

Day 2

Practical Demonstration of EPL(Skill)

Related Activity(Behavior)

Day 3

Activities

Day 4

Exercises and Activities

Day 5

Exercises and Activities

Day 6

Presentation to sensorial Exercises

Day 7

Day 8

Their relation and involvement

Activities Parent Teacher Meeting Simulation

Day 9

Activities12. 12

Day 10

Activities on Areas of Development

Day 11

Day 12

Activities

Day 13

## Mathematical Development

Day 14

Day 15

Ms. Office (Word And Excel)

Day 16

Awards Ceremony

Lunch

Day 1:

The first day was started with the recitation from the Holy Quran proceeded by the Welcome address by The Section Head of the School. The teachers were briefed by the Mission and Vision of the college and that they are the major components in the success of the college as they are the teachers of the future nation builders. The reputation of the college depends upon their effort they put in laying the base root of building the personalities of the students. The purpose and the expected outcomes of the HRD program were communicated.

The resource person Mrs. Asma Janjua took over and after giving the brief account and introduction of the whole course she started with the importance of the ? Prepared Environment? in the class.

Prepared environment refers to the concept given by Dr. Maria that the teacher prepare her classroom and develop the environment in order to facilitate her children in exploring and learning independently. In this type of environment children move around in the class independently and enjoy the variety of activities already prepared by the teacher. In calm and disciplined atmosphere children enjoy the organized activities and under teacher's supervision and with learning they accomplish their tasks on their own pace.

After the tea break the lecture was given on ? How to greet and receive children in the morning when they are reluctantly leaving their mother's lap and are handed over to the teacher for at least three to four hours a day. The warm welcome of the teacher no doubt encourages these small angels on earth to spend the rest of the day outside their cozy homes. It was observed that most of the teachers keep themselves busy in either setting up the classroom or preparing activities for the children and they tend to forget how to receive their student early in the morning. This happy start of the day boosts up their moral and they start feeling confident.

Day 2:

Introduction to Exercises of Practical Life (EPL)

There is a variety technique for doing the specific work. Education for small children means to teach them a process of living and subjects become secondary. A child is born with a lot of innate abilities and instincts such as tendency of movement, order imitation and working independently. Exercise of practical life enables the child to move in the prepared classroom

independently and explore the environment around him. Movement is one of  
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the most important things in a child's life. Sometimes the parents are over-protected and they don't let the child work on his own even in minor things. EPL makes the child learn how to walk on straight line, sit on a chair; tuck in the chair after use, put the toy basket back in place after playing, rolling the mat, buttoning up his shirt, tying his shoe lace, zip up his bag etc.

All these tasks would not only be demonstrated, but the teachers would be asked to prepare these activities for their classrooms.

Day 3:

Lecture on Absorbent Mind:

Absorbent Mind is the intense mental activity of the children from prenatal life to about six years. According to Dr Maria Montessori, children construct the ideas and images unconsciously and unwillingly through their senses. By absorbing his environment he learns his survival skills. This absorbent mind is divided into two phases;

1. Unconscious absorbent Mind: It remains from birth till the child is of three years. Here he unconsciously acquires his basic abilities such as speak, walk and muscular coordination.

2. Conscious absorbent Mind: Three to six years of age. He demands freedom of everything; freedom to move, freedom to choose and freedom to concentrate.

Activities and practical demonstration would be done using household simple materials. How to place things in a tray and carry the tray with both the

hands. Holding the jug safely and pouring water into the glasses without spilling on the table. Cleaning their own tables, putting garbage in the bin, washing hands properly with soap etc.

Day 4 and 5

Sensitive period: From birth to six years a child passes through three periods; order, movement and language At his later age he concentrates consciously on refining those skills. These are spatial order, social order, sensory and temporal order.

Spatial Order: He gets used to of seeing things at their place in his surroundings.

Social Order: Placing and recognizing people around him.

Sensory Order: Starts differentiating texture of things, e. g soft and hard; smooth and rough. Distinguishes colors shades and shapes.

Temporal Order: He gets tuned to set routine time for his food, sleep and play etc. The unfamiliar place and routine upsets him.

Day 6 and 7:

There are some specific exercises that help children develop the following senses:

1. Visual Sense (sense of sight)
2. Chromatic sense (The color sense)

3. Tactile sense (sense of touch)
4. Auditory sense (hearing sense)
5. Gustatory sense (sense of taste)
6. Olfactory sense (sense of smell)
7. The Baric sense (sense of weight)
8. Thermic sense (Sense of hot and cold)
9. Stereo gnostic sense(touch recognition)

As the Montessori apparatus is very expensive and unaffordable we try to improvise and make the best possible low cost material in school.

Some of the materials would be used in this workshop such as: sand paper cards, spindle box, memory game of numbers, teen boards and mystery box etc.

Related exercises and activities would motivate to teachers to make learning fun for the students. By making use of the materials in class the teachers have made themselves would arouse their interest also.

Day 8:

Need of parental involvement:

Another very important aspect in child development. The parents should stay in touch with the teacher to get all kinds of feedback. Teachers would be given some tips to communicate effectively with parents.

Day 9;

Teachers? Role in understanding Conflicts, careful handling and normalizing:

It is important to give the child right kind of prepared environment that suits to his needs.

Activities would be done making simulation models of the class set up.

Day 10:

Lectures on personality development of the teachers focusing time management, stress management and anger management. Dealing with multiple intelligences and mixed abilities.

Day 11:

Areas of development:

There are basically six areas of development that forms the whole personality. Namely; social and emotional development, physical development, language development, mathematical development, cognitive development.

Activities based on how to make children learn the use of courtesy words such as thank you, sorry, excuse me, greeting elders, knock at the door and



seek for permission before entering. Wait for the turn to speak, listen patiently without interrupting etc.

Day12 and 13:

Exercises to develop their motor skills include cutting, pasting, coloring etc.

Importance of news period in language development. Playing fun games for the enrichment of vocabulary.

Games for mathematical development eg missing numbers, count and write etc.

Day14:

Introduction to culture; Religion; art, science and Music:

To inculcate love for mother earth and care for environment.

Activities such as watering plants, turn the tap off while brushing teeth, keep the surrounding clean etc.

How to lead disciplined, neat n clean life. Prayers five times a day. Etc

Day15:

Use of computer . Making spreadsheets for results. Presentation on PowerPoint and class lists on word.

Day 16:

Teachers would be given certificates of the training program. The group that performed best in the activities would be awarded with the College Shield.

Conclusion:

I suppose fifteen days workshop in an academic year is not sufficient. There should be continuous development programs for the teachers which could be run throughout the year to keep the teachers active and diligent member of the staff.

CPD gives all the stake holders, the confidence that the teachers are continuously improving knowledge, skills and expertise. CPD is the hallmark of the professionals.

CPD should include the relevant activities that are needed for overall development of the teacher such as formal workshops, conferences, self directed programs e. g research articles or reviewing useful websites.

A few training and development methods which are also called ? blended training? could be introduced in the schools to impart knowledge and skills to the workforce.

Instructor-led:

In this method the instructor could be a senior-teacher or a head. Instruction could be given through face to face discussion method and utilizing multimedia in an appropriate manner. The charisma of the personality of the instructor also leaves a positive effect on the listeners to motivate them to work even harder.

### Case study:

The senior teachers give examples of some of their old problematic students and how they resolve the situations. Trainees could study and use the information of those old students in resolving the current issues of the class.

### Behavior Modeling:

The new teachers copy or replicate behaviors of the senior and experienced teachers to handle various situations.

### Role playing:

Role playing can be used in making parent-teacher meeting simulations. Teachers often get nervous in handling fussy parents. It is for their before hand practice to handle difficult situations calmly.

### In Basket training:

Teachers would be trained to set their priorities from urgent action to routine handling. This practice would enable them to react peacefully to emergencies occurred in the class.

There are some more methods of training and development that involves learning through experiences such as on-job training, job rotation, internships and apprenticeship training.