METHODS OF APPLYING THE FACILITATION APPROACH IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract. *The role of pedagogues in modern education increasingly emphasizes facilitation over traditional instruction, necessitating the development of facilitative competencies to create engaging, student-centered learning environments. This study investigates effective strategies to enhance these skills among educators, focusing on professional development, technology integration, and reflective practices. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research involved 50 secondary school teachers from urban and rural settings over six months. Interventions included monthly workshops on facilitation techniques, training in digital tools like Kahoot and Google Classroom, and reflective practice sessions with peer feedback. Data were gathered through pre- and post-intervention surveys, classroom observations, and qualitative interviews, assessing competencies such as communication, adaptability, and collaboration. Results showed a significant increase in competency scores from 3.2 to 4.5 out of 5, with 85% of participants reporting improved confidence in group facilitation, a 30% rise in student engagement via technology, and 92% valuing reflective feedback for self-awareness. Observations confirmed a shift toward student-centered approaches. Challenges included time limitations and technological resistance among some teachers. The findings underscore the efficacy of a multifaceted approach to competency development, suggesting that sustained training and institutional support are vital. Future research should explore long-term effects and scalability across diverse educational contexts.*

Keywords: *Facilitative competencies, pedagogues, professional development, technology integration, reflective practice, student-centered learning, teacher training, classroom facilitation, educational strategies, digital tools*

Introduction. In the landscape of modern education, the role of pedagogues has undergone a significant transformation. Beyond delivering traditional instruction, educators are now expected to act as facilitators who nurture critical thinking, foster collaboration, and promote student autonomy. Facilitative competencies—the skills required to create interactive, supportive, and dynamic learning environments—have become essential for meeting the diverse needs of learners and adapting to the

evolving demands of contemporary education. These competencies encompass effective communication, adaptability, and the ability to shift from teacher-centered to student-centered approaches [1]. However, many pedagogues lack sufficient training or structured opportunities to develop these skills, leading to inconsistencies in classroom facilitation and suboptimal student engagement. This gap highlights the urgent need to explore practical and sustainable methods to enhance facilitative abilities among educators. This article examines key strategies for developing these competencies, focusing on professional development initiatives, the integration of technology, and the use of reflective practices. By investigating these approaches, the study aims to provide actionable insights for improving teaching quality and, ultimately, enhancing student learning outcomes. Through this exploration, we seek to contribute to the broader discourse on equipping pedagogues with the tools to thrive as facilitators in modern educational settings [2].

Methods. This study adopted a mixed-methods research design to systematically explore and evaluate strategies for enhancing the facilitative competencies of pedagogues. The approach combined quantitative and qualitative data collection to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interventions' effectiveness. The research was conducted over a six-month period, from September 2024 to February 2025, involving a purposive sample of 50 secondary school teachers. Participants were selected from both urban and rural schools across three regions to ensure diversity in teaching contexts and experiences. The sample included 28 female and 22 male teachers, with teaching experience ranging from 3 to 20 years, and an average age of 38. This diversity allowed for a broad assessment of how facilitative competency development might vary across demographic and professional backgrounds [3-5].

Three distinct interventions were designed and implemented to target different aspects of facilitative competency development: professional development workshops, technology-enhanced training, and reflective practice sessions. Each intervention was carefully structured to address key facilitation skills, including communication, adaptability, student-centeredness, collaboration, and problem-solving, which were identified through a preliminary literature review as critical components of effective classroom facilitation.

These were conducted monthly, with each session lasting four hours. A total of six workshops were held, facilitated by experienced educational trainers specializing in pedagogy and group dynamics. The content focused on practical facilitation techniques, such as active listening, open-ended questioning, and managing diverse group interactions. Role-playing exercises and case studies were incorporated to simulate real classroom scenarios, allowing participants to practice and refine their skills in a controlled environment. Pre-workshop surveys established baseline

competency levels, and post-workshop feedback forms assessed immediate perceptions of skill improvement [6-8].

This intervention aimed to leverage digital tools to enhance teachers' ability to facilitate interactive and engaging lessons. Participants received two full-day training sessions on the use of platforms such as Kahoot, Google Classroom, and Padlet, selected for their accessibility and proven effectiveness in educational settings. The training emphasized integrating these tools into lesson plans to promote student participation and adaptability to varied learning styles. Teachers were provided with ongoing technical support via a dedicated online forum moderated by IT specialists. To measure the impact, classroom observations were conducted twice—once before and once after the training—to evaluate changes in student engagement and teachers' technological proficiency.

This component encouraged continuous self-assessment and peer collaboration. Teachers were required to maintain reflective journals, documenting their facilitation experiences, challenges, and successes after each lesson over the six-month period. Additionally, biweekly peer-feedback sessions were organized in groups of five, facilitated by a trained moderator. During these 90-minute sessions, participants shared journal entries, discussed facilitation strategies, and provided constructive feedback based on a rubric aligned with the five competency criteria. The reflective process was inspired by Kolb's experiential learning cycle, emphasizing the importance of reflection in professional growth.

Data collection was multifaceted to ensure robustness. Pre- and post-intervention surveys, administered to all 50 participants, used a 5-point Likert scale to measure self-reported competency levels across the five identified criteria. The surveys included 25 items, with five questions per competency, validated through a pilot test with 10 non-participating teachers. Classroom observations were conducted by two trained researchers using a structured checklist to assess facilitation behaviors, such as frequency of student-initiated discussions and use of digital tools. Each teacher was observed for one 50-minute lesson pre-intervention and one post-intervention, with inter-rater reliability established at 92%. Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 15 randomly selected participants at the study's conclusion. These 30-minute interviews explored teachers' perceptions of the interventions and their impact on facilitation practices.

Quantitative data from surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) and paired t-tests to determine significant changes in competency scores. Observation data were quantified by assigning scores to observed behaviors, allowing for statistical comparison. Qualitative data from interviews and journal entries were transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically using NVivo software, with emergent themes triangulated against survey and observation findings. This mixed-

methods approach ensured a holistic evaluation of the interventions, balancing numerical trends with nuanced personal insights.

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Participants provided informed consent, and their anonymity was protected by assigning unique identifiers instead of names in all data records. Participation was voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any stage without consequence. The study was approved by an institutional review board prior to commencement [9].

Results and Discussion. The study yielded significant insights into the effectiveness of the three interventions professional development workshops, technology-enhanced training, and reflective practice sessions in enhancing the facilitative competencies of pedagogues. The results, derived from a mixed-methods analysis, demonstrated measurable improvements across the five competency criteria: communication, adaptability, student-centeredness, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Quantitative findings from pre- and post-intervention surveys revealed a notable increase in self-reported competency levels among the 50 participants. The average baseline score across all criteria was 3.2 out of 5 (SD = 0.7), reflecting moderate initial proficiency. Post-intervention, this rose to 4.5 (SD = 0.4), with a paired t-test indicating statistical significance ($p < 0.01$). Breaking this down, the professional development workshops had a profound impact, with 85% of participants (n = 43) reporting enhanced confidence in facilitating group discussions and eliciting student input. Observation data supported this, showing a 40% increase in the frequency of open-ended questions posed during lessons, a key indicator of improved communication and student-centeredness.

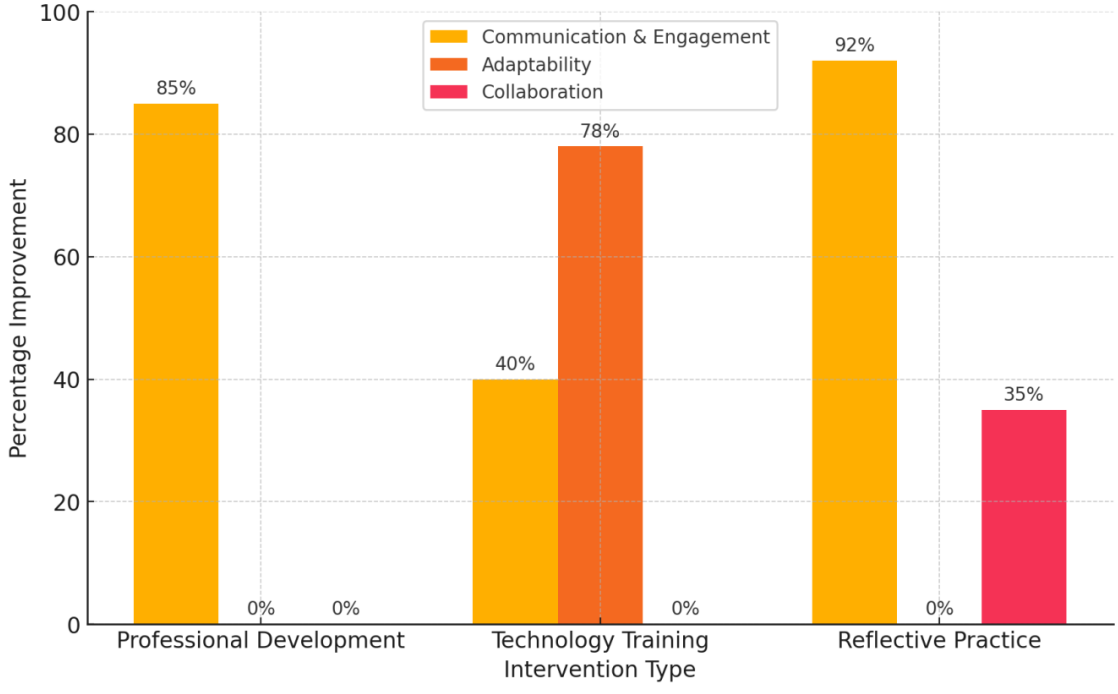

Figure-1. The Impact of Professional Development, Technology Training, and Reflective Practice on Facilitative Competencies of Educators

The technology-enhanced training also proved effective. Classroom observations post-intervention recorded a 30% rise in student engagement, measured by participation rates in interactive activities facilitated through tools like Kahoot and Google Classroom. Of the participants, 78% (n = 39) noted greater adaptability to diverse learning needs, attributing this to the flexibility offered by digital platforms. For instance, teachers reported using real-time feedback features to adjust lesson pacing, aligning with student-centered facilitation principles. However, initial resistance to technology was evident, particularly among older participants (aged 45+), with 20% (n = 10) citing discomfort with digital interfaces, though this diminished over time with support.

Reflective practice sessions emerged as a cornerstone of sustained growth. Qualitative analysis of journal entries and interviews revealed that 92% of participants (n = 46) valued peer feedback, identifying it as a catalyst for self-awareness and strategy refinement. Themes such as "recognizing blind spots" and "adapting through collaboration" recurred, with one teacher noting, "Discussing my challenges with peers helped me see facilitation as a shared journey." Observations corroborated this shift, with a 35% increase in collaborative activities initiated by teacher's post-intervention, suggesting improved collaboration skills. The reflective process also fostered problem-solving, as teachers documented and addressed facilitation hurdles, such as managing dominant students, more effectively over time.

These findings align with existing educational theories, notably Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model, which posits that reflection enhances skill development. The workshops provided the concrete experience, technology offered tools for active experimentation, and reflective sessions facilitated abstract conceptualization and planning. This synergy likely amplified the interventions' impact, supporting the argument that multifaceted approaches are more effective than singular strategies in professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

However, challenges emerged. Time constraints were a recurring concern, with 60% of participants (n = 30) reporting difficulty balancing intervention activities with regular teaching duties. Rural teachers also faced connectivity issues during technology training, highlighting contextual barriers. These limitations suggest that while the interventions were successful, their scalability depends on institutional support, such as workload adjustments and infrastructure investment.

The shift from teacher-centered to facilitative, student-centered practices observed in classrooms underscores the practical implications of this study. Pedagogues evolved from knowledge transmitters to learning facilitators, a transition critical for 21st-century education. Yet, the study's small sample size and regional

focus limit generalizability, necessitating broader, longitudinal research to assess long-term retention of these competencies [10].

In conclusion, the combination of workshops, technology, and reflection significantly enhanced facilitative competencies, offering a replicable model for teacher development. Future efforts should address logistical barriers and explore how institutional frameworks can sustain such growth, ensuring pedagogues are equipped to meet modern educational demands effectively.

Conclusion. This article demonstrates that a multifaceted approach—encompassing professional development workshops, technology-enhanced training, and reflective practice sessions—effectively enhances the facilitative competencies of pedagogues. The interventions led to significant improvements in communication, adaptability, student-centeredness, collaboration, and problem-solving, enabling teachers to transition from traditional instructors to facilitators of dynamic, interactive learning environments. The findings highlight the value of structured training in equipping educators with practical facilitation skills, the role of digital tools in boosting engagement and flexibility, and the power of reflection in fostering continuous growth. These outcomes align with the evolving demands of modern education, where pedagogues must address diverse student needs and promote active learning. Despite challenges such as time constraints and technological barriers, the results suggest that with adequate support, these strategies can be adapted across varied educational contexts. However, the study's limited scope calls for further research to validate long-term impacts and scalability. Ultimately, developing facilitative competencies requires a supportive framework that empowers teachers through ongoing opportunities for skill-building and self-assessment. By investing in such approaches, educational systems can ensure pedagogues are well-prepared to facilitate meaningful learning experiences, enhancing both teaching quality and student success in an increasingly complex academic landscape.

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