

## **Exploring the Perspectives of Early Childhood Education Stakeholders on Language and Literacy Laboratories in the United Arab Emirates**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Language and literacy laboratories have been found instrumental in the preparation of Early Childhood Education (ECE) stakeholders globally. This is especially the case as reading is considered pivotal for beginning learners. Nevertheless, language and literacy laboratories have not been given much consideration in many countries to support literacy development in the early years. The study focuses on the perspective of teachers (pre-service and in-service) and instructors of pre-service teachers on their readiness to teach literacy, as well as the opportunities afforded by language and literacy laboratories. Guided by the Professional Development School model, the study was a pragmatism-driven sequential mix-method study. In the first quantitative phase, data were collected through questionnaires from in-service and pre-service teachers and their instructors. The respondents were randomly selected from the lists solicited from the Ministry of Education (MOE). In the second qualitative phase, in-depth interviews were conducted with pre-service and in-service teachers and instructors of pre-service teachers with the aim of explicating their views and suggestions regarding the findings of the quantitative stage. Quantitative data was analysed descriptively, whereas thematic analysis was used for qualitative data, where three main themes emerged: participants' experiences in ECE career; views on the implementation of language and literacy laboratories, and effectiveness of literacy strategies. The study recommends strategic implementation of the language and literacy laboratories and the adoption of multiple language strategies for language teaching and assessment.

**Keywords:** language and literacy laboratories; United Arab Emirates; Early Childhood Education; Professional Development School Model; Teacher Education Program