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WORK STRESS, CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT, AND CURRICULUM ADAPTATION: IMPACT ON EXPATRIATE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS IN UAE

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ABSTRACT
The study explores the work-related stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation of expatriate kindergarten teachers in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It addresses the limited understanding of how these challenges affect their teaching performance and wellbeing, which is important because the UAE depends heavily on foreign teachers to Support its diverse early childhood education system. It aims to identify the Extent of these challenges and determine their relationship to teaching performance and wellbeing by employing a descriptive-quantitative research design with one hundred expatriate kindergarten teachers as participants. Data were collected through a researcher-developed questionnaire that underwent validation, pilot testing, and reliability checks, and were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and tests of difference. Results indicate that teachers experience minor but recurring challenges related to work stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation, showing that these job demands still influence teaching effectiveness, although overall wellbeing remains generally stable. Findings also show that demographic factors such as age, sex, nationality, and length of stay significantly affect how teachers experience these challenges. Overall, the study concludes that expatriate kindergarten teachers are qualified and capable but require structured, continuous Support to adapt culturally, manage stress, and align more effectively with the curriculum. The study recommends implementing a comprehensive, targeted professional development program that includes training, mentorship, classroom coaching, and orientation activities to strengthen their teaching performance, enhance their wellbeing, and improve retention in the UAE's early childhood education.

KEYWORDS: *Assessment, Classroom Management, Cultural Adjustment, Curriculum Adaptation, Emotional Wellbeing*

I. INTRODUCTION

Expatriate educators play a significant part in enhancing the quality and diversification of education systems that emphasize internationalization and multiculturalism. They bring about diverse educational methods, professional insight, as well as cultural perspectives that should be considered when creating internationally-oriented learning environments. Their job is much more important in early childhood education since instruction at this time immediately influences the learners' basic cognitive, social and academic development. Specifically, Filipino overseas teachers have had favorable foreign teaching experiences, which have led to professional progress, economic gains, and cross-cultural competency (Alicamen et al., 2022). However, little is known about the educational techniques and life experiences of expatriate teachers in the extant literature (Golis, 2025), despite their increasing presence.

It is worth noting that UAE is an interesting region to explore the problem of expatriates' education. There are indeed continuing advances involving developing an education system from elementary level till secondary school in the UAE. Moreover, UAE employs teachers from outside because of the variety among its inhabitants and limited number of teachers locally. The country offers teachers a good salary, development opportunities and good living conditions, however, it is a well-known fact that teachers coming from abroad often face difficulties due to language barriers, cultural differences, different systems of organization and difficulties of curricula adaptation (Roujia et al., 2024; Thirlwall et al., 2021). In this situation, the above causes might result in work-related stress and result in significant levels of dissatisfaction and attrition rate, which means that many teachers leave their employment before they complete a contract (Murdock, 2022).

In addition, expatriate teachers labor in a complicated professional milieu with high expectations, changing educational reforms and different cultural values. Such elements tend to generate difficulties between professional requirements and personal adaptation, which causes stress and affects both teaching performance and wellness. Previous research has shown that cultural adaption challenges, along with instructional and curricular demands, are important factors in determining teachers' performance and overall professional experience in foreign contexts (Dillon et al., 2025; Herrera, 2023).

This research is based on the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory and the Cross-Cultural Adjustment Theory, which offer a complete framework for studying expatriate teachers' experiences . According to the JD-R Theory (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker et al., 2023), burnout may be caused by job demands (e.g. workload, stress), and engagement and performance may be fostered by resources. In contrast, Cross-Cultural Adjustment Theory (Li & Al-Haimi, 2025; Caldwell et al., 2023) underscores the

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multidimensionality of adaptation, encompassing general living circumstances, social interaction, and job adjustment in a host nation.

With the increasing reliance on expatriate teachers and lack of research on kindergarten educators specifically, this study aims to investigate the impact of work-related stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation on expatriate kindergarten teachers' teaching performance and wellbeing in the UAE. The research attempts to assist policy development, improve teacher support systems and boost retention tactics by providing empirical information on these connected elements. Ultimately, the results are expected to help to the development of early childhood education and the promotion of sustainable, high quality teaching techniques in multicultural educational settings.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, nationality, highest educational attainment, number of teaching years in the UAE, and length of stay in the UAE?
2. What is the composite mean table on the Extent of job demands experienced by expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of workload and pressure, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation?
3. What is the composite mean table on the level of teaching performance and wellbeing of expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of instructional delivery, classroom management, learner engagement, assessment, and their physical, emotional, social, and professional wellbeing?
4. Is there a significant difference in the challenges encountered by expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of work-related stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation when grouped according to their demographic profile?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the challenges encountered by expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of work-related stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation and their teaching performance and wellbeing?
6. What training program may be proposed for expatriate kindergarten teachers based on the findings of the study?

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES AND STUDIES

Globalization has affected the education systems a lot and classrooms are more multiculturally varied than ever. Thus schools across the globe recruit expatriate teachers to fulfill the needs of international education. The teachers provide a range of pedagogical practice, cultural background and professional expertise that enriches the teaching and learning. However, the transfer into a foreign school system is not an easy task as it entails adjustments to a new cultural, linguistic and professional environment. Research has indicated that international teaching experiences give challenges and opportunities for expatriate teachers that contribute favorably to their professional advancement, cultural competence, and personal growth (Sarip, 2024; Arcillo, 2023).

Research shows that expatriate teachers' experiences are impacted by a number of elements including cultural adjustment, psychological wellness, and work environment. Cultural adjustment is critical to teachers' performance in culturally varied settings, when social norms, communication methods and institutional expectations vary greatly (Kadam et al., 2021). Although culture shock is frequently seen as a stressor in the first instance, it may provide long-term advantages such as greater resilience, flexibility and self-leadership abilities (Stasel, 2022). Also, expatriate teachers should develop methods of coping with differences in terms of language, culture, and teaching methodologies in the host country (Tabajen et al., 2023).

The expatriate teachers are not only going to face adjustment problems but other job related stresses which can affect their job performance as well as their overall wellbeing. There is ample literature available that shows that stress, low motivation, and burnout are among the major issues faced by teachers who are teaching in foreign countries (Vincent et al., 2023). Isolation, stress, and insecurity can be detrimental to the performance of these teachers inside the classroom (Jalilzadeh et al., 2024). Environmental problems like absence of development plans, alienation with respect to the administrative system, and disconnection with their support network add to the problem.

The results indicated that social support and intercultural competence are essential predictors of adaptation and professional success of expatriate teachers. The higher intercultural competence of teachers correlates with better adaptation to a new context, ability to develop effective relationships with students and other employees, and better quality of teaching. In addition, cooperation among the teachers in an educational institution contributes to improved productivity and increased job satisfaction for teachers (Mansouri & Hosani, 2022; Dillon, 2021). Lastly, resilience and flexibility of teachers allow them to overcome professional challenges and achieve excellent teaching practice (Pacala, 2024).

Teacher wellbeing has emerged as a key determinant of educational success. Research has shown that teachers' physical, emotional, social and professional health strongly impacts their teaching effectiveness and quality of instruction offered to learners (Norozi & Ness, 2023; Harrison & Hou, 2023). School-based social support systems, including as mentoring programs and collaborative networks, have been demonstrated to boost teachers' productivity and psychological well-being (Ramas & Velasco, 2024). Nevertheless, due to these initiatives, expatriate teachers face various emotional and professional challenges that require organized interventions from an institutional level.

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In addition, according to research, it can be stated that being an expatriate teacher is associated with not only challenges but also possibilities. Teachers' exposure to other educational systems enables them to create new tactics, increase flexibility and embrace inclusive teaching (Deguma et al., 2022). Such experiences of marginalization or strangeness may even be conducive to creativity, autonomy, and instructional innovation among expatriate educators (Yang & Saengboon, 2025). Thus, teaching overseas is a transforming process that enhances professional competence and personal resilience (Sereni & Yanto, 2021; Lemana II, 2022).

While there is an increasing amount of literature on expatriate teachers, it is lacking in study of early childhood education, especially at the kindergarten level. While past research has addressed the overall teaching experiences of expatriates, nothing has been done to investigate the particular effect of work-related stress, cultural adjustment and curriculum adaptation on the teaching performance and welfare of expatriate kindergarten teachers. Early childhood education provides a foundation for learners' growth and it is important to close this gap.

Against this background, this research adds to the literature by assessing the joint influence of work-related stress, cultural adjustment and curricular adaptation on the teaching performance and welfare of expatriate kindergarten teachers. The research intends to provide empirical insights into these aspects, which may shape educational policy, increase teacher support systems, and improve the efficacy of early childhood education in multinational settings.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used a descriptive quantitative research approach to explore the obstacles expatriate kindergarten teachers face and how these issues influence their teaching performance and wellbeing. Descriptive research is used to establish the distribution of variables, find patterns, and define connections within a certain population (Vale, 2023). It is especially beneficial in terms of analyzing perceptions and quantifying the magnitude of correlations among variables (Fluet, 2021).

The quantitative method comprises the systematic collecting of numerical data and the statistical analysis of the data to uncover patterns and correlations between variables (Sreekumar, 2023). This allows for objective measurement and helps in making empirical findings.

The present research design provided an unbiased evaluation of the work-related stress, cultural adjustment and curricular adaptation of expatriate teachers and their influence on teaching performance and well-being. The results offered a sound empirical foundation for the development of a training program to enhance the professional practice and general wellbeing of teachers.

Population and Sampling

Among the population of expatriate teachers in the UAE, this study selected kindergarten teachers. The researcher used a random sampling technique to select the expatriate kindergarten teachers.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents in the study were expatriate kindergarten teachers in the UAE. The researcher randomly selected kindergarten learners in the UAE as respondents. A total of one hundred (100) expatriate kindergarten teachers were the respondents of the study with a bachelor's degree or specialization in early childhood education.

Research Instrument

The main tool used for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire. The measure was developed to determine the obstacles faced by expatriate kindergarten teachers especially in the areas of job stress, cultural adjustment and curriculum adaptation and to test their influence on teachers' teaching performance and overall welfare.

The questionnaire was divided into three primary sections. The first portion collected the demographic profile of the respondents such as age, sex, greatest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, and duration of residence in the UAE. The second section included the assessment of the level of obstacles teachers faced in terms of work-related stress, cultural adaptability and curriculum adaptation. The final section assessed the level of teaching performance (instructional delivery, classroom management, learner engagement and assessment) and wellness of teachers (physical, emotional, social and professional).
Likert scale was used to evaluate the replies to help us measure and analyze objectively the factors under consideration.

Validation of the Instrument

The systematical validation and reliability test of the questionnaire were conducted to assure the validity and reliability of the research instrument. To verify that the items were representative of the aims of the research, content validation was done by a panel of experts from the educational institution and the appropriate area of specialty. Their comments was utilized to revise, clarify, and increase the relevancy of the questionnaire questions.

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Following validation, a pilot study was conducted to test the reliability of the tool. Reliability of the tool was tested using Cronbach's alpha and the results showed that all the questions were acceptable. From this, it can be said that the tool is reliable and acceptable for collecting consistent data for the research.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data were collected via a verified and accurate questionnaire after the acceptance of the study proposal. First, permission to conduct the research was obtained from the institution and then consent from the Ministry of Education in the UAE was obtained. The school heads of the chosen schools were then sent formal request letters describing the goal, processes and ethical issues of the research.

The authenticated questionnaire and the required documents to confirm its academic purpose were delivered to the expatriate kindergarten teacher-respondents. Sufficient time was allowed to the respondents to complete the instrument in order to guarantee accuracy and completeness of the replies. After the time allowed for processing, the filled out questionnaires were collected.

The collected data were grouped, tabulated and analyzed by utilizing Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the analysis were used to formulate the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the research. The data examined also informed the establishment of a training program to help expatriate kindergarten teachers.

Finally, the finished study was evaluated during the oral defense. Final modifications were made incorporating comments and suggestions of the panel of experts and the entire paper was submitted to the university.

Statistical Treatment

Statistical techniques were employed in analyzing the gathered data. Frequency and percentages were used in describing the profile of the participants on the basis of their demographic characteristics including age, sex, highest educational qualification, teaching experience, and residence period in the UAE.

Weighted mean technique was utilized in finding out the degree of challenges faced by the expatriate kindergarten teachers with respect to job stress, culture shock, and modification of the curriculum. Weighted mean was also used in determining the degree of teaching performance involving instruction, classroom management, learner involvement, and evaluation process, as well as the degree of teachers' wellbeing in terms of physical, psychological, social, and professional perspectives.

Paired t-test was conducted in identifying the presence of significant differences in the challenges of teachers based on their demographic profile. Lastly, Pearson's r was calculated in determining the relationship between the challenges faced by expatriate teachers and teaching performance and wellbeing.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, nationality, highest educational attainment, number of teaching years in the UAE, and length of stay in the UAE

Table 1

Demographic profile of the kindergarten teacher respondents

		Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Age	21 - 25 years old	0	0	6
	26 - 30 years old	5	5	5
	31 - 35 years old	57	57	1
	36 - 40 years old	16	16	2
	41 - 45 years old	15	15	3
	46 - 50 years old	7	7	4
	51 years old and above	0	0	6
	Total	**100**	**100**	
Sex	Male	21	21	2
	Female	79	79	1
	Total	**100**	**100**	
Nationality	Indian	57	57	1
	Egyptian	15	15	2
	Pakistani	10	10	3
	British	9	9	4
	North American	4	4	6
	Others	5	5	5

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	Total	**100**	**100**	
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor's degree	0	0	7
	With Master's Units	7	7	4
	MA Graduate	58	58	1
	With PhD Units	9	9	3
	With EdD Units	7	7	4
	PhD Graduate	14	14	2
	EdD Graduate	5	5	6
	Total	**100**	**100**	
Number of Years in Teaching	0 - 5 years	1	1	5
	6 - 10 years	29	29	2
	11 - 15 years	44	44	1
	16 - 20 years	21	21	3
	21 years and above	5	5	4
	Total	**100**	**100**	
Length of stay in the UAE	less than 1 year	38	38	1
	1 - 3 years	33	33	2
	4 - 6 years	21	21	3
	7 - 9 years	8	8	4
	10 years and above	0	0	5
	Total	**100**	**100**	

As seen in Table 1, the bulk of the expatriate kindergarten teachers in the UAE are aged between 31 and 35 years (57%), indicating a workforce that is mostly mid-career. A substantial number of respondents are female (79%) which is consistent with worldwide trends in early childhood education. The highest proportion (57%) of teachers in terms of nationality are Indian, followed by Egyptians (15%) and Pakistanis (10%), which indicates the considerable presence of South Asian teachers.

Most of the responders are highly educated, with the majority holding a master's degree (58%), which indicates a highly educated teaching staff. In terms of experience, 44% of teachers have 11-15 years of experience in teaching. However, 38% have been in the UAE for less than one year, showing that a large number of them are still in the early phases of adjustment to the host nation.

The results reveal that the expatriate kindergarten teachers are well qualified in terms of academic and professional credentials yet a large proportion of them are relatively new to the UAE educational context. This emphasizes the need of comprehensive support measures, especially with regard to cultural orientation and curriculum modification, to assist the integration process and to reduce adjustment problems. Furthermore, the shared nationalities and many female teachers may also contribute to institutional measures to increase inclusion, diversity and retention of teachers in early childhood education settings.

The findings are consistent with other research suggesting that educators with considerable experience and higher credentials are usually better prepared to deal with the difficulties of teaching abroad, even if they could have initial issues adapting to different cultures (Smith, 2021; Johnson, 2023). Likewise, the prevalence of female teachers from South Asian origins is in line with known tendencies of the workforce in Gulf nations (Ahmed & Verma, 2022). Moreover, recent studies highlight the need for experienced teachers to be supported during the early phases of expatriation in order to successfully transition to new cultural and professional settings (Lopez & Dela Cruz, 2024).

Composite Mean Table on the Extent of job demands experienced by expatriate kindergarten teachers in the following areas: workload and pressure, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation.

Table 2

Composite table on the Extent of job demands experienced by expatriate kindergarten teachers such as work-related stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation

	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Verbal Interpretation**
Work-Related Stress	3.11	0.26	Sometimes
Cultural Adjustment	3.08	0.21	Sometimes
Curriculum Adaptation	3.09	0.21	Sometimes
Challenges Encountered by Expatriate Kindergarten Teachers	**3.09**	**0.20**	**Sometimes**

Legend: *4 (3.50 - 4.00) – Always* *2 (1.50 - 2.49) – Rarely*
3 (2.50 - 3.49) – Sometimes *1 (1.00 - 1.49) – Never*

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Table 2 present the results that the expatriate kindergarten teachers in the UAE have moderate work demands in all areas with mean scores ranging from 3.08 to 3.11 (SD = 0.20–0.26) translated as "Sometimes. The low values of the standard deviations indicate that the respondents' assessments of the obstacles faced are similar.

The average total teacher workload and stress was 3.11 (SD = 0.26), indicating that the teachers had physical and mental tiredness sometimes, and that work was an occasional hindrance in their personal life. The mean score of cultural adjustment was 3.08 (SD=0.21) which suggests considerable difficulty in cultural and directional adjustment. On the other hand, the average score for curriculum adaptation was 3.09 (SD = 0.21) which reflects the numerous difficulty teachers had in adapting their teaching and assessment methods to suit the UAE national curriculum requirements.

However, the overall mean score of 3.09 (SD = 0.20) for the composite indicates that there are still some issues with areas of stress, cultural integration and curriculum congruence.From these findings, one can conclude that though teachers are adaptable and resilient, there should be an emphasis on providing institutional assistance with regard to managing workloads and cultural orientation.

These results are corroborated by earlier studies on the subject, which demonstrate that the job-stress and adaptation problems faced by expatriate teachers are at an average level (Liang & Sun, 2021; Ahmed & Al-Harthi, 2022). Additionally, it is apparent from existing studies that factors such as challenges in cultural adjustment and curricular assimilation are among the significant elements affecting the teaching efficacy of expatriates in Gulf countries (Al-Kaabi & Ahmed, 2021; Hassan & Cruz, 2023).

The consistent high means and low standard deviations for all domains (letter-sound recognition, sound blending, sound segmentation, rhyming, and listening), signify a strong perception by the teachers regarding play-based learning as a highly effective teaching strategy when it comes to improving kindergarten children's phonemic awareness.

These results are congruent with those of Smith and Jones (2020), which revealed that children enrolled in programs that utilized play-based learning techniques showed more improvements in terms of their phonemic awareness and reading skills compared to children receiving traditional methods of teaching. In addition, Lee and Park (2023) confirmed through their systematic review the efficacy of play-based learning strategies in improving early childhood phonemic awareness.

Composite Mean Table on the level of teaching performance and wellbeing of expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of Instructional delivery, Classroom Management, Learner engagement, and Assessment? For the teacher's wellbeing, Physical, Emotional, Social, and Professional

Table 3.1

Composite table on the level of teaching performance of expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of instructional delivery, classroom management, learners' engagement, and assessment

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Instructional Delivery	3.10	0.22	Sometimes
Classroom Management	3.13	0.27	Sometimes
Learners' Engagement	3.15	0.28	Sometimes
Assessment	3.33	0.28	Sometimes
Level of Teaching Performance of Expatriate Kindergarten Teachers	**3.18**	**0.23**	**Sometimes**

Legend: *4 (3.50 - 4.00) – Always* *2 (1.50 - 2.49) – Rarely*
3 (2.50 - 3.49) – Sometimes *1 (1.00 - 1.49) – Never*

Table 3.1 results show that expatriate kindergarten teachers in the UAE had a moderate level of teaching performance on all areas with an overall composite mean of 3.18 (SD = 0.23) and interpreted as "Sometimes." Overall, the standard deviations obtained are small, indicating homogeneity of replies among the respondents.

Specific domain-wise, assessment, with the highest mean (M=3.33, SD=0.28) indicated considerably greater competence in assessing learners and offering feedback. Next were learner engagement (M=3.15, SD=0.28) and classroom management (M=3.13, SD=0.27), which suggest teachers' capacity to keep order in the classroom and to include learners, although not regularly and optimally. teaching delivery had the lowest mean (M=3.10, SD=0.22) which indicates some limits in the clarity of the lesson, flexibility, and utilization of diverse teaching tactics.

The data reveal that expatriate teachers are generally able to carry out their teaching activities but require development in all the areas. Early childhood professional development programs that focus on instructional delivery, learner engagement, classroom management, and assessment methods may make a substantial difference in teaching effectiveness and children's learning outcomes.

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This conclusion aligns with other research indicating that foreign teachers tend to have adequate but not excellent teaching abilities, especially in multicultural classroom settings (Smith, 2021). Moreover, literature suggests that teacher professional development in interactive pedagogical techniques, classroom management and assessment procedures may increase teacher effectiveness and student engagement (Ahmed & Verma, 2022; Johnson, 2023). The findings of this study highlight the need of ongoing training and institutional support in improving the effectiveness of expatriate teachers in international settings.

Table 3.2

Composite table on the level of teacher wellbeing of expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of physical, emotional, social, and professional

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Physical	3.15	0.45	Sometimes
Emotional	3.21	0.55	Sometimes
Social	3.22	0.53	Sometimes
Professional	2.88	0.49	Sometimes
Level of Well-Being of Expatriate Kindergarten Teachers	**3.12**	**0.41**	**Sometimes**

Legend: *4 (3.50 - 4.00) – Always* *2 (1.50 - 2.49) – Rarely*
3 (2.50 - 3.49) – Sometimes *1 (1.00 - 1.49) – Never*

Table 3.2 results reveal that the expatriate kindergarten teachers in the UAE had a modest degree of composite mean of 3.12 (SD = 0.41) in overall wellbeing with an interpretation of "Sometimes". There is relative variance in the standard deviations, suggesting some variation in individual experiences across dimensions of wellbeing.

The highest marks were observed in terms of social well-being (M = 3.22, SD = 0.53), and emotional well-being (M = 3.21, SD = 0.55), thus indicating a relatively good level of interaction and emotional stability among the participants. Also, the degree of physical well-being could be regarded as reasonable (M = 3.15, SD = 0.45), which means that teachers' overall health can be considered satisfactory despite the fact that at times they feel rather tired owing to their busy schedule. On the contrary, professional well-being was marked by the lowest average (M = 2.88, SD = 0.49).

The findings indicate that there is resiliency on part of the expatriate teachers regarding their health and well-being physically, mentally and socially; however, professional well-being remains an issue. The findings suggest that more needs to be done institutionally to provide professional development opportunities, mentoring and career paths for teachers in order to improve teacher effectiveness and retention.

This finding is consistent with current research which states that well-being among expatriate teachers has been observed to be moderate and the factors associated with the profession to be the ones causing concern for them due to lack of backing and progress (Smith, 2021; Ahmed & Verma, 2022). Furthermore, it has been highlighted in literature how important it is to have social and emotional support systems to build up resilience in teachers along with engaging them effectively (Johnson, 2023).

Significant difference in the challenges encountered by expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of work-related stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation when grouped by their demographic profiles

Table 4.1

Significant difference in the challenges encountered by the expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of work-related stress when grouped according to their demographic profiles

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	Remarks
Age – Work-related Stress	4.672	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Sex – Work-related Stress	-27.082	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Nationality – Work-related Stress	-7.320	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment – Work-related Stress	4.823	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Number of Years in Teaching – Work-related Stress	-1.164	99	0.247	Accept	Not Significant
Length of stay in the UAE – Work-related Stress	-10.890	99	0.000	Reject	Significant

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Table 4.1 shown by the results, there are major differences among the work-related stress of expatriate kindergarten teachers in UAE based on a number of demographics. For example, there were significant differences with regard to age ($t = 4.672$, $p = 0.000$), sex ($t = -27.082$, $p = 0.000$), nationality ($t = -7.320$, $p = 0.000$), highest level of education ($t = 4.823$, $p = 0.000$), and years of residence in UAE ($t = -10.890$, $p = 0.000$), all of which were less than 0.05 significance level. However, there was no difference with regard to teaching experience ($t = -1.164$, $p = 0.247$) indicating that it does not have an effect on stress perception.

The findings imply that demographic variables have a major role in how expatriate teachers perceive occupational stress and thus, distinct support systems should be in place. Factors including cultural background, gender, age and duration of residency may impact teachers' capacity to adapt and deal with demands of the work place, but professional experience alone is inadequate to compensate for stress in a new international setting.

The results here are in line with earlier research that show that there are differences in stress levels of expatriate teachers among demographic categories. Adjustment problems are a significant source of stress for teachers, particularly for teachers who are younger and have less contact with the host culture (Smith, 2021). Similarly, cultural background and nationality have been identified to impact the perception of stress and coping methods in foreign teaching situations (Ahmed & Verma, 2022). Furthermore, gender and education level differences in stress may represent differences in expectations, obligations, and adjustment difficulties in foreign school environments (Johnson, 2023).

Table 4.2

Significant difference in the challenges encountered by the expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of cultural adjustment when grouped according to their demographic profiles

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	Remarks
Age – Cultural Adjustment	5.078	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Sex – Cultural Adjustment	-28.342	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Nationality – Cultural Adjustment	-7.008	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment – Cultural Adjustment	5.014	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Number of Years in Teaching – Cultural Adjustment	-0.881	99	0.381	Accept	Not Significant
Length of stay in the UAE – Cultural Adjustment	-10.905	99	0.000	Reject	Significant

Table 4.2 Results reveal the significant differences in the challenges of cultural adjustment of the expatriate kindergarten teachers in the UAE according to the primary demographic factors. The statistically significant factors were age ($t = 5.078$, $p = 0.000$), gender ($t = -28.342$, $p = 0.000$), nationality ($t = -7.008$, $p = 0.000$), highest level of education acquired ($t = 5.014$, $p = 0.000$) and duration spent in UAE ($t = -10.905$, $p = 0.000$). The p-values of all variables indicated above were less than 0.05. The other predictor, teaching experience, was not statistically significant ($t = -0.881$).

This study shows that the issues surrounding cultural adaptation are highly dependent on demographic factors, particularly those associated with personal background and exposure to the new environment. While teaching experience has no significant effect on cultural adjustment, factors such as age, gender, nationality, educational achievement and duration of residency influence teachers' adaptation and integration into the UAE culture.

The results suggest the necessity of specialized and varied cultural orientation and support programs, adapted to unique teacher profiles, to promote adjustment, minimize cultural stress and boost professional effectiveness.

These results are in line with prior findings that younger teachers with less overseas experience had more problems in adjusting (Smith, 2021). Similarly, the cultural background and gender were shown to have a substantial effect on the adaption experience in the foreign teaching environment (Ahmed & Verma, 2022). Higher credentials and professional experience may aid adaption but do not remove culture adjustment issues (Johnson, 2023).

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Table 4.3

Significant difference in the challenges encountered by the expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of Curriculum adaptation when grouped according to their demographic profiles

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	Remarks
Age – Curriculum Adaptation	5.232	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Sex – Curriculum Adaptation	-27.746	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Nationality – Curriculum Adaptation	-7.214	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment – Curriculum Adaptation	5.028	99	0.000	Reject	Significant
Number of Years in Teaching – Curriculum Adaptation	-1.054	99	0.295	Accept	Not Significant
Length of stay in the UAE – Curriculum Adaptation	-10.863	99	0.000	Reject	Significant

Table 4.3 found that there are big differences amongst expatriate kindergarten teachers in the United Arab Emirates in the subject of modifying curriculum according to certain demographics. Statistically significant differences were found at ($p < 0.05$) in age ($t = 5.232$, $p = 0.000$), gender ($t = -27.746$, $p = 0.000$), nationality ($t = -7.214$, $p = 0.000$), the highest level of education ($t = 5.028$, $p = 0.000$), and years lived in the UAE ($t = -10.863$, $p = 0.000$). Teaching experience, however, was not significant at the statistical level ($t = -1.054$,

These findings imply that the demographic attributes, especially those associated with cultural background, gender, educational achievement, and contact with the host environment, have a significant impact on the difficulties of curricular adaption. Teaching experience is a component of professional competence, but it is not a major predictor of teachers' adaptation to changing curricular demands in an international setting.

The results underscore the significance of specific professional development and orientation programs to meet the requirements of expatriate teachers, especially in aligning instructional approaches with the local curricular standards. Personalized interventions may enhance teachers' flexibility, instructional effectiveness, and general integration into the UAE educational system.

The findings align with earlier research that show expatriate teachers, particularly those with less expertise of foreign settings, have higher challenges in adjusting to host-country curriculum (Smith, 2021). Similarly, issues in curriculum adaptation are affected by the disparities in cultural background and gender in the Gulf education systems (Ahmed & Verma, 2022). Educational qualification and duration of stay boost teachers' capability to incorporate curricular needs successfully (Johnson, 2023).

Significant relationship between the challenges encountered by the expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of work-related stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation, and their teaching performance and wellbeing

Table 5

Significant relationship between the challenges encountered by the expatriate kindergarten teachers in terms of work-related stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation, and their teaching performance and wellbeing

		LEVEL OF TEACHING PERFORMANCE OF EXPATRIATE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS	LEVEL OF WELL-BEING OF EXPATRIATE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS
CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY EXPATRIATE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS	Pearson Correlation	.771**	-0.006
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.954
	N	100	100
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 5 found that there exists a strong and statistically significant relationship between the difficulties encountered by the expatriate kindergarten teachers (job stress, culture shock, and curricular adjustments) and their teaching performance ($r = 0.771$, $p<0.001$). In other words, the amount of these challenges is strongly related to instructional performance. This highlights the importance of these factors in impacting the outcomes of education.

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Despite this, however, the correlation coefficient obtained between the two variables (obstacles and wellbeing of the teachers) showed a very weak relationship between them (r=-0.006, p=0.954). Thus, it can be said that there is no link between these elements, in other words, impediments do not directly affect the welfare of the teachers. This suggests that either expatriate teachers employ personal coping strategies or get enough help in maintaining their wellbeing.

From these findings it can be concluded that although obstacles affect teaching performance significantly, they cannot lead to the decrease in teachers' wellbeing necessarily. It means that there is a necessity to implement professional assistance programs for helping teachers perform their duties more effectively.

These findings corroborate prior research that have shown that extra workload, cultural hurdles, and curriculum-related issues might adversely affect teaching effectiveness (Smith, 2021). Moreover, there is evidence that organized institutional support may improve teachers' performance in difficult circumstances (Ahmed & Verma, 2022) and teachers' welfare may be resilient, owing to the resilience and coping techniques that foreign teachers learn (Johnson, 2023).

Proposed Training Program , may be developed based on the findings of the study
Project Title: "Enhancing Expatriate Kindergarten Teachers' Performance and Adaptation in UAE Schools: A Professional Development and Support Program"

I. RATIONALE
Work-related stress, culture adjustment, and the new curriculum have been found to hinder the effectiveness of expatriate kindergarten teachers in the UAE, making them significant barriers to their performance. Though these problems may not be directly related to their health, they hinder the process of successful educational delivery and engagement of students. The proposed activity will offer training sessions and Support activities to help address these issues by offering the teachers practical ways of coping with stress, adjusting to the culture, and integrating the new curriculum in their methods of teaching.

Objectives	Persons Involved	Persons Responsible	Time Frame	Estimated Cost	Output
To reduce work-related stress among expatriate kindergarten teachers through coping strategies, time management, and stress-reduction techniques	All expatriate kindergarten teachers	School HR, School Psychologist, External Stress Management Trainer	2-day workshop	$1,500	Teachers gain practical skills to manage workload pressure and administrative stress
To enhance cultural adjustment and integration into UAE school environment and community	All expatriate kindergarten teachers, especially new arrivals (<1 year)	School HR, Cultural Orientation Specialist	1-day seminar + ongoing mentorship (3 months)	$1,200	Teachers develop cultural competence, improve communication, and feel socially and professionally supported
To improve curriculum adaptation skills aligned with UAE kindergarten standards	Expatriate teachers teaching curriculum-heavy subjects	Curriculum Coordinator, Senior Kindergarten Teacher Trainers	2-day hands-on workshop	$1,500	Teachers can effectively adapt instructional methods, personalize learning, and integrate local content and assessment standards
To strengthen overall teaching performance despite challenges	All expatriate kindergarten teachers	Academic Director, Teacher Mentor	3-day intensive training + follow-up classroom coaching (2 months)	$2,000	Teachers demonstrate improved lesson delivery, classroom management, learner engagement, and assessment practices
To provide ongoing professional support and mentoring to address work	All expatriate teachers	School Leadership, Senior Teachers	Continuous quarterly review	$1,000	Creation of a supportive network and mentoring system for continuous teacher growth
To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of training in improving teaching performance and reducing challenges	School administration and teachers	School Principal, HR, Teacher Mentors	Post-training evaluation (after 3 months)	$500	Assessment reports and feedback on improvements in teaching performance and reduction in reported challenges

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IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that expatriate kindergarten teachers in the United Arab Emirates are well qualified and experienced teachers with good teaching performance and moderate wellbeing. Although they have the necessary skills they experience ongoing but manageable problems relating to work-related stress, cultural adjustment, and curriculum adaptation. These problems have a major impact on the teaching performance, which means that the adaption issues are directly reflected in the teaching effectiveness in foreign teaching settings.

However, the lack of a substantial association between these problems and teachers' wellbeing implies that expatriate teachers show resilience and ability for coping so they may maintain stable physical, emotional and social functioning despite professional pressures. However, the comparatively lower professional wellbeing suggests worry about career growth, institutional backing, and advancement chances.

The research also finds that teachers' demographic characteristics such as age, sex, nationality, educational level and duration of stay strongly impact their stress and adaption experience. However, teaching experience is not a major determinant of these issues. This indicates that contextual and socio-cultural variables are the main predictors of effective adaptation in foreign teaching situations, not professional tenure.

The present research adds to the literature in that it shows that while expatriate teachers have high professional competence, their performance is greatly affected by contextual obstacles. To improve the quality of teaching, teacher welfare and early childhood education results in multicultural contexts, these difficulties need to be addressed via targeted and systemic interventions.

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