

Status of Pre-Primary Education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Delhi Private Schools

*Dr. Mohsin Ali Khan

Abstract

The present study aimed to find out the status of pre-primary education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in privately managed pre-primary schools. Ten schools were randomly selected with a sample of sixty teachers. Two self-made tools were used. The result revealed that; out of ten schools, six schools were found in good condition and had good infrastructure and other basic facilities. Whereas four schools were found in poor condition; do not have proper building and other basic facilities which are required for quality preprimary education. Out of the total sample more than eighty percent teachers had shown high positive attitude, whereas only eighteen percent had moderate high attitude towards the need of preprimary education. The directional positive hypotheses have been accepted/rejected. The overall results revealed that majority of preprimary teachers think positive about the need and importance of pre-primary education i.e. ECCE since it is the backbone of primary education.

Key Words: ECCE, NCERT, ICDS, NCFTE 2009, Pre-Primary Education

INTRODUCTION:

It is the known fact that, quality of any education program can only be as good as the teacher who teaches it. The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE-2009) acknowledges this as to be a key factor and articulates the concern that generally those who function as teacher educators do not have specific professional training or experience. In the context of the early childhood stage; which comprises the initial six to eight years of life and is of critical significance as the formative stage of education; child's life needs to be carefully handled during this period.

Meaning and Nature of Preprimary Education

As per the NCFTE-2009, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) which is also known called as *Pre-primary Education*; aims at total development of a child in a learning environment that is joyful, child centred, play and activity based. Now a day this education has become an important part of modern education system. The private schools are imparting education effectively in big cities at higher cost, whereas in rural India this education is not a serious concern for teachers and parents. Recently, various researches

*Sr. Lecturer, Rameesh Institute Education, Greater Noida, UP

have laid down the emphasis on; the nutritional intake, emotional nurturance, interaction style and cognitive stimulation of very young minds for future education.

Historical Background

Few decades ago, most societies believed that young children between 6-8 years of age tend to be passive recipients of learning and socialization. Research based insights about early childhood development after the Second World War, led by *B. Bowlby, Maria Montessori, Frobel, John Dewey, and Piaget* and more recently *Daniel Stem et al*, helped to relocate the very young child as an active participant in his/her process of growing up. India has implemented perhaps the world's largest ECCE program known as Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) since 1975. Begun in just 35 blocks, it has been now universalized all over the country by the directive of honourable Supreme Court. This program caters the pregnant mothers for their nutritional care, health checkups, pre and post natal care, other than the early childhood education.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Pre-primary Education, aims at total development in a learning environment that is; joyful, child centred, play and activity based and provides the foundation to primary education. In metro cities ECCE program is basically related with pre-primary education system, which prepares a child for future education and development. At present every child gets compulsory pre-primary education in formal way mostly in private schools in the name of nursery and K.G. classes.

In Government schools, there is no separate system of preprimary education till date, but in national capital Delhi some of the Government, schools have started two year preprimary program like that of private schools. Parents are very serious to put their kids in various reputed private schools to secure their kid's career. In metro cities, private schools provide good environment to attract the kids and also they charge hefty amount during the course of two years before reaching to class first. Keeping in view the above facts, the present study has revealed the status of pre-primary education (ECCE) in private schools of north district of Delhi and also tried to find the reactions of pre-primary teachers towards the importance of this education.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the status of pre-primary education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in private pre-primary schools.
2. To study the perception of preprimary school teachers about the need and importance of pre-primary education.

HYPOTHESES:

The directional positive hypotheses have been formulated for the study;

1. The status of preprimary education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in all private schools is of good level.
2. The perception of all teachers of pre-primary education or Early Childhood Care and Education is positive, since they properly understand the need and importance of this education.

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS:

Preprimary Education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE): It is the preprimary education program of two years introduced by NCERT for total child development in a learning environment that is; joyful, child centred, play and activity based.

Status of Preprimary Education: Status refers to the present condition of pre-primary education i.e. Nursery and K.G. classes in private schools situated in Delhi.

Perception of teachers: It refers to the reaction or attitude of preprimary teachers towards the need and importance of preprimary education.

DELIMITATIONS:

1. Study was limited to the North district of Delhi.
2. Only recognized private pre-primary schools were randomly selected for the study.
3. A self made questionnaire for perception of teachers and a checklist for basic facilities in pre-primary schools were used for data collection.

METHODOLOGY:

The normative research survey method was applied to conduct the study;

POPULATION:

All recognized privately managed pre-primary schools of north district of Delhi have been considered as the population of study.

SAMPLE:

The sample comprised of sixty pre-primary teachers chosen from ten recognized private primary schools of the selected area. Purposive quota sampling technique was applied to get the desired sample for the study.

TOOLS USED:

1. NCERT prescribed Check List to know the status; basic facilities in selected private pre-primary schools regarding pre-primary education.

- Self made Questionnaire to study the perception or attitude of preprimary teachers regarding need and importance of pre-primary education.

PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION:

The data was gathered from all selected preprimary schools by cross checking all required basic facilities through the checklist. The questionnaire was distributed among the selected preprimary teachers to know about their perception regarding pre-primary education.

PROCEDURE OF ANALYSIS OF DATA:

The data was analyzed quantitatively as well qualitatively by using appropriate statistical methods and techniques.

STATUS OF PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS:

The status represents the overall quality of pre-primary education that is; school infrastructure, basic facilities, teaching methodology, teaching staff and overall quality of education. All these points were assessed with the help of checklist.

Table 1: Showing the status of preprimary schools as per the checklist

Sr. No	No. of Selected Preprimary school	Overall status of schools	Results
1	School .A	<i>Good & Satisfactory</i>	Six schools were found in 'Good & Satisfactory' condition as per the quality checks.
2	School .B	<i>Good & Satisfactory</i>	
3	School .C	<i>Poor & Unsatisfactory</i>	
4	School .D	<i>Poor & Unsatisfactory</i>	
5	School .E	<i>Good & Satisfactory</i>	
6	School .F	<i>Poor & Unsatisfactory</i>	
7	School .G	<i>Good & Satisfactory</i>	Four schools were found in 'Poor & Unsatisfactory' condition as per the quality checks.
8	School .H	<i>Poor & Unsatisfactory</i>	
9	School .I	<i>Good & Satisfactory</i>	
10	School .J	<i>Good & Satisfactory</i>	
	Total school = 10		

As per the table-1, out of ten selected pre-primary private schools, six were found in good and satisfactory condition; following all quality standards set by the NCERT. These schools were located in proper area and have almost all basic facilities along with good

infrastructure and academic environment. These schools have all trained and experienced teachers getting proper salary and other benefits. The students were found in proper uniform and Nursery, K.G. class have less than 30 students which is good for a teacher to pay individual attention. The new teaching methodology was used and LED T.V was found in every class to show audio-visual aids and kids were found busy in joyful learning. Four schools were reported in below average category; having small building, poor and pathetic conditions. The number of kids in these schools was very high i.e. above fifty in one class and nursery and K.G. classes were mixed together due to lack of rooms. LED T.V and audio-visual aids were not seen in the class and teachers were also found very exhausted due to large number of kids in each class.

These schools charge proper admission fees and monthly tuition fees from each student but they don't have proper infrastructural and basic facilities and bother less about the quality education. These schools have more untrained and inexperienced teachers working on low salary and also less in number as compared to the strength of students in each pre-primary section. The drinking water and toilet facilities were not proper as only two water taps and two toilets were reported in each school and which were not being cleaned regularly, producing foul smell around. The overall condition of these four private pre-primary schools was found unsatisfactory. Thus, In case of six pre-primary schools the directional hypothesis was accepted, whereas of four schools rejected.

PERCEPTION OF PRE-PRIMARY TEACHERS :

Perception means the awareness and attitude of a person regarding any issue or cause. In this study the perception of pre-primary school teachers was taken into consideration regarding the need and importance of this education in a child's life.

Table 2: Showing the perception (attitude) of pre-primary school teachers regarding need and importance of preprimary education

Sr. No.	Perception level	Range of raw score	Number of teachers	% age	Result
1	High Positive	(32-45)	24	60	Large number of preprimary teachers (80%) show High positive perception.
2	Moderate Positive (Average)	(16-31)	07	18	Less number of teachers (18 %) show Moderate positive perception.
3	Low Positive (Negative)	(0-15)	01	02	Very less number of teachers (2%) shows low positive perception.
	Total	(0-45)	40	100 %	

The above table-2 clearly indicates the level and percentage of perception of pre-primary school teachers about the need and importance of pre-primary education; that majority of teachers (80 %) show clear high level positive perception about the importance of pre-primary education. Less number of teachers (18 %) show moderate or average level of perception and only two percent (2%) show low level or negative perception. The overall results reveal that majority of pre-primary teachers think positive about the importance of pre-primary education. Thus the directional hypothesis was accepted.

FINDINGS AND RESULT DISCUSSION:

1. Out of ten, six schools were located in proper area and the locality and have almost all basic facilities required for pre-primary education along with good academic environment.
2. These schools have all trained and experienced teachers getting proper salary and other benefits.
3. The students were found in proper uniform. Nursery, K.G. classes have less than 30 students which is good for a teacher to pay individual attention.
4. The new teaching methodology was used and LED TV was found in every class to show audio-visual aids and kids were found busy in joyful learning.
5. Four schools were reported in below average category; having poor and pathetic conditions.
6. The number of kids in these schools was very high i.e. above fifty in one class. Nursery and K.G. classes were mixed together due to shortage of rooms making class suffocated.
7. No LED TV or audio-visual aids were seen in the class and teachers were also found very exhausted due to more number of kids in one class.
8. These schools charge proper admission fees and monthly tuition fees but they don't have the proper infrastructural facilities and botherless about quality of education.
9. These schools have more untrained and inexperienced teachers working on low salary and also less in number as compared to the strength of students in preprimary sections.
10. The drinking water facility was poor; only two water taps were reported and long queue of kids was seen on each plastic water tank which was old broken and unclean.
11. There were only one or two toilets in each school which were not being cleaned regularly, producing foul smell around and long queue was seen before each toilet.
12. The overall condition of these four privately managed pre-primary schools was found unhealthy and unsatisfactory and hence needed to be improvised.

13. That majority of teachers (80%) have shown high level positive perception or attitude towards the need and importance of pre-primary education.
14. Less number of teachers (18%) has shown moderate or average level of perception or attitude.
15. Only two percent teachers (2%) have shown low level or negative perception towards the need and importance of pre-primary education.
16. The overall result revealed that majority of pre-primary teachers think positive about the need and importance of pre-primary education (ECCE) since it is the backbone of primary education.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS:

- The present study results revealed that; all private pre-primary schools do not have proper infrastructure and basic facilities to cater quality education.
- Since pre-primary education is the foundation to primary education and thus needs to be taken seriously by the private management and all the teachers.
- Proper checking and inspection from the concerned authorities should be conducted on regular basis to maintain the quality in this education.
- Serious action should be taken by the concerned authorities against these schools by disaffiliating them, who do not follow the prescribed norms of NCERT.

CONCLUSION:

Through the study results it can be concluded that pre-primary education is most important part of every child's education and also provides base for primary education. So to provide quality education at school level, it is necessary to improve the quality of pre-primary education in every school, not only in national capital Delhi but throughout the country. For improvement and expansion of pre-primary education, innovative strategies should be followed to bring qualitative and desirable change in pre-primary education/ Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

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