

Transnational Perspective and Practices in Early Childhood Education

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Abstract

This paper explains various good practices and perspectives of Early Childhood Education across the nation. A good number of reviews across the globe has collected from various sources, research projects, PhD thesis and so on which put categorized as knowledge base, developmentally appropriate practice, observation and assessment, positive behavior guidance, inclusive practices, personal professional development. The research mainly focused on the pedagogical process, language development, social and cultural perspectives of preschools. These good practices also implemented and recommended at national level of those nations to their preschool/ Early Childhood Education Curriculum policies.

Keywords: Good Practices, Early Childhood Education, Global Preschool.

Introduction

Preschool plays a vital role in overall development of the child. Recent research in the field of neuroscience, particularly of the brain, has provided very convincing evidence of 'critical periods' located within these early years for some specific competencies for lifelong learning and development, Kyte (2015). In this context the early experiences of children and the

stimulation they receive very important for the forming synaptic connections in the brain in these early years and the full potential of development of the brain. Environmental conditions during early years substantially affect the growth of children's neural pathways. Providing optimal stimulation at the right time is the key to the networking of brain cells, which shape the

children to think and learn for the rest of their lives. All round capacities emerges during the age between 3 and 6, which are the essential skills for later success in school and life. Research within India and internationally has demonstrated the significant impact of early childhood education can make in terms compensating for defects and enabling children to have a sound foundation. Early childhood education also helps to reduce the dropouts and continuation of children in primary grades, NCERT (1994).

Through creative play, drama, music, and well thought out games with suitable adaptation for children with special needs, and developmentally appropriate activities, children develop their working memory, attention and acquire self-control. For enhancing those skills federal government, united nation agencies like UNICEF should provide opportunities based on well proven/ evidence based good practices of Early Childhood Education. This should address all the aspects of preschool, like pedagogy transaction, linguistic and cultural diversity and so on. In this context this paper attempts to share the good practices in preschools of pedagogical process, curriculum transaction, infrastructure and various approaches and methods based on secondary sources and existing literature in the field of early childhood education.

The National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER, 2018) Preschool programs are typically rated on two dimensions of quality-process and structure. The interactions, activities, materials, learning opportunities, and health and safety routines are observed and rated as a measure of process quality. The second dimension, structural quality, includes the size of each group of children, the adult-child ratio, and the education and training of the teachers and staff.

Good Practices in Early Childhood Education India and Others

Elizabeth Wood and Helen Hedges (2016) conducted a study on early child education curriculum. The study was focused on the questions content, coherence, and control of the ECE curriculum in preschools. The study found by using content, coherence and control in pedagogy enhances the learning developmental skills of preschool children. The study also suggests that these type of curriculum helps the child assessment in play based setting. Peter Kutnick, Antonella Brighi and Jennifer Colwell (2016) studied the interactive and socially inclusive pedagogy of 34 preschools in South England. The study revealed children who engaged in inclusive pedagogy where perform better in cognitive aspects. The study also emphasized the inclusion

pedagogy helps the overall development of the children, particularly in preschool setup.

Marguerite Maher and Lisa Buxton (2015) case studied the cultural interface of Early Childhood Education. The study found literacy development of the children through the involvement of involvement of community elders and family participant in preschools. Kalpana Venugopal (2014) has done a case study on developmentally appropriate practices of “Poo-kal” an innovative practice of early childhood education. The author explained that pookal as an innovative preschool emphasis on holistic development of the children through play based learning. Children were motivated to follow the concept of body, mind and spirit through head, heart and hand.

Zhanmei Song et al. (2014) critically reviewed preschool education helps the rapid economic development of China. The practices and policies in early childhood education helps the teacher development in preschools. The authors emphasized innovative practices in Chinese preschools helps latter success of the children. Jaipaul Roopnarine et al. (2013) tracked important changes on knowledge and application in Early Childhood Education. They examined important dimensions and characteristics in the development and implementation of the

major curricular models and programs in Early Childhood Education programme like Montessori, Bank Street, Project Approach, Reggio, and a host of others. They found continued emphasis remains on inclusion, diversity, and fostering multicultural competence within the profession to help prepare a new generation of educators and child and family specialists to better serve today’s young children and their families across multiple cultural communities and early education settings.

Tuija, A. et al. (2012) dissected the forty years of Finnish pre-school education curricula between 1972 and 2000. The study analyses five curricula texts through qualitative content analysis on the functions of pre-school education on positioning of children and educators. The development of pre-school education consisted of four phases: (1) the era of pre-school education trials; (2) the era of heterogeneous pre-school education arrangements; (3) the era of changes in curriculum policies; and (4) the era of pre-school education establishment. The researcher revealed that there were significant changes in pre-school education curricula which has significantly affected changes in Finnish society, especially in their primary education.

Angela Eckhoff (2011) conducted an experimental study on implanting visual arts

in preschools between a non-profit community-based early education Centre and community arts Centre. The study reveals there is significance in visual skills after implementing the art curriculum. The study implicates that need for art based preschool or kindergarten programme.

Maya (2000) community run preschool: a case study of MAYA'. The study found that the broad curriculum framework of Jean Piaget and the theory of Multiple Intelligences propounded by Harvard Gardener were used to develop curriculum for preschool at the centre. Daily activities in the center began with free play followed by prayer, songs were some activities organized for the children. Cluster Resource Center (CRC) has setup to cater the group of preschool children in centers on that locale. CRC recommendations is that teacher should be given more training on early childhood care and education as they need to get sensitized available in the vicinity of these preschool, convergence of services has required to avoid duplication and confusion. In the study the investigator found better involvement of children and teacher by using the innovative approach. Kabadavi (2007) studied the relationship between preschool teachers and cooperating preschool teachers' cognitive style and their instructional preferences. The study showed teachers able to significantly perform better

after using cognitive. Cognitive style able to manage temperament of preschool teacher.

Booyeun Lim (2004) studied on the aesthetic skills of preschool children. Through the quasi experimental study the investigator reveals aesthetic setting enhances visual and communication skills of preschool children. Duhn (2006) in an article "Global Citizens: Traces of Cosmopolitanism in the New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum, *Te Whāriki*" explains about neo-liberal visions of Early Childhood Education and the author argued on the New Zealand Early Childhood curriculum framework, *Te Whāriki*, which was published in 1996. The author explains *Te Whāriki* as a quality early childhood education curriculum framework that has been productive to make a particular type of child. In the article, the author argues that *Te Whāriki* is not about 'best practice' but about producing the ideal child. The children influenced by this type of curriculum emerged at a time when New Zealand was deeply entangled in neo-liberal visions of globalization. The type of child embedded in New Zealand's Early Childhood curriculum has the potential to sustain neo-liberal visions of the future global subject.

Burchinal, et al. (2000) conducted a longitudinal study on relating the center

based child care to early cognitive and language development. The study revealed that higher quality child care related to higher level of cognitive development, language development and communication skills. Finding suggests that researchers and policy makers should strive to improve the quality of care to enhance early development of children. Suriakanthi and Swaminathan (2000) studied the relationship between quality of early childhood education and learning competencies. The study showed good quality early childhood education centers has better learning competencies, which excludes other various factors in the preschools. The study also recommended to follow various innovative practices for the better learning competencies in the preschools of India.

Abrol et al. (2001) from a cross-sectional study of psycho-social development of children, revealed that 90% of children spoke one language and had pre-school experience of Anganwadis or private nurseries. 67% children had normal nutritional status and the rest were mildly malnourished. Motor, cognitive and personal social developments were found to be closely interlinked and interdependent. Children going to private nursery schools were found to be higher in many abilities especially cognitive ability, compared to

those with no pre-school exposure, or those with experience of government run nurseries or Anganwadis. Most of the children were found to be slow in counting, audio-visual integration, and handling of writing tools. Children with mothers who had secondary school education were developmentally ahead of those whose mothers had primary or no school education. Significant differences were observed between children having normal nutritional status and those in grade I and II malnutrition. Malnutrition affects development in an indirect way so far as cognitive abilities were found. Urban children were at par with children from other countries and rural children were far behind both, urban Indian children and children from Japan. Indian children were much slower in counting, addition and subtraction compared to western children. The study also developed norms for children for walking, running on a straight line, hopping on one foot, ascending and descending stairs, holding writing tools, coloring within a boundary, bladder control, bathing, dressing, awareness about identity, age, family and community, number concept etc.

Read (2007) in a cause study evaluated the exterior design of existing preschool environments in the context of contemporary writings by architects

focusing on creating designs that nurture children's emotions. Sense of place research was discussed in relation to young children's experiences. Findings reveal that the majority of American preschool environments, including small-scale structures, windows, landscaping, natural wall materials, and thresholds enhances the emotion development of preschool children between the age of 4 and 8. Philip, et al. (2010) conducted performing visual arts model for literacy development among preschool children. The study was conducted in three community based child care centers. The study had shown 71% of children were benefited from the performing visual art model. The finding of shown integrating the arts in child centers helps the emergent literacy programs. Which will be promising effects on learning-related, emergent-literacy and school-readiness skills of high-risk preschoolers.

Mei-Gui Lu, et al. (2013) critically reviewed the key competencies of early childhood education in Taiwan, and suggested to improve curriculum. The article suggests that need for parenting approaches from preschool teacher as communication is largely depends on the school environment. Children were deeply connected with preschool home environment. The author suggests children competencies have to be developed based on Chinese cultural

context. This also helps the children to develop communicative interaction, social participation and autonomy.

Asha and Deepa (2011) conducted study on parental perception on context of childhood and play. The researchers explored influences of parental belief systems on childhood and the positioning of play in Indian urban contemporary social contexts. Based on 28 families from two residential areas from low and high income were randomly selected from children attending a fee-paying Early Childhood education centre in the respective locale. The participants were the parents of second-born children who are attending the ECCE centres, to ensure mature reflections on child rearing. The author used observation and interview techniques to collect the data. The findings revealed that irrespective of educational background, physical setting and economic disparity, converged in their attitudes in viewing the value of play. Parents from both settings drew a positive relationship between play and the overall development of children, which led to the significance of play being universally accepted. Parents also understood that there is significant teaching learning that allows children subtle exploration of the environment and facilitates.

Park (2003) conducted a study on enhancing learning development of individuals through cultural practices. The study had shown significant learning development through culturally appropriate practices in preschools. Kwon, Y.I. (2002) conducted a study on traditional approach and subject-centered approach preschools of England. The study had shown positive results on subject-centered approach preschools. The investigator recommended using subject-centered approach for curriculum in preschools which will be highly beneficial. Roy Prentice (2000) emphasized creative approach for all round development of the children. Creative approach enhances the curiosity, experimenting, reasoning, planning and use of gestures among preschoolers. The article quoted from various research studies that creative approach improves the cognitive development among the preschoolers.

Joseph (1997) has done a meta-analysis on the effect of full day kindergarten on child learning outcomes. As he found some studies show positive effects of full-day kindergarten on student achievements as opposed to half day kindergarten, while other studies failed to find any differences in achievement between students who attended full-day kindergarten and students who attended half-day kindergarten. But his meta-analysis found that overall students

who attended full-day kindergarten manifested significantly greater achievements than students who attended half-day kindergarten.

Magnuson et al. (2016) in a meta-analysis on cognitive, academic and behavioral outcomes of early childhood education programmes between the genders. The meta-analysis reveals that boys significantly performed better in cognitive development. And there was no significant relation in the performance between boys and girls in academic and behavioral outcomes. Meta-analysis also reveals boy benefited significantly more from these programs than girls on over all school outcomes such as grade retention and special education classification.

Wood and Hedges (2016) conducted study on coherence and content approach in preschools. The study had shown significant improvement on critical thinking skills in preschools. The study recommended for policy makers, preschool teachers and other researchers in preschools. Using such an approach proved highly beneficial. Hegde et al. (2009) studied on developmentally appropriate practices, beliefs, stated practices and actual practices of kindergarten in India. Forty kindergarten teachers in city of Mumbai (India) participated in the study. Findings showed

that teachers' beliefs were more developmentally appropriate than their stated practices or actual practices in the classroom. The study also implicated that teachers are similar in their developmentally appropriate beliefs and stated practices in classrooms with higher scores on actual practices. The group size has a significant predictor of teachers' actual practices. The implication of the study was that policy makers and the government needs to formulate certain programme standards that should be realistic and feasible for the early childhood education of India.

Karen M. La Paro, Robert C. Pianta and Megan Stuhlman (2012) conducted study on classroom assessment and scoring system from the pre-kindergarten years. The study reveals observation and individual assessment of children better technique to assess the communication skills of the children. Elisabeth Mellgren and Valerie Margrain (2015) in a cross cultural study between Sweden and New Zealand on student teacher opinion in early learning environments for preschools. The study had shown both the nations teacher's strongly emphasize the positive learning environment in preschools. It was recommended that teachers required more time and support than assumed to develop deep and embedded understandings of literacy as a meaningful activity and

experience for children. Universities, and the settings in which student teachers complete practicum, provide important and complementary contexts within which student teachers can develop this learning. The findings of the study support in understanding student teachers' conceptions of literacy and the influence of cultural values.

Diamond, A., Barnett, W.S., Thomas, J. and Munro, S. (2007) studied on receptive and expressive skills in relation with socio economic status. The study had shown positive correlation between receptive and expressive skills. Socio economic status doesn't affect much on the receptive and expressive skills. Sattes (2002) reviewed 30 studies on preschool to school achievement. Preschool achievement depends on the parental involvement, teacher involvement, learning material, community participant and other various factors helps the children to get ready for the preschools. The ECLS-B (2005) the US based longitudinal study conducted for approximately 14,000 children born in the U.S. The study reveals children who participated in preschools in various preschool setting (house, school and day care) benefited from physical, emotional, and language development.

Barrett (2015) studied on speech rhythm and pronunciation through music based

intervention strategies among preschool children. The study had shown significant development in pronunciation and rhythm development. The study also found an increase in expressive skills after the intervention. Larsen-Freeman (2015) studied on a case for 'language acquisition' to become 'language development'. Second language acquisition enhanced the first language/mother tongue of the children. The study had shown a significant impact of language acquisition leads to language development. The study recommended the curriculum designers to promote language acquisition based intervention strategies to enhance language development.

Marian and et al (2007) from five years of early childhood children language development are increasingly influenced by their wider social experience and impact of literacy. In later years, above five the pattern of language development in children will increase by exposing to other language, peer group, literacy tools of the culture like pictures, television, computers, logos, advertising, films, books, stories, poetry and school.

David Crystal (2005), the pattern of individual language development is broadly similar in monolingual and bilingual situation: It's a combination of the infant's unique experiences with a general sequence

of the stage. Bishop and Adams (1990) conducted a study on poor communication ability of preschool children. The study had shown schools with less environment like well-trained teacher, television, learning material had an impact of less communication ability of the preschool children. The study also recommended curriculum should be designed to promote more communication skills for the preschoolers.

Catts et al. (2001) and Scarborough (1998) studied on oral language proficiency has also long been associated with later reading achievement, particularly in the area of reading comprehension. Prediction studies have consistently shown that pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children's performance on vocabulary (semantic) and grammar (syntax) tasks accounts for a significant amount of variance in later elementary-grade reading ability. David et al. (2003) has shown that there is a link between speech, language, and communication with learning behavior, social skills and children's self-esteem. Brains of babies develop at astonishing in early years. Brain is genetically wired at birth, but the complex circuitry that permits mature thought process to occur only begins to develop in early childhood and connections continue to be made throughout life and are shaped by experience.

Robin Boucher (1986) studied the pragmatic meaning of verbal language. He examined the verbal language complexity and styles of learning disabled and nondisabled boys in social interactions with an adult and with a peer to determine if LD (Learning-disabled) boys' verbal language complexity and styles differed from those of non-LD boys and to determine if LD boys could adapt their verbal language complexity and styles to age of listener. Results indicated that (a) LD boys had less complex verbal language, (b) they could adjust verbal language and style to listener, and (c) both LDs and non-LDs showed particular, complementary communication styles. Findings suggest that need of strategies for remediation and further research in pragmatics is required.

Folse (2004) studied on learning vocabulary through second languages. The study had shown significant scores on vocabulary development through second language learning. In this study boys scored more in learning novel words than girls which excludes other factors like socio-economic status and medium of intrusions in preschools. Snow (2006) and Baquedano, Lopez (2003) conducted a study on content of the language in preschools. He had shown the content of the language in home environment is differ from school environment. This study revealed children showed higher 73% content of the language

in home and 59% content of the language in school environment. However the study found positive correlation between home and school environments. Saracho & Spodek (2006) studied on language development in multilingual preschools. The study had shown children who exposed multilingual setup acquire language fast and communicate better than children who exposed in bilingual and monolingual setup. However there is no significant relation between boys and girls in the posttest scores. ICDS Rajasthan (2013) established of Child Media/Resource Laboratory for material development, operational research, advocacy etc. The experiment also trained NTT 500 tribal Anganwadi Centres in ICDS under Tribal Sub plan. Strengthening of ECCE at grass root level through community ownership-Community based monitoring system through network of PRIs, youth, old people. ECE, experimental pilot project implemented in nine districts of the State. Each DIET of the state has also adopted 25 AWCs to develop them as Child-Friendly Centres (CFCs). Audio CD of ECE songs, rhymes, riddles and an animation film to advocate the concept of ECCE have also been developed in the state with the financial support from UNICEF. Other innovation, which the state of Rajasthan is trying out, includes joint training of AWWs with Primary School

teachers, evolving community-based monitoring system to strengthen ECE in CFCs and creation of ECE resource faculty and resource centre in all DIETs.

ICDS Tamil Nadu (2013) Development of ECCE Curriculum - Odi Vilayadu Pappa Development of PSE Kit: This has been done in convergence with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in Tamil Nadu. Each AWC gets two types of kit materials in alternative years (Kit A & Kit B). It comprises of material for individual choice, activities consisting of wooden and plastic blocks; jigsaw puzzles; balls; stacking cups; coloured beads; geometric pin board; lacing boards; shape and colour sorter; wooden numbers; English, through a consultative process involving ICDS cadres; subject experts and Block Resource Trainers and primary school teachers of SSA. The curriculum is intrinsically linked with Activity-Based Learning (ABL), the pedagogy currently practiced in primary classes in Tamil Nadu. Monthly framework and weekly and daily activity plans have been prepared for the transaction of the curriculum. The framework comprises of Seidhu Arivom (Individual Choice Time), Pesi Padi Magizhvom (Circle Time), Vilayadi Karpom (Structured Play), Arindhu Magizhvom (Concept Time) and the daily activities are conducted according to the monthly and weekly framework. The

domains addressed in the bilingual curriculum include (a) sensorial alertness (b) physical growth needs (gross and fine motor development, coordination, balance) (c) self-care life skills education (food, toilet, cleanliness, participation in daily life) (d) communication (listening, responding, speaking, conversation), (e) social-emotional development (moral, social) (f) cognitive development (concept formation, discrimination, pre-reading, pre-writing, pre-math, imagination). And ICDS Gujrath (2013) initiatives has taken by Gujarat in Early Childhood Care Education - Development of Standards and Indicators- Toy Bank Initiative - AWCs School Enrollment Drive which stimulates the preschool to participate in teaching-learning process actively.

Conclusion

From this article it is recommended to practice constructive approach, holistic approach, theme based approach, project approach, forest approach, integrated approach, experimental approach, STEM approach were highly beneficial for the preschoolers across the globe. Few approaches like Theme based approach, project approach and integrated were low cost which have been in use in developing countries. These approaches also 'pedagogical friendly' were teaching –

learning process happens friendly between children and teachers. STEM approach helps children to stimulate the scientific curiosity. These approaches also involve the parents and caretakers to participate for overall development of the children.

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