

Early Childhood Care and Education

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Abstract – Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is widely acknowledged across the world as a critical component of education for all children. As a result, governments have been pursuing it with vigour. Many nations throughout the globe have made significant strides toward achieving ECCE as a result of many initiatives. However, most of them were unable to either fulfil this aim entirely or without compromising its quality owing to a lack of resources, poor planning, and insufficient implementation tactics; this was particularly true in a large and populous nation such as India. Numerous initiatives have been undertaken by the Government of India in order to improve quality. These include policy and plan formulation, constitutional amendments and acts, the development of quality standards and a curriculum framework, schemes, and flagship programmes such as Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), District Primary Education Program (DPEP), and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). In this endeavour, India has made certain compromises with regard to the non-negotiable quality criteria for ECCE, which has resulted in the development of both predicted and unforeseen problems and difficulties. As a consequence, the nation has fallen short of its goal of assuring quality in the ECCE sector. Recent studies, on the other hand, show that significant progress has been made in the area of quality reform. While there are certain areas where there have been modest successes, there have also been improvements in other areas, demonstrating that maintaining quality is an achievable goal in many areas. The purpose of this paper is to summarise measures taken by the Government of India, to analyse the ground realities, to highlight fundamental hurdles in quality reform in early childhood education and care, and to recommend viable enablers to achieve the desired results.

Keywords – Early, Childhood, Care

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INTRODUCTION

The initial six of life are basic long stretches of human existence since the pace of improvement in these years is more fast than at some other progressive phase. Worldwide cerebrum research additionally educates us about the importance regarding early years for mental health.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) makes a positive commitment to youngsters' drawn out advancement and advancing by working with an empowering and invigorating climate in these establishment phases of deep rooted learning.

Guardians as caregivers are basic in giving an invigorating learning climate to the youngster and the initial over two to three years need not be in a conventional learning climate. The National Curriculum Framework recognizes the meaning of association of guardians, family and local area.

The National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Curriculum Framework for all youngsters under six years old is lined up with the Government's vision of ECCE as spelt out in the National Early

Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy. The National ECCE Curriculum Framework is educated by the Position Paper on ECCE (National Curriculum Framework, NCERT, 2005) and the educational plan itemized there under.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is a term that refers to group settings for children between the ages of three and five years old that are intentionally designed to stimulate and support their physical, mental, emotional, language, social, and other developmental milestones, among other things. Psychologists, educators, and policymakers have referred to it by a variety of names, including nursery school education, kindergarten education, pre-primary education, and the group settings in which Early Childhood Care and Education is provided to children have been referred to by a variety of names, including nursery schools, kindergarten schools, Shishu Vihar, and Shishu Vatikas. These facilities are specifically intended to offer preschool children with care, supervision, stimulation, and instruction while they are away from

their families. Early childhood care and education facilities are covered under the broad phrase "Early Childhood Care and Education," which is perfectly acceptable, because they all have the common characteristic of serving children prior to their enrollment into primary schools.

History of early childhood education in India

General early childhood education in India is a somewhat late turn of events. Since the commencement of India, formal education was restricted to just male individuals from the high position gatherings. Mass ignorance among offspring of low station families and female kids has had a combined impact of inconsistent circulation of educational open doors among the populace. The cognizant and deliberate endeavor to teach kids from all areas of the society started in 1937 with the educational way of thinking of Gandhi. Gandhi's fundamental education plot was intended to set up free and obligatory education at the public level. Maria Montessori's 1939 visit to India embedded the reinforcements of preschool education in India and educators were prepared in Montessori's technique for education. Her significant books were converted into numerous Indian dialects. Today, there are numerous Montessori preschools in India, and a few schools in Delhi and Bombay are associated with Montessori International.

Early childhood education has been a steady focal point of every single significant board and commissions set up by the public authority of post-free India. In 1953, the Committee on Early Childhood Education perceived the limits of leaving all out liability regarding early childhood education with guardians and suggested consideration of preprimary classes in the current Indian grade schools. The Committee on Child Care (1963-64) suggested a total upgrade of preschool educational way of thinking and standards to align programs more with the requirements of Indian society. This advisory group likewise suggested the presentation of early afternoon dinners in preschool programs. In 1964, the Kothari Commission of India suggested the foundation of state-level pre-essential education habitats. After ten years, The National Policy on Children (1974), characterized early childhood education as giving both care and education to all youngsters in India, particularly to those segments of the populace where kids are the original school participants. Early childhood education was viewed both as a reinforcing factor for acknowledgment of the objectives of obligatory essential education and for the advancement of HR overall (National Policy on Education, 1986).

OBJECTIVE

1. To assess ground realities about quality ECCE in India.

2. To determine major issues and challenges in quality reforms.

Issues affecting early childhood education in India

The accompanying financial, cultural, political, and educational patterns and issues have had a significant effect upon early childhood education in India.

The Enrollment of Women in the Workforce Is Growing in India. This isn't just valid for ladies from center and upper working class foundations who have middle class positions, yet in addition for ladies from lower class foundations who function as traveler workers in building destinations, farming workers, talented or incompetent workers in modern areas, maidservants in private homes, or ladies occupied with pay creating exercises at home. On account of the inaccessibility of information on ladies working in the private area, a dependable gauge of the quantity of ladies working in the workforce in India isn't accessible.

The Extended Family System Is Gradually Disintegrating. The developing industrialization and ensuing change in monetary foundation has made the blue collar individuals from numerous families move to metropolitan regions looking for work, leaving a piece of their family back in their country homes. Accordingly, the customary job of the more distant family individuals to give care and casual education to small kids is reduced by distance.

Early Childhood Education Enables the Caregiver, Usually an Older Girl Sibling, to Attend School. Early childhood programs, consequently, have the potential not exclusively to lessen the dropout rate among young ladies yet in addition to make all inclusive, obligatory essential education a reality (Kanl, 2019).

Both Basic and Educational Needs of Young Children Can Be Addressed Through Early Childhood Education. The little youngster associated with early childhood programs gets further developed medical care, better nourishment, just as any open doors to dominate school-related abilities, take part in helpful play, and fill in friendly skill (Kaul, 2019). Early childhood education additionally facilitates the progress from home to school, encouraging in the two guardians and youngsters a more inspirational perspective toward education and formal tutoring.

Two strong impacts have added to the improvement of early childhood education in India. To begin with, different ladies' gatherings, trade guilds, strict gatherings, and ideological groups who request more noteworthy equity for ladies and kids have impacted the public authority to underline early childhood education in India. One consequence of

these cooperative endeavors is that ladies representatives in India have been getting a 3-month maternity leave with full compensation.

Second, the early childhood education development at the worldwide level has likewise affected exploration and strategy issues. Numerous inventive exploration tasks and test cases programs have been started by significant offices in India. For instance, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has sent off the Children's Media Laboratory Project in ten territories of India with subsidizing from UNICEF. The learning materials (print and nonprint) created by the research facility in various dialects are circulated liberated from cost to all early childhood habitats and associations in the country.

Arising educational extension to incorporate all youngsters

In 1993, the "Program of Action" report of the Ministry of Human Resource Development in India recognized specific gatherings as significant objective gatherings for extension of early childhood education in India. These gatherings incorporate little youngsters:

- who dwell in extremely low-pay metropolitan networks
- who live in biologically discouraged regions (rustic regions and craftsman families) where they are needed to take an interest in farming and family tasks
- who are the posterity of vagrant, occasional, or development workers
- who have a place with ancestral networks or live in far off regions
- who have unique requirements or actual inabilities (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1993)

The work of the public authority at present is focused on arriving at these youngsters and planning educational programs that will address their issues.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current review is a story survey of enormous and limited scope research studies directed to evaluate the nature of ECCE in various areas Agra Mathura in India like Government, Private and Non-Government Organization (NGO). These examinations are predominantly led by the NCERT, NUEPA, CECED, ASER, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), Planning Commission, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation and National Human Rights Commission.

The audit centers around the explores directed during the year 2000 to 2016, on the grounds that this time World Education Forum took on the Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All that supported the development and improvement in ECCE. Additionally, UNESCO started the EFA GMRs for characterizing issues, checking progress and featuring holes nearby. The essential focal point of the survey is quality ECCE, and this implies that concentrates on other than this subject and span are prohibited. Studies remembered for the audit are recognized by manual ventures of applicable diary and reports and electronic data set hunts on Google Scholar, JSTOR, Academia and official sites of Government of India and different associations. These inquiries gave 1 status report and 32 exploration studies (30 cross sectional and 2 longitudinal). Out of 32 exploration concentrates on 23 utilized likelihood examining, 7 utilized non-likelihood testing and rest of the 2 didn't referenced the example and inspecting technique. Information in these investigations are gathered at different levels including kids and ECCE functionaries utilizing government sanctioned tests, talk with timetables, surveys and perception plans. The main impediments of these examinations are inclusion of states and kind ECCE focuses. 29 investigations are state explicit, while 3 examinations cover every one of the provinces of India. Out of these 3 examinations, 1 is directed distinctly on ECCE part of ICDS catered through Anganwadi Centers (AWCs). Likewise, the vast majority of the state explicit investigations are directed on AWCs, might be a result of countywide predominance of such focuses. Nonetheless, studies can possibly give look at quality in ECCE in all areas the nation over.

RESULTS

The results of these investigations fall into three sections. Initial segment manages the evaluation of nature of ECCE based on eight 'Quality Standards' created by the MWCD. Second part covers the distinguishing proof of significant difficulties in quality changes. Third part recommends conceivable empowering agents to connect something very similar.

Quality of ECCE

There are 8 quality principles and scientist endeavored to give a brief look at research confirms comprehensively, under each key norm. Endeavors are additionally positioned to uncover realities from each area of India and produce an evident picture on nature of ECCE in all areas.

Standard I (Interaction) Connection (kid youngster , kid instructor and kid material) is the main part of value ECCE. Aruna, Vazir and Vidyasagar. (2000); Blaustein (2005); Meisels (1998); MWCD (2013b); NAEYC (2009b); UNICEF (2012) are of the view

that, communication among kids and the scope of ecological just as social encounters alongside significant exchanges are related with positive aberrance in their general turn of events. It helps youngsters, assemble a strong information establishment and set them up for formal tutoring.

In opposition to this, Kaul et al.(2018) in her longitudinal review, tracked down restricted connection among youngsters and with instructor in all the ECCE focuses in Andhra Pradesh (A.P.), Rajasthan and Assam. They collaborate just during instructing learning process. Because of lacking educational material and huge number of youngsters, educators collaborate with the entire class in AWCs in A.P. (Rao, 2019). Deficiency of ECE units and play material are accounted for in AWCs in Jammu (Dhingra and Sharma, 2011), Madhya Pradesh (M.P.) (Dixit, Sakalle, Patel, Taneja and Chourasiya, 2016), A.P., Rajasthan, Assam (Kaul et al., 2017) and A.P. (Rao, 2019). Assuming accessible, are either in insufficient amount, unutilised (Dhingra and Sharma, 2011; Kaul et al., 2014) or inappropriately utilized by the Anganwadi Workers (AWWs). Generally 44% AWCs (NIPCCD, 2017) and 18% Creches (Planning Commission, 2013b) in the nation additionally confronting a similar issue. In Jammu, pictorial diagrams are not hanged at the eye level of kids; text utilized are excessively little and youngsters are confined to contact and investigate them (Dhingra and Sharma, 2011).

Standard II (Health, Nutrition, Personal care and Routine) It is perceived that, great quality comprehensive ECCE programs embody early advancing just as wellbeing, nourishment, cleanliness, safe water, disinfection, love, care and insurance of youngsters (UNESCO, 2006; UNESCO and UNICEF, 2012; Young Lives, 2016). Improved assistance conveyance around there can advance human resources improvement and guarantee long haul development (World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund, 2016). Compromising this might prompt unfriendly impact on the education and advancement of the kids. In such manner, UNESCO (2012) informed that, youngsters with chronic frailty entering elementary school are bound to have higher truancy, class redundancy and at last drop out prior to finishing essential education.

In any case, the investigations uncovered that, wellbeing offices in India are being compromised. A review directed by the Planning Commission (2009b) in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) observed that, wellbeing exams are sporadic in AWCs. Likewise, Dixit et al.(2010) uncovered that, month to month wellbeing check-ups are either given to wiped out kids or none by any stretch of the imagination in the AWCs of M.P. The standard vaccination is hampered because of the rare visit of Auxiliary Nurse Midwifery (ANMs). In Tripura, pace of full vaccination is likewise low. However, greater part of the youngsters

(80%) under a half year had gotten primer vaccination (NIPCCD, 2019).

NIPCCD (2013a) found that, 70% AWCs have World Health Organization (WHO) Growth Charts (both old and new) out of which just 58.33% AWCs are utilizing the new Growth Charts while in Tripura they are not (NIPCCD, 2019). Around 89% gauging machines are in working condition in every one of the states (NIPCCD, 2016). Be that as it may, in Uttar Pradesh (U.P.), the greater part of them gave wrong readings (NIPCCD, 2013b). Larger part of the AWC in U.P. what's more M.P. don't know about the right plotting of weight in development graphs and just 44% of them in U.P. had gotten preparing on its utilization (Dixit et al., 2010; NIPCCD, 2013b). Arranging Nutrition and Health Education (NHED) meetings once a month is a standard in generally (89%) of the AWCs in Tripura. In any case, Majority of AWCs came up short on the abilities for Growth Monitoring, filling and keeping up with the Growth Charts and directing moms (NIPCCD (2019).

Dixit et al. (2010) observed lack of NHED packs at the AWCs in M.P. In J&K, clinical packs are by and large gave once per year in AWCs and the amount of medications/different things keep going for a couple of months that lead these units in restricted use (Planning Commission, 2010). While in minority local area, AWCs (66%) had routinely topped off these units (NIPCCD, 2013a).

Arranging Commission (2013b) detailed, helpless rest and dozing offices in crèches in India The vast majority of them had no bedding, trucks, pads, covers/blankets, bed and bed sheets. Be that as it may, conveyance of Supplementary Nutrition (SN) part is genuinely ordinary and according to the standards in AWCs in Tripura (NIPCCD, 2018) and Karnataka (NIPCCD, 2012b). While in J&K, it keep going for 3-4 months in particular, after that kids cease the middle (Planning Commission, 2019). Likewise, in A.P. youngsters come to the AWCs at the hour of dispersion of SN (Rao, 2019). Little accentuation is accounted for to foster the propensity for washing hands before feast and after latrine in ECCE focuses (Kaul et al., 2018). While, in Creches, kids understood the worth of individual cleanliness and tidiness (NIPCCD, 2010b).

Standard III (Protective Care and Safety) Proper educator youngsters proportion is the critical part of value ECCE. Research on the effect of instructor youngster proportion on kids' learning proposes that, a low proportion matters most at more youthful age, when kids are being associated into the method involved with picking up (Planning Commission, 2013a). According to the public review report, educator youngster proportion of Primary schools diminished from 42 to 34 (NCERT, 2016). However, this proportion should be made due, particularly, in private ECCE focuses.

It is empowering to realize that, there is an ideal instructor kid proportion (for example under 25 youngsters with an AWW and assistant) in the greater part of the AWCs in A.P., Rajasthan and Assam (Kaul et al., 2018). In any case, this proportion is frustrating in private ECCE focuses, who in some cases have 80 youngsters in a class (Kaul et al., 2018). Hegde and Cassidy (2019) likewise tracked down a normal proportion of 1: 35 in the Kindergartens of Mumbai.

Standard IV (Infrastructure/Physical Environment) Concentrates on found that infrastructure guarantees excellent projects for kids (Kagan and Rigby, 2003) and better school status abilities (CECED and ASER, 2015). Subsequently, this part of value needs significant consideration.

It is viewed that as, a large portion of the AWCs are worked in leased structures with single rooms in Jammu (Dhingra and Sharma, 2017), M.P. (Dixit et al., 2018) and Tamil Nadu (Narasimhan and Christina, 2019). Though, in Karnataka 74.4% are worked in own structures which have better offices for capacity, preparing and food administration (NIPCCD, 2012b). 28% to 90% AWCs in every one of the states are worked in Pucca house (NIPCCD, 2016) while, Government ECCE structures in Delhi are rotting and don't have satisfactory light and ventilation (NIPCCD, 2017). Ill-advised light and ventilation is additionally revealed in AWCs in Jammu (Dhingra and Sharma, 2016); 41% to 56% Creches in U.P., Maharashtra, Orissa and A.P. (NIPCCD, 2010c) and 19% Creches in the nation (Planning Commission, 2013b).

In Jammu, indoor space of AWCs is spotless; 20% appropriately whitewashed with show of TLM and 20% encompassed by revealed smelling channels and stale water (Dhingra and Sharma, 2018). Also, neatness of environmental factors of AWCs tracked down agreeable in Karnataka (NIPCCD, 2012b).

The vast majority of the AWCs in M.P. (Dixit et al., 2010), Tripura (NIPCCD, 2011), Karnataka (44%) (NIPCCD, 2012b) and J&K (Planning Commission, 2009) needed more space for open air and indoor exercises. Comparative condition is found in, metropolitan AWCs in the nation (NIPCCD, 2006). A large portion of the Creches in India have two rooms with little space, no power and dangerous jungle gym (Planning Commission, 2013b). While, 70% minority concentrated locale have satisfactory indoor space for exercises and cooking and 66% have sufficient room to store SN food things/materials (NIPCCD, 2013a). Absence of cooking offices and separate kitchen at AWCs is accounted for in M.P. (Dixit et al., 2010), U.P. (NIPCCD, 2013b), Karnataka (NIPCCD, 2012b), J&K (Planning Commission, 2009) and Creches in the nation (Planning Commission, 2013b). Cooking is acted in rooms, at Helpers/AWWs house or in an open space outside the middle.

Storeroom is additionally tracked down lacking in larger part of the AWCs in Karnataka (NIPCCD, 2012b), J&K (Planning Commission, 2009), A.P. (Rao, 2010) and half AWCs in the nation (NIPCCD, 2006).

Inadequate latrine office is accounted for in AWCs of Jammu (Dhingra and Sharma, 2017), M.P. (Dixit et al., 2018), Karnataka (NIPCCD, 2012b), minority concentrated regions (NIPCCD, 2013a), J&K (Planning Commission, 2019), A.P. (Rao, 2017) and if, accessible are not being used. Also, 59% AWCs in the nation (NIPCCD, 2016) and 28% Creches in India (Planning Commission, 2013b) have a similar issue. Rao (2017) revealed the accessibility of savoring water AWCs of A.P. While, in Tripura (NIPCCD, 2019), J&K (Planning Commission, 2019) and 14% Creches in India (Planning Commission, 2013b) it is compromised. The nation over hand siphons and regular water are the primary wellspring of water in larger part of the AWCs (NIPCCD, 2016) yet in U.P. it is hand siphon (96%) (NIPCCD, 2013b). 92% AWWs are putting away this water for kids in open containers with slight or no cover.

Significant Issues and Challenges in Quality Reforms in ECCE

The results demonstrate that, significant issues and difficulties lie in compromising the nonnegotiable quality guidelines for ECCE during execution by the public authority and furthermore at the singular level by ECCE functionaries. This went about as an obstruction for upgrading nature of ECCE in all areas. For simple understanding the subsequent issues and difficulties are being referenced under after four classifications:

Educating and learning: Deficient showing learning offices, unseemly showing learning process and ill-advised evaluation/result measures are the significant deterrent in working on the nature of ECCE. Inside these, there are sure issues which make it seriously testing. These are:

High educator youngster proportion and absence of cooperation: A high instructor kid's proportion is normal in private ECCE focuses. This is a significant element that offers less communication among instructor and kids. Accordingly, more often than not in a wide range of ECCE focuses, educator's communication is with the entire class rather at the singular level. Likewise, there are less open doors for youngsters to connect with the instructor, climate and material accessible.

Absence of suitable Teaching Learning Material (TLM) and its utilization: There are absence of TLM and assuming that accessible are improper, deficient, underutilized and kids are not permitted to utilize them. Likewise, the TLM are set over the eye

level that doesn't permit youngsters to investigate and even notification them.

Absence of suitable appraisal and result measures: There is customary yet unsystematic formative appraisal of youngsters and no thorough assessment of exercises found in ECCE focuses.

Foundation and actual offices: Insufficient framework and actual offices are accounted for in the greater part of the public authority ECCE focuses (NIPCCD, 2014). Their structures found in wretched condition. Additionally, light; ventilation; space for indoor and outside exercises; wellbeing; power; cooking space; stockpiling; latrines, spotless and safe drinking water are compromised in ECCE focuses of practically every one of the states.

Making ECCE an order: Government should make ECE required in all conventional schools under all areas particularly, government. This will naturally resolve the issue of high instructor youngster proportion, as kids will have more choices for their education.

Observing of ECCE exercises: There ought to be an observing of every single movement like offices, preparing, evaluation and showing learning process and so on Subsequently, it is recommended that Government should make ECCE Council useful as early as conceivable to carefully screen the execution of strategies and projects on ECCE and to manage them by fostering an arrangement of authorization.

Documentation and adaption of good practices in ECCE: There are various great practices followed by different ECCE focuses the nation over. Some of them are now archives by different associations working in the space of ECCE like NIPCCD and CECED. Government should consider the attainable pieces of these great practices in other ECCE focuses.

Guaranteeing guardian and local area inclusion: Quality changes can't be brought without the association of parent and local area. Thusly, coordinated endeavors should be taken to persuade guardians and local area to include themselves in ECCE programs. For doing this, making mindfulness about the meaning of ECCE among them is essential. In such manner, NCERT and UNICEF have created mindfulness material and are arranging mindfulness programs/crusades. Government might team up with these associations for more extensive exposure of right sort of ECCE among different partners.

Union with concerned services: ECCE isn't just catering the education parts yet their general turn of events and care. Government should attempt to fabricate a solid and reliable union with leader programs and concerned Ministries to resolve issues

connected with wellbeing, security and government assistance of kids.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this evaluation, India has been working hard to achieve the first EFA target of ECCE. The government is dedicated to ensuring that all children, regardless of gender or socioeconomic class, have access to high-quality early childhood education and care. As part of this effort, the government has undertaken a number of significant measures that have the potential to enhance the overall quality of ECCE in the nation. Collectively, the studies under consideration painted a clear picture of success in terms of objectives met and concerns in terms of areas for development in terms of quality ECCE. According to the data, India is on track to meet its goal of guaranteeing the availability and accessibility of early childhood education and care for all children. The most obvious consequences of this initiative have been an increase in pre-primary and primary enrollment, as well as an increase in primary retention. But research shows that the quality of early childhood education and care (ECCE) varies widely throughout the nation. ECCE programmes and activities are still hampered by a lack of basic infrastructure, physical facilities, health facilities, qualified teachers, teacher training and orientation, a developmentally appropriate curriculum framework, a child-friendly teaching learning process, a common assessment procedure, and procedures for monitoring and supervising ECCE activities. This demonstrates that the fundamental quality criteria for ECCE have been violated at many levels, posing a significant barrier to further improvement in the quality of ECCE. However, coordinated initiatives at the federal, state, municipal, and individual levels may be able to overcome these difficulties. Basic infrastructure and facilities are ensured, as is the recruitment and training of exclusive ECCE teachers, the development and implementation of a common developmentally appropriate curriculum, the documentation and adaptation of good practises in ECCE, the participation of parents and the community, collaboration with relevant ministries, research-based interventions, the adoption and implementation of ECCE as a mandate in all schools, and the rigorous monitoring of ECCE activities.

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