



# A Study of Early Childhood Care Education and NEP 2020

Guide: Dr. Manoj C. Shashtri

(Pro.) Department of Education  
Gujarat. University

Researcher: Rajput Sarojkumari J.

Department of Education  
Gujarat, University

## Abstract

Education is a dynamic process. It changes with time responding to the need of society. The changes in this system are very natural to occur and are essential also as when there is willingness to change there is hope for progress. The study throws light on the new trends needed to modernize our educational system with a view to meet the challenges. Education provides a learning platform for children to develop skills and other dimensions. According to Krishnamurti "There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning".

The National Education Policy 2020 is the first education policy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The new education policy is to develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper and creative imagination, with sound ethical moorings and values. A significant inclusion in the NEP is the focus on ECCE. Early Childhood Care and Education has raised to the top of the national policy agenda with recognition that ensuring educational success and attainment must be in the earliest years of schooling.

**Key words:** Education, early, childhood, care, National Education Policy, learning

## Concept of Early Childhood Care and Education (Ecce)

The concept of ECCE is of recent origin in India. It did not find any mention in the educational literature till the formulation of the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986. According to the Article 45 as amended in 2002, the constitution of India stated; "The state shall Endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years" (Govt. of India, 2007).

Pre- School or Early Childhood Care and Education refers to a wide range of programs, all aimed at the physical, cognitive and social development of children before they enter primary school- theoretically from birth to about age 7 or 8. It is a preparatory stage for primary education, to ensure better foundation for all round development. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) makes a positive contribution to children long term development and learning by facilitating an enabling and stimulating environment in these foundation stages of lifelong learning. It requires that young children be provided opportunities and experiences that lead to their all-round development. Alongside with health and nutrition, learning is also equally important. Learning at the early stage must be directed by the child's interests and priorities, and should be contextualized by her experiences rather than being structured formally. Playing, Music, Art and other activities using local materials along with opportunities for speaking, listening and expressing themselves, and informal interaction are essential components of Early Childhood Care and Education.

## Objectives of Early Childhood Care and Education

The aim of Early Childhood Care and Education is to facilitate optimum development of the child's full potential and lay the foundation for all round development and lifelong learning. While parents and home have the main responsibility of the welfare of the child, a strong partnership between the community and the ECCE centres is important for the well-being of the child and in achieving the following objectives:

The Child Care Committee (1963-64) under the chairperson of Smt. B.Tarabai listed



## The following objectives of preschool

Taking very great care of the physical development of the child in the very early years in terms of health, nutrition, posture and capacities for activities.

Developing habits of cleanliness in the pre-school child at home as well as in the school.

Providing adequate nourishment in kind and quantity for growth of vigorous healthy bodies.

Providing facilities for training and exercise in personal cleanliness and hygienic habits.

Providing playground activities and hand work activities necessary to develop all the skills of the child to deal with the environment.

Providing opportunities for the emotional development of the child.

Providing opportunities for developing, good behaviour patterns.

Providing suitable environment for the development of the senses on which depend the total mental life and the psychological health of the child.

The Education Commission (1966) has suggested objectives for pre-school level in India, these are:

To develop in the child good health habits and to build up basic skills, necessary for personal adjustment such as dressing, toilet habits, eating, washing, cleaning etc. To develop desirable social attitudes and manners and to encourage healthy group participation, making the child sensitive to the rights and privileges of others.

1. To develop emotional maturity by guiding the child to express, understand, accept and control his feelings and emotions.
2. To develop in the child a good physique, adequate muscular coordination and basic motor skill.
3. To develop social attitudes and manners, to encourage healthy group participation and making the child sensitive to the rights and privileges of being a member of a social group and to encourage him to cooperate, share and take care of the property belonging to him as well as others.
4. To encourage aesthetic appreciation in the child,
5. To stimulate in the child the beginning of intellectual curiosity concerning his immediate environment to help him understand the world in which he lives and to foster new interests opportunities to explore, investigate and experiment.
6. To encourage in the child independence and creativity by providing him with sufficient opportunities for self-expression.
7. To focus on play and the individuality of the child by recognizing the holistic nature of the child development like nutrition, health, social, mental, moral, physical, emotional and educational development.
8. To discourage formal methods and introduction of 3Rs at pre-primary stage.

## Principles of Early Learning

- 1) Learning commences from birth: From infancy children are mentally and physically active. They learn through all their senses and stimulations.
- 2) Children construct cognizance: They construct their own erudition or working models while they actively engage in their environment and through reiterated interactions with people and materials. This simply denotes that children touch, taste, shake things etc. to ascertain what transpires and learn about things in their environment.
- 3) Children's curiosity and opiate to learn: Children are curious alacritous to learn. They have an intrinsically need to make a sense of their experiences and learn about the whole around them.
- 4) Children learn through play: Play is central to the child's celebrity and development. Children's spontaneous play provides opportunities for exploration, experimentation, manipulation and quandary solving that are essential for constructing erudition. Play contributes to the development of representational thought. Play should be process oriented and not product oriented.
- 5) Child development and learning are characterized by individual variation: No two children are same. Each child has an individual pattern and timing of magnification and development as well as individual style of cognition. Children's personal, family experiences and cultural background additionally vary. Children's learning reflects a recurring spiral that commences in vigilance, and peregrinates to exploration, to inquiry, and conclusively, to application. Any incipient learning by children commences in vigilance, which is engendered from their experiences with objects, events, or people and ends with utilization, where children are able to utilize what they have learnt

- 6) for multiple purposes and apply their cognition to incipient situations. At this stage children start exploring the next level of information and the spiral perpetuates.
- 7) Children need to experience prosperity more than failure to compose a positive self- concept: The experiences should be orchestrated in accordance with the maturational level of the children. When children have confidence in themselves, they do preponderant. They are agog to endeavor incipient and harder things; they gain incipient skills and become more confident and capable.
- 8) Children develop holistically and benefit from integrated experiences and inculcation: Learning and development of children takes place in totality. All the domains of development i.e. physical, motor, cognitive, language, socio- personal, emotional and ingenious and aesthetic appreciation are interrelated and take place simultaneously

### **New Education Policy 2020: Foundational Stage**

- 1) Revised School structure: In the new 5+ 3+ 3+4 structure a strong base of ECCE from age 3 is included to promote overall learning, development and wellbeing year 3 of ECCE would be Balvatika or preparatory class
- 2) Vision of ECCE: ECCE ideally consists of flexible, multifaceted, multilevel, play- based, activity-based and inquiry based education. The overall aim of ECCE will be to attain optimal outcomes in domains of physical and motor development, cognitive development; socio- emotional and ethical development; cultural/ artistic development of communication and early language, literacy and numeracy.
- 3) Foundational years: The Foundational Stage will consist of five years (3-8 years) of flexible, multilevel, play/ activity based learning and the curriculum and pedagogy of ECCE.
- 4) Medium of Instruction: Wherever possible of MOI until at least Grade5 but preferably till grade 8 and beyond will be home language/ MT/RL. This will be followed by both public and private schools. Exposure too many languages- multilingual environment. □ Bilingual approaches: Teachers will be encouraged to use bilingual approaches including bilingual teaching learning materials with those students whose home language may be different from MOI.
- 5) Medium of Instruction: Wherever possible of MOI until at least Grade5 but preferably till grade 8 and beyond will be home language/ MT/RL. This will be followed by both public and private schools. Exposure too many languages- multilingual environment.
- 6) Bilingual approaches: Teachers will be encouraged to use bilingual approaches including bilingual teaching learning materials with those students whose home language may be different from MOI.

### **Role of ICDS ( Integrated Child development services) in Ecce**

ECCE requires that children be provided opportunities and experiences that lead to their all- round physical, gregarious as well as emotional development. It additionally requires that learning at this early stage must be guided by the child's fascinations and priorities, and should be contextualized by his/ her experiences rather than being structured formally, ECCE additionally involves the engenderment of an enabling environment for children that is affluent, sanctions children to explore, experiment and express themselves and one that is embedded in gregarious cognations that gives a sense of warmth, security and trust. ECCE has positive effects on children's continuation into primary school system as withal in developing psycho-convivial and cognitive competencies among children. The Integrated Child development services (ICDS) Schemes is one of the flagship programs of the Government of India and represents one of the world's largest and unique and programs for early childhood care and development. It is the foremost symbol of country's commitment to its children and nursing mothers, as a response to the challenge of providing pre-school non- formal education on one hand and breaking the vicious cycle of malnutrition, morbidity, reduced learning capacity and mortality on the other. The beneficiaries under the Scheme are children in the age group of 0-6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers.

## Curricula of Ecce NEP 2020

- The education shall be all round, play based, integrated, experiential, flexible and contextual.
- Play as the basis of learning
- -Arts as the basis of education
- Recognition of the special features of children's thinking
- Experience of familiarity and challenge in everyday routines
- Mix of formal and informal interaction
- Blend of the textual (basic literacy and numeracy) and the cultural
- Use of local materials, arts, and knowledge
- Developmentally appropriate practice, flexibility and plurality, Health, well- being, and healthy habits. The curriculum address the following interrelated domains of holistic development through an integrated and play based approach
- Physical and Motor Development: Gross motor skills; coordination of fine muscles with dexterity; eye hand coordination; sense of balance, physical co-ordination and awareness of space and direction; nutrition, health status and practices.
- Language Development: Listening and comprehension; oral skills/ speaking and communicating; vocabulary development; pre- literacy/ emergent literacy skills phonological awareness; print awareness and concepts; letter- sound correspondence; recognition of letters; building words and sentences and early writing. Introduction to language of school transaction.
- Cognitive Development: Development of various concepts including pre number and number concepts and operations (knowledge and skills related to comparing, classification, seriation, conservation of space and quantity, one to one correspondence; counting) spatial sense; patterns and estimations in measurement; data handling; skills related to sequential thinking, critical thinking, observing, reasoning and problem solving; and knowledge about concepts and physical, social and biological environment.
- Socio- Personal and Emotional development: Development of self-concept; self-control; life skills/ self- help skills; habit formation; initiative and curiosity; engagement and persistence; cooperation; compassion; social relationships; group interaction; pro- social behaviour; expressing feelings; accepting other feelings.
- Sensorial Development: Development of the five senses through visual, auditory and kinaesthetic experiences. → Development and Creative and Aesthetic Appreciation: Exploring different art forms, develop dispositions, expression and appreciation for artistic, dance/ drama and musical activities.

## Strengthening Ecce Facilities

- Universe access to quality ECCE with special focus on socio- economically disadvantaged districts in phased manner
- ECCE to be delivered through a significantly expanded system consisting of:
  - Stand- alone Anganwadis
  - Anganwadis co- located with primary schools
  - Pre Primary schools covering atleast 5 to 6 years co- located with existing primary schools
  - Stand- alone pre- schools Strengthening Anganwadi Ensuring Quality Education
- Anganwadi centres to be strengthened with highquality infrastructure, play equipment and well trained workers/ teachers.
- To ensure smooth transition from Anganwadi centres to Primary Schools, Children to take tours of their local primary schools.
- To be fully integrated into school complexes and Anganwadi children parents and teachers to participate in school programmes. Setting Strong Foundation for Preparatory Class
- Before the age of 5, every child to attend a 'preparatory class' or 'Balalaika' (i.e, before class1), which has an EECE qualified teacher
- The mid- day meal programme to be extended to preparatory classes in primary class
- Health check-ups and growth monitoring to be made available to students of Anganwadi and primary schools.
- NCERT is developing a play based learning package with a focus on developing cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities and early literacy and numeracy.

## Suggestion to Improve the Quality of Early Education

In India We can improve the quality of Early Childhood Education by first acknowledging the need and importance of Early Childhood Education. Only once we understand its importance and attach certain value to it, and making it beneficial and a must for each and every child. Early childhood Education for majority of the parents means reading, writing and competing at an early age. They don't understand that early education care is about developing life skills. It is socio- emotional development which takes place first, which is not understood by many.

The following suggestions are as follows:

- A nation- wide campaign needs to be started about the importance of ECE.
- Focus first on children's safety, health and happiness.
- Parent education programme on child care practices, nutritious diet, early education need to be taken up.
- Parents need to be involved in certain school and home activities.

## Conclusion

In this way, Early Childhood Care and Education is one of the most valuable investments a nation can make to promote human resource development, reduce gender inequality and social cohesion, while reducing the costs for remedial programmes. For disadvantages children, such programmes play an important role in compensating for their hardships as well as in combating educational inequalities. Thus, ECCE is education that is fundamental to an individual's development; it has the ability to significantly affect the later years of an individual's life as well as the nation. The sole purpose of ECCE is to help children live their lives.

## References

1. Bharadwaj, Krishna, Sree, (2016) Early Childhood Education in India: The need for strategic extension of ICDS in Bhan, Sujata, et.al. Inclusive Education A.P.H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, pp. 39-49
2. Behera, Jagabandhu, Samal, Rebati (2017) Quality in Education: An Overview in Mete, Jayanta, Pradhan, Kumar, Susanta, Higher Education, A.P.H Publishing, New Delhi
3. C. Stephen White, Mick Coleman (2000) Early Childhood Education- Building a philosophy for teaching, by Prentice Hall, Pearson Education, New Jersey Columbus, Ohio
4. Dhankar, Neerja (2016) Education In Emerging Indian Society, A.P.H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, pp. 133
5. Kaul, Venita (2020) ECCE in National Education Policy (NEP: 2020): Addressing the Learning Continuum , Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.in>
6. Kaul, Ventika (2020) Implementing ECCE and Foundational Learning Recommendations of NEP (2020): Opportunities and Implications, Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.in>
7. Kim, G.J, Umayahara, M. (2015) Early Childhood Care and Education: Building the Foundation for Lifelong Learning and the Future of the Nations of Asia and the Pacific, International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy, Vol.4, No.2, 1-13, Retrieved from <https://www.ijceep.springeropen.com>
8. Kumar, Panda, Pratap. (2017). Childhood and Growing Up, A.P.H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, pp. 21- 22
9. Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Curricular Framework, Retrieved from <https://wcd.nic.in>
10. Ministry of Human Resource Development (2020), National Education Policy 2020, Government of India, Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.in>
11. Mishra, L, (2016) Early Childhood Care and Education, A.P.H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi
12. Mishra, R. C. (2017) Early Childhood Care and Education, A.P.H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi
13. Mishra, R.C (2017) Educational Research and Development, A.P.H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi
14. Mishra, R.C (2017), Health and Nutrition Education, A.P.H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, pp. 63

14. Panda, Kumar, Pratab (2017), Contemporary India and Education, A.P.H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, pp. 91

