

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The education commission, 1964-66 has stated, “While the development of physical resources is a means to an end, that of human resources is an end in itself; without it even the development of physical resources is not possible”. Education is always considered as one of the powerful instruments for developing human resources of the country.

Education is a lifelong process whose objectives are no longer limited to schools but has started from the day a child is born.

*Many of the things we need can wait  
The child cannot  
Right now, is the time his bones are being formed  
His blood is being made  
And, his senses are being developed  
To him we cannot answer  
‘Tomorrow’  
His name is ‘Today’  
-Gabriel Mistral*

It is true that the needs of a child cannot wait. Swami Dayanand has said- “It is the highest duty of parents, teachers and relatives to adorn children with good education, noble character, refined manners and amiable temper. Such is the need for early childhood education and care.

We all know that learning process of child begins as soon as he is born. Some scientist even claim that this process actually begins at conception itself and continues during its term in the womb. Perhaps they may be right.

When one reads scriptures like the Mahabharata, which embodies the world of knowledge, one comes across the stories that carry the seed of this truth. Story of Abhimanyu is the most well-known example. One day, restless and unable to sleep, Subhadra asks Arjun to tell her a story. Arjun recounts the story of a trapped warrior fighting the “Chakravyuha”, a difficult military formation. He stops mid-way as Subhadra doses off to sleep and the child in the womb asks him to continue, whereupon Arjuna chides him gently saying it is

too young to know the answer right now, and what happened later in the Mahabharata story is known to all.

The first responsibility of the child is of parents and then comes the preschools where they spent their early years of life getting the first-hand experiences and try to explore the world around them with the help of teachers. It is here where the growth and development of child takes place in his/her early years. Therefore, it is necessary to know about preschools and preschool education.

### **1.1 PRESCHOOL EDUCATION AND ECCE TERMINOLOGIES:**

**Preschool** is defined as any establishment or arrangement providing early childhood care and education which is expected to carry out activities for the promotion of all round development, care and school readiness of young children for a prescribed amount of time on a regular basis and is recognized by an academic authority.

It would include all preschools that are established, owned and funded by:

1. Central Government, Appropriate Government or local bodies.
2. Voluntary organizations and non-governmental "not-for-profit," sector.
3. Private or "for-profit" sector and
4. Factories, mines, plantations, and similar establishments as per statutory obligations under the prevailing labor laws (CABE Report, 2013).

These would cover preschools referred to by all nomenclatures such as *Anganwadi*, *Balwadi*, nursery, Preschool, Preparatory, Pre-Primary, LKG, UKG, pre-nurseries, play centers, creches, *BalVatikas* etc. Wherein, the term '**Prescribed Time**' would mean where a pre-school provides educational activities between 3 to 4 hours every day and extended day care facility in addition. The timings should be aligned with elementary school's timings.

**Young children** are defined as children between the ages of 3 and 6 years of age (starting with 3-year olds to the completion of 6 years or the time the child is admitted in the elementary school). **Academic Authority** means an authority notified by the Appropriate Government under the RTE Act.

**Preschool education** is a term used in common phrasing to denote a variety of early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes that deliver opportunities for the

children's quality care and education between the age of two and six years. It is viewed in a very broad perspective and encompasses all aspects related to children's development and education. In India, the term is used interchangeably with early childhood education (ECE) and Pre-primary education and covers within its ambit a variety of Nursery and Kindergarten school as well as government sponsored programmes like *Balwadi and Anganwadis*. The demand for such ECCE programmes has increased in the recent past, as more and more mothers have entered the paid labor force. Working parents also choose these programmes for education and developmental reasons. (Sharma, 2006)

**The nomenclature and definitions of various concepts** related to early years include *Early Childhood Education (ECE)* programmes, which are 'preschool education-focused' programmes aimed at 3–6-year olds (as seen in nurseries, kindergartens, preparatory schools, etc.). These are often part of a primary school. *Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)* retains the same educational drive but enlarges its possibility to include the care component, including care and early stimulation for 0–3-year olds, through various crèches and home-based parent education. *Early Childhood Development (ECD) and also Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)* constitute a more holistic and integrated concept of programming, which is in line with that of the synergistic and the interdependent relationship between health, nutrition, and psychosocial development or education, and addresses the all-round development of the child. Programmes of ECCD or ECD normally take a life-cycle approach, as in the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in India, and target, in addition to the child, pregnant and lactating mothers and even adolescent girls. (Position paper, ECCE, 2006)

## **1.2 OBJECTIVES OF PRESCHOOLS**

The three broad objectives of ECCE given by NCF-2005 are as follows:

- ❑ Holistic development of the child to enable him/her to realize his/her maximum potential.
- ❑ Preparation for schooling and
- ❑ Providing support services for women and girls.

Objectives of Early Childhood Education given by Curriculum Draft 2012:

The ECCE aims to smoothen the process of development of the children's full potential and place the foundation of holistic development and lifelong learning. All this can be achieved by ensuring that the child:

- ❑ Develops a positive self-concept.
- ❑ Establish a robust foundation for a good physical health.
- ❑ Inculcate good health habits and life skills or self-help skills necessary for personal and social adjustment.
- ❑ Enhance communication skills, verbal and non- verbal that would facilitate fluency of expression of thoughts and feelings and clarity in speech.
- ❑ Develop a ground work for higher order thinking and reasoning i.e. development of five senses, concepts and cognitive skills.
- ❑ Develop emotional maturity by enhancing the expression, understanding, acceptance and control of feelings and emotions in a child.
- ❑ Inculcation of values, social attitudes and manners that are important in child's socio-cultural context and to make them sensitive to the rights and privileges of others.
- ❑ Develop independence, aesthetic appreciation and creativity by providing child with enough opportunities for self-expression and active exploration, investigation and experimentation.
- ❑ Make a smooth transition from preschool to primary through development of emergent literacy and school readiness.

Thus, both the policies are talking of holistic development wherein the child develops socially, mentally, emotionally, physically etc. The researcher here is concerned with the objectives that refers to the socio-emotional development i.e. Development of a positive self-concept, developing self-help skills for personal-social adjustment. Inculcating values, social attitudes and manners, becoming sensitive to others and development of emotional maturity. Development of independence, aesthetic appreciation and creativity etc.

The Parents and Teachers have to be sensitive to individual difference and pace of development of children when helping children grow and learn. Thus, it is important to know the Characteristics of the preschoolers which are as follows:

### **1.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRESCHOOLERS**

#### **1. 3 years old:**

- ❑ Physically, the three-year-old is independent in most routine activities like brushing teeth, taking bath, toilet management and eating.
- ❑ The child's large muscles have increased in strength and coordination, but lack agility.
- ❑ The ability to co-ordinate small muscles as well as eye and hand coordination increases.
- ❑ Three-year-old is a talkative child as long abilities increase during this period.
- ❑ The child's conversation is a collective monologue and the child may not express his\her thoughts in continuity with ongoing conversation but will speak his\her thoughts irrespective of the topic of conversation.
- ❑ The child is verbal enough to express basic needs and ideas and is extremely fond of listening to stories, songs and music.
- ❑ However, the attention span is limited and children in this age group prefer to engage in a variety of activities for a brief period of time.
- ❑ The child enjoys participation in activities and assisting in small chores, constantly seeking adult attention approval, guidance and interaction.
- ❑ The child likes to play with peers but may not interact actively and generally indulges in second plan.

#### **2. 4 Years old:**

- ❑ At four, the child is more capable of managing himself and independently satisfying his physical needs.
- ❑ The child needs little assistance in eating, bowel control, moving, climbing etc.
- ❑ The child uses proper language to interact with others, ask questions and make known feelings, needs, and ideas.
- ❑ In fact, the four-year-old can be very attention seeking may show off given the opportunities and may be aggressive and loud in making his presence felt
- ❑ The child has developed a definite personality and can make his own decisions in daily chores. The child's gross motor movement is well coordinated.
- ❑ The child has better control over fiber muscle movement and can hold chalks/crayons, blocks, pencils etc to draw the paint and use scissors for cutting.

- ❑ The four-year-old child enjoys Peer Company. The child is rapidly learning to play cooperatively with playmates of his age.
- ❑ The child uses realistic props, using tools, utensils and enjoys dramatic play. This signifies development of larger attention span and broader interests.

### **3. years old:**

- ❑ Generally, five-year-old child has good physical control. He can throw, jump, catch, skip, and use scissors and crayons with precision.
- ❑ The child is ready to begin learning the 3 R's since he can also remember and understand the sequence of things, numbers and alphabets.
- ❑ The child command over language is comprehensive and is used to express feelings, ideas and complying with requests.
- ❑ Attention span has increased considerably and so has eye hand as well as fine muscle co-ordination.
- ❑ Thus, the five-year-old is independent, dependable and self-assured.
- ❑ He likes to get constant approval and assurance from others.
- ❑ The child enjoys playing with same sex and age children.
- ❑ Play is sustained, cooperative and complex and may last from one day to another.

(NCERT Position Paper, 2006)

When we talk of developmental characteristics of preschoolers it is important to understand the physical, social, cognitive and emotional development of children.

## **1.4 MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

### **1.4.1 Concept of Development**

Development has four basic elements (Aggarwal, 2009):

- ❑ Growth (refers to change in size).
- ❑ Maturation (involves qualitative change).
- ❑ Experiences.
- ❑ Social transmission (learning through language, schooling or training by parents).

Child development refers to the biological and psychological and emotional changes that occur in human beings between birth and the end of adolescence, as the individual

progresses from dependency to increasing autonomy (Kail& Robert, 2011). The child development is divided into age related developmental periods like Childhood which lasts from six to twelve, and early childhood (preschoolers) which lasts from two to six years.

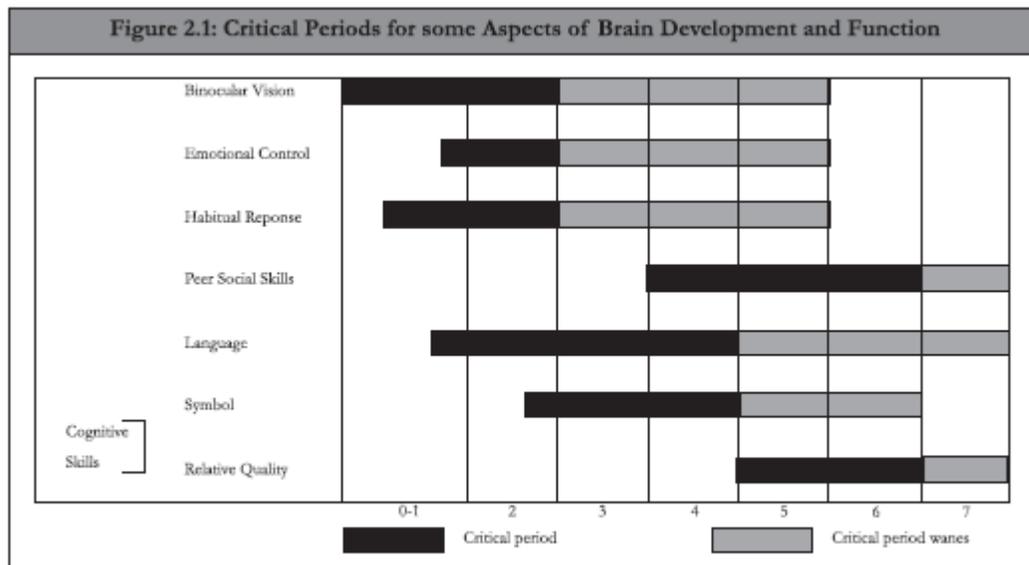
**1.4.1.1 Early Childhood (from 2-6 yrs.):** This is the most important and impressionistic period of child’s life. The characteristics of children in this period have been given above. They learn their first lesson of citizenship at home and school. They develop the instinct of curiosity and love the company of peers and make-believe plays.

**1.4.1.2 Educational implications of early childhood:** This period of child’s life is of great educational significance.

A Child's Brain is made of three main parts: the **forebrain**, midbrain, and hindbrain. The **forebrain** consists of the **cerebrum**, thalamus, and hypothalamus (part of the limbic system). The **Cerebrum**: The cerebrum is also called cortex and is the largest part of human brain. It is associated with higher brain functions of thought and action.

The cerebral cortex consists of four sections which are called "lobes": **the frontal lobe, parietal lobe, occipital lobe, and temporal lobe.**

**Figure 1.1**



Source: *Reaching Out to the Child, HDS, World Bank, 2004.*

- ❑ Frontal Lobe: is associated with reasoning, planning, emotions, movement, parts of speech, and problem solving (it mainly develops in between 3 to 6 yrs. and during puberty).
- ❑ Parietal Lobe: is mainly associated with orientation, movement, recognition and perception of stimuli (develops from 6 to puberty).
- ❑ Occipital Lobe: is mainly associated with visual processing.
- ❑ Temporal Lobe: is associated with perception and recognition of auditory stimuli, memory, and speech (it develops from 6 to puberty).

Growth rates are generally linked to how the brain is growing which includes both the size of growth in neurons (grey matter) as well as ‘white matter’ which is the myelinated axons.

**While the brain’s size increases fourfold between birth and around 5–6 years**, the brain continues to ‘reorganize’ itself via the pattern-making connections (neurons) built up on experience. Between the ages of 3–6 years the most rapid growth takes place in the frontal lobe areas but from around age 6 to puberty, the spurt in growth of grey matter shifts to the temporal and parietal lobes followed by a big spurt just as puberty starts in the frontal lobes again. So, Between the ages of 3–6 years, the most rapid growth takes place in the frontal lobe areas which is associated with reasoning, planning, parts of speech, movement, emotions, and problem solving. This part is mainly said to be associated with social and emotional side. So, if one focus on these areas of the children within this age period of 3-6 then one can prepare them for life time.

It has been correctly held by Watson that **“the scope and intensity of learning during this period exceeds that of any other period of development.”** (Aggarwal, 2009)

According to J.C. Aggarwal (2009), following should be kept in mind by Parents and Teachers while planning the education of the child at this stage.

- ❑ Provision of healthy environment
- ❑ Rational treatment
- ❑ Satisfaction of curiosity
- ❑ Learning by doing
- ❑ Dynamic methods of teaching

Development and Learning goes hand in hand and cannot be separated from each other. In this early childhood stage learning depends on development and vice versa.

### **1.4.2 Learning:**

According to Boaz, “Learning is a process by which the individual acquires various habits, knowledge and attitudes that are necessary to meet the demands of life in general.” As per encyclopedia of educational research, *“learning refers to the growth of interests, knowledge and skills and to transfer these to new situations.”* Gates define learning as, *“learning is the modification of behavior through experience and training.”* (Ahmad, 2011)

According to R.S. Wordsworth, *“any activity can be called learning so far as it develops the individual (in any respect good or bad) and makes his behaviour and experience different from what that would otherwise have been.”*

#### **1.4.2.1 Principles of Early Learning**

- ❑ Learning begins from birth. From infancy children are physically and mentally active. They learn through all their senses and stimulations. But now it is known that learning begins prior birth. (Moon et.al.2012)
- ❑ Children construct their own knowledge. They construct knowledge while they are actively engaged in their environment and through interactions with people and materials again and again. This simply means that they touch, feel, taste, shake things etc. to find out what happens and learn about things in their environment.
- ❑ Children’s curiosity and desire to learn. Children are curious and eager to learn. They have an inherent need to make sense of their experiences and learn about the world around them.
- ❑ Children learn through play. Play is at the source of the child’s well-being and development Children’s unprompted play provides opportunities for experimentation, exploration, manipulation and problem solving. These are essential for building of knowledge. Play leads to the development of realistic thought.
- ❑ Child development and learning are characterized by individual variation. No two children are same. Every child has its own individual pattern and timing of growth and development as well as their own individual styles of learning. Children’s personal experiences, family and social experiences and cultural backgrounds also vary.
- ❑ Children’s learning reflects a recurring spiral that begins in awareness, and moves to exploration, to inquiry, and finally, to application.

- ❑ Children need to experience success more than failure to form a positive self-concept: The experiences should be planned in accordance with the maturational level of the children, such that they are challenging but achievable, so as to enhance self-confidence. The children's self-confidence helps them to do better. They are eager to try new and harder things through which they gain novice skills and become more confident and capable.
- ❑ Children develop holistically and benefit from integrated experiences and education: Learning and development of children takes place in totality. All the domains of development i.e. physical, motor, language, cognitive, socio-personal, emotional and creative and aesthetic appreciation are interrelated and take place simultaneously. (Early Childhood curriculum draft, 2012)

Therefore, where the Learning is modification of behaviors, training, and acquisition of skills through various experiences; development is the physical, psychological and emotional changes in a child and is the product of maturation and learning. So, both go hand in hand at this stage. Development and learning occurs as children interact with people and objects in the environment. Therefore, adults can foster learning and development by making the environment more supportive. This involves creating a healthy setting and providing space, materials, and opportunities to help children learn through play, whether at home or elsewhere, it involves enabling parents, as well as other care givers, to encourage, nurture, stimulate talk and play with their children. Children learn and develop better if they are actively involved in the learning process. It is important for them to have opportunities to construct their own knowledge through exploration interaction with materials and imitation of role models. Opportunities for active involvement should be abundant, whether at home in everyday chores or in more organized settings outside the home. When we talk of the development of the child, there are various aspects of the development of the child:

- ❑ Biological development
- ❑ Physical development
- ❑ Cognitive development
- ❑ Social development and
- ❑ Emotional development

Physical, mental, social and emotional development and learning are related, and progress in one area affects progress in the others (Rao, 1996). Therefore, if we bring positive change in one, it would bring change in overall development.

### **1.5 MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:**

By social development we mean the development of an individual in such a way that he becomes an efficient and useful member of the society to which he belongs. He conforms to the culture of the society of which he is a member (Aggarwal, 2005). An individual, by nature is a human being who cannot live in isolation. He is compelled by biological, psychological and social needs to live in a group or society. The process of the development of such qualities which bring desirable changes in the social behavior of an individual is referred to a social development or socialization of the child.

E.B. Hurlock (1981) notes: “*Social development means the attaining of maturity in social setting*”.

H.E. Garret is of the view that “*Socialization or Social development is the process whereby the biological individual is converted into a human person.*”

L.D. Crow&A. Crow stated that, “*Social Development means acquisition or the ability to behave in accordance with social expectations*” (Aggarwal, 2005).

Preschool years are the most important years for social development in young children. The very significant forms of social skills that are necessary for successful adjustment start appearing in this stage. At this stage the basic social attitudes and tempers establish in young children. Social skills gained by the preschoolers are important in determining what sort of adult they will become. Pleasant social experiences encourage them to repeat their experiences and in contrast, unpleasant experiences tend to discourage them to repeat the same. **Pleasant experiences develop good social behavior like curiosity, cooperation, sympathy, sharing etc. unpleasant experiences develop unsocial behavior like negativism, quarreling, aggression, prejudice and teasing.**

But both the types of experiences are important and responsible for their proper personality development and also to know the socialization process of the young children. The early behaviors will determine how the children will adjust in the later years of his life when his environment becomes broader (Singh, 1997).

Sociologists, preschool workers and child psychologists have considered curiosity,

cognition, language, biological factors as parameters of social development. Some of the social behavior patterns exhibited by children are Imitation, Sympathy, Empathy, Cooperation, Rivalry, Social approval, Sharing and Attachment.

Some of the unsocial behavior patterns exhibited by children are as follows:

Negativism, Ascendant behavior, Aggressiveness, Selfishness, Egocentrism, Sex Antagonism, Destructiveness and Prejudice (Hurlock, 1981)

## **1.6 MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

To understand the meaning of emotional development, it is necessary to know the meaning of emotions. Etymology is derived from the Latin word 'Emovere' which means to 'stir up' 'to agitate' or 'to excite'.

Crow & Crow (1973), stated that an emotion *is an affective experience that goes along with generalized inner adjustment, mental and psychological stimulated or stirred up states in the individual, and that exhibits itself in his own behavior.*

R.S. Woods worth (1945) stated that *Emotions is a stimulated or stirred up state of feeling that is the way it appears to the individual himself. It is a disturbed muscular and glandular activity as seen by an external observer.* (Aggarwal, 2005)

The role of emotions is very vital in the personal and social development of an individual. An emotionally stable individual leads a happy, healthy and peaceful life. He is at ease with himself and his surroundings. On the other hand, an individual who is emotionally disturbed becomes a problem for himself as well as for others. Continuous emotional disturbance affects the individual's growth and development. Therefore, the development of emotions is extremely important for the harmonious development of the personality of an individual. Emotions influence all the aspects of an individual's personality. Proper training and education will go a long way to enable the children to control their emotions and obtain mental balance and stability. Emotions are the prime motive forces of thought and conduct and their control is very important. It has been rightly said that, "to keep one's emotions under control and be able to conceal them is considered a mark of strong character."

Early age children experience most of the emotions normally experienced by adults. However, the stimuli that give rise to these emotions and the ways in which children express these emotions are markedly different. Some of the common emotions found in

children are: Anger, Fear, Jealousy, Curiosity, Joy, Grief and Affection (Hurlock, 1981) According to Goodenough & Tyler (1959), one of the most striking features of the emotional changes that occur during this period is the increasing relationship of emotions to social stimuli and situations. One can note this both in anger as well as fear. When a child cries by halting again and again in between s/he watches for the elder's response or attention. Hence social and emotional aspects are quite related to each other and hence shape, the personality of a child. Hence the researcher tends to study both the aspects together.

### **1.7 Origin of the concept of Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL)**

Cognitive theorists believed intelligence was a single entity and children were a blank slate that could be trained to learn anything. Gardner (1943), gave **Multiple Intelligence Theory**, he believed intelligence is made up of multiple intelligences. His theory states humans have a unique blend of intelligences that cannot be measured by IQ tests. He challenged Piaget's development stages. Unlike Piaget, Gardner saw that at any one time a child may be at very different stages. Multiple intelligence theory: Gardner formulated a list of seven intelligences (Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Musical, Kinesthetic, Spatial Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, and Intrapersonal Intelligence). The first two particularly valued in schools. The following three usually associated with the arts and the last two with personal intelligences.

**Emotional intelligence:** Mayer and Salovey (1997) offered the first formulation of a concept they called "Emotional Intelligence." The emotions play a part in altering thinking, sparked the introduction of a concept focusing on relationship of emotions and thinking, which was referred as Emotional Intelligence. Emotional Intelligence (EI) was defined as *"the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote an intellectual growth"* (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Daniel Goleman in 1995, reported a mixed model according to which EI is an array of various competencies and skills that drive leadership performance. He gave five main EI constructs; self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy and motivation. Not soon enough the Goleman constructs were embraced by educators, in the form of programs in "social and emotional learning or SEL. EI has provided theoretical platform for SEL. The

credit goes to Goleman for introducing it, that today many schools are getting positive outcomes and benefits from SEL Programmes (Goetz, 2009).

### **1.8 The Major Theories of Child Development Associated with SEL of Preschoolers (Directly or Indirectly)**

The following are just a few of the many child development theories that have been proposed by theorists and researchers. The researcher has found them to be of great significance and directly or indirectly playing a major role in Social and emotional development of preschoolers.

**a) Psychoanalytic Child Development Theories: Freud (1949)** concerned itself primarily with the child's social and emotional development and according to him an individual's personality is built around his early childhood experiences. Accordingly, children should be encouraged to delve in self-initiated activities where they would work out their love, hostility, anxiety, aggression, sympathy, fantasy and fear in a warm and permissive atmosphere. **Erik Erikson** gave the stage theory of development, but his theory covered entire human growth throughout the entire human life. According to Erikson, each stage of development was fixated on overcoming a conflict. For example, the primary conflict during the preschool period is, for 2-4 yrs. it is autonomy vs. shame or doubt and for 4-5yrs, initiative vs guilt. Success or failure in handling the conflicts at each stage can have an impact on overall functioning. For example, during the adolescent stage, failure to develop an identity may result in role confusion. So, in the Stage 3: Initiative Versus Guilt (Roughly 4 to 5 Years), the child in this tries to find out what kind of a person he is going to be. S/he tries to identify herself/himself with parents who are powerful and big. They try to be like them. They shake the world around them and are active, moving all around, into others ears and physically attacking. This initiative is supported by advances in mobility, physical dexterity, language, cognition, and creative imagination. They feel that they must be always competing, always "making," in order to have any worth as a person. For this stage the related elements of social order are "ideal prototypes". These are social roles, such as police officer, teacher, astronaut, president, and "hero."

**b) Cognitive Child Development Theories: Jean Piaget** suggested that children think differently than adults and proposed a stage theory of cognitive development. He proposed that children play an active role in gaining knowledge of the world. As per this

theory, children could be thought of as "little scientists" who actively construct their own knowledge and understanding of the world. Piaget favored discovery learning through practical activities rather than stimulus and response. According to him, connecting the knowledge with different aspects of life ensure, learning i.e. may be a child can point out and identify the "yellow" color when asked, but might not learn to 'name' the color unless the name of color is associated with different other aspects of life i.e. may be showing yellow color cars, yellow color table etc. Thus, the learning occurs when the child is given enough opportunities to build his own knowledge and connect it with practical aspects of life or enough experiences for better understanding. This theory was termed as constructivism.

c) **Behavioral Child Development Theories:** The focus of these theories was mainly on how environmental interaction affects or influences behavior and are based upon the theories given by theorists such as John B. Watson, Ivan Pavlov and B. F. Skinner. These theories deal only with observable behaviors. According to them the development is considered a reaction or response to stimuli, rewards, punishments, and reinforcement. This theory differs considerably from child development theories in the way that it gives no consideration to internal feelings and thoughts but focuses purely on the way experiences shapes us.

d) **Social and Emotional Child Development Theories:** There is a lot of research going on the social development of children. **John Bowlby** proposed one of the earliest theories of social development called Attachment theory. Bowlby proposed that the early relationships of primary caregivers with the child have a great influence on the social development of child. The relationship with primary care givers i.e. mother, father, teacher, these are the people directly responsible for the child hence what kind of relationship or bond is formed among them, shape the social development of the child. **Albert Bandura** proposed another theory known as social learning theory.

According to this theory of child development, children learn new behaviors by observing other people. Bandura believed that external reinforcement or rewards were not the only way that people acquired new knowledge or learnt new things unlike other behavioral theories, but he also believed that intrinsic reinforcements such as sense of pride, satisfaction and accomplishment also lead to the gaining of new knowledge or learning. By

observing the actions of others, including parents, siblings, teachers, peers, and children develop new knowledge and skills and acquire new information. **Lev Vygotsky** proposed a pivotal learning theory that has become very influential, especially in the field of education. Like Piaget, Vygotsky too believed that children learn actively and through hands-on experiences. But he gave the new relationship between learning and development, according to which learning precedes development. Before he gave the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the relation between learning and development could be anything from the following three major positions: 1) Development always precedes learning as given by constructivism, that children first need to meet a particular maturation level before learning 2) Learning and development cannot be separated and occur simultaneously as given by behaviorists essentially, learning is development and 3) learning and development are separate but interactive processes as given by gestaltists, one process always prepares the other process, and vice versa. Vygotsky rejected all the above three because he believed that learning always precedes development in the ZPD. The lower limit of Zonal Proximal Display (ZPD) means the actual skill a child is having or has attained by working individually and independently which also shows his/her actual level of development. The upper limit is reached when, with the skill that a child has at lower limit of ZPD, an instructor through scaffolding provides assistance to the child and s/he attains a new potential skill.

Thus, proving that learning precedes development. Vygotsky in his **socio-cultural** theory proposed that society and culture and the people in the cultural context like parents, caregivers, peers, are responsible for the development of higher order functions. **Lawrence Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development** Lawrence Kohlberg advocated a constructivist theory of emotional and moral development based on the work of Jean Piaget. Kohlberg suggested six stages of development that were grouped into three levels. The first level seems to relate here with socio-emotional development. The first level given by him is the pre-conventional level where morality is generally related with children, but many adults to operate on this level of moral development. The first stage of this level talks about Obedience and Punishment Orientation. In this stage, individuals associate or link right and wrong with direct consequences to themselves. If a behavior ends with punishment, a child knows that it is a "bad" behavior and labels it as "bad". If the result is praise or reward,

the child knows that it is a "good" behavior and labels it as "good". The second stage of the first level is Individualism and Exchange in which children judge morality based on individual's self-interest. If they find something is beneficial or of their interest then they can judge it as right even if it is wrong. Right and wrong seems relative to the person involved. These stages are all linked by the lack of consideration for family and society, and they focus completely on the actions of individual and consequences to the individual.

**Howard Gardner:** The cognitive theorists are more of the believers of intelligence as a single entity and that children are a blank slate that could be trained to learn anything. Gardner born 1943, gave Multiple Intelligence Theory, he believed intelligence is made up of multiple intelligences. His theory states humans have a unique blend of intelligences that cannot be measured by IQ tests. He challenged Piagets development stages. Unlike Piaget, Gardner saw that at any one time a child may be at very different stages. Gardner formulated a list of seven intelligences. The first two particularly valued in schools. The following three usually associated with the arts and the last two personal intelligences.

- ❑ Linguistic
- ❑ Logical-Mathematical
- ❑ Musical
- ❑ Kinesthetic
- ❑ Spatial Intelligence
- ❑ Interpersonal Intelligence
- ❑ Intrapersonal Intelligence

### **1.9 SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL):**

*In simple terms, social and emotional learning (SEL) is the capacity to recognize and manage emotions, solve problems effectively, and establish positive relationships with others, competencies that clearly are essential for all students.*

*Thus, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is defined as the process of acquiring a set of social and emotional skills- self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making – within the context of a safe, supportive environment that encourages social, emotional and cognitive development and provide opportunities for practicing social-emotional skills (Cherness, Extein, Goleman, & Weissberg, 2006). SEL is a process for learning life skills, including how to*

deal with oneself, others and relationships, and work in an effective manner. In dealing with oneself, SEL helps in recognizing our emotions and learning how to manage those feelings. In dealing with others, SEL helps with developing sympathy and empathy for others, and maintaining positive relationships. SEL also focuses on dealing with a variety of situations in a constructive and ethical manner. Researchers generally agree upon five key competencies of SEL (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011). These competencies provide the foundation for maintaining high-quality social relationships and for responding to the challenges of life.

The Collaborative to Advance Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), an organization that was formed together to promote the importance of SEL in schools, has also identified the same. The definitions of the five competency clusters for students as per CASEL are as follows:

1. **Self-Awareness:** The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.
2. **Self-Management:** The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving goals.
3. **Social Awareness:** The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.
4. **Relationship Skills:** The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.
5. **Responsible Decision Making:** The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

After going through the five key competencies of SEL given by Durlak, et al. (2011), competencies given by CASEL (2012) and the objectives of preschools given in ECE

Curriculum draft 2012; the researcher has come out with five SEL Competencies (*termed as Dimensions in this entire research*) that encompass all the aspects of Early childhood development. They are as follows:

- ❑ Self-Concept
- ❑ Cultural Sensitivity
- ❑ Awareness and management of feelings
- ❑ Building positive relationship (between peers, teachers and family members)
- ❑ Decision making, problem solving and Creativity

#### **1.10 FACTORS AFFECTING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL STATUS OF PRESCHOOLERS:**

**At Home:** Nuclear families have increased; Urbanization has led to decrease in joint families where there are no grandparents to look after children (Rao, 2013). Single parent is also increasing day by day with the increasing number of divorces (Rao, 2013). Such single parents are unable to give the love and care of both mother and father; thus, the child remains emotionally deprived. Both the parents are working to survive the growing economy; thus, they have less time for their children (Ermisch & Francesconi, 2001).

Working mothers too have increased, and due to the hectic schedule of mothers they get less time for socialization. Neighborhoods have vanished and been replaced by tall buildings with no play areas for children. Free play has decreased; less exposure to circus, zoo, gardens etc., and the more exposure is to movie theatres, resorts, gadgets etc. People prefer to have a single child because of high cost of living and the fact that they are both working professionals. Thus, the number of siblings is decreasing as a result of which the child is getting lonely. S/he does not have a sister or brother to play and grow old with. Lonely childhood is resulting in low achievement (Ermisch & Francesconi, 2001). The clashes of modernization and social change with the age old patriarchal society are also causing a lot of turmoil in the life of married couples. When the child is caught in such turmoil it is a bitter experience for him/her emotionally. This kind of lifestyle is affecting the development of a child specially the socio-emotional development.

**At School:** Safety and security in terms of health, love, care, attachment and infrastructure, should be taken care of. If the basic need of child that is safety is not taken care of, it will create fear in the child, thus hindering his/her growth, development and learning. Economic

disparities among children give rise to envy, jealousy and conflicts. Faulty methods of teaching, like focusing only on academics (3Rs), disregard of individual differences, lack of appropriate use of play materials, lack of activities leading to holistic development and Lack of co-curricular activities can also affect his/her SEL. Emotionally unbalanced teacher can cause havoc, as the teacher plays a role model for children and they imitates him or her. Traditional concept of discipline, Poor physical conditions in schools and Faulty curriculum can further affect SEL of children. (Sharma & Sharma, 2009; Thamaraserri, 2008; Sharma, 2006)

### **1.11 NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF SEL:**

The benefits of SEL can be found both in a school and home setting. For example, SEL increases positive behaviors reducing negative behaviors. Positive behaviors can include improved social and emotional skills, improved attitudes and perceptions about self and others, and improved behavior within the classroom and with peers. Negative behaviors that can get reduced are conduct problems and emotional distress. Furthermore, these SEL skills are carried throughout life and can help to foster success. That is why they have been also included in lifelong learning skills.

Moreover, SEL can help to improve several skills including nonverbal communication skills, socially competent behavior, and social meaning and reasoning. Nonverbal communication is important because the majority of emotional meaning is conveyed without spoken words, and instead utilizes paralinguage, facial expressions, gestures and postures, interpersonal distance, and touch, rhythm and time. Social skills to play an important role in identifying, interpreting, encoding and reasoning social and emotional information that are associated with the social behaviors exhibited by children. Finally, social meaning and reasoning are important in problem solving. Social meaning is the capability to interpret others' emotions and language, and be able to respond appropriately, whereas social reasoning is that capability to identify a problem, set goals and evaluate all the possible solutions available (Zins, Weissber, Wang & Walberg, 2004).

Parents, teachers and counselors can play an important role in facilitating SEL. Learning of social and emotional skills are similar to learning other academic skills. Implementation of a program in schools can help to increase competence and learning in students which may be applied to more complex situations in the future. Teachers can accomplish this in

the classroom through effective and direct classroom instructions, student engagement in positive activities, and involving parents, students and the community in planning, evaluating and implementing the program into the classroom. The first word that a child learns is of a mother or father, so both of them play a very crucial role in providing early childhood care. Various findings have revealed that family income, young maternal age at child's birth, mother's educational attainment, number of siblings in a household, parents involvement, family conflicts and family resources and their attitude towards education all these influence the child development and his/her education.

In order to bring focus of our policy makers on SEL, it is important to observe the current preschool curriculum and the practices being followed in the public and private sectors.

### **1.12 THE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM**

There was none of the legislative prescribed or board affiliated curriculum given for pre-school or ECCE centers until 2012 when Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India advanced up with ECE Curriculum Framework (Draft 2012). So, some have adopted specialized methods of international repute, and some have adopted the curriculum with local and cultural context.

1. **Kindergarten-** literally means “children’s garden”, founded by Froebel, is a form of education which treats the child as a sapling in a garden and the teacher as a caring nurturing gardener who allows self-growth through play way opportunities for overall growth and development (Grewal1984).
2. **Montessori** was originated by Italian educator Maria Montessori in the late 19th and early 20th century. The method is characterized by an emphasis on self-directed activity on the part of the child and clinical observation on the part of the teacher (often called a “director”, “directress”, or “guide”) and utilization of children’s behaviour as the criterion for determining the validity of educational procedures.
3. **Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework (Draft, 2012):** An integrated and a play way-based approach must be used in the curriculum for addressing these interrelated holistic domains of a child, like Physical Development, Language Development, Cognitive Development, Sensory Development, Creative and Aesthetic Appreciation, Socio-Personal and Emotional Development and it should focus on developing life skills. According to the draft, Self-concept, self-control, life skills or

self-help skills, habit formation, initiative and curiosity, compassion, cooperation, social relationships, group communication, pro-social behavior, expressing-accepting others feelings, all come under socio-personal and emotional development.

4. **Progressive Philosophy:** The progressive philosophy of preschool is mainly child centered and development oriented. It aims to foster a harmonious development of the child, his physical well-being, his social development and the development of his intellect, learning through play. Exploration, discovery, experimentation and observation are its core components. (Mohite, P. 1983)

There are so many options available in order to frame a developmentally appropriate curriculum still many of the preschools fall short of it. A developmentally appropriate curriculum is the right combination of innovative, fun filled, play way activities, methods and pedagogies designed, keeping in mind the age, intelligence level and need of the child.

### **1.13 CURRENT PRACTICES IN PRESCHOOLS**

In India, preschool education is provided by private schools and government ICDS (Anganwadi) centers. In addition, there are some ECCE centers running under SSA and some preschools are attached to government as well as private schools. As per the sixth educational survey, in 4,641 towns and cities in the country, a total of 39,055 pre-primary institutions have been reported to be imparting pre-school experience to the children. The majority of these i.e., 23,490(60.15%), are Balwadis/Anganwadis; 3,692(9.45%) are independent pre-primary schools and 11,873(30.40%) are in the form of schools which have pre-primary sections attached to them. Thus, the later forms a major portion and is largely responsible for the children of urban areas. The average enrollment in Balwadis/Anganwadis is 51, and the majority of these are managed by a single instructor. The survey has revealed that there are 11,873 schools which have pre-primary sections attached to them in urban areas and 8, 35,148 children are enrolled in them. Thus, the average strength in these is about 70 and in all 28,955 teachers are there to impart preschool experience to children in urban areas. Thus, these schools showed the higher enrollment as compared to Balwadis.

The Seventh All India Education Survey (NCERT, 2005) estimates that there are 493,700 pre-primary institutions in India, out of which 456,994 are in rural areas. These schools have 26.453 million children of which 12.829 million are girls according to DISE (District

Information System for Education) data (2007- 08). The percentage of enrolment in primary schools with pre-primary facilities is low. It was 10% in 2007-08 compared to 7.7% in 2004-05. The highest percentage of pre-primary enrolment in primary schools is in Madhya Pradesh (19.6%) and the lowest of 5.0% in Bihar (Mehta, 2010). The third round (2005-06) of National Family Health Survey data (IIPS, 2007) presents a very clear picture which forces us to ponder upon the crucial actions required in this area. According to the data, around 56% of children in preschool are enrolled in ICDS Centers of Anganwadis, for early childhood care and education. Among them only 31% of children are regularly attending the centers. Another point of focus is the large variation found in access to early childhood care and education throughout the states.

### **1.13.1 Public Sector:**

The public sector ECCE Programmes includes ICDS and ECE schemes such as crèches and Balwadis in the voluntary sector supported by DWCD. ICDS covers less than one-fifth of the target group. It has a poor access because of the location and caste/community of Anganwadi Worker (AWW). The services are not so good. There are more nutrition centers than preschools, especially in northern states. Weak infrastructure, lack of materials, alternative day care required for rest of day, poor quantity/quality of nutritional supplements and irregularity of distribution makes the scheme of ICDS underutilized. Further inadequate incentives, unrealistic job charts, occasional mismatching between training and work situations demotivates the workers. There is also poor monitoring and lack of community ownership. Overall it is overburdened, cannot take on more responsibilities without new supportive inputs such as modified design and financial/human resources. It needs strong Information Education Communication (IEC) component and supervision of mushrooming private schools. The expansion of ECE was not as large as that of ICDS. As against the target of 2 million ECE centers in 2000, only 0.55 million centers are operative at present. (Position Paper on ECE, 2006) Balwadis are being phased out because of ICDS universalization. Day-care Centers need to be more developmentally appropriate. Worker training comprises of three months of job training with some ECE components and occasional refresher courses. For voluntary sector, it is varying, informal and no standardized.

**1.13.2 Private Sector:** Swarming preschools can be seen in every nook n corner of any city. There are islands of excellence and many good private schools, whereas there are also some, which are very bad in shape or are running without following developmentally appropriate practices. These are some of the contradictory practices seen in the private sector preschools:

**Burden or Boredom vs. Play way based:** Great variation is observed in the preschools. At one end of the spectrum, some children experience great pressure, being burdened with unrealistic and undesirable expectations. There are centers where the similar routines are repeated and very little activities are carried out. The children are expected to sit quietly at one place for long period of time. For children it becomes very monotonous, unexciting, and boring. On the other end, we are also observing new preschools coming up with great philosophies focusing on development of the child, where the focus is on activity and play way method of learning. Assessments are developmentally appropriate and home works are not given.

**Admissions:** Interviewing the child seeking admission and his/her parents is a common practice followed by many private schools. The child is tested for general knowledge and made to perform tasks, which are expected of him in the class after he gets admitted. This results in pressure, tension, and anxiety for both parents and children, and has harmful effects on children.

**Early start in Structured Learning:** Most ECE programmes today are merely a downward extension of primary education. The heavily loaded curriculum exposes children to highly structured environment and rote learning, at an age when they are not developmentally ready for it. Whereas there are some preschools which are taking care of developmentally appropriate practices.

**Expected competencies in conflict with children's developmental stages vs. Expected competencies as per the Early childhood developmental stage:** The curriculum offered in such preschools is developmentally inappropriate. Children are required to sit in one place and write for long durations. Few of the cognitive skills are taught whereas holistic development is ignored. Whereas there are schools which focus on the activities as per their childhood stage these children are in, wherein their attention span is just for 15-20 minutes so the activities developed for them are only for the duration of 20 minutes

followed by break. The children are given freedom to move about in class and the holistic development is taken care of.

**Overcrowded Classrooms vs. Small Group Classrooms:** As many as forty to sixty children are huddled in a classroom, giving them neither the opportunity to move within the classroom nor any chance for social interaction with others. The teacher is unable to give individual attention to each student. Such an environment is not conducive to the all-round development of children. However, a great change has been observed in terms of number of children per classroom. Most of the schools have limited the strength of the classrooms to 20 in number has been suggested by the policies.

**Formal method of Teaching vs. Developmental methods of Teaching:** Children spend most of the time writing, working with workbooks, or engaged in number work. Limited activities for art, music, Environmental Studies (EVS), or indoor and outdoor free play find place in the daily routine. There is a lack of awareness of and concern about the all-round development of children. However, few schools have started incorporating developmentally appropriate practices, art and craft based or activity-based learning, play way methods of learning which have been incorporated in C.B.S.E preschools.

**Developmentally Inappropriate vs. Developmentally appropriate Assessments:** There are schools where Evaluation focuses on competencies that are more appropriately taught at the primary school level, such as competency in reading, writing, dictation, mathematics, and drawing. No emphasis is placed on evaluating the child from the developmental point of view. However due to the again and again emphasis of government on ECCE and practices; A lot of awareness has been generated. Lots of schools are following curriculum draft 2012. Developmentally appropriate assessments have been initiated which are Formative, continuous and comprehensive in nature and are mostly observation based.

**Homework Vs. No Homework:** Children are often given home assignments, which is lot of written work. Children at this stage are not ready for writing and struggle hard for hours to complete the task. This steal from them their playtime, which is their right at this stage in their life. However, there are schools which do not give any books for their home or any home work, and everything is done and completed within school premises.

**Lack of Suitable Equipment vs. Play Materials:** There is a limited supply available, and sometimes these are used more for purposes of display than actual play. At times, as a

special event or treat, children are allowed to play with the equipment and materials. Special rooms are designed for these materials and once in a week visit in such rooms defeats the actual purpose of development of a child which is to be continuous in front of their eyes so that they can use and develop their concepts all the time.

**Teachers' Training and Remuneration:** Most of the teachers are untrained and they lack knowledge about the Methodology of working with young children. The remuneration is also low and varies from school to school. (NCF-2005) But the picture is changing rapidly, in the recent survey conducted by the researcher in private schools of Baroda, in regard with educational qualification, majority (48.8%) of the teachers had done diploma in ECCE/CD, 23.1% had done B.Sc. in home science while 14% were Masters. But the remuneration is still low. (Rajawat, 2015)

Corresponding to the wide range of ECE programmes and initiatives in the country, a variety of ECE training programmes are currently in vogue. Some of them, which are common and better known, may be classified under following heads;

- ❑ Pre-Service Courses (being run by different state owned and private institutions).
- ❑ Job and in-service Courses (exclusively meant for functionaries of Integrated Child Development Services Scheme).
- ❑ ECE Diploma / Certificate Courses (being offered by distance learning institutions like Indira Gandhi National Open University, National Institute of Open Schooling and several others State Specific Open Universities).
- ❑ Specific ECE Intervention based training inputs as for the training programmes under first category of *pre-service courses*, several teacher training initiatives (Integrated Pre-Primary and Primary Teacher's Training Nursery/Pre-Primary Teacher's Training, Vocational Training in Child Care and Education) have been set up by different state owned and private institutions.

**Yashpal Committee** has rightly said that we have been focusing on some very elite qualifications to accomplish success and have totally forgotten about enhancing abilities instead of many useful things in life. And the way the economic gap is increasing among those who manage to get over with these academic hurdles and those who can't is increasing day by day. If this continues we are robbing off, our children from a good successful life or better future and also the opportunities to learn with joy.

The similar kind of gap is increasing year by year between the preschools as there are no fixed standards or curriculum for these. There are preschools attached to State Boards and CBSE schools having their own curriculum.

Then there are isolated preschools like **Kangaroo kids, Kid zee, Euro kids** etc. with different kinds of curriculum. Some are following Montessori, some Kindergarten, some Progressive curriculum, some International curriculum etc. Hardly there is anything based on Indian philosophy or culture. Even this is not an issue, but infrastructure is very important for these preschools. As children observe and learn. They learn by hands on experience so there should be enough of materials and infrastructure, play area etc. for not only SEL but overall development of a child because this is the time when they are being shaped. So maximum resources should be put into use to bring their development. Now here comes the imbalance. There is this first category of preschools that are running without any infrastructure. They just open a preschool in an area of 3 room, there is no open area, and materials used are limited. Then the second category, are preschools which are the franchise of Kangaroo Kids, Euro Kids, Kid Zee etc. which might have materials and infrastructure facility. The other category are preschools that are attached to schools, again there is two categories in it. One (third category) which have excellent infrastructure facilities, they use lap tops, A-V aids, have slide presentations, play area equipped with all sort of swings, sand areas etc. and the fourth category being poor in such facilities.

**So, there is so much of variation that parents remain in dilemma so as to where should they send their kids?** These vagaries can have an unimaginable impact on socio-emotional development of children and can lead to making of socio-emotionally deprived children. The financial drift is another aspect, where parents who can spend more, send their children to the second and third category mentioned above. And those who cannot spend much, send their kids to the first one or the fourth one. Unnecessary burden is placed on the parents, in the name of exposure which many parents cannot afford. Many schools in the name of development conduct incessant activities like adventure sports, international visits, astronaut workshop, etc. where they charge money from parents. However, it is not enforced on parents but when the children are so young, it is difficult for parents to say no to their kids. Schools should be a place where the families of all classes are targeted but it

is not actually happening. Some preschools calling for such expenditure forget that every parent cannot afford such things. (Rajawat & Patel, 2015)

The government has very less share in these preschools with very few Balwadis running. In spite of extra ordinary efforts in Balwadi, there is a set mentality within parents that private preschools are better. With so much of vagaries existing, in private sector the probability of achieving holistic development is quite a task.

After presenting the current scenario in public and private sectors of Preschooling it becomes necessary to lay eyes on what has been said, implemented and achieved through policies over the years.

## **1.14 POLICIES ON EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION (ECCE)**

### **1.14.1 Global Context**

Many events all round the world have added to the realization of the significance of ECCE. It began with the convention on the Right of the child (1989) which was accepted by the United Nations in November 1989. The convention talked about establishing the rights of all persons less than 18 years of age in order to develop their full potential, free from hunger, negligence, exploitation or any other form of abuse. The provision of the convention distinguishes four main areas of children's rights: Survival, Development, Protection and Participation.

Creation of the **Human Development Index** by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990 that measured the achievements of countries on three basic dimensions of human development; a long and healthy life, Knowledge and a decent standard of living, issue of early childhood. It included indicators that specifically related to mortality, children, education and child labor.

The third important event of the **world conference on Education for all (1990)** included the following statement- "Learning begins at the birth. This calls for early childhood care and initial education. These can be provided through arrangements involving families, communities or institutional programmes, as appropriate".

Following are the policies and programmes framed on ECCE:

**1) The World Summit for Children (1990):** The expansion of early childhood development activities including appropriate low-cost family and community-based interactions was considered the first goal in the summit.

**2) The World Education Forum, held in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000:** The international community, including governments and development partners, reaffirmed their commitment to achieve Education for All (EFA) by 2015 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000. The framework suggested 6 goals and 12 strategies to bring more children into classroom. Out of these six goals, three are related to ECCE.

- ❑ Expansion and improvement of comprehensive ECCE for the vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- ❑ To ensure full access to all the children and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015.
- ❑ To ensure the access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes for all young people. The importance of ECCE was realized.

**3) UNESCO Policy Brief on Early Childhood 2004:** The Convention on the Rights of the Child encourages adults to allow a high degree of initiative to young children. A new culture of participation and involvement is now emerging in areas of life important for young children as well as for children in early childhood stage and centers and the manner in which curriculum is framed and implemented. Young children are being treated with far more respect and knowledge. It is acknowledged, that child's environment should be constructed in such a way to interface the cognitive realm with the realms of relationship and affectivity. In other words, young children's learning is grounded in the affective and social domains. Children learn best within positive relationships with their parents and families, caregivers, with their peers and with well-trained early childhood educators.

**4) Moscow Framework for Action 2010:** UNESCO organized the first World Conference on ECCE in September 2010, which culminated in the adoption of a global action agenda for ECCE called Moscow Framework for Action and Cooperation: Harnessing the Wealth of Nations. The Action agenda given in the meet was as follows:

- ❑ Mobilize stronger commitment to ECCE Legislation, policies and strategies
- ❑ Access and scaling up
- ❑ Assessment, research, monitoring and evaluation
- ❑ Quality
- ❑ Capacity building

- ❑ Partnerships and
- ❑ Cooperation

**5) The 12th Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators, Seoul, Republic of Korea, July, 2011:** Discussions focused on following.

- ❑ Using data and evidence for improved policy and learning
- ❑ Making education more relevant and responsive to the needs of national advancement through skills development.
- ❑ Governance and the roles of State and non-state providers in financing EFA and
- ❑ Improving data collection, monitoring, evaluation and assessment, among others. Drafts of the regional End-of-Decade Notes on EFA Progress by EFA goal were presented for comments and validation by countries.

**6) Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Early Childhood, Singapore 2011:** With the support of UNESCO, UNICEF and other international organizations (Plan International, Open Society Foundation and Save the Children Alliance), the Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) and the Seeding Early Education Institute, Singapore (SEED), organized the "Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Early Childhood Development" in Singapore on 8-10 November 2011. The theme of the Conference was Early Experiences Matter: Policies and practices for ensuring holistic development for very young children, with a focus on policies and programmes for children ages 0-3 - an area highlighted by the World Conference on ECCE as requiring further attention.

**7) This Asia-Pacific End of Decade Note on Education for All Goal 1 on early childhood care and education, A Report UNESCO and UNICEF (2012):** said that in India, despite of increasing population and inflation, efforts are being made to provide holistic early childhood services through Integrated Child Development Services programme which was initiated in 1975. The latest, the 86th amendment to article 45 of the Indian Constitution says that State should provide ECCE for all the children until the age of 6 years. (Government of India, 2002).

The End of Decade Note (EDN), highlighted challenges like: Adequate training, certification, incentives for ECCE teachers and caregivers. Public funding for ECCE remained negligible. Attention is to be focused on those residing in remote areas, indigenous communities, minorities and disadvantaged groups and on the difficulties in

providing ECCE services and support to these groups that continued to be challenging. Coordination between sectors was weak mainly with services for children aged 0–3 years. Based on the analysis of the progress and challenges the following recommendations were offered for the five themes identified in Asia Pacific region:

❑ **Policy-making:** The recommendations call for:

Strengthening of the reporting structures on the basic ECCE indicators; issues relating to children aged 0–3 years in policy documents, guidelines and frameworks; Constructive engagement with experts and practitioners to build a sound evidence base; ensure the inclusion of research on children in indigenous communities, in ethnographic groups, with disabilities, in emergency situations, residing in rural and remote areas and in conflict and post-conflict situations; and the documentation and scaling up of innovative practices.

❑ **Access for vulnerable and disadvantaged children:** The recommendations advocate for:

- i) The use of low-cost, safe and indigenous materials to improve the quality of activities and programme content; Activities and programming that are based on culturally salient practices that benefit children;
- ii) To engage local talent creatively in the service of improving programme content and quality, including grandparents and other family members in the programme scheduling.
- iii) To Ensure a smooth transition from ECCE to primary school through administrative as well as relational strategies; and
- iv) To Encourage and support play-based rather than overly formal pedagogical approaches.

❑ **Holistic ECCE** (encompassing the health and well-being of young children).

❑ **Standards, regulations and guidelines, and training and capacity-building:**

The recommendations made:

- i) Establishment and enforcement of ECCE standards
- ii) The standardization and regulation of teacher qualifications that are based on research evidence and meaningful too.
- iii) Creative formats for training caregivers through media, radio programming, etc.;

- iv) The establishment of culturally relevant, play-based, age-appropriate curriculum guidelines for educating the very young, including safe, indigenous and low-cost resources for play and stimulation.
- v) Expansion in use of information and communications technology and virtual education.
- vi) The involvement of expert practitioners in in-service and pre-service training initiatives and mentoring and monitoring of caregivers and teachers by experienced researchers.
- vii) Incentives and skills training for ECCE caregivers and teachers, particularly in rural and remote areas and in conflict, post-conflict or emergency contexts.

**□ The quality imperative:**

The recommendations call for strengthening family-based or home-based ECCE programmes, through increased allocation of financial resources and increased engagement with community-based caregivers. Creating resources for mother tongue-based instruction and with parent groups in national consultations, defining quality and analyzing caregiver child ratios, interactions, parenting and community involvement, curriculum and approaches, monitoring and evaluation in defining criteria for quality ECCE.

## **1.14.2 Indian Context**

### **1.14.2.1 History: Pre-Independence Period**

Early childhood education as an organized endeavor in India dates back only as far as the late 19th and early 20th century when the American and Scottish missionaries took the initiative to set up a few Kindergarten classes in Madras, Sholapur and Ahmedabad.

In 1915 Darbar Gopaldas and Motibhai Amin, established a Montessori school at Vase in Baroda district of Gujarat under the impact of Madame Montessori's ideology. Few years later Gijubhai Badheka started his balmandir at Bhavnagar in Gujarat and began to adopt Montessori methods to suit Indian local conditions. In 1922 Tarabai Modak joined him who devoted her entire life for child education. In 1925 association with Montessori was

established convening a conference on child education. This association was renamed Nutan Bal Shiksha Sangh and it continues to play an active role even today.

In 1946, Madam Montessori met Mahatma Gandhi who wanted her to indianize the method to bring a revolutionary change in Indian education. This gave rise to 'Pre-basic education'. All through this period the thrust was on pre-school education for 3-6 years old children.

#### **1.14.2.2 Post-Independence Period**

Pre-school education in 1947, was mainly in the hands of a few voluntary organizations. In 1953 first step was taken by the government of India by setting up a Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) which was brain child of Durgabai Deshmukh. In order to study the problems of children below six years, CSWB set up a committee in 1960. This committee suggested a comprehensive plan for their care and training.

- ❑ It recommended that responsibility for starting pre-schools should be left to voluntary agencies with adequate assistance from the government.
- ❑ It also emphasizes the importance of training and recommended that a cadre of adequately trained child welfare workers be prepared.

These recommendations resulted in the beginning of training programme for child welfare workers by the Indian Council in 1961. The CSWB was responsible in setting up the supplementary nutrition programme in 1970 and a scheme for crèches for ailing and working mothers in 1974.

In pursuance of the formulation of National policy for children, the integrated child development services (ICDS) was proposed. This scheme was probably presented for the first time at the sixth conference of the Indian association for pre-school education (IAPE) in Oct 1972 at Bangalore K.V. Natrajan, the then chief of the department of nutrition and social welfare, the planning commission.

After extensive correspondence with the IAPE on this subject, the scheme of integrated child development services that was finally launched which covered not only physical and medical aspects but also psycho-social development of children. The government constituted an expert group on Early Childhood Education in 1980 which examined the problems, mainly with reference to the quality of education and ensuring the effectiveness of pre-school children. Though much action was not taken on these recommendations.

However, an early childhood education for grant in aid voluntary agencies working in the educationally backward states did emerge out of these efforts and is in operation now.

In 1970s and 1980s the practices in most of the cases degenerated into mere finding or custodial centers and the age group of 0-3 in terms of their psycho-social needs was neglected (Suriakanthi, & Swami Nathan, 2000). On the other hand, private sector flourished with private nursery schools which were initially only in the urban areas and later extended to rural areas. These tended to be more often than not developmentally inappropriate.

In 1986, the national policy on education (NPE) was approved by the parliament. This was historic document in that it explicitly recognized the importance of Early Childhood Care and Education. But the progress remained very slow and the reason given was that while the National policy on education and the POA were conceptualized and developed by the department of education in the ministry of human resource development, responsibility for implementation of ECCE programmes has been transferred to the department of Women and child development.

As early as 1990, the Acharya Ramamurthy committee made some observation that still hold good. For example, Article 45 has always been interpreted as being applicable only to children above the age of 5 or 6.

More recently SarvaShikshaAbhiyan (SSA) aims to:

- Strengthen the pre-school component in ICDS.
- Set up balwadi in areas hitherto not covered.
- Build advocacy for the importance of early childhood development.
- Organize training programmes for community leaders.
- Provide for extensive planning for ECCE.
- Develop materials &
- Promote merging of the school system and ECCE.

Considering the fact that children neither have any voice nor any political constituency, **the constitution of India** laid down special safeguards ensuring their right to ‘survival protection and development’. Article 21A provides the right for children for compulsory education up to the age of 14 years; Article 45A as amended (Eighty-sixth amendment) Act 2002 states, “*Provision for Early childhood care and education to children below the*

*age of six years.*” Section 11 of the **RTE Act (2009)** too refers to provision of ECCE and free pre-school education until six years, with a view to prepare children above the age of three years for elementary education and to make necessary arrangements for preschool education for such children. However, it’s just a provision.

**i) National Policy for Children (1974):** It shall be the policy of the state to provide adequate services to children, both before and after birth and throughout the period of growth to ensure their physical, mental and social development. The state shall progressively increase the scope of such services so that, within a reasonable time all children in the country enjoy optimum conditions for their balanced development.

**ii) Kothari Commission (1964-66):** Commission has treated the entire pre-university period of education as one stage, recommending an integrated approach to school education. It makes pre-primary education an integral part of schooling. The Commission has identified the following objectives for pre-primary education:

- Building up necessary skills for personal adjustment, such as dressing, eating, toilet habits, washing, cleaning etc. and developing healthy habits in a child.
- Desirable social positive attitudes and mannerism are to be developed, healthy group participation and making the child sensitive to others rights are to be encouraged.
- Developing maturity in emotions by guiding the child to express, understand, accept and control his/her feelings and emotions.
- Enhancing aesthetic appreciation.
- Initiate and Stimulate the curiosity concerning the environment and to help him/her understand the world in which s/he lives; and to nurture interest through opportunities to explore, investigate and experiment.
- Encouraging self-independence and creativity by providing the child with sufficient opportunities for self-expression.
- The ability to express his/her thoughts and feelings must be developed.
- The child’s physical, muscular coordination and basic motor skills must be developed.

While recommending an activity-oriented and play-way curriculum, the Commission has included play activities, physical activities, group activities, physical training including simple exercises and dance, manual activities, sensorial education, handwork and artistic

activities including finger skills, drawing, painting, music, personal hygiene, self-service etc. The spirit of the recommendations lies in providing informal, activity-rich and interesting learning experience for the children. Textbooks and Writing are not included in the curriculum recommended and this is an aspect that needs special attention of educators in the present situation.

**iii) Yashpal Committee (1993):** Yashpal Committee, in its report titled ‘Learning without Burden’ observes that ‘deeply harmful practices in pre-schools and primary schools such as early emphasis on shapely drawing, writing and memorizing information’ result in a lot of stress and anxiety for the children. “A curriculum policy that takes away the elements of joy and inquiry from learning obviously contributes to the rate at which children leave school in the early years”, states the report.

**iv) National Policy on education NPE 1986 and as modified in 1992:** It emphasizes investment in the development of young children, particularly children from sections of the population in which first generation learners predominate.

ECCE was given high priority recognizing the holistic nature of child development namely, nutrition, health and mental, social, physical, moral and emotional development, and was recommended to be suitably integrated with the ICDS programme. It said that Day care centers would act as a support service for universalization of primary education and enable girls engaged in taking care of siblings and household works, to attend school and help support service for working women belonging to poorer sections.

It suggested that ECCE must be child oriented and focused on ‘play’. The individuality of the child must also be a focus. The formal methods and emphasis on the 3Rs must be discouraged at early childhood stage. The local community must be fully involved in these programmes.

A total incorporation of child care and pre-primary education must be brought about both as a feeder and a strengthening factor for primary education and for human resource development.

**v) National Plan of Action (NPA) 1992:** The NPA targeted at the protection, development, survival and growth of children. It was followed by the formulation of the State Plan of Action for Children (SPAC).

**vi) National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001:** Expansion and improvement of environment of support services for women like crèches at work places, educational institutions, homes etc. were recommended to ensure full participation of women in social, political and economic life.

**vii) National charter for children (2004):** The objectives being; a. The State shall in partnership with the community provide early childhood care for all children and encourage programmes which will stimulate and develop their physical and cognitive capacities. b. The State shall in partnership with the community aim at providing a child care centre in every village where infants and children of working mothers can be adequately cared for. c. The State will make special efforts to provide these facilities to children from SCs/STs and marginalized sections of society.

**viii) National Plan of Action for Children, 2005:** The guiding principles are to regard the child as an asset and a person with human rights, to address the issues of discrimination and ensure equality, to accord utmost priority to the most disadvantaged poorest and least served child in all policy and programmatic interventions, to recognize the diverse stages and setting of childhood and address the needs of each, providing to all children the entitlements that fulfill their rights and meet their needs in each situation.

**ix) The National Curriculum Framework 2005:** describes the early childhood stage as the most critical period when foundations are laid for life long development and realization of the child's full potential. To promote children's learning in the early years, efforts must be directed by each child's interests and priorities, be flexible and not structured formally, within an enabling and supportive environment. Activities and experiences for this group of children should be developmentally appropriate and be realized through play-way, activity-based methodology. Caution should be taken against pressuring children into the 3Rs and early introduction of formal learning.

Assessment practices commonly observed also add to the pressure on the young child. The NCF recommends that "At this stage, assessment must be purely qualitative judgements of children's activities in various domains and an assessment of the status of their health and physical development, based on observations through everyday interactions. On no account, should they be made to take any form of test, oral or written". (page 76 NCF, 2005).

**x) Report of the Committee on Pre-primary and Preschool Education in Delhi, 2006 (Ganguly report):**

In order to ensure some degree of standardization of quality in the Early Childhood Education Programmes that are presently offered in different types of schools, a concerted effort should be made with the help of experts in the field, to evolve regulations, rules and guidelines for implementation. However, it will require some time. So, the Committee has thought it fit to provide some guidelines in terms of desirable and undesirable elements. It is hoped that the schools as well as the regulating agencies like Directorates of Education will find the guidelines useful.

**Desirable Elements**

- Clean, safe and healthy environment free of hazards
- Adequate space for play and movement, both indoors and outdoors
- Facilities for clean water and toilets appropriate for children
- Adequate space for storage of play and other equipment and materials
- First Aid Kit and arrangements for emergency medical care
- Regular medical check-up and screening of children
- Presence of trained child care givers
- Ratio of children to adult categories: one adult to eight-ten children (for age 2 to 4)
- Flexible daily schedule appropriate to age, including developmental activities of various kinds
- Play and developmental materials appropriate to age
- Timings convenient for parents and children
- Safe transportation facilities appropriate for young children
- Nutritious, hygienic and balanced food, adequate in terms of quantity, quality and frequency for each age group, appropriate to age (wherever it is provided in the school)

**Undesirable Elements**

- Introduction of formal education (reading, writing and arithmetic)
- Activities associated with formal education and evaluation
- Activities involving competition and competitive achievement such as prizes, stars and other rewards

- ❑ Materials such as textbooks. (However, picture books, drawing and coloring books, pattern books, worksheets and other pre-reading, pre-writing and pre-arithmetic materials may be used appropriate to age)
- ❑ Home tasks and assignments
- ❑ Selection procedure based on ability testing or screening for any pre-determined qualities

**xi) National Curriculum Framework Draft (2012): suggested that** the curriculum must take care of the following interrelated domains of holistic development like cognitive, emotional, social, physical, language and spiritual) through an integrated and play-way based approach emphasizing on development of life skills. It also recommended increase in free play activities and a large group activity for 4-5-year-old and enhancing school readiness for 5-6-year-old. It suggested a sense of balance between outdoor-indoor, active-quiet, structured-unstructured, self-adult initiated learning opportunities and individual-small group-large group activities.

**xii) National ECCE Policy (2013):** It is the extension of NCF draft 2012. It talks about the holistic development, better partnership between school parents, teachers and community. It has the similar objectives as mentioned in draft with smooth transition from home to ECCE center to formal schooling, additionally added.

**1.14.3 Reflection on the Policies:** The National and International policies focused on treating the child as an asset and providing them their right to early childhood care and education. They also focused on Providing access, quality and care to them with the objective of expansion of ECCE. Provide education for their individual interests and school readiness taking care of holistic development of the child. Learning without pressure or burden. Learning through play way activities. Discouraging the undesirable elements of 3R's, home assignments, and textbooks, assessments through grades or marks. Helping the child to enhance their physical, social, emotional, language, cognitive and spiritual development. Inculcation of values, good habits, social attitudes and manners as per the socio- cultural context. Provide clean, safe and healthy environment free of hazards, adequate space for play and movement, both indoors and outdoors, facilities for clean water and toilets appropriate for children, good infrastructure facilities. Adequate balance of activities and support to women through crèches and day boards.

## 1.15 EDUCATORS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, EDUCATION & LEARNING

### 1.15.1 The Indian Educators

i) **Swami Vivekananda:** He believed that no child can be taught. Every child has to teach himself/herself. One can supply water, air and soil to a seed to grow and similarly the child will grow to his/her best when given what s/he wants.

ii) **Sri Aurobindo:** *“To say good words, give wise advice to a child has very little effect, if one does not show by one’s loving example the truth of what one teaches.”*

iii) **Rabindranath Tagore:** gave description of his ideal school called by Elmhurst as ‘A poet’s school’. He said, *“My banished soul sitting in the civilized isolation of town life cried within me for the enlargement of the horizon of its comprehension. The inexpensive power to be happy which, along with other children, I brought with me to this world was being worn away by friction with the brick-and-mortar arrangement of life”*. (Grewal, 1984)

iv) **Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948):** His essentials of pre-basic education:

- The teacher and parents should cooperate in carrying out the education of young children.
- The home where the child is born and lives influences him and that becomes the first centre of his education and learning.
- Pre-school education must not be expensive so that it can reach the millions in the villages.
- A child has to be active, creative and playful.
- Though the child in pre-school period cannot be self-sufficient or self-supporting an attempt should be made to develop this quality.
- According to him, Teachers’ role has to be that of a mother. One who cannot take the place of a mother cannot be a teacher. The teachers have to cultivate their own effective life and to encounter their students with a heart.

“The real education begins from conception as the mother to up the responsibility of the child. It is very clear that if this new education is to be effective, its foundation must go deeper, it must begin not with the children but with the parents and the community.”  
(Grewal 1984)

v) **Gijubhai Badheka (1885- 1939):** Badheka was born in the Saurashtra region of western India. His given (first) name was "Girijashankar". Badheka grew up in Bhavnagar, a city in the western Indian state of Gujarat. In 1907, he moved to East Africa and later, Bombay for work. He was an educationist who helped to introduce Montessori education methods to India. In the first instance, Badheka was a high court lawyer. Following the birth of his son in 1923, he developed an interest in childhood development and education. In 1920, Badheka founded the "Balmandir" pre-primary school.

vi) **Dr. Sarva Palli Radhakrishna:** *According to him the children were treated as just the raw stuff on which we can impose anything and everything, our views, perceptions through our strong will. He stated that it is our duty to release them from the bling tyranny of old and should not try to force them to select a direction instead should let them choose their own direction.*

### 1.15.2 Western Educators

i) **Johann Amos Commonius (1592-1670):**

- Shorter school hours, more play and less stress
- Children encouraged to play games
- Supported group teaching and group work
- Punishment was sometimes necessary

ii) **Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778):**

- Let the children be free
- Make games an education and education a game
- Teach less from books and more from life
- Nature is usually right and training is usually bad

iii) **John Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827):**

- Education was to be from within not from without.
- Harmonious development (moral, intellectual and physical).
- His method was to put an object before the students and then let them see what they want to see.
- Child should not remain inactive. Games are very important for them.

iv) **Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel (1782-1852):**

- ❑ The child is the sole source of educational principles and the teacher simply follows the students.
  - ❑ The child develops himself through his own creative activities.
  - ❑ Self-activity is important for the education of children.
  - ❑ He used the gifts that made kindergarten unique.
  - ❑ ‘Play circle’, (children played games by joining hands in a circle) and ‘play song’ are the elements of kindergarten.
- v) **John Dewey (1859-1952):**
- ❑ He advocated for an educational structure that strikes a balance between delivering knowledge while also taking into account the interests and experiences of the student.
  - ❑ He became one of the most famous proponents of hands-on learning or experiential education, (a philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities.) which is related to, but not synonymous with experiential learning, which is a sub-field and operates under the methodologies of experiential education. Experiential learning is the process of learning through experience and is more specifically defined as "learning through reflection on doing". It considers the individual learning process. He argued that "if knowledge comes from the impressions made upon us by natural objects, it is impossible to procure knowledge without the use of objects which impress the mind" (Dewey, 1916/2009, p. 217-218)
  - ❑ Many researchers even credit him with the influence of Project Based Learning (PBL) which places students in the active role of researchers. The benefits of PBL in the classroom - including a greater depth of understanding of concepts, broader knowledge base, improved communication and interpersonal/social skills, enhanced leadership skills, increased creativity, and improved writing skills. It is a type of instruction, where students work together to solve real-world problems in their schools and communities. Successful problem-solving often requires students to draw on lessons from several disciplines and apply them in a very practical way. The promise of seeing a very real impact becomes the motivation for learning.

- ❑ According to him the teacher is not in the school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child but is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child and to assist him in properly responding to these influences. Thus, the teacher becomes a partner in the learning process, guiding students to independently discover meaning within the subject area. This philosophy has become an increasingly popular idea within present-day teacher preparatory programs.
  - ❑ “Education must begin with a psychological insight into the child’s capacities and interests. The curriculum must grow out of child’s interests, experiences, impulses and needs.”
- vi) Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925):** Steiner gave Waldorf education which is a humanistic approach and is based on the educational philosophy of the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner. Waldorf was Founded in Germany in 1919 and it has 750 schools worldwide
- ❑ Children need to develop their five senses, free from the distractions of TV, the computer, and video games.
  - ❑ It is a homelike environment where open ended, creative play is viewed as the work of the young child.
  - ❑ Fantasy is integral. In a Waldorf school, a broom can be a spaceship, or a horse, unlike in a Montessori school, where it would never be used that way – since the whole point is a reality-based program.
  - ❑ Waldorf schools use "toys" like pebbles, wood sticks, or yards of cloth to encourage children to imagine what they can become.
  - ❑ It is to get out of the intellect and enter into imagination
  - ❑ For the Waldorf student, music, dance, and theater, writing, literature, legends and myths are not simply subjects to be read about, ingested and tested. They are experienced and through these experiences, students foster intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual capacities to be individuals confident of their paths and to be of service to the world. They develop a lifelong love for learning.

**vii) Maria Montessori (1870):**

She was the first woman of Italy to become a medical doctor, braving all the opposition on the part of men. She entering into education was a call from within. Her method now called Montessori Method is based on 3 pillars:

- ❑ The prepared adult: it implies the radical change that all the adults around children including parents and teachers should bring in them, a conversion of heart and mind regarding their attitude towards children. They must know how to prepare an environment.
- ❑ The prepared environment: in Montessori is just like a kitchen for a cook or a laboratory for scientist. In the prepared environment a child should find all the needful for his/her great task- his own self development. It should be a place where they can sit comfortably and can work efficiently and produce articles or objects.
- ❑ The means of development/Montessori material: the aim of this material is to help the child live and develop in full recognition of his/her human nature as a whole. The various parts of these materials serve human development in accordance with characteristics of the child's inner and evolving urge of growth, which reveals themselves by spontaneous interest and constructive, developmental activities.
- ❑ She discovered some wonderful traits in small children such as: Mental concentration, love for order, love for work, love for silence, sense of personal dignity, spontaneous self-discipline, constructive independence, joy, courage, generosity, positive constructive receptivity, sociability, ability to absorb from environment, hunger of knowledge.
- ❑ The Teacher's Role in Montessori: Montessori believed that "it is necessary for the teacher to guide the child without letting him feel her presence too much, so that she may be always ready to supply the desired help but may never be the obstacle between the child and his experience" (Montessori, 1966). The Montessori teacher demonstrates key behaviors to implement the child-centered approach:

✚ **Make children the center of learning**

✚ **Encourage children** to learn by providing freedom for them in the prepared environment.

- ✚ **Observe children** so as to prepare the best possible environment, recognizing sensitive periods and diverting inappropriate behavior to meaningful tasks.
- ✚ **Prepare the learning environment** by ensuring that learning materials are provided in an orderly format and the materials provide for appropriate experiences for all the children.
- ✚ **Respect each child** and model ongoing respect for all children and their work.
- ✚ **Introduce learning materials**, demonstrate learning materials, and support children's learning. The teacher introduces learning materials

**viii) Lucy Sprague Mitchell (1878 - 1967):**

- ❑ According to her studies, the children do not develop at the same rate and she put the emphasis on this as she educated the teachers of her time at the Co-operative School for Teachers. She wanted teachers to "know and understand each child as never before, to help each child grow in the way that is best for him" so that he/she can be fully developed in an all-round way.
- ❑ Her work led to the developmental-interaction approach to learning that we see today. This approach emphasizes children's growth through the different developmental stages and understand the "inseparability of the social, emotional, and intellectual components of a children's mind"
- ❑ Paid close attention to affective domain, children's description of feelings and their sources.
- ❑ She penned stories derived from children's actual experiences, such as stories about children involved in block building

**ix) Susan Isaacs (1895-1948):**

She was very keen and perceptive observer. Her books "The nursery years" (1927), Social development in young children and Children and Parent were some of the great works. For Isaacs, the best way for children to learn was by developing their independence. She believed that the most effective way to achieve this was through play, and that the role of adults and early educators was to guide children's play. Thus, play should be viewed as children's work, and social interaction is an important part of play and learning. The emotional needs of children are also very important and symbolic and fantasy play could be a release for a child's feelings.

### 1.15.3 Constructs extracted from Indian Educators for SEL of preschoolers

**Table 1. 1. – Constructs extracted from Indian Educators for SEL of preschoolers**

Sr. No.	Indian Educators	Constructs that can be used for developing SELP
1	Swami Vivekanand	Provide the materials and the environment and the child will grow to the best.
2	Aurobindo	Show by one's loving example
3	Rabindranath Tagore	No brick and mortar arrangement should be there
4	Mahatma Gandhi	The teacher and parents should cooperate
		Teacher's role should be of a mother
		They shall be made self-dependent
5	Gijubhai Badheka	Happiness to child
6	Dr. Radhakrishnan	Let them be self-directed

### 1.15.4 Constructs extracted from Western Educators for SEL of preschoolers

**Table 1.2 – Constructs from Western Educators for SEL of preschoolers**

Sr. No.	Western Educators	Constructs that can be used for developing SELP
1	Johann Amos Comenius (1592-1670)	Children encouraged playing games
		Supported group teaching and group work
2	Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)	Make games an education and education a game.
		Teach more from life
		Let them be free.
		Do careful study of your scholars
3	John Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827)	Put an object before the students and then let them see what they want to see
		Child should not remain inactive. Games are very important for them
		Teach not by words but by things themselves
4	Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel (1782-1852)	Self-activity is important for the education of children
		Development by their own creative activities
		Play is very important: play circle, play song
5	John Dewey (1859-1952)	Active role of learners so he gave Project Based Learning (PBL)
		Experiential education: engage learners in direct experiences

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Western Educators</b>	<b>Constructs that can be used for developing SELP</b>
6	Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)	Children need to develop their five senses, free from the distractions of TV, the computer, and video games.
		Fantasy is integral. It is to get out of the intellect and enter into imagination
		Music, dance, and theater, writing, literature, legends and myths are not simply subjects to be read about, ingested and tested. They are experienced.
7	Maria Montessori (1870)	Child-centered approach
		Observe children
		Give prepared environment- independent, active, learn
		Children treated as responsible individual
8	Lucy Sprague Mitchell (1878 - 1967)	Paying attention to their description of feelings. Observe and listen.
		Developmental-interaction approach
		Exposing children to the sights and sounds of the outer world
9	Susan Issacs (1895-1948)	Children learn by developing independence.
		Put an object before the students and then let them see what they want to see
		Child should not remain inactive. Games are very important for them

### **1.16 FINAL CONSTRUCTS OF SEL DERIVED FROM LITERATURE**

- ❑ Play as the basis for learning. The development of higher mental functions takes place through play, the child develops abstract meaning that is separate from the objects in the world, which is a critical feature in Play. It also leads to physical development, emotional development and creativity too. Learning to play with others will allow the child to learn and understand better ways to interact, thus leading to social development. Playing alone is also important, it teaches child to be independent. (Vygotsky, Erikson, Issac).
- ❑ Fantasy is integral. In a Waldorf school, a broom can be a spaceship, or a horse, unlike in a Montessori school, where it would never be used that way- since the whole point is a reality-based program. Waldorf schools use "toys" like pebbles, wood sticks, or yards of cloth to encourage children to imagine what they can become. It is to get out of the intellect and enter into imagination. (Waldorf)
- ❑ Preschooling is about experiencing music, dance, theatre, literature, writing, legends and myths. (Waldorf)

- ❑ Changing of roles is important in order to change Behaviors; roles correspond to behaviors and vice versa. The roles that are played around the child heavily influence their behavior, beliefs and shape their attitudes. The children try to correspond with these roles of parents, teachers and other social roles of the society. (Role theory)
- ❑ Behaviors and attitudes develop in response to reinforcement, association and encouragement from the people around us, children learn new behaviors from observing other people and that the identity children acquire is formed more by the behaviors and attitudes of others. Intrinsic reinforcements such as a sense of pride, satisfaction and accomplishment could also lead to learning. (Social learning theory)
- ❑ Students thrive in an environment where they are allowed to experience and interact with the curriculum, and all students should have the opportunity to take part in their own learning. Hands on experience and experiential education given by Dewey are important. An example of experiential learning is going to the zoo and learning through observation and interaction with the zoo environment, as opposed to reading about animals from a book. (Dewey)
- ❑ Project based learning (PBL), takes account of a greater depth of understanding of the concept, broader knowledge base, improved interpersonal communication, enhanced social and leadership skills, increased creativity and improved writing skills. Teacher should have the ability to select the influences that shall affect the child. (Dewey)
- ❑ To expose children to the sights and sounds of the outside world and observing and hearing them. Paying attention to their affective domain-children's description of their feelings and their sources. (Lucy Sprague Mitchell)
- ❑ Zone of Proximal Development is the time between learning or the next level in development, the next level can only be obtained by a child's interaction with an adult. This theory emphasizes the importance of a teacher in a child's learning. It recognizes that the adults in a child's environment have an important part to play in the child's learning. (Vygotsky)
- ❑ Parents, caregivers, peers and the culture at large are responsible for the development of higher order functions. Child in activity should be in cultural context, because lack of cultural context distorts our view of development and that it enables us to look at causes of behavior within the child rather than within their culture. (Vygotsky)

- ❑ Attachment to school and teacher is necessary for the suitable socio-emotional development of a child. (John Bowlby)
- ❑ Self-talk and social interaction are necessary for cognitive, language and socio-emotional development.
- ❑ Children are treated with respect and as responsible individuals in Montessori cleaning up their own spills, cutting up raw fruits and vegetables to make their own snacks, visiting washroom without assistance, and cleaning and dusting at the end of the day. (Montessori)
- ❑ Creating a prepared environment, a place where children can do things for themselves, a place that enables them to be independent, active, and learn. A prepared environment makes learning materials and experiences available to children in an orderly format. (Montessori)
- ❑ The day is divided into blocks of time, some small group, some large group. Each day starts with a plan-do-review sequence: first, kids plan what they will do for the day (who they will play with, what areas they will visit, which materials they will use), then they have an hour of work time in which to carry out their plans, and finally they discuss what they've learned and done. Computers are a key component in the classroom. (High/ Scope-David Vikert)
- ❑ Children judge morality based on individual self-interest. Through the direct consequences like reward, praise or punishments they can be taught good or bad. (Kohlberg)
- ❑ Autonomy and Initiative should be given to children. Give them the appropriate materials, learning opportunities or environment to interact and construct knowledge. Help them to think, let them imitate, let them explore, give them the freedom to move and act. Let them use the objects that make impression on them. (Piaget, Erikson)
- ❑ Teachers' role has to be that of a mother. One who cannot take the place of a mother cannot be a teacher. The teachers have to cultivate their own effective life and to encounter their students with a heart. (Gandhi)
- ❑ Self-activity is important for the education of children. (Froebel)
- ❑ 'Play circle' and 'play song' are necessary elements of kindergarten.

- ❑ Put an object before the children and let them see what they want to see. Teach nothing by words that you teach by things themselves. (Pestalozzi)
- ❑ Group teaching and group work. (Comenius)
- ❑ Less to be taught from books and more from life. And make games an education and education a game. (Rousseau)
- ❑ Developmental interaction approach was paying attention to the description of children's feelings and resources. Hearing and observing them carefully and to know and understand every child as never before. (Lucy Sprague Mitchell)
- ❑ Self-initiated activities of kids where they would work out their feelings and emotions in a warm and permissive environment. (Freud)
- ❑ Humans have a unique blend of intelligence that cannot be measured by IQ tests. At any one time a child may be at very different stages of multiple intelligence. (Howard Gardner)
- ❑ The teacher and parents should cooperate in carrying out the education of young children. (Mahatma Gandhi)
- ❑ Do careful study of your scholars. (Jean Jacques Rousseau)
- ❑ Children need to develop their five senses, free from the distractions of TV, the computer, and video games. (Rudolf Steiner)
- ❑ They shall be made self-dependent and self-directed. (Gandhi, Radhakrishnan)
- ❑ Give happiness to the child. (Gijubhai Badheka)

### **1.17 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

India is home to more than one billion people, of which 42% are children, defined as persons less than 18 years of age. Nineteen percent of world's children live in India. There are about 43 crore children in the age group of 0-18 years, of which about 16 crores are represented by the young child under 6 years of age. There is consensus that the early years are the most valuable and vulnerable period when there are the greatest risks to survival, healthy growth, development and susceptibility to a vicious cycle of under nutrition and disease/ infections. These early years are also crucial for cumulative lifelong learning & human development through physical, cognitive, emotional, social and linguistic development (Report of the working group on child rights for the 12<sup>th</sup> five-year plan (2012-

2017)). Now if this huge chunk of population (16 crore) is taken care they can be molded easily to become the future faces of the nation. For this preschool is the initiating point.

Hunt (1961) indicated that the intelligence is not fixed or decided at birth but is a function of the interaction between the genetic potential and the quality of environment the child is exposed to (as cited in Amin & Mohite 1999).

Bloom (1964) supplemented this with the finding that the rate of development particularly intellectual development is most rapid in the early years of life. Almost 85% of the development of brain is complete in this period of 0-6 years and whatever experiences that are gained in this span, shapes the future of the child. Knowing the importance of early years, the preschool education becomes very important and unavoidable.

Though ECCE has occupied a significant place and a great deal of consideration and attention is being given to it, in reality our efforts still seem short to reach desirable level of achievements in this context. The NPE (1986) comprehends ECCE as a critical input for the holistic development of child viz, nutrition and health, social, mental, physical, moral and emotional development. UNESCO's Regional meeting of experts (1979) argues need for promoting the biological, physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth of the child (Thamarasseri, 2008). The world Conference on Education for All has emphasized that the early years of life are of crucial importance for the physical, intellectual and emotional development of the child. The young child's development proceeds rapidly in the early years: the basis of language is laid at this time; attitudes and social relationships are shaped; and the mind is at its most receptive (Rao, 1996)

In spite of all these policies talking of a holistic development of child in these early years the aims and objectives of early childhood education in Asia and Oceania over emphasize on formal learning and preparatory work for literacy which includes development of reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. The focus of pre-school education should now shift from 'Education' to 'Development' which has already taken place in the western countries. The development should be multi-dimensional including biological, physical, cognitive, affective and social aspects (Thamarasseri, 2008). According to Fifth Survey of Research in Education, the focus of researchers is on cognitive aspect and no studies have been reported on socio-emotional development of children. Thus, the researcher instead of

studying preparatory work of literacy and formal learning wants to focus on development that too on social and emotional aspects as it has been neglected since years.

The researchers have also found that the different areas of development are interconnected rather than being separate isolated. Research has identified a strong scientific connection between the limbic (emotional) system in the brain and the release of dopamine a chemical that is central to our cognitive and attention systems (Humphrey, et. al., 2007). This connection allows us to use our emotions to recognize, understand and inform our decision making and to establish appropriate goals towards which our intellectual reasoning can work. Further, when emotions go uncontrolled, the amygdala can cause our cognitive brain centers to short circuit and interfere with intellectual performance (Humphrey et al., 2007). Thus, in short, we can say that emotional and intellectual performance is related. As also seen in the literature review some of the studies like Marie Team (2006), Raver, Knitzer (2002), Di Santo & Aurelia (2006) supports this view that social and emotional development affects academic success and these areas of development are interconnected. The modern lifestyle we are living is affecting the development of a child specially the socio-emotional development. When a child watches his/her parent's quarrelling, it affects him or her. This is the age of being loved, being cared, given safety, but instead of this the child gets loneliness, watches fight, has no sibling to talk to or peers to play with, the child becomes "deprived". Deprivation can be psychological and emotional as well as economic. The only child, of a well to do family, can be psychologically "deprived" if not given enough time by the parents; the unwanted child of any family, rich or poor, can be emotionally "deprived". The child of a poor family can be economically deprived (Sharma & Sharma, 2009). Such deprivations may in future give rise to delinquency and many disorders. Recent studies have reported that 10 to 25 percent of preschool or early school age children meet the criteria for oppositional defiant disorder or early onset conduct problems- that is, they have aggressive, disruptive, oppositional and hyperactive behaviour problems in a high or clinical range (Webster & Stratton, 2009).

These trends have disturbing implications for all of us, not just for the families of these children, because 'early onset' conduct problems in young children have been shown to be predictive of subsequent drug abuse, depression, juvenile delinquency, antisocial behaviour and violence in adolescence and adulthood (Webster & Stratton, 2009). In short

everyone pays in the long run- personally, financially, or both- when these children are left uncared, unattended and their behaviour problems untreated.

The mentality of Indian parents since decades has been to train the children in formal learning and 3R's in the preschools. It is with this aim they send their children to preschools so that the children become expert in academics and the transaction to school becomes easy for them, thus ignoring this fact that a very crucial phase of these children is being missed out (90% of the development of brain takes place Upto the age of 6 years) and that the children in this race of academic success do not get the time for their personal development and become emotionally and socially detached. But nowadays awareness is spreading due to televisions and magazines, researches done abroad and various literatures. As a result, the parents are recognizing the importance of holistic development and its relation with future success. Hence, the researcher wants to study the social and emotional aspect of the children and how it can be enhanced in the changing scenario.

Thus, preschools are playing a very important and decisive role. It is not only helping them in academics but also giving the deprived children (socially-emotionally) the enriching experiences and helping them in appropriate development. If such emotionally and social deprived children are diagnosed at an early stage as that of preschool, they can be dealt with in a better way and proper interventions of socio-emotional learning and development may be given and the success of the child in future can be ensured.

One can imagine the consequences if there would be no preschools, the entire responsibility of the child would fall in parent's hands. The parents are the first school of a child, but what if these hands fell short of their responsibilities and what about the deprived children who need an additional help? What about the different social, emotional and cognitive experiences of which the child would be deprived off, which are necessary for his/her all round development?

The purpose of this study is to lend support to the efforts of preschools to give more attention to developing the social competence and emotional well-being of children. Teachers understand that just as a child's cognitive competence affects his or her ability to learn, a child's social competence and emotional security affects his or her ability to learn. This can act like a buffer to the child who is deprived from developmentally appropriate socio-emotional practices at home.

Thus, following profound research questions which emerge are:

1. How can a program be evolved to enhance socio-emotional development and learning of children from various developmental theories given by psychologists and educationists?
2. What would be the nature of socio-emotional learning programme?
3. How such program can influence or affect the development of preschoolers?

#### **1.17.1 Statement of the problem**

Development and Implementation of Socio-Emotional Learning Programme for Preschoolers

#### **1.17.2 Objectives of the Study**

- 1 To study the existing level of Socio-Emotional status of preschoolers.
- 2 To develop Socio-Emotional Learning Programme (SELP) for preschoolers.
- 3 To implement the Socio-Emotional Learning Programme (SELP) on preschoolers.
- 4 To study the extent of enhancement of Socio-Emotional status among Preschoolers.

#### **1.17.3 Explanation of terms**

**1. Socio-Emotional Learning Programme (SELP):** It is a programme developed for enhancement of social emotional learning of preschoolers which consist of five dimensions.

- ❑ **Self-concept:** Self-concept in the programme has been described in terms of development and expression of awareness of self in terms of abilities, characteristics and preferences. Developing sense of individuality and self-worth. Encourage and provide opportunities for participation i.e. self-expression, exploration, investigation and experimentation and develop independence and aesthetic appreciation.
- ❑ **Cultural sensitivity:** The Cultural sensitivity has been defined as Knowing India and its Culture. Imbibing Values in His / Her Sociocultural Context and develop Pride & Nationalism
- ❑ **Awareness and management of feelings:** Awareness and management of feelings in this SELP means to know, identify and understand their own feelings as well as that of others. To be able to express the feelings and to develop the acceptance of feelings and control feelings.

- ❑ **Building positive relationships:** Building positive relationships in this SEL programme means to Strengthen Relationship with Peers, Teachers & Family. It also includes development of Sharing, Cooperation & Friendship, Affection, Love, and Care & Belongingness. It also includes being Sensitive to others & appreciate their Perspectives
  - ❑ **Problem solving, decision making & creativity:** Problem solving and decision making in the SELP means Strategies to deal with Negative Emotions like anger, aggression, fear, selfishness. It also deals with understanding Good/Bad Situation. It means solving the problem in difficult situations and make ethically right decisions. It is also finding out solution to daily Problems and using various strategies to enhance creativity.
2. **Preschools:** Preschools in the present study means the pre-primary schools attached to primary, secondary or higher secondary schools having Junior KG.
  3. **Preschoolers:** Preschoolers in the present study means the children studying in **Junior KG** of the preschools.
  4. **Social Development:** In this study means building attachment, relationships, developing sympathy, empathy, cultural sensitivity, sharing, cooperation, social approval, responsibility, commitment among preschoolers. Providing them safety and security and opportunities to overcome the unsocial behaviour pattern.
  5. **Emotional Development:** In this study means recognizing, understanding, expressing, accepting, controlling the feelings and regulating the emotions (anger, jealousy, curiosity, fear, joy, grief and affection) appropriately.