



# A Study on Learning Outcomes of the Children in ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District

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## ABSTRACT

Early childhood education often focuses on children learning through play. It is learning about the development of young children and teaches these young children from birth to age of four about basic knowledge of cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills. The aim of ECCE is that every child should be assured access to the fulfilment of all basic needs. It involves the total development of the child in every aspect including the physical, psychomotor, cognitive, language, emotional, social and moral. The objective of the study is to find out the learning outcomes of the children in ECCE centres. Learning outcome is the academic performance of the children in the ECCE centres. The learning outcomes allow us to understand the child's cognitive level of understanding as the children are in the foundation stage of learning. The learning outcomes will give us the results of learning outcomes of the students in the centre. Education is an all round development of the child which begins right from the womb of our mother. This study investigated the study on learning outcomes of the children in ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District of Meghalaya. The researcher adopted descriptive cum normative survey method and cross sectional research design for the completion of this study. The sample of 455 learners of ECCE centres was selected by making use of sample random sampling technique. The collected learning outcome scores were organised and analyzed by applying the descriptive statistics and t-test.

**Keywords:** ECCE, Learning Outcomes, Education

## 1. Introduction

The growth and development of children are considered significant in any nation as the progress and prosperity of a nation depends upon her children. Further, one needs to understand that the growth and development of any child are depending on the type of education which he/she gets during the pre-school period of the age group 3 to 6 years. In reality pre-school education of a child begins even before the birth. Therefore, M.K. Gandhi opined that the real education begins from the conception as the mother begins to take up the responsibility of the child. If a mother is correctly instructed and prepared for the coming responsibility, then that will be the education of the child as well. In view of this, pre-primary education is the education which the child receives before entering school at the age group of 5 or 6 years. Early childhood of a child refers to the formative stage of first six years of life with well-marked stages (conception to birth, birth to 3 years and 3 years to 6 years) with some specific needs. The specific aim of pre-primary education is to promote regular habits of reading, writing and arithmetic. The Sargent Report (1944) indicated that an adequate provision of pre-primary institution in the form of Nursery school or classes is an essential adjustment to any national system of education. ECCE is an opportunity to reduce developmental problems, thereby bringing lasting benefits to individuals and society. ECCE stress the importance of child-friendly, family-focused and community-based programmes that not only aim to strengthen ongoing social service programmes, but improve the physical and mental modify inequalities rooted in poverty as well as social, religious or gender discrimination.

## 2. Concept of Early Childhood Care and Education

Concept of early childhood care and education refers to care and education of the child from birth to 8 years. Emerging from the 1970's, ECCE is a programme for laying the foundations of development and full realisation of his potential from the formative stage, i.e., early life. Conceptually the concept of ECCE is inclusive of three programmes: For the age group of 0-3 early stimulation is provided in family and crèches, for the age group of 3-6 experiences are provided in pre-schools and for children of 6-8 early primary education are included in the broad rubric of ECCE. The ECCE was originally used as ECE beginning from pre-school but because care formed a part of this early childhood education, it is being used now as ECCE, which is provided care and experiences that lead to their all-round development-physical, mental, social-emotional and school readiness. Pre-primary education or Early Childhood Care and Education Programme caters to the needs of children in the age group of 0-6 years. The focus of this programme is to provide care, opportunities and experiences leading to an all-round development- physical, social, mental, emotional and school readiness of the child. The nutritional and health needs of the child also taken care under this programme. A healthy environment in which the child can explore, experiment and freely express himself/herself will help develop a healthy mind. The important components of learning at this stage are music, rhythm and activities such as speaking, listening and expressing one-self. The good quality of ECCE Programmes will have a healthy impact on child's all-round development.

### **3. Concept of Pre-Primary Education**

M.K. Gandhiji was of the opinion that education should be child centred in nature. He believed that the home is the first centre of a child's education and learning. Therefore, Gandhiji came out with the opinion of keeping close relationship between the home and school. Second, Gijubhai Badheka was one of the pioneers of the Early Childhood Education in India. He got inspired by Maria Montessori's pedagogical philosophy and methods and thought of using in Indian situations for imparting early childhood education (ECE). He initiated an indigenous educational system, taking care of Gandhian Philosophy and integrating with Montessori's Pedagogical Philosophy of Education. Tarabai Modak along with Gijubhai Badheka and Anutai Wagh pioneered a new approach to teaching under privileged rural children in tune with the Montessori Principles. Tarabai Modak started a new educational institution for tribal children in Kosbad in Thane district and she developed the concept of 'Anganwadi' taking into consideration that if the children are unable to reach school, then the school should reach to children in their 'Angans', in view this, now-a-days, the concept of 'Anganwadis' has become very popular across the different status of India in the context of early childhood care education. Taking the stock of views and opinions of the western thinkers and Indian thinkers on the concept of early childhood care and education (ECCE), it is clear that ECCE makes a positive contribution to children long term development and learning by making use of natural environment of the school. Parents are considered significant in providing a stimulating learning environment for the learning of children during pre-primary any stage. ECCE facilitates the realization of goals of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) by helping children in necessary readiness for schooling in terms of getting them habituated to regularly attending the centre-based programme away from home and developing some basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills. Along with these skills, the health and nutritional requirements are also taken care under ECCE.

Rousseau introduced a movement in education which is called 'Naturalism', where his ideas and contributions are related to Early Childhood Education which are the rights for the child to grow with it; making games an educational purpose for the child's life; there should be less books and more activities for the children in the age group of 3-8 years. Children are to be free from the teaching-learning process and there should be discipline for the child to order to cope up with their studies. Froebel stressed the importance of play in the development of young children's mind as it act as an ingredient to ECE. His ideas and contributions towards ECCE for the child was the sole source of educational principles and teacher simply followed where the students led. Dr. Maria Montessori became interested in the problems of mentally retarded children. She developed materials, mainly of three types: those that are designed to train the senses, those that teach practical skills and those that help children adapt themselves to the needs of school life. In 1937, Gandhi gave us a sound ideological basis for his scheme of new education called Tai-Talim or Basic Education. He had realised the importance of early childhood education and said that the real education begins from conception as the mother take up the responsibility of the child and it is very clear that the 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 also. Piaget's theories for the nursery and primary school teachers implicated that they should provide stories and rhymes and free activity during free periods for the child; the teachers should allow for the development of vocabulary and all kinds of symbolic representation; the schools may provide with play areas with large toys in which children learn to control their actions and obtain a working knowledge of spatial relationships.

### **4. Aims and objectives of Pre-School Education**

National curriculum framework (2005) emphasized two years of pre-schooling and considered ECCE as significant for holistic development of the child, as a preparation for schooling and as a support service for woman and girls. It advocated play based developmentally appropriate curriculum. National plan of action for children (2005) included universalisation of ECCE as one of the goals. It specified care, protection and development opportunities for children below 3 years and integrated care and development and preschool learning opportunities for 3-6 years old. Pre-primary education is the education that a child received before entering school at the age five or six. Actually, it starts even before the birth of a child. Therefore, it includes prenatal education, prenatal and post-natal care also. It includes formal as well as non-formal education which imparted in a school as well as outside. Pre-primary education in its broader sense may be divided into the following four parts;

1. Pre-primary education from conception to birth.
2. Pre-primary education from birth to two and a half year.
3. Pre-primary education from a two and half to four years.
4. Pre-primary education from four to five or six years.

According to Miss Grace Owen (1923-1933), Secretary of Britain's Nursery School Association stated that there are six objectives of nursery schools such as:

- (i) To provide healthy external conditions for children like: light, fresh air, fresh water etc.
- (ii) To organize happy and regular life for children and continuous medical supervision.
- (iii) To give opportunity for imagination and development of skills.
- (iv) To assist each child to form for himself wholesome personal habits.
- (v) To provide experience of community life.
- (vi) To achieve a real unity with home life.

Therefore, the overall aim of ECCE will be to attain optimal outcomes in the domains of physical and motor development, cognitive development, socio-emotional-ethical development, cultural/artistic development and the development of communication and early language, literacy and numeracy.

### **5. National Policy on Education (1986) and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)**

The National Policy on Education (1986) and Early Childhood Care and Education shows the following important features and programmes as under:

1. The NPE has used the term ECCE in place of pre-primary or nursery education. NPE lays stress on the holistic nature of child development, namely., nutrition, health and social, mental, physical, moral and emotional development and recommends that ECCE should be suitably integrated with the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Programme, whenever possible.
2. The span under consideration in ECCE is from conception to about 6 years.
3. ICDS includes six services: supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check up referral services, health education and non-formal pre-school education.
4. Day-care centres should be provided as a support service for universalization of primary education to enable girls engaged in taking care of siblings to attend school and as a support service for working women belonging to poorer sections.
5. Programmes of ECCE should be child-oriented.
6. Programmes of ECCE should be focused around play and the individuality of the child.
7. Formal methods and introduction of 3 R's should be discouraged at this stage.
8. The local community should be fully involved in ECCE programmes.
9. A full integration of child care and pre-primary education should be brought about, both as a feeder and strengthening for primary education and human resource development.

### **6. Educational Policy on NEP 2020**

The Nation Education Policy 2020 is the first policy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and aims to address many growing development imperatives of our country. This Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21<sup>st</sup> century education. Over 85 percent of a child cumulative brain development occurs prior to the age of 6, indicating the critical importance of appropriate care and stimulation of the brain in a child's early years for healthy brain development and growth. Therefore, it is the utmost importance that every child has access to quality early childhood care and education (ECCE). Currently, children in the age group of 3-6 year are not covered in the 10+2 structure as Class 1 begins at the age of 6. So, in the new 5+3+3+4 structure, a strong base of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) from age 3 is also included, which is aiming at promoting better overall learning, development and well-being. This new academic structure will follow 5 years in strengthening the foundation stage which includes three years of pre-school or Anganwadi education and two years of primary school, 3 years in the preparatory stage, 3 years in the middle stage and 4 year in the secondary stage. The main aim of this new academic structure is to focus on the holistic, flexible and multidisciplinary learning.

## 7. Reviews of Related Literature

As the foundational stage of education is considered utmost significant (NEP-2020), which takes care of all the components of Pre-primary education. There are large number of studies which have been conducted in aboard and India pertaining the different dimensions of ECCE. Makhlof (2019) conducted a comparative study on "Pre-School Education system in Egypt and USA" highlighting the issues of pre-school education system in these two countries. The school argued that pre-school teachers play a vital role in preparing children for later learning in settings American pre-primary schools were found better than Egyptian Pre-primary schools. Egyptian schools need some improvements by way of enhancing the quality of teachers and physical infrastructure. Gong and Wang (2017) provided a comparative analysis of pre-service education for pre-schoolteachers in China and USA and found that USA provided better pre-service education to pre-school teachers than the teachers in China. Jena and Wangmo (2016) conducted evaluative study on ECCE in Bhutan and indicated that ECCE centres were running with inadequate facilities. Similarly, there are some by the other studies in aboard like- Zua (2015), Brodunetal. (2015), Brobanetal. (2014), Broughman etal. (2011), Taylor, Lee and Franceschini etal. (2011), Mossaun (2011), Semra and Aylon (2010) etc. All these studies indicated the status of pre-school education in different countries of the world and pointed the differences of ECCE centres in terms of their physical infrastructural facilities, preparation of children and pre-school teacher training programmes. Hangsing (2013) found some problems concerning to pre-primary school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh. Taking the stock of all these studies the investigator thought to take up the present research project on ECCE in Meghalaya and finding out the current studies in tune with the desirability of NEP-2020. Nikhla and Nongbri (2018) conducted a study on curriculum and practices for Early Childhood Care and Education, where the study is more concern on the curriculum as in Meghalaya there is no prescribed curriculum for the pre-primary schools. Therefore, the practices will lead to damaging to child's learning but leading to a poor academic performance. Therefore, this study tries to examine the curriculum and its practices laid down by various policies and also to find out the quality of early childhood education in our region. It was found that high percentage (74%) of pre-primary schools were organised by the government of Meghalaya but without financial assistance from the Government.

## 8. Rationale of the study

It has been marked significantly that the first 6 years of any body's life are considered utmost important for taking the individual in other stages of life. This is the period during which 90% brain of the child gets developed as neuroscience research studies have confirmed. Further, the neuro science advocates that the development of brain is greatly affected by the health, food and other nutrients along with the intensive care. In view of this, the ECCE is considered significant intervention and Article 45 of Indian Constitution, Amended. RTE Act-2009 was brought out and enforced in 2010 under which ECCE brought and made compulsory in all the states of India. ECCE got implemented through the scheme of ICDS in the year 1975.

ECCE has shown its effect on the growth and development children from the age group of 3-6 years and its impact has also been marked on other educational stages of the child. NCERT carried out several studies and indicated positive effect on the cognitive and psycho social development of children. National Institute of Public Cooperative and Child Development (NIPCCD) (1980) conducted a study and found pre-school education under ICDS has shown positive input on the learning of 3 R's along with improvement in socialization among the children.

Similarly, some of other studies like- Swaminathan (1986), Srinivasan (1987), Duhan and Kaur (2000), Chuaungo (2001), Russelletal. (2004), Rani and Rao (2013), Jairamand Chopra (2020) etc carried out by taking the various issues of ECCE centres in different parts of the country. Similarly, some of the studies have also been conducted like- Lombi and Padu(2019) conducted on the various issues of ECCE in the capital complex of Papum Pare district of Arunachal Pradesh and highlighted the status of ECCE and awareness level of teachers. Hangsing (2013) worked on problems and prospects of pre-primary school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh. Nongbri and Nikhla(2018) conducted a study on the Curriculum and Practices for ECCE in Meghalaya. But the investigator thought to make an important study on the functioning of ECCE across the selected districts of Meghalaya and finding out the existing learning outcomes of the children towards ECCE in the state of Meghalaya. Keeping in view this, the investigator selected the following research problem.

**9. Statement of Research Problem:** "A Study on Learning Outcomes of the Children of the ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District."

## 10. Significance of the study

The present is considered significant in the context of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District of Meghalaya. In such situation, the study will come out with the status of ECCE centres across the state in relation to their learning outcomes. The study will highlight the major challenges pertaining to the quality of learners in terms of their performance and abilities at the early childhood stage. It is expected that the learning outcomes of the study will definitely act as an eye opener for the teachers/Anganwadi workers at the ECCE centres. Therefore,



the present study will provide an impetus to enhance the foundation and preparatory stages of education in accordance with NEP-2020.

### 11. Objectives of the study

1. To find out the learning outcomes of the enrolled children in ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District.
2. To find out the difference in learning outcomes of male and female children in ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District.

### 12. Hypothesis

1. There will be no significant difference between the learning outcomes of male and female learners in ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District.

### 13. Methodology

The researcher adopted descriptive cum normative survey method and cross sectional research design for the completion of this study. The sample of 455 learners of ECCE centres was selected by making use of simple random sampling technique. The collected learning outcome scores were organised and analyzed by applying the descriptive statistics and t-test. The researcher used an achievement test for obtaining the learning outcome score of the children of ECCE centres. This achievement test was constructed and standardized by Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development (CECED), Ambedkar University, Delhi.

### 14. Analysis and Interpretation

For the purpose of analysis and computation of results, the researcher adopted the tables-1, 2, 3, 4,5,6 and 7.

**Table 1: Frequency table for learning outcome of students in ECCE Centre of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District**

CI	f	x	fx	fx <sup>2</sup>
45-47	99	5	495	2475
42-44	38	4	152	608
39-41	54	3	162	486
36-38	95	2	190	380
33-35	36	1	36	36
<b>30-32</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
27-29	3	-1	-3	3
24-26	27	-2	-54	108
21-23	28	-3	-84	252
18-20	1	-4	-4	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>		<b>Σfx=890</b>	<b>Σfx<sup>2</sup>=4364</b>

$$M = 36.85, \sigma = 7.2, P_{33} = 32.8, P_{66} = 38.86$$

**Table 2: Levels of learning outcomes of students in ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District**

High level	Moderate Level	Lower Level
221	175	59
48.57%	38.46%	12.96%

**Interpretation:** The table-1 adopted for computing the mean score of the learning outcomes of ECCE learners in Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang Districts of Meghalaya and the computed mean score came out to be 36.85 out of the maximum 45 marks which is 81.88 percent and it show that the computed SD value was found to be 7.2 which shows very low variation among the learning outcomes of ECCE learners. Further, the table-2 reveals that the learning outcomes of the learners were divided into three categories, i.e., high, moderate and low categories which were found 48.57 percent, 38.46 percent and 12.96 percent learners in each category respectively which seems to be almost a normal distribution. Generally, 87.03 percent students have shown good amount of academic performance and only 12.96 percent learners have show a bit low performance. In view of this, a little more efforts need to be put for the improvement of learning outcomes at the ECCE level on the part of ECCE teachers/Anganwadi workers.

**Table 3: Frequency table for male learning outcomes of ECCE Centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District**

CI	F	x	fx	fx <sup>2</sup>
45-47	45	4	180	720
42-44	24	3	72	216
39-41	24	2	48	96
36-38	41	1	41	41
<b>33-35</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
30-32	45	-1	-45	45
27-29	1	-2	-2	4
24-26	15	-3	-45	135
21-23	14	-4	-56	224
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>		<b>Σfx=193</b>	<b>Σfx<sup>2</sup>=1481</b>

**M = 36.49    σ = 7.17    P<sub>33</sub> = 32.53    P<sub>66</sub> = 38.77**

**Table 4: Level of Male learning outcomes of ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District**

High Level	Moderate Level	Lower Level
134	67	29
58.26%	29.13%	12.60%

**Interpretation:** The table-3 adopted for computing the mean score of male learning outcomes of ECCE centre in Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District of Meghalaya and the computed mean score came out to be 36.49 out of the maximum 45 marks which is 81.08 percent and it shows the computed SD value was found to be 7.17 which shows very low variation among the male learning outcomes of ECCE learners. Further, the table-4 reveals that the male learning outcomes of the learners were divided into three categories, i.e., high, moderate and low categories which were found 58.26 percent, 29.13 percent and 12.60 percent learners in each category respectively which seems to be almost a normal distribution. Generally, 87.39 percent male students have shown good amount of learning outcomes. In view of this, a little more efforts need to be put for the improvement of learning outcomes at the ECCE level on the part of ECCE teachers/Anganwadi workers.

**Table 5: Frequency table for female learning outcomes of ECCE Centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District**

CI	f	x	fx	fx <sup>2</sup>
45-47	53	4	212	848
42-44	14	3	42	126
39-41	30	2	60	120
36-38	55	1	55	55
<b>33-35</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
30-32	29	-1	-29	29
27-29	2	-2	-4	8
24-26	12	-3	-36	108
21-23	14	-4	-56	224
18-20	1	-5	-5	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>		<b>Σfx=239</b>	<b>Σfx<sup>2</sup>=1543</b>

**M = 37.18    σ = 7.17    P<sub>33</sub> = 35.53    P<sub>66</sub> = 38.65**

**Table 6: Level of Female learning outcomes of ECCE centres**

High Level	Moderate Level	Lower Level
152	44	29
67.55%	19.55%	12.88%

**Interpretation:** The table-5 adopted for computing the mean score of female learning outcomes of ECCE centre in Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District of Meghalaya and the computed mean score came out to be 37.18 out of the maximum 45 marks which is 82.62 percent and it shows the computed SD value was found to be 7.17 which shows very low variation among the female learning outcomes of ECCE learners. Further, the table-6 reveals that the female learning outcomes of the learners were divided into three categories, i.e., high, moderate and low categories which were found 67.55 percent, 19.55 percent and 12.88 percent learners in each category respectively which seems to be almost a normal distribution. Generally, 87.1 percent female students

have shown good amount of learning outcomes. In view of this, a little more efforts need to be put for the improvement of learning outcomes at the ECCE level on the part of ECCE teachers/Anganwadi workers.

**Table 7: Comparison of Male and Female learning outcomes of ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District**

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	df	t-value
Male	230	36.49	7.17	0.6	453	1.15
Female	225	37.18	7.17			

**Interpretation:** The table-7 indicates that the computed t-value came out to be 1.15 which is lesser than the table criterion t-value at .05 level of significance for 453 df, hence, the computed t-value (1.15) has not been considered significant and the formulated hypothesis: "There will be no significant difference between the learning outcomes of male and female learners in ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District" got retained. From this, it is interpreted that the learning outcome scores of male and female ECCE learners really do not differ significantly as the computed learning outcome mean scores of male and female shown 36.49 and 37.18 respectively in table-7. It shows that gender as variable does not influence the learning outcomes of ECCE learners in Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District.

### 15. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the ECCE plays a very vital role in the foundation stage of the child which gives a healthy environment to the child in exploring, experimenting and freely express himself/herself with a healthy mind. Therefore, the important components of learning at this stage are music, rhythm and activities such as speaking, listening and expressing one-self. Early Childhood Care and Education emphasizes a holistic approach focusing on the child's physical, emotional, social as well as cognitive development. The objective of ECCE is to nurture the children for their physical and mental development and to prepare them for schooling with right attitudes and habits.

Therefore, the learning outcomes of the children in the ECCE centres of Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District have been found satisfactory. It means that the ECCE centres in Eastern West Khasi Hills Mairang District of Meghalaya functions effectively.

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