



Contemporary Early childhood Education: Evaluation and analysis

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ABSTRACT

Early childhood is the blossoming age for the development of human personality. Psychological, neurological and educational studies have found that the early childhood period is the most sensitive, critical and receptive period in life. Nowadays, when preschool education is gaining rapid momentum throughout the world, what needs to be seen is whether the-most-talked-about early childhood education is being imparted in the right spirit. Does this education really serve the purpose it is supposed to? Does it aim at fostering the all-round, integrated development of the child? This research is thus an exploratory attempt to find out an answer to these questions. It was conducted to study the contemporary early childhood education in rural and urban areas. It aimed to evaluate and compare the curricular and extra curricular activities in rural and urban preschools. The sample for the study comprised of 100 preschool centres (50 from rural and 50 from urban areas). The tools used were a self designed questionnaire meant for the administrators of the preschool centres. Results indicated that in rural areas formal educational system still prevails to a considerable degree. Curricular activities are highly emphasized and children tend to be pressurized by means of regular class and home assignments, evaluations etc. Extra curricular activities like games, drawing, painting, singing, dancing etc. are carried out with less frequency thereby overlooking the importance of such productive activities. In urban areas also preschool children are subjected to greater constraints of qualifying entrance tests, acquisition of academic skills and huge learning burden. But in comparison to their rural counterparts, these children still find some refuge by means of recreational and extra curricular activities, that are given due importance in majority of the urban preschool centres.

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