
A Comparative Study of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies within Aizawl City with Reference to their Educational Qualification and Existing Infrastructure

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Abstract

The quality of the education can be measured by the quality of its pre-school, because it is the first step towards entering the world of knowledge as well as healthy and purposeful life. Therefore, bearing the importance and its consequences, nations are more concerned about Early Childhood Care and Education. So, in present scenario Early Childhood Care and Education is carried out mainly in two ways - private Pre-school and Government Anganwadies. The main objectives of the study is to compare the educational qualification of the teachers and the physical infrastructure of private pre-schools and Anganwadies with reference to the norms laid down by the NCERT. The sample of the study consists of 15 Private Pre-schools and 15 Anganwadies centre within Aizawl City. The investigator used observation cum interview schedule prepared by Chuaungo (for studying the existing conditions of Pre-schools). The collected data was used to compare the physical infrastructure and to find out the difference in educational qualification of both the school using statistical method. The study revealed that most of the Anganwadies teachers' qualifications did not meet the norms given by NCERT while most of the Private Pre-schools teachers have attained the norms. The study also indicated that in comparing to the existing physical infrastructure - Pre-schools were far better than Anganwadies.

Keywords: *Private pre-schools, Anganwadies, Early childhood care and education.*

Introduction

The early childhood is a recent term synonymous or parallelly used for pre-school years to describe the period before children enter school. Nowadays, it has become common practice for many parents to put their children in schools as early as age two or three or four. In some advanced and even in developing countries, early childhood education, means education for two to five years old children i.e. before primary school or kindergarten. In the

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Indian context, the age span covered under early childhood care and education is from conception to 6 years (Aggarwal & Gupta, 2007) therefore, formal method of teaching is restricted for this stage of children's development. Early childhood education or pre-school education stage is a preparatory and readiness stage for primary education. It is generally of two years duration extending from 3 to 5 years or 4 to 6 years. Recently NEP 2020 Revised school structure : In the new 5+3+3=4 structure a strong base of ECCE from age 3 is included to promote overall learning, development and well being" year 3 of ECCE would be Balvatika or preparatory class. 2. Vision for ECCE: "ECCE ideally consists of flexible, multifaceted, multilevel, play-based, activity-based, and inquiry based education". The overall aim of ECCE will be to attain optimal outcomes in domains of physical & motor development, cognitive development; socio-emotional & ethical development; cultural/artistic development & development of communication & early language, literacy and numeracy." 3. Foundational years : The Foundational Stage will consist of five years (3-8 years) of flexible, multilevel, play/activity based learning and the curriculum and pedagogy of ECCE. 4. Medium of Instruction: Wherever possible the MOI until at least Grade 5 but preferably till grade 8 & beyond will be home language /MT/RL. This will be followed by both public and private schools. Exposure to many languages – multilingual environment.

Early childhood is a period which covers colossal growth and development. Children develop rapidly during the period from their birth to 5 years of age in comparison to any other stage in their lives, shaped in large part by their experience in the world. These early years of development are critical for providing a firm foundation in cognition, language, and motor development as well as social, emotional, regulatory and moral development. (Shukla 2004)

Energizing, nurturing, and stable relationships with parents and other caregivers are necessary for children's healthy development and the absence of these factors can compromise children's development.

The SSA, Mizoram has started setting up new ECCE centres which are Pre-Primary sections, attached to the Primary schools under the SSA on July, 2005. The children, covered belong to 3 – 5 years of age. Some attempts are made to provide learning readiness programme. The children in these Early Childhood Care and Education Centres are provided mid-day meal along with Primary school children. Pre-school under Private management have their presence too in Mizoram. The private management runs invariably English Medium Institutions. These schools have been opening classes usually from Nursery/ Kindergarten (KG) stage. Thus, before a child is able to sit in Class I, he/she has to attend the Nursery and KG Classes (for two years) which simultaneously provide chances for pre-school activities. The pre-school in Mizoram has been implemented under the scheme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) by the Department of Social Welfare since 1978. A non-formal pre-school education is one of the package of services rendered by the ICDS.

Rationale of the Study

To realize the importance of the study of the early childhood education is to know the value of early childhood education as it gives children good foundations upon which to build their succeeding years in school; as besides their academics, they develop a sense of self and family and it teaches them how to communicate with others even though they may be small, and this can help make the world better.

Early Childhood Care and Education has received attention in the National Policy for children (1974), consequent to which the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) was initiated on a pilot basis in 1975 with the objective of laying the foundation for holistic and integrated development of child and building capabilities of caregivers.

The Government of India had formulated the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986 to promote education for the welfare of all its citizens. The policy focuses on the overall development of young children and visualizes ECCE as an important factor for strengthening primary education in the country.

It is crucial to find out the current status of private pre-schools and Anganwadis since early childhood care and education is the foundation period. The ICDS project in Mizoram has rendered its service solely/mainly for the establishment and welfare of the Anganwadis. The ICDS has 5 objectives mainly catering to the needs of a child. Further to enhance the objectives, packages of services are implemented. Tireless efforts rendered by the Government and Anganwadi workers have enabled Mizoram to have one of the best AnganwadiCentres in the country. At the same time, having an awareness of the importance of early childhood education, people who have interest in this matter have set up pre-schools, especially in urban areas. Thus, this has led to the need for a comparison to find out the quality of the Private privately run pre-schools and Anganwadis under Government. The nurturing of children is very important so these are the two agencies who carry out this important task. NCERT has laid down norms to be followed by the teacher about their qualifications, physical infrastructure, records and register so there is also a need to find out whether they fulfill the norms laid down by the NCERT for running pre-schools or not. For qualitative development, competent, professionally trained and enthusiastic teachers are required to teach at this level. Further, it is important to find out the infrastructure, learning environments and whether special programme for the benefit of the children are organized or not. It is imperative to compare the private Pre-schools and Anganwadis in human and physical aspects. It is also important to find out the parents' reaction and their expectations of private pre-schools and Anganwadies.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study has been stated as *“A Comparative Study of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies within Aizawl City with Reference to their Educational Qualification and Existing Infrastructure”*

Review of related literature

Taylor, Lee & Franceschini et al. (2011) performed a research on “*A comparative study of childcare in Japan and the USA: Who needs to take care of our young children?*” The USA and Japan teachers have some similarities and differences in taking care of the children and they have examined their differences and similarities among the teachers in their perception of children among childhood. The results of the study revealed that there was a significant differences in these perception, that American teachers have stronger belief that mothers are the most important part in taking care of the children in comparing to Japanese teachers belief. Both groups of teachers, however, had similar views that group care offers positive development of children.

Zia’s (2015) comparative analysis of public and private educational institutions in Vehari District of Pakistan revealed that education is the main key of progress for the country. Zia said that the main aims of education for private schools were increasing the literate student and reduce illiterate pupil. Primary data were taken through questionnaire and survey method and the result shows that much of the student prefer private schools though public schools provides books and uniforms at free rate for students, still many students prefer private schools as it provides better environment for children than public schools. The findings also showed that the socioeconomic status of the home, the degree of a school’s user-friendliness, the cost of education, parents’ observations of school quality, and their sensitivities of the available employment opportunities in the region.

Singh & Mukherjee (2017) conducted “*Comparison of the Effects of Government and Private Preschool Education on the Developmental Outcomes of Children: Evidence From Young Lives India*”. The findings of the study indicated that many of the centres, whether it was an anganwadi or pre-school, were housed in a rented building, while only some had accommodation of their own. Significant differences were found between anganwadis and preschools regarding the engagement of children in developmental activities. The findings revealed that anganwadis provided very few opportunities for activities initiated by the child that encouraged creativity and provided the stimulation necessary for intellectual growth.

Research Questions

Are there any differences between the educational qualification and the physical structure of private Pre-school and Anganwadies with reference laid down by the NCERT?

Objectives

- 1) To find out and compare the teacher educational qualification of private pre-schools and Anganwadies with reference to the criteria laid down by the NCERT.
- 2) To examine and compare the existing physical infrastructure of private pre-schools and Anganwadies in compliance with the norms laid down by the NCERT.

Delimitations

Due to time constraint, the present study was confined only to Aizawl City.

Method of study

Descriptive survey approach was used to conduct the present study.

Sources of data

The study has used primary and secondary source of data for attainment of its objectives. Primary sources are direct contact obtained through the Head of the Institution, teacher and parents of Pre-schools and Anganwadies. Secondary source are institution office records.

Population and sample of the study

The population of the study comprise of all the Pre-schools and Anganwadies within the Aizawl South Area. The investigators selected 15 - private Pre-schools and Anganwadiescentres as the sample of the study.

Tools used for data collection

For the present study, questionnaire, observation cum interview schedule prepared by Chuaungo (2002) were used. Interview schedule for Head of the Institution prepared by the investigator was also used.

Data collection

The investigator personally visited the school and permission was taken from the Head of the institution of the school to collect the required data confidentiality was assured.

Data analysis

The data collected were tabulated and analyzed for comparison to find out the differences, which was shown in percentage.

Analysis and interpretation

Analysis of the present study was done in accordance with the objectives of the study.

Objective No. 1 :Comparison was done between 15 Anganwadies teacher and 15 Private Pre-school teacher.

Table No. 1 shows the number of teacher who are under-graduate and graduate of both the institution. The comparison result was tabulated and the differences was shown in percentage as below :-

Comparison of the Educational Qualification of the Teachers of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies

Table No. 1

Comparison of the Educational Qualification of the Teachers of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies

Educational Qualification	Anganwadi		Pre-school	
	No. of teacher	Percentage	No. of teacher	Percentage
Under Graduate	10	66.70%	1	6.70%
Graduate	5	33.30%	14	93.30%

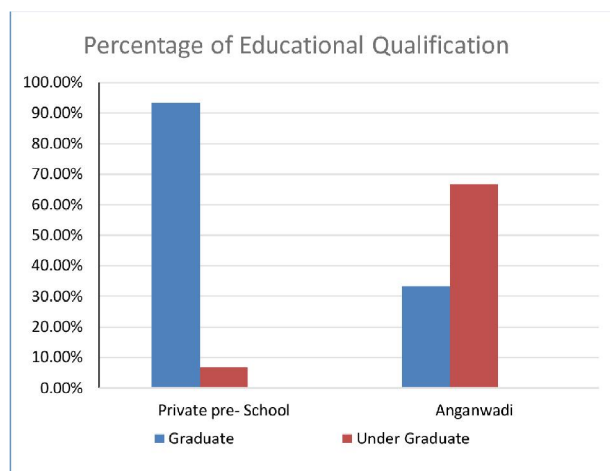


Figure no.1 Chart representing the comparison of both the Institutions through percentage method.

Analysis of data vide Table 1& Figure 1, reveals that there are 15 teachers each in Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies in Aizawl City. Of these (66.7%) were under graduate teachers in Anganwadies while 93.3% teachers of Private Pre-schools were graduates. This findings shows that graduate were more in number in Private Pre-schools than Anganwadies. It can be concluded that that Private Pre-schools teachers have better educational qualification than Anganwadies teachers

Comparison of educational qualification of the teachers of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies with reference to the criteria laid down by the NCERT.

To compare the educational qualification of the teachers of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies with reference to the criteria laid down by the NCERT.

As the NCERT has laid down the criteria for Pre-school teacher i.e. the teacher should be Class XII standard passed holding a Diploma in Early Childhood Education, in the below Table the teachers qualifications are highlighted.

Academic Qualification and Professional course of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies

Table No. 1(a)

Academic Qualification and Professional course of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies

Academic Qualification	Pre-schools		Anganwadies	
	No. of teacher	Percentage	No. of teacher	Percentage
Below XII	nil	nil	6	40%
XII Standard	15	100%	9	60%
Graduate	14	93.30%	5	33.30%
Professional	8	53.30%	2	13.30%

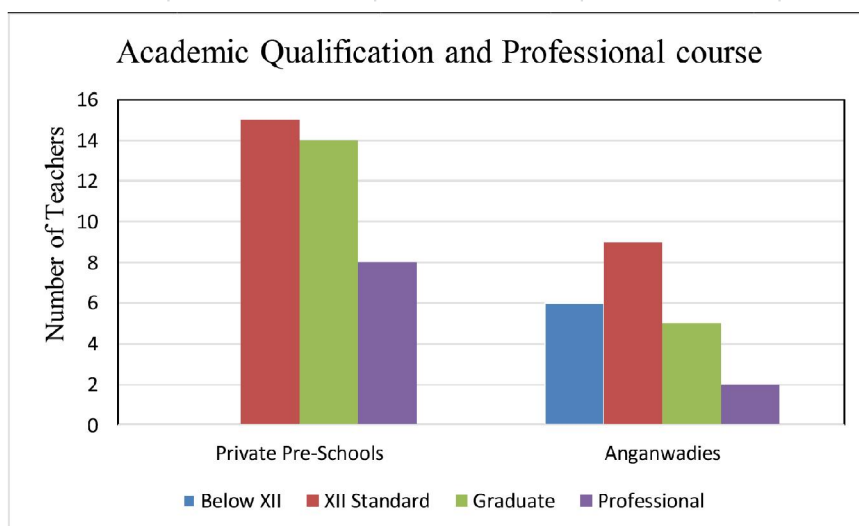


Figure no. 1(a): Histogram showing the comparison of teachers who attained the academic qualification of norms laid down by the NCERT.

A perusal of the result vide Table no. 1(a) and Figure no. 1(a), indicate that there are 15 teachers each in Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies in Aizawl City. Out of which 6 teachers of Anganwadies are below class xii where Private Pre-school have no teachers below class XII. Private Pre-schools have 1 teacher with xii standard and all the other teachers were graduate while Anganwadies got 9 teachers with xii standard and 5 teachers with graduate. 53.3% Private Pre-school teachers holds Diploma Certificate in Early Childhood Education and 13.3% teachers of Anganwadies hold Diploma Certificate in Early Childhood Education. This finding shows that Private Pre-school teachers were more in number in accomplishing the criteria laid down by the NCERT norms.

Objective No. 2: To find out and compare the existing physical infrastructure of private Pre-schools and Anganwadies in compliance with the norms laid down by the NCERT.

Table No. 2**Physical Infrastructure of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadi**

S/N	NCERT Norms	Private Pre-School		Anganwadies	
		No	%	No	%
1	Location (of Pre-schools/ Anganwadies) easily accessible to the children i.e.1 km for walking distance and 8 kms depend on the transportation facilities.	15	100	15	100
2	Free from heavy traffic, ponds, wells, nallahs, pollution, heaps of garbage.	11	73.3	10	66.7
3	Outdoor play space should be available.	6	40	4	26.7
4	Rooms should be well ventilated.	15	100	12	80
5	Indoor space separate storage sleeping facilities, toys corner.	15	100	7	46.7
6	Picture and children work display on the wall.	15	100	14	93.3
7	Furniture provided in the class chairs, bench, table, mat, blackboard, rags.	15	100	15	100
8	Drinking water - filtered water.	13	86.7	14	93.3
9	Sanitary facilities.	15	100	14	93.3
10	Mid-day meal.	15	100	15	100

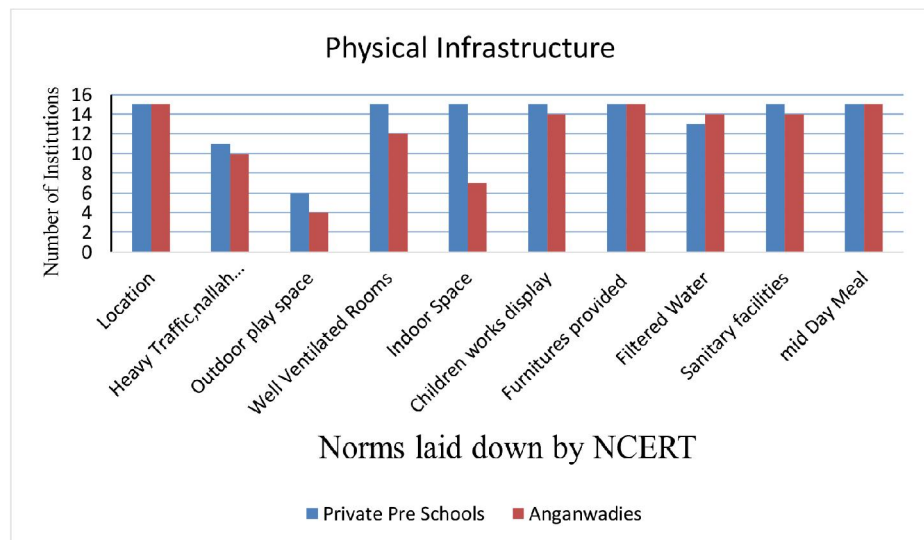


Figure no.2: Chart representing the comparison of the Physical Infrastructure of both the Private Pre School and Anganwadies

A perusal of the result vide Table No. 2 and Figure no.2. All the location of the private pre-schools and were easily accessible and free from heavy traffic, ponds, wells, nallah and garbage. Outdoor play spaces are mostly unavailable to all the private pre-schools. Rooms were all well-ventilated. Indoor space, separate storage, sleeping facilities, toys corners are all available in private pre-schools. Private pre-schools put pictures and display their children's work on the wall. Furnitures like chairs, bench, table, mat, Blackboard and rags were all available in the institutions. In accordance to the drinking water 13 private Pre-schools provide filtered water, while 2 institutions let the children drink the water tap. About the sanitary facilities private pre-school have met the needs of the children. In reference to the mid-day meal the institution provided well enough.

All the location of Anganwadies were easily accessible and were mostly free from heavy traffic, ponds, wells, nallah and garbage. Outdoor play spaces are mostly unavailable at Anganwadies. Rooms were mostly well-ventilated except two (2) Anganwadies. Indoor space, separate storage, sleeping facilities, toys corners were unavailable in 8 anganwadies while 7 anganwadies can afford. Anganwadies put pictures and display their children's work on the wall except 1 Anganwadi. Furnitures like chairs, bench, table, mat, Blackboard and rags were mostly available in the institutions. In accordance to the drinking water 14 anganwadies provide filtered water, while 1 Anganwadi let the children drink the water tap. About the sanitary facilities anganwadies and have met the needs of the children excluding one (1) Anganwadi. In reference to the mid-day meal the institution provided well enough.

Comparison of the existing physical infrastructure of Private Pre-schools and Anganwadies in compliance with the norms laid down by the NCERT.

As shown from the above table shown accordance to the physical Infrastructure of Private Pre-Schools and Anganwadies, location of both the institutions are easily accessible. 4 institutions of Private Pre schools were not free from heavy traffic and 5 Anganwadies were also not free from heavy traffic. 9 Private Pre Schools were not having proper outdoor play space while 11 Anganwadies were lack of outdoor play space. Looking to the indoor space storage all the Private Pre-Schools encompass all the indoor facilities while 8 Anganwadies did not have proper indoor space facilities. Both the institution displayed the work of their students. Furnitures provided by both institution were good enough. Filtered water were also available in both the institutions. Sanitary facilities and mid day meal were also well provided in the institution.

From here we can conclude that Private Pre-Schools have better physical Infrastructure than Anganwadies.

Conclusion and discussion

Early Childhood Education a pre-school education stage is an important stage as it is a preparatory stage to enhance holistic development in child for future life. The main focus of

ECCE are categorized as 0 – 3 years is health condition; 3 – 6 years, health condition and education. It is very essential that we provide special care and attention as it is the first phase in child life where interaction with others began.

National Focus Group on Early Childhood Education NCERT, 2005 has stated that “This stage” of life is important as a foundation for the inculcation of social values and personal habits which are known to last for life time.

According to the criteria laid down by NCERT to be a teacher of Pre-school one has to be a Class XII standard passed and have Diploma in Early Childhood Education (ECE). In the present study no teacher of Anganwadies has a Diploma qualification in ECE. On the other hand, only a few private Pre-school teachers undergo this training, therefore, to attain the ultimate goal of Pre-school we can conclude from the study that trained teachers are needed to attain the desired goal.

The present study also revealed that both private pre-schools and anganwadies were well located with regard to the norms of NCERT as it was all easily accessible and free from traffic, ponds, wells and garbage. Rooms were well ventilated and Indoor space were also good enough and furniture provided to the students were also satisfactory. But with regard to the outdoor play space most of the private pre-schools and Anganwadies established their institutions in rented house so they cannot provide outdoor space. So, special attention is needed to pay more attention with regard to the building establishment.

The investigator noticed that schools with qualified teacher has better student in regard to their behavior, manner and etiquette and their confidence. Their teachings were also more effective than the unqualified teachers.

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