STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (SHRM) PRACTICES AND QUALITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION (ECCE) IN DELHI

SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION, NEW DELHI
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DECLARATION BY THE SCHOLAR

This is to certify that the M.Phil. Dissertation being submitted by me on the topic entitled "**Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices and Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Delhi"** has been completed under the guidance of **Prof. Rasmita Das Swain**. It is declared that the present study has not previously formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associate Fellowship or other similar title or recognition to this or any other University.

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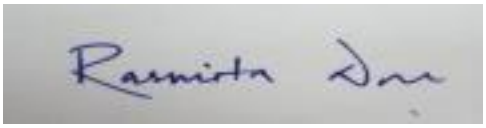
CERTIFICATE OF THE SUPERVISOR

This is to certify that the study entitled **"Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices and Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Delhi"** is the work undertaken by Ms. MANSI PANDEY under my supervision and guidance as part of her M.Phil. Dissertation in this Institution. To the best of my knowledge, this is the original work conducted by her and the dissertation could be sent for evaluation.



Supervisor's Signature

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1. ECCE- Early Childhood Care and Education
2. SHRM- Strategic Human Resource Management
3. UNICEF-United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
4. UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
5. SDGs- Sustainable Development Goals
6. ICDS- Integrated Child Development Scheme
7. MWCD- Ministry of Women and Child Development
8. MHFW-Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
9. MOE- Ministry of Education
10. MCD- Municipal Corporation of Delhi
11. DOE- Directorate of Education
12. ECE- Early Childhood Education
13. ECEC- Early Childhood Education and Care
14. CECED- Center for Early Childhood Education and Development
15. GOI- Government of India
16. NEP- National Education Policy
17. OECD- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
18. CLASS- Classroom Assessment Scoring System
19. ECERS- Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
20. MELQO- Measuring Early Learning Quality and Outcomes
21. ECEQAS- Early Childhood Education Quality Assessment Scale
22. AWW- Anganwadi Worker
23. HRM- Human Resource Management
24. UDISE- Unified District Information System for Education
25. SCERT- State Council of Educational Research and Training
26. DIET- District Institute of Education and Training
27. NCERT- National Council of Educational Research and Training
28. CSWB- Central Social Welfare Board

CHAPTER-1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction:

As per the Census (2011), India has 158.8 million children in the 0-6 age group out of which 60 million children are estimated to be in the age group of 3-6 years. Although the gross enrolment ratio at pre-school level in India has reached 55 % over time, there are still approximately 20 million children nearly 27% of the total in the three-to-six-year age group who are not attending pre-school (UNICEF, 2016). The UNICEF State of the World's Children Report 2016 states that children in the "poorest families and in the marginalized communities are often the ones left behind". Around 34 percent Muslim, 25.9 percent Hindu and 25.6 percent Christian children are not attending preschool. The proportion of such children is nearly 30 per cent among Scheduled Castes (UNICEF, 2016).

The stage of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is globally acknowledged as crucial in the life of a child as the brain develops rapidly during this period. It allows children to develop cognitive, social, physical, numeric, language competencies and also be school ready. UNICEF defines early childhood care and education (ECCE) as 'a range of processes and mechanisms that sustain, support and aid in the holistic development of children, from birth to age 8 years.' Thus, an enabling and stimulating environment in these foundation stages makes a positive impact in the child's long-term development and learning. Major developments in ECCE across the globe can be traced back to the 19th century. The models of Montessori and the activities of missionaries made a great impact on Europe, North America and even on some of the developing countries such as China and India which saw the rise of kindergartens directed towards education and nurseries catering to provide care. However, it was in the 1990s that some important international events took place such as The Jomtien World Conference on Education for All where the 'World Declaration on Education for All' and 'Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs' were adopted as well as the World Education Forum 2000 where 'Dakar Framework for Action,

Education for All' was adopted. To support these efforts, UNESCO also initiated the consecutive Education for All Global Monitoring Reports which slowly moved the focus towards improving the quality of ECCE and making it free and compulsory, especially for disadvantaged children. Recognizing this, the World Education Forum 2015 adopted the 'Incheon Declaration for Education 2030', that encouraged the "provision of at least one year of free and compulsory quality Pre-Primary education and access to quality early childhood development, care and education for all children" (UNESCO, 2015).

The Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 4.2 echoed similar ideas that '*All girls and boys complete affordable and high-quality early childhood development programs, and primary and secondary education to prepare them for the challenges of modern life and decent livelihoods. All youth and adults have access to continuous lifelong learning to acquire functional literacy, numeracy, and skills to a living through decent employment or self—employment'* by 2030 (SDSN, 2014: An Action Agenda for Sustainable Development). A total of 193 countries including India endorsed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and are committed to working towards achieving them.

In India educating the young children traditionally had been the responsibility of the family and the development of organized provision of services progressed slowly. It was only after the creation of the Central Social Welfare Board in 1953, after independence, that the national government started playing a more active role. The Board sponsored voluntary agencies for setting up *balwadis* (kindergartens or child education centers) for the socially and economically disadvantaged children and the objective was to shift the focus towards rural areas and the poor as well as to emphasize the holistic development of the child. There were other initiatives as well in the form of policies, plans, constitutional amendments, acts and schemes of the Government of India which focused on early childhood care and education for all. The most significant were the Five Year Plans; National Policy for Children, 1974; Integrated Child Development Services, 1975; amendment in the National Policy on Education, 1986; Program of Action, 1992 on National policy of Education, 1986; District Primary Education Program; Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan; 86th Amendment Act in the Constitution under Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy; National Plan of Action 2005; Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act -2009 under Section 11, and National Policy for Children, 2013.

The Government of India also took initiatives specifically for quality reforms in ECCE through the Ministry of Women and Child Development by formulating the National ECCE Policy 2013; National ECCE Curriculum Framework 2013; Quality Standards for ECCE 2013 and National ECCE Council, 2014. Presently, ECCE services in India are provided through various channels such as the government (Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) through anganwadis, National Crèche fund, ECCE under Primary / Elementary Education program etc.), private and non-government organizations. It is also coordinated by three ministries such as the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MHFW) and Ministry of Education (MOE). Thus, there is a great diversity in the nature of programs available for ECCE in India, as in many other countries. The increased number of stakeholders in the field leads to diverse models of ECCE and a multitude of philosophies of childhood and education.

However, even after the framing of ECCE policy, curriculum framework and quality standards, the implementation of these programs and frameworks have not been up to the mark. Barriers such as increasing dropout rates, lack of infrastructural facilities, the inability of first-generation learners to grab the basic concepts of education, rigid teaching-learning process, improper planning, lack of convergence and coordination between departments and the lack of effective and strategic human resource management etc. have all contributed to the prevention of effective implementation of the policy, on part of the government and schools. As early childhood care and education is the first school environment introduced to children and is the most decisive and important foundation for children's success to enter the next stage of education, as well as forming their character, an effective and strategic human resource management plays a significant role in its success and quality. Thus, at the school and system level, factors such as effective school leadership, teacher selection, training and development, compensation, appraisal, retention, incentives, performance management and degree of participation must be managed effectively in order to achieve a quality early childhood care and education which is accessible, diverse, inclusive, has adequate infrastructural facilities, availability of resources, play-based pedagogy and promotes holistic development of children. The latest National Education Policy 2020 also acknowledges that in order to achieve universalization of ECCE as well as a 100% gross enrollment ratio in pre-school by the year 2030, it is important to invest in the recruitment and training of Pre-Primary educators.

Studies have been conducted by scholars and researchers on measures of quality standards in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) both internationally and nationally as well as analysis of its impact on the learning levels and outcomes of children. Scholars have also carried out researches on the health and nutrition aspects due to the ease in quantifying and measuring parameters of health and nutrition. However, there is a dearth of studies on the role and importance of strategically managed human resources in achieving quality standards of early childhood care and education. In a labor-intensive industry like education, the importance of human resources is critical and it becomes important for schools to invest strategically in their 'human resources', specifically in their teachers. Careful selection and recruitment of qualified teachers, continuous professional development, rewarding pay structure and incentives, motivating and encouraging work environment, recognition of good work and a positive and supportive system of evaluation, monitoring and supervising aids in better performance of the teachers and improved quality of education.

As teachers are the backbone of the education system and spend the most amount of time with children, this study attempts to examine the current status, practices and challenges of selected aspects of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) such as such as Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards as well as Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) including accessibility, diversity, inclusivity, adequate infrastructural facilities, availability of resources, use of play-based pedagogy and holistic development of children in the select government managed ECCE agencies of South Delhi district (Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education (DOE) and anganwadis). The state of Delhi presents a fine challenge for inquiry as it has a large number of governments managed ECCE agencies, Pre-Primary teachers and anganwadi workers. The Delhi government in the context of NEP 2020 has also recently launched its preschool curriculum for the city's 10,897 community-based preschool centers and both the state and central government have taken various initiatives to expand the services of ECCE. This chapter traces the global and national developments in ECCE. It also highlights the current status of ECCE in India as well as the importance of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices (SHRM) in Quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

1.2 Evolution of ECCE- Global Perspective:

Kindergartens and nurseries were first established in the 19th century in much of Europe and North America, and even in several of the developing countries such as China and India based on the model of Froebel, Pestalozzi, Montessori, and the activities of missionaries. The most significant developments could be traced to the 1960s as independent states were being established with the end of colonialism and there was a dramatic increase in female labor force participation rates. This was also a time when extensive debates between care vs development were taking place on child and family policies in Europe and the U.S. These developments made a significant impact on the rise of the sector of Early Childhood Care and Education and Care (ECCE).

UNESCO attempted to obtain a global picture of the ECEC in 1961 by receiving answers from 65 countries. The findings revealed that the majority of countries used the term "kindergarten" to describe these programs, with some only using it to differentiate programs for older "preschool" aged children from those for younger children, and others using it to describe all programs for children from birth to compulsory school age. Other noteworthy findings included the fact that for many countries, compulsory primary school was not the top educational priority. However, in those places where the Pre-Primary education was carried out, “whole child," encompassing behavior, physical, social, and cognitive development, was emphasized. The majority of respondents said that the most essential service given by Pre-Primary school programs was care for young children of working mothers.

Another survey, undertaken by UNICEF in 1974, found that the concept of preschool had expanded significantly. It recognized the various designations given to ECCE in different countries (preschool, kindergarten, nursery school, early childhood education (ECE), early childhood care and education (ECCE), or education and care (ECEC), for example). However, common goals such as child care while mothers work, socialization, cognitive stimulation, intellectual growth, and preparation for primary school, as well as holistic child development, were also observed between the countries. There were some common concerns also identified such as inadequate supply of places, primarily in urban and affluent communities, inadequate physical facilities, unqualified and inadequately trained teachers, a short day in many countries inadequate to meet the needs of working mothers, insufficient places for disadvantaged children or children with disabilities, or handicapped children and fragmentation across government ministries with respect

to policy making responsibility. The survey also concluded that preschool education, being a new field was expensive and generally less well developed in the poor countries than the rich and often unequally developed within regions and countries.

1.2.1 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Europe and Anglo America:

Increased attention on child protection, services for children with special needs, and services to support mothers' labor force participation were among the historical streams that impacted ECCE policies and programs in Europe and the Anglo-American countries. Another major theme was the shift from private charity to public responsibility, which occurred primarily after WWII. The origins of European countries ECCE policies and programs can be traced back to two mid-nineteenth-century developments: protective services for neglected children and children of poor working mothers, and preschool education aimed at enhancing or enriching the development of middle-class children. Catering to the requirements of the expanding number of women in the labor market who wanted decent quality and affordable care for their children was a third component that gained traction, particularly after WWII.

In several countries, such as Belgium, France, Germany, and Italy, the educational component became dominant before women's labor force participation increased, and established the core of an early education system for children aged 2 1/2 or 3 to compulsory school enrollment, usually at the age of 6. As early as the mid-1970s, 90% of this age group was enrolled in preschool in Belgium and France, and 80% in Germany. Programs supporting children under the age of three had far lower coverage rates, depending on the country. An important component in several nations was the scarcity of spaces for children under the age of three, as well as parental preference for family day care. While the preschools were free for the normal school day, care for the younger children carried fees. A similar model was followed by the central and eastern European countries.

Between 1960 and the turn of the century, universal provisioning for children aged 3 to 5 years old gained prominence. In Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Spain, and Sweden, almost all 4-year-olds and close to that for the 3-year-olds were enrolled in early education system. In Germany, Hungary, Norway, and the United Kingdom as well there was universal coverage starting with children from age 3. As more women entered the workforce in the 1970s, this early

education system began to be used to provide care as well, adapting to the demands of working mothers and parents. In countries where female labor force participation rates rose quickly (e.g., the Nordic countries in the 1970s), a child care or daycare model emerged as the dominant model, designed to meet the requirements of working parents, thus covering a full workday and year, from the beginning.

In comparison to Europe, there was a lack of early-childhood education policy in Anglo-American countries, as well as ambiguity regarding who should carry main responsibility for child care and socialization. Child care and education began to merge, although the two and occasionally three streams such as (compensatory education, care, and education/socialization) remained separate. Thus, the primary factors driving ECCE developments in Europe and the Anglo-American countries in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s were catering to the needs of working women and children for care while mothers and fathers worked outside the home, as well as the stress placed on preparing children for formal education. The issue of quality arose despite the fact that there was no consensus on how to define it. (Moss & Pence, 1994; Helburn, S, et al, 1995). Extensive research was also done in the European and Anglo-American countries documenting the positive consequences of the ECEC programs, including positive school related and behavioral outcomes as well as enhanced cognitive, social, and emotional development and school readiness (Kamerman, et al 2003).

1.2.2 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Developing Countries:

The demand for ECCE in developed countries was largely driven by rising female labor force participation rates, the need for childcare while mothers worked outside the home, and the recognition that a group experience is beneficial to a child's overall development and in preparing children for primary school. In underdeveloped countries, however, mothers were presumed to be at home or, if at work, to be working in the informal sector, farming, or selling in the market. From an early age, children in rural communities were expected to help with domestic chores or other family duties. The demand for early childhood education was underestimated, and the concept of ECCE as a legal right was not popular. Furthermore, there had long been a divide in ECCE policy in many developing countries because services for children under the age of three were seen as the responsibility of parents, and policy. Ministers of Education in these developing countries had

little experience with children under the age of three and remained disconnected from these programs, treating them as miniature versions of elementary school.

The evidence that these programs led to improved school performance, including better attendance, lower rates of class repetition, lower dropout rates, and stronger literacy and numeracy skills, was the driving factor in increasing demand for ECCE programs in many developing countries, according to the Education for All, Global Monitoring Report (2005). As a cost-effective route to poverty reduction, participation was also selected as the best investment for economic growth, with the highest rate of return. As more women transitioned from the informal sector (agricultural to manufacturing and services) and from unpaid family work to wage employment, demand soared Choi (2002). The Jomtien decade was significant in putting ECCE on the global agenda as a necessary component for future economic and social development in developing countries.

ECCE was regarded as a luxury in Africa, primarily the responsibility of families and communities, and investments in ECCE were not regarded as significant. Limited resources, inadequately qualified staff, the program's low status and low quality were cited as impediments to growing the provision of ECEC in Africa in the mid-1990s. "More than 95 percent of young children in Africa did not have access to early stimulation programs, care facilities, or non-fee-paying preschools," according to an estimate cited by Aidoo (2005) and based on UNICEF's State of the World's Children (2005, p.7). In contrast to Africa, the Asia Pacific region displayed more diversity than any of the other major regions, making it difficult to provide a history of regional ECCE developments as it was distinguished by a wide range of countries with varying physical and demographic sizes (from China, India, and Indonesia to the island nations) as well as a rich diversity of histories, cultures, races, and faiths (Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, Taoist, Islam). Iran in the west, Japan and Korea in the east, Kazakhstan in the north, and New Zealand in the south formed the region. (EFA GMR Report, 2005) While some had colonial roots (e.g., India and Vietnam), others (e.g., the majority of Central Asian countries) were part of the Soviet Union and spoke numerous languages.

In Asia, education had long been recognized as a critical component in creating social and economic growth as well as raising individual living standards. In India, as in the rest of Asia, child care had traditionally been the responsibility of the family, and structured ECCE services

had only recently become wide available. Even once it was created, it took a long time for it to develop. (Rao, 2005; Gill, 1993). Variations in the definition of ECEC, the fragmentation of administration and delivery systems across government agencies and divided by age groups, the distinction made between care and education, the poor quality of programs, and the inadequacy of teaching staff all added to the complexity of ECEC in Asia and the Pacific. Coverage was more comprehensive in East and South East Asia but located largely in urban and affluent areas and private providers were the major component of the delivery system. Children from low-income families were largely excluded. However, the demand for ECCE increased in the developing countries despite limited resources. Governments started to participate in funding and delivery of preschool education, however in most countries the private sector, community as well as non-governmental organizations started to get involved as well.

1.3 Evolution of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in India:

In India, early childhood care and education was primarily the responsibility of family i.e., parents, grandparents, uncles, and aunts. Pre-Primary schools were only established by missionaries during the British period, and their purpose was debatable. Gijubhai Badheka established India's first Kindergarten, or Bal Mandir, in 1920. Furthermore, when Dr. Maria Montessori visited India and established a training program to introduce and spread the Montessori method of early learning, it boosted early childhood education. In 1926, Montessori-trained Gijubhai Badheka and Tarabai Modak developed a balwadi, resulting in a contextualized and low-cost version of the Montessori model. The national government began to play a more active role following independence in 1953, when the Central Social Welfare Board was established. The Board supported voluntary agencies that would establish balwadis (kindergartens or child education centers) for underprivileged children. The program's goal was to shift the attention to rural areas and the holistic development of the child rather than just preschool education. Over time many were also established in urban or semi-urban.

The Committee on Early Childhood Education recognized the constraints of leaving total responsibility for early childhood education to parents in 1953, and advised that Pre-Primary classes be integrated into existing Indian primary schools. The Indian Kothari Commission further suggested the creation of state-level Pre-Primary education centers in 1964. The National Policy on Children (1974) which was implemented ten years later described early childhood education as

providing both care and education to all children in India, particularly those who were first-generation school students.

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) program, which became the world's largest endeavor to deliver a package of services to the most vulnerable demographic groups, was launched by the national government in 1974. The initiative focused on urban slums, tribal communities, and the country's more remote and backward rural areas. This was the country's largest ECCE program, and it was created to give vulnerable children a head start by providing an integrated health, nutrition, and early childhood education program. Supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-ups and referrals, non-formal pre-school education, and community participation were among the services provided to children under the age of six, as well as services to pregnant and nursing mothers. The anganwadis (courtyard gardens), a term derived from the modest child care center that could be run in the courtyard of any village home, served as the focal point for service delivery. The primary worker and first paraprofessional in the child care service, the anganwadi worker, was usually a local woman.

Though ICDS was the primary program to address ECCE demands, the central and state governments also launched a number of other programs to supplement the ICDS provisions. For example, the 'Creches and Day Care Centers Scheme' was established in 1975 to offer day care for children under the age of five. It primarily served the children of migrant, agricultural, and construction workers. Similarly, the 'Early Childhood Education Scheme' was created as a separate initiative to lower primary school dropout rates and enhance primary school retention rates. Central funding was provided to voluntary organizations for running pre-school education centers under this scheme. In addition to these schemes that reached out to rural, urban slums, and tribal communities, plenty of private, fee-based nursery schools sprung up to meet the demands of middle-class parents in metropolitan and semi-urban areas.

Despite occasional inconsistencies in service quality, evaluation studies concluded that the ICDS program has had a positive influence on the survival, growth, and development of young children. For example, a study conducted in rural areas of three southern states (Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka) discovered that the programs had a considerable impact on both boys' and girl's psycho-social development. The study also found that undernourished ICDS recipients scored higher on developmental tests than children who were not participating in the program.

Reduced percentages of low-birth-weight newborns, lower infant mortality rates, higher vaccine coverage, higher health-care use rates, and improved child nutrition were all observed in areas where the program was implemented.

The five-year plans of India had also emphasized on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Table-1.3.1 ECCE Provisions in the Five-Year Plans of India

Year	**Five Year Plans**	**Initiatives for ECCE**
1951-56	I	• Initiative to give shape to Balwadis and Creches
1956-61	II	• Maternal and Child Health programs were given major impetus
1961-66	III	• ECCE as the base of the National system of Education was formally recognized. • A committee was appointed by CSWB to survey the child care needs and status in the country. • Recommendations were made to include health, nutrition and recreation along with preschool education. • Training centers were set up for training the Balsevaks.
1969-74	IV	• Included Pre-school education into the education system. • Efforts were made to train teachers, productions of teaching materials.
1974-79	V	• Focused on child welfare in rural, tribal and slum areas. • National Children's Board was constituted • Paradigm shift in Preschool education • Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) was introduced in 33 experimental areas which provided better supplementary nutrition, immunization, regular health checkup, referral services

		and nutrition and health education during the first 6 years in a child's life.
1980-85	VI	• A nomenclature of ECE (Early Childhood Education) replaced the earlier name of PSE (Pre School-Education)
1985-90	VII	• Special attention was given to the welfare of the mother and child belonging to the unprivileged strata of the society. • The concept of ECE became more comprehensive in scope and systematically planned for the development of the 'total child'.
1992 97	VIII	• Accelerated expansion in the coverage of children in ECCE
1997-2002	IX	• It recommended provisions and inputs for ECCE as investment in human resource development. • Women groups were roped in to manage ECCE programs.
2002-2007	X	• Rights based approach to child development • A number of strategies were advocated to reduce the child mortality rate and improve support services for taking protective and preventive measures. • Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) focused on total child development services.

Additionally, major policy documents also included ECCE as an important component:

Table 1.3.2 Emphasis on ECCE- National Policies

1974	National Policy on Children
1986	National Policy on Education
1992	National Plan and State plan of action for Children
1992	India ratified convention on Rights of Child

1993	National Nutrition Policy
2000	National Policy on Population
2001	National Policy on Empowerment of Women
2002	National Health Policy

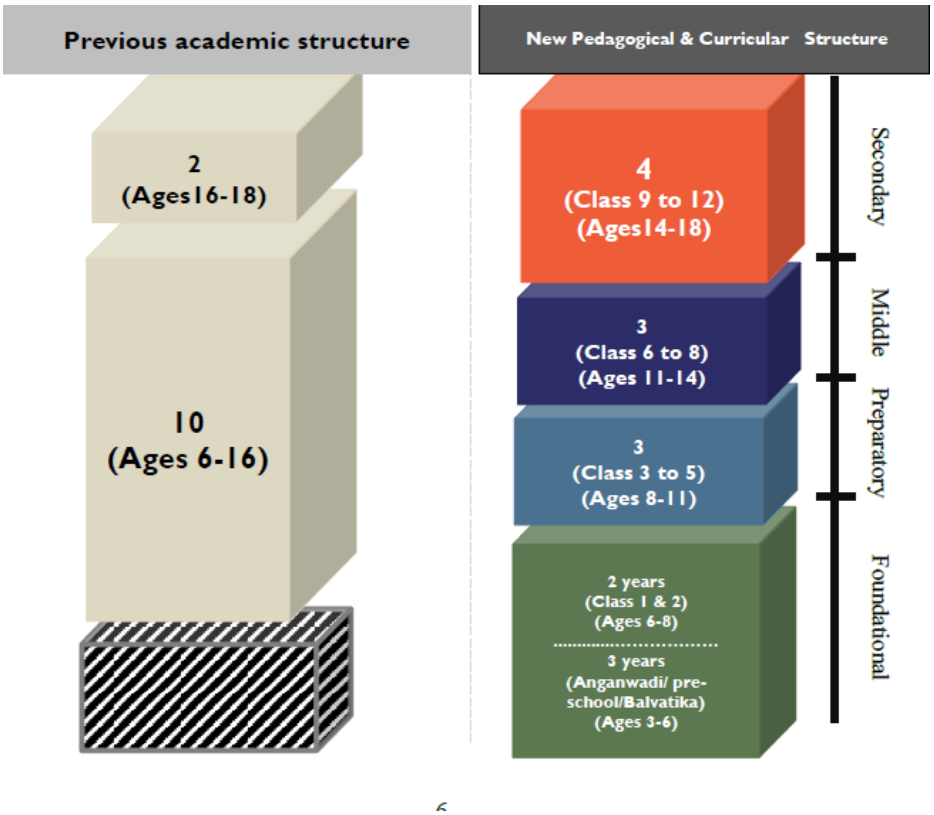
Recognizing the crucial role of early childhood education, the National Policy on Education of 1986 proposed expanding the ECCE programs not only as an essential component of human development but also as a support to the “universalization of elementary education." (Gill, 1993). The policy emphasized education for the benefit of all of the country's citizens. It emphasized the overall development of young children and saw ECCE as a critical component for strengthening primary education in the country. ECCE was also deemed crucial for human resource development in the policy. It emphasized the need of developing child-centered and play-based ECCE programs. It discouraged the use of formal methodologies and the early use of the 3Rs. It also advised that the local community be included in the programs. Thus, ECCE was envisaged as a holistic experience fostering health, psychological and nutritional development of children along with school-related skills.

As early childhood care and education was gaining attention and importance at the national and state level, India drafted Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy in 2012 and implemented it in 2013. The national ECCE council was also notified in 2014 and guidelines for curriculum and quality standards were drafted. The policy framework aimed to “promote inclusive, equitable and contextualized opportunities for promoting optimal development and active learning capacity of all children below 6 years of age by facilitating an enabling environment through appropriate systems, processes and provisions across the country.” The Policy framework also included the National ECCE Curriculum Framework and Quality Standards for ECCE. Access with equity and inclusion, improving quality, strengthening capacity, research and documentation and advocacy and awareness generation were the key areas of the policy. The policy recognized that young children are best cared for in their family environment and thus strengthening family capabilities to care for and protect the child was proposed to receive the highest priority.

With a background of such developments in the sector of ECCE, India recently implemented the National Education Policy 2020 which stresses the need of high-quality early childhood education and its implications for India's human capital development. It is based on the Sustainable Development Goals, with Goal 4 emphasizing the need of quality education. It aims to achieve "universal provisioning of high-quality early childhood development, care, and education" by 2030, in order to ensure that every child has the required readiness for school and for class 1, no later than 2030. The Policy also emphasizes the need of early children developing core literacy and numeracy skills through multilingual, experiential, and play-based activities.

Early childhood is the first major change recommended in the policy. It proposes that early childhood education be seen as the foundational stage of schooling, consisting of three years of Pre-Primary education as well as grades 1 and 2. This is a significant policy shift, as before to this, early childhood, or 0-6 years, was deemed to be a welfare priority, to be managed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, and to be excluded from the Right to Education. The new policy expands the Right to Education Act to include early childhood education and gives the Ministry of Education responsibility for its administration. It is designed with the idea that children from three to eight years old needed a similar curriculum and play-based pedagogy that allows for inquiry and discovery. The policy takes into account the disparities in children's cognitive growth and development trajectories and encourages flexibility in education between the ages of 3 and 8. Another significant reform proposed by the policy is the reorganization of school education. Previously, primary education was followed by three years of middle school, then secondary, and ultimately senior secondary, commonly known as 10+2, but the policy has recommended a totally new structure that includes classes 1 and 2 in early childhood education, that is now five years. Both of these tenets emphasize the importance of early childhood education and the fact that the early years are not simply a preparation for formal schooling. To comprehend the distinction between the foundation stage and the preparatory stage, teaching-learning strategies, processes, and curriculum would need to be revisited.

Figure 1: Reorganized school education structure-NEP 2020



Source: National Education Policy 2020.

Other policy recommendations with respect to early childhood education in NEP 2020 included:

- Co- locating anganwadis with existing primary schools, and the co-location of preschools with primary schools, wherever possible.
- Building high quality, stand -alone preschools. Providing physical infrastructure of high quality that is conducive to and scaffolds learning, in all anganwadis, pre-schools, and primary schools.
- Developing a National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Education (NCPFECE) for 3–8-year-olds, by NCERT with a focus on multi-faceted framework comprising alphabets, languages, numbers, counting, colors, shapes, indoor and outdoor play, puzzles and logical thinking, problem -solving, drawing, painting and other visual art, craft, drama and puppetry, music and movement.

- Building a professionally qualified set of educators for early childhood education. Introducing a quality regulation/accreditation system for early childhood education programs.

  All the above policy recommendations highlight that the focus is on enhancing the quality of services for the youngest learners along with issues of access, enrolment and retention.

1.4 Current status of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in India:

With a goal of achieving universal provisioning of quality early childhood development, care, and education by 2030 (NEP 2020), it is important to examine the current status of ECCE in order to identify areas of improvement and development.

Figure 2: Status of ECCE in India: Key Statistics

Data	No.	Source
Total No. of Anganwadi centres operational	13,77,595	ICDS report updated as on 30th June 2019
Total child population of 6 months to 3 years age cohort	3,82,03,017	ICDS report updated as on 30th June 2019
Total child population of age 3-6 years	3,05,09,301	ICDS report updated as on 30th June 2019
Total No. of Anganwadi workers/ teachers	13,77,595	ICDS report updated as on 30th June 2019
Total No. of schools	11,68,292	UDISE (2018-19) (Provisional)
Total schools with primary sections	8,26,842	UDISE+ 2018-19 (Provisional)
Total primary schools with pre-primary sections	1,94,768	UDISE+ 2018-19 (Provisional)
Total No. of schools to be covered for preparatory class	7,01,537	Schools excluded having already pre-primary sections
Total No. of children enrolled in the attached pre-primary section	29,94,751	UDISE 2017-18 (Provisional)

According to the UDISE data (NIEPA, 2016-17), there were around 22.03 per cent primary schools which were recorded to have Pre-Primary schooling, against the 22.41 per cent recorded in 2015-16, enrolling around 7.7 per cent children in it. According to the UDISE 2018-19 the number of children receiving pre-school education in different types of schools was 1,19,30,307 out of which 45.70 percent were girls and 54.3 percent were boys, indicating considerable gender gap in enrolment. Despite this substantial coverage 7,01,537 primary schools were yet to be covered for

pre/primary sections or preparatory class. Around 5.7 per cent children of its total sample were found availing Pre-Primary education according to the recent data of NSSO 75th (GOI, 2019). The proportion of children attending was slightly higher for girls (5.8 per cent) and for those living in urban areas (7.4 per cent). It was also observed that a pre-school education facility was available in almost all private schools and, as per NSSO, around 55.2 per cent children were availing unaided private Pre-Primary schools and around 12 per cent were enrolled in private aided schools.

Although a higher proportion of pre-school goers attended private schools, "the private providers remain largely unregulated. Thus, there was a need brought up to have a regulatory body for maintenance of the quality of pre-school education" (GOI, 2019). The proportion of children attending Pre-Primary education in Government schools was only 32.7 percent indicating differentiation in schooling access by management of schools at this stage. Many challenges were also identified in ongoing efforts to universalize ECCE, including the provision of adequate quality preschools with necessary physical and academic infrastructures, such as play materials, teaching learning materials, barrier-free access to all indoor and outdoor spaces; and separate toilets for boys and girls, for various ages of children; and a safe and comfortable school environment with appropriate accessories and facilities. At this point, one of the most significant difficulties was the gap in learning between children. Many children did not have enough learning chances at this level due to access differences. It was acknowledged that it is critical not only to make Pre-Primary schools universal, but also to ensure that they are effective in promoting the overall development of young children.

As education and childcare remains responsibility of the state, there has been a disparity in the implementation of ECCE policy across states. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana were among the first states to enact state-specific ECCE policies, with the goal of overhauling the existing ECCE eco-system. Tamil Nadu established a dedicated webpage for early childhood educators and has made significant headway in integrating its Anganwadi system with primary schools. In 2018, around 9,000 schools in Rajasthan were given the task of mentoring anganwadis in their respective localities. Gujarat had also implemented a strategy to train anganwadi workers to teach children language skills as well as some basic reading and math skills.

Many states, such as Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha, concentrated on the nutritional side of ECCE by adding eggs, milk, or a meal to the menu (Kaul and Shankar, 2009). Many governments also implemented reforms, remedial actions, and other measures to curb the expansion of unaided,

unrecognized private pre-schools. Despite many reforms, basic learning and skills in most of the states remained a problem. The states of Telangana, Assam, and Rajasthan, despite having near-universal access to ECCE had anganwadi centers which focused on formal teaching and lacked developmentally appropriate curriculum and resources, according to a recent study conducted by the Center for Early Childhood Education and Development (CECED) and UNICEF which looked at ECCE practices in rural areas across these three states from a school readiness perspective.

New Delhi, being an educational hub has attracted people from almost all states as well as from a number of other countries. As per the census (2011), there were more than 2 million children in the age group of 0 to 6 years. The Delhi Government currently has preschools in its Municipal Corporation-run schools as well as schools under the Directorate of Education. There are private preschools, Balwadi (run by Government & also NGOs), creches, Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) run by ICDS and NGOs also offering preschool education. South Delhi has a total of 343 schools out of which a total of 193 schools has Pre-Primary sections in South Delhi with 84 schools under Local Body followed by 80 schools under Private unaided (recognized) and 27 being under Department of Education. The lowest were Government aided with 2 schools. There are 10,000 plus AWCs that have been established under the Integrated Child Development Scheme in Delhi and these AWC's serve to provide care and preschool education to the children. The Delhi government has taken initiatives in the ECCE sector such as opening "modern anganwadi hub centers" for children from economically disadvantaged families and developing a curriculum by Delhi SCERT on 'Diploma course in Preschool Education' which would help to develop the capacities of teachers for preschool and early primary classes who would be fully trained to take care of developmental and learning needs of children of this age group. This would benefit in the long run in developing good habits, values, and strong academic foundation among children. (Chopra, 2012).

However, studies have also revealed the poor-quality standards of ECCE provisions in Delhi, specifically schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi where 'play' had not been given its due importance in the curriculum. Lack of consensus on the quality and type of early childhood education to be provided to the children was also observed. The impact of this variation in the curricular goals and objectives, as well as the ways of planning and implementing curriculum was seen as being reflected on the children's development and early school performance (Chopra,

2012). Thus, there is diversity in the management agencies providing ECCE services across the nation, there are no standardized indicators of Quality ECCE or SHRM practices followed in any of the states. Even though states take into consideration the national policies and quality guidelines, there is diversity with respect to strategic human resource practices such as teacher recruitment and selection, teacher evaluation, professional development and reward system leading to various levels of quality in the ECCE sector with some states performing better than the other states. A major challenge in the ECCE sector is the lack of coherent database. The only source of time series data available on ECE is currently from the ASER annual survey; however, it is confined to the rural areas. Given the significant differences between the rural and urban scenarios, there can be no possibility of generalizations from this data for the country as a whole. Thus, there is a requirement of a dedicated national level database of ECCE provisions in India.

1.5 Importance of Strategic Human Resource Management in Quality ECCE:

The NEP 2020 recognized the importance of the qualified and trained human resources especially teachers in the effective implementation and achievement of Quality ECCE. Thus, recommended a 6-month certificate program in ECE for anganwadi workers/teachers with qualifications of 10+2 and a one-year diploma program covering early literacy, numeracy and other relevant aspects of ECCE for those with lower educational qualifications through digital/distance mode using DTH channels as well as smart phones. One of its recommendations was also that the Cluster Resource Centers of the School Education Department would mentor the ECCE training of the anganwadi workers/teachers who shall have at least one monthly contact class with the anganwadi teachers for continuous assessment. In the longer term, state governments would also be asked to prepare cadres of professionally qualified educators for early childhood care and education, through stage-specific professional training, mentoring mechanisms, and career mapping. Necessary facilities would need to be created for the initial professional preparation of these educators and their Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

Human Resource Management emerged in the late 1980s as an alternative for personnel management. Personnel management was overly bureaucratic, heavily influenced by operational procedures, and offered unrealistic answers. HRM, on the other hand, mirrored the organization's strategic goal and enabled managers at all levels to provide personalized individual responses to

issues, employ positive motivation, and be proactive when interacting with various team members and addressing problems they faced.

Within the discipline of human resource management, a new field called the strategic human resource management (SHRM) originated. This concept integrated various practices to enable and encourage employees to meet an organization's goals. The concept of strategic HRM was first formulated by Fombrun et al (1984), who laid down three core elements as necessary for firms to function effectively:

- Mission and strategy
- Organization culture
- Human resource management

In the context of ECCE services, there various stakeholders play an important role such as teachers, principal, supervisors and national or state level officers. Teachers, in particular, play a critical role in sustaining and increasing educational standards in every educational system. The school system's efficiency is impacted by a teacher shortage or inadequate administration. Recruitment, selection, staffing, welfare, maintenance, training and retraining, placement, promotion, retention, motivation relationship, remuneration or rewards, transfer, performance assessment, and participation are all parts of human resource management. Staff in educational systems stay dedicated and productive when they are properly recruited, selected, supervised, inducted, and rewarded. Strategic human resources can be a source of competitive strength for education and also lead to high-quality ECCE services if they are well-managed.

Increased productivity, higher profits, and decreased employee turnover are some of the benefits of SHRM for organizational effectiveness (Knies et al., 2018). SHRM's strategy, which first gained popularity in the corporate world, has since spread to other domains and fields, including the labor-intensive field of education. As staff recruitment, training, and remuneration began to consume a significant percentage of school budgets and time, there was a growing interest in the potential of good HRM to improve the quality of the teaching team and, as a result, the school's effectiveness. According to Loeb et al. (2012), effective schools rely on attracting and employing effective teachers, assigning teachers to students in a more equal manner, and retaining excellent teachers. SHRM in education focused on aligning school goals with HRM practice development, the relationship between school context and HRM practices, and the fit between different HRM

practices within a school (Becker and Huselid, 2006). As a result, it underlined the importance of paying attention to both teachers' individual goals and the school's organizational goals in order to develop a high-quality and committed teacher team.

In India, inadequate teaching learning facilities, inappropriate teaching, inadequate assessment/outcome measures, a high teacher-to-student ratio, and a lack of interaction are among the issues that have been encountered in the successful management of human resources, particularly teachers. Most government ECCE centers also lack necessary infrastructure and physical facilities (NIPCCD, 2014). Low level of training of ECCE functionaries (NIPCCD, 2010d), a lack of training centers, non-deputation of teachers for training, non-involvement of teachers in the development of preschool curriculum (CECED, 2010), vacant posts, low ECCE functionaries' salaries, heavy workload, a lack of proper monitoring mechanisms, and a lack of research and research-based intervention program have also been observed.

Studies have revealed that the Anganwadi worker (AWW) who provide service within the ICDS program confront numerous obstacles in performing their duties, including inadequate remuneration, a lack of community support, excessive work overload, a lack of training, and record keeping, to name a few. As a result, it's critical to recognize and address such issues in order to provide high-quality early childhood. Runhaar (2017), identified a set of common SHRM practices that contribute to AMO ability (A), motivation (M) and opportunities (O) of teachers such as Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards which form the foundation of this study.

1.6 Operational Definitions of the Study:

Early Childhood Care and Education- It is conceptualized as an integrated provision for children from prenatal stage to 8 years, which addresses a child's need for care, education, nutrition and health holistically, in consonance with a life cycle approach. The period from birth to eight years old is one of remarkable brain development for children and represents a crucial window of opportunity for education. ECCE acts as a foundation for emotional wellbeing and learning throughout life and promotes holistic development, gender equality and social cohesion. NEP 2020 reorganized the school structure and added the first five years of school life i.e., age three to five years in the foundational stage. This subsumed grade 1 and grade 2 within it. The overall aim of

ECCE is 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 (NEP 2020). The present research includes the pre-school setup that provides education to the 3 years to 5 years age cohort.

Strategic Human Resource Management- Strategic human resource management is the process of linking the human resource function with the strategic objectives of the organization to improve performance. Strategic human resource management (SHRM) is defined as "the pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable an organization to achieve its goals" (Wright & McMahan, 1992). It promotes the idea that no matter how well designed a strategy of an organization is, it will work when the organization has the right people, with the right skills and behaviors, in the right roles, motivated in the right way and supported by the right leaders. The theory of ability/motivation/opportunities (AMO) theory of performance developed by Appelbaum et al. (2000) and adapted by Runhaar (2017) is one the most commonly used theoretical frameworks in SHRM. It argues that organizational interests are best served when HRM practices are designed to contribute to the ability (A), motivation (M) and opportunities (O) of employees. Runhaar (2017), identified a set of common SHRM practices that contribute to AMO of teachers such as staffing, professional development, teacher evaluation and reward systems which have been examined at the school level or anganwadi level in the present research. While the institutional SHRM practices are important for quality service delivery at grass root level, the systemic level practices at the top level of administration augment the micro level institution where all governmental policies get implemented to achieve constitutional goals like equity, quality, diversity and inclusiveness in public life.

Quality Early Childhood Care and Education - Education is the process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits. Quality education specifically entails issues such as appropriate skills development, gender parity, provision of relevant school infrastructure, equipment, educational materials and resources, scholarships or teaching force (UNESCO). Eight 'Quality Standards' have been developed by the MWCD including Interaction, Health nutrition, personal care and routine, Protective Care and Safety, Infrastructure/ physical

environment, Organization and Management, Children experiences and learning opportunities, Assessment and outcome measures and managing to support quality System (MWCD). In today's context, Quality also includes diversity, inclusivity, accessibility and equity in foundational education as also mandated in SDG Goal 4. The quality indicators examined in the present study include accessibility, diversity, inclusivity, infrastructure facilities, availability of resources, play-based pedagogy and holistic development of children.

1.7 Rationale:

Delhi as an educational hub and national capital attracts people from almost all states as well as from a number of other countries. It has special significance as its education system is more prone to changes by active involvement of non-state actors and international agencies. The transparency and accountability of education system is also high because of active and informed stakeholders. In Delhi, anganwadi workers are being given wages between INR 3000 to 9000 whereas under the Minimum Wages Act they should be paid between INR15,492 to 19,291 in Delhi. The anganwadi workers and helpers went on an indefinite strike in the month of February 2022 in Delhi demanding a substantial hike in their honorarium and brought to notice the heavy workload. Such challenges impact the motivation and productivity of the human resources involved and also quality standards of ECCE services. Delhi has also been selected as a site for the study due to paucity of time as well as ease of accessibility for the researcher.

Every educational system depends heavily on its human resources, specifically teachers for execution of its program and policies. The practices of strategic human resource management (SHRM) in education include staff recruitment and selection, staff development and training, appraisals, job performance reward etc. When the workforce in the education systems is adequately recruited, selected, supervised, and adequately rewarded, then they remain committed to the job and improve the quality of the teaching-learning process. In Early Childhood Care and Education, quality can be ensured when the key stakeholders such as teachers, principals, supervisors and other staff members are recognized, trained, supervised and rewarded adequately for their services. As teachers form the backbone of the educational institution and spend the most amount of time with the children, this study focuses on the SHRM practices with respect to the teachers in ECCE sector.

The ability/motivation/opportunities (AMO) theory of performance of Appelbaum et al. (2000) argues that organizational interests are best served when HRM practices are designed to contribute to the ability (A), motivation (M) and opportunities (O) of employees (Runhaar, 2017). People perform well when they not only have the necessary skills and knowledge (A), but also want to do the job and are incentivized (M), and receive the necessary support and possibilities in their work environment to effectively do their job (O) (Appelbaum et al., 2000). In India, currently there are various challenges to the human resource management of the ECCE system which impacts its quality. To begin with, there is no legal framework that specifies requirements and standards of ECCE teacher training programs; instead, various education channels provide different types of training such as the Nursery Teachers Training (NTT) program (two-year training for preschool teachers) approved by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), online ECCE teacher training programs, two-year diploma course by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU, one-year certificate course by National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and two week Anganwadi training etc. There is also a lack of standard qualification required for being an ECCE educator as some teachers working at Anganwadi centers, NGOs, and private preschools have little training and are without any teaching qualifications, and thus hired for a low salary, while government Pre-Primary schools require proper qualification. This diversity and non-standardization lead to compromise in the quality of ECCE services provided to children. ECCE workforce also faces other issues which have been highlighted in some researches hindering their performance such as inadequate honorarium, work overload, excessive record maintenance, infrastructural concerns and inadequate training and supervision.

The latest National Education Policy 2020 has set goals of achieving universal provisioning of quality early childhood development, care and education and 100 percent Gross Enrolment Ratio in preschool to secondary level by 2030. It also recognizes the importance of the human resource and recommends recruitment of qualified and trained teachers as per the need of schools along with capacity building of teachers for pre-school. Thus, this present research examines the current status, best practices and challenges of SHRM such as Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards as well as the quality of early childhood care and education (ECCE) including Accessibility, Diversity, Inclusivity, Infrastructure Facilities, Availability of Resources, Play-Based Pedagogy and Holistic Development of children in South

Delhi District. It would also provide insights for strategic human resource management practices having bearing on quality ECCE.

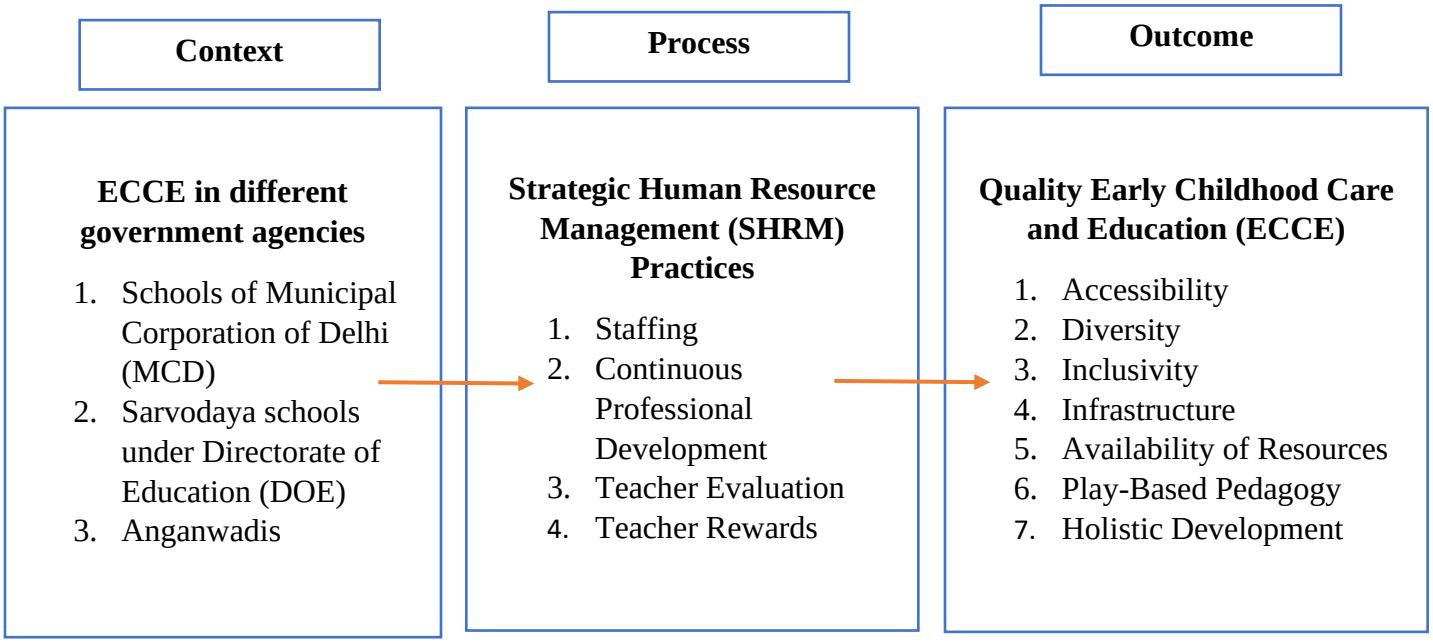
1.8 Research Questions:

1) What are the strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices in ECCE across different government managed agencies such as schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education (DOE) and Anganwadis of South Delhi?
2) What are the best practices in strategic human resource management (SHRM) in ECCE across government managed agencies of South Delhi?
3) What is the quality of ECCE across different government managed agencies of South Delhi?
4) What is the relation between strategic human resource management (SHRM) and the quality of ECCE?

1.9 Research Objectives:

a) To study the strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices in ECCE across different government managed agencies such as schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education (DOE) and Anganwadis of South Delhi.
b) To study the best practices of SHRM in ECCE in government managed agencies of South Delhi for emulation and scalability.
c) To study the quality standards of ECCE across different government managed agencies of South Delhi.
d) To draw the relationship between strategic human resource management (SHRM) and quality of ECCE.

Figure 3: Research Model conceptualized for the study



CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction:

A literature review is a survey of scholarly sources that provides an overview of a particular topic. Literature reviews are a collection of the most relevant and significant publications regarding that topic in order to provide a comprehensive look at what has been said on the topic and by whom. It functions as an important pre-requisite to actual planning and execution of good piece of research work and it acts like bridge between the proposed research and the studies already done. Review of related literature helps an investigator to eliminate the duplicity of what has been done and project provides useful hypothesis and helpful suggestions for significant investigation. The facts and finding are useful to go in depth and to explore the unknown areas of this problem. This chapter would aid in developing a conceptual understanding of aspects of Quality ECCE and SHRM practices as well as the interrelationship between the two. There have been few researches done on measuring the quality of ECCE internationally as well as nationally, however, there is a dearth of studies with respect to SHRM in the ECCE sector and how it impacts the quality of education.

The chapter is divided into the following sub themes:

2.2 Developments in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in India:

2.3 Governance and Management of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

2.4 Review of studies on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) system in Delhi

2.5 Quality in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

2.6 Conceptualization of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) in Education

2.7 Impact of effective SHRM practices on Quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

2.2 Developments in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in India:

In the late 1800s, English and Scottish missionaries established educational institutions for children under the age of six years in various parts of India. They also established training facilities to prepare teachers for such schools. These schools were predominantly located in India's metropolises and larger towns, catering solely to children from the officer class and the rich urban elite. Gijubhai Badheka, a pioneer who was motivated by Montessori's philosophy and pedagogical ideas, founded the first indigenous nursery school in 1916. In 1925, he was joined by Tarabai Modak, another pioneer, and the 'Nutan Balshikshan Sangh' was born (New Childhood Education Society). This facility provided comprehensive community development programs that included a preschool, a primary school, and a training program. This institution's main goal was to give 'Lifelong education, skill development, and women's development to the tribal people' that had previously been unreached.

The Wardha Committee, which was established by the All-India Congress Committee, published a report in 1937 that included Mahatma Gandhi's Scheme, which was developed as an alternate strategy for giving Basic Education to the large population of children aged six to fourteen years. He also devised a low-cost pre-basic education program for children under the age of six that was founded on the principle of learning by doing and was tied to the children's own life pattern. He stressed the value of female teachers and felt that children should be allowed to explore and engage with the natural world around them. In remote areas, Kasturba National Memorial Trust encouraged the establishment of institutions to train pre-basic and basic education instructors. The arrival of Dr. Maria Montessori in India in 1939 was a watershed moment in the country's early childhood education history. She founded an educational facility at the Theosophical Association in Adyar, near Madras, as well as the 'Montessori International' society to promote Montessori's educational theory and principles in early childhood education.

With India's independence, the desire to improve people's lives, especially children's lives, grew stronger, and certain national level organizations were formed with the express objective of improving the welfare of families and children. The Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW) and the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) were established in 1951 and 1953, respectively. The government began to play a more positive role in fostering the development of families and children with the introduction of the Five-Year National Plans in 1950. The CSWB helped

Voluntary Organizations establish 'Balwadis' (children's centres) for children in rural areas, small towns, and villages through its Grant-in-Aid scheme. As the network of balwadis in the community development blocks grew, the emphasis shifted from providing Pre-Primary education to providing programs that integrated health, education, and welfare not just for the children but also for their families. Between 1960 and 1975, many National Commissions and Committees were established to assess the state of programs and services for the care, education, nutrition, and health of young children. Each of these groups provided helpful suggestions for expanding and improving these programs and services.

In 1966, the Sargent Committee Report, an official document of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), recognized the need of early childhood education as a crucial adjunct to primary education for the first time. Early education was seen by the committee as a way to prevent high rates of failure and stagnation in early primary schools. Early childhood education facilities spread slowly but steadily during the pre-independence period. A large network of 'Montessori' schools was established across the country, as well as several pre-basic schools in rural and tribal areas. Despite these early endeavors, early childhood education programs remained dispersed, concentrated in metropolitan areas, limited to specific geographic regions of the country, and confined to those who could afford such service.

Parliament passed the National Children's Policy in 1974, and the National Children's Board was established shortly after. None of these breakthroughs, however, had a significant impact on early childhood education and care policies and the majority of early childhood programs were located in urban or semi-urban settings. Children from better-off families took advantage of the amenities wherever there were rural Balwadis, while poor children were still deprived of it. Only with the implementation of the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) in the Fifth Five Year Plan, the world's largest attempt to deliver a complete package of services to the country's most vulnerable population, a major breakthrough was made. This one-of-a-kind program included the three most important aspects of human resource development: health, nutrition, and education. Supplementary nourishment, immunization, a health checkup, and referral services. The 'anganwadi' provided these services to youngsters as well as expecting and lactating mothers (courtyard play center). Children received non-formal pre-school education, and mothers received

nutrition and health education at this center. It took a 'holistic' approach to the development of the kid.

Parliament approved the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986, and a Plan of Action (POA) was developed. It emphasized the necessity of investing in the development of a valuable human resource by emphasizing the value of early childhood care and education. It advocated for a comprehensive approach to delivering programs that promote children's nutrition, health, physical, socio-emotional, and mental development. It also underlined the importance of play in early childhood development and warned against the disadvantages of introducing the 3 Rs using formal teaching methods too early. The goal of the early childhood care and education programs was to seen enhance the foundation of primary education.

In addition, the policy stated that day care centers would be built near primary schools to enable girls to attend school while looking after their younger siblings. The critical need of working women was recognized, and creches and day care centers were considered as a social support system for these women. Given the importance of ECCE in increasing primary school retention, the Department of Education incorporated it in the design of the externally funded series of District Primary Education Programs (DPEP) projects in the early 1990s. Under the DPEP, programmatic links were also attempted between pre-school and primary school, with the component of school preparation being introduced as an early element of the primary curriculum and the play-based technique being continued in grades one and two.

In order to promote ECCE services of India, certain provisions in the Indian Constitution were included in terms of fundamental rights and directive principles of state policy. Article 15 (3) of the Indian Constitution empowered the state to practice protective discrimination in favor of economically and educationally weaker groups, with special provisions for girls and children from disadvantaged social groups, as well as children in difficult situations, as a fundamental right. Article 45 of the Constitution established ECCE as a constitutional mandate, stating that "the State shall attempt to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they reach the age of six years" (GoI 2007:23).

Some other policies and programs which provided an enabling context for provision of ECCE services in India included:

- National Nutrition Policy (1993) which recognized that children below six years, high-risk group should be given high priority.
- National Policy on Empowerment of Women (2001) which supported provision of childcare facilities, including crèches at work places.
- India also ratified Convention on Rights of the Child in 1992 and reaffirmed its commitment to children, which resulted in formulation of a policy framework to prepare a National Charter for Children.
- The National Plan of Action for Children (2005) which included universalization of ECCE as one of the goals. It specified care, protection and development opportunities for children below three years and integrated care and development and pre-school learning opportunities for three to six years old.
- National Curriculum Framework (2005b) which 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 women and girls. It advocated play-based developmentally appropriate curriculum (Kaul 2009: 16).

In the year 2013, National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy was approved by the Government of India. This Policy framework also included the National ECCE Curriculum Framework and Quality Standards for ECCE. The Policy gave commitment to universal access to the provision of quality ECE to all children under the age of six years. Since then, the country made major reforms in early childhood care and education and to take the developments further, the Government of India recently implemented the National Education Policy 2020. Under the new policy, the old pattern of 10+2 class structure in school education was replaced with a new pedagogical and curricular restructuring of 5+3+3+4 covering ages 3-18 that lays great emphasis on ECCE (3-6 years). In the new 5+3+3+4 structure, a strong base of ECCE from the age of 3 years is also included, which is aimed at promoting better overall learning, development, and well-being. One of the goals of NEP 2020 is to ensure universal access to high quality ECCE across the country in a phased manner. Special attention and priority would be given to districts/ locations

that are particularly socio-economically disadvantaged. For universal access to ECCE, anganwadis would be fully integrated into school complexes/clusters. It acknowledged that access to pre-school education needs to be improved as the initial years of a child are crucial and cognitive, and intellectual developments take place during these years.

2.3 Governance and Management of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):

In India, ECCE is provided through three different channels: public, private, and non-governmental. Publicly funded initiatives are mostly targeted at underserved communities, particularly those in rural areas. The ICDS, which is run by the government is one of the largest integrated programs for children under the age of six years and offers a total of six services, one of which is non-formal preschool education. The private sector, which is currently unregulated but is rapidly increasing across the country, not only in urban areas but also in rural and tribal areas in many states, is the second largest provider. While the government-funded ICDS serves children from low-income families, private initiatives are majorly targeted towards children of socioeconomically better off families.

Table 2.3.1: Various models of ECCE services in India

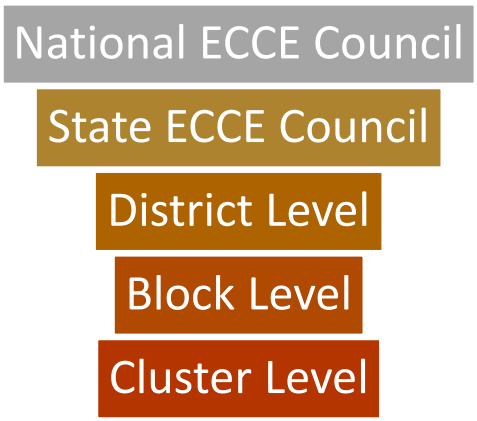
Model 1	ECE through ICDS a*nganwadis*
Model 2	ECE through Pre-PrimarySections in Government Primary Schools
Model 3	ECE through *Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan:* convergence between MHE and MWCD Model a: Co locating *anganwadi* in primary school under the *Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan* Model b: Establishing Pre-Primarysections in Primary Schools under the *Samagra Shiksha* *Abhiyaan*
Model 4	ECE through Private Schools
Model 5	ECE through NGO Sector

Model 6	Home-Based Model for Children in Difficult Circumstances, such as those with disabilities, those in geographically remote locations and children of migrants

The functioning and management of these models are coordinated by the Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MHFW). The Ministry of Education helps in the development of education in the country to fulfill the Right to Education (RTE) Act. It plays a key role in increasing access to preschool education. The ECCE Policy (2013), which is the responsibility of the MWCD, provides services for children aged 0 to 6 years. It encompasses all early childhood education and care programs, as well as related services such as anganwadis, creches, preschools, playschools, and nurseries. A National Curriculum Framework for ECCE was also developed by them. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is focused on health needs of mothers and first two years of a child's life. It also published a user-friendly resource on Journey of the First One Thousand Days for communication with pregnant women and care givers with information.

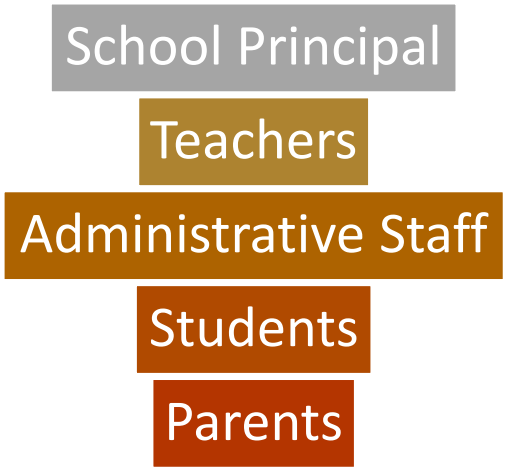
The management structure of the ECCE services in India can be categorized into systems level and school level. The hierarchy of authority and power at the systems level is given below:

Figure 4: Management Structure- Systemic Level



The hierarchy of authority and power at the school level in management of ECCE services is:

Figure 5: Management Structure- School Level



National Education Policy 2020 recognized the importance of collaboration between all stakeholders at the national, state and local level in the management of ECCE services. Thus, it laid down certain recommendation for effective implementation of quality ECCE services:

- Collaboration between local government authority (DEO/BEO/BRC/CRC etc.) with school clusters, NGOs and community-based organizations to establish pre-schools for young children in every neighborhood as per the norms and standards specified.
- Social mapping of availability of schooling facilities as well as access and participation of children in a disaggregated manner (according to sex, social and income categories) may be conducted. Social auditing may also be conducted from time to time.
- To track children's admission, attendance and learning outcomes, a special committee may also be constituted at the institution level (school/anganwadi) involving SMC members, teachers teaching pre-school level and early grades so that it becomes possible to find out their interests, learning needs and support they need for further improvement of their performance.

- Collaboration between school Clusters, through their SCMCs and these committees to provide them support needed for small schools should take place. An appropriate monitoring system for school education should be developed through digital mode or an on-site visit as per the need arises.
- Registration and accreditation of early childhood education in each state should be monitored by child enforcement agencies.
- The early childhood care and education curriculum would be planned and implemented jointly by the Ministries of HRD, Women and Child Development (WCD), Health and Family Welfare (HFW), and Tribal Affairs.
- For continuous guidance of the smooth integration of early childhood care and education into school education, a special joint task force will be constituted.

2.4 Review of studies on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Delhi:

Delhi as an educational hub and national capital has attracted people from almost all states as well as from a number of other countries. As per the census (2011), there were more than 2 million children in the age group of 0 to 6 years. Currently, the Delhi government has preschools in its Municipal Corporation-run schools as well as schools under the Department of Education. There are private preschools, Balwadi (run by Government & also NGOs), creches involved in ECCE, AWCs run by ICDS and NGOs also offering preschool education. South Delhi has a total of 343 schools out of which a total of 193 schools has Pre-Primary sections in South Delhi with 84 schools under Local Body followed by 80 schools under Private unaided (recognized) and 27 being under Department of Education. The lowest is Government aided with 2 schools. In Delhi, there are 10,000 plus AWCs that have been established under the Integrated Child Development Scheme and these AWC's serve to provide care and preschool education to the children. To get a further understanding of the status of ECCE structure and system in Delhi, few studies have been reviewed.

Kaushal (2021) A study was conducted in four Delhi districts, with data collected from two tehsils in each district. 40 preschool teachers and 24 AWWs were interviewed. A total of two community members from each preschool and anganwadi were approached to ask about their thoughts on the preschool intervention. The goal was to learn about the facilities, curriculum, support materials,

and current ECE practices at the various types of ECE Centers in Delhi, India. According to the data, more than half of the preschools (60 percent) and one-third of the AWCs (33 percent) in the East Delhi district were found to be clean. More than half of the preschools (60 percent) and only one of the AWCs (17 percent) in the North East Delhi district kept their premises clean.

In the districts of North Delhi and South West Delhi, several preschools and AWCs were kept extremely clean (33 percent). However, it was discovered that the majority of AWCs (80 percent) and preschools (33 percent) lacked sufficient supervision and monitoring in terms of infrastructure. The classroom space in many anganwadis (70 percent) and preschools (30 percent) was just adequate for all of the children to sit in one room but not enough for activities.

Children from preschools were found to be actively participating in 70 percent of centers in the South West and East Delhi districts, 60 percent in the North East district, and 50 percent in the North Delhi district. In the case of AWCs, active participation of children was discovered in 17 percent of East and North Delhi district centers, and 33 percent of South West Delhi district centers. However, the scenario in North East Delhi was unsatisfactory, as there was no active participation in any of the AWCs. Preschools had more active engagement of children than anganwadis, which could be attributed to the higher qualified teachers in the former. The majority of preschool teachers (72 percent) had higher qualifications than AWWs. Another aspect that was recognized as impacting the children's active engagement was the irregular and low pay, which was noted as a major factor in the preschool teacher’s demotivation with their work.

With the support of the state-level body SCERT, the Delhi government developed a unique preschool curriculum. This curriculum was utilized in MCD-run schools throughout all districts, while the anganwadi curriculum was designed by ICDS. Theme-based curriculum was adopted and it included rhymes, games, and daily activities that the ECE teacher and AWC worker had to follow. However, it was shown that the AWCs did not provide opportunity for participants to take initiative during the activities. Some of the private preschools were also found to be academically focused, emphasizing the 3Rs in their curriculum. The curriculum in these private schools was observed to be a downward extension of the primary classes. It included no or very limited child-oriented activities in the curriculum.

(Davey A, Davey S, Datta U, 2008) A study to assess the quality of services provided by anganwadi centres (AWCs) was conducted. 200 beneficiaries from 20 AWCs were included in the study over a period of one-and-a-half-month. For one or more reasons, 52.5 percent of respondents were unsatisfied with the AWC's services. The most prevalent explanation given was the AWC's inaccessibility and lack of room (68.6%), followed by the poor quality of the food distributed (66.7%) and the AWC's irregular preschool teaching (57.1%). Only 42.3 percent of the mothers of the 104 preschool-aged children indicated using AWC services for preschool education, although not on a regular basis. The priority placed on growth tracking and supplementary nutrition distribution, as well as a lack of room and education and teaching tools at the AWC, were cited as reasons for the irregular preschool education services.

(Chopra, 2015) Another study was undertaken in nursery, grade I and grade II of 36 randomly selected MCD schools to investigate their structural and process quality using the structured observation schedule titled, 'Early Childhood Education Quality Assessment Scale' (ECEQAS). This tool is based on Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) and has been used in several research studies conducted by CECED, Ambedkar University, Delhi, to study the quality of ECE programs across India.

Infrastructure features such as the availability of drinking water and toilets, as well as the safety and cleanliness of the physical environment, were included in structural quality. The school experiences of the students were factored into the process quality. According to the findings, 22 MCD schools had good 'Structural Quality,' meaning they had clean drinking water and toilets. In addition, MCD schools had no safety hazards for the students, and a protective barrier surrounded the school to safeguard the students from various threats. The cleanliness of MCD schools was found to be adequate, as the majority of MCD schools of the study had no unclean conditions surrounding them. The majority of MCD schools provided ample classroom space for sitting, moving around, and performing activities, and all MCD schools had trained and competent teachers. Teacher's storage space was also found to be acceptable, and students were seen sitting on chairs or clean mats in the vast majority of MCD classrooms. Furthermore, in the majority of MCD schools, the available space for outdoor play was adequate.

However, the available toilets in MCD schools were not clean, and there was a scarcity of water for use in toilets, resulting in a low score on certain structural quality components. In addition, infrastructure for children with special needs was found to be severely lacking in MCD schools,

with the majority of schools lacking ramps, supporting railings, unique seating arrangements, bathrooms, or appropriate play equipment for children with disability. Most of the time, teachers in MCD schools were not seen using any learning aids in the classrooms. There was no indoor play learning material available for children in most MCD schools. Outdoor play or activity equipment was either unavailable or highly inadequate. In primary schools, a teacher–child ratio of 1:25 is considered a good standard. In most classrooms, however, the teacher-to-child ratio was seen to be 1:25–40. One teacher was witnessed managing more than 40 pupils in multiple classrooms. Two grades were also grouped together in six MCD schools due to a lack of teachers, teachers on leave, a lack of space in the school, or the class teacher being involved in administrative tasks. Studies have found that putting children from two or more grades in the same classroom has a negative impact on the overall quality of teaching (Raj 2012).

The types of activities conducted by the teacher in the majority of MCD schools were observed to be 'Routine Activity' and 'No Activity.' The study defined 'No Activity' as 'children hanging around, doing nothing arranged by the teacher,' and 'Routine Activity' as 'activities such as taking/giving attendance, distributing food to children/children eating, asking children to go to the bathroom, or cleaning up the classroom.' As a result, during the most of their time in school, students were not engaged in any learning activity. Teachers did not conduct activities such as "guided conversation," "rhymes and songs," "coloring and drawing," "storytelling," "free play with material," "outdoor play," "teaching of readiness concepts," "free conversation," "dramatization/role play/puppet play," or "clay work/sand play" on a regular basis. Teacher-led activities, on the other hand, were prevalent. Furthermore, children did not participate in any small group activities throughout the day. As a result, peer learning chances were limited. Although teachers in MCD schools gave opportunity for children to listen, there were limited opportunities for them to speak. Thus, these studies gave an overview of the quality standards of ECCE service providers, specifically in Delhi.

2.5 Quality in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):

The quality of a child's early educational experiences has an impact on their overall development and performance in school. According to the latest research findings on early brain development and its impact on children's overall development, quality early care and educational experiences

are essential to children's success in life and have a long-term positive impact on their development and learning (Langlois and Liben 2003). This benefit is magnified for poor children (Heckman 2006; Mustard 2007), as high-quality early education can result in significant long-term improvements in disadvantaged children's intellectual and social development (Burchinal et al. 2000; Grantham-McGregor et al. 2007; Essa 2014). Quality Pre-Primary education contributes to a positive change in learning outcomes over the course of a child's life. Early investment in high-quality early learning allows students to go through the educational system successfully and efficiently, saving educational institutions the time and resources needed to remedy poor learning outcomes, low retention, and completion rates later on. Pre-Primary education improves labor force productivity and lowers the social costs of crime and health care in the long run. Pre-Primary education also contributes to the country's economic growth since it allows female members of the household (mothers and sisters) to enter the workforce and increase their earnings.

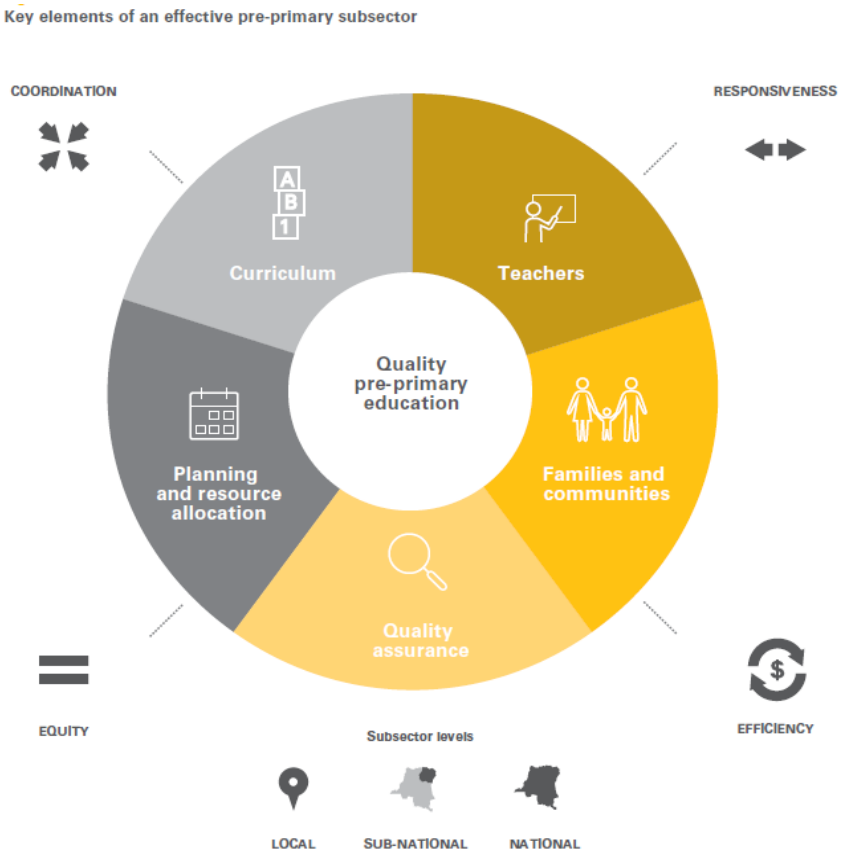
According to a UNICEF report on Pre-Primary education, children who attend a good preschool program have a strong foundation for learning and have higher social skills, numeracy, vocabulary, and a desire to learn more when they enter primary school. As a result, simply providing access to ECCE programs are insufficient; the quality of the programs is even more important. High-quality ECCE programs, in particular, offer a number of benefits, including parental support in the early years of a child's life, integration of educational activities, nutrition, health care, and social services, provision of relevant educational experiences, and ease of transition to formal schooling. The importance of ensuring that all girls and boys have access to at least one year of high-quality Pre-Primary education is also emphasized in the Sustainable Development Goals 4.2.

High-quality ECCE is defined differently in different contexts and is influenced by a country's or state's economic growth, resource availability, and cultural attitudes. However, infrastructure, curriculum, teaching and learning methodologies, teacher-child relationships, programs administration, and community integration are all components that determine quality independent of context. The relationship between preschool quality and children's learning experiences has been the subject of a lot of research. Longitudinal and contemporaneous research have demonstrated that high-quality early childhood education can improve children's learning, academic performance, self-esteem, and attitudes toward lifetime learning significantly (Schweinhart et al., 1993; Peisner Feinberg & Burchinal, 1997). There is also substantial evidence

that variations in the quality of education affect a wide range of cognitive, social and emotional outcomes in children's learning and development (Andersson, 1989, 1992; Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002; Clifford & Bryant, 2003; Sylva et al., 2004).

Various international organizations have laid down their conceptual framework of quality Pre-Primary education. UNICEF views quality not as a standalone entity but the sum of many interlinked components, including teachers, families and communities, quality assurance, planning, use of resources, and a curriculum designed to help children learn and grow to their full potential.

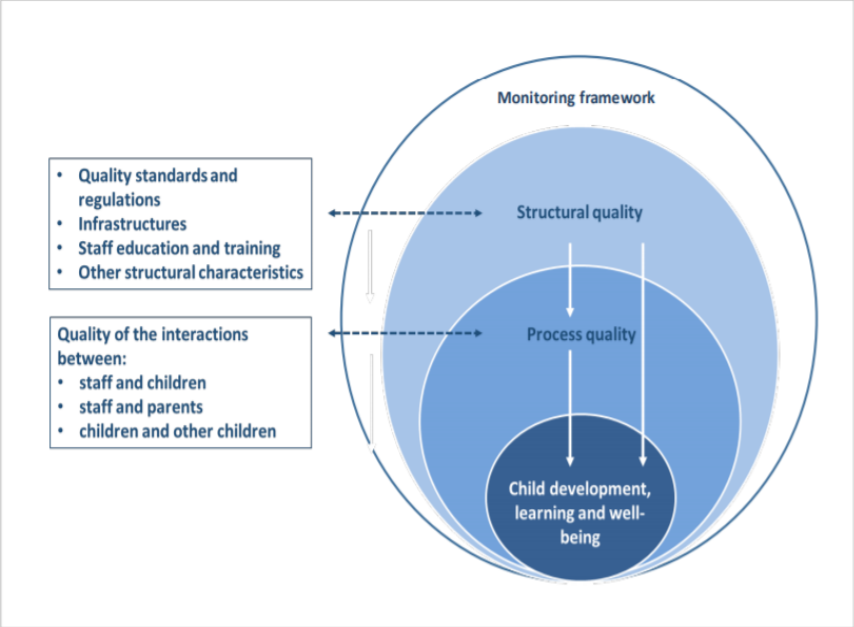
Figure 6: ECCE quality standards by UNICEF



Source: United Nations Children's Fund, Conceptual Framework for the Pre-Primary subsector

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has also laid out a framework to understand quality in early childhood education and care as given below:

Figure 7: ECCE quality standards by OECD



Source: OECD 2018, Engaging Young Children: Lessons from Research about Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care

Quality measurement is a complicated process that varies depending on a nation's or state's economic, cultural, political, and social circumstances. The World Bank has identified structural and process elements that influence and are measured in the development of high-quality early learning programs. Instructor-child ratios, staff qualifications, teaching experience and stability, health and safety, and the physical setting are all structural metrics, whereas process relates to the quality of interactions between the teacher and the child, among other things.

In India, with the formulation of National ECCE policy and Quality Framework in 2013, the government took various steps to ensure quality ECCE. The policy laid down certain norms for all

ECCE service providers such as having adequately trained staff, only 3–4-hour duration of ECCE program, age-appropriate curriculum, adequate toys and learning materials, safe infrastructural facilities such as water supply, clean toilets, child ratio of 1:20 for 3-6 years and 1:10 for under 3 years. In addition to the policy, the Quality Standards for ECCE 2013 listed 8 broad standards for ensuring the optimum developmental opportunities for children. It involved developing appropriate support mechanisms to ensure that quality is achieved and maintained.

The eight key components of the Quality Standards for ECCE 2013 developed by Ministry of Women and Child Development included:

Standard I: Interaction- Teacher/Adult- Child interaction, Environment/Material, Staff- Family Interaction, Intra staff

Standard II: Health nutrition- Personal care and routine, Health (check-up, first aid, immunization, handling illness), Nutrition, Hygiene, Habit formation

Standard III: Protective Care and Safety - Adult supervision, Socio/Emotional protection, Physical safety

Standard IV: Infrastructure/ physical environment - Space, Building, outdoors (size, ventilation, light, disabled friendly), Aesthetics, Cleanliness, Green area, Safety and approach, Water facility, Toilet facility

Standard V: Organization and Management - Program philosophy and methods, Documentation and records, Program planning, Parent involvement, financial management (fee, salary, fund allocation), Staffing (adequacy, professional qualifications, professional development opportunities, reflective practitioners)

Standard VI: Children experiences and learning opportunities- Provide opportunities for exploration, experimentation, encourage child to make choices and participate in play, Foster child's language and literacy abilities, Develop problem solving and mathematical abilities, Promote each child's physical abilities, Nurture development and maintenance of relationships, Cultivate enjoyment of and participation in expressive arts

Standard VII: Assessment and outcome measures- Assessment methods, Assessment reporting Facilitating development through assessment, Staff assessment and development, Program assessment (staff meeting, parent feedback)

Standard VIII: Managing to support quality System- Teacher education and on-site professional development, opportunity for capacity building at all administrative levels, career path for the staff, Monitoring and supportive supervision.

There have been few studies conducted which have also revealed factors leading to quality care and education. (Montie, Xiang, and Schweinhart, 2006) A study revealed that in ten nations, a greater proportion of child-initiated activities, higher levels of teacher education, more educational materials, and less time spent in whole-group activities were linked to improved developmental outcomes. Only a few societies considered small group sizes, strict teacher-to-child ratios, and "developmentally appropriate" curricular models to be hallmarks of outstanding preschool quality. (Tobin, 2005).

(Marsh,1995) Another study conducted in a nursery school in an urban area as part of a larger research project, between the Manchester Metropolitan University and a Local Authority for two years revealed factors leading to quality care and education in a range of social services, educational, private and voluntary establishments within the authority. Effective communication between educators and parents was considered a significant factor. It also involved informing parents about the required conduct norms. It was deemed beneficial to have a proactive leadership style in which the Heads leads by example. The headmaster was instrumental in both the hiring of employees and the creation of a good and welcoming environment. Educators were also urged to be great role models for other educators, children, and parents in their interactions. In order to create, implement, and evaluate the curriculum, teamwork was encouraged. This needed excellent communication and exchange of ideas, which helped to strengthen the team spirit. A clear job description for each professional role also helped to differentiate roles, although the successful running of the nursery on a day-to-day basis was dependent upon flexibility and co-operation between staff. Friendly, professional connections among employees were viewed as critical to the establishment's smooth operation. Before the children started, the nursery in the study conducted a professional activity day and social meetings to enable staff get to know one other before meeting the new intake of children. Highly developed interpersonal skills were also considered essential for negotiating with staff, parents and students.

(Suchodoletz et al., 2020) A study was conducted on ECE quality in kindergarten classrooms of two of the poorest Low-to-Middle Income countries in Eastern Europe, Kosovo and Ukraine and comparisons were made with the Finland model reflecting the variations in the process and structural quality indicators. In many developed nations, regulations limit the number of children in each class to 23 to 25 for children under the age of four, with one or two adults per class (EURYDICE Report 2019). These rules were based on research that shows small classes and low child-to-teacher ratios help teachers and students have better interactions (Bowne et al. 2017). ECCE programs in low-to-middle-income nations, on the other hand, were in stark contrast to these requirements, with class sizes averaging 40 or 50 children and a wide range of ages (Bartlett 2010). The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) – Preschool Version (Pianta, La Paro, and Hamre 2008) was used as a standardized measure to assess process quality in this study focusing on three domains of teacher–child interactions, i.e., emotional support, instructional support, and classroom organization, that are relevant to children's everyday experiences in the classroom (Hamre et al. 2013). The higher CLASS scores in Finland reflected an emphasis on child-centered services, with teacher–child interactions recognized as a crucial competency of ECCE workers (e.g., Repo et al. 2020). Teachers in Kosovo and Ukraine, on the other hand, followed more typical teacher-directed techniques (Kadriu and Gougeon 2014; Ognevyuk 2016), resulting in lower CLASS scores. Due to a shortage of financial resources, teachers in Kosovo and Ukraine were also involved in non-teaching responsibilities, leaving them with less time in the classroom (Kutsyuruba 2011). However, it becomes equally necessary to consider the belief systems and cultural context of the countries being measured.

Tobin (2005) argued that quality standards are cultural constructs that should be negotiated within the local context, and he expressed his reservations about quality measures that are enforced externally. Many academics say that attempts to develop uniform, decontextualized, external quality standards are theoretically wrong, politically risky, and futile. Recognizing that there is no single set of indicators that can prescribe a quality environment is a requirement of quality evaluation. Multiple factors shape children's experiences in ways which may be beneficial or detrimental, depending on the context of other influences in their lives. Taking into account multiple perspectives and negotiating a vision of childhood futures can be done in a variety of ways at various levels in the child development system, ranging from teachers and child care

workers talking to parents to state officials drafting a policy statement. Pence and Moss (1994, 173) advocated for an "inclusionary paradigm" that defines quality by incorporating all stakeholder's perspectives.

(Sheridan, 2001) Researchers from two distinct countries and cultures (Sweden and Germany) collaborated on a research project in which they evaluated quality in 20 preschools, 10 in each country, simultaneously and independently. The reconstruction revealed that there was significantly more variance within and between German preschools than there was between Swedish preschools (Sheridan & Schuster, 2001). Four aspects were drawn as a consequence of the research in order to build a theory of pedagogical quality that could be utilized as a starting point for internal and external evaluations as well as to improve preschool quality. (1) The dimension of society, (2) the dimension of teachers, (3) the dimension of children, and (4) the dimension of settings/learning contexts.

The prevailing discourses in society formed the first dimension of evaluation and analysis. It included information on changing public policy aims and requirements, the role of preschool, and how to increase educational quality in order to meet overall goals. Understanding the socio-economic and cultural milieu in which preschool operated was aided by a societal viewpoint. In preschool, a child's social development requires that, to the extent that they are capable, they take responsibility for their own actions and for the environment. As a result, the preschool must ensure that children develop the ability to articulate their thoughts and opinions, giving them the power to change their own circumstances and accept responsibility for their own actions as well as the environment.

The second dimension of evaluation and analysis focused on how teachers approach and engage with children, as well as their pedagogical awareness and educational techniques in relation to the child's learning process and the content from which a child must form knowledge. Several studies have found that the teacher's skill and attitude appear to have a significant impact on preschool quality. Teachers who used a democratic learning technique encouraged students to ask questions, learn, and participate, and the students seemed happy, helping one another, and resolving issues through negotiation. External variables, such as the vast number of children in low-quality preschools, were perceived as hurdles to teachers, preventing them from communicating with individual children, and from making children part of the planning of ongoing activities, etc. They

also explained: ‘if we had an extra room, the children could paint more often and when they want to’.

The third dimension of evaluation and analysis concerned recognizing children as subjects with their own voices, as well as a desire to comprehend children's intentions and expressions for meaning in a given scenario and context. In this perspective, evaluating children meant recognizing them as capable social actors who constructed knowledge and culture in certain historical, social, and cultural contexts. 41 percent of the 17 children in the three high-quality preschool units felt that the teacher knew what they liked, 41 percent answered maybe, and 18 percent said no. Up to 45 percent of the 22 children in the low-quality preschool units did not believe that the teacher knew what they preferred to do.

Preschool learning environments were the fourth dimension of evaluation and analysis. Preschools can be seen of as gathering areas for values, attitudes, and learning goals from both home and society. To evaluate pedagogical quality from this perspective included an evaluation of structural aspects, pedagogical processes and children’s expected outcomes in relation to the overall goals viewed in a specific context and time. Space, equipment, and materials, as well as how they are arranged and used, the organization of content and activities in relation to a time schedule, and all pedagogical processes that occur throughout the day, such as interplay between the child and the teacher and between the children, the atmosphere, the teacher's attitude, their educational strategies, and what children have learnt in preschool were all considered.

There is a dearth of studies on the relationship between preschool quality and child development in the developing world, however few researches have been conducted to understand the quality of ECEC in the developing countries. (Rao and Pearson, 2007) Children in the highest quality preschool showed considerably superior developmental functioning than children in all other programs and the control group, according to a longitudinal nationwide study of Cambodia's early childhood care and education programs. Longitudinal studies of children who attended preschool programs in Bangladesh also (Aboud, 2004), India (Zaveri, 1993), and Nepal (Save the Children, 2003) found that participating children fared better in terms of school preparation, attendance, and cognitive development than those who did not. Such findings highlighted the importance of considering quality in context (Myers, 2006) and evaluating preschools using situationally appropriate tools. Even the smallest input provided by programs such as food supplementation and

some adult-centered preschool stimulation seemed to have a favorable influence for early children in circumstances where mother literacy was very poor and children were very socially disadvantaged.

Not many studies were found to be conducted in India to examine the quality of ECCE services. However (Rao, 2010) studied one hundred and ninety-three 4-year-olds, from four types of early childhood education centers (ICDS, Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Program, nongovernmental organization, and private) and assessed the program quality. The children were from low-income families and resided in both urban and rural locations. Two ICDS centers (I and Y) were chosen for the same project. In Center I, there were 18 boys and 17 girls, and in Center Y, there were 9 males and 23 girls. All of the children were from economically disadvantaged families that fulfilled the government's standards for being labelled as below poverty line families. In both centers, the fathers of the children worked in similar jobs (mostly agricultural or construction), while the majority of the mothers were illiterate. Teachers from Centers I and Y were also the participants in the study. Their classes were observed, and they were interviewed for general background information and program details. The McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities was used to assess children's level of developmental functioning. It included questions on teachers' academic background, professional qualifications, and work experiences. Teachers were also asked about the delivery and distribution of the supplementary nutrition, the adequacy of the teaching resources, supervisory visits, communication with parents, teachers' involvement in the community, and the Mothers Committee.

The findings revealed that the centers were small in size, had dedicated storage areas for their limited resources, and lacked outdoor play equipment. Although neither center had a toilet, both had drinking water. There were locked gates, so there was less risk of children running into the road in terms of health and safety. There was also very minimal equipment, which reduced the risk of having any safety issues. There were no basic play supplies like balls, blocks, or crayons in each center, but there were storybooks and low-cost, no-cost indigenous products. Resources were available for the teachers to keep track of their student's progress and provide parent education. Both AWWs (anganwadi workers) met the job's minimum requirements and appeared dedicated to their roles. However, the AWW in Center I seemed more motivated and achievement oriented than the one in Center Y. She had completed her degree a few years earlier, whereas the AWW in Center Y had not pursued further education.

Despite the fact that both centers used the same government-funded inputs and had the same structural quality, one of them had superior process quality than the other. This disparity in quality appeared to be caused by a number of variables. The center with the greater quality was closer to the Project Office and received more informal supervision and monitoring than the other. The AWW in Center I seems more committed to helping children's growth than the one in Center Y. She seemed to include the kids in more activities, whereas the kids at the other center seemed to spend more time "sitting around." Children in the higher-quality center had stronger perceptual, memory, verbal, and numeracy skills than children in the lower-quality center, demonstrating that child outcome measures are connected to quality. Children who attended a higher-quality preschool had superior literacy abilities, which are crucial for early school success. High-quality preschool education is critical for a child's growth. Preschool will not benefit children if the level of care and instruction provided is inferior to what they would receive if they did not attend. The lack of implementation of the preschool education component of the ICDS was accorded to multiple responsibilities on the AWW as well as a lack of manpower which put an even larger strain on the already overburdened AWW or the system as a whole.

(Chopra, 2012) Another study in India to understand the differences in quality of provisions provided to the children in the five different categories (ICDS, Private Nursery School (PNS), Big Recognized Schools (BRS), Experimental (Exp) Schools and MCD nursery classes run by Municipal Corporation of Delhi) was conducted. The Exp preschools provided the best services as they took a developmental approach to early childhood education and planned their programs around the principles of child development. The children were also well-served by the BRS preschools; nevertheless, a considerable majority of these programs took an academic approach to early childhood education. The PNS programs were also observed to take an academic approach to their curriculum and emphasized the acquisition of the three R's. Furthermore, the children were underserved by the programs in this category. The curriculum at MCD schools and ICDS programs, on the other hand, was more child-centered. However, the overall quality of the services provided to children under these two umbrellas was poor. Quality variations were also observed within the categories of BRS and PNS programs as there was no apex body for these two categories. In contrast, there existed a separate governing body for both the MCD schools and the ICDS. These governing bodies developed policies and procedures for these two types of early

childhood programs, as well as supervising their implementation. As a result, there were relatively few differences between MCD schools and ICDS programs. Observing the various programs, it appeared that a big majority of the lower-rated early childhood programs did not place a high value on 'play.' Play activities were either not included in the curriculum or did not have a dedicated time slot. Furthermore, while the children were engaged in play activities, the teacher did not interact with them. Thus, in the 'poor' early childhood programs, the developmental value of 'play' was missing, whereas the 'good' programs engaged children in meaningful play activities. Another distinction between the 'good' and 'poor' programs was the curriculum's subject-based approach. The 'good' programs used a 'development-based' curriculum, whereas the 'poor' programs used a 'subject-based' curriculum. Furthermore, the 'good' programs emphasized the 'process' of any activity rather than the 'content.'

The recent National Education Policy 2020 also recognized that presently quality ECCE is not available to crores of young children, particularly children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. However, strong investment in ECCE has the potential to give all young children such access, enabling them to participate and flourish in the educational system throughout their lives. It has also laid down its goal of ensuring universal access to high-quality ECCE across the country in a phased manner. Special attention and priority have been recommended to be given to districts and locations that are particularly socio-economically disadvantaged. It recommended anganwadi centers to be strengthened with play equipment, high-quality infrastructure and well-trained anganwadi workers/teachers. It also gave emphasis on having a trained human resource in order to achieve universal and quality ECCE.

2.6 Conceptualization of Strategic Human Resource Management in Education:

Strategic management has been defined in a variety of ways in recent literature, and it has become widely used in management literature. The goal of strategic human resource management is to effectively apply such resources to meet the strategic requirements and objectives of organizations. Strategic human resource management, according to a more comprehensive academic definition, is mostly about integration and adaptation. Its goal is to ensure that: (1) HR management is fully integrated with the firm's strategy and strategic needs; (2) HR policies are consistent across policy areas and hierarchies; and (3) HR practices are updated, accepted, and used by line managers and

employees in their daily work. Wright, P. M., and McMahan (1992) offered a similar definition of strategic human resource management that it is “the pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable an organization to achieve its goals.”

Human Resource Management emerged in the late 1980s as an alternative for personnel management. Personnel management was overly bureaucratic, heavily influenced by operational procedures, and offered unrealistic answers. HRM, on the other hand, mirrored the organization's strategic goal and enabled managers at all levels to provide personalized individual responses to issues, employ positive motivation, and be proactive when interacting with various team members and addressing problems they faced. Human resource (HR) management saw a significant transformation during the previous decade. This shift moved the emphasis of HR research from micro analytic research, which formerly dominated the profession, to a more macro or strategic perspective. The concept of strategic HRM was first formulated by Fombrun et al (1984), who laid down three core elements as necessary for firms to function effectively:

- Mission and strategy
- Organization culture
- Human resource management

Adding the adjective 'strategic' to HRM suggests that the focus of HRM as a whole is on enhancing organizational effectiveness, according to Boxall and Purcell (2000), despite the fact that HRM and SHRM are closely related. Strategic HR management is linked to better outcomes and is also linked to higher organizational performance. Increased productivity, higher revenues, and decreased employee turnover are some of the benefits of SHRM for organizational effectiveness (Knies et al., 2018).

SHRM's strategy, which first gained traction in the corporate world, has since spread to other domains and fields, including the labor-intensive subject of education. As staff recruitment, training, and compensation consume a significant percentage of school budgets and time, there was a growing interest in the possibilities of good HRM in terms of improving the quality of the teaching team and, as a result, the school's effectiveness. Successful schools can benefit from attracting and employing effective teachers, assigning instructors to children in a more equitable manner, and retaining good teachers. SHRM in education focused on aligning school goals with

the development of HRM practices, the link between the school context and HRM practices, and the fit between different HRM practices within a school (Becker and Huselid, 2006). Thus, it emphasized on paying attention to both the individual goals of teachers and the organizational goals of the school to create a high-quality and committed teacher team.

Runhaar (2017) ability/motivation/opportunities (AMO) theory of performance of Appelbaum et al. (2000) is one the most commonly used theoretical frameworks in SHRM. It was suggested that when HRM methods are structured to contribute to employees' ability (A), motivation (M), and opportunity (O), the organization's interests are best served. People perform successfully when they not only have the requisite skills and knowledge (A), but also want to do the job and are rewarded (M), and have the appropriate support and opportunities in their work environment to complete their job efficiently (O) (Appelbaum et al., 2000). Staffing, professional development, teacher assessment, and reward systems are among the prevalent SHRM practices listed by Runhaar (2017) as contributing to teacher AMO.

Staffing is the first HRM practice, and it involves recruiting and selecting new teachers from outside the school. It also includes assigning teachers to specific responsibilities inside the organization (Runhaar, 2017). There is evidence that teacher recruitment and selection may influence teacher behavior in terms of retention and effectiveness. Professional development, the second HRM practice, contributes to teachers' competence, knowledge, efficacy, motivation, beliefs, and behavior, according to many educational studies (e.g., changes in class practice).

Teacher evaluation, the third HRM activity, serves a dual purpose: it holds instructors accountable while also aiming to enhance their performance. Teacher evaluation has been demonstrated to influence teacher skill (e.g., teaching quality), teacher motivation (e.g., work satisfaction), and teacher behavior (e.g., teachers' participation in professional learning activities) in studies. Reward systems, the fourth HRM technique, can be financial or non-financial. According to research, it results in strong teacher motivation. As a result, strategic human resource management in education is critical, as the educational workforce is the primary instrument for improving goals and, as a result, national development. Development is impossible without a sufficient, skilled, and well-motivated staff, as well as sound human resource management. 'Effective human resource management is the key to providing high-quality educational experiences,' according to

Middlewood and Lumby (1998: 5), and 'educational organizations rely on the quality, commitment, and performance of individuals who work there for their success.'

In the context of ECCE services, there are various stakeholders who are included in the category of human resources such as teachers, principal, supervisors and national or state level officers. Teachers, in particular, play a critical role in maintaining and increasing educational standards in every educational system. The school system's efficiency is harmed by a teacher shortage or inadequate administration. Recruitment, selection, staffing, welfare, maintenance, training and retraining, placement, promotion, retention, motivation relationship, remuneration or rewards, transfer, performance assessment, and participation are all aspects of human resource management. Teachers in educational systems stay dedicated and productive when they are properly recruited, selected, supervised, inducted, and rewarded. Strategic human resources can be a source of competitive strength for education and also lead to high-quality ECCE services if they are well-managed.

However, certain challenges in human resource management disrupt the effectiveness and quality of the education process and system such as poor working condition, poor recruitment and selection process, inadequate and delays in renumeration, lack of proper guidance from supervisors and appropriate training etc. In India, there have been steps taken for training of ECCE staff such as framing of guidelines for training anganwadi workers, however there is no standardization of the qualifications and training process of all ECCE workers due to multiplicity of service providers. The latest National Education Policy 2020 has also laid down certain guideline to ensure a qualified and trained ECCE workforce. With respect to appointment of teachers, it recommends recruiting qualified and trained teachers as per the need of schools and also emphasizes on capacity building of teachers for pre-school. It advocates teachers to be trained in creating a child friendly environment through activity-based teaching-learning methods to attract these children to school. To address the different needs of young disabled children, special teachers may need to be recruited.

This policy promotes different agencies and universities including NIEPA to conduct research studies and provide training for capacity building of different stake holders involved in planning

and implementation of NEP 2020 specially for ECCE. The training would also need to be provided for managing schools ensuring better equity and inclusion and for integrating pre-school section with the primary/secondary school. There is emphasis on capacity building of administrators for preparing district/block level plans for providing access of children to quality pre-school education, facilitating them to transit to primary school and sustaining their retention. It recommends developing an appropriate mechanism for regular monitoring of functioning of pre-school sections attached to schools and providing support to school heads and teachers for its effective functioning.

Despite the expanding body of empirical SHRM research, the discipline has been criticized for its lack of theoretical grounding (Bacharach, 1989; Dyer, 1985). This criticism stems in part from the fact that the discipline has used three separate styles of theorizing, but the differences between them have not been clearly addressed. Some authors have advocated for a "best practices" approach to SHRM from a universalist standpoint (Dewar & Werbel, 1979). Like many micro-level HR researchers, these researchers believe that some HR practices are always superior than others, and that all firms should embrace these best practices. Pfeffer, for example, stated that greater use of 16 management techniques, such as involvement and empowerment, incentive compensation, job security, internal promotion, and training and skill development, would results in higher productivity and profit across organizations. Osterman (1994) suggested that a variety of new work techniques, such as teams, job rotation, quality circles, and comprehensive quality management, resulted in increased productivity for all american organizations.

A second set of researchers adopted a contingency perspective (Butler, Ferris, & Napier, 1991; Dyer, 1985; Fombrum et al., 1984). According to contingency theorists, a company's HR policies must be consistent with other components of the organization in order to be effective. Contingency theorists, for example, have attempted to demonstrate how a variety of HR practices are consistent with various strategic perspectives, as well as how these practices relate to firm performance.

A third group of SHRM theorists developed arguments that are consistent with the configurational approach that is emerging in the organization theory and strategic management literature. Configurational theories differ from universalistic and traditional contingency theories because configurational theories are guided by the holistic principle of inquiry, are usually based on typologies of ideal types, and explicitly adopt the systems assumption of "equifinality" (Doty,

Glick, & Huber, 1993). Wright and McMahan claimed that SHRM is concerned with "the pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable an organization to achieve its goals" (1992: 298) and that HR system in an organization must achieve both horizontal and vertical fit in order to be effective. They appeared to suggest that the configurational perspective was an appropriate approach for SHRM. Vertical fit refers to the congruence of the HR system with other organizational features, such as business strategy. Horizontal fit refers to the internal consistency of the organization's HR policies or practices. An arrangement with the greatest degree of horizontal fit would be optimal. The larger the performance improvements, the closer an organization's HR practices resemble the correct prototype system (for its business strategy).

Despite the fact that not all HR practices are strategic, there is a growing consensus on which ones are. Internal career opportunities, formal training systems, appraisal measures, profit sharing, employment security, voice mechanisms, and job definition were identified as seven practices that were consistently considered strategic HR practices, based on the theoretical works of Osterman (1987), Sonnenfeld and Peiperl (1988), and Miles and Snow (1984). Internal career opportunities are the first practice. It refers to the utilization of internal labor markets. In other words, organizations have the option of hiring primarily from inside or from outside. The second practice is training systems, which refers to how much formal training employees receive. Organizations can give comprehensive formal training or rely on selection and some socialization to acquire skills. Third, appraisals might be based on performance or behavior. Individual actions that are required to do the job efficiently are the emphasis of behavior-based appraisals, whereas results-oriented assessments are solely concerned with the implications of such behaviors. Fourth, profit-sharing plans have been viewed as an important component of a strategic HR system because they link pay to organizational performance. Fifth, the level of job security provided to employees has a number of strategic ramifications. Sixth, voice mechanisms have emerged as important determinants, including formal grievance channels and participation in decision-making. Finally, the degree to which jobs are defined as precisely or narrowly as possible is critical. Tightly defined jobs are those in which employees know exactly what their responsibilities are and prove beneficial for both the individual and the organization.

In a globalized world, organizations aim to achieve superior performance through optimum utilization of resources and it is dependent on highly motivated and committed employees. (N.Sumathi, 2017) Employee performance is the most essential result of Strategic HRM Practices, according to a study done in an IT organization in Chennai District. Employee's personal and organizational variables such as age, gender, qualification, experience, non-competitive compensation package role, stress, empowerment, leadership support, job security, inconsistent and vague promotional policies, and employee performance were found to have significant relationships. A good strategic management policy was observed to motivate employees to work smartly to achieve results by establishing harmonious relationships between employees and the management.

Employees viewed Strategic HRM Practices as critical in their organizations, according to the findings. It was also discovered that 87.7% of the organizations in the sample unit used a 360-degree appraisal system, and 87 percent of them supplied performance-based incentives to their employees. 93.1 percent did an employee attitude survey, and 89.9 percent completed competency mapping to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the IT organizations. The research also revealed a few strategic HRM practices that IT companies value, such as the recruitment and selection process, training and development with a clear objective and competitive training, performance appraisal, salary, rewards and recognition, transfer and promotion policies, work environment, and employee benefit.

India does not have good HR practices in the educational sector which sometimes also becomes a reason for many people to consider teaching as a substitute when nothing is available. (Venkatesan, 2011) A study was done in the Namakkal region of Tamil Nadu, which is one of the most important districts in the state and home to a large number of private educational schools. The study's goal was to look into the human resource practices of a few private educational institutions in Tamil Nadu's Namakkal district. The study focused on employee happiness, the current pay system, private sector promotion opportunities, employee job security and motivation, management and employee relationships, and job stress. It was a study of employee's attitudes on their jobs and the reasons why they switch institutions on a regular basis. Data was gathered from 30 private educational institutions, including 10 private schools, 10 private arts and science colleges and 10 Professional Colleges with a total number of respondents from all the categories of educational institutions being 450.

The study's main findings revealed that out of 150 private school employees, 43 (28.7%) had a high degree of job satisfaction and 37 (24.6%) had a low level of job satisfaction. However, roughly 70 (46.7%) of respondents from private schools reported a moderate level of job satisfaction. Out of 300 employees at private arts and science and professional colleges, 78 (26.00%) had a high level of job happiness, 150 (50%) had a medium level of job satisfaction, and 72 (24.00%) had just a low level of job satisfaction. Age, gender, job level, family income, and rural/urban origin were all factors in total job satisfaction among private college employees. The most important variables were determined to be family income and work level, since these factors influenced job satisfaction of both private school and college employees in Tamil Nadu's Namakkal area. The majority of employee respondents, 60 percent of workers from private schools and 38.33 percent of employees from private arts, science, and professional colleges, believed that personal interview performance was crucial for selection in the institutions. 6% of employees in private schools and 12.67% of employees in private arts and science and professional colleges viewed group discussion as vital. Recommendation was considered as major criterion for selection according to 13.33 per cent and 21.67 per cent of private schools and Private Arts & Science and Professional Colleges respectively.

It was discovered that out of 150 responders from Private Schools, 67 (44.67%) received employer-provided training, and 83 (55.33%) received stipends and other emoluments during the training time. In the case of Private Arts & Science and Professional Colleges, 41.33 percent (124) of the sample employees received training, while 176 (58.67 percent) were paid over the period. In a survey of 150 private school employees, 50 (33.33 percent) said that training increased their chances of promotion, while 30 (20.00 percent) said it improved their skills, and 70 (46.67 percent) said they received more incentives. In the case of Private Arts & Science and Professional Colleges, the majority of the 300 sample employees who underwent training stated that training had definitely improved their skill, while 16.67% felt that training increased their promotion opportunities, and 20.00% (60) stated that they had received additional incentives. Employees, on the whole, were enthusiastic about training.

It was discovered that 28.74 percent of 87 private school employees received certificates or medals, while 27.58 percent received cash prizes. A total of 24.14 percent of respondents received a raise, while 19.54 percent received a promotion. In the case of private arts and science and professional colleges, 31.79 percent of 195 prize winners received certificates or medals, while 30.26 percent

earned an increase. Cash prizes were given to 20.51 percent of the participants, while 17.44 percent were promoted to higher positions. Thus, effective SHRM practices according to the few studies done in the field of Education reveal a positive impact on the attitude and efficiency of the teacher community.

2.7 Impact of effective SHRM practices on Quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):

Teachers are the most valuable resource in the school system, and they also constitute the largest single cost in educational provision. It is widely acknowledged that the educational system will not be able to provide high-quality education without qualified personnel. Recruitment, staff development, reward systems, and career structures are all important aspects of strategic human resource management in large-scale modern organizations. Understanding school HR processes is vital since assembling a team of skilled and devoted teachers have an impact on quality, whether directly or indirectly.

(Peter Mok, 2016) A survey undertaken by the Hongkong government found that over and above their engagement in staff development days, 82 percent of Hong Kong teachers participated in some form of continuous professional development (CPD) activity (Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications, 2003). Furthermore, 30% of the respondents said they were engaged in academic, award-winning programs. Recruitment and Selection, Orientation, Training and Development, Performance Management, Working Conditions, and Rewards and Compensation were the six characteristics of HR practices in schools that the study confirmed. The findings found that in Hong Kong schools, the dimensions of Orientation and Training and Development were seen to have the best HR practices, while Working Conditions and Recruitment and Selection were perceived to have the worst. Orientation practices were associated with their schools' provision of information to newcomers, which they felt was necessary for them to discharge their responsibilities. The regression analysis revealed that Training and Development and Working Conditions were two of the characteristics that had an impact on starting teachers' affective commitment. The effective commitment of beginning teachers would be improved, and the wastage rate would be reduced, if schools linked school development plans with the personal development needs of teachers.

(Peprah Opoku, 2019) In a study aimed to examine the factors that promote teacher retention in rural schools in Ghana, The Teacher Retention Scale (TRS) was administered to 164 teachers recruited from 15 schools in 10 communities which consisted of 12 items and two sub-scales in a single district in Ghana. The results showed that the participants were slightly positive on structural capital and social capital as well as high positive correlation between both sub-scales.

The establishment of a school culture in which instructors share common aims, accept themselves as equal members of the community, and collaborate as a team is referred to as social capital (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2015). Teacher retention is aided by the presence of school leaders who are interested in teacher development and the creation of a positive atmosphere. Teachers receive support from school officials in the form of learning resources and professional development to keep them up to date on current teaching practices (Castro, Kelly, & Shih, 2010). Teachers are also encouraged to collaborate with one another, according to school authorities. Teacher retention can also be influenced by the presence of strong relationships among teachers, students, and the entire community (Hardré, Sullivan, & Roberts, 2008). Acceptance of teachers at both school and community levels can motivate them to remain in schools.

Structural capital refers to the availability of essential educational infrastructure as well as incentives for instructors to stay in the classroom, such as financial bonuses and accelerated promotion (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2015). Teachers may be encouraged to strive toward enhancing the learning of pupils in rural schools if instructional resources are readily available. Teachers who accept positions in remote schools forego most of the conveniences that contribute to a decent quality of life, such as restaurants and entertainment centers (McEwan, 1999). As a result, monetary incentives and consistent promotion in remote schools could compensate for their loss, with a potential positive influence on retention.

Between social capital and structural capital, there was observed a strong positive link. This shows that both structural and social capital are important factors in teacher retention in rural schools. While working in rural schools, teachers, for example, require appropriate working conditions, such as bonuses, recognition, and opportunities for professional growth (McEwan, 1999). Teachers, too, need to work at a school where there is a culture of cooperation and mutual support (Gomba, 2015). This would make it easier for teachers to adjust to their new surroundings and feel confident about contributing to the development of children in rural schools. Furthermore, it is

critical for the communities where these teachers work to include them in their activities. This facilitates socialization and enables teachers to identify with local communities and feel comfortable working in rural schools.

Scholars generally agree that the quality of learning is dependent on the quality of the teachers. As a result, every program aimed at enhancing educational quality must start with the teachers themselves. Professional development for teachers is at the heart of any plan to improve their performance. Inevitably, poor professional training manifests itself in the quality of teaching. The key components of teacher professional training are curriculum, content knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge. A good teacher's professional development will concentrate on their conceptual understanding. Because teachers are the source of knowledge transferred to learners, they must have a clear and in-depth understanding of curriculum content and also be highly knowledgeable about pedagogy in ways which must go beyond mere teaching methods, examples, illustrations etc. As a result, in-service training and development helps teachers re-adjust their knowledge and skills to keep up with the realities of the classroom. These trainings should be well-organized, with in-service training and development experts who are well-trained. One of the prerequisites for a successful educational revolution is high-quality in-service teacher training and development, which prepares teachers to deal with reforms in subject matter teaching, learner evaluation, school organization, and teacher professionalization.

Improved supervision, monitoring, and assessment of education departments, districts, circuits, and schools, as well as education quality and standards, were all identified as essential elements in increasing teacher performance. This necessitates better training for members of the school governing body. The educational standards and quality are also determined by the physical circumstances of the school. As a result, continuous efforts to enhance working conditions are required. Another strategy to attract great teachers to the school is to offer competitive salaries and benefits. It lays the groundwork for higher efficiency and better performance. Within the education system, the development of a true, coherent human resource management system, one with defined lines of authority and where there is a better linkage between control of resources and accountability for success and failure is important.

(Zeyu Xu & Charisse A. Gulosino, 2006) Teachers play an important role in enhancing early childhood performance, according to a study done in US kindergartens. The study was more

concerned with what teachers do than with their credentials. It looked at teachers' behavior in particular, with a focus on the teacher's role in developing and sustaining a positive teacher–parent connection. According to the findings, teacher–parent connection was observed as a favorable predictor of student achievement. The behavioral characteristics of teaching influence the transition from a just "qualified" to a "quality" teacher.

The findings corroborated previous research that found a tenuous link between teacher credential indicators and student achievement after controlling for other education inputs (Rivkin et al., 2001). The creation of a composite teacher–parent partnership index, as well as its interaction term with parental support, reveals that there is a considerable positive association between student accomplishment and parental support. The influence of teacher quality on student outcomes was measured using a value-added approach in this study. Teacher efforts in creating and maintaining a solid teacher–parent partnership, one of the behavioral components of teaching, were found to have a significant impact on increasing early childhood student achievement. It was argued that teacher–parent collaboration has an impact on how teachers think about teaching and can lead to specific views of their responsibilities (i.e., improving academic outcomes). Mapp (2002) also stated that when teachers are involved in the planning of a teacher–parent relationship, they are more likely to stay committed to the project. Teachers learn more about children in their class and are better equipped to provide appropriate educational services for their pupils when families buy into the idea of teacher–parent cooperation. As a result, parents and teachers collaborate to make key decisions that benefit their children's success.

Although teachers cannot be considered as the sole contributors to the quality of education, but they are considered to be the most important enablers of educational improvement. From the perspective of educational effectiveness, few common staffing indicators at system level and at school and classroom level include:

System level: Working conditions (class size, teaching time, types of students to teach, non-teaching time, professional development and career opportunities); teacher compensation (salary levels and pay-scales, measures of additional benefits); supply and demand of teachers, pre-service training (number of years of initial training, type of initial training); share of teachers' education in total education expenditure; in-service training (teachers' education opportunities, proportion

of teachers involved in continuing education activities, loss of learning time for students as a result of in-service activities of teachers).

School and classroom level: educational leadership (proportion of time spent on educational matters); pre-service training (proportion of unqualified teachers); in-service training (continuing education activities); years of experience in subject taught; (instructional effectiveness indicators).

Nutbrown Cathy (2021) Few researchers such as the one conducted in England reiterated the importance of qualifications for those working in early childhood education. Many countries were experiencing a recruitment and retention dilemma for early childhood educators, and a lack of coherence and clarity left many educators feeling disillusioned and unappreciated. The lack of an agreed nomenclature, as well as the numerous jobs, differing demands, and disparities in compensation and working conditions, added to the uncertainty. Despite numerous studies, academic assessments, and analyses, the credentials problem persisted in England (Nuttall et al. 2020). A growing number of these reviews, reports, recommendations, and surveys pointed to the need for a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of people who work with young children, as well as adequate remuneration, working conditions that support them in a difficult job, and a career structure that encourages retention. Some early childhood educators were found leaving their skilled profession for positions in supermarkets (Akhal 2019); this was an indictment on policymakers for their lack of action, as well as a result of lower-level qualifications attracting poor pay and difficult working circumstances. Long hours, unequal compensation, a lack of career structure and recognition, and a lack of qualifications were just a few of the causes of the recruitment and retention crisis.

High-quality care necessitates a well-educated, well-qualified workforce, which is critical in bridging the achievement gap and providing young children with the best available learning and development opportunities. Furthermore, a high-quality 'workforce' is an issue of children's rights, and universal access to early education, to a workforce that is properly trained and rewarded, appreciated and respected, and who has opportunities to study, think, and question is important to those rights. To enact a positive shift, radical change, political will, and government investment are required; to be effective, any change must be resourced, with a properly substantial investment in educators' initial introduction to the workforce, as well as conditions of service that will ensure their retention and advancement.

High-quality early childhood education is dependent on well-educated teachers who have had a strong foundational education and training, as well as ongoing professional development that supports and enhances their work throughout their careers. It is necessary to emphasize that early education entails much more than the acquisition of predetermined facts and knowledge; it entails learning how to use information, collaborate with others, listen to different points of view, and have the courage, confidence, and morality to confront cruelty and injustice. Thus, teachers must be oriented and trained well to achieve these goals.

A balance must be established between providing chances for play, discovery, and learning, as well as adult support and involvement, in order to develop children's creative learning. Too much or inappropriate participation hampers learning; a strong desire to speed change in children's growth, as well as purposefulness that decides for children rather than with them, will not result in the rewards of strong and healthy holistic development. Educators must employ a careful and vigilant pedagogy that nurtures a love of learning while simultaneously provides children with new relational opportunities when the time is right. Early childhood educators must have 'permission' to use creative, artistic, imaginative, and unconventional methods with young children. In a pedagogical relationship with endless potential, educators must partner with children in their play and trust children as learners and their own expertise as teachers. Rich learning can result from such close inquiring interactions between young children and their educators.

Training quality has been acknowledged as a critical component of providing effective and quality education to children. The quality of functionaries' concepts, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities are all important factors in their capacity to do jobs effectively. Other qualitative variables, including as structures, equipment, and the staff-to-child ratio, have an impact on the teaching-earning practices. Thus, few studies done in India on ICDS acknowledged that anganwadi workers must receive ongoing training to keep up with the growing number of skills that are required of them. Lack of attention to early stimulation of under threes, a lack of understanding of child development (children were rarely grouped or differentiated for age-appropriate activities at anganwadi centres), and a limited knowledge of how to pursue a wider repertoire of self-initiated child activities or resources were all observed to be the training flaws within the ICDS system. These studies and reports also reveal while the majority of anganwadi Workers have a caring relationship with the children, some have been found to be oblivious to their feelings. Thus, trainers

should build in exercises that explore the anganwadi worker's own learning experiences as children and adults, both at home and at school, to increase empathy for learners. In few researches, trainers and anganwadi workers agreed that training and refresher training were too brief and infrequent, and that training facilities were underequipped which ultimately made them turn to more formal ways of teaching in the anganwadi centers. Thus, proper and adequate training of the Pre-Primary educators is essential to ensure quality ECCE services. The NEP 2020 also promotes regular training of Pre-Primary teachers and anganwadi workers to achieve quality Early Childhood Care and Education.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction:

Research is a systematic effort to gain a new knowledge, and for good and appropriate result, investigation requires systematic and accurate procedure in research field. A well thought out plan of action, followed by a systematic execution brings out fruitful results in research (King, Keohane & Verba, 1994). Hence, the research is a careful, critical, discipline inquiry, varying in technique and method according to the nature of conditions of the problem identified, directed towards clarification or resolution (or both) of the problem. Research is not a haphazard task but it requires proceedings in a definite direction, done with definite intention of taking a specific problem and finding its solution in a scientific manner. In the previous chapter brief literature was discussed to develop the problem and in the light of previous studies and theoretical background statement of the problem was made. This chapter is devoted to the method and procedure followed in the investigation. Therefore, an attempt has been made to provide methodological plan and procedure as under:

3.2 Statement of the problem

3.3 Plan of the study

3.4 Sampling

3.5 Tools and Techniques

3.6 Methodology

3.2 Statement of the problem:

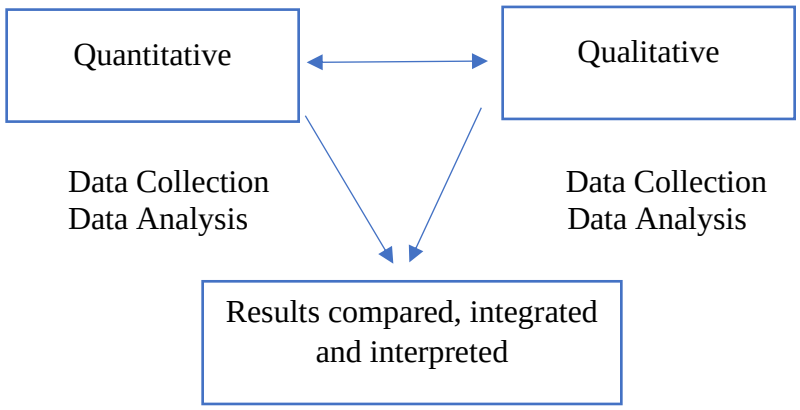
The problem assigned for the present study entitled as **"Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) Practices and Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) In Delhi".**

3.3 Plan of the study:

The study aimed to examine the Quality standards of ECCE as well as SHRM practices of South Delhi District. The Quality indicators taken into consideration for this study include Infrastructure Facilities, Availability of Resources, Play-Based Pedagogy, Holistic Development, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusivity. The Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices were measured in terms of Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards. The implicit assumption here was that these SHRM practices have a direct bearing on the quality of ECCE services. The challenges faced by ECCE teachers in implementing Quality ECCE services were also taken into account. Thus, the study not only looked at the current status of SHRM practices and Quality ECCE but also examined the relationship between them.

The mixed method approach was chosen for this research. A mixed method research design is a way for gathering, analyzing, and "mixing" quantitative and qualitative approaches in one or more studies to better understand a research subject (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The main premise is that combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies yields a better knowledge of the study problem and subject than using either method alone. The study design adopted for this research was concurrent triangulation. This design involved collected of both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time in a single study. However, the two methods were combined in both the data analysis phase and the interpretation. The purpose of this type of investigation was to validate the findings generated by each method through evidence produced by the other. Integrating qualitative and quantitative data can provide strong evidence for conclusions; and triangulating the data from different methods increases the validity of the results and the conclusions (Creswell and Plano Clark 2007).

Figure 8: Concurrent triangulation Mixed Method Design



The present research used both qualitative and quantitative research techniques at the same time with an emphasis on the description, analysis and interpretation of observed realities. Data was collected at two levels under the quantitative method. At the state level to get an overall understanding of the ECCE provisions in Delhi, large-scale database such as UDISE Plus was used to gather data on the number of Pre-Primary teachers, qualifications of teachers, diversity of Pre-Primary students in classroom, inclusion of students with disabilities, number of girls students, infrastructure facilities etc. At the district level (South Delhi District) a nominal scale questionnaire i.e. Yes or No category was used to gather data on the quality standards in the three ECCE government managed agencies selected for the study. Simultaneously, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the heads of select ECCE service models (Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Sarvodaya Schools Under Directorate of Education and anganwadis) to gather data on best practices for emulation and scalability as well as challenges faced in SHRM and Quality ECCE.

A mixed method approach was relevant for this research as it brings more depth in understanding the current structure, practices and challenges of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and Quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECCE) services across different government managed agencies of South Delhi District. The results from both the types of data collection techniques were analyzed and interpreted to draw out themes and patterns. A brief description of the chosen data collection techniques is given below:

Primary Data

Quantitative Questionnaire- A nominal scale i.e., 'Yes' and 'No' category was used in the questionnaire. The questionnaire included 39 Quality indicators such as ramps, separate toilets for boys and girls, activity area within the classroom, use of storytelling, flexible seating arrangement, activities for gross motor and cognitive development and availability of resources etc. (See Appendix B)

Semi-Structured Interviews- It is a qualitative research technique which involves asking open-ended questions to the respondents and for eliciting response about a subject. Semi structured interviews offer a considerable amount of leeway to the researcher to probe the respondents along with maintaining basic interview structure. The semi-structured interview in the present research had three broad sections such as Biographical Data, School Profile and Teacher Management. The

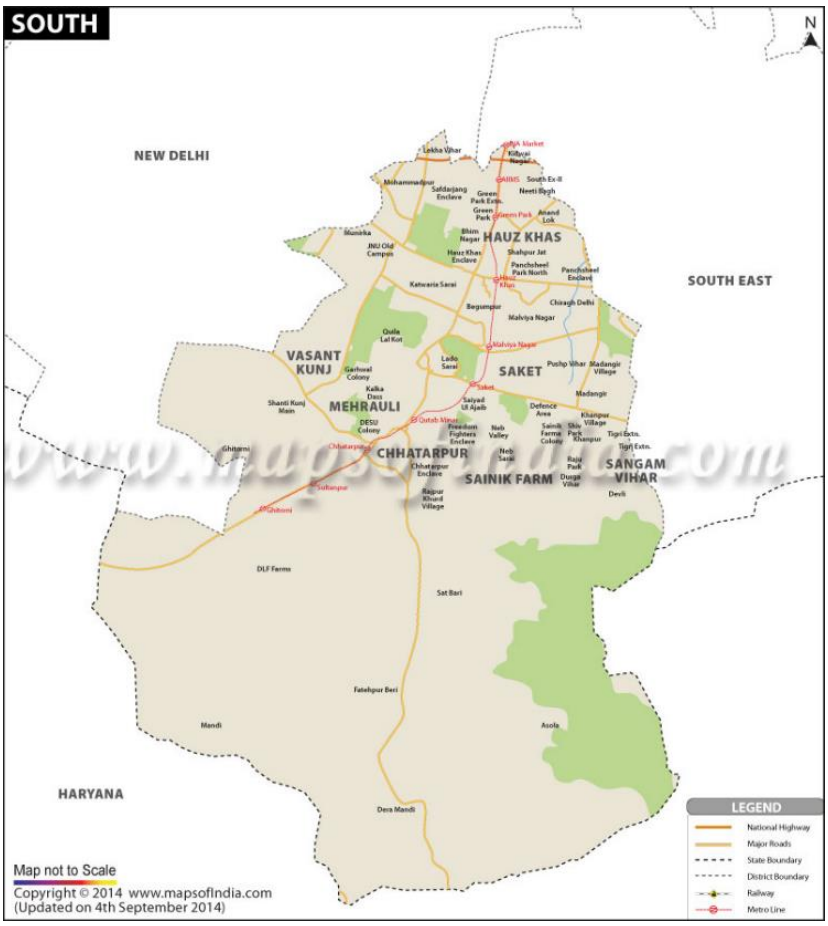
first section looked into the biographical details of the respondent. The second section looked into factors such as admission policy, management type, integrated or separate pre-primary sections, enrollment category and fee structure etc. The third section looked into factors such as teacher recruitment, teacher pupil ratio, orientation of teachers, salary structure, promotions, evaluation and reward structure. (See Appendix A)

Secondary Data

Large Scale Database- Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE PLUS) was used to analyze factors such as the number of teachers, their qualifications, diversity of children in classrooms, infrastructure facilities etc. in the state of Delhi with respect to ECCE.

3.4 Sampling:

Figure 9: Map of South Delhi District



Source: **https://www.mapsofindia.com/delhi/districts/south-delhi.html**

The National Capital Territory of Delhi has 5069 schools with 343 schools in South Delhi. ECCE services are provided by 193 schools (Private Unaided, Local Body, Department of Education, Government Aided) with Pre-Primary sections within it. ECCE services are also provided by anganwadi centers and there are 10,758 anganwadis spread across the length and breadth of Delhi, covered under 95 Projects. South Delhi specifically has 763 centers under 6 projects.

Step 1: Three ECCE service models were selected for this study in the South Delhi District. South Delhi district was selected for the study due to ease of accessibility as well as paucity of time. The total number of schools/centers with Pre-Primary sections in each of the categories in the South Delhi district were identified:

Table 3.4.1: Total number of Pre-Primary schools/centers across three government managed agencies of ECCE in South Delhi

Management Type	anganwadis	Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi	Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education
	19 Projects, 2066 centers	84	27

Step 2: A pilot study was conducted across four categories of early childhood care and education (ECCE) service providers such as anganwadis, Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education and Kendriya Vidyalaya schools in South Delhi District. However, during the pilot survey, it was found out that Kendriya Vidyalayas do not have Pre-Primary sections. Thus, this category was eliminated from the research. The pilot study revealed the existing human resource management structure at the Pre-Primary level as well as quality standards maintained with respect to ECCE. Various challenges of the existing SHRM and quality structures were also revealed which validated the importance and need of the research. The pilot study also allowed the researcher to refine and add few aspects to the existing interview questions.

Step 3: For the purpose of this research, random stratified sampling was used. 10 schools within each management type were selected from the urban areas of South Delhi Revenue District.

Table 3.4.2: Pre-Primary schools/centers selected from South Delhi District across three government managed agencies of ECCE

Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi	Anganwadis	Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education
SDMC Pratibha Primary Co.ed School, Green park	Anganwadi Kendra 99 - Hauz Khas Village- Govindpuri Project	Sarvodaya Vidyalaya - Masjid Moth
SDMC Primary Pratibha school- (Girls) Mehrauli	Anganwadi Kendra 100 - Hauz Khas Village- Govindpuri Project	Ishani SKV G block Saket
MCD primary school- Bhim Nagar (Co.ed)	Kusumpur pahari Project - Harijan Basti- Vasant Kunj	Sarvodaya Vidyalaya No 1, RK Puram Sector 2
Nagar Nigam Sahasiksha Adarsh Pratibha School, Humayunpur, Safdarjug Enclave, New Delhi	Anganwadi Kendra Yusuf Sarai- Gujjar Diary- Govindpuri Project	Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya- No 2, Meherauli
SDMC primary (Co ed) school Adchini	Anganwadi Kendra- Adchini - Govindpuri Project	Ramanuja Mehrauli No 2, Main Bazaar
MCD primary school Arjun Nagar	Anganwadi Kendra 92- Humayunpur	Sarvodaya Bal Sr. Sec Vidyalaya No 1- Qutab
SDMC Nigam Partibha Vidyalaya Gautam Nagar	Anganwadi Hub centre- Humayunpur	Navjeevan Govt Sarvodaya Girls Sr Sec School Begumpur Stc/Mmtc Colony
SDMC primary school- Mehrauli Dargah	Anganwadi 13 Lado Sarai (Meherauli Project)	Gargi Government Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya Green Park
South Delhi Nigam Model School- Hauz Khas Enclave	Anganwadi 17 Lado Sarai (Meherauli Project)	Sarvodaya Vidyalaya Co.ed Safdarjung Enclave
SDMC Primary Co-ed school- Hauz Khaz Village	Anganwadi 18 Lado Sarai (Meherauli Project)	Sarvodaya Vidyalaya Co.ed Shahapur Jat

Thus, the aim was to understand the current status of SHRM and Quality ECCE across three government managed agencies serving a large number of children with ECCE services. Three different government managed agencies were selected to get a comprehensive understanding of the diverse ECCE services being provided in the state of Delhi. The Heads/Primary school in charges of these institutions were interviewed to get a holistic perspective of the status and challenges faced by them with respect to effective SHRM and implementation of quality ECCE services.

3.5 Tools and Techniques:

To construct the quantitative questionnaire as well as the semi-structured interview list of guide topics, various international and national framework on Quality ECCE were reviewed such as Conceptual Framework for the Pre-Primary Subsector by UNICEF, Measuring Early Learning Quality and Outcomes (MELQO) Initiative of World Bank, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development quality assessment framework, National Quality standards framework based on the National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy 2013, NCERT framework for ECCE, NIPUN Bharat Guidelines for Implementation, School standards and evaluation framework by Shaala Siddhi and Early Childhood Education Quality Assessment Scale (ECEQAS) developed by Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development (CECED) at Ambedkar University Delhi.

With these frameworks as guiding documents, a questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide was prepared and used for the pilot study in four government managed institutions providing ECCE in South Delhi District. The respondents were asked to give feedback on the nature of questions asked, whether any questions can be added or removed. The feedback received during the pilot study aided in the modification of the interview guide and questionnaire in order to make it more holistic in understanding the various dimensions of SHRM and Quality of ECCE.

The questionnaire used a nominal scale i.e. a ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ category and included questions on various Quality indicators such as availability of infrastructure, seating arrangements, availability of play material and Teaching learning material and presence of activity-based learning etc. The semi structured interviews however had four broad sections which were used as a guideline-

Recruitment and selection process of Pre-Primary teachers, Professional Development of Pre-Primary teachers, Rewards, Salary and Promotion structure of Pre-Primary teachers and Teacher evaluation and monitoring structure. The semi-structured nature of the interview also allowed the interviewees to share the best practices as well as challenges faced in the effective implementation and delivery of Quality ECCE.

3.6 Methodology:

A border understanding of the ECCE services in the state of Delhi was estimated through the data captured in UDISE Plus by the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education. The Data Capture Format for the year 2021-22 was analyzed and reviewed and questions pertaining to the Pre-Primary teaching were narrowed down such as whether Pre-Primary education available or not, whether anganwadi in premises, infrastructure facilities (ramp, drinking water, toilets), number of Pre-Primary teachers, enrollment of Pre-Primary children etc. With a focus on these questions, the school report card of all the schools in Delhi district wise was collated and analyzed. Similarly, data on the number of anganwadi centers in Delhi as well as the number of anganwadi workers and helpers in South Delhi District was analyzed through the state department of Women and Child Development website. However, it was observed that many important aspects of Pre-Primary education were not captured through the existing data information systems creating a gap in the holistic understanding of the ECCE structure in Delhi. The primary data collection was thus done to fill these gaps and get a deeper understanding of the current state of ECCE, SHRM practices and Quality indicators.

The primary data collection was done over a period of two months- November to December 2021. The questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedule were created by the second week of October 2021 and the pilot study was conducted in the last week of October itself which aided in the refining and modification of the tools. The respondents were given a brief of the purpose of the research and then were given the questionnaire as well as interviewed later to get a more in-depth understanding. The field work was done in three phases, starting with the schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, moving on to the anganwadis and lastly the Sarvodaya Schools under the Directorate of Education. In the Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, the permission letter to conduct research from NIEPA was accepted by the headmasters/ primary school in charges and they were all very cooperative in the whole exercise. Some of the headmasters even invited the teacher in

the school to participate in the discussion after the interviews and this helped in gaining the insights on various SHRM practices even deeper. They also brought out various challenges that they face on a daily basis. In the anganwadis, mostly the anganwadi workers were available and in few the supervisors were also present. The accessibility to anganwadis was also easy and they also were cooperative in the whole process. The anganwadi workers also invited the anganwadi helpers to come for the discussion after the interviews. This allowed to get a holistic perspective on the current status as well as challenges in the anganwadi ECCE system. However, to access the Sarvodaya Schools under the Directorate of Education, researcher had to visit the Directorate Office for the South Delhi District and get permission from the Deputy Director of South Delhi District. Once the permission was granted, it was easy to interact with the headmaster/primary school in charge of these schools. Some of the headmasters even asked the Pre-Primary teachers to give a more detailed idea about the ground reality in teaching Pre-Primary sections.

Note making was done during the whole process of conducting the semi-structured interviews and all the interviews were transcribed the very same day. This aided in keeping a detailed record of all the responses and interaction during the fieldwork. Due to covid restrictions, classroom observations to further examine the SHRM practices and quality standards could not be done as children were not attending schools physically. However, within the restrictions, the researcher was able to physically interact with the headmasters/school primary in charges, Pre-Primary school teachers, anganwadi workers and helpers who gave detailed information on classroom practices followed before and after covid.

The analysis of the data started with examining the collated data from the UDISE PLUS platform as well as the data collected on anganwadis on the Women and Child Development website. The data was then used to draw broader conclusions on various aspects such as the number of Pre-Primary schools, division by management type, number of Pre-Primary teachers and anganwadi workers etc. It helped in building an overall perspective about the ECCE system and structure in Delhi, specifically South Delhi. Further, the primary data was analyzed and themes were drawn out. A comparative analysis was done on the data from all the three government managed agencies within each theme. The comparative method is often applied when looking for patterns of similarities and differences, explaining continuity and change. Comparative research method combines theory or

theoretical concepts with data collection (Given, 2008). Thus, in the present research, results from both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were compared, integrated and interpreted.

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 Introduction:

This chapter presents the findings of the study. With the data collected from UDISE Plus, questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, connections and relationships in the obtained data were established. Field notes of the researcher were used to supplement understanding. When the responses obtained from the three different government managed agencies of ECCE were examined, there were considerable differences observed with respect to the SHRM Practices (Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards) and Quality ECCE (Accessibility, Diversity, Inclusivity, Infrastructure Facilities, Availability of Resources, Play-Based Pedagogy, Holistic Development). The findings of the study in this chapter have been divided into the following sub themes:

4.2 Overview of ECCE services in South Delhi District

4.3 Current status of Quality Indicators across the three government management agencies

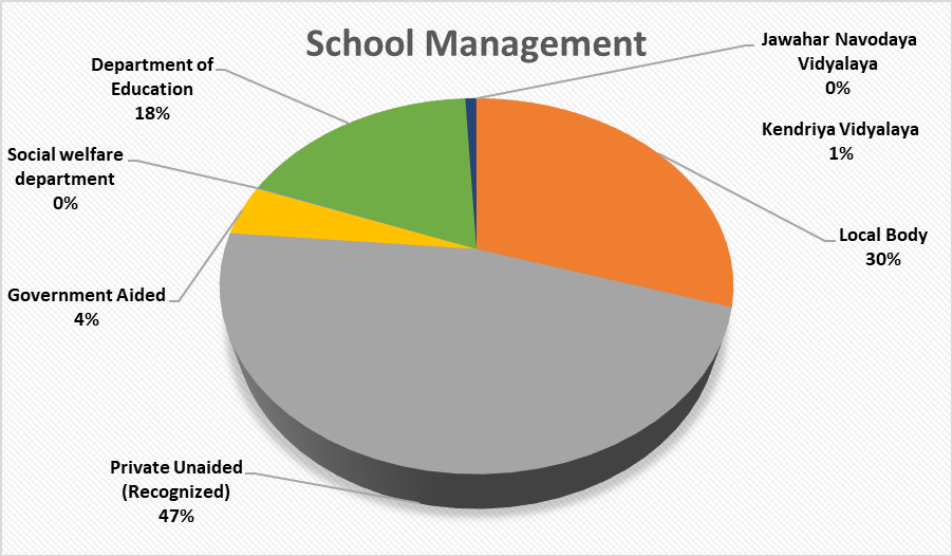
4.4 Status of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) Practices in three government management agencies

4.5 Challenges faced in SHRM and Quality ECCE

4.2 Overview of ECCE services in South Delhi District:

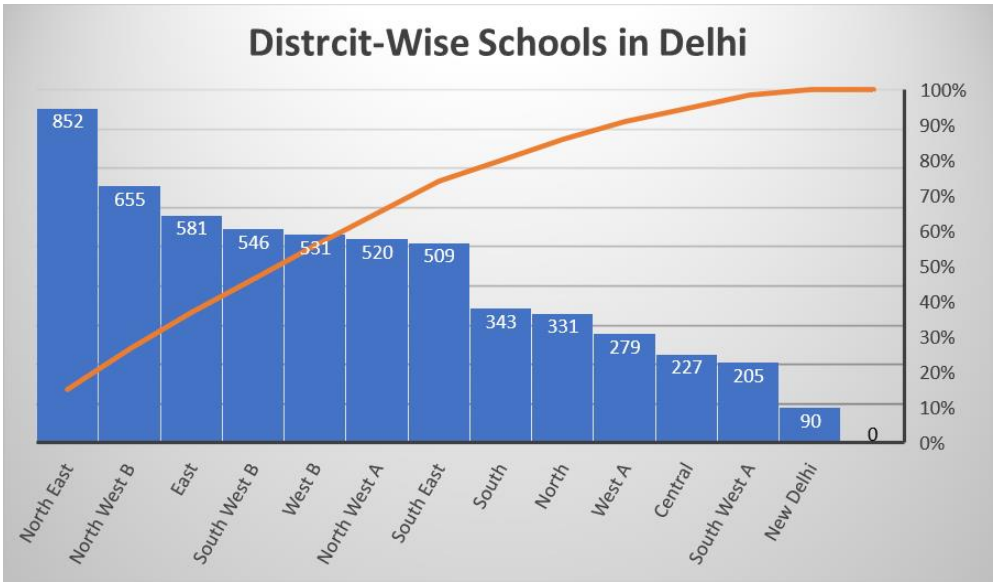
The UDISE Plus data provided by the Ministry of Education was used for gaining a broader understanding of the current status of ECCE services including the number of schools in Delhi, district-wise distribution of schools, number of Pre-Primary schools in South Delhi district, division across management types, number of Pre-Primary teachers at the state level as well and at the district level etc.

Figure 10: Schools in Delhi across different management types



The total number of Schools in Delhi were recorded to be 5669 spread across different management types. The private unaided (recognized) schools were observed to the highest with 2652 in number, followed by schools under Local Body at 1687 and Department of Education at 1026. The lowest number. The lowest number of schools were under the Social Welfare Department and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya with 6 and 2 school in number respectively (UDISE 2019-20).

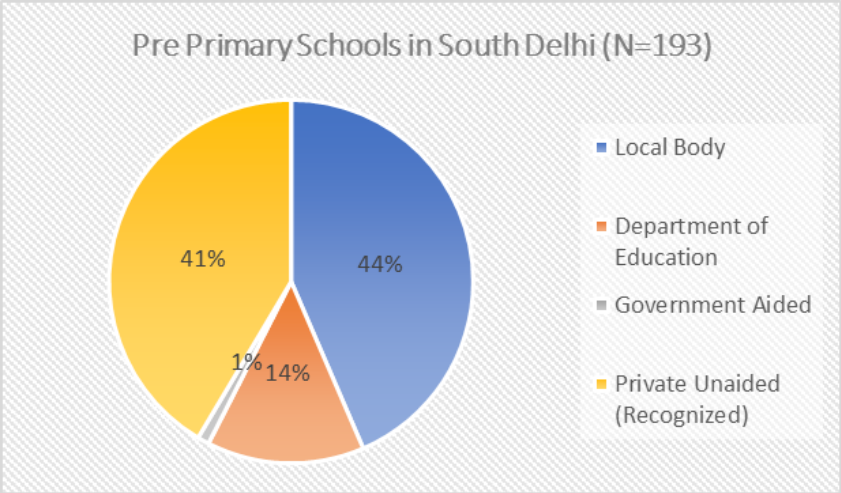
Figure 11: District wise school distribution in Delhi



The schools in Delhi were recorded to be spread across 13 districts with the highest number of schools being located in the North East District followed by Northwest B and East district. The lowest

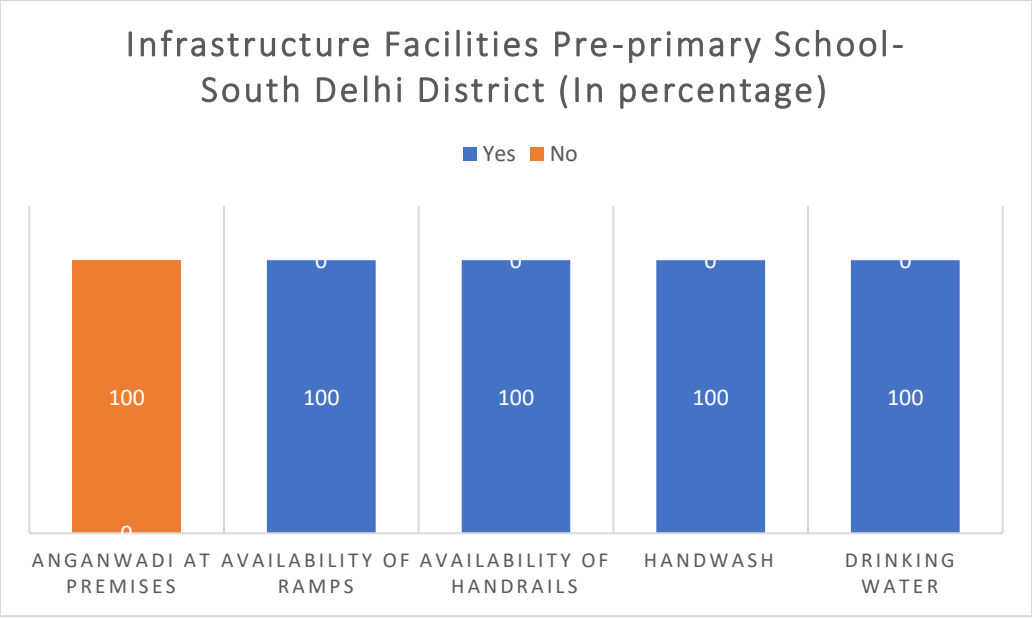
number of schools were located in the Central, South West A and New Delhi districts. South Delhi District which was the focus of the study had a total of 343 schools within which the highest number of schools were private unaided (recognized) with 148 schools, followed by Local Body with 144 schools, Department of Education with 72 schools and lowest number of schools were under Government aided and Kendriya Vidyalaya with 7 and 2 schools respectively (UDISE 2019-20).

Figure 12: Pre-Primary schools in South Delhi District across management types



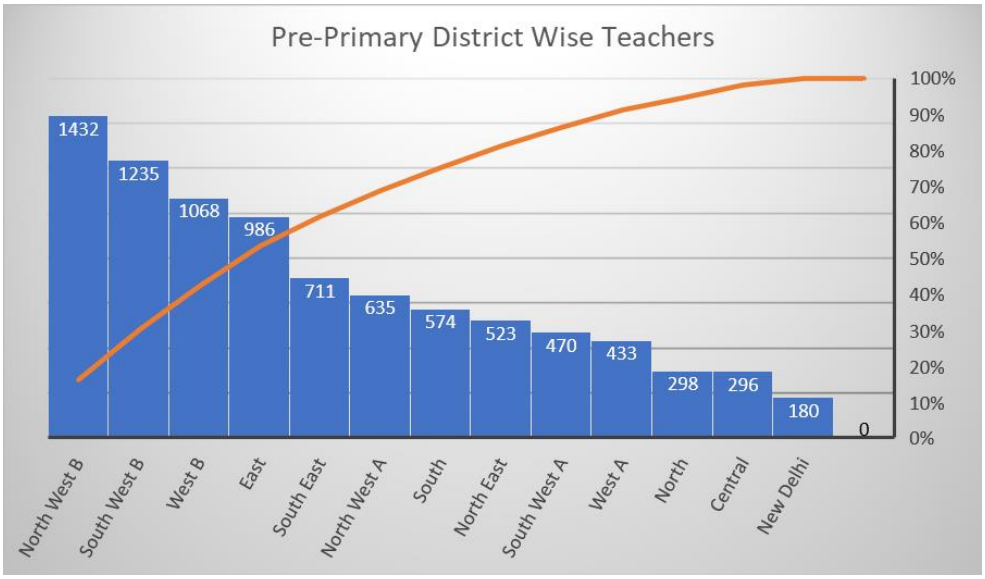
Out of the 343 schools in South Delhi District, a total of 193 schools were recorded to have Pre-Primary sections in South Delhi District with 84 schools under Local Body followed by 80 schools under Private unaided (recognized) and 27 being under Department of Education. The lowest number of schools were 2 under Government aided agency (UDISE 2019-20).

Figure 13: Infrastructural Facilities in Pre-Primary schools in South Delhi District



All of the 193 schools with Pre-Primary sections in South Delhi District were observed to have basic infrastructural facilities such as availability of handrails, ramps, hand wash and drinking water. However, none of them had anganwadis on premises.

Figure 14: District Wise Pre-Primary teachers in Delhi



There was a total of 28039 teachers recorded in Delhi, with the highest number being from the Department of Education at 15847 followed by Private Unaided (Recognized) sector at 9387,

Government aided schools at 1558 and Kendriya Vidyalaya at 910. However, Pre-Primary teachers in Delhi were observed to be 8841 in total with highest being in the Private Unaided (Recognized) with 6744 followed by Local Body with 1211 and Department of Education with 855. At the state level, 99 percent of the Pre-Primary teachers were recorded to be female and only 1 percent were male (UDISE 2019-20). Out of the 8841 Pre-Primary teachers in Delhi, the highest number of Pre-Primary teachers were in the North West B district followed by South West B and West B. The lowest number of Pre-Primary teachers were in Central and New Delhi district. The focus of the study which was South Delhi District had 574 Pre-Primary teachers (UDISE 2019-20).

Figure 15: Pre-Primary teachers across management types in South Delhi District

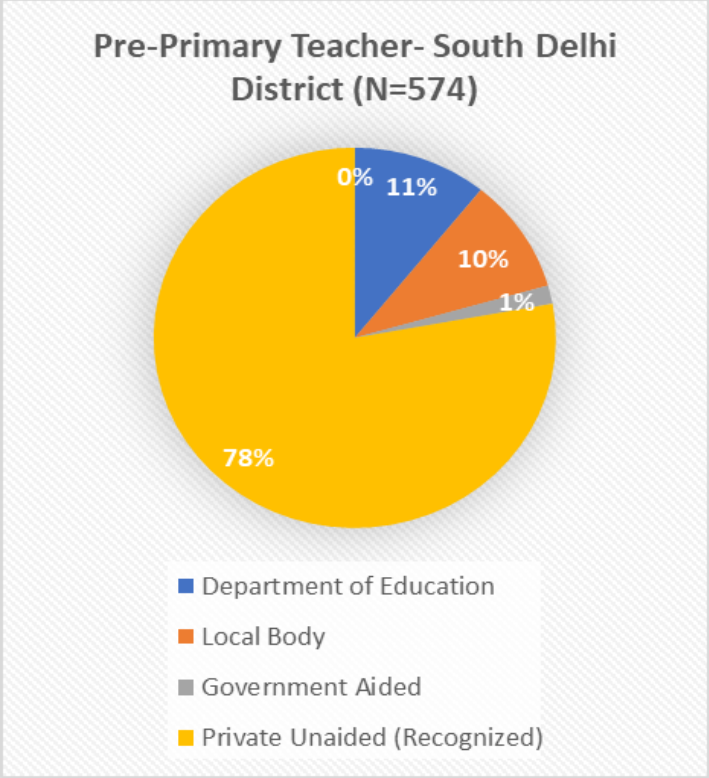
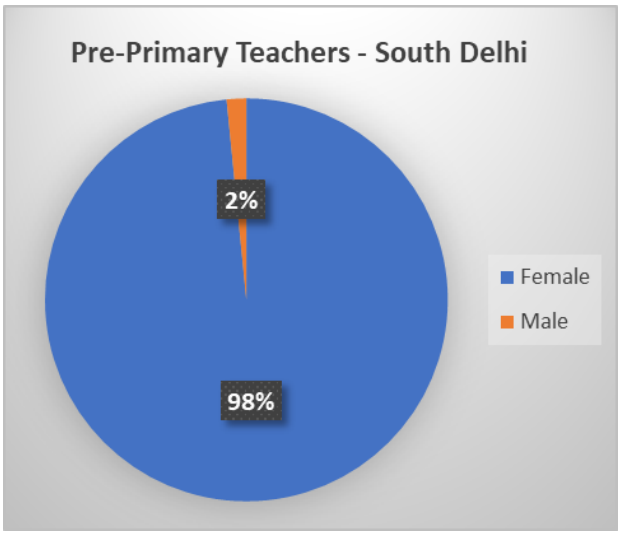
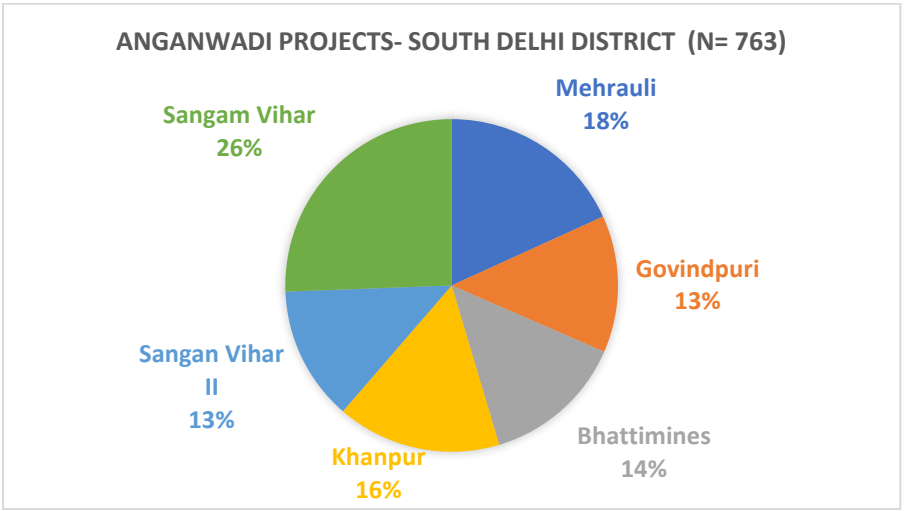


Figure 16: Gender distribution of Pre-Primary teachers in South Delhi District



There was a total of 574 Pre-Primary teachers in the South Delhi District with 98% being female and 2% being male. Majority of the Pre-Primary teachers in South Delhi District were under the management type of Private unaided (Recognized) schools comprising 78% followed by schools under Department of Education with 11%, Local Body with 10% and Government aided with 2 %. (UDISE 2019-20). Out of the 193 schools with Pre-Primary sections in South Delhi, 39 schools had no Pre-Primary teachers. (UDISE 2019-20).

Figure 17: Distribution of anganwadi projects in South Delhi District



The National Capital Territory of Delhi was observed to have 10,758 anganwadis spread across length and breadth of Delhi, covered under 95 Projects. South Delhi specifically had 763 centers

under 6 projects. Every anganwadi was required to have one anganwadi worker and one anganwadi helper. However, out of the 763 centers in South Delhi District, 57 centers had a vacant position for anganwadi worker while all of the centers had at least one anganwadi helper allotted to it (MWCD, 2020)

4.3 Current Quality Status across the three ECCE government management agencies:

This section looked at the current status of quality indicators across the three government managed agencies providing ECCE services (Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education and anganwadis).

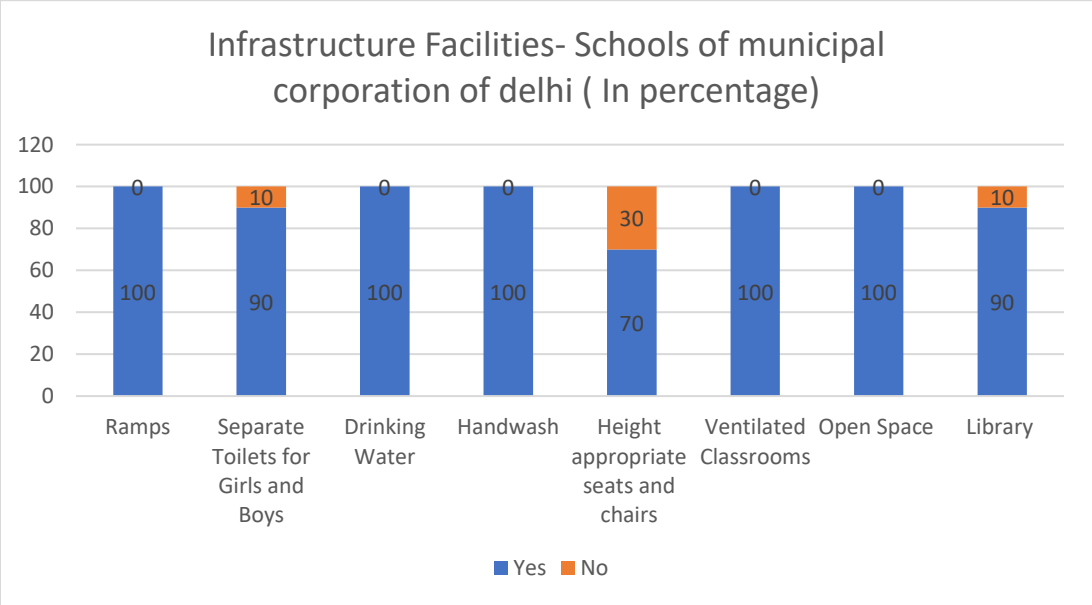
With a background of the overall ECCE structure within Delhi, specifically South Delhi, it was concluded that there are a large number of ECCE providers across different management types. There were also a large number of Pre-Primary teachers recorded however most of them were positioned in the Private Unaided (Recognized) Schools and lesser number of teachers were present in the government managed agencies providing ECCE services. There were also a large number of anganwadi centers recorded with angawandi helpers and workers working towards providing early childhood care and education to children along with the other services that they provide such as immunization, health and nutrition etc. However, the large-scale database such as UDISE Plus and even information about anganwadis on the website of Ministry of Women and Child Development at the national and state level was observed to be very limited and did not cover the details and ground realities of the functioning of ECCE services. Thus, to develop a further understanding, this section draws from the field work done in three government managed agencies providing ECCE services (Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education and anganwadis) and lays down the current quality standards and status of these three government managed agencies.

4.3.1 Infrastructure Facilities across the three ECCE government managed agencies:

Various international as well as national organizations have laid down indicators of infrastructural facilities which are essential for ensuring a safe, enriching and quality teaching-teaching learning experience for children at the pre-school level specifically. However, certain common indicators

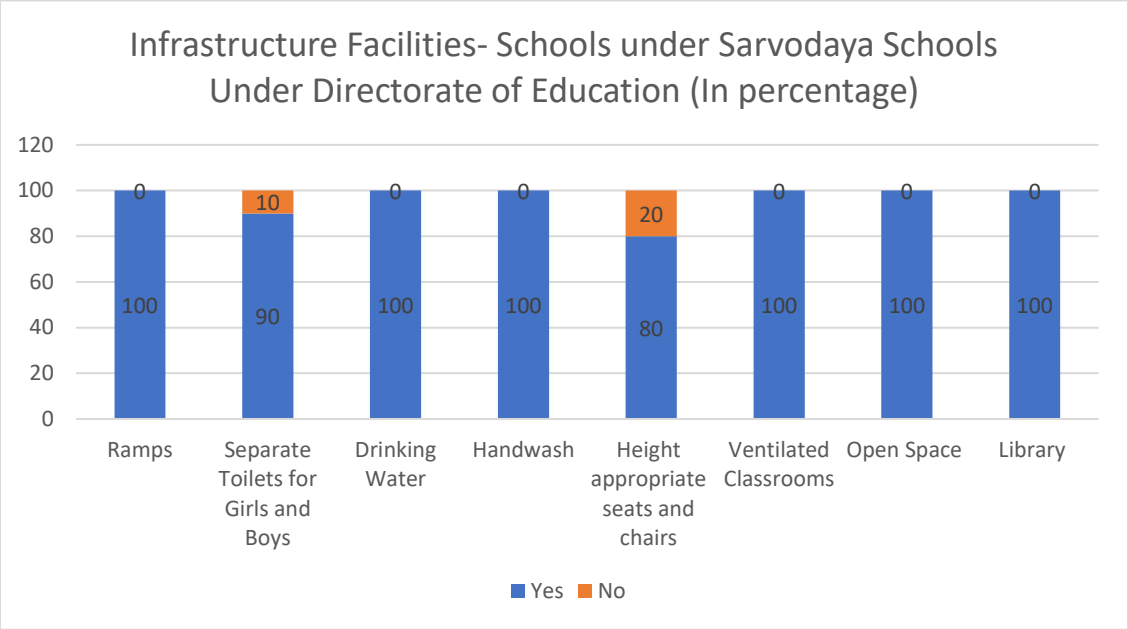
were taken into account for this study such as availability of ramps, separate toilets for boys and girls, drinking water, handwash, ventilation in classrooms, height appropriate chairs and tables for children, open space and library facilities. Thus, this section looked at the current status of the three ECCE government managed agencies with respect to the Infrastructural indicators selected for this study.

Figure 18: Infrastructural facilities of schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi



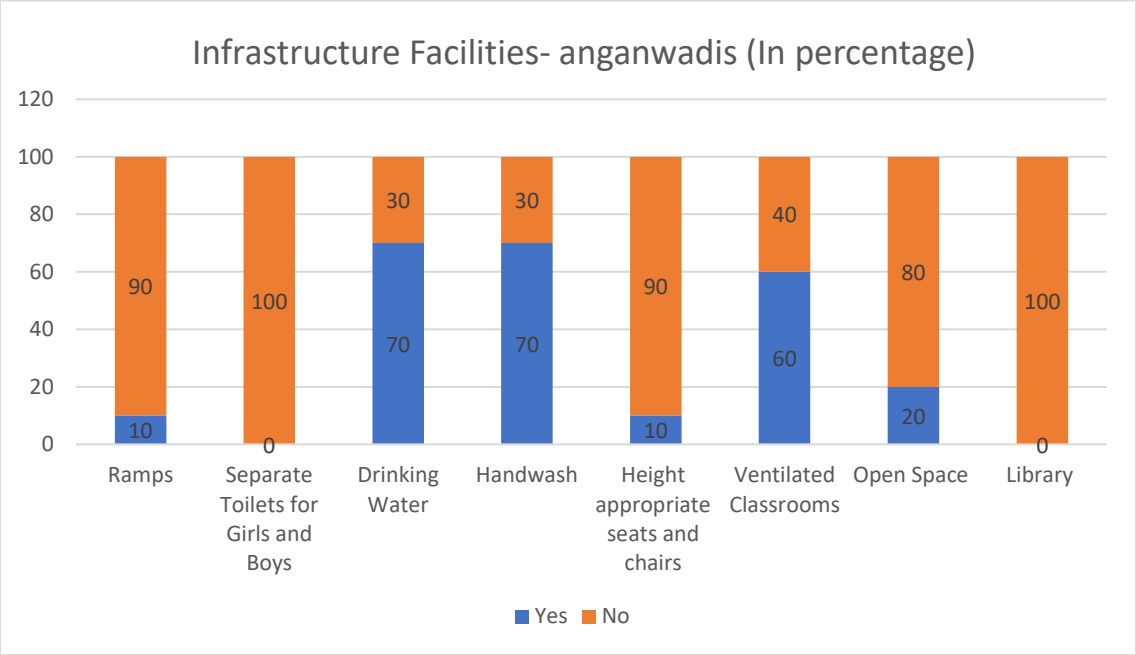
All the ten schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had availability of ramps, drinking water, handwash, ventilated classrooms and open space. Additionally, nine MCD schools had functional toilets, separate for girls and boys as well as library facilities. With respect to height appropriate chairs and tables, three schools did not have appropriate furniture and only had mats (daris) for children to sit on. Resources such as toys, flash cards, TLM, Kits etc. were available in most of the MCD schools. However, space constraint was observed in few schools and one school even faced a severe seepage problem because of which most rooms in the school could not be utilized.

Figure 19: Infrastructural facilities of Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education



The ten Sarvodaya Schools under the Directorate of Education had all facilities such as ramps, drinking water, handwash, open space, library and ventilated classrooms. Only one school had a common washroom for girls and boys and two schools did not have height-appropriate tables and chairs for children while rest of them had both of these facilities. Many classrooms had a library space within the classroom itself. Resources such as toys, flash cards, TLM, Kits etc. were available in most of the schools, however one school highlighted that at times they received resources after the first half of the year which was a challenge. The infrastructure was well maintained and appropriate for ensuring quality education for children.

Figure 20: Infrastructural facilities of anganwadis



Amongst the ten anganwadis studied, only one anganwadi which was a hub center had the facility of a ramp while the rest of them did not have ramp facility. It was also observed that none of the anganwadi had a library or separate toilet for girls and boys. Only the hub center had few height-appropriate chairs and tables while the rest of them only had Mats (daris) for children to sit on. Additionally, only two of the anganwadis had some open space, largest being at the hub center; however, the rest of the eight anganwadis had no open space (See appendix C). Five of them had only one small room with little ventilation and very little light. Lack of resources like toys, flash cards, textbooks for teachers and children was also observed. Some resources were not given timely and workers had to spend their own money to pay for charts, fevicol, flash cards, glaze paper etc.

4.3.2 Teacher-Pupil Ratio across the three ECCE government managed agencies:

Various international as well as national organizations have mentioned that at the preschool level the ideal pupil-qualified teacher ratio must be 1:20-25. Researches have also indicated that age-appropriate grouping of children as well as activities is equally essential. This section looked at the Teacher Pupil Ratio as well as the grouping of children across the three ECCE government managed agencies.

Figure 21: Teacher-Pupil Ratio in Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi

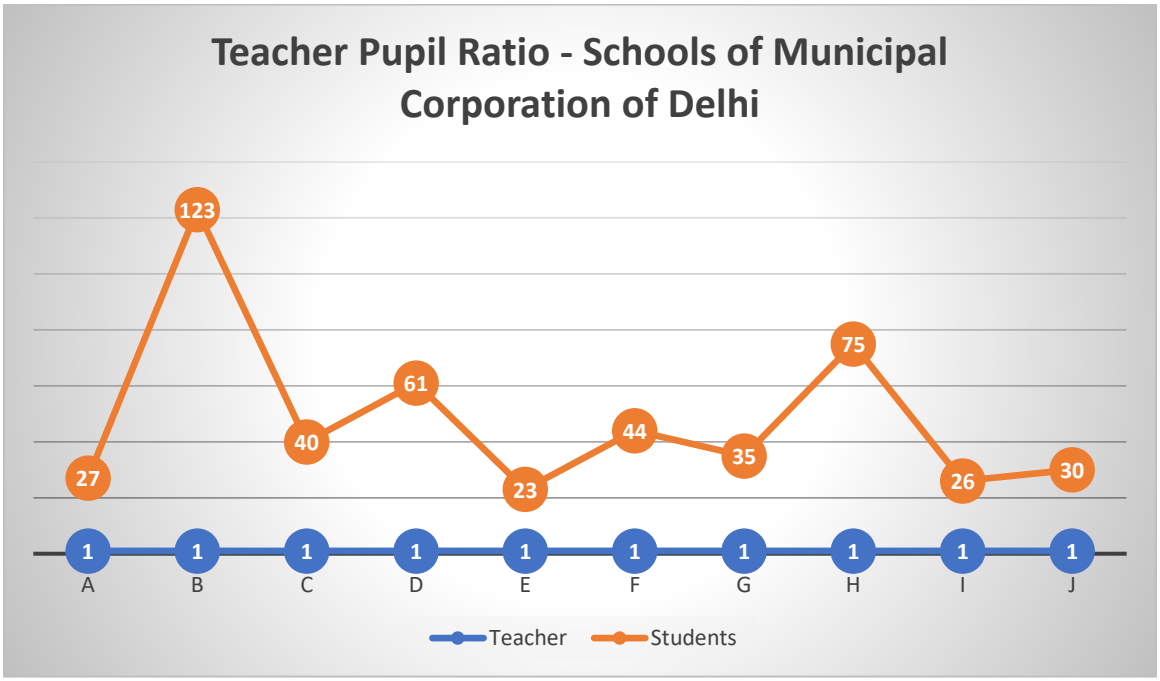
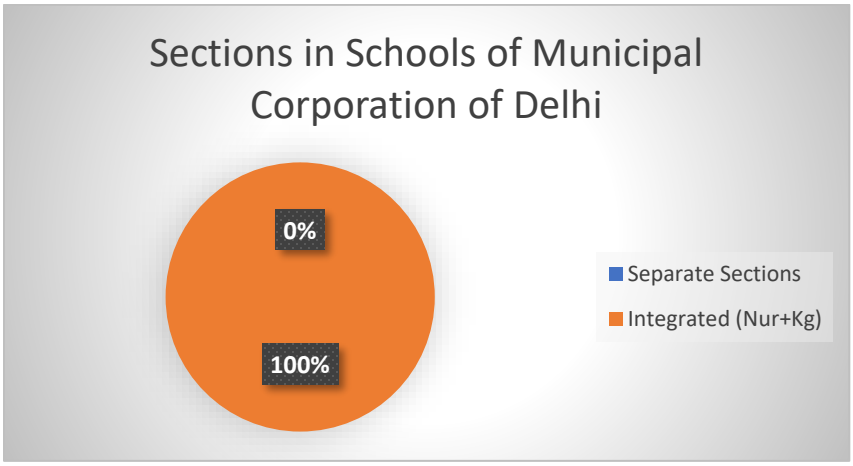


Figure 22: Sections in schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi



All the schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi had integrated classes where children of Nursery and Kg studied together taking the Teacher-Pupil ratio as high as 1:123, 1:61 and 1:75. The average number of children in all the schools were approximately 40 with one teacher teaching both Nur and Kg children in the same classroom. Since all the MCD schools under this study had integrated

classes, same topics were taught to all of them and no uniform syllabus or curriculum was being used in these schools. In one of the schools, the teacher mentioned that *"I divide the blackboard into two halves and write concerned topics for Nursery on one side and for Kg on another side".* As some schools did not even have an Aya or helper, it added additional burden on the teachers to cater to non-academic needs of the children such as taking them to the washroom, making them wash their hands, taking them to the playground etc.

Figure 23: Teacher-Pupil Ratio in Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education- Nursery

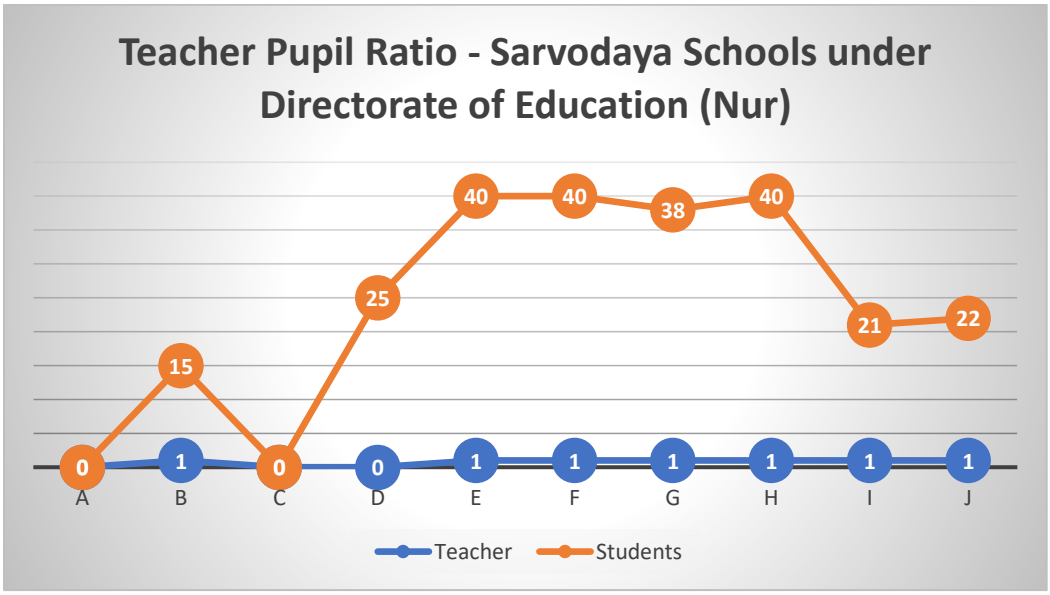


Figure 24: Teacher-Pupil Ratio in Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education- Kindergarten

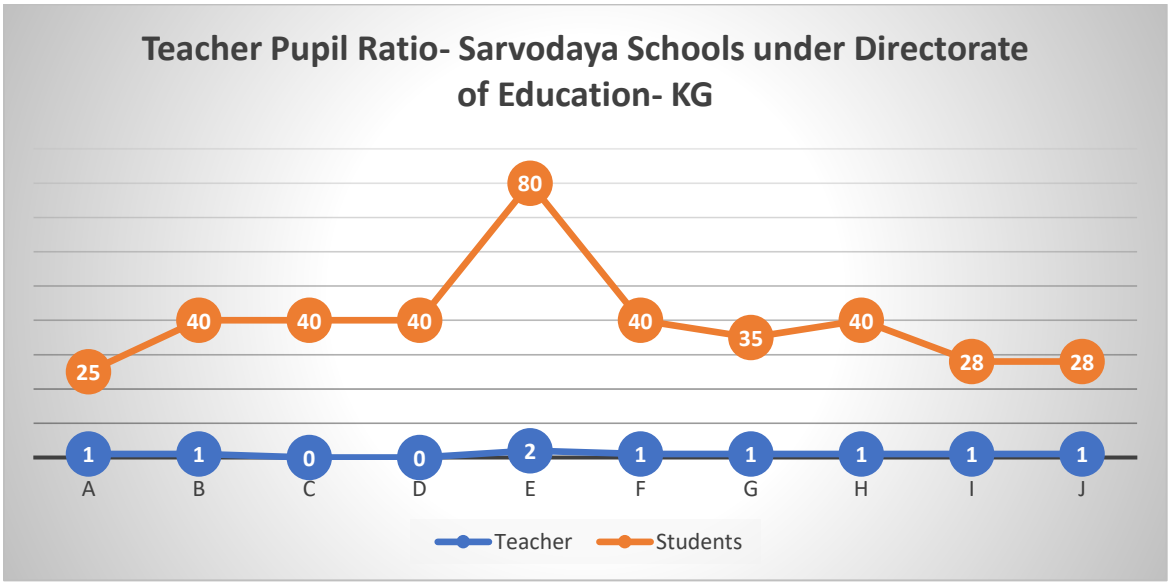
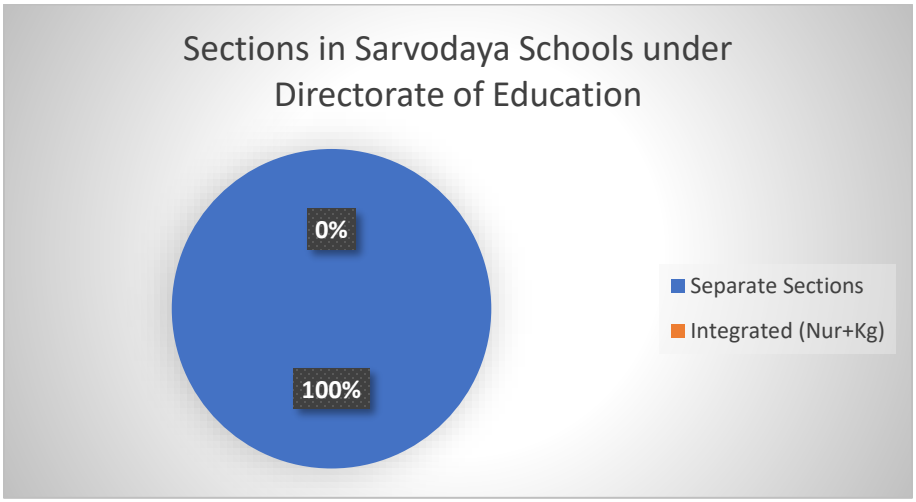


Figure 25: Sections in Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education



All of the Sarvodaya schools under directorate of education had separate sections for Nursery and Kg. They followed a specific curriculum and timetable as recommended by the directorate of education. The teacher pupil ratio on an average in both sections was 1:40, however for one school where there were 2 nursery sections, the Pupil-Teacher ratio was 2:80. The main concern of few Sarvodaya schools was that they did not have an aya or there was only one aya for both Nursery and Kg sections, thus there was added burden on the teachers for additional duties.

Figure 26: Teacher-Pupil Ratio in anganwadis

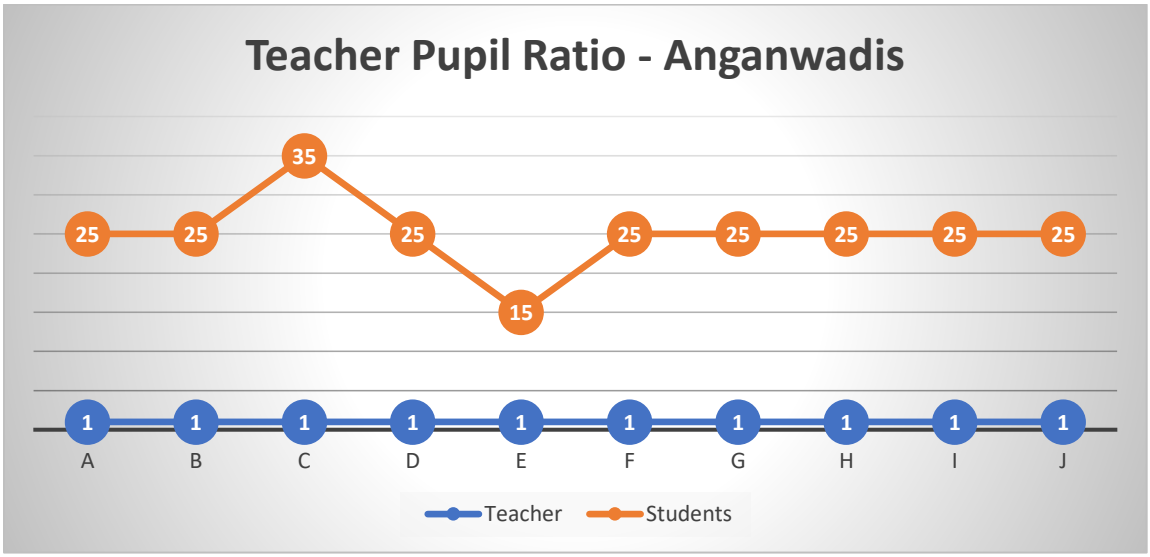
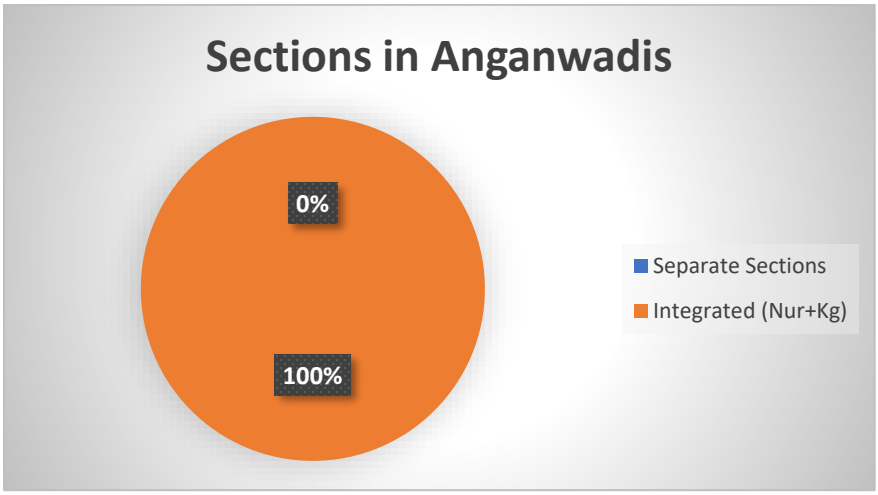


Figure 27: Sections in anganwadis



Anganwadis did not have a system of Nur or Kg as all children from 3-6 years of age group sat in the same classroom. They were taught the same topics, however sometimes they were grouped according to age for some activities and tasks. The teacher-pupil ratio was low in these centers with an average of 1:25 and maximum going to 1:35. The teachers mentioned that most children of the area in this age group went to the primary schools nearby as parents preferred a continuity

in schooling. The parents found it a hassle to take admission for their child form grade 1 in another school, thus preferred to admit their child in a primary school with Pre-Primary sections.

4.3.3 Classroom Diversity across three ECCE government managed agencies:

A crucial component of Quality ECCE which has been recognized both nationally and internationally is accessibility and diversity. Enrollment of children from diverse backgrounds exposes the children to various cultural and social groups, preparing children to become better citizens of the community. This section looked at the classroom diversity across the three ECCE government managed agencies selected for this study.

Table 4.3.3.1: Classroom diversity in Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi										
	Boys	Girls	SC	ST	OBC	Children with Special Needs (CWSN)	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Total
SDMC Pratibha Primary Co.ed School, Green park	14	13	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	27
SDMC Primary Pratibha school- (Girls) Mehrauli	58	65	1	0	0	0	49	0	1	123
MCD primary school- Bhim Nagar (Co.ed)	14	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
Nagar Nigam Sahasiksha Adarsh Pratibha School, Humayunpur, Safdarjug Enclave, New Delhi	38	23	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	61
SDMC primary (Co ed) school Adchini	13	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
MCD primary school Arjun Nagar	18	26	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	44
SDMC Nigam Partibha Vidyalaya Gautam Nagar	21	14	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	35
SDMC primary	58	17	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	75

school- Mehrauli Dargah										
South Delhi Nigam Model School- Hauz Khas Enclave	16	10	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	26
SDMC Primary Co-ed school- Hauz Khaz Village	15	15	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	30

There were no Children with Special Needs enrolled in any of the schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi studied. Only two schools had more girls than boys, while in rest of the 8 schools boys outnumbered girls in the classroom. Thus, there was a gender gap observed in these schools. Seven schools had enrollments of Scheduled Caste children and only two schools had participation from children belonging to Other Backward Castes and Scheduled Tribe. With respect to religious minorities, five of the schools had Muslim children, only one school had a Christian child and a Sikh child. Thus, children from disadvantaged backgrounds were observed to have less representation.

Table 4.3.3.2: Classroom diversity in Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education											
		Boys	Girls	SC	ST	OBC	Children with Special Needs (CWSN)	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Total
Sarvodaya Vidyalaya - Masjid Moth	Nur										
	Kg	12	9	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	21
Ishani SKV G block Saket	Nur	0	15	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	15
	Kg	0	34	11	0	3	0	0	0	0	34
Sarvodaya Vidyalaya No 1, RK Puram Sector 2	Nur										
	Kg	15	24	5	0	3	0	1	0	0	39
Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya- No 2, Meherauli	Nur										
	Kg	0	40	4	0	0	0	17	0	0	40
Ramanuja Mehrauli No 2, Main Bazaar	Nur	0	40	4	0	0	0	12	0	0	40
	Kg A	0	40	8	1	1	0	13	2	0	40
	Kg B	0	40	4	1	0	0	13	0	1	40
Sarvodaya Bal Sr. Sec Vidyalaya No 1- Qutab	Nur	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
	Kg	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
Navjeevan Govt Sarvodaya Girls Sr Sec School Begumpur Stc/Mmtc Colony	Nur	20	18	7	0	2	0	5	0	0	38
	Kg	23	12	2	0	2	0	4	0	0	35
Gargi Government Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya Green Park	Nur	12	13	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
	Kg	15	15	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	30
Sarvodaya Vidyalaya Co.ed Safdarjung Enclave	Nur	13	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	21
	Kg	15	13	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	28
Sarvodaya Vidyalaya Co.ed Shahapur Jat	Nur	12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22
	Kg	15	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28

In Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education, there were four schools with all girl children. In the rest of the six schools, only one school had more girls than boys and in the rest of them boys outnumbered girls. Only two schools out of ten had no enrollment of Scheduled Caste children, while nine schools had no enrollment of Scheduled Tribe children and six schools had no enrolment of Other Backward Caste children. There were no Children with Special Needs children enrolled in any of the schools. With respect to religious minority groups, four schools had no Muslim children, while nine schools had no Christian or Sikh children.

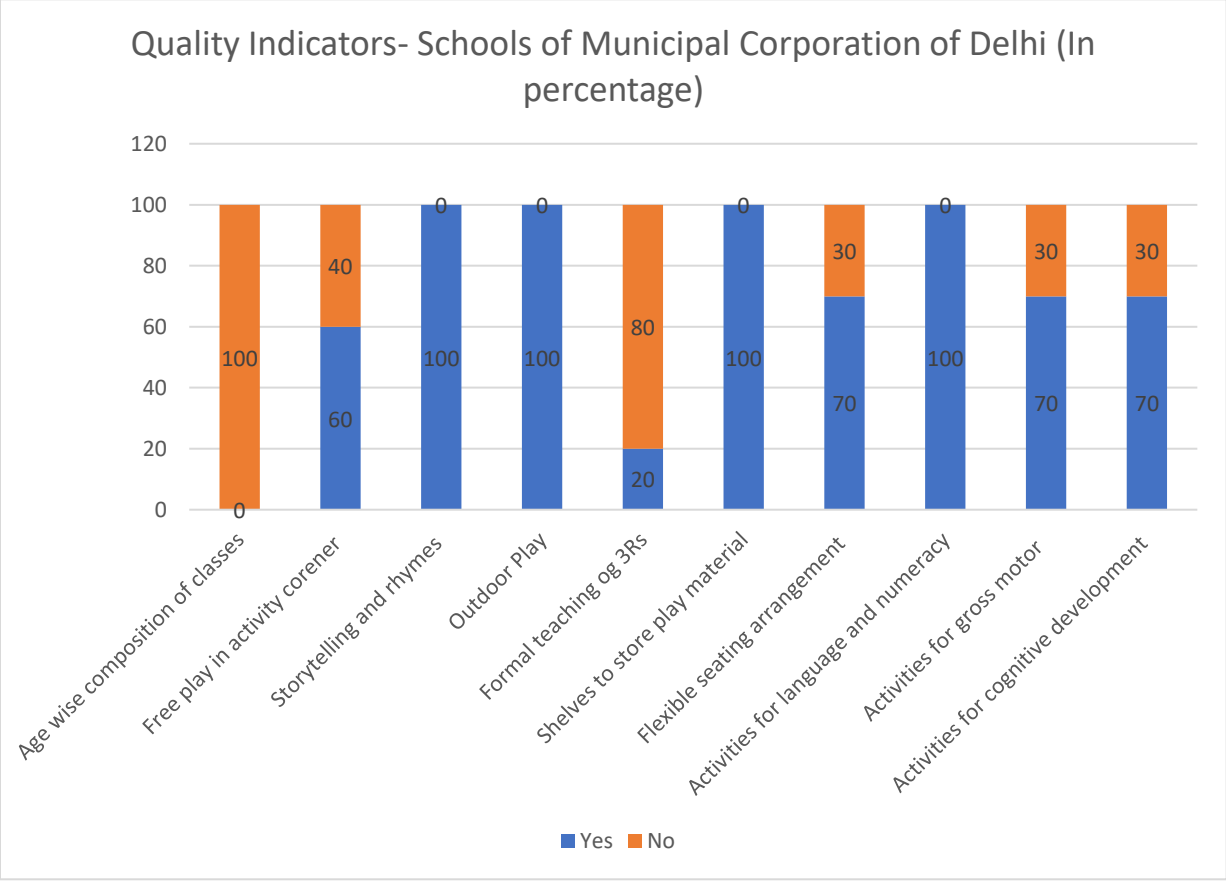
Table 4.3.3.3: Classroom diversity in Anganwadis										
	Boys	Girls	SC	ST	OBC	Children with Special Needs (CWSN)	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Total
Anganwadi Kendra 99 - Hauz Khas Village- Govindpuri Project	13	7	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	20
Anganwadi Kendra 100 - Hauz Khas Village- Govindpuri Project	13	15	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	28
Kusumpur pahari Project - Harijan Basti- Vasant Kunj	18	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35
Anganwadi Kendra Yusuf Sarai- Gujjar Diary- Govindpuri Project	10	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
Anganwadi Kendra- Adchini - Govindpuri Project	9	5	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	14
Anganwadi Kendra 92- Humayunpur	12	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
Anganwadi Hub centre- Humayunpur	15	15	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	30
Anganwadi 13 Lado Sarai (Meherauli Project)	13	10	5	0	7	0	3	0	0	23
Anganwadi 17 Lado Sarai (Meherauli Project)	11	12	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	23
Anganwadi 18 Lado Sarai (Meherauli Project)	15	9	15	0	0	0	1	0	0	24

There were more boys enrolled as compared to girls in six anganwadis, highlighting the gender gap. Children from Scheduled Caste had relatively high representation with presence in six centers. Children from Other backward Caste had representation in only one center. There were no Children with Special Needs or children from Scheduled Tribe enrolled in any of the anganwadi centers studied. With respect to religious minority groups, there were no children from Christian or Sikh community whereas seven centers had Muslim children enrolled.

4.3.4 Quality indicators for holistic development of children across three ECCE government managed agencies:

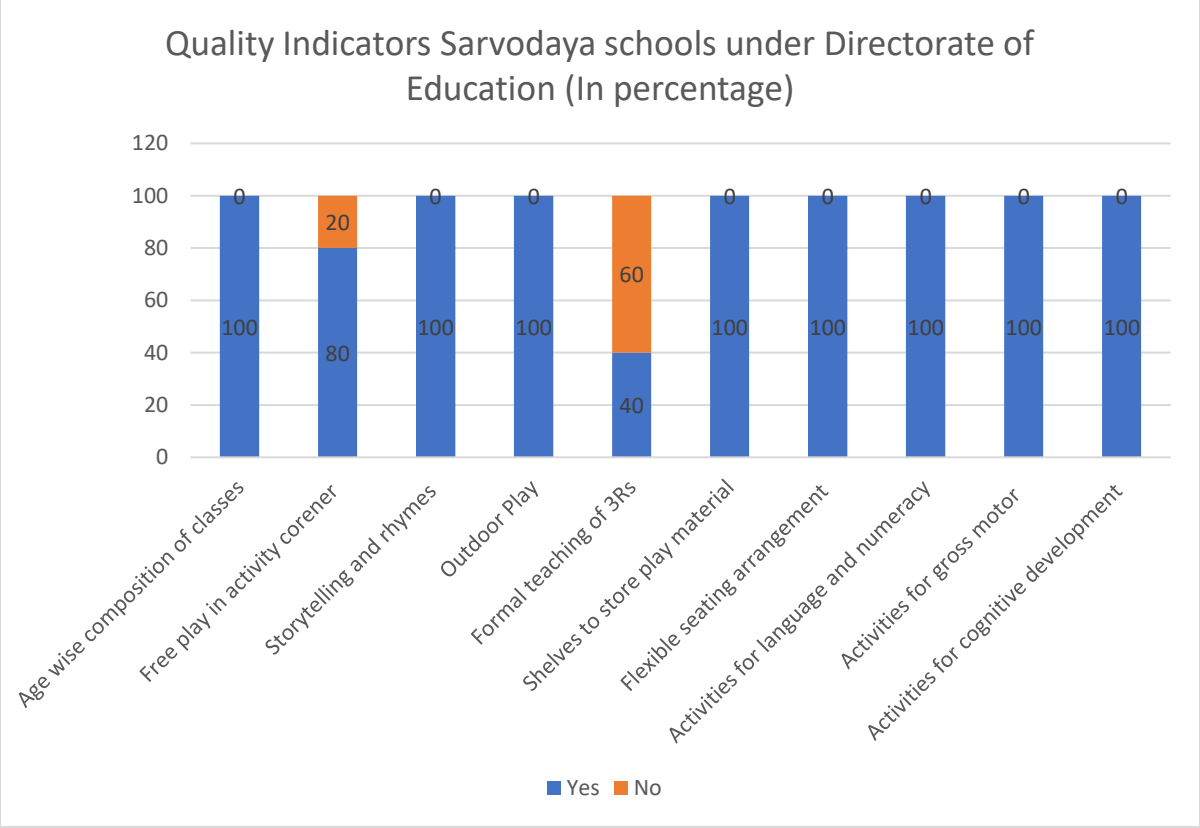
This section looked at the performance of the three ECCE government managed agencies on the various quality indicators essential within and outside the classroom for the holistic development of children.

Figure 28: Quality indicators of Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi



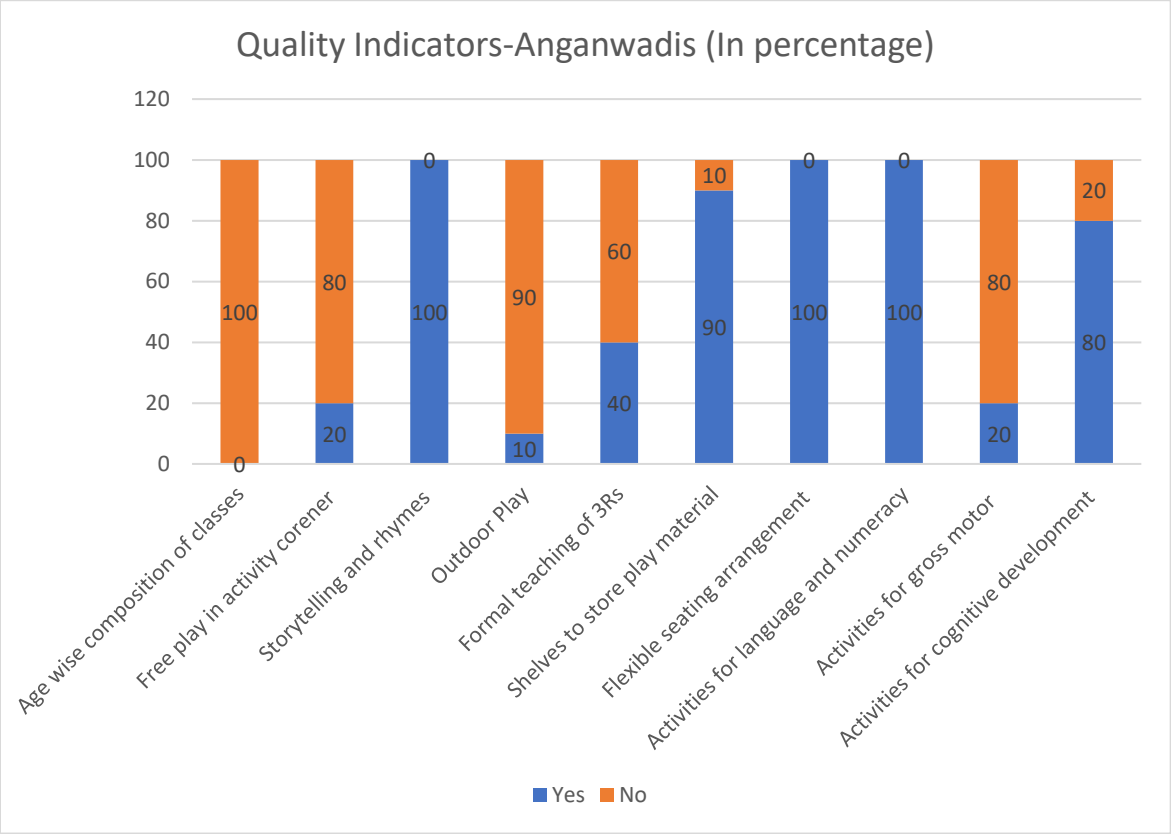
Storytelling, rhymes, outdoor play and activities for teaching language and numeracy and shelves to store play material were observed to be present in all of the MCD schools under study. However, four schools did not have activity corners/free play in the activity corners and also didn't employ activities for developing gross motor skills and cognitive skills of children. Formal teaching of 3Rs only took place in two schools while rest of them focused on play-way pedagogy. Out of ten schools, seven of them had flexible seating arrangement where chairs and tables were arranged according to the activities and tasks being done in the classroom while the other three schools had fixed and rigid row wise seating arrangements.

Figure 29: Quality indicators of Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education



Storytelling, rhymes, activities for language and numeracy, gross motor and cognitive development were observed in all the 10 schools. All of them also had shelves to store play material and flexible seating arrangement according to the activities and tasks being conducted in the classrooms. Only two schools did not have free play in activity corners Four schools used formal teaching of 3Rs, while majority of the schools used play-way and interactive pedagogical activities and method.

Figure 30: Quality indicators of anganwadis



Storytelling, rhymes and activities for language and numeracy were observed in all the anganwadis under study. However, eight of them did not have activity corners and nine did not have outdoor space for children to play and also did not conduct activities for gross motor development. Almost all anganwadis had shelves to store play material except one. With respect to formal teaching of 3Rs, only four anganwadis had some form of formal teaching while rest of them use play-way and activities-based pedagogies. Whenever required, the teachers would rearrange the tables and chairs so that children could perform activities.

4.4 Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) Practices across the three ECCE government managed agencies:

The teachers form the backbone of any educational institution. Children spend the most amount of time in an educational environment with their teachers. In the context of ECCE, as the children require additional care and attention, the role of teachers in the classroom becomes extremely important. The way the teacher interacts with the children as well as the parent community determines the learning outcome of the children as well. Thus, it becomes crucial for the educational institutions to invest in effective and strategic management of one of their most important human resources i.e., the teachers. This section examined the current status of SHRM practices such Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards across the three select government managed agencies providing ECCE services in South Delhi District.

4.4.1 Teacher Qualifications across the three ECCE government managed agencies:

The selection of Pre-Primary teachers in MCD schools and Delhi Government schools takes place through the CTET exam. The educational qualification for MCD Pre-Primary teachers as per the government norms are given below:

(i) 12th Pass with 50% Marks from a recognized Board.

(ii) 2 years Diploma in primary education/ certificate course in ETE/ JBT/ DIET/ B.El.Ed from a recognized institution.

(iii) Must have passed Hindi as a subject in 10th Class.

(iv) Should have passed in CTET

(v) Desirable: Computer Knowledge

Similarly, the qualification required for Pre-Primary teachers in Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education are:

(i) Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and 2 years Diploma in elementary education from a recognized Board. OR

(ii) Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 45% marks and 2 years Diploma in elementary education following the NCTE regulation-2002. OR

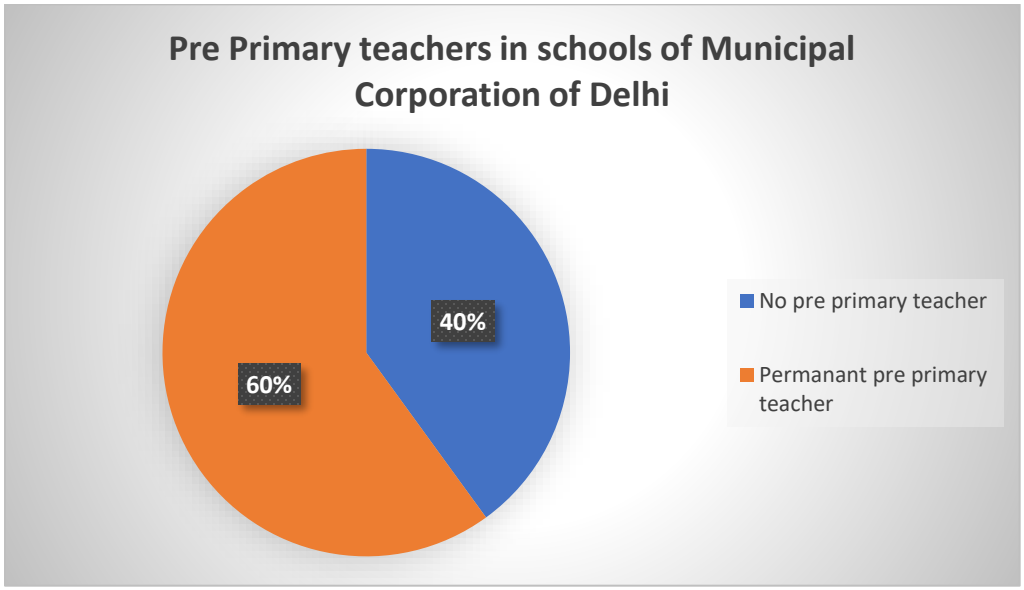
(iii) Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and 4 years Bachelor of Elementary education (B.El.Ed). OR
Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and 2 years Diploma in Education (Special Education) from a recognized Board. OR
Graduation and 2 years Diploma in elementary education from a recognized Board.
(iv) Should have Pass in the CTET.
(v) Must have passed Hindi or Urdu or Punjabi or English as a subject at the Secondary Level.

With respect to anganwadi workers, their recruitment takes place through the Department of Women & Child Development and the required qualification of an anganwadi worker/helper is 8th / 10th or 12th Class or its equivalent qualification from a Govt approved board. The selection process consists of a written examination followed by document verification, interview and then a merit list is prepared.

4.4.2 Staffing across the three ECCE government managed agencies:

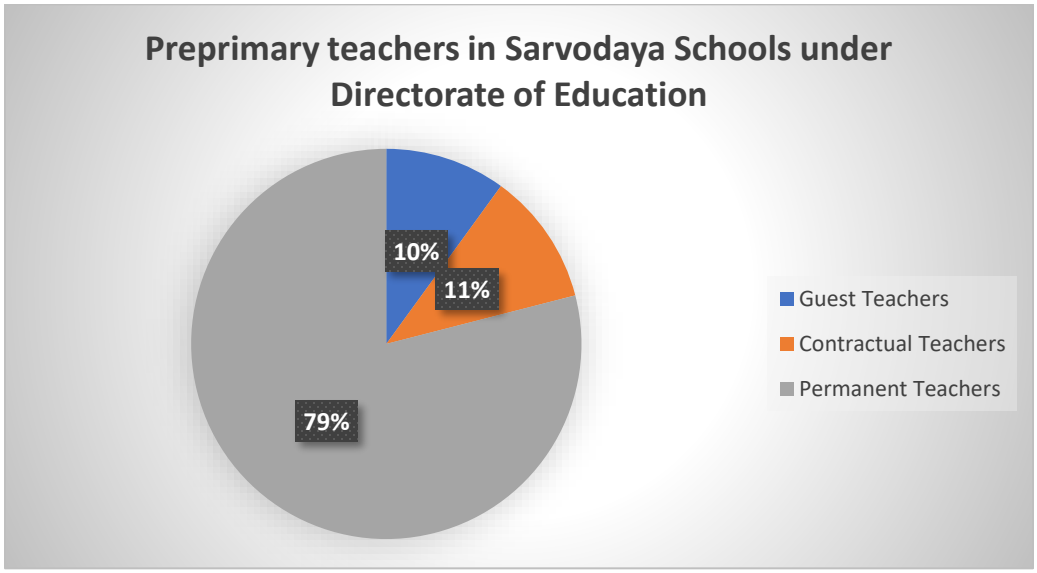
This section looked at the various aspects of staffing such as vacancy, sanctioned posts, number of Pre-Primary teachers, number of guest, contractual and permanent teachers etc. across the three ECCE government managed agencies.

Figure 31: Pre-Primary teachers in schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi



Out of the ten schools of Municipal corporation of Delhi surveyed, four schools did not have any Pre-Primary teacher even though there was vacancy. Some of them did not have Pre-Primary appointments since 2016 and either the primary teacher/ special educator/ principal with no training in ECCE were recorded to be taking the Pre-Primary classes. In the rest of the six schools there was a permanent Pre-Primary teacher with qualifications as per government norms, however only in three schools were the sanctioned posts filled with the adequate number of teachers. In one of the schools, there were three sanctioned posts for Pre-Primary teachers but only one was filled and in two other schools there were two sanctioned posts but only one was filled. Out of ten schools, five of them did not have any aya /attendant creating additional workload for Pre-Primary teachers.

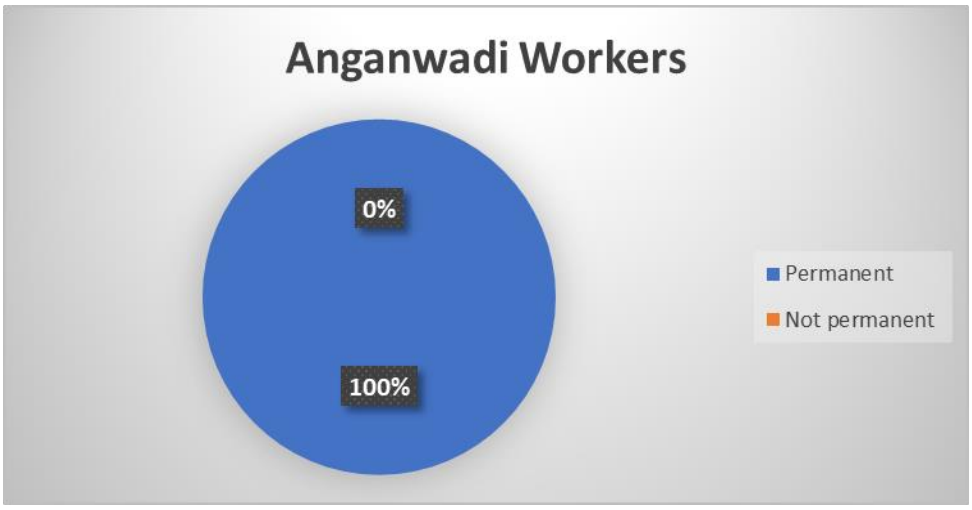
Figure 32: Pre-Primary teachers in Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education



In Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education, out of ten schools, eight had permanent Pre-Primary teachers with the required qualification as directed by the government norms, one school had a guest teacher who was a primary teacher, not trained in ECCE and in the other school, there were two teachers teaching pre -primary classes, however one had ECCE training and the other one was a primary school teacher. All of the ten schools had filled up their sanctioned posts, either through guest teacher, contractual teacher or permanent teacher. Out of the ten schools, eight schools had contractual aya/attendant and two had no aya/attendant creating additional workload

for the teachers. In schools which had an aya, there was only one appointed for multiple sections making it difficult for the aya to be present in all the sections whenever required.

Figure 33: Anganwadi workers in anganwadi centers



In all the ten anganwadis, there was one permanent anganwadi helper and worker appointed. However, in eight anganwadi centers, the workers and helpers had met the qualification criteria as laid down by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Further, workers in seven of the centers had a bachelor's degree, and one even had a postgraduate degree. With respect to the qualification observed of helpers, there was diversity as one helper was 5th pass, another one had not gone to school while helper of two centers also had a bachelor's degree and in the Lado Sarai center, the helper was more qualified with a bachelor's degree than the worker who was 10th pass.

4.4.3 Continuous Professional Development across the three ECCE government managed agencies:

This section looked at the current status of training and professional development of Pre-Primary teachers and angwandi workers across the three ECCE government managed agencies selected for this study.

- The in-service training of Pre-Primary teachers in schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi were recorded to be conducted by State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) or District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs). Out of ten schools, two schools mentioned that training happened regularly and six schools mentioned that training

happened 1-2 times a year. However, two schools also mentioned that since last two years no training had happened for Pre-Primary teachers. Due to the COVID pandemic, in the last 2 years, the majority of training in the form of seminars or workshops happened in an online mode whereas earlier it used to happen in a face-to-face mode. The training was given on topics such as innovative pedagogical methods, play-way based activities and games, art, craft, storytelling, effective interaction with parents and understanding needs of the children in the classroom etc. The latest training was given on NEP 2020 and latest developments in ECCE.

- In Sarvodaya schools under the directorate of education, all of the ten schools mentioned that regular training took place i.e. at least 2-3 times in a year by State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) or District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) for Pre-Primary teachers in both face-face mode as well as online mode especially during the covid pandemic. Only in one school where a primary guest teacher was given the responsibility of taking the Pre-Primary classes, it was mentioned that she attended the ECCE training whenever it was conducted by the higher authorities and it helped her in understanding the pedagogical style crucial for teaching Pre-Primary children. The trainings were conducted on topics such as innovative and play-way methods to teach numeric, language, how to deal with kids in a sensitive manner, storytelling, games, rhymes, how to measure learning outcomes, activities for gross motor, cognitive and psychomotor skills etc.

- All the ten workers in the anganwadi centers had attended the last training conducted in January by the Women and Child Development on ECCE. However, only five anganwadi workers mentioned that they got a 7-day training in the first month of their joining, while rest of them did not attend any such training. There were also some anganwadi workers who said that regular training did not take place as two of them attended only 2-3 in the last 12-13 years of working and one of them had attended only 4 in the last 10 years. While other workers mentioned that training occurred 1 or 2 times a year. The topics on which they were given training included rhymes, storytelling, making teaching learning kits, play-way activities, innovative ways, cognitive development, how to teach through interactive ways, outdoor activities etc. Since they also had additional duties and responsibilities of providing health, nutrition and immunization etc., they also had to attend training on these.

4.4.4 Teacher Evaluation across three ECCE government managed agencies:

This section looked at the current status of teacher evaluation including number of observations, frequency of observations and evaluations, levels of evaluations, criteria of evaluation etc. across the three ECCE government managed agencies selected for this study.

- The classroom observations and teacher evaluations were done at two levels in the schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, one was internal that is within the school system by principals and other one was external that is through the school inspectors. Seven out of ten schools had principals conducting observation once or twice a week, while in the rest of three schools, principals observed classes regularly. The school inspector however visited the schools once or twice a month. Teachers were evaluated on different factors such as the principal observed how the teacher interacted with children as well as parents, whether teachers were coming to the classroom timely or not, whether children were learning actively and participating in the classroom and types of activities used by the teacher etc. The school principal also maintained a confidential report of every teacher where they were observed and supervised on these criteria. The school inspector observed the infrastructure and resource availability in the school for Pre-Primary sections, classroom conditions for children, availability of chairs and desk, classroom transaction, children participation, toilet and drinking water facility for preschool children etc.

- Evaluation and observation were done by three stakeholders namely the principal, primary school in charge and officials from directorate of education in Sarvodaya schools under directorate of education. The frequency of observation varied from alternate days by primary in charge, once a week by the principal to once a month by DOE officials. The Pre-Primary teachers were evaluated on the basis of punctuality, interaction and connection with children, rapport with parents, participation of children, availability of resources such as appropriate infrastructure, books, classrooms, tables, chairs and progress of children etc. School heads in both schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi and Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of

Education were directed to maintain an Annual Performance Appraisal Report (APAR) for all teachers including Pre-Primary teachers which included six sections given below:

Table 4.4.4.1 Annual Performance Appraisal Report (APAR) Criteria

Section 1: General Information: Name, Designation, Qualification, Address, Level in Pay matrix, leave availed, Subject and duration of Induction/In-Service Training/Workshop/Seminars attended, Awards or Honors, Extra engagement (election, census etc.), Interest area of getting future trainings
Section 2: Self Appraisal: Student Outcomes to reflect quality of education, enrollment of students, Learning level of students (as per reading, writing, speaking and arithmetic skills), academic support skills (play-way methods, Use of innovative Teaching Learning Material (TLM) etc, Maintenance of attendance, evaluation of class-work, preparation of daily lesson plan, Including children with special needs (CWSN) and slow learner, Use of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation, cooperation with school head and colleagues, Attitude and Dedication (Inculcating good habits among students, sensitivity and commitment towards students, schools and community etc)
Section 3: Appraisal to be filled by Reporting Authority: Academic Skill (command over subject, used TLM and ICT, uses CCE to track learning of students etc), Extra academic activities (makes effort for all-round development of students, surveys out of school/drop out children and ensures their admission etc), Teamwork, contribution to school activities and community engagement (Contributes to state/central level policy initiatives, active involvement with the parent community etc), Attitude and Dedication (Punctuality, sensitivity, commitment towards students, devotion etc)
Section 4: Assessment: by Reporting and Reviewing Authority: Academic skill, Extra Activities, Teamwork, contribution to school activities and community engagement, Attitude and Dedication

Section 5: Overall assessment of the strengths and weakness and contribution in development of students
Section 6: A feedback by the reporting authority of the reviewing authority

- The evaluation and observation in anganwadi centers were conducted at two levels, one was through supervisors and other through Child Development Project Officer (CDPO). All of the ten anganwadis reported that the observation by supervisors wase done 3-5 times a month whereas CDPOs visited the centers 2-3 times in a month. The factors which were observed through supervisors and CDPOs included regularity of workers and helpers, their attitude and behavior towards the children, maintenance of registers, infrastructural facilities and availability of resources such as books, table, chair and learning outcome of children etc.

4.4.5 Teacher Rewards across the three ECCE government managed agencies:

This section looked at the current status of teacher rewards including awards, recognition and acknowledgment for the efforts of Pre-Primary teachers across the three ECCE government managed agencies.

- The awards in the schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi took place at the Zonal level and anyone who wanted to participate was allowed to volunteer their name. In the ten schools surveyed, eight never participated in the awards and two participated but did not receive any award. The criteria on the basis of which the Pre-Primary teacher was evaluated for the award included interaction with children, activities used in the classroom, participation and learning outcomes of children, pedagogical techniques and innovations used in the classroom, regularity and discipline, maintenance of registers and other documents etc.

- There were no awards in Sarvodaya schools under directorate of education for Pre-Primary teachers as awards only started for primary teachers onwards. In one of the ten schools surveyed, there was award ceremony conducted by the school itself where efforts of Pre-

Primary were recognized based on their APAR performance. However, overall the teachers felt undervalued and not acknowledged for their hard work and efforts.

- The Angawadi centers had a system where the name of the anganwadi workers/helper was put forth by the supervisor to the higher authorities after observing them on criteria such as maintenance of register, regularity, discipline, attendance of children, learning outcome of children, health and nutrition work and initiatives etc. However, in the ten anganwadis visited for the field work, only one helper named Veena received an award in the year 2014. Rest of them felt that the reward system was not adequate and they did not feel satisfied with the reward system. They felt unrecognized and undervalued for the amount of work that they did.

4.5 Challenges in SHRM practices and Quality ECCE:

This section looked at the challenges faced in the in effective implementation of SHRM practices and achievement of Quality ECCE standards across the three government managed agencies providing ECCE services selected for this study.

4.5.1 Challenges faced in schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi:

- The schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi were observed to face various challenges. Teacher shortage came out as a big concern as few schools did not have any Pre-Primary teacher for 4-5 years and children were being taught by primary teachers/heads of the school. As these alternate teachers did not have appropriate qualification such as degree or diploma in Nursery education or Early Childhood Care and Education and training to teach Pre-Primary school children, they resorted to formal methods of teaching and learning. They were also unfamiliar with the latest and innovative play-way method and activities which would be beneficial in the growth and development of these children.
- High teacher-pupil ratio was another challenge brough to light due to the lack of recruitment of more teachers as well as the system of integrated classrooms where children of both Nursery and Kindergarten sat together. Due to space constraints as well, children were made to sit together and it was mentioned that teachers struggled in delivering quality education to a large class. As both 3+ and 4+ aged children sat together, either the teacher taught the same topics

to both the age groups or some of them divided the classroom time into two halves catering to the needs of both alternatively. One of the teachers also mentioned that she divided the blackboard into two halves, one where concepts for 3+ were taught and written and second where concepts for 4+ children were written.

- A lot of teachers were also observed to be involved in administrative work along with teaching duties which occupied a lot of their time. Many of them also had added election duties, covid survey duties etc. which at times interrupted their teaching hours. In such cases, it was also observed that ayas/helpers took charge or some other teachers were asked to substitute. It was also mentioned that at times when the pre-primary teacher was occupied with some administrative work, the ayas conducted some activities for the children and in some school even gave them classwork or homework.
- In some schools, aya/helpers were also not present for many years as a result of which a lot of burden fell on the teacher. Tasks such as taking the children to the washroom, helping them to wash their hands etc. were also added to the duties of the teacher in the absence of ayas/helpers which interrupted their teaching process and quality.
- Many schools did not have any specific books/material to follow, they were observed to be teaching topics which were handed down over the years from the senior teachers. Some schools also mentioned that they had to make children write more than required and include formal teaching along with play-way methods as parents put pressure on teachers to emphasize more on written work. Parents often complained that children were not learning if they were only taught through play-way methods or through activities.
- One of the pre-primary teachers mentioned that *"As I am the only preschool teacher in the school, thus my demands and needs are not given a lot of importance. I had to struggle a lot to get an activity room for preschool children but slowly it got converted into a store room so children do not have ample space to perform activities."* She also mentioned that *"Primary school teachers as well as the principal are not well aware of the needs and pedagogies of preschool children, thus many times they believe that no teaching-learning takes place as these children are always playing or doing activities."* She also mentioned that school timings were too long for these children and suggested that they should be allowed to leave half hour earlier than senior children.

- Allowing children to take admission throughout the academic year created challenges as it was difficult for the child to come at par with his/her peers in the middle or end of the academic session. This also required additional time and attention of teachers which became difficult in an already hectic schedule and duties.

4.5.2 Challenges faced in the Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education:

- A major challenge faced by the Pre-Primary teachers was increased workload due to added responsibilities of administrative work, election duties, covid surveys etc. It also created interruption in regular teaching-learning process as they had to look for substitutes and coordinate with the other teachers.

- One of the teachers mentioned that *"There are too many activities scheduled in one day and resources given were not enough for the number of children in the classroom. Many times, we have to make cut outs ourselves from chart papers so that all children can do the activity".* One of the teachers also mentioned that *"There is lack of attractive toys for children."*
- Lack of infrastructure was also highlighted by few school heads as they did not have spare rooms in case a new section was to be created in the future. Many school heads also mentioned that there was a lack of support at home by the parents. They were not observed to be keen on supporting the children at home with their learning. One of the school heads also mentioned that *"Parents don't send their children to school regularly; they leave for their village for months and when the child comes back, they have a huge learning gap to fill.".* One of the school teachers also mentioned that *"At times, we get the resources and teaching-learning material in the second half of the school year"*
- Lack of aya was mentioned as a big concern as the responsibilities of non-academic tasks such as taking the children to the washroom, assisting them while they wash hands etc. fell on the shoulders of the teachers which interrupted their teaching. One of the school heads mentioned that *"There is one aya for three sections and it becomes difficult for the aya to assist al three sections when required, thus the burden eventually falls on the teacher".* In one of the schools, the aya was also given the cleaning responsibility thus, she was not available to assist the children when required.

- There were no state level awards for Pre-Primary teachers as it started with the primary teacher onwards. There was a feeling of disappointment and demotivation among the teachers as their efforts were not recognized and acknowledged. Promotion was also rare for Pre-Primary teachers.
- Parental support at home was mentioned to be lacking. Some were not attending Parent-Teacher Meetings as well. While other parents pressured teachers to make children write more and play-way methods and activities were not valued by them and were not seen as part of serious learning. One of the teachers mentioned that "*Earlier there was a guest teacher who used to make children write a lot and when I replaced her and gave more emphasis to play-way methods and made children do very less writing and more activity-based learning but then parents started to complain that our children are not learning"***.**

4.5.3 Challenges faced in the anganwadi centers:

- Lack of infrastructure was observed to be the major challenge in anganwaids. Most of them had one small rented room with lack of ventilation, proper light and space for children to study and participate in activities. Except one anganwadi, none of them had height-appropriate chairs and tables and children had to sit on mats/Daris. Many times, resources such as teaching learning material, charts, toys, even daris were arranged by the workers and helpers from their own salaries.
- The rent fund which was given to them was very less i.e., around 3000-4000 and many times there was a delay in disbursement of the fund leading to pressure on the anganwadi workers and helpers from the landlords. At times, it was also highlighted that the workers and helpers had to pay the rent from their pocket.
- The salary of the anganwadi workers was reported around 8000 INR and that of the helper was around 4000 INR. The low salary was also highlighted to be of a major concern. Many also mentioned that there had been delay in disbursement of the salaries, even for months at a stretch.
- As angawnadis also provided other services such as nutrition, immunization, health-check-up, health education and referral services along with preschool non formal education, there was an overload of work mentioned by the workers and helpers such as COVID surveys, Vaccination surveys, Pension related work and many other door-door social welfare work

fell under the purview of duties to be undertaken by the anganwadi workers and helpers which did not allow them to fully concentrate and dedicate themselves to the providing quality education to children.

- As all children from 3-6 years sat in one room, the same topics were taught to all kids. However, the strength of children was observed to be low as parents preferred to admit their children in primary schools which also had Pre-Primary sections. Sometimes children aged 2 years also were made to sit in the angwandis with the other children.
- There were no proper learning outcome levels/ standards followed. Even though they had a curriculum guide which was given to them, it was not followed in a day-day basis. Due to lack of space, many activities, especially ones which required outdoor space, could not be done.
- Many workers and helpers mentioned that the rigidity in the criteria for promotion such as minimum age to be 35 and 10 years of minimum experience etc. created barriers for their growth. Thus, lack of promotion opportunities was seen as a factor of disappointment among the workers and helpers. Some helpers who were young and well educated wanted to apply for post of worker but the eligibility criterion was fixed and rigid as it required 5 years plus experience and age limit was 35 years, one of the helpers was had a bachelor's degree mentioned that *"When I will complete 5 years, then I would be more than 35 years old and would not be able to apply for a worker's position. Also till then new people from outside the system would be recruited and I would have anyways lost the opportunity"*.

CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction:

As was evident in the earlier four chapters, the central focus of the present research was to examine the current status of SHRM Practices such as Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards and Quality ECCE such as Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusivity, Infrastructure Facilities, Availability of Resources, Play-Based Pedagogy and Holistic Development of children. The findings of the study revealed the current SHRM practices as well as Quality standards followed by the schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education and anganwadis. It also highlighted the challenges faced at the level of implementation of Quality ECCE services and effective management of Human Resources.

Based on the findings of the study, a critical analysis was drawn and this chapter has been divided into the following sub themes:

5.2 Comparative analysis of three government ECCE service providers

5.3 Universal and Contextual Aspects of Quality

5.4 Universal and Contextual Aspects of SHRM practices

5.5 Impact of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) Practices on Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

5.6 Discussion on the results of the research study

5.2 Comparative analysis of three government ECCE service providers:

The educational facilities at school level in Delhi have been recorded to be provided in stages i.e., pre-primary, primary, middle, secondary and senior secondary level. The responsibility of Pre-Primary and primary education lies mainly with the local bodies such as Municipal Corporation of Delhi, the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and the Delhi Cantonment Board (DCB). MCD had the largest number of primary schools under its purview in Delhi and catered only to

primary education, hence it was a major player in the provision of primary education in Delhi. These schools were funded and administered by the MCD. Children of age group of 4+ to 11 years were provided free Pre-Primary and primary education in municipal schools. The Department was fully poised to implement the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009. However, no specific documents or notice was located specifying the roles and responsibilities of the Pre-Primary teachers in schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi.

Middle, Secondary and Senior Secondary education was primarily looked after by the Directorate of Education, Government of Delhi. Although Pre-Primary and primary education was mainly the responsibility of the local bodies, the Government of Delhi had converted its 449 schools into composite schools, now known as Sarvodaya Vidyalayas with classes from I to XII. Of the 1,067 schools run by the Delhi government, 442 were classified as 'Sarvodaya' schools which started from either class 1 or nursery. In an action plan called 'Vision 2030' issued in 2020, the Directorate of Education emphasized its goal to provide quality Pre-Primary education to children below 6 years of age and begin admission in the nursery for all its 'Sarvodaya' schools. Out of the 10 Sarvodya Schools under the Directorate of Education selected for this research, 3 schools had only the KG section while the other 7 had both Nursery as well as KG sections. All of the schools were located in an urban setting.

A circular of Directorate of Education released in 2018 on instructions with respect to primary education stated the following:

- The safety of children must be ensured by school heads. Toilet visits for children in Nursery/KG, Class 1 and Class 2 should be supervised by a lady caretaker/lady worker. All primary school toilets must have female workers for cleaning and maintenance, and no male staff should be stationed there. Toilets for elementary classes must be on the same floor as the classes.
- As a peer mentor to Assistant Teachers, the Primary In charge should watch two classrooms per day and ensure that sample notebooks and children diaries are checked.
- A weekly schedule must be developed that includes at least three periods for each of the following: a) Library; b) Craft/Drawing/Painting; c) Sports: including any physical game, aerobics, and other informal physical activities; d) Music/Dance; and e) General knowledge (1 period a week)

- Storytelling is an effective way to teach and interest children in Pre-Primary and primary school. Teachers should use gestures (various facial expressions) and voice modulation (intonation) together with attractive items such as masks/puppets, etc., to engage the entire class when delivering a story. Teachers must also act as a guide at the Pre-Primary level to educate children how to carry a book appropriately.
- An activity-based learning module must be prepared by every teacher (chapter wise) for all subjects.
- Worksheet booklets Phulwari I and Phulwari II, distributed to all children in classes Nursery and K. G., should be used to assess children, with records kept on the specific pages for children provided at the back of the teacher's journal. Co-scholastic records, which include children involvement in various activities, competitions, and sports held at the school level, should also be included in the teacher's diary. Every child must participate, and the teacher must ensure that this happens.

ECCE services were also provided to children through The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) program. The ICDS was one of the world's largest and most unique outreach programs for early childhood care and development. It symbolized India's commitment to its children. The first ICDS project was launched in India with 33 projects all over the country on 2nd October 1975 and ICDS project Jama Masjid was the milestone project for the state of Delhi. Anganwadi meant "courtyard shelter" in Hindi. It fell under the purview of the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Each anganwadi center was supposed to have one anganwadi worker and helper.

Services of anganwadis included:

- Health Check-ups.
- Immunization.
- Growth Promotion and Supplementary Feeding.
- Referral Services.
- Early Childhood Care and Pre-school Education.
- Nutrition and Health Education

Roles and responsibilities of an anganwadi workers included:

- To weigh each child every month, record the weight, use a referral card for referring cases of mothers/children to the sub-centers/Primary Health Center etc.
- To carry out a quick survey of all the families, especially mothers and children in those families in their respective area of work once in a year.
- To organize non-formal pre-school activities in the anganwadi of children in the age group 3-6 years of age and to help in designing and making of toys and play equipment of indigenous origin for use in anganwadi.
- To organize supplementary nutrition feeding for children (0-6 years) and expectant and nursing mothers by planning the menu based on locally available food and local recipes.
- To provide health and nutrition education, and counseling on breastfeeding Infant & young feeding practices to mothers.
- AWWs shall share the information relating to births that took place during the month with the Panchayat." Secretary/Gram' Sabha
- To make home visits for educating parents to enable mothers to plan an effective role in the child's growth and development with special emphasis on new born child.
- To maintain files and records as prescribed.
- To assist the PHC staff in the implementation of health component of the programs viz. immunization, health check-up etc.
- To share information collected under ICDS Scheme With the ANM
- To bring to the notice of the Supervisors/ CDPO any development in the village which requires their attention and intervention, particularly in regard to the work of the coordinating arrangements with 'different departments.
- To guide Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) engaged under National Rural Health Mission in the delivery of health care services and maintenance of records under the ICDS Scheme.
- To assist in implementation of Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) and motivate and educate the adolescent girls and their parents and community in general by organizing social awareness programs/ campaigns etc .
- To identify the disability among children during her home visits and refer the case immediately to the nearest PHC or District Disability Rehabilitation Centre.

- To support in organizing Pulse Polio Immunization (PPI) drives.
- To inform the ANM in case of emergency cases like diahorrea, cholera etc.

Role and responsibilities of anganwadi helpers included:

- To cook and serve the food to children
- To clean the anganwadi premises daily and fetching water
- Cleanliness of small children.
- To bring small children collecting from the village to the anganwadi

Thus, it was also observed from the findings of the filed work that the Pre-Primary teachers in schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi as well as Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education performed academic oriented tasks and their primary responsibility was only teaching. Even though there were other administrative duties as well which are given to these teachers such as register maintenance, covid surveys, election duties etc. but a large amount of their time was involved in the teaching-learning process. In contrast, the anganwadi workers had preschool education as one of the primary responsibilities given to them. They held multiple responsibilities, all of which were equally important such as health, nutrition, immunization, referral services etc. As all of the other duties apart from imparting non-formal education to children of 3-6 years of age were also given priority, thus they were observed to have less time and focus towards just the education aspects. Many of the anganwadi workers also suggested that there should be one dedicated teacher in anganwadis just to cater to the educational needs of the children so that quality of learning is not compromised. As the management authority of the three types of ECCE service providers selected for the study varied, each had their own set of priorities and guidelines for the Pre-Primary teachers. As there does not exist a standardized framework for Quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Strategic Human Resource Management, the learning outcomes, growth and development of children in each of these ECCE government managed agencies also vary.

5.3 Universal and Contextual Aspects of Quality:

The international and national frameworks were examined to draw inferences for quality ECCE. The next steps included identifying and shortlisting parameters that could be possible indicators of quality and best practices. The idea was to identify features that were exemplary, as well as

universally applicable round the world. After conducting an analysis of the exciting frameworks, some parameters emerged as ‘must-haves’ and as best practices. These were seen as the universal constructs of quality early childhood care and education. These parameters emerged as the hallmarks of quality in the frameworks of the international organizations such as UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank and OECD and found mention in the Indian documents such as ‘Quality Standards’ developed by the MWCD, NCERT guidelines, Nipun Bharat and evaluation framework by Shaala Siddhi. An overlap in these parameters was also visible. A summary of the quality hallmarks or the universal constructs included:

- **Holistic development of children:** Pedagogies utilized in ECCE programs should highlight the overall development of the young child while also taking specific needs into account. Both care and education are essential, and interlinkages between domains should be addressed, as development domains are not mutually exclusive.
- **Infrastructural Facilities:** As they constitute a fundamental part of quality ECCE, a safe and big outdoor play area free of harmful objects, a well ventilated and lit room with space to accommodate a maximum of 25 children, a suitable teacher-pupil ratio, height appropriate tables and chairs, and so on should be made accessible. Every classroom should have a teacher's chair and table. Every classroom should have low shelves for storing materials and activity zones. Every school should have a library and literacy space where a range of age-appropriate materials are available. There should also be safe drinking water, handwashing facilities, and separate bathrooms for girls and boys.
- **Developmentally Appropriate Curricula and Learning Outcomes:** A curriculum which is child- centered is highly recommended. Curricula which include cognitive, social, language related, physical, creative and routine tasks along with activities to support diverse interests, is required for a healthy balance. Children need to be supported to explore and express themselves. Children should be encouraged to think, reason, question, develop ideas, solve problems and experiment, as well as make choices and practice independence. Procedures to implement a curriculum need to incorporate child’s unique pace and abilities.
- **Partnership with family and community:** It is critical to acknowledge the home as the primary context in which all children learn and develop. The importance of the family and parents in the delivery of ECCE programs and services cannot be overstated. A

healthy relationship with positive connections to the family and parents guarantees that the child's best interests are prioritized for optimal growth.

- **The centrality of the child's learning in the environment:** The child is an active learner who must be encouraged and enabled in order for him or her to reach his or her greatest potential. The child should be free to make decisions, explore, and experiment, and should be given such possibilities in his or her environment. Multilingualism should be used as a resource in the classroom, and the mother tongue should be used as the medium of education. Joyful and immersive learning through art, storytelling, poetry, rhymes, games, toys, music, or activity-based in-Home Language/Mother tongue concentrating on rich local traditions should be prioritized. (Incorporating art, sport, ICT, storytelling, toys, games, puzzles, and other forms of entertainment.) Lesson Plans including real-life scenarios should be used in the classroom, with an emphasis on inter/multidisciplinary learning.
- **Play as Central to Pedagogy**- Children learn best through child-initiated and teacher-scaffolded play. Play ensures that children are active and engaged in their learning and take responsibility for their learning. For developing self-regulation as well as for promoting language development, cognitive development and social competence in the early years, play is an important vehicle. It goes a long way in sparking curiosity, keeping children motivated as well as engaged in learning. Storytelling and rhymes must be a part of the teaching process. Children should be actively participating in the classroom activities.
- **Equity, Inclusion, Diversity:** Diversity of all kinds, such as cultural, linguistic, caste, gender, class, handicap, and so on, should be valued and respected in quality ECCE programs. Children from various Indian cultural backgrounds, whether from high socioeconomic strata or low socioeconomic strata, abled group or disabled group, should feel a feeling of belonging through quality programming. Programs should embrace diversity by exposing children to a wide range of rich and varied experiences, helping them to appreciate and respect diversity.

After drawing the universal constructs of quality from the international systems and the benchmarks identified, the three ECCE government managed agencies selected for this study were analyzed. The idea was to explore the ways in which and the extent to which the three

ECCE service providers approximate the benchmarks of quality identified and to understand some of the contextual features of quality which they embody.

Table 5.3.1: Analysis of three ECCE government managed agencies on Universal Quality Indicators

S.No.	Universal Quality Indicators	Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi	Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education	Anganwadis
1	Holistic Development of Children	Teachers maintained that they developed children holistically.		
2	Infrastructural Facilities	Separate toilets, hand wash and drinking water and ramp were available. However, there was lack of rooms, lack of space for activity corners, high teacher-pupil ratio, height appropriate chairs and tables for children.	Their infrastructural facilities were better than the other ECCE service providers. The only challenge was high-teacher pupil ratio in classrooms.	Poor state of infrastructure in all anganwadis. They lacked ramps, separate toilets for boys and girls, drinking water and hand wash facility, chairs and tables for children and teachers etc. The classrooms were not ventilated and lit appropriately and three was no outdoor space for play.

3	Developmentally Appropriate Curricula and Learning Outcomes	Some teachers had a syllabus and followed that, others taught topics which had been taught for years. They have to finish some topics by the end of the year. There were no properly developed learning outcomes which were measured.	There was a curriculum, timetable and schedule followed by the teachers given by the Directorate of Education. The curriculum also laid down month-wise topics and activities to be followed. There was also a report card with tangible learning outcomes which had to be measured.	There was a curriculum guide given by the Ministry of Women and Child Development which is not followed regularly. Topics were taught as seen appropriate by the anganwadi worker. There was no learning outcome framework followed.
4	Play as Central to Pedagogy	Play was a part of the teaching process; however, lack of activity corners limited the play-based pedagogy. Formal teaching was also observed to be practiced.	Play was an important component of the teaching process. Outdoor play was encouraged. Play was more dominant than formal teaching.	Lack of activity corners and outdoor space restricted the inclusion of play-based pedagogy. However, group activities in the classroom were conducted whenever possible.
5	Child Centered teaching process	The teaching-learning process was more teacher-	Teaching-learning process was more child-centered and	The learning process was teacher directed. However,

		directed. However, they did allow children to participate.	participation of children was higher.	children were encouraged to participate.
6	Partnership with family and community	Parents were observed to be less interested and supportive towards their child's learning. However, teachers made efforts to communicate.	Lack of parents support at home was observed. Some even missed Parent-Teacher interactions often. However, teachers made the effort to communicate.	Anagwandi workers and helpers encouraged the parent community to send children to anagwnadis by going door-to-door as well. Parent community is more involved than others.
7	Equity, Inclusion, Diversity	No children with special needs (CWSN) were enrolled in any of the thirty ECCE government managed agencies surveyed. There was also less representation from SC/ST and OBC children. Muslim and Christian children's representation was still better than other religious minorities.		

5.4 Universal and Contextual Aspects of SHRM practices:

Although there was a lack of literature specifically for SHRM practices in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), however there were certain SHRM practices which were found to be accepted by various scholars, researchers and organizations around the world such as:

- **Staffing:** It deals with the recruitment and selection of new teachers from outside the school. Although empirical evidence is limited, it appears that teacher recruitment and selection may

influence teacher behavior in the form of retention (Opfer, 2011) and effectiveness (Robertson-Kraft and Duckworth, 2014). Schools must utilize school-specific selection criteria that are in line with the school's vision and goals. It includes testing and interviewing candidates for acceptable teacher qualifications, school fit, academic competence and field skill, communication skills, and pedagogical talents.

- **Professional development:** Professional development appears to improve teachers' ability (e.g., knowledge (Koellner and Jacobs, 2015) and efficacy (Althauser, 2015); teacher motivation (e.g., wellbeing (Yildirim, 2014) and teacher beliefs (Opfer et al., 2011)); and teacher behavior (e.g., changes in class practice (Sailors and Price, 2010) according to multiple studies. It includes frequent in-service training, a positive attitude toward teacher training, in-service training, conferences, workshops, and seminars, training in creating a child-friendly environment through activity-based teaching-learning methods to attract these children to school, recruitment of special teachers to address the various needs of young disabled children, and providing opportunities for self-reflection, keeping up to date, and observing others, as well as interpersonal responsibilities.
- **Teacher evaluation:** It holds teachers accountable while simultaneously attempting to enhance their performance. Both goals necessitate accurate evaluations of instructors' performance based on a detailed explanation of teacher expectations (Runhaar, 2017). It includes supervision of school activities, evaluation of early reporting to school, adequate teaching preparation, general punctuality, and participation in extracurricular activities, behavior with children, classroom conduct, use of play-way methods to teach, and conduct and interaction with the parent community, among other things.
- **Reward systems:** It can be monetary (e.g., merit pay), which is rare in the educational setting, or non-monetary. Teachers are intrinsically motivated, according to research (Runhaar, 2017). As a result, in order to boost teacher motivation, schools should pay attention to intrinsic motivators. It includes competitive wages and benefits, housing, medical, educational, and recreational opportunities, salary incentives, positive feedback, alternative work arrangements, assignment of a challenging project and opportunities for training or development, recognition for good work, and an award ceremony for Pre-Primary teachers.

- **Working condition:** Work-life balance, employee safety, job satisfaction, good infrastructure and culture climate, availability of teaching materials and adequate desk and chairs for

teachers, good and friendly supervision, fair grievance system, communication with employees, opportunities to exercise and express capacities are all factors to consider.

The three select ECCE government managed agencies were analyzed with respect to these universal SHRM practices drawn from various literature:

Table 5.4.1 Analysis of three ECCE government managed agencies on Universal SHRM Practices

S.No	Universal SHRM practices	Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi	Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education	Anganwadis
1.	Staffing	The Pre-Primary teachers were selected through a national level DSSSB exam. After clearing the exam, they got posted to schools. No interview took place.		Ministry of Women and Child Development conducted the selection. It included written test, document verification, interview and merit list.
2.	Professional Development	Training was given on innovative pedagogies, activities and developments in ECCE. However, sharing of best practices was not done often. Training happened	Training was given on new play-way methods of teaching, new activities etc. They happened regularly and aided in effective teaching-	Training was given on new developments in ECCE, innovative activities and pedagogies etc. Some had not attended training in many years while others

		often, however some suggested that it could be more regular.	learning in the classroom.	mentioned that it happened as and when required. Responses were not uniform on the regularity of training.
3.	Teacher Evaluation	Teacher evaluation was done by principal, primary in charge and external supervisors. It happened regularly. Teachers were evaluated on how they interacted with children, punctuality, participation of children in class etc.	Teacher evaluation was done by principal, primary in charge and DOE officials regularly. They were evaluated on punctuality, interaction with children, rapport with parents, participation of children, progress of children etc.	Teacher evolution was done by supervisors and CDPOs. They were evaluated on attitude towards children, maintenance of registers, regularity of workers and helpers etc.
4.	Reward System	No financial incentive. Zonal level awards were conducted however those who wanted to participate can volunteer. However, teachers felt less acknowledged and	No financial incentive. No awards for Pre-Primary teachers at the state level. Teachers felt demotivated, less recognized and	No financial incentive. Awards had not taken place for a few years. Supervisors gave the name of the best worker. However, they felt their efforts were not given due

		recognized for their efforts.	acknowledged for their efforts.	importance and recognition.
5.	Working Condition	Chairs and tables for teachers were available and basic infrastructure facilities were available. However, a lot of added administrative and survey related work. Lack of Aya/Assistant added responsibilities on teachers.	Infrastructural facilities for teachers were available. Teachers were motivated. However, they had added administrative tasks and survey related or election related duties were given.	Lack of infrastructural facilities, no table and chair for teachers. Not enough space in classrooms. A lot of additional duties were given to the worker such covid related surveys, health checkups, immunization, door-door surveys etc.

5.5 Impact of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) Practices on Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):

As teachers form the backbone of the education system, it becomes important for the educational institutions to invest in their effective management and development in order to achieve quality teaching and learning. Thus, the theory of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) advocates that it is not only important to recognize the organizational goals of the school but also to value the individual goals of teachers and create an alignment between the two in order to create a high-quality and committed teacher team. The motivation, commitment and dedication of teachers leads to quality teaching-learning practices. In the context of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), the role of the teacher becomes even more important as the child's brain develops rapidly during these formative years and they spend the most amount of time with their teachers. The behavior, dedication, attitude and motivation of teachers largely determines the quality of education received by the children and impacts their overall growth and development.

Thus, it is important for educational institutions to adopt effective SHRM practices such as recruitment and selection of qualified teachers, providing continuous professional development, evaluation of the teachers based on valid criteria and rewarding and acknowledging the efforts of teachers.

This section analyzed the findings made during the fieldwork to examine the relationship between SHRM practices and Quality ECCE.

Table 5.5.1 Relationship between SHRM practices and Quality ECCE in the three ECCE government managed agencies:

Relationship Criterion of SHRM and Quality ECCE	Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD)	Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education (DOE)	Anganwadis
SHRM Practices (Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards) And Quality ECCE (Accessibility, Diversity, Inclusivity, Infrastructure Facilities, Availability of Resources, Play-Based Pedagogy and Holistic Development)	Relationship between SHRM and Quality ECCE was evidenced from qualitative information about SHRM and quantitative data about quality of ECCE. Strategic issues of human resource had significant bearing on teaching - learning process and other quality pointers. Lack of teachers, lack of ayas/helpers, lack of rewards and recognition for Pre-Primary teachers, additional administrative duties and survey/election	Adequate number of teachers, filled sanctioned posts, continuous professional development, regular and timely evaluations, a fixed timetable and schedule, curriculum provided supported in having in having more activity based and play-way based teaching in class, more outdoor play. However, high PTR and lack of adequate number of ayas/helpers was an obstacle to effective classroom teaching.	Multiple duties/responsibilities such as immunization, health-checkup, helping nursing mothers etc. along with providing education to children at par with Pre-Primary schools, less pay, lack of rewards or recognition, lack of promotional opportunities resulted in lack of quality in teaching, not being able to follow the curriculum given by MWCD regularly, asking helpers to teaching topics to children, teaching same topics to all children

	related duties, lack of a standard curriculum/syllabus/books led to more formal teaching in classrooms, lack of outdoor play or activity-based pedagogy. High PTR, lack of activity corner led to deteriorating teaching learning practices and demotivation among teachers. However, training and regular evaluation and observation was seen as helpful in guiding teachers on innovative pedagogies in ECCE.		irrespective of age, inadequate space, lack of outdoor space, Teaching-learning kits and activity corners limited the scope of play-based learning and holistic development of children.

The way the SHRM practices prevailed in the three ECCE government managed agencies highlighted that at the institutional level, factors such as infrastructure (lack of ramps, insufficient space, lack of outdoor space etc.) and enrollment of CWSN, SC, ST and OBC had no significant connection to teacher recruitment, professional development, teacher evaluation and rewards. The policy interventions at systemic level are required for infrastructure, universalization of ECCE, whereas context specific planning is required to manage human resources to achieve their best and empower them for quality service delivery.

5.6 Summary and Discussion:

Early childhood is a period for significant brain development that set foundation for later learning. At this time, the early experiences provided to the children influence their brain development and establish neural connections that provide basis for language, reasoning, problem solving, social skills, behavior and emotional health. Therefore, Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) (2013, p. 8) envisaged, "in order to improve learning outcomes and sustain them in the long run, early years may be the best place to invest". That can be done by providing quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) to all children. A study conducted by Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development (CECED) and Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) (2015) in India, found that, children attending ECCE program that were ranked high on the quality assessment gained significantly more from one year ECCE than children who attended poor quality ECCE centers.

A very crucial determinant of quality ECCE are the Pre-Primary teachers. They form the backbone of the educational services and children spend the most amount of time with their teachers, it becomes important for educational institutions to invest and effectively manage their needs and requirements. It is important for schools to strategically manage their human resources specifically teachers in order to achieve quality education. The National Education Policy 2020 aims at universal provisioning of quality early childhood development, care, and education must thus be achieved as soon as possible, and no later than 2030, to ensure that all children entering Grade 1 are school ready. The NEP 2020 recognizes the importance of the human resources especially the teachers in the effective implementation and achievement of Quality ECCE. The study therefore attempted a picture Quality ECCE (Infrastructure Facilities, Availability of Resources, Play-Based Pedagogy, Holistic Development, Accessibility, Diversity, Inclusivity) and SHRM Practices (Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards). The state of Delhi presented a fine challenge for inquiry as it had a large number of governments managed ECCE agencies and Pre-Primary teachers and anganwadi workers. The Delhi government in the context of NEP 2020 had also recently launched its preschool curriculum for the city's 10,897 community-based preschool centers. However, in Delhi, anganwadi workers were being paid between INR 3000 to 9000 whereas under the Minimum Wages Act they should be paid between INR15,492 to 19,291 in Delhi. Currently, the anganwadi workers and helpers are holding an indefinite strike in Delhi demanding a substantial hike in their honorarium and bringing to notice

the heavy workload. Such challenges impact the motivation and productivity of the human resources involved and also quality standards of ECCE services.

The present study was formulated with these points in the background and this section discusses findings of the study with respect to the objectives laid out in the study:

5.6.1 Objective 1: To study the quality standards of ECCE across different government managed agencies of South Delhi:

Common indicators drawn from various international as well as national organizations were taken into account for this study such as infrastructural facilities (availability of ramps, separate toilets for boys and girls, drinking water, handwash, ventilation in classrooms, height appropriate chairs and tables for children, open space and library facilities), Teacher-Pupil Ratio, Classroom Diversity and factors contributing to holistic development of children (Activities for gross motor, cognitive development, outdoor play, flexible seating arrangement etc.). With respect to infrastructure, all the ten schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had availability of ramps, drinking water, handwash, ventilated classrooms and open space. Few did not have separate toilets for boys and girls and library space. Resources such as toys, flash cards, TLM, Kits etc. were available in most of the MCD schools. However, space crunch was seen in few schools. The ten Sarvodaya Schools under the Directorate of Education had all facilities such as ramps, drinking water, handwash, open space, library and ventilated classrooms. The infrastructure was well maintained and appropriate for ensuring that children get quality education. Most of the anganwadis did not have ramps, separate toilets for boys and girls, lack of height appropriate pchairs and tables and lack of resources like toys, flash cards, textbooks for teachers and children were also observed.

Various international as well as national organizations mentioned that at the preschool level the ideal pupil-qualified teacher ratio should be 1:20-25. However, all the MCD schools had integrated classes where children of Nursery and Kg studied together which made the Pupil-Teacher Ratio as high as 1:123, 1:61 and 1:75. All of the Sarvodaya schools had separate sections for Nursery and Kg. The teacher pupil ratio on an average in both sections was 1:40, however for one school where there were 2 nursery sections, the Pupil-Teacher ratio was 2:80. anganwadis did not have a system

of Nur or Kg, here all children from 3-6 years of age group sat in the same classroom. The teacher-pupil ratio was low in these centers with an average of 1:25 and maximum going to 1:35.

Storytelling, rhymes, outdoor play and activities for teaching language and numeracy and shelves to store play material were observed in all of the MCD schools under study. However, in few schools there was lack of activity corners as well as activities for developing gross motor and cognitive skills. Some also did not have flexible seating arrangements. In anganwadis, use of storytelling, rhymes, flexible seating arrangements and activities for language and numeracy were observed. However, there was lack of outdoor space, activities for gross motor development. In Sarvodaya schools, storytelling, rhymes, activities for language and numeracy, outdoor space, gross motor and cognitive development were observed in all the ten schools. While majority schools focused on play-way pedagogies and had activity corners as well, few focused on formal teaching of 3Rs.

With respect to diversity in the classrooms, there was no CWSN child in any of the three government managed agencies of ECCE. MCD schools has less representation of girls, ST/OBC and religious minority children. However, SC children had better representation. In Sarvodaya Schools as well there was less representation of girls, ST, OBC, Christian and Sikh children. SC and Muslim children representation was more. Anganwadis also had less representation from girls, ST, OBC and Christian or Sikh children. SC and Muslim children had better representation.

Thus, the findings of the study were found to be supporting previous researches done in India with respect to Quality of ECCE. Findings of (Rao, 2010) four types of early childhood education centers (ICDS) in Tamil Nadu revealed that the centers were relatively small, had no outdoor play equipment, neither center had a toilet, but drinking water was available in both. In many classrooms, one teacher was observed to manage more than 40 children. (Chopra,2015) A study done on MCD schools revealed that clubbing of two grades together was common for reasons like lack of teachers in the school, teachers being on leave, lack of space in the school or class teacher being involved in administrative activities. ‘Play’ was also not given its due importance. Thus, similarities were observed between the findings of the previous researches as well as the fieldwork conducted for this study. However, this study also revealed that trainings, awareness and inclination towards play-based pedagogy was increasing in all the three ECCE government managed agencies. Sarvodaya Schools under the directorate of education were observed to have

the highest quality standards as compared to the schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi and anganwadis.

5.6.2 Objective 2: To study the strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices in ECCE across different government managed agencies such as schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education (DOE) and anganwadis of South Delhi District:

Children spend the most amount of time in an educational environment with their teachers. In the context of ECCE, as the children require additional care and attention, the role of teachers in the classroom becomes extremely important. The findings of the study revealed that the pre- primary teachers in MCD school as well as Sarvodaya Schools were qualified as per the government norms. However, in anganwadis, while most of the workers were qualified as per the government norms, there were few workers did not have the required qualification as they were recruited before the new regulations came out.

With respect to teacher staffing, there were four MCD schools which did not have any Pre-Primary teachers despite having vacancy. The principal/primary school teachers who did not have any ECCE training were asked to teach the children. There were lack of Aya/Assistants also reported. In Sarvodaya schools, eight schools had permanent Pre-Primary teachers while rest had either primary teacher with no ECCE training or a guest Pre-Primary teacher teaching the children. Eight schools had contractual aya/attendant and two had no aya/attendant creating additional workload for the teachers. However, in all the ten anganwadis, there was one permanent helper and worker appointed.

In the context of trainings and professional development, SCERT/DIET gave training to Pre-Primary teachers of MCD and Sarvodaya Schools. Out of ten MCD schools, two schools mentioned that training happened regularly whereas six schools mentioned that training happened 1-2 times a year and two schools mentioned that since last two years no training had happened in pre-primary. In Sarvodaya Schools under the directorate of education, all of the ten schools mentioned that regular training took place, at least 2-3 times in a year. The topics were found to be similar such as innovative pedagogical methods, play-way based activities and games, Art, Craft, Storytelling, interaction with parents, understanding needs of the children etc. In

anganwadis, some workers said that regular training did not take place as two of them attended only 2-3 in the last 12-13 years of working. One of them had attended only 4 in the last 10 years, while others said that 1 or 2 times a year training was conducted. The topics on which they were trained included rhymes, kits, play-way activities, innovative ways, cognitive development, how to teach through interactive ways etc.

In MCD schools, the classroom observations were done at two levels, one was internal that is within the school system by principals and other one was externally that is through the school inspectors. Seven out of ten schools had principals conducting observation and evaluation once or twice a week, while in the rest of three principals observed classes regularly. In Sarvodaya schools under directorate of education, evaluation and observation was done by three stakeholders namely the principal, primary school in charge and officials from directorate of education. The frequency of observation varied from alternate days by primary in charge, once a week by the principal and once a month by DOE officials. School heads in both MCD schools and Directorate of Education schools were directed to maintain an Annual Performance Appraisal Report (APAR) which gathered information on various criteria such as Qualifications, duration of Induction/In-Service Training/Workshop/Seminars attended, Awards or Honors etc. In anganwadis the evaluation and observation were also done at two levels, one through supervisors and other through Child Development Project Officer (CDPO). All of the ten anganwadis reported that the observation by supervisors was done 4-5 times a month whereas CDPOs visited the centers 2-3 times in a month mainly looked at regularity of workers and helpers, their attitude and behavior towards the children, maintenance of register etc.

With respect to rewards, there was a general disappointment seen among the educators in all the three ECCE government managed agencies selected for the study. In the ten MCD schools surveyed, eight never participated in the awards and two participated but did not receive any award. In Sarvodaya schools under the directorate of education, there were no awards for Pre-Primary teachers at the state level as it was conducted only for primary teachers and above. In the ten anganwadis visited, only one helper named Veena received an award in the year 2014.

Thus, the findings of the study reiterated the ability/motivation/opportunities (AMO) theory of performance by Runhaar (2017). The selection process of teachers, regularity of professional training, evaluation and rewards were observed to be important determinants of the teacher's

motivation, performance and attitude towards the teaching-learning process. There was not enough literature or research conducted on Strategic Human Resource Management practices especially in the Early Childhood Care and Education field. However, a study on Human Resource Practices in selected Private Educational Institutions in Namakkal District of Tamil Nadu (Venkatesan, 2011) revealed that socio-economic background variables, job level, job mobility, number of dependents, salary, family income, nature of housing were the variables associated with overall job satisfaction of private school employees. Out of 150 private school employees who underwent training, 50 (33.33 percent) felt that training enhanced their scope for promotion, while 30 (20.00 per cent) felt that it improved their skill and 70 (46.67 per cent) of them stated that they received additional incentives. This study on the three ECCE government managed agencies also reflected the importance of training in guiding the teachers on new and innovative pedagogies. It also revealed new knowledge by bringing to light the experiences of Pre-Primary teachers and anganwadi workers as well as challenges faced by them at the ground level such as lack of adequate number of teachers, lack of recognition and acknowledgement, lack of ayas/assistants, additional administrative duties and responsibilities and lack of promotion opportunities etc. The study also revealed that clear specification of qualifications, regularity of training and systematic evaluation system across all three government managed agencies were beneficial for the Pre-Primary teachers as well as the Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

5.6.3 Objective 3 To study the best practices of SHRM in ECCE in government managed agencies of South Delhi for emulation and scalability:

There have not been previous studies conducted on examining the best practices of SHRM practices specifically in ECCE, thus this study through the field experience brought to light few SHRM best practices followed in each of the ECCE government managed agencies in South Delhi District which could also be used for emulation and scalability:

- In schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, all Pre-Primary teachers who were recruited had the appropriate qualifications as laid down by the government. There were also adequate trainings arranged for the Pre-Primary teachers on important topics such as innovative pedagogy, new play-based activities for language and mathematics, activities for gross motor

and cognitive development, how to interact with parents, how to make Teaching-Learning Material etc. which proved to be helpful for them. The evaluations were also observed to be regularly conducted at both internal and external level. The use of APAR (Annual Performance Assessment Report) was also maintained for the teachers by the school heads. These observations and evaluations were observed to be a good feedback mechanism for the teachers to improve their teaching-learning practices.

- In Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education, all Pre-Primary teachers had adequate and required qualifications. All sanctioned posts were also filled with either permanent, guest or contractual teachers. The trainings were also conducted frequently and on relevant and crucial topics such as new developments and innovation in pedagogies, interactive activities for children, mental health of teachers, interesting ways of storytelling, rhymes etc. The evaluation and observation system were also structured and regularized. The observations were done on various aspects such as regularity, discipline, behavior with children, behavior with parents and participation in classroom by children etc. at three levels (Primary in charge, Principal and Directorate of Education officials). The use of APAR (Annual Performance Assessment Report) was also maintained for the teachers by the school heads. The Pre-Primary teachers were also provided a curriculum guide as well as a fixed timetable/schedule for children which guided the teachers in their teaching-learning process and conducting activities for the children.
- In anganwadis, trainings were provided on crucial topics such as how to make teaching-learning material, interactive activities, how to make timetable, innovative ways of storytelling and rhymes etc. These trainings guided the workers during their classroom interaction with children. The evaluation system and observation system were regular and structured. It was conducted at two levels (through Supervisors and Child Development Project Officer) on factors such as regularity, discipline, register maintenance, participation in classroom, attitude and behavior with children etc.)

  Thus, each of the three government managed agencies of ECCE had their own best practices with respect to the SHRM practices selected for this study. However, Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education had better SHRM practices more institutionalized as compared to the Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi and anganwadis.

5.6.4 Objective 4: To draw the relationship between strategic human resource management (SHRM) and quality of ECCE:

The study reflected a significant impact of SHRM on quality across the three ECCE government managed agencies. In schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, the lack of teachers, lack of ayas /helpers, lack of rewards and recognition for Pre-Primary teachers resulted in more formal teaching in the classrooms and lack of activities. High teacher-pupil ratio also impacted the quality of ECCE. However, training and regular evaluation and observation was seen as helpful in guiding teachers on innovative pedagogies in ECCE. Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education, were more structured ECCE with adequate number of teachers, filled sanctioned posts, a fixed timetable and schedule, curriculum guide etc. aided in more activity based and play-way based teaching in class and more outdoor play. However, lack of ayas/assistants added additional duties for the teachers which interrupted their teaching process. With respect to anganwadis, the lack of basic infrastructural facilities, less pay of workers and helpers as well as multiple responsibilities and duties resulted in limited activities and outdoor activities and less attention to the education aspect of anganwadis.

Previous researches have also indicated the interrelationship between SHRM practices and Quality ECCE. Teachers require employee friendly working environment, such as bonuses, recognition and prospects for professional development, while working in rural schools (McEwan, 1999). Similarly, teachers need to work in a school environment where there is a culture of togetherness and mutual support (Gomba, 2015; Kelly & Fogarty, 2015). Physical conditions of the school also determine the educational standards and quality. Thus, constant effort must be made to improve the working conditions. Good salary and incentives are also another way to attract quality teachers to the school. It provides a basis for the improvement of better performance and increased levels of efficiency. The findings of studies done on anganwadis have also emphasized that the quality of functionaries' concepts, knowledge, attitudes and skills played a key role in their capability to carry out tasks efficiently. It also recognized that staff get affected by other qualitative aspects e.g., buildings, equipment, ratio of staff to children etc.

Thus, this research supports the previous studies that well-educated, well-qualified workforce are essential to high quality provision which, in turn is crucial in closing the attainment gap and giving

young children the best possible opportunities for learning and development (Sylva et al. 2004). However, miniscule research had been conducted in India specifically in the context of exploring interrelationship between SHRM practices and Quality ECCE. Thus, this study through field experiences brought to light new knowledge on how SHRM had an impact on quality ECCE in the three government managed agencies selected for this study.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Conclusion:

There is no universal definition of quality in education, specifically in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). It is contextual and various international and national organizations have given their own set of indicators which define quality in ECCE. Similarly, there are no universal set of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices, various scholars and researchers have identified different set of practices depending on the context. However, certain common indicators of both Quality ECCE as well as SHRM practices were drawn and formed the basis of this study. The parameters of Quality ECCE taken up for the study included Infrastructure Facilities, Availability of Resources, Play-Based Pedagogy, Holistic Development, Accessibility, Diversity, Inclusivity and the selected SHRM Practices for the study included Staffing, Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Rewards. Delhi was chosen as the site of study, specifically South Delhi District. The overall picture at the state level of Quality standards of ECCE as well as SHRM practices were evaluated through secondary database i.e., UDISE+. A deeper analysis of the South Delhi district on the selected indicators of Quality ECCE as well as SHRM practices was done through primary data collection across three government managed agencies providing ECCE services (Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education and anganwadis).

The results indicated that the Quality standards of ECCE in Sarvodaya schools under the Directorate of Education were better as compared to the Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi and anganwadis. The major shortcomings in schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi were lack of space for activity corners, high teacher-pupil ratio, lack of height appropriate chairs and tables for children, separate rooms and space for Nursery and Kg and low representation from ST/OBC/CWSN/Sikh/Christian children etc. In anganwadis, their major challenges with respect to Quality standards were lack of ramps, separate toilets for boys and girls, drinking water and hand wash facility, chairs and tables for children and teachers, lack of outdoor space and activity corners etc.

In the context of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) Practices as well, the Sarvodaya schools under Directorate of Education were observed to be better as compared to the Schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi and anganwadis. The challenges faced by schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi were lack of Pre-Primary teachers, vacant positions, lack of ayas/assistants, additional administrative and survey/election related workload and lack of recognition and acknowledgement for their efforts. In anganwadis, the shortcomings observed were less pay, multiple duties and responsibilities, lack of space and tables and chairs for teachers, and lack of rewards and recognition. Thus, the results brough to light the current status of Quality standards of ECCE, SHRM and best practices. It also revealed the relationship between Quality ECCE and SHRM across the three selected government managed agencies providing ECCE services in South Delhi District.

6.2 Ethical Considerations of the Study:

1. Participants were fully informed of the purpose and approach of the research. Also, how the data would be collected and processed was explained full
2. The researcher obtained informed consent from all parties involved in the research.
3. Requests for consent included the possibility of opting out of the research
4. The researcher ensured confidentiality of all research subjects
5. In the case of compilation of personal data from the informants, data was gathered only to further the study and was not used for any other purpose
6. Permission was taken before taking written notes of the responses in the as well as observations made in the semi-structured interviews
7. Permission from the concerned higher authority was taken before approaching the school heads
8. Permission was taken to take pictures within the school premises

6.3 Limitations of the Study:

1. Due to restricted time of field work, a limited sample size was selected

2. Due the COVID restriction, the permission required specifically to access schools under Directorate of Education took some time. However, the permission was granted later.
3. As the study was conducted during the COVID period where children were not visiting school thus classroom observations could not be done.
4. There was lack of previous studies in this research area
5. The existing national database such as UDISE+ had limited information with respect to ECCE.

6.4 Implications of the Study:

- The study highlighted that with respect to SHRM indicators such as teacher selection and recruitment as well as continuous professional development, Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education performed better than the schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi and anganwadis. With respect to teacher evaluation, all of the government agencies of ECCE under study were observed to at an equal level. Teacher rewards however were seen to be organized better at anganwadis as compared to schools of Municipal Corporation of Delhi and Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education.
- The study brought to light that with respect to quality indicators, Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education were observed to be more accessible and diverse as compared to MCD schools and anganwadis. Inclusiveness was also observed to be better practiced in schools under DOE, however no CWSN child was enrolled in any of the government agencies of ECCE studied.
- The study also brought to light the lack of data existing in the ECCE structure. The existing data collection tool (UDISE+) had limited questions related to ECCE and Pre-Primary teachers. It does not address aspects related to Pre-Primary teachers and anganwadi workers qualifications, their trainings, promotions, sanctioned posts, vacancies and appointments of Pre-Primary teachers (guest, permanent and contractual) number of ayas/assistants, qualification of ayas/ assistants, quality indicators in Pre-Primary schools and anganwadis (rhymes, storytelling, formal teaching of 3Rs, outdoor space and play, activities for cognitive, gross motor development, activity corners, availability of resources

such as toys, learning kits, etc.). There is a need to update existing information system. Data also needs to be collected at a more large-scale level and of different government agencies providing ECCE services.

- The study highlighted the need for effective convergence and coordination between the various department and service providers of ECCE. A strong convergence and coordination with respect to developing a common curriculum, benchmark for quality, quality assurance and monitoring mechanism is required. A common set of indicators are also required in determining qualifications of Pre-Primary and anganwadi teachers, training of professionals etc. can aid in enabling all children in the age group 3-6 years to get access to high quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).
- Mapping exercise should be conducted to identify catchment areas where new anganwadis/preschools are required. It should also be conducted to identify number of enrollment of children across different management agencies providing ECCE services.

6.4.1 Implications for Schools under Municipal Corporation of Delhi:

- **Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)**
  - A cadre of permanent teachers should be recruited in the ECCE sector. All sanctioned positions for pre-primary teachers should be filled on priority basis.
  - Rationalization of high teacher-pupil ratio is essential. Separate sections and teachers for Nursery and Kg is also important to deliver age-appropriate quality education.
  - Non-teaching administrative tasks should not be given to pre-primary teachers.
  - Appointment of adequate number of ayas/assistants is important their roles and responsibilities must be specified.
- **Quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)**
  - Systemic level intervention is essential to provide infrastructural facilities such as adequate number of classrooms with activity corners, height appropriate chairs and tables for children and timely distribution of teaching learning material and resources etc.

- Admission process should be streamlined through government intervention and implemented at the institution level.

6.4.2 Implications for Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education:

- **Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)**
  - Nonacademic workload should be reduced for the preprimary teachers as it impacts the quality of teaching.
  - Appointment of adequate number of ayas/assistants should be done on priority basis and their tasks and duties must be laid out clearly.
  - A reward system for recognizing and acknowledging the efforts of preprimary teachers should be established such as 'Model Teacher'.
- **Quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)**
  - At the institution level, parent community should be oriented and made aware of the disadvantages of formal teaching and learning and advantages of play-based pedagogy in the ECCE sector.
  - Sarvodaya school can be a role model for other agencies providing ECCE services with respect to certain SHRM practices and Quality standards and the best practices should be scaled up in other agencies.

6.4.3 Implications for Anganwadis

- **Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)**
  - The pay scale of the angwandi workers and helpers should be revised.
  - Additional support should be provided at the systemic level to the anganwadi workers and helpers to fulfil the multiple he roles and responsibilities given to them.
  - Community participation for anganwadi management and functioning should be encouraged.
  - The promotion structure should be revised and be made more inclusive so that all workers and helpers get a chance to grow in their career.
  - Special educators should be recruited in anaganwadis for early detection of disability in children and accordingly provide appropriate intervention.

- **Quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)**
    - Systemic level intervention is essential to provide infrastructural facilities such as adequate space classrooms, outdoor play area, activity corners, ramp facility etc. increased funds for rent and electricity as well as its timely disbursement should be also be provided through government intervention.
    - Innovative and interactive teaching learning material which are visually stimulating should be provided to the anganwadis timely.

6.5 Suggestion for Further Studies:

- Due to paucity of time as well as due to COVID restrictions, a small sample size of 30 from South Delhi District was undertaken for this study. However, a larger sample size from more districts within Delhi would give a more holistic understanding of the ECCE structure in the state of Delhi. It would also be helpful in comparing and analyzing the current status, best practices as well as challenges faced in various districts.
- Multiple agencies provide ECCE services in Delhi such as private preschools, Balwadi (run by Government & also NGOs), creches, Pre-Primary sections in government schools such as those under Municipal Corporation of Delhi and Directorate of Education, anganwadi Centers (AWCs) run by ICDS and NGOs. Due to paucity of time, only three government managed agencies were visited for this study, however future studies could also include more agencies. A comparative study could also be conducted between private and government managed ECCE services.
- A longitudinal study could also be conducted including multiple districts of Delhi as well as the diverse ECCE agencies in Delhi.
- More aspects of Strategic Human Resource Management such as teacher appraisal, promotion, working environment, school leadership, teacher-teacher interaction, teacher retention etc. could also be included in future studies.
- As this study focused on the teacher community, it is important to recognize that there are multiple stakeholders in achieving quality ECCE services, study could also be done on the experiences, responsibilities, practices and challenges of school leaders, helpers/assistants/ayas and parent community.

- Quantitative questionnaire was used to measure the presence of quality standards in the centers/schools of the select ECCE agencies in this study as children were not being present in schools physically due to COVID restrictions. However, studies could become more enriching and holistic if it supplemented by classroom observations and case studies.

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APPENDIX A

Semi Structured Interview Schedule

NB: All information gathered will be kept confidential.

Section 1
Biographical Data

1.1 Name- [ ]

1.2 Designation- [ ]

1.3 Gender-

Male	
Female	

Section 2
School Profile

2.1 Management Type-

Schools of Municipal Corporation	
Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education	
Anganwadis	

2.2 Pre-Primary sections-

Integrated (Nursery+Kg)	
Separate Nursery and Kg	

2.3 Number of Pre-Primary students-

Boys	
Girls	

2.4 Enrollment by category:

SC	
ST	
OBC	
CWSN	
Muslim	
Christian	
Sikh	
Parsi	
Buddhist	

2.5 What is the admission policy for Pre-Primary classes in the ECCE center /school?

_____

2.6 What is the fee structure in the institute at the Pre-Primary level?

_____

Section 3
Teacher Management

3.1 How are Pre-Primary teachers recruited in the school?

_____

3.2 Does the school/ ECCE center conduct its own formal tests and interviews?

_____

3.3 What is the qualification required for the Pre-Primary teacher/Anganwadi worker in the center/school?

_____

3.4 Pre-Primary teachers/Anganwadi workers in school-

Sanctioned posts	
In-Position	

3.5 Category of Pre-Primary teachers/Anganwadi workers-

Permanent	
Contractual	
Part time	
Guest Teacher	
Any Other	

3.6 What is the teacher-pupil ratio in Pre-Primary sections?

_____

3.7 How is the orientation of teachers carried out?

Special orientation program meeting	
Heads/ Senior teachers conduct face-face	
No special orientation	
Any other	

3.8 What is the salary structure for Pre-Primary teachers/Anganwadi workers?

_____

3.9 What is the promotion structure for Pre-Primary teachers/Anganwadi workers?

_____

3.10 What are the criteria to assess Pre-Primary teacher's/Anganwadi worker's performance?

_____

3.11 How is teacher's performance evaluated?

- ☐ Annual Report
- ☐ School Head Observation
- ☐ Feedback from Parents/ SMCs
- ☐ Peer/Learners Feedback
- ☐ Learner's Achievements
- ☐ Any Other- Please Specify –_____

3.12 How often does teacher evaluation take place?

_____

3.13Who conducts training for Pre-Primary teachers/Anganwadi workers? How many trainings are conducted annually and on what topics?

_____

3.14 What is the number of teachers who have undergone additional in-service training?

_____

3.15 Are teachers and school heads going through 50 hours of Continuous Professional Development in a year?

_____

3.16 What is the number of teaching hours in Pre-Primary classes?

_____

3.17 What are the other duties/ responsibilities assigned to teachers beyond classroom teaching?

_____

3.18 How do teachers conduct learner's assessment?

_____

3.19 Do teachers integrate the use of TLM, local community resources and ICT support material?

_____

3.20 Do the teachers transact the curriculum in the vernacular language/ mother tongue?

_____

3.21 Is the curriculum age appropriate and child centric, taught in play-way manner?

_____

3.22What is the incentive structure/reward system in the school/ ECCE institute for good performance of Pre-Primary teachers//Anganwadi workers?

_____

3.23 How is learner's attainment measured and how is the progress ascertained over time?

- By counting periodic tests ☐
- Half yearly ☐
- Annual Exams ☐
- Continuous evaluation ☐
- Any other- specify ☐

APPENDIX B

Quantitative questionnaire schedule

Instruction: Kindly put a tick on "Yes" if the quality indicator is present and "No" if it is not present

Quality Indicators	Yes	No
1. Ramp		
2. Drinking water		
3. Toilets		
4. Open space		
5. Ventilated classrooms		
6. Height appropriate seats and chairs		
7. Library		
8. Hand Wash		
9. Classroom space to sit comfortably		
10. Age-appropriate play based individual and group activity for cognitive and language development		
11. Free and guided conversation		
12. Story telling		
13. Outdoor play		
14. Rhymes and action songs		
15. Routine activities- attendance, meals and toilet time		
16. Formal teaching of 3Rs		
17. Availability of materials for indoor activity/play		
18. Transport Facility		
19. Arrangements for CWSN students		
20. Shelves to store play/learning material accessible to students		
21. Proper chair and table and cupboard of teacher		
22. Activity area within classroom		
23. Age-appropriate books, story books, comics etc. in library		
24. Sleep/Nap area		
25. Flexible seating arrangements according to activities		
26. Display of material at children's level of understanding		
27. Age-wise composition of children in class		
28. Most children understand language of teacher		
29. Speaking opportunities provided by teacher		
30. Activities & materials for developing cognitive skills		
31. Activities for development of reading, writing & number readiness		
32. Children's participation in outdoor activities		

33. Listening opportunities provided by teacher		
34. Activities for gross motor development		
35. Interaction between peers & their teachers during meal/snack time		
36. No bias displayed by teacher towards gender		
37. Teacher demonstrating sensitivity & awareness regarding needs of children with special needs		
38. Inclusion of children with special needs during play		
39. Teacher demonstrating sensitivity and awareness regarding children from other social disadvantaged groups such as tribal, SC & OBC		

APPENDIX C

Infrastructure and overall ambience of three government managed agencies providing ECCE services

Nagar Nigam Sahasiksha Adarsh Pratibha School, Humayunpur, Safdarjug Enclave- School under Municipal Corporation of Delhi

Sarvodaya Vidyalaya Co.ed, Safdarjung Enclave- Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education

Ramanuja Mehrauli No 2, Main Bazaar-- Sarvodaya Schools under Directorate of Education

Anganwadi Kendra 99 - Hauz Khas Village- Govindpuri Project

Anganwadi Kendra Yusuf Sarai- Gujjar Diary- Govindpuri Project