RESULTS
AND
DISCUSSION
CHAPTER 3

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected were analyzed according to the specific objectives of the study. The major findings that emerged are presented in the following section. The results are arranged according to the study objectives to maintain a logical sequence and help draw out conclusions as per the research questions.

Overview of Indian thought on purpose and aims of education, views on children, perspectives on learning, concepts of teaching, conception of knowledge and beliefs about assessment

The following section highlights an overview of Indian thought on selected aspects of curriculum as delineated in the study objectives. Conceptual overviews were derived through a literature review on education in India as documented in texts and essays authored by eminent educationists and thinkers.

Aims of education

The terms shiksha and vidya have been used as the equivalents to education in ancient India. Shiksha has been conceptualized as not only dealing with the correct pronunciation and recitation of mantras and hymns, but also inclusive of a variety of contexts and meanings. Besides uccharana (recitation), it means vidyopadane (teaching and learning), vidyadane (imparting knowledge), adhyapane (teaching), abhyase (knowledge), adhyayane (learning), dande (punishing) and upadeshe (preaching). Vidya is used for gyane (knowledge), labhe (usefulness), vicharene (thinking) and
sattayam (existence). Education was conceptualized as the process of acquisition of knowledge by applying one’s own mind.

Self realization (atma-sakshatkar or swarupaamubhuti) was the main objective of education as it was believed that self or atma was the centre of all activities. It was believed that after realizing the self, nothing remained worth realizing as it removed the duality between the self and the universe. The development of the intellectual power alone was not the aim of education. Along with it a most desirable quality needed was the inculcation of the sense of discrimination or viveka (satyaasatyavicechana). Intelligence itself was not considered enough for promoting viveka or the power for discrimination. Tapas of the mind was emphasized in order to achieve a state of settled intelligence (shtitipragya), considered of prime importance towards the goal of self realization.

Views on children

The Vedanta philosophy consists of an integrated approach to understand an individual, which was closely linked to the education of a person. The individual was understood through five hypothetical/categorical constructs; namely body, energy, mind, knowledge and bliss. The individual was thought to be composed of five sheaths or ‘koshas (sheaths)’ wherein the ‘self’ manifested. They were the annamayakosha (the sheath composed of food), the pranamayakosha (the sheath composed of vital air), the manomayakosha (the sheath composed of mind), the vijnanamayakosha (the sheath composed of intelligence) and the anandamayakosha (the sheath composed of bliss). The emphasis was on the inter-correlations among these five selves and the emphasis on attaining ‘ananda’ (bliss) through valid knowledge. It emphasized the process of
development of an individual from the physical-physiological to the spiritual. They roughly correspond to the cognitive, conative and affective domains of modern psychology.

*Views on teachers/teaching*

Teaching was considered as a social and moral duty (*brahma karma swabhavajam*). Guru was the general term used for teachers. He was expected to remove the darkness of ignorance from the student’s mind and empower him to realize the ultimate truth. Self-realization was thought to be impossible without the guidance of the guru. For becoming a teacher the highest intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities were required. They were expected to be self-realized and individuals with settled intelligence. They were expected to be well versed in the art of teaching (*adhyapanam*), be a good communicator (*vakta*) and a commentator (*vishleshaka*). Clarity of thought and speech, proficiency in discussion, debate, giving examples, art of explanation, elaboration and illustration were the other qualities.

The teacher was expected to know the art of reading child’s mind and providing a suitable learning opportunity to *alp-pragya* (below normal), *pragya* (of normal mental power) and *mahapragya* (gifted) children. Thus, teaching was expected to be based upon the learning potentialities of the students. Question method, lecture method, discussions and debates were common teaching techniques. Children with higher mental power were essentially encouraged towards self learning, whereas for students of lower ability, story method was common. Explanation of subtle ideas proceeded through elaboration and illustration, with the guru giving examples and making
comparisons’. Observation and study of nature were also considered important strategies for teaching.

Views on learning

The students were known as skishya (disciple), vidyarthi (student), vidyarati (devoted to learning) and brahmachari (engaged in the quest of higher learning). Invariably, the students used to utter the name of their gurus while introducing themselves. The life of a student was not easy. Sukharthi va tyajet vidya vidyarthi va tyajet sukham (the pursuit of pleasure and learning could not go together, one had to choose either). The study was conducted under strict discipline and the service to guru; strict obedience and single-mindedness in study were thought necessary. For full comprehension of an idea or a concept, careful attention to the teacher was thought to be essential. It was called shravanam (listening to the guru and remembering what was taught by him). This was followed by mananam (reflection, deliberation and argumentation) by the pupil himself. Then came the stage of nididhyasana (meditation and concentration on the theme of shravanam and mananam) for understanding the essence or hidden meaning behind a concept.

Thus, shravanam, mananam and nididhyasana were the main steps of learning. In addition, adhyayanam (study of texts), mananen (reflections and deliberations on the essence of what has been learnt), pravacanen (discussing with other pupils) and prayogena (application) were considered as the basics of learning. It has been told that one-fourth of learning is achieved from the guru, one-fourth from other students’, one-fourth by one’s own experience and one-fourth by putting it into practice. Thus, in the
process of teaching and learning, the pupils played a major role and guru acted only as friend, philosopher and guide.

Views on knowledge

The notion of knowledge has been approached by Indian thinkers in diverse ways. It has been conceptualized as ‘relation’, ‘act’, ‘quality’, and ‘self-subsistence’. The terms are interlinked and do not refer to inter-linked categories. Jnana (cognition), upalabhdi (attainment) and buddhi (intellect) are often used independently as well as interchangeably to refer to knowledge. As an activity, knowing is characterized as a process of consciousness. A valid cognition is one which is free from doubt (samsaya), indefiniteness (anadhyavasaya) and error (bhrama), and which therefore reveals things as they are (vathartha), furnishes the basis of successful activities (samvadi-pravrityamikula) and is not contradicted (abadhiita) by any other experience.

The process of knowing involves four factors, that is, subject (pramata), object (prameya), method (pramana) and the resulting knowledge (prama). The validity of knowledge may be determined by focusing on the functional aspects of reality. This empirical world is treated as a field of action (karmamayam jagat). Everything therefore, is meant for some action and every action has an end. We can test when a given object serves the end for which it is meant (arthakriyakarin). It is believed that novelty is the major feature of knowledge. The validity of knowledge is regarded natural by some schools of Indian thought, for example Mimamsa and Vedanta, who think that the conditions of validity lie within the very conditions which generate the knowledge. Thus knowledge is known from the knowledge itself (svatah-pramana).
True knowledge (vidya) leads to the awareness of the unity incorporating all the manifestations.

*Views on assessment*

The evaluations of students were oral in which knowledge, ability for exposition and elaboration, ready wit, use of proper and correct language, power of expression, oration, analysis, synthesis and to defend one’s own point of view were tested. Evaluations in subjects involving skills and competencies for performance were theoretical as well as practical.

Overall, the prime purpose of education was self realization through inculcation of the sense of discrimination and achieving a state of settled intelligence. Views regarding children consisted of an integrated approach to understand an individual, who was understood through five hypothetical/categorical constructs; namely body, energy, mind, knowledge and bliss. The emphasis was on the inter-correlations among these five selves and the emphasis on attaining ‘ananda’ (bliss) through valid knowledge. It emphasized the process of development of an individual from the physical-physiological to the spiritual. Teaching was considered as a social and moral duty and required the highest intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities. They were expected to possess excellent skills in the art of teaching and communication and base teaching upon the learning potentialities of the students. Observation and study of nature were also considered important strategies for teaching.
Learning was essentially thought to revolve around listening, reflection and concentration skills and was preceded by study of texts, deliberations of what was learnt, discussions with others and application. The notion of knowledge has been conceptualized as ‘relation’, ‘act’, ‘quality’, and ‘self-subsistence’. Cognition, attainment and intellect were often often used independently as well as interchangeably to refer to knowledge. The process of knowing involves four factors, that is, subject, object, method and the resulting knowledge. It is believed that novelty is the major feature of knowledge. The validity of knowledge is regarded natural by some schools of Indian thought, for example Mimamsa and Vedanta, who think that the conditions of validity lie within the very conditions which generate the knowledge. The evaluations of students were generally oral in which knowledge, ability for exposition and elaboration, ready wit, use of proper and correct language, power of expression, oration, analysis, synthesis and to defend one’s own point of view were tested.

Conceptualizations surrounding the various domains of education were thus viewed from a broader purview; consisting of enhancing and uplifting the life of an individual at various levels through education.
Perspectives of selected national documents on early childhood education

The following section highlights the perspectives regarding above mentioned curricular domains from the purview of select national early childhood documents. The documents were reviewed and analyzed individually to obtain insights into the above mentioned domains. Further on an integrated analysis of these select documents were carried out to obtain a collective view of early childhood education curriculum. The selected documents represent views on early childhood care and education from a holistic perspective, thus in addition to reviewing the whole document, the sections concerning the curricular domains selected for the study were studied in detail and subjected to greater scrutiny. The major findings are highlighted as follows:

Purpose of early childhood education

The purpose of education seems to be on eliminating certain aspects from culture which are presumed to be undesirable. Education is viewed as a tool to replace the unwanted elements of the society by introducing social practices and values which are believed to be more desirable and make efforts at reconstructing the culture, so that its members and attain maximum satisfaction of the material, social, cultural needs. Efforts are at making the society more just, democratic and egalitarian than it currently is. The attempt seems to be geared towards gaining social consensus on the curricular aspects of the child’s education by highlighting the differences that exist in the society. Thus, the aspirations of a society as envisaged ‘or as ought to be’ seem achievable through education.
Views on children

To a large extent, children are viewed as potential contributing members of society who are products of the society they live in and can help create a better society in the future. The underlying perception of the role of education is to guide the development of the child in a direction as deemed ‘correct’ by the society. There is a lot of emphasis on the kind of education which is given to the child, thus more acknowledgment is given to honing their potentials to act in the future ‘in spite’ of their past histories, their socio-economic situation, community etc. There seems to be an inherent bias to say that probably where they come from is not sufficient to make them into contributing members of the society, thus education must be ‘all inclusive’ and efforts must be geared at provisioning access to maximum possible children. Children are perceived as possessing a bundle of potentialities, which can be molded in manifold directions.

Views on teaching

The teacher is viewed as or expected to be someone whom the children can look up to and further on it is expected that teachers must be capable of reflecting on themselves and on their society. The teachers are expected to be preparers of the classroom and the environment such that children can be actively engaged in learning. They should encourage and guide children’s’ innate curiosity and self exploration tendencies. Teachers must be open to differences amongst children, and respect children and their potentialities. Distinction is made between abstract and concrete learning and teachers are expected to work accordingly. They are expected to be
carefully observant of children, respect where they come from, and to not let the
distinctions of class, caste and gender, bias their views against children and
consequently damage their self concept. The teacher must also function as the
facilitator to children during the process of learning.

Views on learning

Learning is regarded as active assimilation of new experiences into learners
meaning structures. Learning requires not only that a social group acquires knowledge,
but also that it reaches a consensus both the nature and truth of the learning, and also
towards achieving social consensus and/or agreement. They also believe and
emphasize that learning takes place when people interact with the world around them
and make meaning for themselves out of those interactions. For learning to occur, a
stimulating environment is thought to be crucial, direct experiences are also thought to
be important. They also emphasize that not just experiences but what meanings are
made out of the curricula which will decide the type of learning.

Views on knowledge

Knowledge is typically viewed from the lens of organization of content in
different curricular areas. The authority of knowledge emerges from the kind of impact
it has in providing individuals with the skills they need to function within society.
Views on assessment

Focus is on stress free, pressure free careful monitoring of children’s progress, through continuous and consistent observation. No quantitative assessment or standardized testing is recommended. Observations of behavior and skills are thought to be the best ways of assessing and keeping a track of the progress of the child in the major domains of growth.

Overall, the purpose of education seems to focus on eliminating certain aspects from culture which are presumed to be undesirable. Education is thought to be a tool to replace the unwanted elements of the society like differences that emerge due to caste, class, socio-economic status and there is a strong effort to reconstructing the culture, so that its members and attain maximum satisfaction of the material, social, cultural needs. Children are viewed as potential contributing members of society who are products of the society they live in and can help create a better society in the future.

There is a lot of emphasis on the kind of education which is given to the child, thus more acknowledgment is given to honing their potentials to act in the future ‘in spite’ of their past histories, their socio-economic situation, community etc. Children are perceived as possessing a bundle of potentialities, which can be molded in manifold directions. Learning seems to be primarily conceptualized as a social act rather than an individual act. In both process and product, in both means and end, it aims mainly at social self-realization (Brameld, 1950). For learning to occur, a stimulating environment is thought to be crucial, direct experiences are also thought to be
important. Emphasis is not just on experiences but what meanings are made out of the learning.

It is expected that teachers must be capable of reflecting on themselves and on their society and encourage and guide children’s’ innate curiosity and self exploration tendencies. Teachers must be open to differences amongst children, and respect children and their potentialities. Distinction is made between abstract and concrete learning and teachers are expected to work accordingly. The teacher must also function as the facilitator to children during the process of learning. Interactions are based on adults’ knowledge and expectations of age-appropriate behavior in children balanced by adults’ awareness of individual differences among children’. (Bredekamp, 1987, p.13)

In terms of assessment, pressure free and careful monitoring of children’s progress is advocated; through continuous and consistent observation. Observations of behavior and skills of children across time are thought to be the best ways of assessing and keeping a track of the progress of the child in the major domains of growth.

Thus, thoughts pertaining to various domains of education seem to navigate both the learner centered and social reconstruction dimensions. National documents typically function from a larger canvas; however, the extent to which these dimensions play out in curricular decisions and implementation remains a debatable premise.
Assumptions of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children

Educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children shared certain common views regarding purpose of early childhood education. Figure 3 indicates their views on purpose of early childhood education.

![Diagram showing purpose of early childhood education: views of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers](image-url)

*Figure 3.* Purpose of early childhood education: views of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers
Nearly 82% educators (41 of 50 respondents) and 86% EC teachers (43 of 50 respondents) emphasized the purpose of early years education was to stimulate growth by providing children with stimulating environment. While majority of fathers 94% (47 of 50 respondents) and 82% mothers (41 of 50 respondents) felt the purpose of early years education was to lay the foundation for future adulthood. However, in terms of the sources of aims of education for young children, early childhood teachers perceived themselves to be the ‘transmitters’ of aims as setup by agencies ‘external’ to the child. This pattern replicates in their views on ideals which must be achieved by young children. Stark distinctions are observed in the perceived links between educational and psychological development of the child, with educators’ reporting that educational development leads to psychological development, whereas parents felt that psychological development was influenced in part by educational development.

A distinction is made between the ‘self expressed needs of the child’ and the ‘needs of the child as inferred by the adults’ i.e. what adults think the needs of children are (Noddings, 2003). Overall, the assumptions’ regarding purpose of early years education seems to be guided by needs of children as inferred by the adults. Whereas, the ‘self expressed’ needs of the child seem to play little role in deciding the aims of education at large.

Figure 4 indicates views on children/importance of early years.
**Figure 4. Views on children: views of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers**

Nearly 50% educators (25 of 50 respondents), 72% EC teachers (36 of 50 respondents) and 72% fathers (36 of 50 respondents) feel that children are active agents in their world. They view children as having something of worth. They reported that education should be concerned about processes which are internal to the child. They view children as integrated organisms and feel that children themselves should be the
focus of educational efforts and not the acts or attributes of children. They feel that children should be accepted as the way they are and that children are thought to exist for themselves and not to further ends external to themselves. They reported they viewed children as unique individuals and within a particular social context.

Nearly 48% educators (24 of 50 respondents) and 82% mothers (41 of 50 respondents) reported that children are passive agents in their world, are missing something of worth and that education should be concerned about process internal to the children. They view children as atomizable organisms and felt that the acts and/or attributes of children should be the focus of educational efforts and not on children themselves. The respondents felt that the purpose of education is to be concerned about making children as they ought to be rather than accepting them as they are. They think that children exist not for themselves but to further ends external to themselves. The respondents viewed children and their education in relation to standardized norms of the society and in the broader context of academic disciplines.

The respondents’ shared certain common meanings in their opinions regarding learning. However, educators and mothers of young children and early childhood teachers’ and fathers were divided in some of their opinions regarding views on learning.

Figure 5 represents the respondents’ thoughts on learning.
Figure 5. Thoughts on learning: views of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers

Nearly 56% educators (28 of 50 respondents), 44% EC teachers (22 of 50 respondents), 52% fathers (26 of 50 respondents) and 56% mothers (28 of 50 respondents) view learning from the perspective of the receiver. Learning is viewed primarily as a function of natural growth of young children. They consider learning as an integrated process, wherein the children learn multiple constructs in a holistic manner. The
respondents primarily viewed learning as change in mind and that the desired result of learning is also a change in mind. The respondents reported that the primary actor during learning is the learner itself rather than any other agent. The respondents stated that learning can best proceed when that which is to be learnt is in harmony with the stages of the growth of the child and when individual development of the child is facilitated.

Nearly 40% educators (20 of 50 respondents) and 44% mothers (22 of 50 respondents) view learning from the perspective of the transmitter. Learning is seen primarily as a function of societal transmission, and is considered as an atomistic process. The respondents feel that learning primarily changes the behaviour of a person and that the desired result of learning is a change in behavior. The respondents feel that the primary actor during learning is the agent as well as the learner. The respondents felt that learning can best proceed when children are provided with guidelines as to what behaviors’ are expected from them. The respondents felt that learning will also proceed best when all children are given a standard task but the variations in learning rate and styles are recognized.

Nearly 44% EC teachers (22 of 50 respondents) and 48% fathers (24 of 50 respondents) view learning from the perspective of the transmitter. Learning is seen primarily as a function of societal transmission, and is considered as an atomistic process. The respondents feel that learning primarily changes the mind of a person and that the desired result of learning is a change in mind. The respondents feel that the primary actor during learning is the agent. The respondents felt that learning can best proceed when children are provided with subject content which is simplified, especially
those themes which are difficult. The respondents’ felt that learning will also proceed best when all children are grouped together in terms of achievement and then taught accordingly.

Educators, early childhood teachers and mothers of young children were divided in their opinion regarding views on teaching, whereas majority of fathers shared common meanings in their opinion regarding views on teaching.

Figure 6 highlights the respondents’ views on teaching.
Figure 6. Thoughts on teachers/teaching: views of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers.

Nearly 42% educators (21 of 50 respondents), 42% early childhood teachers (21 of 50 respondents) and 40% mothers (20 of 50 respondents) felt that the intent of teaching was to stimulate the growth of the child and be concerned about the holistic development of the child. They also reported that teachers’ own attitudes, beliefs and
visions regarding teaching and children play a significant role in the life of the child. The respondents’ felt that the role of teacher is that of a facilitator to children’s growth and development. They reported that teachers are preparers and supervisors of the classrooms. They felt that teacher effectiveness can be measured by observing the child’s growth and the ways in which teachers facilitate the growth of the child. The respondents’ felt that within classrooms teachers must encourage diversity amongst the students and modify and creatively adapt curriculum based on children’s needs and situations. They felt that teachers and curriculum developers must plan the curriculum by accommodating children’s individual differences. During teaching teachers must encourage the interactions of children with the environment.

Nearly 46% educators (23 of 50 respondents), 38% EC teachers (19 of 50 respondents), 68% fathers (38 of 50 respondents), and 44% mothers (22 of 50 respondents) felt that the intent of teaching was to acculturate children into the vision of education as setup by educators and at the same time be concerned about the holistic development of the child. They reported that teachers own attitudes, beliefs and visions regarding teaching and children play a significant role in being good teachers. They felt that the role of a teacher is that of a companion, to whom children can look up to and be guided by. They reported that teachers are preparers and supervisors of the classrooms, and that the effectiveness of the teachers can be measured by observing whether the teacher is able to effectively transfer to children the vision of education as envisaged by the society. The respondents’ felt that while teachers may accept individual differences in performance of behavior, the ultimate aim was to stimulate uniformity in terms of values and the kind of human being we want children to be. The respondents’ reported that teachers should plan the curriculum and adapt the curriculum based on the social
concerns and expectations. During teaching teachers must encourage children to build cohesiveness with the group and act according to the group dynamics.

Figure 7 highlights the respondents’ perceptions regarding knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views of educators</th>
<th>Views of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge helps in deciphering and understanding various awkward situations and helps make correct decisions.</td>
<td>Acquisition of skills or information about one's own self or about the world around the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulation of facts, ideas, thoughts is information, using it correctly gives one knowledge, being able to decide how to use this knowledge in life is wisdom.</td>
<td>An understanding of the way things are, which are passed on from generation to generation in a disciplined manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge is something one must acquire with efforts. It leads to eternal happiness, complete satisfaction, positivity and ‘santosh’.</td>
<td>Set of ideas and thoughts one acquires during a course of time, it becomes important when it is implemented differently in different situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission of knowledge into practice is most crucial.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views of fathers</th>
<th>Views of mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills and expertise acquired by a person through education and experience.</td>
<td>Information and skills gained through experience or education, consists of beliefs, values, faith and actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It increases understanding of reality and acts as a guide for decision making.</td>
<td>When information about anything reaches a certain level of depth, it becomes knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic learning about a particular theme/topic, ingrained conceptually and become a guiding star.</td>
<td>Perfect combination of right information and experience leads to knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of experience, hearsay, imbibed information, basic facts, proofs, variations due to experience and existing conditions.</td>
<td>Expertise and skills acquired by a person through experience or education is knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 7. Thoughts on knowledge: views of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers, and mothers.*
Nearly 58% educators (29 of 50 respondents), 42% EC teachers (21 of 50 respondents), 40% fathers (20 of 50 respondents) and 44% mothers (22 of 50 respondents) view knowledge as personal meanings accorded by individuals to things around themselves. The respondents feel that knowledge gives the ability to make own decisions and meanings about the things surrounding themselves. The respondents feel that the source of knowledge is individuals’ personal and creative response to his/her experience. It is unique to each individual. The respondents reported that knowledge derives its authority from the meaning it has to the one who possess the knowledge. The respondents feel that learning and growth both lead to increase in knowledge.

Nearly 42% educators (21 of 50 respondents), 44% EC teachers (22 of 50 respondents), 42% fathers (21 of 50 respondents) and 52% mothers (26 of 50 respondents) reported that knowledge is the capability for action. The respondents feel that knowledge gives children the ability to do things. They feel that knowledge arises from reality as it is interpreted by the members of society. Knowledge derives its authority from the impact it has in perpetuating society by providing individual with the skills that they need to function within society. The respondents feel that apart from the ability to do things, knowledge is something that corresponds to the society’s view about reality and how things should be.

The respondents’ shared certain common meanings in their views regarding children. However, educators and mothers of young children and early childhood teachers’ and fathers were divided in some of their opinions regarding views on children. Figure 7 indicates respondents’ views regarding children/importance of early years.
Figure 8 indicates respondents’ perceptions on assessment.

(Views of educators)
- Helps review the learning process, determine where it is leading and what changes are required in the process
- Purpose is to measure child's growth and development against a set benchmark
- Gives an opportunity to identify deficits and assets of child's learning, thereby giving an opportunity to design a need based program for the child
- Main purpose is to help the child understand what is required for them to improve

(Views of teachers)
- Identification of child's growth in various domains and areas which need to be worked upon
- Compare child's personal growth against himself/herself
- It also helps in re-appropriation of the teaching-learning environment and informs future planning and practice
- Assessment must not hamper the emotional balance of the child, no matter what the performance, it must be handled sensitively

(Views of fathers)
- To focus on identifying the gap between the learning and the application of learning in a given situation
- It helps take a decision to mould the child in a particular direction (where he/she is lacking)
- Main purpose is to check the process of teaching, justify the outcome of the process and the methods implemented
- It must be carried out based on the aptitude and capability of the child as its main purpose is to promote positive growth and development of the child

(Views of mothers)
- Making a child realise his/her own abilities, what he/she does not know, adults should act as enlighters
- Tells us whether child is on par with his peers or needs practice/support
- Can get to know grasping power, understanding of the child
- Assessment promotes learning and development through measuring of abilities, interest, aptitudes, values and personality characteristics
- Assess the efficiency of a teacher and the method of evaluation

Figure 8. Thoughts on assessment: views of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers

Nearly 88% educators (44 of 50 respondents), 84% EC teachers (42 of 50 respondents), 80% fathers (40 of 50 respondents) and 82% mothers (41 of 50 respondents) reported that the purpose of assessment is to diagnose the abilities of the child and consequently help in the growth of the child. They reported that the purpose
of assessment is to inform the evaluatee about their progress. They felt that assessment and designing assessment is not a part of the curriculum development. They reported that the assessment should be informal and stress free, which measured the child’s potential against his/her own capability. They felt that assessments for children should be subjective and not objective. They considered evaluation to be a holistic process and that the child should be the one that should most benefit from it. The respondents also felt that during assessment, the focus should be on individual norms rather than group norms or fixed criterion. They also felt that students should be evaluated during the period of instruction, rather than after the instruction. They felt there should be no set definitions for a good assessment.

To gain a comprehensive overview of the results, the assumptions of Indian thought, selected national early childhood documents and views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children on selected components of the curriculum are summarized in the following tables.
Table 4

*Purpose of Early Childhood Education: Comprehensive Overview*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian thought</th>
<th>Selected national early childhood documents</th>
<th>Educators</th>
<th>Early childhood teachers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of knowledge by application of mind</td>
<td>To eliminate certain aspects from culture which are presumed to be undesirable</td>
<td>Stimulation of developmental abilities across domains</td>
<td>Stimulating and Holistic Development</td>
<td>Learning of social skills</td>
<td>Enhance self concept and interact with peer group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self realization (<em>atma-sakshatkar</em> or <em>swarupaamubhuti</em>) was the main objective of education</td>
<td>Education viewed as a tool to replace the unwanted elements of the society by introducing social practices and values which are believed to be more desirable</td>
<td>Enhance socialization and transmission of basic cultural values</td>
<td>Preparation for formal schooling</td>
<td>Explore world outside home</td>
<td>Preparation for formal schooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on the inculcation of the sense of discrimination or <em>viveka</em> (<em>satyaasatya</em> <em>vicechana</em>)</td>
<td>Efforts geared at making the society more just, democratic and egalitarian than it currently is</td>
<td>Optimization of development and nurturing of basic skills</td>
<td>School readiness</td>
<td>Inculcating good personal habits</td>
<td>Building foundation for life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence itself was not considered enough for</td>
<td>Ease the transition from home to external environments</td>
<td>Child -centered education</td>
<td>Child -centered education</td>
<td>Fostering cultural values</td>
<td>Learn peaceful co-existence with peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learn emotional regulation</td>
<td>Foster creativity, empathy and thinking skills</td>
<td>Training for formal schooling</td>
<td>Preparation for future adulthood and contributing members of the society</td>
<td>Nurture natural curiosity of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning basic hygiene, manners, skills and adjustment to new environment</td>
<td>Stepping stone for higher education</td>
<td>Identify and strengthen child’s inner strength</td>
<td>Identify and strengthen child’s inner strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increases knowledge about own skills and abilities</td>
<td>Gain emotional stability over separating from parents for the first time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
promoting viveka or the power for discrimination

- Tapas of mind emphasized in order to achieve a state of settled intelligence (sthitipragya)

  through education

  - The attempt seems to be geared towards gaining social consensus on the curricular aspects of the child’s education by highlighting the caste, class and gender differences that exist in the society

  - Aspirations of a society as envisaged ‘or as ought to be’ seem achievable through education.
### Table 5

**Views on Children: Comprehensive Overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian thought</th>
<th>Selected early childhood documents</th>
<th>Educators</th>
<th>Early childhood teachers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on holistic development of child through education</td>
<td>Children are viewed as potential contributing members of society who are products of the society they live in and can help create a better society in the future.</td>
<td>Crucial and delicate years which need to be addressed with utmost care</td>
<td>Formative years for future learning</td>
<td>Constant changes in child's emotional and physical development</td>
<td>Stepping stone of life-long development and character formation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of knowledge, the inculcation of social duties and religious rites and above all formation of character.</td>
<td>The underlying perception of the role of education is to guide the development of the child in a direction as deemed 'correct' by the society.</td>
<td>Formative years of a child's personality</td>
<td>Provision of the right environment moulds the child into a healthy adults</td>
<td>Crucial for development of brain and learning of lifelong habits</td>
<td>Foundation years for cultivating truth, regularity, cleanliness, courtesy and obedient behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It sought to build up the whole being of the individual and to enable him to lead the best and the highest kind of</td>
<td>Children are vulnerable, naive, curious, active, ready to learn, gets molded as per</td>
<td>Learning is at a peak, thus maximum ideas, concepts, information can be passed on</td>
<td>Foundation years which shape children's health, happiness and future learning</td>
<td>Early years are shapers, one can mould the child as desired</td>
<td>Experiences and learning's acquired during early years engrave themselves and support the child for the rest of his/her life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum learning occurs during these years</td>
<td>Crucial for strengthening synapses in the brain</td>
<td>Children gain increasing control of their feelings and their reactions</td>
<td>Crucial to respect the child and value its needs during early years in order</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
life possible for him in the circumstances in which he was placed.
Educational influences were so planned as to mould his life from the moment he was conceived to the moment of his death.
- It was left upon the teacher to mark the capacity of the pupil to enter upon a study.
- There is a lot of emphasis on the kind of education which is given to the child, thus more acknowledgment is given to honing their potentials to act in the future ‘in spite’ of their past histories, their socio-economic situation, community etc.
- Education must be ‘all inclusive’ and efforts must be geared at provisioning access to maximum possible children.
- Children are perceived as possessing a situation and experiences he/she faces
- relations with others and understanding their place in society
to develop a child who trusts society and is a good judge of right or wrong.
bundle of potentialities, which can be molded in manifold directions.
Table 6

*Perspectives on Learning: Comprehensive Overview*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian thought</th>
<th>Selected Early Childhood Documents</th>
<th>Educators</th>
<th>Early childhood teachers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concept of learning assumed a form of devotion. The students were known as <em>shishya</em> (disciple), <em>vidyarthi</em> (student), <em>vidyarati</em> (devoted to learning)</td>
<td>Learning regarded as active assimilation of new experiences into learners meaning structures. Learning requires not only that a social group acquires knowledge, but also that it reaches a consensus both the nature and truth of the learning, and also towards achieving social</td>
<td>Experience based knowledge forms the foundation of learning for children Learn through observation, sensory learning and from a stimulating environment Environment at home and surrounding them provides them with all kinds of learning experiences Basis of all humans are emotions, so is</td>
<td>Through play and manipulation of environment First hand, concrete experiences Through senses and day-to-day life experiences Self exploration of environment, with peers, adults and family members Observation, imitation, exposure to different media</td>
<td>Learn through observation, activities, self-experience, interacting with others Sensory learning, imitation of those around them, by trial and error and play way method Children live in their own fantasy world, even if they are asleep or awake, they learn from that In order to make them learn new concepts, adults</td>
<td>Through play, interacting with people, observing, listening, participating They learn through practical experiences, field trips, rhymes, songs, pictures, action, first hand experiences and presence of enriching materials Through playful interaction with objects and motivated by their own desires How children learn is dependent upon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
comprised of shravanam (listening to the guru and remembering what was taught by him). Followed by mananam (reflection, deliberation and argumentation) by the pupil himself.
- It has been mentioned that one-fourth of learning is achieved from guru, one-fourth from other students’, one-fourth by own experience and one-fourth by putting it in practice.
- In the process of teaching and consensus and/or agreement.
  - They also believe that learning takes place when people interact with the world around them and make meaning for themselves out of those interactions.
  - For learning to occur, a stimulating environment is thought to be crucial, direct experiences are also thought to be important.
  - Emphasis is not just on experiences but the kinds of meanings that are the case with young children, if a theme/concept appeals to them emotionally they imbibe it in their hearts and minds.

need to design new strategies
the experiences communicated by the teacher and by experiential learning
learning, the guru acted as friend, philosopher and guide. made out are consicered crucial to learning.
Table 7

**Concepts of Teaching: Comprehensive Overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian thought</th>
<th>Selected Early Childhood Documents</th>
<th>Educators</th>
<th>Early childhood teachers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching was considered as a social and moral duty (<em>brahma karma swabhavajam</em>).</td>
<td>• The teacher is viewed as or expected to be someone whom the children can look up to and further on it is expected that teachers must be capable of reflecting on themselves and on their society. • The teachers are expected to be preparers of the classroom and the environment such that children can be actively engaged</td>
<td>• Be with children by choice and not compulsion • Act as role models, second mothers and understand characteristics of young children Should be trained, flexible, creative, energetic, caring, be able to handle emergencies, approachable</td>
<td>• Formal training in child development • Role model, friend and mentor to the child • Young at heart and mind, active, spontaneous, should love and like children • Can focus on each child individually • Motivates children, provides reinforcement and teaches basic learning skills • Should be able to create and provide a stimulating environment for learning</td>
<td>• Should have capacity to emulate mothers, encourage and nurtures the child, gives warmth, compassion and feeling of security to the child • Makes children fearless, acts as facilitators and guiding lights • Implement personal values, pillars to child’s socio-emotional and character development</td>
<td>• Smart, active, dynamic, bubbly, caring, supportive and expressive • Treats each child as individual and makes efforts to make the child into a good human being • Be a facilitator and friend to children, treat all children equally with a positive approach • Guides children according to their individual personalities • Should be next to mothers, a good role</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
required.

- They were expected to be self-realized and individuals with settled intelligence. They were expected to be well versed in the art of teaching (adhyapanam), be a good communicator (vakta) and a commentator (vishleshaka).
- Clarity of thought and speech, proficiency in discussion, debate, giving examples, art of explanation, elaboration and illustration were the other qualities.
- The teacher was expected to know the art of reading child’s mind and providing a suitable in learning. They should encourage and guide children’s’ innate curiosity and self exploration tendencies.
- Teachers must be open to differences amongst children, and respect children and their potentialities.
- Distinction is made between abstract and concrete learning and teachers are expected to work accordingly.
- They are expected to be carefully observant of and respect individuality and differences of young children.
- They must have lots of patience and without expectations and should be transmitters of knowledge but they are paid very less or break a child, thus, the teacher must understand feelings and emotions of children.
learning opportunity to *alp-pragya*
(below normal),
*pragya* (of normal mental power) and
*mahapragya* (gifted) children.

- Teaching was expected to be based upon the learning potentialities of the students.
- Question method, lecture method, discussions and debates were common teaching techniques.
- Children with higher mental power were essentially encouraged towards self learning, whereas for students of lower ability, children, respect where they come from, and to not let the distinctions of class, caste and gender, bias their views against children and consequently damage their self concept.
- The teacher must also function as the facilitator to children during the process of learning.
- Interactions are to be based on adults’ knowledge and expectations of age-appropriate behavior in children.
story method was common for teaching.
Table 8

Conception of Knowledge: Comprehensive Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian thought</th>
<th>Selected Early Childhood Documents</th>
<th>Educators</th>
<th>Early childhood teachers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The notion of knowledge has been conceptualized in diverse ways.</td>
<td>• The notion of knowledge is placed in the context of selection and organization of content for curricular purposes.</td>
<td>• Knowledge helps in deciphering and understanding various awkward situations and helps make correct decisions.</td>
<td>• Acquisition of skills or information about one's own self or about the world around the individual</td>
<td>• Skills and expertise acquired by a person through education and experience</td>
<td>• Information and skills gained through experience or education, consists of beliefs, values, faith and actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It has been as ‘relation’, ‘act’, ‘quality’, and ‘self-subsistence’. The terms are interlinked and do not refer to interlinked categories.</td>
<td>• Agreement with national expectations of learning.</td>
<td>• Accumulation of facts, ideas, thoughts is information, using it correctly gives one knowledge, being able to decide how to</td>
<td>• An understanding of the way things are, which are passed on from generation to generation in a disciplined manner</td>
<td>• It increases understanding of reality and acts as a guide for decision making</td>
<td>• When information about anything reaches a certain level of depth, it becomes knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jnana (cognition), upalabdi (attainment) and buddhi (intellect) are often used independently as well as interchangeably to</td>
<td>• Conceptual connections in terms of priority, sequencing, investigation methodology</td>
<td>• Set of ideas and thoughts one acquires during a course of time, it becomes important when it is implemented differently in different situations</td>
<td>• Holistic learning about a particular theme/topic, ingrained conceptually and become a guiding star</td>
<td>• Combination of experience, hearsay, imbibed information, basic</td>
<td>• Perfect combination of right information and experience leads to knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The notion of knowledge is placed in the context of selection and organization of content for curricular purposes.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Transmission of knowledge into practice is most crucial</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Expertise and skills acquired by a person through experience or education is knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
refer to knowledge. As an activity, knowing is characterized as a process of consciousness.

- The process of knowing involves four factors, subject (pramāṇa), object (prameya), method (pramāṇa) and the resulting knowledge (prama).
- It is believed that novelty is the major feature of knowledge.
- The validity of knowledge is regarded natural by some schools, Mimamsa and Vedanta, who think that the conditions of and validation procedures
- Must be connected to the local life and with the rest of the world
- Understanding that children construct their own knowledge
- Influenced by socio-economic context and identity of the learner
- Creation of variety of experiences and implementing multiple methods

use this knowledge in life is wisdom

- Knowledge is something one must acquire with efforts. It leads to eternal happiness, complete satisfaction, positivity and 'santosh'

facts, proofs, variations due to experience and existing conditions
validity lie within
the very
conditions which
generate it.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian thought</th>
<th>Selected Early Childhood Documents</th>
<th>Educators</th>
<th>Early childhood teachers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The assessment of students were oral in which knowledge, ability for exposition and elaboration, ready wit, use of proper and correct language, power of expression, oration, analysis, synthesis and to defend one’s own point of view were tested.</td>
<td>Focus is on stress free, pressure free careful monitoring of children’s progress, through continuous and consistent observation.</td>
<td>Helps review the learning process, determine where it is leading and what changes are required in the process.</td>
<td>Identification of child's growth in various domains and areas which need to be worked upon.</td>
<td>To focus on identifying the gap between the learning and the application of learning in a given situation.</td>
<td>Making a child realize his/her own abilities, what he/she does not know, adults should act as enlighters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments in subjects involving skills and competencies for performance were theoretical as well as practical.</td>
<td>No quantitative assessment or standardized testing is recommended.</td>
<td>Purpose is to measure child's growth and development against a set benchmark.</td>
<td>Compare child's personal growth against himself/herself.</td>
<td>It also helps in re-appropriation of the teaching-learning environment and informs future planning and practice.</td>
<td>Tells us whether child is on par with his peers or needs practice/support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observations of behavior and skills are thought to be the best ways of assessing and keeping a track of the</td>
<td>Gives an opportunity to identify deficits and assets of.</td>
<td>Assessment must not hamper the emotional balance of the child, no matter what the performance, it must be handled sensitively.</td>
<td>Main purpose is to check the process of teaching, justify the outcome of the process and the methods implemented.</td>
<td>Can get to know grasping power, understanding of the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identification of child's growth in various domains and areas which need to be worked upon.</td>
<td>It must be carried</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
progress of the child in the major domains of growth.
• The purpose of assessment is to give useful information about children’s learning and development to the adults providing the programme as also to children and their families.
• It also helps ensure early identification of developmental delays, special educational needs and particular abilities.

child's learning, thereby giving an opportunity to design a need based program for the child.
• Main purpose is to help the child understand what is required for them to improve.

out based on the aptitude and capability of the child as its main purpose is to promote positive growth and development of the child
• Assess the efficiency of a teacher and the method of evaluation
The following section highlights a summary of distinct views and points of departures surrounding the conceptualization of:

- Purpose of early childhood education
- Views on children
- Views on learning
- Thoughts on teachers/teaching
- Conceptions of knowledge
- Views on assessment

It highlights the perspective of Indian thought, national early childhood documents and the views of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers of young children.

**Purpose of Early Childhood Education**

The prime purpose of education according to Indian thought is self realization through inculcation of the sense of discrimination and achieving a state of settled intelligence.

National early childhood documents consider the purpose of education to focus on eliminating certain aspects from culture which are presumed to be undesirable. Education is thought to be a tool to replace the unwanted elements of the society like differences that emerge due to caste, class, socio-economic status and there is a strong effort to reconstructing the culture, so that its members and attain maximum satisfaction of the material, social, cultural needs.
The views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children conceptualize education as stimulating growth by providing children with stimulating environment and to lay the foundation for future adulthood. In terms of the sources of aims of education for young children, early childhood teachers perceived themselves to be the ‘transmitters’ of aims as setup by agencies ‘external’ to the child. Stark distinctions are observed in the perceived links between educational and psychological development of the child, with educators’ reporting that educational development leads to psychological development, whereas parents felt that psychological development was influenced in part by educational development.

Overall, the assumptions’ regarding purpose of early years education gradually shifted from self realization, to attaining social equality and the needs of children seem to be guided by needs of children as inferred by the adults.

Views on Children

Views regarding children according to Indian thought consisted of an integrated approach to understand an individual, who was understood through five hypothetical/categorical constructs; namely body, energy, mind, knowledge and bliss. The emphasis was on the inter-correlations among these five selves and the emphasis on attaining ‘ananda’ (bliss) through valid knowledge. It emphasized the process of development of an individual from the physical-physiological to the spiritual.
The national early childhood documents view children as potential contributing members of society who are products of the society they live in and can help create a better society in the future. There is a lot of emphasis on the kind of education which is given to the child, thus more acknowledgment is given to honing their potentials to act in the future ‘in spite’ of their past histories, their socio-economic situation, community etc. Children are perceived as possessing a bundle of potentialities, which can be molded in manifold directions.

Two distinct positions surround the views regarding children/early years. Educators, early childhood teachers and fathers view children as active agents in their world and possess something of worth. Education was thought to be concerned about processes internal to the child. Children are viewed as integrated organisms and they should be the focus of educational efforts and not the acts or attributes of children. Children should be accepted as the way they are and that children are thought to exist for themselves and not to further ends external to themselves. Children are viewed as unique individuals and within a particular social context.

Mothers and educators report that children are passive agents in their world, are missing something of worth and that education should be concerned about process internal to the children. They view children as atomizable organisms and felt that the acts and/or attributes of children should be the focus of educational efforts and not on children themselves. The purpose of education was to be concerned about making children as they ought to be rather than accepting them as they are. Children are thought to exist not for themselves but to further ends external to themselves. Children
and their education are viewed in relation to standardized norms of the society and in the broader context of academic disciplines.

Overall, the views on children gradually assumed the dimension of contributing members of the society and to further means external to themselves.

**Views on Learning**

According to Indian thought learning was essentially thought to revolve around listening, reflection and concentration skills and was preceded by study of texts, deliberations of what was learnt, discussions with others and application.

The national early childhood documents seem to primarily conceptualize learning as a social act rather than an individual act. In both process and product, in both means and end, it aims mainly at social self-realization (Brameld, 1950). For learning to occur, a stimulating environment is thought to be crucial, direct experiences are also thought to be important. Emphasis is not just on experiences but what meanings are made out of the learning.

Two distinct positions surround the views regarding learning from the perspectives of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children. Learning is viewed from the perspective of the receiver and is considered primarily as a function of natural growth of young children. Learning is thought to be an integrated process, wherein the children learn multiple constructs in a holistic manner. Learning
is thought to lead a change in mind and that the desired result of learning is also a change in mind. The primary actor during learning is the learner itself rather than any other agent and learning can best proceed when that which is to be learnt is in harmony with the stages of the growth of the child and when individual development of the child is facilitated.

Learning is also viewed from the perspective of the transmitter. It is seen primarily as a function of societal transmission, and is considered as an atomistic process. Learning is thought to primarily change the behavior of a person and that the desired result of learning is a change in behavior. The primary actor during learning is the agent as well as the learner and learning can best proceed when children are provided with guidelines as to what behaviors are expected from them.

Views on learning transacted a path from the oral to the written, while the oral finds a mention in national early childhood documents, the practice pertaining to learning assumes a significantly different direction in practice.

**Views on Teachers/Teaching**

According to Indian thought, teaching was considered as a social and moral duty and required the highest intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities. They were expected to possess excellent skills in the art of teaching and communication and base teaching upon the learning potentialities of the students. Observation and study of nature were also considered important strategies for teaching.
The national early childhood documents expect that teachers must be capable of reflecting on themselves and on their society and encourage and guide children’s’ innate curiosity and self exploration tendencies. Teachers must be open to differences amongst children, and respect children and their potentialities. Distinction is made between abstract and concrete learning and teachers are expected to work accordingly. The teacher must also function as the facilitator to children during the process of learning. Interactions are based on adults’ knowledge and expectations of age-appropriate behavior in children balanced by adults’ awareness of individual differences among children’. (Bredekamp, 1987, p.13)

Two distinct positions surround the views regarding teachers/teaching from the perspectives of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children. The intent of teaching was thought to stimulate the growth of the child and be concerned about the holistic development of the child. Teachers’ own attitudes, beliefs and visions regarding teaching and children play a significant role in the life of the child. Role of teacher was that of a facilitator to children’s growth and development. Teachers are considered as preparers and supervisors of the classrooms. Teacher effectiveness could be measured by observing the child’s growth and the ways in which teachers facilitate the growth of the child. Within classrooms teachers must encourage diversity amongst the students and modify and creatively adapt curriculum based on children’s needs and situations.
The intent of teaching was to acculturate children into the vision of education as setup by educators and at the same time be concerned about the holistic development of the child. The role of a teacher is that of a companion, to whom children can look up to and be guided by. They effectiveness of the teachers can be measured by observing whether the teacher is able to effectively transfer to children the vision of education as envisaged by the society. While teachers may accept individual differences in performance of behaviour, the ultimate aim was to stimulate uniformity in terms of values and the kind of human being we want children to be. It was expected that teachers should plan the curriculum and adapt the curriculum based on the social concerns and expectations and that during teaching teachers must encourage children to build cohesiveness with the group and act according to the group dynamics.

Views on teachers ranged from the highest moral obligation to being implementers and supervisors of the classrooms. Early childhood teachers themselves emphasize their role as implementers of the program and responsible for the performance of the child.

**Views on Knowledge**

According to Indian thought, the notion of knowledge was conceptualized as ‘relation’, ‘act’, ‘quality’, and ‘self-substistence’. Cognition, attainment and intellect were often used independently as well as interchangeably to refer to knowledge. The process of knowing involves four factors, that is, subject, object, method and the resulting knowledge. It is believed that novelty is the major feature of knowledge. The
validity of knowledge is regarded natural by some schools of Indian thought, for example Mimamsa and Vedanta, who think that the conditions of validity lie within the very conditions which generate the knowledge.

The national early childhood documents typically view knowledge from the lens of organization of content in different curricular areas. The authority of knowledge emerges from the kind of impact it has in providing individuals with the skills they need to function within society.

Two distinct positions surround the views regarding knowledge from the perspectives of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children. Knowledge is regarded as personal meanings accorded by individuals to things around themselves. Knowledge gives the ability to make own decisions and meanings about the things surrounding themselves. Source of knowledge is individuals’ personal and creative response to his/her experience. Knowledge derives its authority from the meaning it has to the one who possess the knowledge and that learning and growth both lead to increase in knowledge.

Knowledge is thought to be the capability for action. Knowledge gives children the ability to do things. Knowledge arises from reality as it is interpreted by the members of society and derives its authority from the impact it has in perpetuating society by providing individual with the skills that they need to function within society. Apart from the ability to do things, knowledge is something that corresponds to the society’s view about reality and how things should be.
Indian thought is rich in its conceptualization and perspectives on knowledge, especially from the perspective of organization of knowledge in curricular areas. However, national early childhood documents, except for the National Curriculum Framework, details other dimensions in greater detail. Knowledge is essentially perceived as increase in capacity and skills for functioning in daily life.

**Views on Assessment**

According to Indian thought the evaluations of students were generally oral in which knowledge, ability for exposition and elaboration, ready wit, use of proper and correct language, power of expression, oration, analysis, synthesis and to defend one’s own point of view were tested.

The national early childhood documents emphasizes pressure free and careful monitoring of children’s progress is advocated: through continuous and consistent observation. Observations of behaviour and skills of children across time are thought to be the best ways of assessing and keeping a track of the progress of the child in the major domains of growth.

The perspectives of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children consist of the purpose of assessment as diagnosing the abilities of the child and consequently help in the growth of the child. It informs the evaluatee about their
progress, however, assessment and designing assessment is not a part of the curriculum development. Assessment should be informal and stress free, which measured the child’s potential against his/her own capability however, assessments for children should be subjective and not objective. Assessment is considered to be a holistic process and that the child should be the one that should most benefit from it. The focus of assessment is expected to be on individual norms rather than group norms or fixed criterion. Assessment should take place during the period of instruction, rather than after the instruction and there should be no set definitions for a good assessment.

Indian views on assessment were essentially focused on change in the skills and capacities of children, based on their own learning and expressive styles, the national early childhood documents advocate a stress free, activity based assessment, however the same may not be prevalent in practice. Assessment is thought to be useful in enhancing the teaching learning program whereas, it is also considered as a measure of teacher effectiveness.
Map the preferred curricular ideologies of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children.

The following section highlights the preferred curricular ideological positions of educators, early childhood teachers and mothers and fathers of young children. The preference of ideological position was derived as detailed in the method chapter.

The preferences of curricular ideologies amongst the groups are highlighted based on the following domains:

- purpose of early childhood education
- views on children
- perspectives on learning
- concepts of teaching
- conception of knowledge
- beliefs about assessment

Chi square test for homogeneity of populations was carried out to ascertain homogeneity or heterogeneity of preferred curricular ideologies of the four groups of respondents; namely educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers of young children with respect to the following:

- purpose of early childhood education
- views on children
- perspectives on learning
- concepts of teaching
- conception of knowledge
- beliefs about assessment
Chi square test of homogeneity ($\chi^2_{0.05, df=9}$) revealed that the preferences on four curricular ideologies were heterogeneous amongst the group of educators, early childhood teachers and fathers and mothers of young children. The heterogeneity of preferences was observed not only amongst the groups, but was also observed within each group, across the selected tenets of early childhood education curriculum.

As highlighted in the method section, the results were computed at three levels, however, the results are presented in a manner which avoids repetition and presents maximum information for interpretation.

Thus the results of this section are thus presented in the following sequence:

1- Preferred curricular ideologies of all respondents within respective groups, namely; group of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers, according to the specific domains of the inventory:
   - purpose of early childhood education
   - views on children
   - perspectives on learning
   - concepts of teaching
   - conception of knowledge
   - beliefs about assessment

2- Comparative overview of preferred ideological position amongst two groups, namely; educators and teachers and fathers and mothers.

3- Percentage rank frequency tables according to the domains of inquiry and Chi-Square values.
Purpose of early childhood education: Preferred curricular ideologies

**Educators**

Majority of educators, 82% (41 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 8% educators (4 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology, 6% educators (3 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology, while 4% educators (2 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred with regards to views on purpose of early childhood education.

**Early childhood teachers**

Majority of early childhood (EC) teachers 86% (43 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered as most preferred, 10% EC teachers (5 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred and 4% EC teachers (2 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred with regards to views on early childhood education.
Fathers

Majority of fathers 74% (37 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 10% fathers (5 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred, 8% fathers (4 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred and 8% fathers (4 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred with regards to views on early childhood education.

Mothers

Majority of mothers 82% (41 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 8% mothers (4 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred, 6% mothers (3 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred and 4% mothers (2 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred with regards to views on early year’s education.

Figure 9 illustrates a comparative overview of preferred ideological position amongst the group of educators and early childhood teachers, and fathers and mothers.
Figure 9. Comparative overview of preferred ideological position: purpose of early childhood education
Table 10 indicates the preferences on four curricular ideological positions with regards to purpose of early childhood education.

Table 10

*Percentage Rank Frequency Table: Views on Purpose of Early Childhood Education*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement*</th>
<th>Rank (Most preferred)</th>
<th>2 (Preferred)</th>
<th>3 (Somewhat preferred)</th>
<th>4 (Least preferred)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (C)</td>
<td>14 (7%)</td>
<td>69 (34.5)</td>
<td>68 (34%)</td>
<td>49 (24.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (D)</td>
<td>12 (6%)</td>
<td>64 (32%)</td>
<td>74 (37%)</td>
<td>40 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (A)</td>
<td>12 (6%)</td>
<td>52 (26%)</td>
<td>47 (23.5)</td>
<td>91 (45.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (B)</td>
<td>162 (81%)</td>
<td>15 (7.5%)</td>
<td>11 (5.5%)</td>
<td>12 (6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sequence of the statements and corresponding ideologies retained in the order of their appearance on the inventory, where:

A- Scholar Academic Ideology

B- Learner Centered Ideology

C- Social Reconstructionist Ideology

D- Social Efficiency Ideology

H₀- Four groups are homogenous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools

H₁- Four groups are heterogeneous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools
The critical value at 0.05 level of significance with 9 degrees of freedom was:

\[ \chi^2 \text{ Critical} = \chi^2_{0.05, 9} = 16.82 \]

\[ \chi^2 \text{ Obs} = 478.9 \]

Here, \( \chi^2 \text{ Obs} > \chi^2 \text{ Critical} \)

Thus, \( H_0 \) is rejected and we conclude that preference on four ideologies are heterogeneous amongst the group of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers of young children with regards to purpose of early childhood education.
Views on children: preferred curricular ideologies

Educators

Nearly 68% educators (34 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 12% educators (6 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred, 12% educators (6 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred and 8% educators (4 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred with regards to views on children/early years.

Early Childhood Teachers

Nearly 76% EC teachers (38 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 18% EC teachers (9 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred, 4% EC teachers (2 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred and 2% EC teachers (1 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred with regards to views on children/early years.

Fathers

Majority of fathers 72% (36 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 14% fathers (14 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred, 8% fathers (4 of 50 respondents) rated the social
efficiency ideology as most preferred and 6% fathers (3 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred with regards to views on children/early years.

**Mothers**

Majority of mothers 74% (37 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 14% mothers (7 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred, 6% mothers (3 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred and 6% mothers rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred with regards to views on children/early years.

Figure 10 depicts a comparative overview of preferred ideological position amongst the group of educators and early childhood teachers, and fathers and mothers.
Figure 10. Comparative overview of preferred ideological position: views on children
Table 11 indicates the preferences on four curricular ideological positions with regards to views on children.

Table 11

*Percentage Rank Frequency Table: Views on Children/Early Years*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N=200</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>1 (Most preferred)</th>
<th>2 (Preferred)</th>
<th>3 (Somewhat preferred)</th>
<th>4 (Least preferred)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (D)</td>
<td>14 (7%)</td>
<td>42 (21%)</td>
<td>62 (31%)</td>
<td>82 (41%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (A)</td>
<td>29 (14.5%)</td>
<td>105 (52.5%)</td>
<td>44 (22%)</td>
<td>22 (11%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (B)</td>
<td>145 (72.5%)</td>
<td>21 (10.5%)</td>
<td>19 (9.5%)</td>
<td>15 (7.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (C)</td>
<td>12 (6%)</td>
<td>32 (16%)</td>
<td>74 (37%)</td>
<td>82 (41%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sequence of the statements and corresponding ideologies retained in the order of their appearance on the inventory, where:

A- Scholar Academic Ideology
B- Learner Centered Ideology
C- Social Reconstructionist Ideology
D- Social Efficiency Ideology

H₀- Four groups are homogenous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools

H₁- Four groups are heterogeneous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools
The critical value at 0.05 level of significance with 9 degrees of freedom was:

\[ \chi^2_{\text{Critical}} = \chi^2_{0.05, 9} = 16.82 \]

\[ \chi^2_{\text{Obs}} = 443.8 \]

Here, \( \chi^2_{\text{Obs}} > \chi^2_{\text{Critical}} \)

Thus, \( H_0 \) is rejected and we conclude that preference on four ideologies are heterogeneous amongst the group of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers of young children with regards to views on children/early years.
Perspectives on learning: preferred curricular ideologies

Educators

Nearly 56% educators (28 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, while 26% educators (13 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred, 16% educators (8 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred and 2% (1 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred; with regards to views on learning.

Early Childhood Teachers

Nearly 40% EC teachers (20 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 30% EC teachers (15 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred, 24% EC teachers (12 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred and 4% EC teachers (2 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred with regards to views on learning.

Fathers

Nearly 52% fathers (26 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 28% fathers (14 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred, 12% fathers (6 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar
academic ideology as most preferred and 8% fathers (4 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred with regards to views on learning.

Mothers

Nearly 56% mothers (28 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 34% mothers (17 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred, 6% mothers (3 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred and 4% mothers (2 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred with regards to views on learning.

Figure 11 depicts a comparative overview of preferred ideological position amongst the group of educators and early childhood teachers, and fathers and mothers.
Figure 11. Comparative overview of preferred ideological position: perspectives on learning
Table 12 indicates the preferences on four curricular ideological positions with regards to views on learning.

Table 12

*Percentage Rank Frequency Table: Perspectives on Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement*</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>1 (Most preferred)</th>
<th>2 (Preferred)</th>
<th>3 (Somewhat preferred)</th>
<th>4 (Least preferred)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (D)</td>
<td></td>
<td>51 (25.5%)</td>
<td>53 (26.5%)</td>
<td>65 (32.5%)</td>
<td>31 (15.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (A)</td>
<td></td>
<td>36 (18%)</td>
<td>58 (29%)</td>
<td>60 (30%)</td>
<td>46 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (B)</td>
<td></td>
<td>102 (51%)</td>
<td>60 (30%)</td>
<td>28 (14%)</td>
<td>10 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (C)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 (5%)</td>
<td>29 (14.5%)</td>
<td>47 (23.5%)</td>
<td>93 (46.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sequence of the statements and corresponding ideologies retained in the order of their appearance on the inventory, where:

A- Scholar Academic Ideology
B- Learner Centered Ideology
C- Social Reconstructionist Ideology
D- Social Efficiency Ideology

H₀ - Four groups are homogenous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools
H₁ - Four groups are heterogeneous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools
The critical value at 0.05 level of significance with 9 degrees of freedom was:

\[ \chi^2_{\text{Critical}} = \chi^2_{0.05, 9} = 16.82 \]

\[ \chi^2_{\text{Obs}} = 205.1 \]

Here, \( \chi^2_{\text{Obs}} > \chi^2_{\text{Critical}} \)

Thus, \( H_0 \) is rejected and we conclude that preference on four ideologies are heterogeneous amongst the group of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers of young children with regards to views on learning.
Concepts of teaching: preferred curricular ideologies

Educators

Nearly 46% educators (23 of 50 educators) rated the social reconstruction ideology as most preferred, whereas 42% educators (21 of 50 educators) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 8% educators (4 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology and 4% educators (2 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred with regards to views on teachers/teaching.

Early Childhood Teachers

Nearly 42% (21 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 30% EC teachers (15 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred, 22% EC teachers (11 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred and 6% EC teachers (3 of 50 educators) rated the social reconstruction ideology as most preferred with regards to views on teachers/teaching.

Fathers

Majority of fathers 60% (30 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred, 22% fathers (11 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 10% fathers (5 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred and 8% fathers (4 of 50 respondents) rated the
social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred with regards to views on teachers/teaching.

Mothers

Nearly 44% mothers (22 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred, 40% mothers (20 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 14% mothers (7 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred and 2% mothers (1 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred with regards to views on teachers/teaching.

Figure 12 depicts a comparative overview of preferred ideological position amongst the group of educators and early childhood teachers, and fathers and mothers.
Figure 12. Comparative overview of preferred ideological position: concepts of teaching
Table 13 indicates the preferences on four curricular ideological positions with regards to views on teaching.

**Table 13**

*Percentage Rank Frequency Table: Views on Teachers/Teaching *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Statement*</th>
<th>1 (Most preferred)</th>
<th>2 (Preferred)</th>
<th>3 (Somewhat preferred)</th>
<th>4 (Least preferred)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (D)</td>
<td>12 (6%)</td>
<td>33 (16.5%)</td>
<td>68 (34%)</td>
<td>87 (43.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (C)</td>
<td>88 (44%)</td>
<td>55 (27.5%)</td>
<td>40 (20%)</td>
<td>17 (8.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (B)</td>
<td>75 (37.5%)</td>
<td>74 (37%)</td>
<td>30 (15%)</td>
<td>21 (10.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (A)</td>
<td>25 (12.5%)</td>
<td>37 (18.5%)</td>
<td>61 (30.5%)</td>
<td>41 (20.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sequence of the statements and corresponding ideologies retained in the order of their appearance on the inventory, where:

A- Scholar Academic Ideology

B- Learner Centered Ideology

C- Social Reconstructionist Ideology

D- Social Efficiency Ideology

H₀- Four groups are homogenous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools

H₁- Four groups are heterogeneous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools
The critical value at 0.05 level of significance with 9 degrees of freedom was:

\[ \chi^2 \text{ Critical} = \chi^2_{0.05, \ 9} = 16.82 \]

\[ \chi^2 \text{ Obs} = 186.2 \]

Here, \( \chi^2 \text{ Obs} > \chi^2 \text{ Critical} \)

Thus, \( H_0 \) is rejected and we conclude that preference on four ideologies are heterogeneous amongst the group of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers of young children with regards to views on teaching/teachers.
Conception of knowledge: preferred ideological positions

Educators

Nearly 58% educators (29 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, while 36% educators (18 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred, 4% educators (2 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology and 2% educators (1 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred with regards to thoughts on knowledge.

Early Childhood Teachers

Nearly 44% EC teachers (22 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred, 42% EC teachers (21 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 8% EC teachers (4 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred and 6% EC teachers (3 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred with regards to thoughts on knowledge.

Fathers

Nearly 40% fathers (20 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 36% fathers (18 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred, 18% fathers (9 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred and 6% fathers (3 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred with regards to thoughts on knowledge.
Mothers

Nearly 40% mothers (20 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 40% mothers (20 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred, 14% mothers (7 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred and 6% mothers (3 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred with regards to thoughts on knowledge.

Figure 13 depicts a comparative overview of preferred ideological position amongst the group of educators and early childhood teachers, and fathers and mothers.
Table 14 indicates the preferences on four curricular ideological positions with regards to thoughts on knowledge.

Table 14

*Percentage Rank Frequency Table: Conception of Knowledge*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Statement*</th>
<th>1 (Most preferred)</th>
<th>2 (Preferred)</th>
<th>3 (Somewhat preferred)</th>
<th>4 (Least preferred)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (A)</td>
<td>11 (5.5%)</td>
<td>35 (17.5%)</td>
<td>86 (43%)</td>
<td>68 (34%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (B)</td>
<td>90 (45%)</td>
<td>57 (28.5%)</td>
<td>32 (16%)</td>
<td>21 (10.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (D)</td>
<td>78 (39%)</td>
<td>77 (38.5%)</td>
<td>25 (12.5%)</td>
<td>20 (10%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (C)</td>
<td>66 (33%)</td>
<td>31 (15.5%)</td>
<td>57 (28.5%)</td>
<td>89 (44.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sequence of the statements and corresponding ideologies retained in the order of their appearance on the inventory, where:

A- Scholar Academic Ideology
B- Learner Centered Ideology
C- Social Reconstructionist Ideology
D- Social Efficiency Ideology

H₀- Four groups are homogenous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools

H₁- Four groups are heterogeneous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools
The critical value at 0.05 level of significance with 9 degrees of freedom was:

\[ \chi^2_{\text{Critical}} = \chi^2_{0.05, 9} = 16.82 \]

\[ \chi^2_{\text{Obs}} = 202.2 \]

Here, \( \chi^2_{\text{Obs}} > \chi^2_{\text{Critical}} \)

Thus, \( H_0 \) is rejected and we conclude that preference on four ideologies are heterogeneous amongst the group of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers of young children with regards to views on knowledge.
Views on assessment: preferred curricular ideologies

Educators

Majority of educators 76% (38 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 8% educators (4 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred, 8% educators (4 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred and 8% (1 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred with regards to their views on assessment.

Early Childhood Teachers

Majority of EC teachers 84% (42 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 24% EC teachers (12 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred and 12% EC teachers (6 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred with regards to views on assessment.

Fathers

Majority of fathers 80% (40 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 14% fathers (7 of 50 educators) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred and 6% fathers (3 of 50 educators) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred with regards to their views on assessment.
Mothers

Majority of mothers 86% (43 of 50 respondents) rated the learner centered ideology as most preferred, 6% mothers (3 of 50 respondents) rated the social reconstructionist ideology as most preferred, 4% mothers (2 of 50 respondents) rated the social efficiency ideology as most preferred and 4% mothers (2 of 50 respondents) rated the scholar academic ideology as most preferred with regards to their views on assessment.

Figure 14 depicts a comparative overview of preferred ideological position amongst the group of educators and early childhood teachers, and fathers and mothers.
Figure 14. Comparative overview of preferred ideological position: beliefs about assessment
Table 15 indicates the preferences on four curricular ideological positions with regards to views on assessment.

Table 15

*Percentage Rank Frequency Table: Beliefs about Assessment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>1 (Most preferred)</th>
<th>2 (Preferred)</th>
<th>3 (Somewhat preferred)</th>
<th>4 (Least preferred)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (D)</td>
<td>10 (5%)</td>
<td>89 (44.5%)</td>
<td>62 (31%)</td>
<td>39 (19.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (B)</td>
<td>163 (81.5%)</td>
<td>16 (8%)</td>
<td>5 (2.5%)</td>
<td>16 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (C)</td>
<td>12 (6%)</td>
<td>75 (37.5%)</td>
<td>83 (41.5%)</td>
<td>30 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (A)</td>
<td>15 (7.5%)</td>
<td>20 (10%)</td>
<td>50 (25%)</td>
<td>112 (56%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sequence of the statements and corresponding ideologies retained in the order of their appearance on the inventory, where:

A- Scholar Academic Ideology
B- Learner Centered Ideology
C- Social Reconstructionist Ideology
D- Social Efficiency Ideology

H₀- Four groups are homogenous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools
H₁- Four groups are heterogeneous regarding preferred curricular ideology on views of schools
The critical value at 0.05 level of significance with 9 degrees of freedom was:

\[ \chi^2_{\text{Critical}} = \chi^2_{0.05, 9} = 16.82 \]
\[ \chi^2_{\text{Obs}} = 603.3 \]

Here, \( \chi^2_{\text{Obs}} > \chi^2_{\text{Critical}} \)

Thus, \( H_0 \) is rejected and we conclude that preference on four ideologies are heterogeneous amongst the group of educators, early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers of young children with regards to views on assessment.

The most preferred curricular ideologies across the selected tenets of early childhood education curriculum amongst the group of educators, early childhood teachers and father and mothers of young children are summarized in Table 16.
Table 16

*Most Preferred Curricular Ideologies: Comparative Overview*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views on early childhood education</th>
<th>Educators</th>
<th>Early Childhood Teachers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views on teachers/teaching</td>
<td>Social reconstruction</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Social efficiency</td>
<td>Social efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Social efficiency</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views on learning</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scholar academic</td>
<td>Scholar academic</td>
<td>Social reconstructionist</td>
<td>Social reconstructionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoughts on knowledge</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Social reconstructionist</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Social reconstructionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social reconstructionist</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Social reconstructionist</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views on children/early years</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scholar academic</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views on assessment</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following is a summary of the most preferred curricular ideologies of educators, early childhood teachers and fathers and mother of young children, according to the domains of inquiry. Detailed explanation for the same has been mentioned in the previous sections.

**Purpose of early childhood education**

The educators, early childhood teachers and fathers and mother of young children, prefer the learner centered ideology as most preferred in terms of the purpose of early childhood education.

**Views on teachers/teaching**

Educators prefer the social reconstruction ideology and learner centered ideology, whereas early childhood teachers, fathers and mothers of young children prefer the learner centered and social efficiency ideology with regards to their views on teachers/teaching.

**Views on learning**

Educators and early childhood teachers prefer the learner centered and scholar academic ideologies, while fathers and mothers prefer the learner centered and social reconstructionist ideologies with regards to their views on learning.
Thoughts on knowledge

Educators, early childhood teachers and fathers and mother of young children prefer the social reconstructionist and learner centered ideologies with regards to their views on knowledge.

Views on children/early years

Educators, early childhood teachers and mothers prefer the learner centered ideologies whereas fathers prefer the learner centered and scholar academic ideologies with regards to their views on children/early years.

Views on assessment

The educators, early childhood teachers and fathers and mother of young children, prefer the learner centered ideology as most preferred in terms of the purpose of early childhood education.

Overall the most preferred ideologies are the learner centered, followed by social reconstructionism, social efficiency and scholar academic. The preference of the curricular ideologies resonates with their views and assumptions pertaining to the domains of inquiry.
Draw implications for conceptualization of an indigenous early childhood education curriculum framework

The following section highlights the implications of the study results on conceptualization of an indigenous early childhood education curriculum framework. The implications were derived on the basis of conceptual overview of Indian thought on selected aspects of curriculum, analysis of select national documents of early childhood care and education and the views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children.

- Ancient Indian thought on education reflects a process inclusive of a variety of contexts and meanings. Education was conceptualized as the process of acquisition of knowledge by applying one’s own mind. The development of the intellectual power alone was not the aim of education. Along with it a most desirable quality needed was the inculcation of the sense of discrimination or viveka (satyaasatyat vicechana). Intelligence itself was not considered enough for promoting viveka or the power for discrimination. Tapas of the mind was emphasized in order to achieve a state of settled intelligence (sthitipragya), considered of prime importance towards the goal of self realization.

- Teaching was considered as a social and moral duty (brahma karma swabhavajam). Guru was the general term used for teachers. He was expected to remove the darkness of ignorance from the student’s mind and empower him to realize the ultimate truth. Self-realization was thought to be impossible without
the guidance of the guru. For becoming a teacher the highest intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities were required. They were expected to be self-realized and individuals with settled intelligence. They were expected to be well verse in the art of teaching (adhyapanam), be a good communicator (vakta) and a commentator (vishleshaka). Clarity of thought and speech, proficiency in discussion, debate, giving examples, art of explanation, elaboration and illustration were the other qualities

- The teacher was expected to know the art of reading child’s mind and providing a suitable learning opportunity to alf-pragya (below normal), pragya (of normal mental power) and mahapragya (gifted) children. Thus, teaching was expected to be based upon the learning potentialities of the students. Question method, lecture method, discussions and debates were common teaching techniques. Children with higher mental power were essentially encouraged towards self-learning, whereas for students of lower ability, story method was common. Explanation of subtle ideas proceeded through elaboration and illustration, with the guru giving examples and making comparisons’. Observation and study of mature were also considered important strategies for teaching.

- Learning in ancient India was conceptualized as a process inclusive of three steps. The first step was called shravanam (listening to the guru and remembering what was taught by him). This was followed by mananam (reflection, deliberation and argumentation) by the pupil himself. Then came the stage of nididhyasana (meditation and concentration on the theme of shravanam and mananam) for
understanding the essence or hidden meaning behind a concept. In addition, *adhyayanen* (study of texts), *mananen* (reflections and deliberations on the essence of what has been learnt), *pravachaaen* (discussing with other pupils) and *prayogena* (application) were considered as the basics of learning.

The notion of knowledge has been approached by Indian thinkers in diverse ways. It has been conceptualized as ‘relation’, ‘act’, ‘quality’, and ‘self-substence’. The terms are interlinked and do not refer to inter-linked categories. *Jnana* (cognition), *upalabhdi* (attainment) and *buddhi* (intellect) are often used independently as well as interchangeably to refer to knowledge. As an activity, knowing is characterized as a process of consciousness. A valid cognition is one which is free from doubt (*samsaya*), indefiniteness (*anadyavasaya*) and error (*bhrama*), and which therefore reveals things as they are (*yathartha*), furnishes the basis of successful activities (*samvadi-pravrttyanukula*) and is not contradicted (*abadhita*) by any other experience. The process of knowing involves four factors, that is, subject (*pramata*), object (*prameya*), method (*pramana*) and the resulting knowledge (*prama*). It is believed that novelty is the major feature of knowledge. The validity of knowledge is regarded natural by some schools of Indian thought, for example Mimamsa and Vedanta, who think that the conditions of validity lie within the very conditions which generate the knowledge. Thus knowledge is known from the knowledge itself (*svatah-pramana*).
- It has been told that one-fourth of learning is achieved from the guru, one-fourth from other students’, one-fourth by one’s own experience and one-fourth by putting it into practice. Thus, in the process of teaching and learning, the pupils played a major role and guru acted only as friend, philosopher and guide.

- The evaluations of students were oral in which knowledge, ability for exposition and elaboration, ready wit, use of proper and correct language, power of expression, oration, analysis, synthesis and to defend one’s own point of view were tested. Evaluations in subjects involving skills and competencies for performance were theoretical as well as practical.

- Ancient Indian thought on selected components of curriculum consists of ideas which might be useful in thinking about and educational practices with young children. Although some of the concepts may not be directly implemented, they can be extremely useful if appropriated selectively.

- Educators and early childhood teachers can be made aware of Indian ideas surrounding curriculum and can be empowered to choose the ways in which they may use this knowledge in practice with children.

- Conceptualization of early childhood education curriculum framework must recognize the presence of curricular disagreements and competing images as they exist in the views of national early childhood documents and the views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children.
- Key dispositions and assumptions of primary stakeholders regarding the broad aspects of curriculum must be recognized for the role they play in practice with young children.

- Curricular decisions regarding children seem to be characterized by ideological struggles amongst the current educational discourse and amongst the views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children. Increased awareness of the direction these struggles assume, would lead to better decision making and place the curriculum in resonance with societal values, beliefs and practices.

- It seems likely that a unified conception of early childhood education curriculum may not exist, however; efforts should be made to build a strong and effective partnership by implementing wide varieties of strategies which can serve as a ‘bridge’ between the thoughts and expectations of national documents and the views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children.

- Policy documents pertaining to early childhood documents must portray cognizance to the numerous ways in which the preferred ideological positions have impact on the ways issues related to early childhood education curriculum are interpreted and engaged in by those who plan and implement the curriculum (educators and early childhood teachers) and those who are secondary receivers (parents of young children).
- Notions regarding the selected components of early childhood education curriculum seem to be ‘preserved’ in distinct images. These images seem to reflect differing assumptions and positions of national early childhood documents and views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children. Consequently, it influences thinking about and practice with young children.

- Curricular decisions for children must be ‘located’ within the distinct images that surround the notion of purpose of education, views on children, thoughts on teaching, conceptions of knowledge, views on learning and beliefs about assessment.

- A curriculum framework may acknowledge cultural diversity as it exists, by acknowledging the presence of multiple childhoods, families in different circumstances and cultures. However, it must also aim to gain a deeper understanding and attempt to address the issues that may emerge out of conflicts and power relations that exist within diverse circumstances and the various ways in which they influence thoughts related to education of young children.

- A curricular framework for early childhood education must take note of the dualities that children face on a day-to-day basis and the ways in which it influences the development of the child. Thus, the nature and scope of interventions for young children must acknowledge its political as well as cultural impact on children as well as educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children.
- Developmentally appropriate practices are envisaged, however, there seems to be a lack of clarity in what ways they may translate in practice.

- A broad variety of meanings surrounds the notion of developmental appropriateness and seems to be ensconced within the broader purview of social reconstructionism.

- Scientific prudence regarding child development finds its way into the way child is described; however, the notion of developmental appropriateness does not seem to be considered separate from the overall vision of creating an equal and just society through equality in provision and access to early childhood education.

- Visions of children from a developmental context that emphasizes their living fully in each stage through which they pass are coupled with the need to prime children into the society they live in. They are viewed primarily as members of social groups, not as individuals. The realization of their potential is in social interaction with others. Thus developmental appropriateness has its own meaning in the Indian context.

- Views on teaching/teachers reflect distinct thoughts. Teachers of young children are expected to negotiate a broad continuum of values ranging from being good role models to possessing ‘ideal’ qualities to work with young children. The value attribution is in terms of ‘expectations’ and the ideals the teachers must achieve. However, thoughts of parents reflect a distinct shift from ‘expectation’ to ‘assessment’ when they attribute the child’s performance to the capability of the
teacher/ teaching style. The teacher is viewed as someone who would primarily ‘transact’ the curriculum, ensuring that each child ‘performs well’.

- The results of the research suggest that these ideas can be useful and selectively appropriated in creating an early childhood curriculum from an indigenous perspective.
Observations

The following are few observations which emerged after analyzing the results of the study and merits mention:

- **Teachers as implementers**

  Literature in early childhood education often highlights the notions surrounding pre-school teachers as being ‘child minders’ and supervisors of the classrooms. Results of the present study revealed similar patterns in the views of national early childhood documents and views of educators and parents of young children. However, the study results point to the seemingly prevalent notions amongst early childhood teachers as being ‘implementers’ of the early childhood education programs.

- **Gender of the pre school teacher**

  The results of the study highlight a bias towards the ‘female’ pre-school teacher as being the ‘ideal’.

- **The Young child**

  The analysis of the data and the emerging results underline the ‘young child’ who seems conspicuous by its absence. Though the research focused on early childhood education curriculum, visions pertaining to the ‘child’ seem cloaked under the visions of those around her.
Limitations of the Study

The research study tried to understand various nuances surrounding the conceptualization of early childhood education curriculum and tried to ascertain whether a curriculum framework from an indigenous perspective can be evolved. The following are some of the limitations of the present study:

- The research study respects and acknowledges developmental perspectives and its positive child outcomes, however, it aimed at exploring the possibility of evolving a perspective that has roots in Indian Epistemology and identifying the spaces in the views of national early childhood documents and views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children, where these perspectives might find a ‘goodness-of-fit’. The results of the study must be thus, interpreted from this perspective.

- Many views surround the notion of ‘Indian Thought’, the study does not aim at specifying a particular school of thought as being ‘Indian’. However, it humbly acknowledges the deep history and the rich diversity which characterizes Indian Epistemological perspectives.

- A variety of meanings surround the notion of ‘indigenous’. Thus, the results of the study must be taken in view of the meaning of the term which guided the study.
- The study was carried out in two cities of Gujarat, namely; Baroda and Bhavnagar, both urban towns, with a purposively selected sample. The results of the study may have assumed a different format and direction if the study was carried out in rural or tribal areas.

- The study pin-points at diversities in the views of Indian thought, national early childhood documents and views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children. However, the study acknowledges the origin and evolution of varied perspectives. Indian thought was influenced and evolved over a period of time, national documents advocate a particular view as it functions from a larger canvas, and views of educators, early childhood teachers and parents of young children have their own color.