Chapter-2
Review of the Literature
2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews a corpus of literature relevant to the study and builds a case for the study. It reviews the literature around the children museum and the educational activities of children museum. The review of literature provides an analysis of socio-cultural theory. The children museum is a place with an intense social, educational and entertaining role which, through its educational programs, facilitates social interaction among children and aims at their emotional social and cognitive development. The main aim of children museum is creating an atmosphere for children where they can learn as well as enjoy. The post-modern children museum is a major reason for the rapid growth in children museums.

2.2 Review of Literature

There is not much work done on the topic, “A Study on the History, Development and Role of Children’s Museum in India with a focus on National Children Museum, New Delhi.” The selected literature for review is collected through the secondary sources as journal, books, articles, theses, dissertations etc. Recent literature focuses on children’s museum. Children’s museum plays an important role in promoting the development of a child in play way methods. Many people have worked on related topics which are discussed below:

William (1942) has stated that the many facets of the eternal truth of nature; the examples of everyday wonders, the signs of an unchanging permanence above and beyond the power of human are to be seen, of course, in our other museum. But they are behind glass, labeled with words that duty all but the initiated. Here in the children’s museum such things are held in the hand. They are examined intimately; they are known and familiar and understood; they become a part of experience. And if there is any truth in the proverb that travel is broadening, then it cannot be denied that young Americans will find enlightenment in seeing the counterparts of their own familiar article of dress and daily usage won and used by the children of other lands. The children museum is dedicated to the belief that the potentialities of a child can not be guessed, must not be limited, and should be encouraged to full development.

Agarwal (1950) has concluded that an educational museum should be conceived as supplementing to a large extent, the educational activities of the school giving decisions and scope to extra curricular activities of a useful character,
developing an interest amongst the students in their environments, drawing the attention of their material. He reveals that the whole idea of a school educational museum is dynamic, linked with fruitful creative activity and living material interest of the students and their teachers. He explained the scope, and objects of school educational museums. The organization of each group, dynamically conceived efficiently function, should be voluntary. There should not be too much formality and restrictions or even water tight division of school work. The material should be properly selected and planned in the school museum. He also suggested that the local school should organize for each district, a district museum committee, which could co-ordinate their activities, make joint plans, exchange notes and information and even specimens and organize special programs of cultural melas on suitable occasions. He stated that the regional deputy director of education should be requested to give their cooperation and guidance for this aspect of the school’s activity. This program should be connected to the main educational functions for the sake of its proper development, scientific purpose and finally, he suggested that the school text books also should be planned as to reflect greater interest in local life and in the life of district and the province which they are intended to serve.

Sardesai (1957) has explained the function of a modern museum which has been described in the following words by late Shri B.G. Kher, “The modern museum is a veritable domicile of learning and a college of education. It is a teaching institution and is entitled to be recognized and organized as a university which brought its various branches in functioning for advancement of education. According to Lord Reay, “A museum is perhaps the only place in India where work of a pioneering nature in the field of education is being carried out and thought”. A Museum Education section, an attempt is being made to bring the museum service within the reach of going pupils. In his article, he explained a short history of the museum and he mentioned the activities carried out in the educational institution by the museum educational section and other facilities offered to them by museum like lecture in school by museum, loan of showcases on various subjects, loan of film belonging to the museum, lectures in the museum’s lecture hall etc. These all are offered for members of the institution. Along with, there are for non-member institutions – weekly lecture series, guided tour to the museum sections, 16mm film shows in the museum lecture hall, admission to special exhibitions, etc. All the
programs are carried out accordingly with the acceptance of changes, if any suggestion is made by the institution during the month, it is accepted by the museum and if their programs were being conducted then they made a relation to school with the museum. After that, they started something new in the museum, alike guided tour for museum and educational exhibitions. There is scope for further development in these activities.

Agarwal (1970) in his work has examined the year from 1945-46. His period of experimentation in the field of education everywhere shows that museums have been effective in bringing about many new changes. Statistics show that there are not too many children’s museums in India. Although it is known that museums not only educate our children and the public, but they also create a kind of research aptitude in them. Few children’s museums at the national level have started mobile museum service for the children studying in rural areas. It is time that more museums cater to such needs of children by opening galleries in existing museum. Such ideas should be planned for their benefit. He suggested that the children’s museum should be, technically speaking, of a composite nature having various subjects displayed, suitably in a common hall or different rooms. The construction of a children’s museum should be suggested through a chart and the organization of different sections like historical, physical, library and professional should be explained. He also suggested that even the organization of a children museum should be done by the children under the guidance of an expert.

Trivedi (1971) has revealed that museums have obtained a place of great importance in the modern world due to the fact that they are becoming more and more conscious of their responsibility towards various categories of visitors who came to them for recreation and education. A modern museum is meant for the purpose of recreation and education. A modern museum has to offer something really instructive to every class and category of visitor according to the level of their understanding and interest; it has its first obligation towards the student community and towards teachers from schools and colleges as they are more an organized group. It is observed that the museum, gallery must serve as a veritable place of education and direct experience. He suggested that the galleries should accurately and precisely be documented so that the students and teachers may use them as illustrations of the knowledge of the particular branch which they represent. He also explained about the museum’s visit
and museum classes and suggested how it should be planned according to children’s interest and benefit. He also highlighted the problems of the museum.

Alam (1972) has stated that a child “learns the ways of society and makes these ways parts of his own personality.” The process of changing the infant and gradually into making him a responsible member of the society. It is thus what is generally meant by socialization that examines the needs of the children of our country and tries to find out how far they are fulfilled by the existing children’s museum. The urban children in comparison to rural children are more fortunate as they are provided with the opportunities of seeing films, listening to radio programs, visiting the zoo, aquarium and museums etc. They also get comparatively better family assistance and have an advance community environment. The unfortunate rural child is still deprived of all these facilities. He also discussed the condition of children museum, which suffers due to the lack of funds. This hampers their development is the fact that they are regarded and treated as ordinary museums.

Shivaramamurthi (1973) has stated that the museum is a great forum for molding the intellect and right insight into things in a child. If a nation is to be great, the bedrock of this foundation should necessarily be the highest character. Character is values that come as a habit, if sufficiently early in life; the child knows the right path to tread. It is said that in India the character of the people was molded by the illiterate young and older by the narration of selected portions of the epic. Fables narrated, have had a permanent impression on the minds of young and old that listened to them. The responsibilities of training children in ethical value was so immensely felt that from the earliest years of childhood, the parents and grandparents would narrate stories to the inquisitive little ones and get them interested apparently in the stories. The museums have abundant materials for conveying this lesson to the juveniles as they come. It is indeed a great thing to impress a young child that can be easily molded that living in a riverine area one should consider oneself a child on the lap of the sand dunes of the mother river, that nourishes them all abundant water.

Graudy (1976) has described the children’s workshop in 1976, concurrently with the Georges Pompidou Centre; the children’s workshop was opened in Paris. An area specially designed and equipped for school children and young visitors was freely available, with a team of forty people and program of activities in artistic expression to prepare them to derive greater benefit from the various departments in
the centre. The children’s workshop had more than 80,000 visitors for the series of five to six sessions and has been working regularly with a network of fifty provisional museums. Since the creation of the center, particularly attention has been given to visiting children, primary school teacher and activity leaders.

The workshop’s aim is to teach children how to look, listen and feel, to educate their senses – rather than focusing on development of their reason and memory, which is the role of the school – to put them in contact with young artists, painters, sculptors and musicians, and to set up a dialogue that will enable young people to open their eyes to contemporary creative work and to familiarize them with the artist and his research. Within the children’s workshop, six activity workshops are run simultaneously in two galleries which give directly onto the square through glass panels. Each of these workshops are devoted to a mode of expression: drawing, color, volume, audio visual, bodily action and music.

Daniele Graudy (1976) described the children’s workshop in 1976, concurrently with the Georges Pompidou Centre; the children’s workshop was opened in Paris. An area specially designed and equipped for school children and young visitors was freely available, with a team of forty people and program of activities in artistic expression to prepare them to derive greater benefit from the various departments in the center.

Mutal (1979) has described his personal experience of his visit to a children museum and described the museum as an institution of life long education that plays a new role in this historical process, to meet this requirement, a museum has been specially designed for children and also has been described by the activities related to children and its outputs for the development and education of the children.

Ranga (1980) highlighted the needs of children in the museum. “International year of the child” lays serious attention at the museum and museum expert has been focused towards their requirements in the early stage. The museum is the only housing of the antiquity of historical importance. The idea of children museum comes from the school curriculum. At many museums occasional lectures are given and organized and successful efforts have been made to bring together schools and the museums.

Gartzak (1981) has described in the third article that adults lack interest in the world of children’s experience as they are really inclined and they are curious. He
said that museums are exclusive places where the cultural heritages are collected, conserved and exhibited. He also described the history of museum, the Tropen Museum in particular, about its birth and all activities of this museum.

Bajpai (1984) has revealed that children’s museum actually caters to high school children. She believed due to attractive and colorful exhibits and broad programs, which give much first hand information, teenagers and adults, find more interest in children museum. The main aim of children museum is to educate the children through recreation in an atmosphere which should be very different from the conventional classroom.

Shah (1985) indicates the different types of activities in the children museum. He told children museum activity in India has grown after independence. In a democratic set up, children museum can contribute much to foster creative instincts and awareness about the environment in which they live and have to grow up. The children being at the center of museum activities can give them training for organization and responsibility and loyalty needed for citizenship.

The pioneering efforts of Late Shri Pratab Raj Mehta have blossomed into series of junior museums in our country. He was awarded “Padma Shree” award for initiating the children museum concept in the country.

Kothari (1985) described a children museum is a place where greater consideration is given to a child’s way of looking at object and using of the same. There is no easy solution for creating suitable children’s exhibits. The project differs from designer large varieties of projects; most of the professional museologists agree that participatory element in exhibit is a strong point of interaction between a viewer and museum. This is more so in case of children museum. He told science has great inherent possibilities for participatory approach. Art as such has also great potential for participatory presenting. He also suggested that children’s museum exhibits should go for well design display, which can be handled easily and should not employ expensive methodologies. To bring about this element into a museum, the museum designer will have to keep an open mind and will have to use highly creative thinking.

Ranga said, since 1961, the National Children Museum also known as Bal Bhavan offers out of school, activities to children. This museum presides children with audio visual experience to compliment school education and to establish a centre
for the promotion of curative, constructive critical activity on the part of children museum and teacher.

Bagchi and Trimurthy (1986) have observed the child learning with hands on experience on real objects. The researcher Jean Piaget said that young children learn from multi sensory interaction with concrete objects rather than from abstraction. For a child, interaction is the most powerful mode of learning. They reminded of a Chinese proverb “I read, I forgot, I see, I remember, I do, I understand.” This proverb though universal is probably truer in the case of children. Cognition of a child is develops through continuous learning through interactive experiences. They also told about Piageton principles.

Feber (1987) also mentioned about other museums for education, in The Hague, Holland was created in 1904, in Europe and it is considered to be the first European museum particularly aimed at a child audience. The purpose of this museum was to be a museum for the benefit of schooling a school museum, providing opportunities for children to have direct experience of museum objects. The exhibition of this like other museums aims particularly at a child audience has displays designed at child eye level. Other characteristics are the use of working models, replicas, photos, charts, audio/visual presentations.

Nair has explained as an old Chinese proverb “I hear, I forget, I see, I remember, I do, I understand” underlines the way concept of a new approach to educational programs and activities for children in the museum. Exhibits in a museum no doubt, provide and find of information useful to children. But they often tend to become more exhibits devoid, if the kind of experience is necessary to enhance the quality and efficiency of communication child at a level that a child can perceive. A child’s ability to perceive is dependent upon how they co-relate an object or a situation with his personal experience and response to it. An understanding of the child’s learning process is therefore, fundamental in evolving effective program for children in the museum.

Ranga (1988) has stated that the creative work has always been a living curiosity in man since time immemorial man has crossed designing of exhibitions. The term exhibition has a wider scope of greater change in social set up, tremendous transformation in the present system. Museums have conspicuously shown a tilt towards supplementing school education in order to make it more meaningful,
integrated and substantially. He also explained the need of museum exhibition, scope and purpose. And also suggested some important factors for syllabus oriented exhibitions which make the successful exhibition. He concluded that thematic and educational exhibitions have often been the first means of imparting educational input with greater simplified method, but it is a pity that this broader aspect has not been fully utilized by the schools. The reason can be attributed to the lack of understanding, interaction, indifferent attitude of school authority and above all the tight school program that generally stand in the way between the museum and school.

Razdan (1988) has revealed that there is given more concentration to the child for their education rather than earlier years. Some museums have supplementary activities like quiz, games, and nature trails of treasure hunts. A number of non conventional media, which have great potential for educational communication can be explored and used to radically enhance the meaning of the basic message of museum exhibitions media like dance, drama, music, puppetry, mimicry, storytelling, indoor outdoors games, experimentation etc. The primary educational tool message can be enhanced several folds by a multi medium may fail to move one child while it may have an appreciable effect on another. She also suggested that there should be an integrated approach to planning an exhibition. An exhibition should be planned having a basic story or a message.

Cave (1989) has focused on socio-cultural data family demographic and profile of young visitors and also focused group and individual interview questions, concentrated on the expectation and needs of potential visitors to the new child. The finding showed that the visitor profile was similar to that of most North American museums with some exceptions. The qualitative work identified the following factors as crucial for the future success of the children museum. This research project was timed so that on the planning of the client centered museum and they have had a profound influence on the future direction of the new children’s museum. He concluded his work incorporated into the environmental assessment of the strategic plan for the children’s museum as a part of the scan of the future of the operating environment for the museum. He also explained the relevance of the goals of the children’s museum.

Agarwal described that education may be becoming more synthetic but with the result children may not be prepared to meet the challenges of life, though skeleton
guidance on the national discipline is available to some institutions in India, besides many opportunities often to them through a large number of co-curricular activities to enable them to get enough food for increasing their knowledge. In the present circumstances and environment of the world as a whole, children museums have played a very important role in the education and told that children museums are not too many in India. It does not only play an important role of children’s education, but also create a kind of research aptitude in them.

Cave (1989) has explained that a project which designed the concept of the new children’s museum. The visitor survey portion of the work focused on socio-cultural data, family demographics and profiles of young visitors. It was carried out over a two-week period in June and July, 1988, at the building which the Canadian Museum of Civilization shared up until September, 1988, with the National Museum of Natural Sciences. All visitors to the building were included in the study population. Focus group and individual interview questions concentrated on the expectations and needs of potential visitors to the new children’s museum, as well as on their reaction to it. Respondents were screened for French and English language representation, multicultural origins and a balance of children’s ages. A total of twelve focus groups were conducted. These included: children aged nine to fourteen; parents of preschoolers and primary school children; preschool and primary school teachers. Individual interviews were done with children aged six to eight years of age. The findings showed that the visitor profile was similar to that of most North American museums, with some exceptions. As in earlier studies at this location, the largest visitor age category was twenty to forty-four years. However, it was a surprise to discover that the second largest age group of visitors was under six years old. Teenagers and seniors were virtually absent. Most visitors were local people who came with their pre-teen children. The predominant languages were English and French, but many respondents also spoke to other languages in the home. A large proportion of the audience was born outside of North America.

Rupp (1996) has explained the exhibit designing for the children museum and its output. She described when developing meaning, making exhibit for children are the especially important to design through emotional connections. She described that exhibit design for children museum is an exited task in which as designers we are being asked to create meaningful, unique engaging exhibit experience and also able to
investigate what stories programs and philosophies should be utilized to support and inform the exhibit and contribute to the development of the topic and themes that the exhibit covers. Children museum generally brings to the table strong educational philosophies about their role in a community life and describe how and why kids visit the museum. She threw light on the closer reflection that there are hidden challenges and also explained the opportunities and information across to a diverse group of visitors providing safe and enriched spaces that are interesting to kids and adults creating places for learning through various kinds of play creating kids oriented environment where visitors find meaning that have been provided.

Albert (1997) reported that play interpreted as ‘work without purposes’ and for the same people it is only a waste of time. He revealed that play is an important part of every child, which makes him/her an active person and developing a critical mind, the sense of creativity can be nourished. He explained a kind of architecture where play can be effectively brought about and through which recreational and educational development of childhood can be accomplished. He concluded that children’s museum is a priceless tool helped children to be better prepared and equipped for their future. He also explained the nature of play and the environment and also threw light on the play theories.

Din (1998) reveals that the changes in educational theories. Some questions are clarify in their article like what are the initiative for children museum, rapid growth in children museum after 1960s etc. He explained the history of children museum from 1899-1997. He focused on the development of children’s museum, mission, and statement impact from learning theories and practice, challenges of children museums. He explained something about children museum like innovation and derivation of some selected museums like Brooklyn Children’s Museum, Boston, Detroit, Indianapolis with nation-wise development.

Wyszomirski (1999) highlighted the effect of the government performance and result Act on museum and discussed about how these requirements of strategies, goal, planning, performance, measurement and outcomes evaluation are becoming requirements of all funders as they seek answer to the value of their allocation.

Pitcitielli and Anderson (1999) have thrown light on young children learning in museum setting. This study is based on first hand experience of young children and their growth and development. He revealed that a number of articles experience. He
observed that students enjoy visits to museums which increased interest and enjoyment, the outcomes find out through post visit activities. He observed in Australia, there have been noticed fluctuations in the number of young visitors over the past years also declines in school visitors. He suggested that there is a need for investigation of children experience. This will be helpful in the development of museum exhibitions and programs which have educational and experience impact for young visitors.

Piscitelli and his colleagues (2001) have conducted a one day workshop in Australia Conference topic related to providing strategies and information for including young children (0-8 years old) in gallery and museum. This conference was very successful for the children museum of Australia by the conference children become the most important part of the museum. Given a list detailing 10 ways to approach an exhibit with young children (Piscitelli and Anderson, 2001).

Lyn Fasoli (2002) has explained the preschool children as they prepared for, participated in and followed up a series of excursions to the National Gallery of Australia. The study explored and analyzed the children museum interest in to the practices of the gallery. He shows that relations of power are always a part of learning and it can be seen through an analysis of the resources available to children. He explained the children’s learning in early childhood like social, unpredictable, transformative rather than individually constructed stable (Fasoli Lyn 2002, pp.ii). He threw light on young children in museum or in an art gallery. Children participated in art gallery has changed. Museum and galleries are being considered as educational place for children from the beginning of a school classroom, preschool and child care centers. In the Australian context, an exception can be found in general resource for teachers and child care workers written by Piscitelli (1991), a leading Australian educator interested in children learning in museums. The learning of museum or art gallery is different from the class rooms. Piscitelli has conducted a number of research studies that aims to document children’s learning in museum and art gallery. She threw light on case studies that focus explicitly on children’s experience in museum and art gallery.

Crain (2003) focused in his recent book ‘Reclaiming childhood,’ in this book he described what do we want the child know and be able to do and what capacities in
the child spontaneously motivated to develop at his/her current stage. Instead of thinking about our goals it should be considered the children interest and need.

Mayfield (2005) has stated that the children museum is a place to involve in activities. He observed 30 Children’s Museum in Europe, North America, and Middle East. He also explained a number of issues of children’s museum like finding, sponsorship, attendance, exhibit design and technology. He analyzed that children’s museum is a play space. He pinpointed that motivating accessible parent approved play space in children museum are the youngest and fastest growing segment of the museum field as a whole (Association of children’s museum 2002, section success and growth). The children museum becoming increasingly global (Atkin, 2002).

The cognitive psychologist Jean Piaget (Schunk, 2004) introduced the concept of constructivism, according to which the child activity constructs knowledge through continues assimilation and accommodation of new information. Particularly, the child has an active role in learning, which is considered as a natural process. The cognitive structures that the child had already formed, adjust to new knowledge, as he firstly learns to create the appropriate cognitive structures.

Ringel (2005) has been focused on designing interactive exhibition for families and thinking about family dynamic in museum get us to exhibit design heaven. He describes the basic concept and articulated a few goals, conduct research and come up with the basic content of exhibits. He also described what we think about the best medium to convey that content always looking for ways to vary the medium so people would not fall asleep or feel like they are reading a book on the wall.

Tata (2011) has explained various activities of children museum. He told about a meeting where there was a discussion on what women should do to commemorate the international years of child and also describe now a days museum organized a variety of things for children including running crèches. In a paper written for a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) study mentioned the size of the country Botswana measures 570,000 sq. km. and has a predominately rural population of over 750,000. The country is semi arid and 85% of it is covered with Kalahari sand. There are problems of poor communication, poverty and illiteracy. Many of the school are poorly staffed and badly equipped.

Crowley & Jacob (2011) reveals that long before young children encounter science, history or social studies in grade school, they have developed a wealth of
information through informal encounters with the topics. They explore how parents mediate children’s experience to help weave multiple moments of learning in to broader knowledge about academic disciples and foster the development of “islands of expertise.”

Katya and Hilary (2012) have examines trends in the understanding of children as visitors to art and natural history museums. It begins by examining research into the qualities of engagement by museum visitors generally. It then addresses the specific challenges posed by children as visitors, and the responses developed by museums to enhance their engagement. Three strategies are identified: social/family-centered interactivity, immersive experiences and engagement through interpretive dialogue. The three examples of programs of children’s engagement examined in this paper represent a major departure from such models towards a profoundly social form of interaction. The paper argues that these strategies are museums’ responses to shifts in pedagogical theory, and have been developed to increase the engagement of the child-visitor with exhibitions. Such strategies represent a genuine engagement between adults (both museum staff and parents) and children, and an opportunity for children to define the experience of cultural engagement. The consequence of this is a redefinition of the cultural role of museums in relation to children. Children make up a substantial proportion of the audiences/visitors for most of the major cultural activities and art forms. In 2006, approximately 70 per cent of Australian children attended a public library, art gallery, museum or performing arts event (Cultural Ministers Council, 2006). Many of these activities are funded directly through federal, state and local government departments or through grants from arts funding agencies on the basis of their service to children as audiences.

Munley (2012) stated that the results of research conducted in museum context using learning resources and materials designed by the museum that focuses on learning by young children. She examined that there has been an obvious increase in the number and types of programs offered by the museums for pre school children. Brooklyn children museum was the first museum for the children by the inspiration of this museum founded the Boston children museum after that there were Indianapolis and then according to the Association of Children Museum (ACM), by 1975 there were approximately 38 children’s museum in the United States. She reveals the
appeal of hands-on experience to learning for young children ignited a movement to create children’s museum. She opened very briefly that traditional museum as places for young children. Traditional museums are suitable setting for formal learning as well as informal learning. Children museum a suitable place that make young childhood development.

Luke and Washington (2013), organized two days symposium Crain (2003) focused in his recent book ‘ Reclaiming Childhood,’ in this book he described what do we want the child know and be able to do and what capacities in the child spontaneously motivated to develop at his/her current stage. Instead of thinking about our goals it should be considered the children interest and need related to children’s museum. All museum practitioners identified the most imperative support needed by the field to the different learning impacts of children’s museums. The review of data was necessarily limited by the scope of the project and as such is not planned to be in full depth but rather is intended to provide a snapshot of the current research landscape of the field. This landscape review address three complementary questions, reviewing three different data sets that speak to the learning value of children’s museum.


ACM 2012 organized a conference on market place-exhibit hall which featured Nano mini exhibition at Portland on 10 May, 2012.


In 2015, ACM another conference organized on bringing the world to children and family hosted by the Children’s Museum of Indianapolis.

In October 2016 Asian Pacific Children Museum Conference (APCMC) will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA. The APCMC 2016 will provide education and children museum professionals with an opportunity to exchange ideas and best practices and learn each other by attending valuable sessions related to topic of peace.
education for children. The theme of the APCMC is “Peace with the heart of Aloha.” The aim of children's museum work to prepare our youngest citizens to become leaders in a global society, this conference will be a sharing of program, ideas and inspiring messages on how we prepare future in peaceful World.

2.3 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature relevant to this study of children museum and its development. The review of the literature concerning educational activity of the children museum. The review of the literature surrounding the role of most children museums highlights on manipulative environments that support learning for young children.
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