Chapter-6
Children's Museums in India
6.1 Introduction

Moss (1999) and Piscitelli (2002) mentioned that the more museum’s role is connected to free time experience and to group aims such as social/cultural addition and convenience imperatives the more young children are seen in their own right and in connection with other settings as part of their life experience.

Keeping all these things in mind museum educators realize that children need a greater care by which they can stimulate their ideas in learning process and in play way methods they learn more and more so a number of programs and activities started in the museum for the children.

The children’s museum plays a vital role in the learning experiences of children of all ages, but especially for toddlers studies have shown that learning begins at a newly early age, both parents and curators of children museum are listening to these studies (Caplan, 2004).

The concept of children’s museum in India is traced out through the United States (US). After the Independence of the Country first Prime Minister pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru took special interest in the welfare of children and took various initiatives in this direction. One of them was the initiative of the concept of Balbhanwan established at New Delhi. Which later was the incentive other in different parts of the Country to establish museum and other centre for the children.

6.2 Shri Girdhar Bhai Sangrahalya Museum, Amrelli (Gujarat)

This Museum was established in the year 1955 inaugurated by the Morarji Desai, Prime Minister of Gujarat. The target audience of which was children.

![Image of Shri Girdhar Bhai Sangrahalya Museum, Amrelli](image-url)
This Museum has the richest collection of objects from many fields of interest which are displayed in systematically arranged and labeled. The Museum is divided into nineteen (19) galleries-

6.2.1 Antiquity Section Gallery

In this gallery the sculptures are displayed which was excavated in the 1990 excavation from Amrelli. The Main attraction of this gallery is a large Buddha Sculpture displayed in the center of the gallery.

Fig. 6.2 Displayed Excavated Materials

6.2.2 Statue Gallery

In the Statue Gallery there are many replicas of different periods displayed.

Fig. 6.3 Excavated Sculptures Displayed
6.2.3 Art Section Gallery

In Art Gallery a number of the art work of India are shown. The arts of India have always been famous for their richness, aesthetics and vibrancy. They are even famous beyond Indian subcontinent.

6.2.4 Coins Gallery

This Gallery has a rich collection of the Coins of the different periods.

Fig. 6.4 Coins Collection

6.2.5 Natural History Gallery

This Gallery shows the reptiles, birds, lions and leopards in their original forms by the Taxidermy and created the scene of forest in dioramas.

Fig. 6.5 Natural History Gallery
6.2.6 Pictorial Gallery of Ramayana and Mahabharata

This gallery shows the Ramayana and Mahabharatha stories through paintings.

6.2.7 Toofan Rafai Art Gallery

In this gallery many paintings of Mahabharatha are exhibited by the famous Gujarati artist on different themes.

6.2.8 Dr. Jivajiraj Mehta freedom fighter Gallery

This gallery shows the scenes of Dr. Jivaraj Mehta getting full freedom through various photos.
This Museum is a remarkable source of knowledge and has a small library for the children along with a number of activities like paintings, Kathi work, handicrafts; music show organized by the Museum. A large statue of Buddha displayed in the museum.

6.2.9 Mahatmayan Gallery

The Mahatmayan Gallery is dedicated to the Mahatma Gandhi. In this gallery various Kand shows related to the Mahama Gadhi like Ayodhya Kand and Africa kand etc.

6.2.10 Kathi House Gallery

In this Gallery famous Kathi work displayed, the importance of this gallery is who’s visitors like the kathi work and want to learn, there are available experts of the kathi work they guide the visitor about how to done it.

Fig. 6.8 Displayed Kathi works
Fig. 6.9 Children Learning Kathi Work

6.2.11 Astronomy Gallery

This is the children’s Famous gallery.

Fig. 6.10 Children busy in pictures
Fig. 6.11 Showing Telescope

6.3 National Children’s Museum, New Delhi

National Children’s museum, New Delhi is an integral part of the National Bal Bhawan established in 1956 by the great efforts of pt. J L Nehru. It offers to children more fun and recreation through the various educational programs. The Galleries and detail of the activities are given in the next Chapter seven.

6.4 Motilal Nehru children’s Museum, Lucknow

Motilal Nehru Children Museum Lucknow is a multi purpose museum for the children between the age group of 4-14 years. This was established by the Motilal Memorial Society under the guidance of late Chandra Bhaanu Gupta. Prime Minister of India Pt. jawaharLal Nehru opened this museum to the public in 1957.

It is a place with optical material and numerous activities programs according to the need and interest of the young ones to underwrite to their overall development not only mental but also intellectual growth of the child. It is the very vast prospect for youngsters between the given age to develop their skills by involving them in various creative activities like making dioramas, paintings, workshops,human figurine and much more.
The purpose of the museum is to educate the children through recreation and proving a surrounding which is a lot different from the school room, where a child should come on their own free will and have the facilities and one expose to the sphere elsewhere the text book. It is the great mode of learning by the medium of informal education. Museum is a good medium to take the children away from their writing book through their galleries and programs.
Approximately 50,000 children visit the museum different galleries. There are six galleries in this museum. Adult visitors also come to see and enjoy the museum at their leisure time. Educational and recreational films shows are organized by the museum for the children.

6.4.1 Gallery I – Sare Jahan Se Achcha Hindustaan Hamara:

It is a very informative gallery showing the diversity of India through dioramas depicting culture of different states of India i.e. Karnataka, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Odissa, Punjab, Maharashtra etc.

![Fig. 6.15 Basement Gallery shows Diorama](image)

Every diorama showing the different culture of the different country by the medium of their region and areas. The culture and the characteristics social pattern of each state has been depicted in interesting ways, each diorama is a complete unit by itself.

6.4.2 Gallery II - The Videshi Sanskriti kaksh:

This gallery shows the culture of different countries by the medium of objects and photos. The Exhibit on Egypt shows a mummy. Because it is a Videshi Sanskriti kaksh so showing the videshi culture the other countries shown are France, USA, Spain, UK, Italy, Japan.
6.4.3 Gallery III - Buddha ke Sath Kuch Chann:

The main aim of this gallery is to show, how closely India is connected with its neighboring countries through Gautam Buddha.

This preaching art and culture and how budha was spread beyond India. In this gallery the jataka tales are depicted which is the main attraction. The Dharam chakra Mudra is also depicted in showcases.
6.4.4 Gallery IV - The Geological Gallery

This gallery introduces the children to the basic of geology along with geography all the models in this gallery are electrically operated and are interactive dioramas. The exhibits of volcanic eruption, stalactite, coal mine are the main attraction of this gallery.

6.4.5 Gallery V - Toy and Dolls Gallery

This gallery is dedicated to the creativity of the children. The creative works of children are displayed in this gallery. Children make dolls and toys using paper, Foam, Clothes, Cotton and Waste Material under the guidance of experts.
6.4.6 Gallery VI - The man on the moon:
This permanent exhibition gallery is the most popular gallery of the museum where children come to see the real moon landing. The models are electrically operated.

Fig. 6.20 Man on the Moon Gallery

Another attraction of this museum model train. By the medium of the train showing some famous station of the Lucknow as Charbagh, Gomtinagar and much more.

6.4.7 Gallery VII - Health Section:
In this gallery depicts different methods to live fit and fine.
6.4.8 Gallery VIII Life Under the Sea

This gallery under the sea defines the three layer of water in the sea.

Along with these galleries museums also have different types of departments which organize activities and provide help to children to develop their own skills and talents and give them an opportunity to creative craft work.

Museum has departments of music, drama and dance. The museum is helping the children to develop an appreciation and competence in the crafts, arts, music and with other leisure time activities. Museum also has a good children library and a film library.
6.5 Shankar’s International Dolls Museum, New Delhi

The Shankar’s International Dolls Museum is the collection of the dolls from all over the world in their traditional costumes. It is housed in the building of children book trust on Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi. The museum it divided in two halves. There are 160 glass showcases. One section displays dolls from European countries like UK, USA, New Zealand, and the second section have showcases of the dolls from Asian and African Countries.

![Shankar's International Dolls Museum](image)

**Fig. 6.24 Shankar’s International Dolls Museum**

In Shankar’s International Dolls Museum 150 dolls made at the dolls workshops are attached to the museum.

![Gathering information from Museum Staff](image)

**Fig. 6.25 Gathering information from Museum Staff**
The museum collection of Costume Dolls was encouraged by a gift of a single doll presented to Mr. Shankar Pillai from the Hungarian Ambassador in the early fifties. After getting this gift Shankar began to collect dolls from India’s others countries. Soon he had a collection of about 500 dolls which he decided to exhibit at various places in India. At an exhibition held in Delhi which was visited by Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru and his daughter Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Shankar voiced his concern for the dolls. Mrs. Gandhi promptly suggested: Why not a permanent museum for the dolls? This encouraged Shankar Pillai to start building in the museum of dolls in Delhi.

The museum was inaugurated in 1965 by the President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, who correctly named it as Nehru House.

Fig. 6.26 France Costume Dolls
Fig. 6.27 Bulgaria Costume Dolls

Fig. 6.28 Russian Costume Dolls
The museum was started with thousand dolls. Between 1965 and 1987 another five thousands were added mostly as gifts. Today the Shankar’s love of costume dolls became a large collection of dolls coming from the all over the World. There are 6,500 dolls from dolls displayed in the museum representing eighty five countries. In
Shankar’s there are a work room or conservation lab where workers makes the beautiful dolls different themes like Rajasthani Bridal and Punjabi etc. along with conservation of the dolls also done by the workers.

Fig. 6.31 Making Dolls at Museum by modeler

Fig. 6.32 Worker Painting the Dolls
6.6 Nehru children’s Museum, Kolkata

Nehru Children’s museum a dream project of National Cultural Association was inaugurated on 14th November 1972 by the then chief minister of West Bengal Sri Siddharth Sankar Roy. Since its inception it has come a longway implementing a number of Successful Projects and activities.

It was the dream of Jugal Srimal to do something for the children. He dreamt that the children of today have touched peak of success in their young beginning age and become an asset to the mankind. His feeling at last shaped in 1945, National Cultural Association. He had led a team of young enterprising youth who blow out the outlets of the Associations into multifaceted projects of which the first was Nehru Children's Museum that was inaugurated on the birthday of Pandit Nehru in 1972. Sri Srimal had in his mind to teach the children through the humorous events like the Dolls and Toys, Epics of Mahabharata and Ramayanain Nehru Children's Museum Yearly Sit and Draw Art Competition and other advertising activities for the underprivileged children. The Jawahar Lal Nehru. Sri Srimal had in his mind to teach the projects he has launched for the children. His activities have been broadly esteemed by the important personalities from Abroad and India. So on success, Nehru Children's Museum has succeeded; it was owned to the great vision, mission and zeal of Late Jugal Srimal, the founder director of the Organization.

The Nehru Children’s Museum, Kolkata is based on the book of pandit Jawaharlal Nehru’s ‘Glimpses of World’s History’. Nehru always believed that children are future of our country and stressed the need to shape their future by
providing the best education. Taking inspiration from his ideology museum is imparting education through informal means of museum showcases. The museum also has toys/dolls gallery.

The museum was opened to the public in 1972. The exhibits in the museum spread over four floors covering the epic stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata.

6.6.1 Ramayana and Mahabharatha Gallery

Museum has the miniature models of the Mahabharatha and Ramayana, created by reputed clay model artists from the district of Krishna Nagar of West Bengal. This is a major attraction of the especially for children. Museum also has large no. of activities where children are talented in the brook if fine arts like painting, drama, dance, and crafts. These activities help a child recreate himself and also give an opportunity to pursue their interest in these fields.

![Fig. 6.34-6.35 Gallery views](image)

In the next gallery is dolls gallery. Dolls from 92 countries of the world and different states of India are displayed in an attractive manner with captions.

![Fig. 6.36 Dolls of Different countries](image)
Chapter 6

Children's Museums in India

Fig. 6.37 Displayed Donated Dolls

6.6.2 Dolls Gallery

The second floor has another dolls gallery in front of this there is a Gallery named Mahabharata in miniature models which is made by the clay and other using material. The gallery is started with Diorama number one with the general Introduction of India the land of Folk Lore and end with diorama no 61 with the Story of Yudhistra went to heaven and enjoyed eternal peace and happiness.

Fig. 6.38 Monju Dam Dolls Gallery

6.6.3 Monju Dam Dolls Gallery

The third floor has a Monju Dham Dolls gallery which have from 37 Countries. It also have the Ganesh idols presented by Durha Basu and Pradeep Chandra Basu. It has different models of Lord Ganesha. It has also mini diorama. The
name of that gallery is Ramayana in Miniature models. That gallery have 1-61 dioramas of miniature model which shows the epic of Ramayana started with the childless king of Ayodhya Dashratha performed a sacred rituals to win the son and end with the land accepting of all kings and queens in the ruins of Ayodhaya.

![Ganesh Idols section](image1)

**Fig. 6.39** Ganesh Idols section

![Ganesh Idols](image2)

**Fig. 6.40** Ganesh Idols

### 6.7 Government Children Museum, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

The museum Children’s Museum, Chennai is a place of curiosity for children, which takes them from the land of books to the land of exhibits it inspires a child to
investigate new prospects. It directs children into constructive and valuable amusements. It molds them into sound citizens of the future.

Fig. 6.41 Entrance view of Children Museum, Chennai

The children museum started in 1986. It is collaborative project with National Council of Science Museum and National Science Museum (NSM). The children museum is the multipurpose museum.

Fig. 6.42 Outside Museum View
The Children’s Museum, Chennai consists of Basement, Ground floor and First floor. The architecture of the Children’s Museum follows to that of a model museum building. The display arrangement in the Children’s Museum discloses to the children the sphere in which they live, stimulates knowledgeable curiosity and opens the door to the world of wonder.

A fountain operated by solar power and water pumping unit, the life size Tyrannosaurus and Stegosaurus fiber glass models are the supplementary charms of the Children's Museum. Visitor facilities for physically able visitors are available. It is a place where education is reformation and recreation.

6.7.1 Civilization Gallery
The civilization gallery shows the prehistoric man’s culture and different types of civilization gallery.
Prehistoric Man

This gallery shows the tools and weapons made of stone which prehistoric man used and the living style by gathering food or shooting. This period is named the Stone Age. It is divided into three parts: the Paleolithic, the Mesolithic and the Neolithic. It shows the Old Stone Age lasted up to about 10,000 BC During this time nearly tools and weapons from hard stones like quartzite. During the Mesolithic Age when the earth became enclosed with swamps and plantations he became a fisher and a hunter of birds and collected fruits and grains. During the New Stone Age he settled down and organized agriculture and
Fig. 6.46 Prehistoric Man
Cattle rearing. The first villages bounded up and by the middle of the period the first great cities appeared.

Sumerian Civilization

Sumerian was one of the great kingdoms of the past. It grew up between 4000 and 3000 BC in the land enclosed by the rivers Euphrates and Tigris. It was also called Mesopotamia. This land is now in the Southern part of modern Iraq. 'Ur' was known for its high temple called Ziggurat. They wrote on clay tablets and baked them for strengthening them.

Fig. 6.47 Sumerian Civilization

The Egyptian Civilization

This civilization shows more than 5000 years ago the ancient Egyptians ruled and developed a grand civilization.

The kings of Egypt were called ‘Pharaohs”. Isia and Osiris were the two important gods of the Ancient Egypt.
It shows when a pharaoh died; his soul went back to heaven. So they worked out ways of preserving the bodies of the Pharaohs after death and reserved them in tombs called ‘pyramids’. The largest and the most famous of the pyramids is the Great Pyramid built for Pharaoh Khufu in about 2500 BC. The possessions of the Pharaohs were submerged with them in the graves. These contained of an enormous variety of things like jewellery, objects of metal, clothing, pottery, furniture etc., which gives us a picture of their culture.

**Indus Valley Civilization**

This shows the first Civilization of India grew up in the fertile Indus valley from around 5000 BC. Excavations in the valley have exposed two large cities, Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro.

The people of the Indus Valley used bronze in great quantity. A dancing female figurine of bronze statue from Mohenjo-Daro is a masterpiece of art.
Their seals, made of steatite, expose a great variety of records of animals or gods and also encompass writing, whose decipherment has not formed general agreement among scholars.

6.7.2 Science Gallery

The Science gallery of the children museum Chennai shows the past animals of the earth millions of years ago are depicted in mini dioramas which showing the
different vegetation during this period. Animals of the Past shows in the gallery are Dimentrodeon or soil reptile, Bronttosaurus or lizard.

This also shows the past birds between 200-70 millions years ago birds and animals. Sivatherium mammals, Moerithrium it was the small size and fed on aquatic vegetation.

![Science Gallery](image)

Fig. 6.52 Science Gallery

![Showing past mammals](image)

Fig. 6.53 Showing past mammals
6.7.3 Technology Gallery

Technology showing the different techniques for making the paper showing the paper industries, paper making process. The main attraction points of this gallery the Printing machine manufacturing from London. It is the gifts machine and small model of this machine present in the gallery. Spite of this there are some model which shows the industrialization of India by the pressing of button you can feel the methods. Some example of this machine is Wheels System.

![Fig. 6.54 Showing past Mammals](image)

![Fig. 6.55 Showing Paper making process](image)
Mass Rapid Transport System (MRTS) miniature working model existing by Southern Railway, Chennai on loan basis to demonstrate the transportation system operating between Chennai Beach Station and Tirumayilai Station.

6.7.4 Transportation Gallery
The Transportation gallery shows the different types of engine, Steam engine, Pumping system and diesel etc. In this gallery shows the Transport through Water, Montgolfier Balloon, The Steamers and Model of S.S. Irwin- Ship, Hydro and Thermal Power Station Models, This mini dioramas display arrangement illustrates the overall working principles of hydroelectric command and thermal electric power generation and distribution, Petrol and Diesel Engine Models.
Fig. 6.57 S.S. Irvin Ship Model

Fig. 6.58 Hydrothermal power station, solar power, atomic power station.
6.7.5 Costume Dolls Gallery

In this gallery, lots of costume dolls present in different region, i.e. Maharastra, Bihar, Karnataka, Kuchipudi, Manipuri etc.
Fig. 6.61 Showing costume dolls through ages

Fig. 6.62 Showing European Countries Dolls
6.7.6 The last one is Kids corner
This corner having some arrangement for children. This is the main attraction point of Children Museum. This is having some arrangement for child's glass, Ceramic, Plaster of Paris, mini model of wood and metal. And also display some child work crafts.
Jigsaw Puzzle:
The next side is showing different country’s tickets and stamps

Fig. 6.65 Jigsaw Puzzles

6.8 Chacha Nehru Children Museum, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

Chacha Nehru Children Museum situated in the Capital of Kerala Thiruvananthapuram stay behind the major attraction for the children of all ages. The main purpose of this children's museum to aware the children of different culture of states and union territories of India and some other countries. It is also called as a doll house. It was established in the year of 1976. It is present in the residential area of Kerala state.

Fig. 6.66 Children’s museum, Kerala

The foundation stone of the museum was laid by Shri R. Keshwan Nair, honorable secretary of Kerala state council of child welfare society on 14.07.1973.
This building is opened by Shri Achutha Menon chief minister of Kerala on 06.07.1976.

Fig. 6.67 Entrance of the Museum

Fig. 6.68 Gathering information from The Curator of Children Museum

Visiting the museum makes everyone recall their childhood. Children of all ages as well as the elder really enjoy their visit. The display objects include Stamps masks and dolls. There are around 2000 dolls in Nehru Children's Museum. A small aquarium on the first floor of the museum and collection of Malayalam literature are the major attraction of this museum. It also has the small science park and small
discovery room combined with activity room. A small planetarium is also a part of this museum complex.

![Fig. 6.69 Entrance of the Gallery](image)

### 6.8.1 Dolls Section

The first Section has small dolls which represent cultures of different states of India, which is explained by an Audio commentary. This gallery also has a section on Hindu Deities the Goddess Durga, Ganesha, Shiva, Vishnu. It is known as the religion centered.

![Fig. 6.70 Dolls Section](image)
Fig. 6.71 Shows different type dolls

Fig. 6.72 Showing different Hindu’s Goddess Fig.

6.8.2 Old Stamp Section

The second gallery is the old Stamps Gallery has a large collection of the stamps of different region of India and the world donated by Kerala Government. The major attraction of gallery one Stamps of 1957, Air Force stamp, Landing stamps,
Freedom Fighter stamps, 398 stamps of Bombay University. It has very rich collections of stamps with proper display and easy to understand.

Fig. 6.73 Old Stamp Section

6.8.3 Traditional Costume Section

The third gallery is the traditional costumes gallery having rich collections of dolls of different states in their traditional costume.

6.8.4 Clay Model Section

The fourth gallery has clay Model. Models made by Children and Professional modeler. There is also some origami made by children also present here.

The fifth gallery has model of white clay ceramic. The model of Spiderman, Superman. The heroes of Comics. This gallery also has some famous puppets of India.
The science section of the museum contains different scientific models. The museum also has a library full of literature and comics related to the children. The museum has a combined auditorium of the nearest school. The auditorium has different activities performed by children like dance, drama, etc. It also has a skill development center. The visit of the children is 2500-3000 per day.

Fig. 6.75 Scientific Model
The Museum has very interesting swing, there are presented a swing for those women who do not want to raise their child they put their baby in the swing after putting the swing alarmed and the presented staff take the child in his custody after that the Kerala Child welfare raise the child by providing the many activities and make him/her self dependant. This swing called amatottal. This Swing situated outside the Museum building and open 24 hours.

6.9 Summary

In the preceding chapter gave an insight into the history, development of the various visited children museums in India visited by the researcher and also gave the details of presented museum’s galleries.
References


