Chapter-9
Conclusions & Recommendations
National Children Museum (NCM) provides opportunities to children by being an important place in analyzing the needs and demands of the children and helping them grow both mentally and physically. The various activities organized by the NCM have become an empowering tool for the development of children. The visitors of the museum are the most important part of the museum. Through the establishment of high quality, sustainable educating programs within museums, there is an increase in the information for interactive learning opportunities and enduring outcome for children. These have led to more effective partnership among the museums, and between museums, school and families.

It seems that the NCM’s environment manages to create an atmosphere of openness and freedom that is a pre-requisite for spontaneous play to happen. The preliminary findings of the research also suggests for the museum environment in relation to play – that is museums should not be afraid in compromising their learning objective, if play is used as an interpretive strategy. Children enjoy playing, but it should also be acknowledged that they learn; they learn while having fun, discovering and sharing with friends and family.

Most of the Children museums are located in urban areas. A new children museum merged with other institutions and changed their identity to science oriented museum and Shankar’s International Dolls Museum.

**Conclusions based on analysis of the visitor of NCM, New Delhi**

According to the analyzed data collected (Table 8.1), it is apparent that most visitors of the National Children Museum are from school groups. The NCM has a strong relationship with the schools.

It is observed from table 8.3 that most of the children using the NCM, are of the age group between 14-16 years. Some were in the age group 11-13 years and least were in the age group of 8-10 years.

The collected data shows that most of the visitors at the NCM came to know about the museum through other sources as shown in Table 8.5. They got the knowledge about the museum majorly through their friends, than through school, and minimum through advertisements and more visitors through other sources. 142 visitors in the age group 11-13 years came to know about the museum through their friends, mostly from their school or some other sources, and minimum through
advertisements. 173 visitors in the age group 14-16 years got the knowledge through their friends, highest through schools, minimum through advertisements.

Presentation is the most important aspect of any exhibition. It is a tool of communication and a means of creating a delightful children museum environment that would attract children of all ages. Presentation is otherwise called as display. Display in general is a graphic in three dimensions. It is also a language symbol. Graphics which will include posters, maps and charts, must merge with the overall framework of the exhibition to highlight the coherent story of exhibitions. The methods and techniques of the children museum exhibition techniques in the light of the changing concepts, mainly due to the entry of scientific collection of the gallery and with the emphasis on the educational role of the Children Museum.

The data in (Table 8.7) show that amongst all the NCM galleries which galleries children liked the most and shown their interest. The exhibition galleries are the most important component of the museum for the visitors. The data show that the highest percentage of visitors liked the Surya Gallery followed by the Gaurav Gatha, Hamara Bharat and very few visitors liked the Temporary Art Exhibition Gallery. Visitors mostly like the Surya Gallery because it has a number of interactive science related exhibits. Galleries help the children in acquiring visual literacy and other skills.

Results revealed that the NCM’s visitors have knowledge about the educational program organized at the NCM. The data shows that visitors in the age group 14-16 years, a large percentage of them know about the educational programs organized in the museum. It is shown in (Table 8.8) that visitors in the age group 14-16 years have more knowledge about the educational programs in comparison to visitors belonging to the lower age group.

It is remarkable that previously acquired knowledge about museum educational program can be proved as an essential factor for museum staff and visitors both, in relation to the accomplishment of designing educational activities in the National Children’s Museum. It is indicated that there is a relation between education and the visitors from the NCM in designing and carrying out educational activities in the museum. The children museum’s role in connection to educational activities is the creation of alternative ways of learning and use of different techniques in learning environments with interdisciplinary dimensions.
It is interesting to see that the visitors have an interest in activity participation. It is concluded that a large percentage of visitors participated in the museum activity. The highest percentage of visitors participating in the NCM’s activities belonged to 14-16 years of age. According to the results from (Table 8.10), the first time visitors who did not participate in the activities wished to participate in the activities further organized.

It is shown in the table 8.12 that children mostly learn something new from the museum activity, there are a number of educational activities provided (mentioned in Chapter 7) by the National Children’s Museum.

It is an interesting point that the visitors of the National Children’s Museum, enjoyed and learned from the activities they participated in (Table 8.14). Children in the age group 14-16 years enjoyed and learned a lot more than other children, from the educational activities. Another interesting point regarding the relationship between the enjoyable and educational, the responses of the NCM visitors, mostly agreed with their visit being more enjoyable than educative. Few supported both educative as well as enjoyable. It is concluded that a museum tries to play an important role in providing activities which are both enjoyable and educative.

The data also show that a large number of visitors want to come again in the NCM (Table 8.16). It is important to note that most children’s museums are established in the urban areas so a large number of children from rural areas miss the opportunity to visit a museum as it is not easy to visit museum far off. So a large number of children suggested (Table 8.17) that children’s museum should also be built in smaller cities and towns.

It is concluded that a museum visit helps in understanding school related learning. A large percentage of children have positive attitudes towards the museum’s educational programs. According to their age level, most children agree that museums help them in school related learning. Most children suggested that the museum should explain their school lessons (Table 8.18). So, it can be concluded that the NCM provides learning experience through play way methods.

It is interesting to note that children had an overall positive perception about the museum’s educational program. Also, the visitors had an overall positive perception about the impact on children of their educational activities which provides them more entertainment and more knowledge.
In addition, a large number of visitors want museums to provide learning experiences (Table 8.19) which should increase their knowledge and provide entertainment too.

As it may be concluded by the visitors’ responses (Table 8.20) that they have a positive attitude towards the NCM museum and believe that it is a suitable place for educational trips.

The data show that a number of visitors have been to the museum more than once as depicted. This is because they enjoyed more and more in the museum (Table 8.21) and wanted to come again to NCM.

**Conclusions based on the various visited Children Museums in India**

In Table 8.38.3 question number 2 shows that the staff of the children’s museum does not have a background in Museology. However, the curator and gallery guides at the National Children’s Museum (New Delhi) belonged to Museology background.

In Table 8.38.4 question number 4 shows the experience level through the working period of the staff. The NCM (New Delhi), *Shri Girdhar Bhai Sangrahalya*, Amreli (Gujarat), Children Museum (Kolkata) and the Children Museum (Chennai) have staff with an experience above 15 years, whereas Nehru Children Museum (Lucknow) and Children Museum (Kerala) have staff with an experience of 6-10 years.

In Table 8.38.5 question number 5 shows the presence of museum curator in museums. Only the NCM, New Delhi has a museum curator. Museums in Thiruvananthapuram Kerala and other cities do not have a curator. The work of the curator in the museum is to deal with other staff members.

In Table 8.38.6 shows that museum activities are organized mostly during the summer vacations. Only *Shri Girdhari Bhai Sangrahalya* and National Children Museum, New Delhi carries activities throughout the year.

In Table 8.38.7 shows that museums organized special events on Children’s Day, Environment Day and Museum Day. National Children Museum, New Delhi organized events on these days and *Shri Girdhar Bhai Sangrahalya*, Lucknow organized events on environment day and Children Museum, Kerala celebrated the Children’s day.
In Table 8.38.8 shows that special programs are organized for physically disabled children at the National Children Museum, New Delhi and the Nehru Children Museum, Lucknow.

In the same table 8.38.10 shows that children visit museum mostly with their families. The data show that the visitors at the NCM, New Delhi and Lucknow are accompanied with their friends or come individually.

The table 8.38.11 shows that Children Museums provide temporary exhibitions based on different themes.

According to table 8.38.12 shows that Children Museums provide Physical activities, creative activities, science activities and performing art activities. Most Children Museums provided creative activities.

It shows that the NCM, New Delhi provides a number of facilities including an auditorium, film shows, park, aquarium, library, computer lab and canteen for the children. Lucknow Children’s Museum and SGBS, Amrelli (Gujrata) have an auditorium for the children. Park facility is provided only at Thiruvananthapuram Museum. Almost all children's museums have a library facility for the children. The Nehru Children Museum, Lucknow and Chennai have computer lab which is not provided in any other museums.

The research data shows that the NCM, New Delhi, organized programs for all age groups of children, from 5 to 16 years. However, the Children Museum, Thiruvananthapuram and Kolkata organize an exhibition for children in the age group of 8-10 years. Nehru Children Museum, Lucknow organizes events for 10-14 years of children.

According to the survey, it can be seen that only the NCM, New Delhi, organizes outreach activities (visits to other museums and historical places) for the children.
Recommendations

If we compare the origin and development of Children Museums around the world with their origin in India, we find that while Children Museums in the Western world are the by-products of the already well-established museum movement in various countries, which started activities and facilities for their young visitors, within the museums - like school partnership programs, teacher training activities. Thus, establishing the role of museums in supplementing formal education at schools. The museums experimented with creating, discovery rooms, activity rooms and various hands-on activities. These child centric activities resulted in the beginning of museums, especially for children.

The Children Museum concept in India is recent. It is a post-Independence phenomenon, which has not grown out of the museum movement in India, because the processes of museum development in India is not only unplanned but also sporadic and non-professional.

The Children Museum’s Movement in India is a concept offshoot of the concept of National Bal Bhawan (NBB) mooted by the first Prime Minister, Jawahar Lal Nehru and his colleagues soon after the Independence.

The National Bal Bhawan concept is more an activity based center rather than collection and exhibition based center.

The initial focus of the National Bal Bhawan and of all the Children Museum was on the national integration in the newly independent country, creating scientific temper amongst children and interpreting the diverse national culture of India.

One of the special features of the development of Children Museum in India is the concept of depicting the cultures of various states of India and many countries of the world, through the costumed dolls which was the contribution of Mr. Shankar Pillai, a close associate of Pandit Nehru.

Toy train is the star alteration of the National Bal Bhawan established in 1950’s and 1960. They were established with the initial interest in Children Museums in many states, but now it seems that after 1960’s and 1970’ they have been neglected and therefore they are not in good shape.

There is no central coordination today to guide and help in the development of Children Museums. The National Museum or State Museum does not have any link or relation to the existing Children Museum. They have not been able to project
themselves as active centers for supplementing school education. They should be a part of the education department, or Ministries rather than the child welfare departments.

They are not part and parcel of a school education policy of the central government or state governments. The NCM, which is a part of the National Bal Bhawan, though having a very appropriate building and campus, has not yet established itself as an independent institution, there is overlapping of activities and objectives in these two sister organizations, National Children Museum and National Bal Bhawan.

Manpower is also important to ensure that all functionaries are provided with the basic facilities for their activities and others. Before the year 2012, there were four daily wagers (manpower) enrolled; but according to the government rule these posts were removed permanently. Now, sometimes work depends on the gallery guides like opening and closing of the galleries. Sometimes, it is tough for the gallery guides to manage the work. The concept and model of the National Bal Bhawan should be reviewed and upgraded.

The relationship between National Bal Bhavan and National Children’s Museum should be reviewed and revised.

Few centers like the International Shankar Doll Museum and The National Science Center provides impressive activities for children and organizes exhibitions to a great extent, but they are devoid of the status of the National Children’s Museum that decreases their efficiency level. It is suggested that they should be given the privilege of becoming a national children’s museum as they are promoting a lot to this respective field.

The component of discovery learning should be enhanced and made more comprehensive in the Children Museum.

More modern, multimedia, audio visual techniques of communication should be used in the exhibitions at the Children Museum in India. More participatory exhibits should be introduced in the display galleries of the NCM. Interpretive texts or labels should be given rapid attention to be made more attractive and informative.

More trained Museologists should be involved in the proper development of Children Museum in the country.
More research should be carried out in the field of non-formal learning, especially through the children’s museums in the educational field and museology departments of India.

The people visiting in children museums should be from some association, to put forward their case and highlight their role in non-formal education and for the development of the child.

The education departments of Indian Universities should include a unit on Children Museums in the syllabi for their training courses, especially for pre-school, primary and middle schools.

Museum world has been witnessing a major transformation in recent times in concept, approach, presentation, management and communication with the audiences. Attractive architecture and gallery displays, visitor friendly digital communication tools, engagement and experience hot spots in the museum are replacing the traditional approach and practice. Networking and collaboration, outreach, web presence, use of social media and marketing are increasingly being practiced and are being considered as important functions of children museum. Perhaps this transformation is necessitated by demand for more relevance and contemporary requirement from children museum. Moreover, children museums are facing challenges from other attractions and visitor friendly leisure time activities. The success of Children Museum is no more dependent only on the internal curatorial expertise, but on networking, collaboration and audience engagement and experience using varieties of contemporary communication tools and practices.

This change is influenced by the visitor centric planning, new financial model of self sustainability and tremendous possibilities that digital technology should be offered. Museums have seen changes in approach from ‘eyes-on’ to ‘hands-on’ to ‘minds-on’ and now ‘emotions/hearts-on’. However, Children Museum objects and programs have now taken the center stage of children museum practice.

The success of Children Museums also depends on inclusiveness reaching out to all segments of the society, networking and collaboration with other institutions, school, organizations and agencies, marketing and public relations using modern communication methods such as social networking and outreach program. It is not only the quality of objects that makes the children museum a great institution, but it is the museum experience as a whole which determines the success of the museum.
today. The recent concepts experiential, exclusivity, e-promotion, global citizenry, virtual presentations, interdisciplinary content treatment, social networking are being globally introduced to remote museums and focus on visitors, rather than only on objects and their interpretation.

The display design of the gallery should be attractive, appealing, inviting, and offer a wow feeling for children. Illumination, color, creation of cognitive spaces, agronomic structures, incorporation of research data inputs should be enhanced to make them visitor friendly.

With the advent of digital media, the children museum is not only confined to the four walls of the space but it is increasingly becoming a global concept. Virtual tour of museums or its collection, accessing information through Children Museum websites or portals, social media for visitor interaction are the new tools for promotion of museums. Unless marketing is a key function of any museum, the success of a Children Museum has to cater to every segment of the society taking in consideration the museum exhibits, programs and education to one and all. Each museum needs a tailor made marketing strategy, based on its collections and specialty. Marketing is a systematic activity and needs a strategic plan and process.

Technology adaptation for children museums can be for two different purposes; one for conducting the museum business, management, children’s experiences, digitization marketing, communication with audiences, outreach, etc. The present technology savvy society, especially the younger generation needs these interventions to make children museums popular. Therefore, there is a need for using technology in all functions of the children museums. Digital technology has opened many new vistas for the children museum.

A museum curator is not always a charismatic authority. The success of the exhibition designed by him depends on his ability to give correct semantic dimension to the thematic continuum. An exhibition cannot be theoretically a hypothesis and a subject of uncanny fascination for spectators.

Every children museum genre intending interpretative and didactic display to provide people an ideal environment of empirical and effective learning should have sound textual structure along with material remains and should be showcased after theoretical argument on the ability of the display to produce historically relevant
prolific knowledge pedagogy. Its aim should be to enable people in discovering additional data on a subject.

For effective communication, these children museums should have beautifully used cycloramas, cosmoramas and dioramas. One may find a very good number of models; machines and electronic devices should also be used in children museums. Computer aided design, audio-video presentations, and computerizations of textual information have changed the cultural continuum of museums. The excessive use of technology has made children museum display melodramatic. In the name of entertainment, the additions of devices being made to the visual spectacles of museums are damaging ingenuity of theme and context.

The science park includes an open air display of science exhibits as play models for the benefit of the children. The new origami display should be added to the museum’s gallery. A new 3-D theatre is on the move.

The display should be more interactive, easily understandable and should be presented in an enjoyable and pleasing form. Display should be made keeping in mind all sorts of children, especially the common mass. The possible visitors may be from different socioeconomic background, educational background, age group, etc. They may be anybody from different parts of the society such as rural areas children, school children, slum children and physically handicapped children. Hence display should include scope or corner or matter of interest for every possible target group.

Interactive display is always more preferable as it results in an active involvement of child by generating their interest and curiosity. It will not only provide information with amusement, but also enhance their active involvement. Interactive display may be of many types such as interactive information panel, quiz panel, puzzle, kiosk, interactive dioramas and working models etc.

Generating the awareness and dissemination of knowledge or education in play way manner, should be the prime focus of all the children museums today. Nowadays, children museum started functioning as centers for recreation, learning and dissemination of knowledge. Outreach programs also increased with enriching of the internal and open display, hands on experience and participatory program in the Children Museums. This shows a vital change in the perception, outlook, approach and the functioning of the museum today in order to provide more and more facilities
for children. Now NCM, New Delhi is trying harder for providing such kind of quality services which gives quality of experience in every aspect to the children.

It is highly suggested that like Children Museum Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala provide a swing which called ‘Amatottal’ (chapter 6) every children museum should be taking this type of initiative for these types of children.

**Suggestions for Further Research**

There are possibilities for further research regarding the Child’s oriented exhibitions which might me more attractive by using technology in National Children’s Museum, (New Delhi) interactive exhibits and educational activities of children museum to make museums more informative and attractive.

Research on the application of learning theories to the design of child-oriented exhibit is also an exciting subject for further research.

A major motivation of this research was the overall perspective of NCM, New Delhi. The study offered several contributions to the field of learning theories related to children (Chapter 4) and provided original methodological approaches for analysis, such as the analysis of the children in NCM, New Delhi and also analyzed the comparative study (Chapter 6) of the other museums in India.

There is a continuing improvements and innovations, continual process in the present study I have tried-

- To study the infrastructure organization map and exhibit galleries of the Museum
- To study the educational role of the Museum
- To document and analyze the activities of Museum especially educational activities
- To know the child’s response to museums, exhibits and activities.

I have tried to take this aspect humbly and I advice, scholars and scientist for future research of the Museuology to see further and search the other aspects of the branch of study so that the it is not studied as theoretical, but also as a scientific endeavor which is also a part of this wide discipline.