CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction:

The harmonious development of all aspects of a person such as cognitive, socio-emotional, physical, language, moral, creativity and aesthetic by providing the right experiences and environment to draw out the innate potentialities of a child is education. Therefore, if quality education is provided, it transforms the person and contributes to the well being of the Nation. Education is the most powerful tool for churning human resource development. Indira Gandhi said that “Education is a liberating force, and in our age it is also a democratizing force, cutting across the barriers of caste and class, smoothing out inequalities imposed by birth and other circumstances” (IGNOU, 1993, Coping with Socio-Emotional Problems 1) The universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948 also states that Right To Education is a universal human rights. It means that every human being should be given education irrespective of caste or class, young or old to be liberated from ignorance and to bring about equality.

Noting the importance of education, the government of India and various private institutes are providing education to various levels of formal education. It is divided into different levels because children have specific capacity to understand certain things at certain age, accordingly learning programs are framed to develop specific competencies. In India, there are 3(three) levels of formal education, namely Primary or elementary catering to 6-14 years child of classes 1-8, secondary level catering to 14-17 years old teenagers of classes 9-12 and higher education from graduation and above which is also known as tertiary or third level education .The most important foundation stage but outside the formal system is Pre-Primary or Pre-school stage which caters to the needs of children in the age group of 2½ -6/7 years. Pre-School Education is the learning experiences or education that are provided informally to the child before he starts formal schooling with an objective to bring optimum development in all areas like language, socio-emotional, physical, cognitive development etc through play-way method, songs, story-telling, drawing etc. This stage is also known as Early
Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) because learning experiences is provided to children in their early childhood stage.

1.1 Early Childhood Care and Education:

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) refer to programmes and provisions for children from pre-natal to six years of age. It caters to the needs of all children to bring about overall development i.e. physical, motor, language, cognitive, socio-emotional, creativity and aesthetic appreciation along with health and nutrition aspects. This Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is also known by different nomenclatures like Pre-School, kindergarten, Nursery, Montessori, Balwadi, Pre-primary, Pre-basic, Anganwadi etc. These differences in names and functioning are due to the differences in ideals of several great Educators who had contributed a lot in the development of Education programme. ECCE covered developmental priorities for each sub stage within the continuum, i.e. care, early stimulation and interaction needed for children below 3 years, and developmentally appropriate pre-school education for 3 to 6 year old with a more structured and planned school readiness component for 5 to 6 year olds. This is a preparatory stage and therefore Pre-School Education facilitates a child to enter primary stage successfully. ECCE includes minding the child at Crèches, nutritional and health care at ICDS and providing learning experiences in Montessori, Kindergarten, Nursery etc whether public or private. This is acknowledged as the most crucial period, when the rate of development is very high and foundations are laid for cumulative lifelong learning and holistic human development.

1.2 Different Developmental areas and activities employed for holistic developments of children are discussed in brief which are given below:

Every child loves to play and learn best through play and play is the most important medium to foster holistic child development in Pre-school stage. Play develops a sense perception, physical growth, emotional equilibrium and release tension, spontaneous language development and develop friendship, cognitive development through building blocks, sorting and matching objects develops imagination and creativity. The following are some of the activities or programmes conducted at pre-school for overall development of the child:

1. Language development: To develop language, teachers talk to pre-schoolers frequently during activity, narrate stories, show picture books, give opportunities for
free interaction to express feelings and thoughts, singing, rhyme etc. These develop
listening skills, increases vocabulary and prepare them to read clearly. These skills
become handy when children started primary class. They can comprehend and learn
language or written subjects like English, science, social studies, etc easier than
others.

2. **Aesthetic and creativity developments:** To develop divergent thinking and
sensitivity towards beauty, a stimulating and encouraging environment characterized
by free play and expression, rhythmic actions, dance, drama, puppets and role play,
painting, drawing, clay modeling, observe natural phenomena such as plant, animals,
flowers etc are provided.

3. **Socio-Emotional Developments:** The early Childhood years are characterised by
rapid personal and social development. During this stage the child moves on from
being relatively unsocial to a Social human being. The child who was mainly self-
centred and enjoyed playing alone now prefers to play with another child and then
moves to group play for short periods of time. Developmentally, he is more mobile,
can communicate more freely and therefore, opportunities of social interaction widen
further. As the size of groups grow, the complexity of interactions amongst children
such as self-concept, negativism, aggression, self-awareness, leadership, sympathy,
co-operation, competition, friendship etc increases. Wide individual differences are
noticed due to different environmental influences, desire for independence and gender
consciousness recognizing the different appropriate sex-role stereotypes. Even play
pattern undergoes a change from parallel ie two children playing side by side to
associative play in which a group of children play together, to co-operative play in
group working towards a common goal and even socio-dramatic plays. However, in
the absence of secure and cordial environment, behavioural disorders such as
aggression, repression, shyness, anxiety, hyperactive etc are developed.

The Pre-School stage is characterised by frequent emotional outbursts by children, the
reason being that they have not learnt socially acceptable behaviour. Gradually as their
social interactions widen, children learnt that they must control strong expression of
emotions like hitting, throwing, biting when angry, hiding when frightened etc.
Emotions in children are brief, intense and transitory and vary in strengths and
patterns of expression and change with age and culture. Some of the common emotions at this stage are love and affection, anger, fear, jealousy, aggression, anxiety and joy. Some common indicators of emotional problems are extreme temper tantrums, shyness, bed-wetting and withdrawal from society. However, emotions are essential part of one’s life and when regulated properly, it helps in proper functioning of human life. Therefore, Socio-Emotional development in Pre-School children is very important.

The Pre-school stage is characterized by frequent and intense emotional outbursts like biting when angry, screaming when happy and hiding when frightened. The children are taught to use emotions constructively through play, spoken words, arts and craft, dance and songs. Gradually as their social interactions widens, children learn to control strong expressions of emotions. And emotional development influences each other. Emotional development is very important because researchers found that more often the emotional intelligence may be a greater predictor of success than mental aspect. To develop positive self concept in pre-school children which is the start of social life, a secure and encouraging environment is provided where he can experience a feeling of satisfaction, love, value, reward and acceptance develop a feeling of personal worth which in turn promotes confidence, mental health and effective learning. There is a transition from unsocial to social behavior when the child enters Pre-school and interacts with friends. They are taught to speak politely, share things and responsibilities like cleaning and cooking together.

4. **Physical and motor development:** Pre-schools provide suitable activities for children involving motor development such as rolling, balancing, pushing, threading, beads, cutting, pasting materials etc to develop large and fine muscles and to gain control of body movements. Proper growth of both height and weight indicate a healthy child. Thus, much attention is given to nourishment of the child. Play of various kinds whether free or structured formed an important part of physical and motor skills development.

5. **Good health habits to build up basic skills necessary for personal adjustment:** To achieve the objective activities like washing hands, cleaning teeth, zipping and unzipping trousers, lacing and unlacing etc are practiced.
6. **Cognitive development:** This development during pre-school is brought about through structured, free play and also by involving the children in a variety of activities like picture puzzle, matching objects, classifying things, missing object games to identify and remember missing objects. Skills involving sense observation, classification, sequential thinking, reasoning, problems solving, memory, retention etc are all developed through the following activities like recalling food stuff and identifying objects on the basis of smell or taste. The concept of time like morning, noon, afternoon, evening, night, day, measurement of time by clock, days of the week are taught to pre-school children by flash cards showing different events of the day, dramatizing events that happen in a day sequentially are also important for mental development. Concept of color are developed in pre-school through painting, matching objects on the basis of color, flash card, color rhymes etc. Through this the children are able to name and mix colors to form new colors, differentiate and order colors from light to dark shade which all contributed to mental development. A variety of activities are done to develop the concept of number in children like placing beads on different number of dots on a card, awareness about number of their body parts such as two hand, five fingers, etc, number games and rhymes learn through group play by making bigger or smaller circles, arranging in a row form tallest to shortest, arranging leaves, pebbles, cubes, books in order of size, shape or weight. They can recognize number symbols, count and place number up to 5 which are all mental process.

7. **Music:** To develop auditory discrimination, Pre-school children were made to play and listen to varieties of objects, both natural and artificial like sea shell, Pebbles, birds, wind, tin, spoon, and musical instruments both local and international.

Therefore, if all these developmental areas are taken care of, in all children, every child can be an asset for the Nation. According to Census 2011, India has 158.7 million children in the 0-6 year’s age group which needs proper care and investment by providing commensurate resources. Due to its national importance, the Government of India recognizes the significance of ECCE, which has been included as a constitutional provision through the amended Article 45 (The Constitution Act, 2002) which directs that “The State shall endeavour to provide ECCE for all children until they complete the age of six years” (Draft National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy, Ministry of women and child
The increasing awareness about the need of providing Early Childhood Education is due to the excellent work of Psychologists, Educationists, Behaviourists etc who have been working on child’s development and natural growth. Realisation of the importance of human resource development for the future of a country has generated immense interest and creative thinking in the field of child development. The great Psycho-Analyst Sigmund Freud said that the early childhood experiences would have a long lasting influence on adult personality (J.S. Grewal, 1998, Early Childhood Education: Foundations and practice). Also the attention is due to recent 3 (three) global events like the World Conference on Education for All (EFA, 1990) at Thailand which pointed out the fact that learning began from birth and that services be given particularly to disadvantaged and disabled children. Secondly, due to the World’s Summit for Children (1990) and its plea to make adequate investment for children’s education and development. And thirdly, Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) which promoted the value of family and the defence of children’s rights within a context of gender equality. These international events made their impact on national policy too. Although National Policy on Education (1986) viewed ECCE as a feeder, support programme for primary education, support service for working women of the disadvantaged sections of the society and as a human resource development program, it prompted the Plan of Action (POA) 1992 to add a separate write-up on ECCE and spelled out the details of the future plans in the area.

According to “Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework (Draft)” of 2012 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, the objectives of Early Childhood Care and Education is to facilitate optimum development of the child’s full potential and lay the foundation for all round development and lifelong learning. This aim is to be achieved through enabling the child to:

1. Develop a positive self-concept.

2. Establish a sound foundation for a good physique, adequate muscular coordination and basic motor skills.

3. Imbibe good health habits and basic life skills/ self-help skills necessary for personal social adjustment.
4. Enhance verbal and non-verbal communication skills which would facilitate expression of thoughts and feelings in fluent, correct, clear speech.

5. Develop the five senses and cognitive skills and concepts which are foundation for higher order thinking and reasoning.

6. Develop emotional maturity by guiding the child to express, understand, accept and control feelings and emotions.

7. Imbibe values, social attitudes and manners important in his/her socio cultural context and to become sensitive to rights and privileges of others.

8. Develop independence, aesthetic appreciation and creativity by providing children with sufficient opportunities for self-expression and active exploration, investigation and experimentation.

9. Make a smooth transition from preschool to primary through development of emergent literacy and school readiness.

ECCE services are delivered through public, private and non-governmental channels. The private sector in an organised or unorganised form was run by interested individuals like Tarabai Modak, Gijubhai Badeka and others under the influence and guidance of Maria Montessori and Annie Besant from abroad. In private sector, Pre-School education is mostly provided leaving out the health and nutritional aspect and is attached to Primary schools. It is still continuing largely under private enterprises and is the second largest service provider of ECCE spreading all over India. It is estimated that about 10 million children received ECCE from privately owned programmes (Sharma, 1998, as quoted in UNESCO, 2006). In the voluntary sector, there are smaller scale initiatives either run by funding agencies, societies, religious groups etc. In the public sector, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) a National flagship programme is the world’s largest scheme imparting ECCE with holistic approach including health, nutrition and education.

The Indian Education Commission, 1964-66 has enunciated the following objectives of Pre-School Education:
1. To develop in the child, good health, habits and to build up basic skills necessary for personal adjustment such as dressing, toilet habits, eating, washing, cleaning etc.

2. To develop desirable social attitudes and manners and to encourage healthy group participation, making the child sensitive to the rights and privileges of others;

3. To develop emotional maturity by guiding the child to express, understand, accept and control his feelings and emotions;

4. To encourage aesthetic appreciation;

5. To stimulate the beginnings of intellectual curiosity concerning the environment and to help him understand the world in which he lives and to foster new interest through opportunities to explore, investigate and experiment;

6. To encourage independence and creativity by providing the child with sufficient opportunities for self-expression;

7. To develop the child’s ability to express his thoughts and feelings in fluent, correct and clear speech; and

8. To develop in the child a good physique, adequate muscular co-ordination and basic motor skills.

The child’s development is an integrated and multi-dimensional process. Through co-operative and co-ordinated efforts of Pre-School centres and families as well as other social agencies involved in this process, the objectives are to be realised in well planned and properly organised programmes.

In 1974, the National Policy for children was adopted by the Government of India which recognised the children to be “supremely important assets” of the Nation and hence, the Nation should have to look to their “nurture and solicitude”. This policy provides that the state governments have to provide all basic services to the child as well as to the mother for proper growth and development. Therefore, looking to this essential demand and as a show of commitment to child education the scheme of “Integrated Child Development Services”
(ICDS) was initiated on October 2, 1975. It was the 106th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation. The first project was set up in Jama Masjid area in Delhi, 1975. The scheme is funded by the Central Government of India, State Governments, Voluntary organisations, foreign agencies and the communities themselves and is being monitored by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. The ICDS is basically a child welfare scheme which caters to the needs of socio-economically disadvantaged families in rural and slum areas. The scheme has expanded to 5659 sanctioned projects and 7,48,059 Anganwadi Centres, in all the 35 states/Union territories in the country as on 30th Sept 2006. This scheme helps to gain momentum in Pre-School Education and universalise primary education. Early Childhood Education was suggested under the Sixth-Five Year Plan (1980-85) as a strategy to reduce the drop-out rate and improve the rate of retention in schools followed by the adoption of National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 by the Government of India in which a bold recognition was granted to Early Childhood Care and Education. The NPE used the term ECCE to include all activities which foster and promote the all-round balanced development of the child during the critical Early Childhood years in all dimensions- physical, mental, social, emotional etc. It is specially designed and aimed at the all-round development of a child. The following are the objectives of ICDS:

(i) Improve health and nutritional status of children in the age group of 0-6 years.

(ii) Lay foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child.

(iii) Reduce the incidence of morbidity, mortality, malnutrition and school drop outs.

(iv) Enhance the ability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child.

(v) Achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst various departments to promote child development.

The package of services provided in the programme included supplementary nutrition, immunisation, health check up and treatment of minor ailments, referral services, Pre-School education, nutrition and health education and convergence of other supporting services such as drinking water, sanitation etc. The ICDS focussed its activities on urban slums, rural and
tribal blocks. The focal point of convergence of various services is the Anganwadi which is the child care centre located within the village or the slum. The centre is run by an Anganwadi Worker and assisted by a helper who were selected from the community and provides direct link to children and mothers under the programme. The Supervisor is responsible for 17-25 Anganwadi Centres. She supervises and guides the AWWs on the job orientation and assists her in record keeping, home visits, organising community meetings etc. The Child Development Project Officer provides the link between the ICDS functionaries and the government administration and the District Programme Officer (DPO) heads the whole district. Pre-School education is provided to children in the age group of 3-6 years in a non-formal setting. It is provided through play-way methods which stimulate the mental development and satisfy the curiosity of children. They learn to play together, recite rhymes and songs, concepts of colour and surroundings which form the basis for a sound Primary education in later years. There is no formally structured curriculum and therefore a good deal of flexibility in the programme. Besides these, health and nutritional needs of children and even lactating mothers along with health education were provided for holistic development. Presently ICDS is the biggest programme of Early childhood development.

1.3 Early Childhood Education Movement in India:

Early Childhood Education Movement in India will be discussed in 2 (two) points namely (i) Pre-Independence Initiatives and (ii) Post-Independence Initiatives.

1.3.1 Pre-Independence Initiatives:

Pre-School in India is borrowed from Western system and was introduced towards the end of the 19th century when efforts by some private enterprises in this direction can be seen. Some were purely Pre-Schools and others attached to Primary schools. In India Loreto Convent School in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh in 1874, St. Hildas Nursery school at Poona 1885, Saidapeth high school, Madras (1888), Sholapur Kindergarten School for training teachers (1901-1902) and Dakshinamurti Training College at Bhavnagar in 1924 were among the first to be established. Missionaries were mainly responsible for establishing and propagating Pre-Schools in this country. In 1907, Mrs Annie Besant who was a British by birth, started many schools for young children at Madras. In 1934, Dr Arundale succeeded Mrs Besant as the president of the Theosophical society. Arundale invited Maria Montessori in 1939 and started Montessori Training Centre for teachers who strengthen the Montessori Movement in India.
Pre-School education in India took a definite shape under the leadership of Mrs Annie Besant and Rabindranath Tagore. It was because of them that Pre-School education which was till then limited to missionaries, theosophists, rich and higher classes and in few private hands, spread on a Nationwide scale.

Pre-Primary schools were first established to meet social needs such as looking after the children of working mothers or providing a suitable environment to young boys and girls from urban families whose small flats were hardly appropriate for the children’s proper growth. Prior to 1947 little attention was paid to Pre-Primary education and it was not even regarded a State responsibility. ECCE remained with the Voluntary sector till the government sponsored Sargent Committee in 1944 emphasised the importance of Pre-primary education. For the first time in our educational history, the Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education (1944) emphasised the significance of Pre-School education and recommended that an adequate provision of Pre-primary education should be an essential adjunct of a national system of education. It emphasised the need for providing free Pre-primary education either in separate nursery schools or in nursery sections attached to junior basic schools and advocated the appointment of only trained women teachers for these schools.

In a parallel development, the Father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi gave his scheme of pre-basic education for children below the age of seven. Kasturba Memorial trust initiated the first pre-basic education school in 1945. Other landmark dates in the development of pre-School education in India during the Pre-independence period are:

(i) Formation of Nutan Balshikshan Sangh in 1926, an experimental Pre-Schools one each in Gujarat and Maharashtra.

(ii) Formation of Besant memorial School with Montessori section at Adyar which was also known as Adyar Montessori Centre in 1934.

(iii) 1939 and 1947- visit of Dr. Maria Montessori to India conducting training courses in Montessori Methods.

1.3.2 Post –Independence Initiatives:

Pre-primary education gained rapid popularity in Independence India. In 1950-51, the number of Pre-primary schools was only 303 with 866 teachers and an enrolment of about
28,000. In 1965-66, the number of Pre-primary schools increased to 3500 with 6500 teachers and a total enrolment of about 250,000. These were mainly urban institutions whereas in rural areas the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) and the Community Development Administration have done pioneering work running Balwadis. The constitution of India has made several provisions either in the form of Fundamental Rights or as Directive Principles of State policy which are now being used for promoting ECCE services in the country. For example Article 15(3) of the constitution asserts, “Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making special provisions for women and children”. After independence, India made a planned effort in Early Childhood Care and Education through the successive Five Year Plans and therefore its progress will be discussed in Five year plan wise.

1.3.2.1 First Five-Year Plan (1951-1956):

The Central Social Welfare Board was established during the first Five Year Plan to sponsor programmes of its own and developed welfare projects in which Balwadi activities were given an important place. It was also meant to release grants to those voluntary organisations that came forward for organizing programmes for women and children. The CSWB assisted 2128 institutions of which 591 were child welfare institutions. But in the first Five Year Plan, out of 169 crores provided for the development of education, no allocation was made for Pre-School education.

1.3.2.2 Second Five-Year Plan (1956-1961):

In the later part of the Second plan, the planning Commission made a provision for child welfare and education. This was done on the recommendation of the Committee set up by the Central Social Welfare Board. There were 3700 Balwadis as part of the Welfare extension Projects. Assuming 3 to 6 as the normal age range for nursery schools or classes, there were over 40 million children in this age group in 1960-61.

1.3.2.3 Third Five-Year Plan (1961-1966):

Pre-School or Early Childhood Care and Education as the base of the National System of Education was formally recognised for the first time when the government directed the Central Welfare Board to survey the child care needs and status in the country by setting up a special committee. Report of this committee which was a landmark in the history of Pre-
School education made a comprehensive recommendation in addition to education of the child at the Pre-School age, his health, nutrition and need for recreation. Further, the committee pointed out that Pre-Schools should be self-sufficient and started by the voluntary agencies for both rural and urban. These should be run by both Community Development Departments and Central Social Welfare Board. Therefore, there was a large scale expansion in the ECCE facilities during 1961-66 such as rise in the number of Balwadis, training centres for the training of Bal Sevikas. According to Arun Thakkar (1980) “During the third plan, the grants-in-aid programme of the Central Social Welfare Board gave an impetus to the promotion of Pre-School education and 2174 Pre-Schools, Nursery Schools, Montessori schools Kindergarten, Pre-basic schools and Balwadis”. 4815 Balwadis were aided by the Central Social Welfare Board.

**Some developments during 1966-1969 Period:**

In 1964, the Indian Association of Pre-School Education (IAPE) was formed. In 1966, the Education Commission (1964-66), gave its suggestions for strengthening the Pre-School education. The IAPE brought out a comprehensive document which dealt with such important problems as: Pre-School education for the rural and tribal children, education at the training centre, the system of Pre-School education, recent trends in Pre-School education, Voluntary efforts in Pre-School education and Pre-School teacher education. In 1969, the National Council of Educational Research and Training decided to set up the department of Pre-primary and Primary Education. This department collaborated with other agencies and prepared courses of studies for the schools, set up a children’s Media Laboratory and also for the training of teachers.

**1.3.2.4 Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-1974):**

It was suggested in the draft of the Fourth Five-Year plan that in the field of Pre-School education, Government effort will be confined mainly to certain strategic areas such as training of teachers, evolving suitable teaching techniques, production of teaching materials and teachers’ guides. In the Social Welfare Sector, however, there will be a small provision for the opening of Balwadis, both in rural and urban areas (Fourth Five-Year Plan, GOI, Planning commission, 1969, p.280). Many conferences and seminars were organised for discussing the various concepts and approaches. By the end of Fourth plan, a number of children had benefitted from various schemes.
1.3.2.5 Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-1979):

This plan had the rural, tribal and slum areas as its target for child welfare. The plan aimed at providing integrated services—health, welfare, education, nutrition, and family planning as bases to promote child welfare. During this plan, 13 million children in the age group of birth to 6 years were to be covered by extending integrated services to 18% of the total children in the weakest section of Indian society. In the fifth plan Rs 25 crores were provided for the educational component and Rs 75 crores for the social welfare plan. A National Policy Resolution for children was issued in 1974 and as a result of which a National Children’s Board was constituted. The Integrated Child Development Scheme was (ICDS) introduced in 33 experimental areas and another 117 ICDS in 1978-80 which provided supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check up, referral services, health education and Non-formal education in the age group of 0-6 years. The focal point of the ICDS projects provided services through Anganwadis which was run by a local voluntary worker who was assisted by a helper. The work of Anganwadi workers was to be supervised by a Mukhya Sevika.

1.3.2.6 Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-1985):

For the first time the term ‘Early Childhood Education’ has been used in place of Pre-School education as the former is intended to be more broad based and cover the entire period of crucial development upto 5 years. Special attention is to be paid to children of under-privileged groups. The sixth plan report said that Early childhood stage is the period of maximum learning and intellectual development of the child and hence of great educational significance. That the Pre-school child care programmes were limited to the distribution of food supplements and routine health cover which contributes very little to the personality development of the child. Therefore, the concept of learning and development through play and joyful activities should be articulated across age groups, through an all round programme which should be comprehensive in scope, integrated in nature and reinforced over long time. Organisation of a Creche for children in the 0-3 age group and /or a Balwadi for 3-6 age group with provision for educational toys, play equipment, learning materials and books for children’s reading would be appropriate for this purpose. In this plan very high amount were allocated for the Early Childhood Education which is the highest amount ever allotted for this purpose.
1.3.2.7 Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-1990):

Early Childhood period (0-6) received more attention during this plan. The ICDS programme comprising of immunization, nutrition and early childhood education was recognised as the single largest outreach programme from the standpoint of ‘Early Childhood Care and Education’. The ECCE sought to provide healthy home-based stimulation practices for the 0-3 age group and early childhood education for the 3-6 age group of children. By 1987-88, the ICDS outreach had expanded to cover nearly 4.65 million children through 88,400 centres in rural, tribal and urban (slum) areas. This coverage when combined with other facilities such as Balwadis, Creches, Day care Centres and ECC Centres, added up to a total coverage of about 62,29,000 children. The coverage constituted less than 12% of those children who required early care and education. The target groups to be taken care of under this programme included children from poor urban slum communities, forest dwellers and tribals in remote areas, ecologically deprived areas where children are required to fetch fuel, fodder, water, residents of remote hamlets etc. During this plan period, the Ministry of Human resource Development involved NGO’s in those areas where ICDS projects were not in operation. The Resource centres were set up to produce relevant teaching, learning and play materials. Training was organised for the functionaries of ECCE through Pre-service and in-service ICDS training Centres. Materials developed by Children’s Media Laboratory projects in various languages were also used at selected places. Setting up of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, providing alternatives for the Non-ICDS blocks, early stimulation for the 0-3 age group, involvement of communities or families and use of communication technology were inputs provided in this plan.

1.3.2.8 Eighth Five-Year Plan (1992-1997):

The world declaration on the survival, protection and development of children in 1990 paved the way for providing on priority basis the preventive services to check childhood morbidity and mortality. In Early Childhood programmes the emphasis in the current plan is on long term retention of children in schools which is facilitated by the ECCE programmes extended through crèches and day care facilities through the NGO’s and industrial establishments. A review of the NPE 1986 suggested Pre-School education on a large scale with a view to strengthening elementary education ultimately. International Agencies provided services to the war and famine affected children. This plan also had drawn attention
to the Government and community for early admission of children in the nursery schools raising the admission age to 4 by government.

1.3.2.9 Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002):

The priority accorded to the integrated development of early childhood education and services in earlier plans was reiterated in the Ninth plan. It termed these provisions and inputs as investment in human resource development. It was during this plan period that women groups were roped in to manage ECCE programmes.

1.3.2.10 Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-2007):

It stressed a ‘right based approach to child development’ and consequently launched various as well as advocated a number of strategies to substantially reduce the child mortality rate and improve support services for taking protective and preventive measures. During this plan period, the programmes of ICDS, Reproductive and Child health and the massive movement of education for all through a nationwide programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan comprehensively focussed towards total child development services. The areas of education, health, nutritive food, immunization and vaccination, and other related services were brought together with specific reference to child and mothers from poorer and disadvantaged sections of the society.

The Tenth plan Document realised the critical importance of nurturing the child in a stimulating and safe environment for their intellectual, social and emotional development. Efforts, therefore, were directed towards laying a strong foundation during these first three years so that children could achieve their full potential. Hence, required provision was made in the plan to augment support services like creating a network of crèches, day-care centres, Anganwadis etc particularly for the children of working mothers.

1.3.2.11 Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2007-2012):

Reduce infant mortality rate to 28 and maternal mortality ratio to 1 per 1000 live births Provide clean drinking water for all by 2009. Reduce malnutrition among children between 0-3 years to half its present level. Reduce anaemia among women and girls by 50%. Ensure that at least 33 percent of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of all government schemes are women and girl children
1.4 BRIEF ACCOUNT OF MANIPUR:

Manipur is a small North-Eastern state of India. It was described by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the ‘Jewel of India’. Manipur is flanked in the north by Nagaland, Mizoram in the south, Myanmar in the east and Cachar district of Assam in the west. It has a total area of 22,327 sq.kms and a population of 2,570,390 according to 2011 census and population density is 115. It is surrounded by hills on all sides occupied by the Nagas and Kuki-Chins and the valley by the Meiteis and the Pangals. The Meiteis are the most dominant single group constituting about two-third of the state’s population. Manipur has an altitude ranging from 781 to 2020 m above the sea level and lies between 93.2°E and 94.47°E (Longitude) and 23.50°N and 25.41°N (Latitude).

Manipur had been a princely kingdom even during the British period till 1949. Manipur merged into the Indian union on the 25th January 1950 and became a part ‘C’ state. In 1957 Manipur was converted into union territory, under the state Re-organisation Act 1956. The fight for statehood continued and later, on 21st January 1972 Manipur became a full-fledged state under the Indian Constitution as a result of the enactment of North-Eastern Areas Reorganisation Act, 1971. Geographically the State is divided into two parts i.e. the Hill and Plain areas. The State is a land of social, cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity. There are 29 Scheduled Tribes (ST) and 7 Scheduled Caste (SC) having their distinct languages, tradition and culture. The scheduled Tribe and the scheduled caste population constitute 31 and 2.5 percent of state. Presently, Manipur has 9 (Nine) districts, five in the hill areas namely- Ukhrul, Senapati, Churachandpur, Chandel and Tamenglong, and four in the valley namely- Imphal East, Imphal West, Bishnupur and Thoubal district. In addition to these, there are three sub-district administrative units. They are Jiribam in Imphal East, Kangpokpi in Senapati and Moreh in Chandel District.

Ukhrul is one of the nine districts of Manipur. It was marked out first as a subdivision in 1919 during the British Raj. Then in November 1969 it was upgraded to a full-fledged district, bearing the nomenclature of Manipur East district. Later on, Chandel district was carved out from this district on 15th July 1983. Therefore, the title of the district was changed to Ukhrul district in 1983. Ukhrul district now has 5 (five) sub-divisions which are co-terminus with the five developmental blocks and 4 (four) sub-deputy collectors offices.
Ukhrul district is bounded by Myanmar in the east, Chandel district in the south, Imphal East and Senapati districts in the west and Nagaland state in the north. It covers an area of 4,544sq.kms. The climate is of temperate nature with a minimum and maximum degree of 3°C to 33°C. The exact location of the district in the globe is 24°N to 25.41°N and 94°E to 94.47°E.

Tangkhul Nagas constitute the major bulk of the population. Others are small percentage of Kukis, Nepalese and other non-tribals. The total population of the district is 1,45,937 as per 2001 census with approximately 230 villages. The life and art of the Tangkhuls are attractive and captivating. Their different costumes, utensils, architecture, monumental erections and memorial set-ups depict their dexterity in art which also speaks of their sense of beauty and fineness.

1.4.1 Education:

The ancient people of Manipur had many books written in Manipuri script on history, religion, medicine, philosophy of life etc but hardly on educational theories and practices. However, the available literatures, documents, social, political, religious and vocational traditions of the Manipuri people in the past have highlighted something about the system of education in the early days. The system was by and large methodical, scientific and it emphasised the all-round development of the individual. Such type of educational system was the outcome of the constant interaction between the teacher and the taught. The Manipuri word for the pupil is “Maheiroi” meaning the “learner” and the teacher is called (Preceptor), “Oja”, “Guru” or “Pandit”. The system was based on learning through oral transmission of knowledge from one generation to another before written manuscripts. The significance of oral transmission lies in the belief that the sacred words should be stored inside one’s head. This is one of the main reasons why it was difficult to find specific books on educational theories and practices.

Presently, to upgrade the quality of life of people in the State, Government of Manipur has been making several efforts prioritising the sectors like education, public health, water supply, social welfare etc. However, education is one of the principal factors influencing the socio-economic development of the state like quality of the state’s labour force. Further, its contribution to economic growth and its impact on population controls life
expectancy, infant mortality, improving nutritional status and strengthening civil institutions is well recognised.

There has been a great deal of accomplishment in the field of education since 1950-51. The number of educational institutions has increased from 538 in 1950-51 to over 4222 by the end of 2004-2005. Out of these 4222 institutions, 4089 were schools, 62 colleges and 2(two) universities.

1.4.2 School education:

As per the National Policy on Education 1986, a target had been set for the universalization of primary education for children in the age group of 6-14 years. Under this policy, three aspects of elementary education such as (i) Universal access and enrolment (ii) Universal retention of children upto 14 years of age and (iii) Substantial improvement in the quality of education are to be achieved.

Several programmes like National Programme of Nutrition support to primary education (mid-day meal scheme) and promotion of girl’s education were also undertaken in the state. Under mid-day meal scheme, the state is providing 3 kgs of rice per student per month to the students of class I to V reading in 2997 government and aided schools having primary classes. Under the scheme (Expanded Operation Blackboard) of the government of India, minimum teaching learning materials like teacher’s equipment, games and play materials, books for library, furniture etc were procured for 398 upper primary schools of the state.

The total enrolment at the primary stage (Class I-V) increased from 213.19 thousands in 2001-02 to 355.35 thousands in 2002-03. Of these, the relative share of girls’ enrolment decreased from 48.78 percent in 2001-02 to 48.30 percent in 2002-03. Total enrolment at the middle/Upper primary stage (Class VI to VIII) in 2002-03 is 124, 59 thousands as against 151, 45 thousands in 2001-02. The relative share of girls’ enrolment was 48.55 percent in 2002-03 as against 47 Percent in 2001-02. The school level education is primarily looked after by the state government. The Secondary stage of education comprising of classes from IX to X are under the academic control of the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur which conducts the High School Leaving Certificate Examination. Higher Secondary School
education, comprising of class XI to XII comes under the control of Council of Higher Secondary Education, Manipur.

Higher education plays a crucial role in the national development process. The matters relating to higher education are looked after by Directorate of Higher Education (U). The total number of colleges for General Education in the State at the end of 2005 was 62(all types including private colleges) and 16,205 students. All these colleges had teaching facilities for higher degree courses.

1.4.3 Pre-Primary or Pre-School Education in Manipur:

Pre-primary education first started in western countries under the leadership of Maria Montessori, Froebel, Rousseau etc who started Pre-Schools in the last part of the 18th century. In India, Gijubhai Badeka, Tarabai Modak, Rabindranath Tagore etc were the pioneer in running Pre-Schools prior to Independence in 1947.

In Manipur, available records indicate that the first Pre-primary school was established in 1958 because it was inscribed on the foundation stone of the Government Montessori School, Imphal but according to the Educational Survey Unit of NCERT (1972-73) reported that the first Pre-primary school in Manipur was established in 1961. There is no separate statistics for Pre-primary stage alone in Manipur because it is mostly attached to Primary. In 1972-73, the total numbers of Pre-primary schools were 332 with the enrolment strength of 10,834 children and with 528 teachers. In 1990-91, Pre-primary/JB/UJB/Primary schools comprising all government, Local bodies, Aided and Unaided was 3190 with the enrolment strength of 1,89,238 and 11,010 teachers. In 2001-02, there was 2574 schools with 2,13,364 students and 9642 teachers. Pre-primary schools exclusively for girls were 163 which was found only in valley districts like Imphal East, Imphal West, Bishnupur and Thoubal in 2001-02.

Some of the common types of Pre-primary schools found in Manipur are given below:

(i) Montessori Schools- In Manipur, the government established a Montessori School as a model in 1958 just in the heart of the capital of Manipur. This school follows the system introduced by Maria Montessori of Italy. Children learn with the help of
didactic apparatus and emphasises sense training, health habits formation rather than reading and writing. Children who are 2½ years old were given admission into this school and taught up to compulsory schooling stage.

(ii) **Kindergarten Schools**- These schools are run by missionaries. The schools follow the pattern of Froebel’s Kindergarten which means a garden for children. They are taught through songs, rhyme and nurtured like young plants and are being prepared for primary education. The age for children to be admitted is 3(three) years but sometimes below also was admitted.

(iii) **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)**-In a welfare state, the social Welfare Programme aims at the welfare of the weaker sections of society like destitute, infirm, physically and mentally handicapped etc. To protect them from injustice and all forms of exploitations, Government is running various institutions such as Anganwadi Centres, Destitute Homes, Children Homes or orphanage etc. Integrated Child Development Services is one of them. This is a national flagship programme for holistic child development which was first started on 2nd October, 1975. For all-round development of children-mentally, emotionally and physically, 34 ICDS Project Centres are now being run by the Department spreading over the 9(nine) districts of Manipur, covering 33 blocks and1(one) Urban ICDS project. For overall control and supervision of various welfare programmes, 1(one) ICDS cell at the State Head Quarter at state level and 6 (six) ICDS cells at District level have been established. As on 31st March, 2004, 4501 (2061 in the hills and 2440 in the valley). Anganwadi Centres are now functioning under the 34 ICDS Projects including 1(one) urban project. These Centres are actively associated with the programme in giving nutrition, education, demonstration, health and immunisation of children etc. During 2001-02, 52744 boys and 52925 girls within the age group of 3-6 have been given Pre-School education. During 2000-2001, 4 (Four) Anganwadi Training Centres were giving orientation training to Anganwadi Workers and helpers.

1.4.4 **Education in Ukhrul District:**

Education in Ukhrul district was first brought by the arrival of Rev. William Pettigrew, a Baptist Missionary, Scotland born Englishman in January 1896 with the purpose of spreading Christianity. When he first arrived in Ukhrul, the Tangkhul tribe had no written
and common language and was functioning only with different village dialects which naturally hampers communication and brings discord between villages. He felt the need to have common language for better communication, peace and to spread the gospel. He, then spent 3 (three) years to develop Tangkhul grammar and vocabulary.

A Middle English school was first established by him in February 1897 with 31 students at Ukhrul village with the help of the state. In 1903, a Lower primary school was again established with 15 students at Hundung village. A tremendous progress was seen between 1896 and 1905 because 10 (ten) schools were established in this period but only boys attended. Girls attended only night schools and by 1934, 7 (seven) tribal girls had undergone teacher’s training. Many schools were established later on and literacy rates of some districts were seen increasing. Imphal West has the highest literacy rate i.e. 80.2 in Manipur and Chandel has the lowest at 56.2. However, Ukhrul has the third highest literacy rate at 73.1 in Manipur according to 2001 census (Economic Survey Manipur 2009-10). The literacy rate of Manipur increased from 70.5% in 2001 Census to 79.85% in 2011 census and similarly literacy rate of Ukhrul district is seen increasing from 73.1% in 2001 to 81.35% in 2011.

1.4.4.1 Pre-Primary or Pre-School Education in Ukhrul:

In Ukhrul, there are only few separate Pre-School organised for Pre-Schoolers. Mostly others are attached to primary or Junior School as LKG (Lower Kindergarten), UKG (Upper Kindergarten) or class-A and Nursery. These are privately owned pre-schools. Pre-schools in Governmental institutions are named as Lower primary school and Junior Basic which caters both for primary and pre-primary child’s needs. But official records are not maintained for pre-primary alone but together with Primary/JB/UJB. Gradually, some Pre-Schools have come up solely for children in private institutions. Pre-Primary Education in Ukhrul District like any other also was an influence from the West, Indian pioneer in the field of Pre-School and policies of Early Childhood Care and Education of the Indian Government. In 2001-02, there were 223 Pre-primary /Primary/JB/UJB in Ukhrul district comprising of local bodies, Aided, Unaided and government types of management with 661 teachers out of which 443 were male and 218 were female and total enrolment of children were 13,761 out of which 6792 were male and 6969 were female. There are no institutions exclusively for girls in Ukhrul district. The Teacher -Pupil Ratio in 2001-02 was 1:21 in Ukhrul which stood fourth counting from the lowest in other districts of Manipur.
1.4.4.2 Pre-School Education through ICDS in Ukhrul:

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is a cent per cent Centrally sponsored Scheme. It was introduced in Manipur on 2\textsuperscript{nd} October 1975 with a pilot project at Ukhrul T.D. Block. The Scheme has been successfully being implemented by the Department of Social Welfare as the nodal department. It is one of the most ambitious and comprehensive survival and child development schemes for enhancing the health, nutrition and learning opportunities for pre-school children and their mothers by simultaneously providing all the requisite services at the village level. The significant factor is that the deprived and underprivileged children are the target groups of this scheme. ICDS care for children below six years of age. It also takes care of essential needs of pregnant women and nursing mothers residing in socially backward villages and urban slums.

Aims and objectives of ICDS Scheme

- Improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age group 0-6 years
- Lay the foundation of proper psychological, physical and social development of the child.
- Reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropouts.
- Achieve effective coordination of policy and implementation among various departments to promote child development.
- Enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child, through proper health and nutrition education.

The focal point for the delivery of ICDS services is an Anganwadi Centres, child-care center, located within the village or slum area itself. Each Anganwadi is run by an Anganwadi worker (AWW) and a Helper appointed from amongst the locality.

Non-formal opportunities for Pre-school learning: Pre-school education in a non-formal setting forms the backbone of the ICDS programme. Children between the ages of three and six attended the Anganwadi for about three hours a day. The main objective of pre-school education component is to stimulate and satisfy the curiosity of the child, rather than
follow any rigid learning curriculum. Children are taught songs and games. Toys are indigenous and imaginatively produced from inexpensive, locally available materials. There is no formally structured curriculum, and flexibility is encouraged.

At present, there are 6(six) ICDS projects in Ukhrul district namely:

(i) Ukhrul ICDS project having a total number of 291 Anganwadi Centres and 238 Anganwadi Workers assisted by 238 Helpers along with 53 Mini workers.

(ii) Lungchong Meiphai ICDS Project having a total number of 182 Anganwadi Centres and 158 Anganwadi Workers assisted by 158 Helpers along with 24 Mini workers.

(iii) Chingai ICDS Project having a total number of 178 Anganwadi Centres and 126 Anganwadi Workers assisted by 126 Helpers along with 52 Mini workers.

(iv) Phungyar ICDS Project having a total number of 144 Anganwadi Centres and 108 Anganwadi Workers assisted by 108 Helpers along with 36 Mini workers.

(v) Kamjong ICDS Project having a total number of 128 Anganwadi Centres and 97 Anganwadi Workers assisted by 97 Helpers along with 31 Mini workers.

(vi) Kasom Khullen ICDS Project having a total number of 126 Anganwadi Centres and 86 Anganwadi Workers assisted by 86 Helpers along with 40 Mini workers. Therefore, there are 1049 overall total Anganwadi Centres, 813 each Anganwadi Workers and Helpers along with 236 Mini Workers. At present there are 17,734 children enrolled in ICDS Ukhrul District.

1.5 NEED AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY:

Early Childhood Education, for many years a neglected aspect of education, is enjoying a new prominence. This change is largely due to recent research efforts which have produced convincing evidence that the first six years of life are the most critical years in a child’s life span since the rate of development in these years are more rapid than at any other stage of development. Therefore, the need and importance of Pre-School is now being recognised all over the world. Project Head Start and other programmes initiated by the
Government and private bodies have put a measure of urgency upon the extension of educational opportunities for the young children. Therefore, the need and importance of Pre-School is now being recognised all over the world. Early Childhood Education is needed to improve enrolment and retention.

Pre-school education is needed to prepare children coming from socially and economically deprived homes for formal schooling to reduce the rate of drop-outs, wastage and stagnation.

Review of Related literature shows that not much studies had been conducted on the topics under study in India and abroad. Keeping in mind the increasing population of preschoolers and institutions, there is a need to investigate the system and suggest measures for improvement. The condition of Pre-School in Ukhrul district is pathetic and underdeveloped from all perspective. Most of the Pre-Schools are attached to primary and high schools with an exception of the few. It does not adhere to any method or system started by previous preschool educators (Montessori Method, Froebelian system, Nursery etc). Administrators and teachers are not well qualified or trained. The methods of teaching are very formal with less emphasis on play and story-telling. The facilities are very poor with no proper play room and play equipment. Therefore, children suffer in want of more stimulating environment.

Pre-school is supposed to play a great role and contribute to the child’s socio-emotional, language, physical and cognitive development. But in such poor condition, the investigator felt a need to study whether pre-schools are really contributing to the above mentioned developmental areas or not. And to study the role of teachers and parents as a motivator in the life of children and what or how activities are organised to train their sense organs. To study the utilisation of teaching aids and play materials for social, emotional, intellectual, language and overall development of the child and to offer suggestions for improving the quality of Pre-School education in Ukhrul district.

This investigation will contribute to the qualititative and quantitative advancement in the field of early childhood education. This will bring awareness to parents about the need of proper child rearing style; send the child to Pre-School at the right age and creating stimulating environment at home for healthy development of the child. This research study can be of great help to students, parents, non-governmental organisation and government, to
be used as document while implementing policies on education and contribute for the welfare of the society.

1.6 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The problem under study is stated as “Contribution of Pre-School Education Towards the Socio-Emotional Development of Children in Ukhrul District of Manipur”.

1.7 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE KEY TERMS USED:

Pre-School Education: This refers to education given at purely Pre –school or Pre-Primary level attached to Primary School and Anganwadi Centres for providing healthy environment and learning experiences informally through play-way, activities, games, storytelling, songs etc to a child of 2 ½ to 6 years before he starts formal schooling for school readiness and laying foundations for different developmental aspects.

Socio-Emotional Development: This refers to the child’s growing understanding of herself in relation to others and the way in which the child controls and expresses the emotions when alone and/or in society.

1.8 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The following are the objectives of the present study:

1. To find out the objectives of Pre-Schools in Ukhrul District.
2. To study the daily activities and learning programmes conducted in Pre-Schools of Ukhrul District.
3. To find out the Teaching Methods followed by Pre-Schools in Ukhrul District.
4. To study the types of Teaching aids and play materials used in Pre-Schools of Ukhrul District.
5. To study the Socio-Emotional Development of Pre-School Children in Ukhrul District.
6. To find out the problems faced by the Pre-School teachers and Anganwadi Workers in Ukhrul District.

7. To offer suggestions for improving the quality of Pre-Schools in Ukhrul District.

1.8.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the research questions of the present study:

1. What are the objectives of Pre-Schools in Ukhrul District?

2. What activities and learning programmes are being conducted in Pre-Schools of Ukhrul District?

3. What are the teaching methods being followed by Pre-Schools of Ukhrul District?

4. What are the different types of teaching aids and play materials used in Pre-Schools of Ukhrul District?

5. How is Pre-School contributed to the Socio-Emotional development of Pre-School children in Ukhrul District?

6. What are the problems faced by the Pre-School teachers in Ukhrul District?

7. What suggestions can be offered for improving the quality of Pre-Schools in Ukhrul District?

1.9 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

The study is delimited to Pre-Primary schools catering to Pre-school programme and Pre-Schools of Anganwadi Centres in 6(six) ICDS Projects of Ukhrul district in the State of Manipur.