



From Policy to Practice: An Analytical Framework for Evaluating ECCE Reforms under NEP-2020

¹Kanai Sarkar & ²Uttam Kumar Das

^{1&2}Assistant Professor of Education, Department of Education

^{1&2}Nazir Ajmal Memorial College of Education, Hojai, Assam.

** Corresponding Author- Kanai Sarkar

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18639551>

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Accepted: 21-01-2026

Published: 10-02-2026

Keywords:

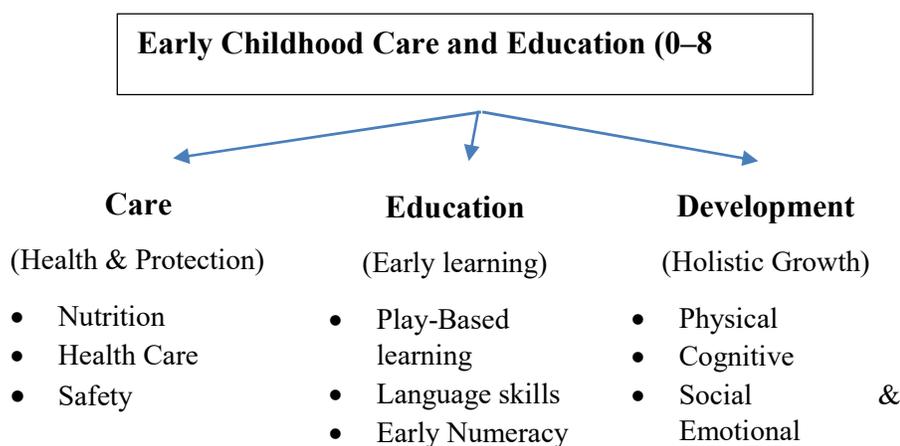
ECCE, NEP 2020, 5+3+3+4 Framework, Anganwadi-School Linkage, Play & Experiential Learning, ECCE Educators, Mother-Tongue Pedagogy.

ABSTRACT

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), as envisioned in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, stands as the foundation of lifelong learning, ensuring universal access, inclusion, and quality education for children aged 3 to 8 years. The policy restructures the schooling system into a 5+3+3+4 model, emphasizing a Foundational Stage that nurtures curiosity through play-based, activity-centered, and inquiry-oriented learning experiences. In alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 4.2, the policy integrates early education with Anganwadi centers to reach children in marginalized and remote communities, thereby promoting equity and inclusion from the earliest years. Guided by the National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for ECCE (NCPF) developed by NCERT, the approach encourages culturally responsive, multimodal pedagogies that cater to the diverse linguistic and social backgrounds of Indian children. To ensure pedagogical excellence, educators undergo structured professional preparation through six-month certificate courses, one-year diploma programs, and continuous professional development initiatives. ECCE programs highlight the holistic development of children by engaging them in activities that nurture prosocial behavior, emotional regulation,

critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, laying the groundwork for cognitive, emotional, and social growth. To bridge the rural–urban divide, the policy emphasizes improving infrastructure, establishing mobile ECCE centers, and delivering education in local languages to enhance accessibility and cultural relevance. Through initiatives such as NIPUN Bharat, efforts are made to strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy, enhance teacher capacity, and promote smooth transitions from preschool to primary education. By fostering play-based learning, inclusive practices, and teacher empowerment, NEP 2020 envisions an early education ecosystem that is equitable, child-centered, and developmentally appropriate, ensuring every child in India receives a strong and joyful start to lifelong learning.

Introduction: Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) serve as the cornerstone for a child's cognitive, emotional, and social development, laying the foundation for lifelong learning and well-being. Recognizing this critical phase, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 integrates ECCE into India's formal education system, extending the Right to Education Act to encompass children aged 3 to 6 years. This policy shift aims to provide holistic development opportunities through play-based, activity-based, and inquiry-based pedagogies, emphasizing the importance of early learning experiences in shaping lifelong learning trajectories.



Source: Self-Prepared Diagram



Despite the policy's visionary framework, translating ECCE reforms from policy to practice presents multifaceted challenges. These include disparities in access between rural and urban areas, variations in the quality of infrastructure and resources, and inconsistencies in teacher training and professional development. Moreover, the integration of Anganwadis and pre-primary education into the formal schooling system necessitates systemic coordination and alignment across various stakeholders and administrative levels.

To effectively assess the implementation and impact of ECCE reforms under NEP 2020, a comprehensive analytical framework is essential. Such a framework should encompass dimensions of accessibility, quality, inclusivity, and child development outcomes. It must also consider contextual factors such as regional disparities, socio-economic influences, and cultural contexts that affect the delivery of ECCE services.

This study proposes an analytical framework to evaluate ECCE reforms under NEP 2020, aiming to bridge the gap between policy intentions and on-ground realities. By systematically examining the alignment between policy objectives and actual practices, the research seeks to provide evidence-based insights that can inform policy refinement, resource allocation, and strategic interventions to enhance the effectiveness of ECCE initiatives across India.

Review of Related Literature: NEP 2020 envisions an integrated foundational stage comprising three years of preschool (ages 3–6) and two years of early primary education (Classes 1 and 2), collectively referred to as the foundational stage of schooling. This approach aligns with global best practices, emphasizing the importance of early learning experiences in shaping lifelong learning trajectories. The policy also recommends four models for implementing quality ECCE: community-based Anganwadi centers, Anganwadi centers within school premises, pre-primary sections in schools, and standalone pre-schools (UNICEF India, n.d.). Despite the policy's comprehensive framework, translating ECCE reforms into practice presents several challenges. Disparities in access between rural and urban areas, variations in the quality of infrastructure and resources, and inconsistencies in teacher training and professional development are significant barriers. The integration of Anganwadis and pre-primary education into the formal schooling system necessitates systemic coordination and alignment across various stakeholders and administrative levels (Education for All in India, 2025). A critical component of effective ECCE implementation is the training and professional development of educators. The NEP 2020 emphasizes the need for qualified ECCE educators and advocates for continuous professional development to enhance teaching quality. However, studies have highlighted the shortage of trained teachers and the need for



capacity-building initiatives to equip educators with the necessary skills and knowledge (ResearchGate, 2025). Adequate infrastructure and resources are essential for the successful implementation of ECCE programs. The NEP 2020 calls for the development of age-appropriate learning materials and the creation of conducive learning environments. However, research indicates that many ECCE centers, particularly in underserved areas, lack basic facilities and resources, hindering the delivery of quality education (Education for All in India, 2025). The NEP 2020 emphasizes the importance of equity and inclusivity in ECCE, aiming to provide quality education to all children, regardless of their socio-economic background. However, studies have noted that children from marginalized communities often face barriers to accessing ECCE services, including financial constraints, social stigma, and lack of awareness (Education for All in India, 2025).

Objectives of the Study: After reviewing several National and International studies, the researcher formulated different research objectives to carryout the study. The objectives are-

1. To analyze the major provisions of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 that focus on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).
2. To examine how ECCE contributes to the cognitive, emotional, and social growth of children from infancy to eight years of age.
3. To evaluate the policy measures introduced in NEP 2020 for improving access, inclusion, and quality in early childhood education.
4. To investigate the integration of Anganwadi centers with the formal education system and assess its impact on expanding early learning opportunities in disadvantaged and remote communities.
5. To assess the effectiveness of play-based learning methodologies and teacher training programs recommended under NEP 2020 in enhancing the overall ECCE framework.

Research Questions of the Study: On the basis of different research objectives, the researcher formulated different research questions to conduct the study, the research questions are-

1. What are the key provisions of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 that address Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)?



2. In what ways does ECCE contribute to the cognitive, emotional, and social development of children between birth to eight years of age?
3. How effective are the policy strategies outlined in NEP 2020 in improving accessibility, inclusivity, and quality of early childhood education across diverse socio-economic groups?
4. How does the integration of Anganwadi centers with formal schooling systems influence the delivery and reach of ECCE programs?
5. To what extent have play-based learning approaches and teacher training initiatives under NEP 2020 been implemented, and how do they contribute to the strengthening of the ECCE framework?

Methodology of the Study: The present study employs a Qualitative research design, and thematic content analysis method is used to examine and evaluate how play-based learning strategies and teacher training initiatives are being implemented within the NEP 2020 framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). This approach is deemed suitable as it aims to capture rich, contextualized understandings of stakeholders' experiences, perceptions, and pedagogical practices, rather than focusing on numerical measurement of variables (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Significance of the Study: This study carries profound importance within the dynamic landscape of India's education system, especially in the wake of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. By placing Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) at the heart of its vision, NEP 2020 underscores the critical role of the early years- from birth to eight- in shaping a child's holistic development, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions. The research is vital in exploring how the policy envisions a systematic, inclusive, and transformative framework to overcome longstanding challenges related to accessibility, quality, and equity in early learning. Central to this reform are initiatives such as the integration of Anganwadi centers with formal schooling, the emphasis on play-based and experiential learning, and the introduction of comprehensive teacher preparation and professional development programs. Together, these measures aim to create a cohesive and equitable foundation for all children, with special attention to those from marginalized and disadvantaged backgrounds. By analyzing these core interventions and their real-world implications, this study deepens the understanding of policy-driven transformation in early education and illustrates how national policy frameworks can shape grassroots-level implementation. The insights derived from this research hold practical value for educators, policymakers, curriculum developers, and child development experts, offering guidance on how to strengthen early learning systems. Ultimately, the study contributes to



building an evidence-based perspective on how NEP 2020 can enhance learning outcomes and future readiness among India's youngest learners, ensuring that early education is inclusive, equitable, and developmentally meaningful.

Discussion and Findings of the Study: The following discussions have been presented in alignment with the objectives of the study-

Objectives-01: *Major provisions of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 that focus on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).*

The policy highlights the first eight years of life as a crucial phase of rapid brain development, forming the foundation for cognitive, social, emotional, and psychomotor growth (MoE, 2020).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions ensuring universal, free, and high-quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for all children aged 3–6 years by the year 2030. To achieve this, the policy advocates the integration of ECCE within the formal education framework by linking Anganwadi Centers, pre-schools, and the foundational stages of primary schools into a unified system. This structural integration aims to guarantee inclusivity, equity, and accessibility for every child, irrespective of socio-economic background or geographical location (MoE, 2020). Furthermore, this vision resonates with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.2, which underscores the global commitment to provide all girls and boys with access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education, thereby preparing them for primary schooling and lifelong learning (UNESCO, 2021).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduces a new 5+3+3+4 curricular and pedagogical structure, wherein the first five years comprising three years of pre-school or Anganwadi education followed by Grades 1 and 2 are collectively defined as the Foundational Stage. This stage is considered crucial for shaping the child's overall development, as it encompasses the most formative years of learning and growth. The ECCE curriculum at this level is designed to be play-based, activity-oriented, and inquiry-driven, encouraging children to explore, experiment, and learn through joyful experiences. The emphasis is placed on fostering curiosity, creativity, communication, and socio-emotional skills while laying a strong foundation for literacy, numeracy, and lifelong learning (MoE, 2020).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions the formulation of a National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCPFECCE) by the National Council



of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). This comprehensive framework aims to guide the design and implementation of developmentally appropriate curricula and teaching practices across diverse early childhood settings in India. It emphasizes the use of multisensory, play-based, and experiential learning approaches that actively engage children in exploration, discovery, and creative expression. Moreover, the framework underscores the importance of incorporating local culture, traditions, and mother tongues to ensure that learning experiences are contextually relevant, inclusive, and meaningful for young learners (NCERT, 2021).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 places strong emphasis on enhancing the professional competence of Anganwadi workers and ECCE teachers to ensure the delivery of high-quality early childhood education. It mandates that existing personnel undergo a six-month certificate course or a one-year diploma in ECCE, equipping them with essential knowledge of child development, pedagogy, and inclusive practices. In addition, the policy advocates for continuous in-service professional development to keep educators updated with evolving pedagogical methods and best practices (MoE, 2020). Well-trained and motivated teachers are viewed as the cornerstone of effective ECCE implementation, as they play a vital role in creating nurturing, stimulating, and age-appropriate learning environments that foster children's holistic growth and development (Kaul & Bhattacharjea, 2020).

Objectives-02: How ECCE contributes to the Cognitive, Emotional, and Social growth of children from Infancy to Eight Years of age.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) offer a well-structured and nurturing environment that promotes the development of cognitive, emotional, and social competencies, which are fundamental for ensuring school readiness and fostering holistic growth in young children (Heckman, 2011).

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programs play a pivotal role in nurturing children's Cognitive growth by engaging them in age-appropriate and stimulating activities such as storytelling, problem-solving games, hands-on exploration, and creative play. These experiences encourage curiosity, critical thinking, and imagination while strengthening essential cognitive functions. Empirical research demonstrates that high-quality ECCE significantly enhances children's language acquisition, early numeracy skills, and executive functions- including memory, reasoning, and self-regulation- during the formative years (Barnett, 2011). Furthermore, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2020) underscores that rich and meaningful early learning experiences help establish



foundational neural pathways that support logical thinking, sustained attention, and long-term academic success.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) play a vital role in fostering emotional growth by offering a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where children learn to recognize, express, and manage their emotions effectively. Through the formation of secure and trusting relationships with caregivers and teachers, children develop a strong sense of emotional security, which in turn enhances self-confidence, empathy, and social understanding (Bowlby, 1988). Research further indicates that participation in emotionally supportive ECCE settings contributes to reduced behavioral difficulties, greater emotional regulation, and increased resilience and adaptability during later stages of schooling and life (Denham et al., 2012).

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) serve as a crucial foundation for socialization by providing children with opportunities for peer interaction, cooperative play, and collaborative problem-solving. Within these guided and structured settings, children learn essential social skills such as sharing, turn-taking, communication, and conflict resolution, which are fundamental for building positive relationships and functioning effectively within group environments. Through these early social experiences, children gradually develop a sense of belonging, empathy, and respect for others—abilities that are indispensable for successful adaptation to school life and broader society (Vygotsky, 1978).

Objectives-03: Policy measures introduced in NEP 2020 for improving Access, Inclusion, and Quality in Early Childhood Education.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 seeks to address existing disparities in early childhood education through comprehensive and targeted strategies designed to enhance accessibility, inclusivity, and quality in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). By focusing on the needs of children from diverse socio-economic, cultural, and regional backgrounds, the policy envisions creating equitable learning opportunities that ensure every child receives a strong and fair start to lifelong education and development (Ministry of Education (MoE), 2020).

To reduce the existing rural–urban divide in access to quality early education, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 advocates for the upgradation of Anganwadi Centers with enhanced physical infrastructure, adequate learning materials, and digital resources. The policy envisions transforming these centers into child-friendly, stimulating, and inclusive learning environments that support the holistic



development of every child, regardless of geographical location or socio-economic status (NCERT, 2021).

To extend early education opportunities to children in remote, marginalized, and underserved regions, the policy proposes the establishment of mobile ECCE centers and community-based learning models. These flexible and context-specific approaches are designed to reach children from nomadic, migrant, and hard-to-reach families, ensuring that geographical or socio-economic barriers do not hinder their access to quality early childhood education (Rao & Newnham, 2021).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduces special measures to ensure equitable access to early education for children belonging to Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), minorities, and socio-economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs). These measures include the provision of scholarships, targeted outreach programmes, community participation initiatives, and localized support systems aimed at reducing disparities and fostering inclusivity in Early Childhood Care and Education (MoE, 2020).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 advocates the use of the mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction during the foundational years of education. This approach not only strengthens children's conceptual understanding and communication skills but also promotes cultural inclusivity and a sense of identity and belonging. By valuing linguistic diversity, the policy ensures that children from multilingual and marginalized communities experience smoother transitions into formal education and achieve better learning outcomes (MoE, 2020).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 mandates the formulation of a National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCPFECCE) by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). This framework emphasizes the design of play-based, inquiry-oriented, and culturally responsive learning experiences that cater to the developmental needs of young children while reflecting India's diverse cultural and linguistic heritage (NCERT, 2021).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 underscores the importance of professional development for Anganwadi workers and pre-primary teachers to enhance their pedagogical effectiveness. It recommends that existing educators undergo a six-month certificate course or a one-year diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to deliver developmentally appropriate and child-centered learning experiences (MoE, 2020).



Objectives-04: *Integration of Anganwadi Centers with the Formal Education System and Assess Its Impact on Expanding Early Learning Opportunities in Disadvantaged and Remote Communities.*

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions the integration of Anganwadi centers with the formal school system to establish a cohesive and continuous foundational stage for children aged 3 to 8 years. This integration aims to enhance the overall delivery of early education by ensuring curricular continuity, developmental alignment, and smoother transitions from pre-school to primary education, thereby laying a strong foundation for lifelong learning (MoE, 2020).

In many marginalized communities, Anganwadis function as the only available early learning centers, underscoring the necessity of linking them with formal schools to ensure equitable educational opportunities (Rao & Newnham, 2021). The integration of services facilitates holistic development, providing children with nutrition and health support alongside age-appropriate cognitive and socio-emotional stimulation within a structured framework (Sharma & Singh, 2021). By integrating AWCs with formal schools, the policy aims to provide equitable access to quality early childhood education for children from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds (MoE, 2020). Linking AWCs with schools is intended to ensure that children from economically and socially.

The NEP 2020 proposes a range of strategic measures aimed at integrating Anganwadis into the formal school system to ensure continuity and coherence in early childhood care and education. The Foundational Stage Curriculum, guided by the National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for ECCE (NCPF), introduces a unified, play-based learning approach for children aged 3–8, ensuring smooth continuity between Anganwadis and primary schools (NCERT, 2021). The policy mandates upgrading the competencies of Anganwadi workers through a six-month certificate or a one-year diploma in ECCE to harmonize their pedagogical practices with the standards of formal schooling (Kaul & Bhattacharjea, 2020).

Influence on the Implementation of Early Childhood Education- The integration of Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) with schools helps bridge geographical disparities, especially in rural, tribal, and economically disadvantaged regions where independent preschools are lacking. Research indicates that this integration results in increased enrollment in ECCE programs and facilitates smoother transitions into Grade 1 (Rao & Newnham, 2021). The adoption of a unified curriculum along with enhanced teacher training ensures more effective and engaging early learning experiences. Findings from pilot initiatives in states such as Odisha and Karnataka reveal that aligning the curriculum of Anganwadis with primary schools



significantly enhances children's literacy, numeracy, and overall school readiness (Kaul & Bhattacharjea, 2020).

Challenges: A large number of Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) suffer from insufficient classrooms, inadequate teaching resources, and poor sanitation facilities, limiting their ability to operate effectively as formal ECCE centers (Kaul & Bhattacharjea, 2020). Successful integration demands close collaboration between the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) and the Ministry of Education; however, bureaucratic obstacles often impede this inter-ministerial cooperation (Rao & Newnham, 2021).

Objectives-05: *Effectiveness of play-based learning methodologies and teacher training programs recommended under NEP 2020 in enhancing the overall ECCE framework.*

It underscores two key components essential for strengthening ECCE: (1) the implementation of play-based and activity-oriented learning methodologies, and (2) extensive teacher training programs to ensure effective pedagogical delivery (MoE, 2020).

Implementation of Play-Based Learning Approaches: The NEP 2020 calls for the formulation of the National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for ECCE (NCPF) to foster play-based, experiential, and inquiry-driven learning aligned with children's developmental stages (NCERT, 2021). This framework is grounded in constructivist principles, emphasizing active exploration, hands-on engagement, and context-based learning experiences (Vygotsky, 1978).

ECCE centers and foundational-grade classrooms are required to shift from rote based practices to child-centric, play-integrated pedagogies (MoE, 2020). Activities are encouraged to reflect local culture, language, and environment to make learning relevant and engaging for children in diverse socio-economic settings (NCERT, 2021). **Teacher Training Initiatives for ECCE: Policy Provisions:** NEP 2020 recognizes teacher capacity building as vital for ECCE quality. It proposes- Ongoing in-service training and mentoring to keep teachers updated with child-centric pedagogies and developmental psychology (NCERT, 2021). States are encouraged to recruit trained early childhood educators and integrate them into pre-primary and foundational-grade classrooms (Kaul & Bhattacharjea, 2020).

Training modules have been introduced under initiatives such as the NIPUN Bharat Mission and through digital platforms like DIKSHA, emphasizing play-based pedagogy and holistic child development (MoE, 2021). Initial assessments reveal improved teacher awareness of child-centered approaches; however, the



quality of implementation varies significantly across states due to unequal availability of resources and infrastructure (Rao & Newnham, 2021).

Conclusion: The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a transformative milestone in reshaping India's framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), acknowledging the first eight years of life as the most crucial period for establishing the foundation of lifelong learning and holistic development. By ensuring universal access to quality ECCE, integrating Anganwadi centers with the formal school system, and restructuring education into a 5+3+3+4 curricular framework, the policy envisions a seamless and cohesive foundational stage that prioritizes play-based, activity-oriented, and inquiry-driven learning experiences.

The introduction of the National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for ECCE (NCPF) ensures that early education remains culturally rooted, developmentally appropriate, and child-centered, while comprehensive teacher training and ongoing professional development enhance pedagogical quality and classroom effectiveness. Furthermore, the policy underscores equity and inclusivity by extending targeted support to marginalized and disadvantaged groups, promoting mother-tongue-based instruction, and improving infrastructure and digital access in underserved regions.

Overall, the ECCE provisions of NEP 2020 are aligned with global educational goals such as Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.2, positioning India to advance a system of holistic, inclusive, and high-quality early childhood education. However, realizing this vision will require sustained investment, effective implementation, rigorous monitoring, and active community participation to bridge existing gaps and ensure meaningful outcomes for every child.

References

- Barnett, W. S. (2011). Effectiveness of early educational intervention. *Science*, 333(6045), 975–978. DOI: 10.1126/science.1204534
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th ed.)*. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/qualitative-inquiry-and-research-design/book266033>



- Denham, S. A., Wyatt, T. M., Bassett, H. H., Echeverria, D., & Knox, S. (2012). Assessing social-emotional development in children from a longitudinal perspective. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 53(2), 234–246. DOI: 10.1136/jech.2007.070797
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. Bantam Books. <https://positiveimpact.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/daniel-goleman-emotional-intelligence.pdf>
- Heckman, J. J. (2011). The economics of inequality: The value of early childhood education. *American Educator*, 35(1), 31–47. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ920516.pdf>
- Kaul, V., & Bhattacharjea, S. (2020). *Early childhood education in India: Policy, practice, and challenges*. Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development. <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-981-13-7006-9>
- Ladd, G. W. (2005). *Children's peer relations and social competence*. Yale University Press. <https://yalebooks.yale.edu/book/9780300106435/childrens-peer-relations-and-social-competence/>
- Ministry of Education (MoE). (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Government of India. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English.pdf
- Ministry of Education (MoE). (2021). *NIPUN Bharat Mission Guidelines*. Government of India. <https://dsel.education.gov.in/en/nipun-bharat>
- NAEYC. (2020). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs*. National Association for the Education of Young Children. <https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/PSDAP.pdf>
- NCERT. (2021). *National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education*. National Council of Educational Research and Training. <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/national-curriculum-framework-ncf>
- Rao, N., & Newnham, C. (2021). Early childhood education and development in India: Current status and policy implications. *International Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 53(2), 125–140. DOI: 10.17206/apjrece.2017.11.1.41



- Sharma, R., & Singh, M. (2021). Holistic early childhood care and education: Implications of NEP 2020. *Journal of Education and Development*, 11(3), 45–56. <https://ijrpr.com/uploads/V5ISSUE1/IJRPR22265.pdf>
- Shonkoff, J. P., & Levitt, P. (2010). Neuroscience and the future of early childhood policy. *Neuron*, 67(5), 689–691. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2010.08.032>
- Shonkoff, J. P., & Phillips, D. A. (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. National Academies Press. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25077268/>
- UNESCO. (2021). *SDG 4 Data Digest: Towards Universal Early Childhood Education*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. https://www.uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2025/09/sdg4-data-digest-2019-en_0.pdf
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvjf9vz4>