

Type and Selection Process of Books for Preschool Children

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ABSTRACT The present research is an exploratory attempt to study the type and selection process of books for preschool children of Jammu city. The sample of the study was 20 principals of pre-schools of Jammu city, of Jammu State, winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir State. Systematic random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Interview schedule was used to gather the information. The results of the study reveal that majority of the schools had set of books and preferred picture books and workbooks. Most of the principals preferred books having attractive and colourful pictures and not in favour of providing expensive books. Data also showed that books, which were prescribed by the authority, were preferred. Majority of the principals were of the view that there should be some books for teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Preschool education acts as the first stepping stone as well as the preparation for future life, where the child gets benefited physically, intellectually, socially, morally, and psychologically. Our educationist and psychologists are of firm opinion that great emphasis and attention should be laid on the children of age 2 to 6 years. The early period of the child is considered as most impressionable. During this period efforts are made to enable the child to develop habits of self-discipline and obedience to others. He is provided with play activities and also given elementary training in 3R's i.e. reading, writing and arithmetic. Formal and informal education is imparted during these years.

Books play an important and prominent role in educating a person, so it becomes necessary for a person to choose good books especially for the young children. Textbooks are in a way, a necessary tool in the hands of the teachers with which they are able to carry on their routine of teaching in the classroom situations. A textbook is a prescribed book of the students of particular age groups. It covers items as given in the syllabus. Children's books are a wonderful source for helping children adjust to the rapid change occurring in their daily lives. Looking at books is in itself an imaginary experience. Sometimes children enter into the imaginary story created by the author. More often they use the pictures to generate their own

fantasies. When children have a happy introduction to books, they discover there are fun, laughter, adventure, information and enlightenment in them. Given a rich menu of books a child will develop ideas, vocabulary and grammar. Each book is designed and carefully planned according to the age, needs and interest of the children. This study will help to find out types of books that have been chosen for educating the children in the preschools of Jammu city.

METHODOLOGY

The sample of the study consists of 20 preschools of Jammu city of Jammu district of Jammu and Kashmir State.

Controlled Variables

1. Only Private schools having preschool classes were selected.
2. Only preschools of urban areas of Jammu city were included in the sample.

Sampling Techniques: A list of preschools located in Jammu city was prepared by making personal visit of the preschools and then randomly preschools were selected. Systematic random sampling techniques were used to select the principals.

Tools used for Data Collection: Interview schedule was prepared for the principals.

Procedure of Data Collection: The data as collected by personal visits. First of all, permission was taken from the principals of the preschools. In the first visit, rapport was established and then information was obtained.

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Procedure of Data Analysis: Both qualitative and quantitative analysis was done. The responses obtained were coded, tabulated and then percentages were drawn and content analysis was done.

RESULTS

Background Information of the Respondents:

Table 1 reveal that the mean age of the principals was 47 years and majority of them were females. The mean educational qualification of the principals was graduation with B.Ed and the mean teaching experience of the principals was 18 years.

Types and Selection Process of the Books:

Results reveal that majority (75%) of the preschools had a set of books because they were of the view that if schools did not provide set of books then the teacher were not be able to teach in the class systematically and set of books provides guidelines to the teachers. Books also help the children to be particular about what they have to study in the prescribed time. 25% of schools did not have set of books, as they believed that books are not important. Only few books were used such as English, Math and one storybook. As more stress was given on play way method. They believed that with the help of play, child can learn easily, take interest in studies and do not feel boredom.

Table 2 shows that majority (71.4% and 83%) of the preschools were provided English and math textbooks whereas all the preschools were provided Hindi textbooks. 14.4% of the preschools were provided English work books and 17% preschools were provided math

workbooks. 14.2% preschools provided English story and rhyme books whereas none of the preschool provided Hindi work, story and rhyme books. It was also found that majority (65%) of the principals were satisfied with prescribed set of books as they think that these books were according to the need of the children. In 25% of preschools principals wanted to add more picture books, drawing books, work books and fun books in the prescribed set of books. While 10% of the principals wanted to delete Hindi books and also English rhymes and story books as they were of the view that during this stage child is too small and is not able to learn these.

Table 3 reveals that most of the principals (55%) preferred books having attractive and colorful pictures because the children like them very much. 25% of preschools principals preferred books which were according to the child's level of learning because learning is the basis of success in life and occupies very important place in the field of education. Cost of the books was also considered an important factor while selecting books because in most of the schools children were coming from the middle class families and it becomes difficult for them to buy expensive books.

Table 3: Criteria of selecting books

Criteria of selecting books	Principals	n=20%
Having attractive, and colorful pictures	11	55
Child's level of learning	5	25
Cost	4	20

Table 1: Background information of the respondents

Information	Mean
Age (in years)	47
Sex	Female
Educational Qualification	Graduate with B.Ed
Teaching Experience (in years)	18

Table 2: Books used in the preschools

Books*	English		Math		Hindi	
	n=28	%	n=24	%	n=17	%
Text books	20	71.4	20	83	17	100
Work books	4	14.4	4	1	-	-
Story books	2	7.1	-	7	-	-
Rhyme books	2	7.1	-	-	-	-

(Preschools= 20) *Multiple Responses

It was found that most of the principals were not in favor of providing expensive books because they think that in expensive books also provides the same content, quality and attractiveness. Costly, books can be purchased only once and if the books are cheaper they can purchase again and again in case if the books are lost. While 30% of preschools were of the view that expensive books are better because their printed material is better in comparison with inexpensive books.

If the books prescribed in the syllabus are not available in the market, the most of principals (55%) did not substitute the other books, but they could wait or order the publisher. While 45% of principals substitute the books as they were of the view that time is very precious and they did not want to

waste the time of the children so they preferred alternative books for the time being.

Books Recommended for the Teachers: 70% of the principals were of the view that their should be some books for teachers because with the help of these books teachers can understand about the child psychology as well as the knowledge regarding the all round development of the children. Teachers with the help of these books also learn about the new methodologies used in teaching. Teachers also learn regarding the teaching aids that how the teaching aids should be used in the class perfectly and accurately. While remaining 30% preschools did not provides such books for the teachers as they were of the view that teaching experience is more important.

DISCUSSION

Present study reveals that majority of schools had a set of books as per the view that the language of the textbooks is the language not only of words, and sentences but that of illustrations, pictures, diagrams etc and if the set of books are not provided in the school teacher could not be able to teach in the class systematically. Hess (1990) also focused in the study that books were most useful and a rich source in the preschool. Majority of schools in the present study provided alphabet books, counting books, workbooks, story books, rhyme books and Hindi books but some schools avoid Hindi books and story books as per the view that children were not in a position to learn. They preferred that teacher should teach stories and rhymes for the sake of enjoyment and for social, emotional, intellectual, as well as language development. A previous study conducted by Leung and Pikulski (1990) found that repeated exposure to stories and rhymes increased children's use of target words in their pretend readings but Study conducted by Senechal (1996) contradict these studies that teaching of stories and rhymes is important but story and rhyme books too had an important influence on the development of children's language, as the child learn by sight the interrelationship between the visual and the given text. Data show that majority

of the schools had some criteria while selecting the books like cost of the books, child's level of learning and books having attractive and colorful pictures. Jill and Kant (1970), Heyneman (1983) too reach similar results that all books should have clear illustrations, which do not pender to coyness and also have a substantial effect on the pupils' achievement. Majority of schools preferred inexpensive books because they were of the view that an inexpensive book provides good quality, content and attractiveness and mostly children in the school were from the middle class families. They were not in a position to buy costly books. If a particular books was not available in the market majority of schools used to wait for those books and inform the publisher to publish books as soon as possible. In majority of the schools books were also provided to teachers so that with the help of these books teachers could understand the child's psychology as well as the knowledge regarding the all-round development of the child. Teacher also learns new methodologies regarding the teaching aids so that they would be able to teach in the class in a better way. These books also provide guidelines to the teachers so that the teacher can prepare the topics properly.

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