



Policy and Practice of  
Early Childhood Education and Care  
across Countries

*Report of NIER Study Visit Programme*

**Department for International Research and Co-operation**

**National Institute of Educational Policy Research (NIER)**

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**Tokyo Japan**

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## Forward

NIER Study Visit Programme on ECEC (Early Childhood Education and Care) Policy and Practice is one of the ODA programmes organized by our institute, and researchers and policy makers on ECEC from Asia and the Pacific region participated in it from 27 to 30 October, 2009.

It is our honor to be able to invite excellent experts on ECEC policy and practice from such countries as India, Malaysia, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Taiwan and Turkey on this opportunity. I am glad to hear that all the participants enjoyed study visit to typical or new type of ECEC settings in Tokyo, and not only this field trip, but they also joined the lectures on Japanese educational history and ECEC system on the first day and held a last day seminar exchanging the latest cross-country information on ECEC (ECCE).

This final report includes the whole process of this study visit programme, especially, the country papers which all the participants kindly handed in are very precious (see Annex 3) to Japanese educational policy makers and researchers.

We would like to express our deep appreciation for the great contribution of the participants and kind co-operation of the institutes where they visited during the programme.

Tomiji Sugawa  
Director General, NIER



## Section I: Introduction

### Background

Today, much attention goes to Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) more than before in the world of education. Many governments, policy-makers and researchers found its importance because some remarkable research findings across countries are available. For example, OECD Reports, Starting Strong I and II (2001/2006), and one of UNESCO-EFA Global Monitoring Reports, Strong Foundations (2007) show the influence and impacts of the governmental investments and initiatives towards ECEC.

Japan is not an exception: Its ECEC policies and practices have been promoted for recent years and ECEC is still a nationwide concern. Because child population declines, ECEC relates with the societal issues on not only education for children and lifelong-learning but also economy as well as human resource and labour.

The purpose of this international study visit programme is to provide an opportunity to the excellent researchers from Asia and Pacific countries for 1) sharing the experiences on ECEC policies and practices in discussions among participating countries and 2) studying the Japanese cases by field trips and lectures.

The programme was held from 27 to 30 October 2009 at the National Institute for Educational Policy Research (NIER) for country reports and ECEC fields for observation and interviews. The participants were experts on ECEC, belong to academic and/or research institutes. The participating countries were from India, Malaysia, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Taiwan and Turkey. The participants prepared a short country report in addition to presentation (Annex 3). The report covered the following themes:

1. Outline of the ECEC system (age 0 to 6 or compulsory school age) in his/her country, including its auspices or legal status; funding resources and parental cost; access and provision of the service; and contents and methods as pre-primary education, etc.
2. Present most significant ECEC policy issues in his/her country.
3. Innovative and/or typical examples of ECEC practice in his/her country.

## Section II: Visit to ECEC in Japan

### Places visited

#### Shirogane Yochi-en Kindergarten

Type: Private Kindergarten

Age range: 3-5 years old (50 pupils in each grade with 2 classes)

Number of Teachers/Staffs: 13 teachers and 1 administrative staff

Location: Urban area (15 minutes from Tokyo center by subway)

Shirogane Yochi-en was founded in 1946 as an experimental kindergarten of NIER but before it was transferred to be a private kindergarten afterward. It has long been practicing play-centred outdoor and indoor activities, where children can enjoy the surroundings full of nature and undulations of ground. Their buildings are very cozy and well designed to be open to children, staffs, parents and community people.

#### Yanagicho Kodomo no Mori ECEC Centre

Type: Integrated Public Kindergarten and Day Nursery, Bunkyo -ward, Tokyo

Age range: 1-5 years old (Yanagicho Day Nursery for 1-3 year olders:36 children / Yanagicho Kindergarten: 4 -5 year olders: 84 children)

Number of Teachers/Staffs: 10 child-minders, 7 teachers, 18 part-time staffs

Location: Urban area (15 minutes from Tokyo center by subway)

Yanagicho Kodomo no Mori is an integrated public kindergarten and day nursery. For the purpose of implementing integrated ECEC for 1-5 year old children in the community, local government attached the original kindergarten and the day care center, in the same site. 1-3 year-old classes provide day care services for the working parents and 4 and 5 year old classes include half day ECEC (basic course) and one day ECEC (extended course). This new system has started in 2006, and this was the first case in Bunkyo ward, Tokyo Metropolitan Area.

#### Tamagawa Gakuen Yochi-en

Type: Private Kindergarten

Age range: 3-5 years old (50 pupils in each grade with 2 classes)

Number of Teachers/Staffs: 13 teachers and 4 staffs

Location: Sub-urban area (30 minutes from Tokyo center by train)

Tamagawa K-12 & University was founded in 1929 as an elementary education organization. Later secondary education divisions were added, and in 1947 Tamagawa University received approval for establishment as an "old system" (pre-war) university. As a comprehensive institution (gakuen), it currently provides education from kindergarten to graduate school level within a single campus.

With its primary educational principle of "Zenjin" Education, and as a private school with definite individuality, it aims to build rich and harmonious human culture beginning with scholarship, morality, arts, religion, the body and everyday life.

## Mitakeno Oka Hoiku-en

Type: Public day nursery

Age range: 0-5 years old (60 children)

Number of Child minders/Staffs: 25 child minders and 8 staffs

Location: Urban center (Shibuya, one of the busiest areas in Tokyo)

A "public financed-private managed" type of child-care center (a day nursery which provides extended child care service for working parents). This type of child-care centers often uses the closed elementary school building or its site. Mitakeno Oka also includes home for the aged and multi-purpose meeting rooms for the community. Its building and facilities are provided by public sector (Shibuya-ward) and managements and human resources are provided by private sector (Benesse cooperation) under contract with Shibuya-ward office.



## Observation shared

The common observation from the field trip to the Japanese kindergarten and nursery school during the two days were summarized as follows:

1. **Space & Environment:** All the Japanese institutes seem to have playground, open-area, green nature. It is good for child development, especially nourishing their respect for nature. The value of cleaning room is important as a goal of learning informally, comparing to some of participants' countries have an issue of keeping campus clean. Although the institutes the participants observed were much better than average ones in Japan, all the equipments seemed to be very well organized and designed.
2. **Contents of Activities/learning and their backgrounds:** They seem diverse from the end of the needs for academic ability to that of personality development. The contents observed in the field were vary and flexible. We observed, for example, sweet potato was used for activity material. The senior class (age 5) took the potato at the previous week and gave it to the younger classes (age 3 and 4), and the younger groups ate the potato and tried to draw the picture of potato and the family. Even the rather culturally homogenous Japanese children also have much diversity in children's personal development such as mental and physical aspects. Using music is also a good channel to develop children's recognition and social skills in good manner. Some participants' countries emphasize the programmes for academic ability.
3. **Time:** the Japanese institutes provide service in limits. Others offer flexible time in diverse social background like race and poverty as well as climate and natural conditions such as warm weather and remote areas. Same as elementary school close at 4pm so that parents want them to stay on campus longer for their work.
4. **Personnel:** The young Japanese private kindergarten teaching staff quit their job after marriage. Almost all of them are female (c.f. 6% of male for the total staff, including managers) and accumulate their experience as a kindergarten/nursery teacher for four or five years before they leave the institute. One of the reasons they leave is lower salary (200,000 to 230,000 yen/mo). Another is availability of residence around the institute. ON the other hand, they look very happy in working. For the training, the four-year system is longer than other countries. Part-time teaching staff also commit to the activities in the institute. Two professional teaching staff stayed in the class of around 30 children.
5. **Family & Community:** Several participants pointed out the social pressure to mothers for caring small children. The social change creates the various needs from the parents. Parents come to the institute to help its management and they also used its equipments for their own activities.

6. **Problem:** The largest problem was identified that the coordination and integration were needed between kindergarten and nursery school. Private kindergartens are decreasing and the needs for nursery school are increasing. Governmental supports may be needed more.
7. **Human Communication:** The most impressive scene in the field was smile from staff and children. Taking series of small notes by teachers was also observed as sign of how much they pay attention to the children in every moment. The staff share the notes among other teaching staff, management and sometimes with parents.
8. **Other issues** raised from the country reports: Special education needs, minority/indigenous groups in remote areas, Holistic approach, teacher's license system, children-centred approach. Dilemma between development and implementation of curriculum. Drawing picture is one of the children's common channel for their little language skills.
9. **Other issues in system:** free education provision?



## Section III: Discussions on ECEC

### Common Issues Identified

#### **Teacher:**

Salary of teachers:

- Teachers receive low salary except Turkey. Education is not popular for young generation in most of countries.
- Teachers easy quit their teaching profession and move to other business sector. (India, Malaysia)
- Official agreement of minimum wage for teachers is not reflect reality (not enough for their professional burden and/or lower than other business sector); Government try to increase the salary in India. (In the context of government sponsored scheme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme of Government of India. Preschool education is being one of the five components of the ICDS.)
- Low but lifelong employment guaranteed by official authority (Taiwan).
- While public school teachers are paid higher than private in the high competitive exam (e.g. only 6 employed for thousands of kindergartens in Seoul in 2007) (Korea)
- Pension for public school teachers. (Japan, Korea and Taiwan)

#### **Training of teachers**

Qualification of teachers:

- Certificate from higher educational institutions is required but still many untrained teachers (most of them have no certification) are working (India and Taiwan).
- Teachers are trained in two phases either during pre-service or in-service courses. (Malaysia)

The universities and teacher training institutions are given the responsibility to train teachers at the pre-service level. Criteria are specified and candidates will have to go through strict interviews in order to be selected for training. At the in-service level teachers are invited to attend short courses to upgrade their knowledge and skills. However this poses problem because it creates a situation whereby there are classes where there are no teachers. Efforts are made to ensure that there will be not too many teachers attending in-service courses at one time so that parents will not complain over the absence of teachers.

## **System:**

### **Tuition free:**

- There are wide range of tuition fee in private schools.
- Tuition fee for public school is lower than private in general.
- Public pre-school is all free including children's uniform (Mexico).

### **Promotion/awareness:**

- National campaign for complete enrolment to kindergarten (Taiwan)
- Integration between kindergarten and day care center (Japan, Korea and Taiwan): Attached institute (kindergarten and day care center share building, playground and human resources etc.). To comply different low is major source of complexity. Ministries' responsibilities are also different.
- Difficult to enroll because of small capacity/number of day nursery schools, on the other hand, some kindergartens are face shortage of children (Japan).
- Curriculum: continuity to upper schooling (Korea).
- Evaluation: government or authority's inspection/monitoring for public schools.
- Teacher-children ratio: varies from 1-35 to 1-10

## **Social Backgrounds:**

Young parents have to work and leave their children to nursery school.

Children have to study after school. Academic skills development will be required from their parents and little attention is paid to the personality development (Korea).

Gender balance of teachers (Turkey has increasing number of male students for pre-schooling teachers at training institutions but in other countries majority of teachers are female.)

Low fertility rate (Japan, Korea and Taiwan)



## Challenges and Innovations

Enrichment conditions of ECEC will lead more birth rate.

The number of teachers will decrease while the child population decline or keep/increase for enrich ECEC.

Activities in ECEC for academic oriented or personality development.

New type of institute such as public-fund & private-managed institution (Japan).

Partnership:

Malaysia will definitely appreciate the cooperate and private sectors to play active role and forge partnership especially with regards to networking and funding. The Malaysian government have formulated strategies so that more public centres and classes are built to meet the ever growing needs of preschoolers. At the moment certain percentage of parents have to send their children to private centres due to the lack of classes at the public schools.

**New institute:**

**e.g. public-fund & private-managed in Tokyo i.e. Public-Private Partnership**



## Annex 1: List of Participants

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## Annex 2: Agenda and Schedule of Work

### **27 October (Tue)**

- 10:00 - 10:30 Registration/ Orientation  
10:30 - 10:50 Courtesy Call to NIER Director-General

(Facilitator: **Hideki Maruyama**)

- 10:50 - 11:00 Inaugural Session & Introduction  
11:00 - 12:00 Lecture on Education and Development in Japan (*including tea break*)  
*by Yasuo Saito (NIER)*  
12:00 - 12:30 Discussion from Japanese experience  
  
12:30 - 14:00 *Lunch Break*

(Facilitator: **Yasuo Saito**)

- 14:00 - 15:00 Presentation of ECEC in Japan  
*by Yuko Tarumi (Ochanomizu Univeristy)*  
15:00 - 15:30 *Tea break*  
15:30 - 16:30 Discussion about ECEC in Japan  
16:30 - 17:00 Summary & Introduction for Field Trips  
*by Mariko Ichimi Abumiya & Taro Numano (NIER)*

### **28 October (Wed)**

Field Trip

- 9:30~11:30 Shirokane Yochi-en (Meguro-ku) Kindergarten  
14:00~17:30 Yanagicho Kodomo no Mori (Bunkyo-ku,) ECEC Center

### **29 October (Thu)**

Field Trip

- 9:30-10:30 Tamagawa Gakuen Yochi-bu Kindergarten (Machida-city)  
11:30-12:30 Tamagawa University, Faculty of Education  
Lecture on Teacher Training

12:30~14:30 *Lunch Break & Campus Trip*

16:00-18:00: Mitake no Oka (Shibuya-ku) Child-care Center

### **30 October (Fri)**

(Facilitator: **Hideki Maruyama**)

9:30 - 10:30 General Feedback on Field Trips

Discussion Issues Raised by **Mariko Ichimi Abumiya (NIER)**

10:30 - 12:30 Country Presentation & Round Table Discussion – 1 (*including Q&A*)

10:30 – 11:00 **India** by **Mr. G.C. Upadhyay (NCERT)**

11:00 – 11:30 **Malaysia** by **Ms. Mokolus Binti Mo Kattubawa Rowther (MOE)**

11:30 – 12:00 **Mexico** by **Ms. Angélica López (Government of Mexico City)**

12:00 - 14:00 *Lunch Break*

(Facilitator: **Taro Numano**)

14:00 - 15:00 Country Presentation & Round Table Discussion (continued)

14:00 – 14:30 **Korea** by **Ms. Soon Hwan Kim (Ewha Womans University)**

14:30 – 15:00 **Taiwan** by **Ms. Yu-ching Yeh (National Chiayi University)**

15:00 – 15:30 **Turkey** by **Ms. Çağlayan Dinçer (Ankara University)**

15:30 - 16:00 *Tea break*

16:00 - 17:00 Summary Discussion & Overall Feedback

17:00 - Closing

## Annex 3: Resource and Country Papers

*Japan*  
*Yasuo Saito*  
*NIER*

### Education in Japan: Past and Present

The introduction of a modern education into Japan, taking several Western countries as models, began in the latter part of the 19th century. The arrival of modernization in Japan was therefore comparatively late, but education underwent very rapid development within a short space of time. In that time, in Japan, there were some particular socio-cultural conditions that were favorable for its development as follows: (1) the educational heritage of the *Tokugawa* shogunate *Edo* era (1603-1968), (2) the secular tradition in education, (3) the linguistic homogeneity that allows using Japanese as the sole medium of instruction, (4) recognition of urgent necessity for formation of nation-state through education, (5) the emergence of system of recruiting people on the basis of academic attainment, (6) the lack of any colonial legacy in education and the possibility of choosing models from different countries.

#### **1. Introduction of a modern education system: 1868-1885**

##### **[Opening of the country and the Meiji Restoration]**

In 1868, a political revolution took place in Japan, marked by the collapse of the political power held by the Tokugawa Shogunate, and the birth of a new system of political authority with the Emperor at its head. The beginnings of the modernization of Japan can be seen in this revolution, known as the Meiji Restoration. (Meiji comes from the name of the Emperor Meiji) .

During Edo period, the Shogunate government had adopted a policy of keeping the country closed to outside world but in the early part of 19th century it faced a great pressure and military threat by a number of western countries that demanded Japan open its door. In the final stage of Edo era, Japan fell into a state of civil war. The feudal system had hampered the emergence of a national consciousness. The new government of Meiji attempted to overcome this crisis by abolishing the feudal regime and turning Japan into a unified, modern nation-state. Adopting main slogans, “Civilization and Enlightenment”( *Bunmei kaika*), “Enrich the Country, Strengthen the Military” (*Fukoku kyôhei*), they introduced modern social and economic systems to Japan. And education reform was also included within this modernization package.

##### **[The concept of the Education System Order]**

In 1871, the Ministry of Education was established. And in the following year, 1872, the first systematic education regulation was promulgated in the form of the Education System Order. School system followed the American model, which consisted of three levels of schooling, elementary school, middle school and university. On the other hand, administrative system followed the French, with the strong central control of Ministry of Education and the system of school districts. Under the Education System Order, the plan for the establishment of schools took the following form. The entire country was

divided into 8 university districts, each of these was divided into 32 middle school districts, and each of these was further divided into 210 elementary school districts. In principle, all children were required to attend to elementary school, regardless of sex, parental occupation or social status.

Traditional educational institutions were transformed and incorporated into the new systems. Many *Terakoya*, or popular learning houses for the teaching of reading and writing and the practical skills to the commoners, became elementary schools. Many of the *Hanko* (fief schools) for samurai warrior class were transformed into local middle schools. Although the *Shōhei-zaka Gakumonjo*, the supreme Confucian education institution established by the shogunate government, was abolished, two other Western-style educational establishments set up in the Edo era, the “*Kaisei-jo*” and a medical institute, continued to exist after the Meiji Restoration and eventually developed into the University of Tokyo. To modernize the content and methods of elementary education, in 1872, the government invited Professor Marion Scott from the United States a specialist in teacher education, and the Tokyo Normal School was established.

#### **[Employment of foreign consultants and dispatch of students for overseas study]**

In the early years of the Meiji era, the government employed many foreign consultants while paying them exceptionally high salaries. In the early institutions of higher education, many courses were instructed by foreign professors. At the same time, the government sent large numbers of capable students to study abroad. After studying for a number of years, they returned to Japan and in a very short space of time replaced the foreign instructors. To finance these enterprises, the government was forced to invest large amount of its available funds. In this situation, for the establishment and running of elementary schools, the government became largely dependent on local government funds, taxes on the residents of school districts, and tuition fees.

#### **[A compromise with reality]**

The educational development plan formulated in the early years of the Meiji period was ambitious and magnificent in its scale, but it was too uniform and unrealistic. Of the 8 universities that it was planned, by 1877, only one, the University of Tokyo, had actually been created. In 1879, the government, in an effort to come to terms with reality, abolished the Education System Order and promulgated a new Education Order. The system of school districts was abolished, and schools were to be administered by the municipalities. The years of schooling was also shortened and school attendance rules were relaxed. However, under this “liberal” Education Order, attendance rates worsened still further and criticism mounted, so that after only one year, in 1890, a revised Education Order was issued. Under the revised Order, central control was once again strengthened, and the school attendance requirement was strictly set at a period of 3 years.

#### **[A clash of ideologies]**

Also around the end of the 1870s, changes began to appear in the ideological context of education. Opposing the course of Westernization that had been followed since the Meiji Restoration, a movement emerged, driven primarily by the conservatives in the Imperial Court, seeking a change in education policies. They alleged a decline in public

morals resulting from excessive Westernization, and emphasized the need for a restoration of morals based on traditional ethics. In 1879, the Emperor sent the Imperial Will on the Great Principles of Education (*Kyôgaku Taishi*). In this document, emphasis was placed on Confucian ideas such as duty, loyalty and filial piety, and patriotism. In the revised Education Order of 1880, education of “morals” (*Shûshin*) took on new importance.

## **2. The development and expansion of education: 1886-1945**

### **[Minister Mori’s conception of the education system]**

In 1885, a cabinet system of government was introduced. As the first Minister of Education, *Mori Arinori* was appointed. He was an enlightened bureaucrat with diplomatic experience of both Britain and America. He created the basic framework of an education system, which was to become the foundation of educational development in Japan. In 1886, Mori issued 4 separate school orders for different parts of the educational system, namely the Elementary School Order, the Middle School Order, the Normal School Order, and the Imperial University Order.

The sole university, the University of Tokyo, was designated as an “Imperial University”, which was identified as an institution with the purpose of training the elite leaders and technocrats who were to be equipped with the advanced Western knowledge and skills. Imperial university received both privileges and a considerable amount of academic freedom. The middle schools were the institutions designated to prepare students to enter an Imperial University. On the other hand, the elementary school was identified as the training centers responsible for bringing up children to become loyal subjects of the Emperor. Attendance at the 4 years’ ordinary elementary course was imposed as a duty on all citizens. Normal schools were identified as key institutions to inculcate all future teachers with a nationalist ideology.

By these measures, Education Minister Mori aimed to harmonize the twin objectives of, on the one hand, modernizing Japan and, on the other hand, realizing the spiritual unity of the people through a strengthening of national morality.

### **[The Imperial Rescript on Education]**

The second objective was greatly strengthened by the proclamation of the Imperial Rescript on Education (*kyôiku chokugo*) in 1890. Basing its stance on ideas drawn from Confucian culture and the Japanese classics, the Rescript set out the standards of behavior expected from the Japanese people and strongly emphasized the virtues of patriotism and loyalty to the Emperor. For the next 50 years, right up until the end of World War II, the Imperial Rescript on Education continued to have a great influence on Japanese education.

### **[The diversification of the education system]**

In 1893, the government issued the Vocational Supplementary School Regulations and in 1894, the Apprentice School Regulations, thereby aiming to provide an elementary industrial education. In addition, in 1899, the Vocational School Order was enacted, covering secondary schools for industry, agriculture, commerce, mercantile marine, and practical vocational skills. In 1903 the government issued the Professional College Order. In the Professional Colleges (*Senmon gakkô*), graduates from a middle

school or girls' high school took specialized training course such as medicine, pharmacy, law, engineering, and commerce. In 1897, a second imperial university was established in Kyoto, and others followed, in 1907 in Sendai, in 1910 in Fukuoka, and elsewhere.

#### **[Extension of compulsory education]**

In the 1890s, a steady improvement of school attendance rate could be observed. By 1898, the school enrollment rate during the compulsory education period had reached 69%. In 1900, it was decided that no tuition fees would be required for attendance at elementary school. Also in 1900, the system of automatic promotion through grades was adopted and grade-repetition and dropout from elementary school steadily decreased. Then in 1907, compulsory education was extended from 4 to 6 years. And in a wider social context, adult illiteracy is seen as having been virtually disappeared by the early years of the 20th century.

#### **[The expansion of secondary and higher education]**

Stimulated by the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) and World War I (1914-1918), Japanese capitalism underwent rapid development. At the same time, popular demand for education increased, and there were rising calls for expansion and reorganization of the education system. In 1918 the University Order was promulgated. Under this Order, approval was given for the establishment of single-subject universities and private universities. Professional Colleges and higher schools also saw an increase in numbers. At the same time, normal schools gradually advanced to the level of professional colleges, or grew closer to the higher education sector. By this time, the enrollment rate of compulsory education had reached 99%. It is fair to say that a modern education system was virtually established in Japan by around 1920.

#### **[The rise of ultra-nationalism and militarism]**

In the area of educational theory and methodology, the decades of 1910s and the 1920s saw the introduction of the ideas of John Dewey and other educationists, and the influence of the global movement known as the New Education Movement was also felt here. But as Japan moved into the 1930s, ultra-nationalist trends gradually became discernible in Japanese education policies. In 1937, with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, militarism became increasingly prominent, and following Japan's entry into World War II, militarist education was strengthened. Control over ideas and academic content was strengthened. In the final stages of the war, students were mobilized to produce foodstuffs or military supplies. Teachers were also drafted into the armed forces, and children in urban areas were evacuated into rural districts to escape from air bomb attacks. At the end of the war, in 1945, Japan's school system was virtually completely paralyzed.

### **3. Education reforms after the end of World War II**

#### **[Defeat in war, and education reforms under the occupation]**

With defeat in war in 1945, Japan was occupied by the Allied Forces. From that time until 1951, Japan was placed under the control of the General Headquarters of the Allied Forces (GHQ). Under this system, de-militarization, democratization, and the rebuilding of the country were all taken forward. In 1946, a new Constitution proclaiming pacifism

and democracy was promulgated. GHQ requested the U.S. to dispatch “United States Education Mission to Japan” to examine the postwar Japanese education reforms. The Education Mission arrived in March 1946 and issued a report containing a series of recommendations. The large-scale postwar reform of the Japanese education system was carried out on the basis of the recommendations of this mission.

#### **[The main points of education reform]**

What came to form the core of education reforms was the Fundamental Law of Education, enacted in 1947. This law clearly set out the fundamental principles of postwar education in Japan, and effectively replaced the prewar Imperial Rescript on Education. Following it, a number of educational laws determining the structure and management of the education system were passed, including the School Education Law (1947), the Board of Education Law (1948), the Social Education Law (1949), and the Private School Law (1949). The basic framework of the new education system was as follows: (1) a shift from the prewar, dual school system to a single track system, known as the 6-3-3-4 system; (2) the extension of compulsory education to 9 years, including elementary school and lower secondary school; (3) the adoption in principle of co-education; (4) the establishment of boards of education at prefecture and municipality level; (5) the abolition of normal schools and the establishment of a university-based teacher training system. In the context of an impoverished country following the defeat in war, it was no easy task to implement these reforms. But it was decided to press ahead with full implementation.

#### **[The democratization of educational administration]**

In the area of educational administration, American-style local boards of education were introduced. However, implementation of the system of boards of education has faced various problems. In 1956, to adjust the system of board of education to Japanese conditions, the “Law concerning the Organization and Management of Local Educational Administration” was enacted. The system of boards of education remained, but the authority of local boards of education was somewhat curtailed. At the same time, the superior-subordinate relationship linking the Ministry of Education, prefecture boards of education and municipal boards of education was strengthened.

#### **[The laws concerned with improving the school and learning environment]**

From the 1950s on, a series of laws were enacted with the aim of improving the school and learning environment. In 1954, the “Law for the Promotion of Education in Remote and Isolated Areas” was enacted with the aim of improving educational conditions in mountainous areas or on remote islands. Special financial provisions were made available for the purpose of upgrading facilities and equipment in schools in these areas, and special allowances were paid to teachers who worked in them. Also in 1954, to set out criteria for the improvement of school lunches, the School Lunch Law was established. In 1958, the “School Health Law” was approved with the objective of making provisions for maintaining children’s health, administering a hygienic environment in schools. Finally in 1963, the “Law concerning the Free Provision of Textbooks in Compulsory Education Schools” was promulgated.

#### **[Promotion of industrial education and science education]**

Also enacted were two laws which aimed to promote specific areas of education, namely the “Industrial Education Promotion Law” in 1951, and the “Science Education Promotion Law” in 1953. These laws set out national criteria relating to the laboratories, facilities and equipment needed for industrial education and science education. All schools, public and private, that want to improve their scientific facilities to satisfy the criteria could apply for a national subsidy that would meet all or part of the costs.

#### **4. Success and Problems**

##### **[Expansion of popular demand for education]**

The education system underwent rapid quantitative expansion from the 1950s on. By 1950, the extension of compulsory education to 9 years was virtually completed. There was an increase in the number of people who wanted to go on further. In the first place, this affected the upper secondary education, and subsequently, the higher education level. The advancement rate to the upper secondary schools stood at 42.5% in 1950, rising to 57.7% in 1960, reaching 82.1% in 1970, and rising again to 94.1% in 1980.

The number of students going on to junior colleges and universities also increased. In 1960, the percentage going on to higher education was a mere 10.3% of the age cohort (15.3% of boys, 4.6% of girls). Higher education was still tinged with a elitism. But by 1970, the figure had reached 23.6%. By 1980, the figure had risen still further, to reach 37.4% (41.3% of boys and 33.7% of girls). In the same way as in the U.S., the massification of higher education was seen as having become a reality.

##### **[A law to secure capable education personnel]**

While in 1974, during the period of rapid economic growth in Japan, saw the enactment of the law that has such a long title, the “Law Concerning Special Measure for Securing Capable Educational Personnel in Compulsory Education Schools for the Maintenance and Enhancement of School Education Standards”. The aim was to recruit people of outstanding talent into the teaching profession in opposition to the tendency for such capable young people to concentrate in private companies. There was a stipulation in the law that the salary of the teachers in the compulsory education schools must be treated more favorably than the salary level of general public servants. Following the enactment of the law, during the period 1974-78, the salary of teachers in compulsory education schools was revised three times, it had risen by 30% and became to be higher than the salary paid to general civil servants. After these measures, the traditional image of a low-paid teacher was shaken off. The number of the applicants for teaching profession increased sharply and the examination for appointment of teachers organized by prefecture boards of education became more competitive. In economic terms too, the teaching profession became an attractive work option among young people.

##### **[Japanese growth and the role of education]**

Japan’s educational results were also affirmed by international comparative studies on educational achievement. In the international investigation such as IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement), both in mathematics and in science, Japanese students were placed in the world top rank. There can be no doubt that education has provided the driving force for economic, social and cultural

development in Japan. Looked at as a whole, Japanese education has provided a large number of people who acquired the qualities demanded by the industrial world and Japanese society, specifically people who possessed the basic knowledge and skills to respond to technical change and innovation, who were disciplined, diligent, and constant and who had the collaborative skills needed to work in a group.

#### **[The emergence of educational problems]**

On the other hand, Japanese education did face a number of problems. Criticisms have been made on excessive uniformity and rigidity leading to an imposition of excessive control over children's behavior. In addition, the excessive competition for entry to the best schools or top-class universities inflicted psychological stress on both children and parents. This intensified competition was often referred to in the media as "examination hell". Criticisms were made that a compulsion to rote memorization and educational force-feeding would be robbing children of the spirit of inquiry and of creative thinking. Attention was drawn to the increase in the number of children who were unable to keep up with their classes, the so-called "*Ochikobore*". To supplement or to compensate the studies, so many children commuted to "*Juku*", private tutoring schools during the evenings and/or weekends.

In addition, there was frequent reporting in the media of what was called "the desolation of education", for example, a phenomenon whereby some students reject to attend school (*Futôkô*) by reason of "dislike for school", in-school violence, bullying (*Ijime*) among pupils, apathy on the part of student.

On the other hand, there was a general impression that once students had cleared the entrance examination hurdle to get into university, Japanese higher education institutions did not demand strict study from their students. No particularly great effort was required to move up a grade, and students could expend their energies on club activities, recreation and part-time work. In contrast to the high quality level of elementary and secondary education, the mediocre quality of higher education became a major problem issue.

## **5. Discourses for Educational Reform**

#### **[The Central Council for Education and the Third Educational Reform]**

With Japan's entry into the 1970s, voices were increasingly heard advocating the need to reform the whole education system. In 1971, the Central Council for Education (*Chûkyôshin*), an advisory body to the Minister of Education, submitted a report consisting of "a fundamental policy for the comprehensive expansion of the education system". It contemplated a comprehensive reform aimed at restructuring all levels of education from kindergarten through university and called it oneself as "the third major educational reform".

The report engendered a fierce debate. In particular, the Japan Teachers Union adopted a clear oppositional stance, claiming that the CCE put forward reform proposals without making a critical examination of the postwar reforms. In addition to oppositions, the economic retrenchment and budgetary cutbacks following the "oil shock" of 1973 had made it difficult to implement large-scale education reforms.

#### **[Prime Minister Nakasone and NCER]**

At the end of 1982, Mr. Nakasone came into power. Prime Minister Nakasone showed great eagerness to bring about education reform. In 1984, as an advisory body under the direct jurisdiction of the Prime Minister, the National Council on Education Reform (NCER, *Rinkyōshin*) was launched. Great interest was shown by the mass media in the launching of the NCER. It remained in existence for 3 years and issued a total of 4 reports.

In August 1987, the final report was published. Fundamental perspectives on educational reform are presented in the form of three principles: (1) the principle of putting emphasis on the individuality of students; (2) the move to a system of lifelong learning; and (3) the response to changes such as internationalization and advancement of information technology.

## 6. Education reform in the 1990s

Many of the principles and concepts put forward by NCER were passed over to the Ministry of Education. And with the advent of the 1990s, educational reform came to assume a concrete shape.

### **[*Ikiru chikara and Yutori*]**

In July 1996, the Central Council for Education submitted the first report of its deliberations on “A model for Japanese education in the perspective of the 21st century”. In the report, the Council set out a vision of Japan’s future, forecasting the intensified internationalization, the further spread of information, the further development of science and technology, global environmental problems and energy problems, also the rapid advancement of an aging society coupled with a declining birthrate. It foresees that Japanese society will face “a difficult period of rapid change, in which the way ahead would be difficult to discern.” On this perspective, the Council pointed out that the children who would have to live in such society would need to be equipped with following qualities:

- (1) The abilities and the qualities conducive to identifying problems for themselves, studying on their own initiative and thinking for themselves, exercising their own judgment and acting independently, and solving problems properly;
- (2) A rich sense of humanity, embracing a ability to control oneself, a willingness to cooperate with others, and a heart that thinks of others and to be sensitive to variable and precious things;
- (3) The health and physical strength enable them to live an active life.

The Council summed up the abilities and qualities outlined here in the phrase “*Ikiru chikara*”(competences for positive living or zest for living). The Council stressed that for this “competences for positive living” to be cultivated in the children, it was important for the school, the home and the community to collaborate together. In addition, the Council said, in order to develop these competences, it was important for children, for their schools, and for the whole of society, embracing the family and the community, to have “*Yutori*”(latitude or relaxed feeling). For some time after this, “*Ikiru chikara*” and “*yutori*” were taken up and used as the key words in any debate about education reform.

### **[The reform of school education]**

With regard to school education, the CCE made the following recommendations. (1) Review carefully the content of education to reduce the teaching of the mere knowledge or of rote memorization material, and make a strict selection of content and ensure that children have a firm grasp of the fundamentals. In order that children can have “*Yutori*”, shorten the number of teaching hours; (2) With a view to encouraging individual children to develop their own distinctive personality, promote more flexibility in the curriculum and work toward creating schools that have their own distinctive characteristics; (3) In order to cultivate children with a rich sense of humanity and a vigorous physique, strengthen hands-on activities such as volunteer work, contact with nature, work experience; (4) With a view to promoting cross-curricular, comprehensive studies such as international understanding, information education, environmental protection, nature experiences, set up “school periods for integrated learning”. The integrated learning period (*Sōgō gakushū no jikan*) is a time slot, in which each school is expected to develop their own synthetic leaning activities without textbooks. A further recommendation was the proposal for a phased introduction of the five-day school week (once a month from 1992, and twice a month from 1995).

### **[Establishing and implementing the new curriculum]**

In December 1998, the Ministry of Education announced new Courses of Study for elementary and lower secondary schools. Under the new Courses of Study, the educational content is cut by around 30%. For example, the teaching hours for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade of elementary school would to be reduced from 1015 to 945 hours, and for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of lower secondary school from 1050 to 980 hours. The periods of integrated learning would be introduced by 3 hours a week in elementary school and 2 to 3 hours a week in lower secondary school. The new Courses of Study and the five-day school week would be completely implemented from April 2002.

## **7. Controversy in progress**

### **[The debate about academic ability]**

When faced with the implementation of the new Courses of Study, however, criticisms began to be openly voiced about the assertion on “*Yutori*” which had underpinned the educational discourses of the 1990s. A number of science and engineering professors of universities expressed their dissatisfaction and anxiety over the new curriculum. They alleged that the level of knowledge in science and mathematics among present university students clearly went down when compared to that of the previous generation, and they warned that any further reduction of teaching hours or of the educational content would result in a larger drop in academic ability. On the other hand, it was also argued that there was no objective data demonstrating that children’s academic achievement has fallen.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Education comes to emphasize that the Courses of Study are the “essential minimum” in which teachers should extend children’s ability through more advanced study depending on the interests and abilities of children,. However, there is no clear guidance in the Courses of Study themselves relating to the contents or levels of more advanced study. The Courses of study have been fully

implemented since April 2002. But this type of controversy has continued further.

Some people feel anxiety over the result of OECD-PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). According to the evaluation of 2003, Japan's 15-years olds were in the top class internationally. However, in the reading literacy, the Japanese students dropped their rank and were not considered the world's top class.

#### **[Establishment of ERC]**

In October 2006, Prime Minister *Shinzo Abe* established a new advisory body called Education Rebuilding Council (ERC, *Kyōiku Saisei Kaigi*) emphasizing his government's intention to tackle the educational problems. In the mid-term reports, ECR recommended some policies such as 10% increasing of curriculum contents and school instruction-hours in primary and secondary schools, introduction of renewal system of teacher certificates, speedy treatment for bullying problems in schools. The possibility for introducing education voucher system to Japanese education was also discussed. However, by the abrupt resignation of Prime Minister Abe in September 2007, ECR lost momentum. In 31 January 2008, the final report of ERC entitled "Education Rebuilding by Society as a Whole" is presented. As the final report, previous radical tone of discussions in ERC is weakened and some all-purpose recommendations are presented. Attention to the final report of ERC in the mass media was not notable so much.

#### **[New Curriculum]**

In 28 March, the Ministry of Education announced new Courses of Study for elementary and lower secondary schools that would be implemented from April 2011. According the explanation of the Ministry, even in the new curriculum, basic idea of *Ikiru chikara* would be maintained as a principle of education. However, there are some changes in the new curriculum as follows:

1. In Primary school and Junior Secondary School, the total number of teaching hours would be increased by around 10%.
2. In Primary school, two teaching hours in a week would be increased for Grade 1 and 2 and one teaching hour for Grade 3-6 in a week.
3. In Junior Secondary School, in all grades (Grade 7 to 9), one teaching hour in a week would be increased.
4. In Primary school, for Grade 5 and 6, in each week one hour of Foreign Language (English) Activities would be introduced.
5. In Primary school, the integrated learning period would be reduced from 3 hours to 2 hours in a week
6. Also in Junior Secondary School, the integrated learning period would be reduced from 2~3 hours to 1.4~2 hours in a week.

Ministry of Education is discussing to move up the implementation of some parts of the new curriculum from April 2009.

### **[Inauguration of the new government]**

In the general election of the Lower House of the Diet held in August 2009, the long-dominated LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) was badly defeated by opposition parties. In 16 September 2009, the new government led by Prime Minister *Hatoyama* (Democratic party) is inaugurated. They declared a new policy-making process that emphasized the political leadership and less-dependant on the bureaucracies. According to their Political Manifest, the new government started to review thoroughly the policies which were decided by the former government.

Until now, the ministerial team of the Ministry of Education, consists of politicians, proclaims new policies such as the abolishing of the tuition-fees for public senior high schools, revising the system of annual national assessment of academic achievement (from complete survey to sampling survey), and reviewing the teacher certificate renewal system which was just introduced in April 2009.

## **Japanese Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) System**

### **【OUTLINE OF THE ECEC SYSTEM IN JAPAN】**

#### **Japanese education system in general**

- 6 (primary school) – 3 (lower secondary school) -3 (higher secondary school)
- 9 years of compulsory education
  
- Ten features of Japanese education system
  - (1) Near universal access to higher secondary school (though not compulsory)
  - (2) Automatic promotion (i.e. Repetition is rare): Promotion based on age
  - (3) Government has the responsibility to support school attendance. (Government has the responsibility to provide financial support to children who cannot attend compulsory education for financial reasons)
  - (4) High homogeneity: Teaching Japanese children in Japanese
  - (5) School education that covers children's daily life (Not only subject matter instruction, but also extra-curricular guidance)
  - (6) Large role of private sector: Higher education and out-of-school education (e.g. 'juku')
  - (7) Rapid expansion after the promulgation of modern educational system (1872): Expansion of primary school through economic burden on local people
  - (8) Heavy investment in primary school (or compulsory education)
  - (9) High quality of teacher training and compensation (qualification and salary)
  - (10) High quality of education especially in primary school

#### **1. History of Japanese ECEC**

- Two systems of ECEC: Kindergarten and Day Nurseries
  - (1) Kindergarten (3~5 years old)

In 1876, the first kindergarten opened as an Affiliated Kindergarten of Tokyo Normal School for Girls (present day Ochanomizu University). Most children were from upper-middle class. "Coming to kindergarten by carriage or attended by maids"; ECEC was considered as a luxury; Established only in the cities; Increase of private kindergartens
  - (2) Day nurseries (0~5 years old)

First day nursery was established in 1890 to support parents' work (for impoverished families, largely motivated by Christianity, philanthropists, volunteers and missionaries as a form of charity); Rise of capitalism and greater number of women in the labor force (factories); Welfare institution to assist lower-working class: Under the jurisdiction of Home Ministry (later Ministry of Health and Welfare); Public day nursery: Group care while mothers working
  - (3) Development of dual systems  
After World War II, kindergarten was codified as a type of school (School Education

Law in 1947: Article 77-Kindergartnes shall provide a suitable environment that helps young children grow and develop their minds and bodies; Article 80-Kindergarten was to be for young children from three years of age until they entered elementary schools)

Rapid gain in 1960s (Enrollment of 5 year olds 28.7% in 1960, 53.7% in 1970)

1971: Kindergarten Education Development Plan: To enable the enrollment of all 4 and 5 year olds who desire to go to kindergarten in the coming ten years; increase of government subsidiary and remission of childcare fee

1981: Enrollment of 5 year olds in kindergarten reaches 64.4%.

(Table B in Appendix in the History of Japan’s Preschool Education and Care)

After World War II, day nursery was codified as child welfare institutions (Child Welfare Law in 1947: Article 39-institutions for the purpose of caring for infants and young children on the basis of daily contracts from the parent or guardian; Article 24-responsibility of city mayors in placing children in need of childcare in day nurseries; later Article 39 amended-limit the coverage to infants and children lacking of early childhood care due to parents’ work, illness, etc.); Development of day nursery for children in households with both parents working; Greater role of day nursery with the increase of nuclear family and female labor participation.

Currently, 95% of 5 year olds enroll in either kindergarten or day nursery; Substantive differences between kindergartens and day nurseries have diminished.

## 2. Japanese ECEC system

Category	Day Nursery	Kindergarten
Legal Foundation	Child Welfare Law, Article 39	School Education Law, Article 77
Governing Authority	Ministry of Health and Welfare -Municipalities	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science & Technology -National: MECSSST -Public: Educational committees -Private: Prefectural govt.
Purpose	Provide care to infants and young children who lack care due to parents’ work, illness, etc. on the basis of daily contracts from the parents	Provide a suitable environment that helps young children grow and develop their minds and bodies (Language, health, human relationship, expression, environment)
Target Age	0~5 years old	3~5 years old
Number of days/year	Approximately 300 days	39 weeks
Number of hours/day	8 hours (in principle)	4 hours

Teacher-Student Ratio	0 year old: 1:3 1~2 year old: 1:6 3 year old: 1:20 4~5 year old: 1:30	Max 1:35
Number of facilities	22,288 (Public 12,414; Private 9,874)	14,061 (National 49; Public 5,649; Private 8,363)
Number of enrolled children	1,959,889 (Public 1,080,067; Private 879,822)	1,753,396 (National 6,626; Public 356,769; Private 1,390,001)
Percentage of Enrollment (of 5 year olds)	36.8%	59.3%

Note: Modified from p. 16-17, Table 1-1, The History of Japan's Preschool Education and Care)

### 3. Funding resources and parental cost of ECEC

- (1) Public kindergarten: Nation (nearly 0%), district (90.1%), parents (9.9%)  
Parental Cost: 75,000 yen/year
- (2) Private kindergarten: Nation (8.1%), prefecture (26.2%), district (6.3%), parents (59.4%)  
Parental cost: 242,000 yen/year
- (3) Day nursery (all age): Nation (27.6%), prefecture (13.8%), district (13.8%), parents (44.8%)  
Parental cost: 300,000 yen/year (varies according to family income, age, hours)
- (4) Day nursery (3 years and older): Nation (19.5%), prefecture (9.8%), district (9.8%), parents (61%)

### 4. Four features of Japanese ECEC

- (1) Classroom teachers of early childhood education collaborate with researchers at universities and similar institutions to review the practice and strive toward its improvement. Many classroom teachers go on to become researcher or vocational instructors at universities, junior colleges, or vocational institutes, either through acquiring additional education or because of recognition for their practical achievements.
- (2) Close relationship between the classroom and teacher training school. Universities, colleges, and vocational schools that are responsible for training early childhood teachers, not only train teachers but develop methods that are useful for actual sites and attempt to support teachers on the sites.
- (3) Several philosophical streams in early childhood education, with distinct methodologies for each. However, in actual practice, these streams are not applied mechanically but with flexibility, based upon a finely tuned approach to the life and actions of each individual child.
- (4) Early childhood education comes in a diverse array of forms. Each kindergarten or day nursery works to establish its own methods for early childhood education through the productive interaction of the specific content and methodology of multiples forms, or through the adoption of better features of other forms. However,

some centers are closed into their own ways of doing things, adhering rigidly to one form and making no attempt to try anything new.

## **5. Forms of Japanese ECEC**

- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare show the general directional framework of early childhood education (health, human relationship, environment, language, and expression), but the details of early childhood education are left up to each kindergarten or day nursery.
- Three major forms:
  - (1) A form of ECEC that is based on nurturing the human relationships within a group  
The main objective is for children to learn the basic routines of daily life and study habits. Activity times consist of slots that are put together by the teacher, and slots that the child can use with relative freedom, without instructions from the teacher. During free play times, children are encouraged to play with other children or turn their attention to, and relate with, one another, rather than spending time on their own. Materials for art activities are provided by the teacher as needed. Teachers are affectionate toward the children, avoid becoming authoritarian, behave calmly, and build a warm relationship with the children.
  - (2) A form of ECEC that extends the child's ability to perform functions  
The basic curriculum focuses on having the child learn study skills in a group setting. Children learn such skills as reading Chinese characters, writing "hiragana" characters, recognizing concepts of numbers, volume, and shapes, training their memory, playing musical instruments, and drawing pictures. Children's activities are predetermined by a time schedule, with almost no room for individual choice. Children are strictly discipline to observe kindergarten rules.
  - (3) A form of ECEC that is child-centered  
The majority of the time is used by the child for free play. While there are group activities as well, there is minimal direct instruction from the teacher. Play materials and equipment, as well as such articles as blocks and art supplies are provided for the children to be used freely whenever they wish, with the environment also arranged to accommodate the activities. The teacher is warm and cheerful, and adapts his or her approach to each individual child.

## **6. Development and training of kindergarten teachers**

- (1) Development of kindergarten teachers
  - Three types of license:
    - A) Second class: Acquire at a two-year junior college or a vocational school
    - B) First Class: Acquire at a four-year university
    - C) Specialist: Acquire at a graduate school master's program
  - Necessary subjects to obtain the license are fixed by the law. Framework and number of subjects are similar to that of primary school teachers.
  - Professors at these training institutions are required to pass the national review.
  - The majority of teachers go through two-year training; few who obtain the first class license (through a four-year training) compared to teachers of other level. Although since after World War II, ECEC professions are open to both genders, more than 90% of kindergarten teachers are female. The reason for large percentage

of second-class license and female in kindergarten teachers may be due to the low compensation. Especially, in private kindergartens, teachers' salary is low compared to other levels of teachers. Related to this, ECEC teachers leave the profession earlier compared to other levels of teachers. (Tables 4-1, 4-2, Figure 4-1, 4-2, p. 53 in The History of Japan's Preschool Education and Care) In order to provide kindergartens with teachers with higher levels of expertise, it will be necessary to improve their treatment (salary).

(2) Training of kindergarten teachers

- Regardless of the sector, a new teacher is attended by a certain experienced teacher for one year, and thus, receive on the job training.
- In addition, for public kindergartens, teachers with 10 years of experience have opportunities for special training.
- Regardless of sector, there are various trainings during school year or holidays, and most teachers attend these trainings in turns. The government supports ECEC sites not only financially, but through providing guidance on care. Motivated teachers attend master's program or research groups over weekends or at nights.

(3) Self-development in the kindergartens

- Many kindergartens reflect on their child care in order to improve their childcare. Teachers reflect on one's child care and take records every day to plan the following day's childcare. Teachers discuss regularly and principals and chief teachers provide guidance to teachers on daily basis. Some kindergartens have such sessions as the entire kindergarten staff observing and discussing the care of one teacher, or taking a videotape recording of actual care and having everyone discuss what they see.
- Bulletins issued by kindergarten groups and journals for teachers published by general publishers provide various information on teaching methods, new creative ideas about toys and play equipment, and publication of new picture books. There are numerous publication companies that specialize in early childhood education and publish books and magazines for both teachers and children.

(4) Nursery teacher training and the nursery teacher examination

- Since postwar, day nurseries have been under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and "nursery teacher" was established as a professional certification for teachers working at day nurseries and other child welfare facilities. There are two ways of acquiring nursery teacher certification: (1) To undergo training at a training institute that has been accredited by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, or (2) To pass a nursery teacher licensing exam. Currently, 90% of licensed nursery teachers acquire certification via designated training institutes.
- The designated institutes include four-year universities, junior colleges and vocational schools; but the overwhelming majority of teachers train at junior colleges. In 2001, there were 359 designated training institutes, of which, 222 were junior colleges, 66 were vocational schools, 56 were four-year universities, and the remaining were other types of training facilities. In these institutes, one may also acquire a kindergarten teaching license in conjunction with nursery teacher

certification.

- The nursery teacher exam covers the following subjects. The written exam includes social welfare, child welfare, developmental psychology and mental health, children's health, children's nutrition, childcare principles, education and nursing principles, and childcare practice and theory. Those that pass the written exam also take an examination that tests their practical childcare skills. Scores of 60% or higher are required on each subject in order to pass, and people that pass all sections of the exam are certified as nursery teachers. People already holding a kindergarten teaching license are exempted from the developmental psychology, educational principles and practical childcare skills portions of the exam. Whether training at a designated training institute or acquiring certification via the nursery teacher exam, the licensing system has been designed to ensure that certified teachers have the knowledge and skills necessary to accommodate the various social situations encountered by children.

#### 【SIGNIFICANT ECEC POLICY ISSUES IN JAPAN】

- Integration of kindergarten and day nursery: Since 1990, with the diversification of child care needs due to the declining birthrate and the increasing prevalence of dual-income families, the dual system of kindergarten and day nursery has been under debate. In 1996, the Committee for Promotion of Decentralization decided to allow the sharing of facilities between kindergarten and day nursery depending on the situation of each community. In March, 1998, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Welfare established the guidelines related to the dual use of facilities as kindergartens and day nurseries. Since 1997, kindergartens have promoted day care services after kindergarten hours. In 2004, 2,328 public kindergartens (41.92%) and 7,091 private kindergartens (85.3%) provide such day care, and thus the actual differences between kindergartens and day nurseries have diminished. Local governments are also taking concrete measurements to unify the managements of kindergartens and day nurseries as a part of administrative streamlining efforts. Thus, the trend toward systematically unifying kindergartens and day nurseries is expected to continue to accelerate.
- The situation surrounding early childhood education has changed with the times, and the problems are both complex and wide-ranging. The integration of kindergartens and day nursery is drawing attention as a government policy, but many other issues remain as well, including collaboration between kindergartens and elementary schools (for smooth transition), and expanding the functions of kindergartens and day nurseries so that they serve as local support centers for child-rearing, especially with the increase of child-abuse. The most suitable education for the development of young children needs to be reconsidered from the perspectives of both education and welfare.

#### 【INNOVATIVE/TYPICAL EXAMPLES OF ECEC PRACTICE IN JAPAN】

- Cultural activities (Koinobiri, Tanabata, Tsukimi, Setsubun, etc.): Cherishing traditions and seasons
- Message book: Communication with parents

## **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in India**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **Features of Indian Education System**

- It is 10+2+3 system. 10 years' Common Scheme of Studies (5 primary education+3 upper primary and 2 secondary) + 2 years' senior secondary + 3 years' graduation
- 8 years of free and compulsory elementary education for 6-14 years' of age children as a right (Right to Elementary Education Act 2009)
- Free and compulsory ECCE for children below the age of 6 years as per the Article 45 of the Directive Principles of Constitution
- Near universal access to elementary education
- No detention policy at primary stage
- Great diversity – regional, religious, lingual, cultural and socio economic
- High heterogeneity-multilingual multi level classrooms
- Mid day Meal Scheme is a significant input at elementary education stage
- Large role of private, non-governmental and voluntary organizations
- Education for all called Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, implemented since 2001 has achieved universal enrolment and satisfactory retention rate now focusing on quality of education at elementary level
- Heavy investment on compulsory education. Now focusing on universal secondary education
- Quality of teacher training is the area of concern for improvement

#### **History of ECCE in India**

India has a wealth of traditional practices of early childhood care and education that dates back to about 5000 years. Scriptures advocate an attitude of indulgence as the desirable mode of child rearing at this stage. Consequently much of the early childhood care and education was informal, within the family and through grandmother's caring practices- lullabies, stories and traditional infant games in a joint family setup. The wealth of developmentally appropriate child care practices is gradually becoming extinct in the changing social realities i.e. emergence of nuclear family and women's participation in workforce. It is in this context the need for institutionalized early childhood care and education is growing day by day.

The first formal institutions for the pre-school age children in India, opened mainly by foreign missionaries in late nineteenth century, were the kindergarten schools, which expanded further in the next two to three decades. Singh U.K. et.al 1996 records that Loreto Convent School started in 1874 at Lucknow Uttar Pradesh, St. Hildas Nursery School at Poona in 1885 and Saidapeth High School as training school for nursery teachers at Madras in 1888 were some significant institutions. During early period of Twentieth- Century Mrs. Anne Besant, a British by birth, who became the president of

International Theosophical Society in 1907 started many schools for young children after she came to India and adopted India as her country by her own. She opened a school in Adiyar Madras which was later shifted to Rishi-Valley, where Theosophical Society has started educational work. Many schools for young children were opened in south India during 1920-30. Dr. George Arundale became the president of Theosophical Society after Mrs. Anne Besant in 1934 and started a Montessori centre at Adiyar as Anne Besant memorial school. She invited Maria Montessori to India and started Montessori Training centres in various parts of the country, i.e. Madras, Ahmadabad, Bombay, Karachi, kodiakanal. In Western India, Montessori schools were opened and such pioneers as Gijubai Badeka, Tarabai Modak; others expanded the Montessori approach. Gijubai Badeka started his first institution in 1920. He started his first training centre in 1924, Dakshinmurti Training College, Bhavnagar. He formed Bal Nutan Sangh in 1926 covering Gujarat and Maharashtra states. Bal Nutan Sangh also started training centre at Dadar in 1938. In 1945 a rural centre was started by Bal Nutan Sangh at Bordi in district Thane, Maharashtra, and named as Gram Bal Shiksha Kendra. These were all private efforts. The need for an inexpensive system of pre-school education was emphasized and conceptualized by Mahatma Gandhi, which was called pre-basic education. Under pre-basic education children up to the age of seven years were covered. The pre-basic education as per Gandhi ji's scheme of things was visualized in four sub stages. These were: the first stage from conception to birth, second stage from birth to two and half years, third stage from two and half to four years and fifth stage from four to seven years. This was expected to be the preparatory stage to Gandhi ji's basic education. The first pre basic institution was started at Sevagram in 1945 under the guidance of Shanta Narulkar.

In course of time the focus of pre-school education shifted to meeting the needs of masses and the first generation learners, instead of remaining confined to those who could pay for such education. Thus, the concept, focus and forms of early childhood education have changed significantly over the last few decades. This is evident from the deliberations that took place in the various meetings of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE). The recommendations came from Sargent Report in 1944 to provide for facilities of pre-primary schooling to give young children social experience rather than formal instruction. The report suggested that one million places should be provided as a start in the age group 3-6 years

In the post-independence period, the Government of India took various measures to address the issues pertaining to children and women. Indian Council for child Welfare (ICCW) was formed in 1951. Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) was formed in 1953. ICCW and CSWB started grant –in aid scheme for voluntary organizations running pre-primary centers. National Policy on Children was formulated in 1974. Direct government initiative came when Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) was launched in 1975. Which has grown in size and coverage and poised to have universal coverage with quality in 11<sup>th</sup> five year plan (2007-2011).

## Population Projections

**Table-1**  
**Child population Projections**

	2006	2011	2016
	Number in million	Number in million	Number in million
<1 infants	24.20	24.29	24.91
1-2 toddlers	45.86	48.17	49.25
3-5 preschool children	63.73	70.03	72.49

Source: Census of India, Population Projections for India and states 1996-2016, Registrar General, India

As per the Census of India 2001, children in the age group of birth to six years number around 158 million which is nearly 15.2 % of the total population. The population projections indicate that by 2016 about 25 million children will be in need of immunization service and their mothers would need maternal health services. The preschool age (3-5 years) population would be about 72 million by 2016 (see table -1).

### Profile of the Child in India:

- One third of babies are born with low birth weight
  - Only 42 % children (12-23 months) are fully immunized
  - 14% are not vaccinated at all
  - India has the largest number of malnourished children in the world
  - 47% of all children below 2 years are malnourished
  - 25 million children are born every year
  - The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is 70 per 1000 live birth
  - 60 million children under 5 years live in poverty
  - 19.4 million children are getting preschool education under ICDS
  - Only 34 million children out of 158 million are getting supplementary nutrition
- (Source: Government of India 2002 (a) The Child in India: Profile UNDP 2003: Human Development Index)

Almost 2.5 million children die in India every year accounting for one in five child deaths in the world. In almost all cases girl children are 50% more likely to die than boys. India also accounts for 35% of developing world's LBW babies and 40% of child malnutrition. According the report on the State of India's Newborns (National Neonatology Forum and Save the Children 2004) India has the highest births and neonatal death in the world. Inherent in the health system is a strong gender bias against the female at all levels. (Eleventh Five Year Plan, India New Delhi)

### Legal Framework

- Article 15(3) of constitution of India, empowers the state to practice positive discrimination favoring educationally and economically weaker groups
- Article 42 (having relevance to working women also benefits young children state ) 'enjoins the State to secure just and human conditions of work and maternity leaves'
- Article 45 (directive principles of state policy) reads-the state shall provide free

- and compulsory ECCE for all children until they complete the age of six years
- Article 47- 'the state shall endeavor to raise the level of nutrition and standard of living of people to improve health

### **Statutory Provisions**

- Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (regulation and prevention of misuse) Act 1994
- Infant Milk substitute, Bottles and infant foods (prevention and misuse ) Act 1994
- Persons with Disabilities (Equal opportunities, protection of Rights and Full participation) Act 1995

In addition there are various State Government level acts impacting women and children

**2. Outline of ECCE System:** ECCE is conceptualized in three sub stages for implementation and delivery of services, namely, sub stage 1- pre natal to one month, sub stage 2- one month to three years and sub stage 3- three to six years. In addition, the stage of six to eight years extending up to class II is also considered within the purview of ECCE for linkages with primary education.

#### **Sub Stage 1: (Prenatal to one month)**

Safe Motherhood: Early marriages leading to early child bearing and closely spaced pregnancies continue to pose serious challenge. 65% girls are married before 18 years of age and 33 % are before 15 years of age. There are evidences that younger the delivering mother lower the chances of safe delivery. Malnutrition is another major concern because more than 50% of Indian women being anemic. Safe delivery is another major indicator. The MMR has come down to 3.01 in 2005 from 4.08 in 1997 (SRS) but still very high. Three fourth of the total deliveries take place at home without institutional care. The survival of girl child is a major issue as the sex ratio has dipped from 945 in 1991 to 927 in 2001 per 1000 male. Exclusive Breast feeding for six months and feeding of colostrums within one hour of birth is reported only at 46.3% and 23.4% level respectively. Capacity building of mothers and families for safe motherhood and ensuring prenatal and neonatal care are important aspects of program for women and child development.

#### **Sub Stage 2 :( one month to three years)**

Child's nutrition continues to be a major priority. Poor health care, sanitation and general neglect cause a substantial proportion of children to become moderately or severely malnourished. 12.3% of children found severely malnourished, 29.1% were moderately malnourished and 37.15 mild malnourished leaving only 21.5% in the normal nourishment zone (National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau and Food and Nutrition Board 2002). Child immunization is another major concern as 50% one year olds and 42% children aged 12-23 months have not been fully immunized. Early stimulation is important input at this stage along with immunization, health and nutritional care.

#### **Sub stage three :( 3-6 years)**

The National Curriculum Framework envisages two years pre schooling to all children. Some states like Nagaland, Delhi have provision for preschool education within primary

school system. In Nagaland two years preprimary is available in the primary schools. In Delhi, Municipal Corporation of Delhi and New Delhi Municipal Corporation provide one year preprimary in primary schools. In general, state run pre primary schools are negligible. Private and NGO run primary and secondary school also have provision of pre primary school in most of the cases.

**Six to eight years:** This stage is considered important from the point of view of linkages with primary education and smooth transition from pre primary to primary. Program focused at this stage are reciprocity between preschool and primary school and shared understanding of children learning and development needs.

**ECCE Services in India:** India has 28 states and 7 Union Territories. The administrative, legislative and fiscal powers are distributed between center and state governments. ECCE services are available through three distinct channels –public, private and non-governmental organizations.

**Public Initiatives:** There are as many as 130 programs, targeting children below 6 years of age, under the auspices of various ministries and departments. Major ones are:

- Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)
- Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Working Mothers
- ECCE under *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (Education for All)
- *Mahila Samakhya* (Women’s Education and Empowerment)
- Preschools attached to Primary Schools

### **Integrated Child Development Services:**

Launched on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1975 in 33 Community Development Blocks, ICDS today represents one of the world’s largest programs for early childhood development. ICDS is the foremost symbol of India’s commitment to her children – India’s response to the challenge of providing pre-school education on one hand and breaking the vicious cycle of malnutrition, morbidity, reduced learning capacity and mortality, on the other. It is an inter-sectoral program which seeks to directly reach out to children, below six years, especially from vulnerable and remote areas by providing an integrated program of early childhood education, health and nutrition. The Scheme provides an integrated approach for converging basic services through community-based workers and helpers. The services are provided at a centre called the ‘Anganwadi’. The Anganwadi, literally a courtyard play centre, is a childcare centre, located within the village itself. A package of six services is provided under the ICDS scheme, namely-Supplementary Nutrition, Non-formal Pre-school Education, Immunization, Health Check-up, Referral Services, Nutrition and Health Education. Beneficiaries are children up to six years’ age, Pregnant and lactating mothers and adolescent girls. The three services namely immunization, health check-up and referral are delivered through public health infrastructure under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Preschool education, nutrition and health education are delivered through Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Human Resource Development.

**Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Working Mothers:** The scheme has been designed merging two existing schemes namely- National Crèche Fund and Scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Organizations to run crèches for children of working and ailing mothers. Crèches are being allocated to states based on the proportion of child population. The services being provided include; sleeping facilities, health care, supplementary nutrition, immunization, preschool education etc. The services are planned in a center for 25 children for eight hours (9am to 5pm).

**ECCE under *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA):** Government of India initiated various programs for universalization of primary and elementary education in the country. Early Childhood Education (ECE) was included as an important component in the overall strategy of universalization of primary education. During the implementation of District Primary Education Program (DPEP) from 1996 to 2001 large number of ECE centers were opened in habitations where ICDS coverage was not there. *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, implemented from 2001 onward bringing all programs of universalisation of elementary education under its fold, used the strategies and experience gained during DPEP phase. The inputs provided are, relocating ICDS *anganwadi* centers in primary school premises, synchronization of timings of *anganwadis* and primary school, providing play material and organizing joint training programs for ECE worker and primary teachers. SSA also has a component of National Program of Education for Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) under which one child care centers is provide as model center at cluster level, (a cluster generally has 10-15 schools in its jurisdiction) to facilitate girls participation in schooling.

***Mahila Samakhya:*** It is a program for women's education and empowerment in rural areas. ECCE activities are part of the program and taken up on need based criteria.

**Pre schools Attached to primary schools:** Currently there are 14.27 % primary schools having pre primary sections (National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi 2003)

### **Private Initiatives**

These are fee charging profit making initiatives in ECCE and cater to children of economically better off families. It is estimated that about 10 million children receive preschool education through the privately run kindergartens, nursery schools and pre primary classes in primary schools.(Sharma 1998). Admission in these English medium schools is seen as upward mobility. Some of these schools are more of 'teaching shops'. The cost per child varies from Rs.18000 to 200,000 per annum in Mumbai (Veenita Rao, CNN-IBN, Nov. 2007). In ICDS the cost per child estimated per annum was Rs 350 per annum (10 US dollars) in 1992 (NIPCCD, New Delhi).

### **Voluntary and NGO Initiatives**

NGOs and Voluntary organization play an important role in providing education for all, right from the stage of ECCE, especially in economically backward areas, rural areas and urban slums. They run ECCE centers, mobile crèches and other programs related to improving the socio-economic conditions of people. Many NGOs like Mobile Crèches, *Ruchika*, *Nutan Bal Sangha* and SEWA have demonstrated successful methodologies for

meeting child care needs of diverse communities and establishing linkages between ECCE and primary education.

### Coverage of ECCE

**Table 2**  
**Coverage of ECCE under different programs**

Sl No.	Public Sector Programs	Projects Centres	Beneficiaries	Total
1	ICDS*	6291 projects 1.053million centers	54.6million 0-6 age children(23 million preschool children) and 11.6million pregnant and lactating mothers	66.2million
2	SSA**	10,000	.42 million Preschool children	.42million
3	Rajiv Gandhi Crèche scheme**	22,038	5,50,950	.55million
4	Private***	-	10 million Preschool children	10 million
5	NGO***	-	Preschool children	3-20million

\*11<sup>th</sup> plan document GOI

\*\* Select Issues concerning ECCE in India, A case Study, A paper prepared for inclusion in 2007 GMR, NIPCCD New Delhi

\*\*\*National Curriculum Framework, Position Paper, National Focus Group on ECCE, 2005

Presently the coverage of 0-6 children in ECCE is about 30% of total population in this age bracket (See Table 2).As per 2001 census, the country has 60 million children in 3-6 years age group. Current figures suggest that pre schooling under ICDS and other provisions is available to 34 million children leaving 26 million out of preschool activities. There are also disparities in provision of ECCE in rural and urban areas. ECCE provision in urban areas is insufficient as per the corresponding child population.

**Table 3**  
**Increase in Anganwadis Centers over the years**

Sl No	Year	No of ICDS centers (rounded in millions)
1	On 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1992*	0.25
2	On 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1997*	0.35
3	On 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2002*	0.55
4	On 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2006*	0.75
5	On 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2007**	1.05

\*WCD website-wcd.nic.in, \*\* Planning Commission 11<sup>th</sup> plan GOI

Table 3 indicates that the increase number of ECCE centers over the years is significant. Supreme Court of India had directed the Central Government to open 1.4 million anganwadi by the end of 2008. The government has given an undertaking to the honorable Supreme Court to abide by it and decided to universalize ICDS by the eleventh plan period.

**Table 4**  
**Expansion of ICDS: Increase in Allocation of Funds over the years**

Sl No.	Plan period	Years	Outlay in Million INR
1	8 <sup>th</sup> plan	1992-97	26012.8
2	9 <sup>th</sup> plan	1997-2002	57203.0
3	10 <sup>th</sup> plan	2002-2007	116845.0
4	11 <sup>th</sup> plan	2007-2011	450000.0

The allocation of funds for ICDS has steeply increased over the last four Five Year Plans. During Eleventh Plan it is estimated that an allocation up to Rs.450, 000 million will be required for universalisation of ICDS with quality. During the first three years of the Eleventh Plan period the budget allotted has been to the tune of Rs 52930, Rs.63000, and Rs.67050 million for 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 respectively.

**Financing Pattern:** ICDS being a centrally sponsored scheme is implemented through 35 states and Union territories with 100% financial assistance for inputs other than supplementary nutrition (SNP). However 50% assistance has also been extended since 2006 for supplementary nutrition to ensure that it is available for 300 days in a year. Over all there has been an increase in expenditure on children as a percentage of GNP from 2.66% in 1993-94 to 3.26% in 2001-02(WCD annual report 2004-05).In terms of relative contributions, both the state and central contributions have increased steadily. ICDS scheme is being implemented not only with state owned resources but external assistance as well. World Bank has assisted various projects in different states in phases called World Bank assisted -ICDS-I, ICDS-II, ICDS-III and ICDS IV.

**Content and Methods of Pre -primary Education:**

The curriculum is envisaged in three sub stages. 1. Early Stimulation for Under Three children through parental involvement, 2. Organized center based play and development oriented curriculum for 3-5/6 year olds. This thrust of developmentally oriented curriculum has been reiterated through National Curriculum Framework 1988, 2000, and 2005. The Framework also views child education from ECCE to grade II along a continuum, and emphasizes continuity in terms of approach and methodology. The National Policy on Education 1986/92 discourages formal reading, writing and arithmetic at preschool stage. However there is a large gap between policy and practice. There is virtual absence of play activities. ICDS and privately run preschool center are found teaching of three R's and adopting the downward extension of primary curriculum. This is attributed to the absence of any regulatory system. As a result children are subjected to academic pressure to perform, referred to as 'curriculum load'.

Government of India viewing the seriousness of the issue appointed a committee under the chairmanship of noted educationist Prof. Yash Pal. He concluded that 'a lot is taught but little is learnt or understood', at this stage. Teaching of three R's, formal evaluation, admission at an early age, admission tests, home work, physical load of books, (as many books of private publishers are prescribed by schools for young kids) are the concerns of curriculum. National Curriculum Framework 2005 has made significant recommendations to make children's learning at this stage child centered, play based by recognizing special features of children's thinking and focusing on constructivist approach.

### **ECCE Teacher Training**

The training provisions vary significantly for ECCE programmes organized by the MHRD and the DWCD. Pre service Nursery Teacher training of one and two years' duration are offered by Nursery Teacher Training Institutions under the MHRD, mainly targeting preschool education component. However there are large numbers of unregulated nursery teacher training institutions also operate catering mainly to the demands of private sector. Under ICDS, On the Job Training of three months duration is offered to ECCE workers , mainly 10<sup>th</sup> standard pass, through the network of Anganwadi Workers Training Centers called AWTCs, targeting five services –preschool education, immunization, supplementary nutrition, referral services and nutrition and health education. These provisions for training reflect a great divide in quality of teacher preparation for ECCE in terms of content, methods, scope and duration.

### **3. ECCE Policy Issues in India:**

National Policy on Children 1974, National Policy on Education 1986 modified in 1992, National Health Policy 2002, National Nutrition Policy 1993, Right to Education bill passed recently and many such measures speak of India's enabling policy environment to further the cause of children. However many of the problems and issues in ECCE are the outcomes of earlier policies and their implementation. Any attempt to give children a fair deal now requires a major policy shift (National Focus Group Report on ECCE, NCERT, 2005). The dimensions of this policy shift would be:

**i) Recognition of ECCE as part of EFA:** Every child has a right to ECCE of equitable quality. The 86<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution , making education of children in the 6-14 age group a fundamental right, leaves out children of below six years of age. However, Article 21 together with Unnikrishnan judgment (that every child has the right to education up to the age of 14 years) provides an opening that can be used to rekindle the debate and reserve the policies in place (Position Paper on ECCE, National Focus Group Report 2005)

**ii) Regulating the ECCE System:** There is total absence of a regulatory or control mechanism in the area of ECCE. The need for putting in place a system of regulation through accreditation or other methods like licensing, registration of centers along with developing norms and standards for opening and managing such centers has been long felt.

### **iii) Age of Admission to pre primary and Primary**

As per constitutional provision the compulsory education starts from 6-14 years but in practice most of the states have 5+ years of age for admission to class I. Thus pre schooling stage becomes 3-5 not 3- 6 years. Free and Compulsory schooling is from 6-14 years.

### **iv). ECCE Curriculum and Training**

There are broad guidelines for pre primary curriculum and its implementation but in practice formal curriculum of grade I get extended downward to nursery and even pre nursery. Load of curriculum has been one of the major national concerns at preschool and early primary stages. There are pre primary classes attached with primary but availability of trained teachers and facilities for training are scanty. As a result teacher trained for higher grades or untrained teachers run the pre primary in most cases. There is obviously a need for an ECCE curriculum policy and training of teachers for pre primary.

### **v). Resources**

One of the policy gaps for long has been the low resource outlay for child development. The resources made available are not commensurate with the demands of the ECCE stages for realizing the full potential of human development. The pace at which the brain develops during early years and the allocations made for ECCE stage and other stages of development during child's life are a total mismatch. It is argued that during first five years 80% brain development takes place but spending per child for ECCE is just one eighth of the elementary stage.

### **vi). Bridging the divide between public and private sectors**

There is a big gap between the quality perception of government and private ECCE programs. On the one hand preschool component of ICDS is said to be weak and meant for poor children, on the other hand fee charging schools costing parents thousands of rupees per month are perceived to be of high quality. The divide needs to be bridged so that poor program for poor children and rich program for well to do children do not perpetuate the social divide from the very beginning.

**vii) Interdepartmental coordination and ownership:** Till 2006 the responsibility of preschool education was with Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) which has now been shifted to Ministry of Women and child Development (MWCD). The MWCD is not well geared to handle the needs of professional growth and development of pre primary teachers as MHRD is. The coordination in such a situation becomes must. Achieving high level of coordination is therefore one of the major issue.

## **4. Innovative or Typical Examples of ECCE Practice in India**

There have been various innovative efforts in the area of ECCE in public private and NGO sectors. In public sector under the auspices of Education and ICDS departments some of the innovations initiated are-

- **Janshala (Community School) Program** -It was a collaborative program of Government of India and five UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO

and UNFPA) to provide support to universal primary education in nine states. ECCE centers were set up on the convergence model and women's groups were set up to mobilize and manage ECCE centers in five states. The program was reported very successful.

- **ECE centers under the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)*-an Education for All Program**

Education and child development being in the concurrent list states and central government are free to undertake various innovative activities. State governments have opened various ECE centers catering to the needs of children in the age group of 0-6 years, as part of the SSA's innovative activities. Significant among them are:

1. ***Ka Shrenee*** (comparable with reception class) **in Assam** - It means starting a nursery class in primary school before beginning of formal schooling.

- 2 ***Bachpanshalas in the state of Haryana***: It means Childhood Schools for preschool age children opened on experimental basis.

3. **ECCE Program for children of convicted mothers in Madhya Pradesh**: Early childhood education organized for children of convicted mothers in the close vicinity

4. **Model Convergence in Nagaland** –it attempted to establish convergence between ICDS and primary schools with nursery classes

**Innovations under ICDS:** Like education department there have been various contextually relevant innovative efforts were organized under the ICDS in various states . Some significant ones are:

- 1.***Bal Sanjeevani*** : It means ensuring child survival. In Madhya Pradesh an integrated approach to prevention and reduction of malnutrition and improving feeding practices through intensive awareness generation, extensive growth monitoring, decentralized planning, user friendly monitoring and convergence among different departments was initiated. It focused on identifying critical beneficiaries through community based health volunteers to use ICDS services. It resulted in reducing total and severe malnutrition by 2.5 and 3.0 points respectively.

2. **Why Can't We Do It (*kano Parbo Na*)**: ICDS in West Bengal adopts an innovative approach of Positive Deviance in Early Childhood Care in four districts. It involves identifying families who have achieved positive outcomes in child nutrition and growth. An enquiry is conducted to learn from the positive deviants those beneficial care practices that allow their children to have better health as compared to their similarly disadvantaged neighbors. Nutrition counseling and child care sessions are conducted in anganwadi centers (AWCs) for care givers of malnourished children to learn appropriate child care practices and behaviors from positive deviants.

3. ***Anchal Se Angan Tak*** (lap to Courtyard): Started in 7,610 anganwadi centers in 61 blocks of Rajasthan *Anchal Se Angan Tak* a program for integrated Early Child Development adopts life cycle approach. It focuses on under three children, pregnant and nursing mothers, and adolescent girls. The strategies include advocacy, joint training, community participation, organization of village contact groups and adolescent

girls' groups. Nutrition health education and income generating skills are imparted to women and girls.

**4. *Dular*:** The meaning is love and affection. *Dular* is a strategy to promote survival growth and development of children. Its coverage has been 31 blocks of four district of Bihar. It focuses on life cycle approach and children under three, mothers and girls. District Mobile Monitoring and Training Teams have been established. Village level volunteers are appointed to monitor the child care behaviors in the community and provide support to families in addressing the problematic cultural beliefs related to nutrition and health in an innovative manner. A *Dular* card maintained is used for monitoring child' growth.

#### **Under NGO sector**

**1. Mobile Crèches:** Mobile crèche focuses on health, have custodial care, nutrition and pre primary education for children of mothers working in construction sites. The program maintains quality but at a small scale.

**2. *Bal Niketan Sangh, Indore*:** is a dedicated NGO to serve the poor communities in Madhya Pradesh and has community to primary education. There are many such NGO level efforts wide spread in the country.

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## **Early Childhood Care and Education in Malaysia**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Malaysia has always place great effort in ensuring education and care for all children. These efforts are manifested through the many sectors involving in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and the amount of allocation given to ECCE each year. ECCE in Malaysia is broadly divided into two main groups, which are the 0-4 years old and the 4-6 years old.

In Malaysia, early childhood care and family development is the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD). MWFCD is the coordinator for national programs on the growth and development of children. Through its Department of Social Welfare, MWFCD registers all Childcare centers (TASKA, an acronym in the local language). TASKA offers care and education for children in the age group of 0-4 years old.

Early childhood education for the 4-6 years old group falls under the responsibilities of three Ministries, i.e. Ministry of Education, Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, as well as Department of National Unity and Integration under the Prime Minister Department. Ministry of Rural and Regional Development is the pioneer in setting up preschools in Malaysia (beginning early 1970's), currently (2007) there are 8307 preschools set up by this Ministry which are commonly known as the KEMAS preschool. KEMAS preschools are located in rural or suburban and are set up based on request by the local community. In the late 1970's Department of National Unity and Integration set up preschools in the urban areas where there are 'Rukun Tetangga', a friendly neighborhood scheme, these preschools are generally known as the PERPADUAN preschools, PERPADUAN preschools must accept students from the different races, currently, there are 1496 PERPADUAN preschools (2007). Ministry of Education (MOE) is the latest in setting up preschools. In the year 1992, preschool was set up by MOE in the form of pilot project as an annex to the existing primary school, in the year 2003, MOE preschool project was rolled out to whole nation; currently there are 5905 of these preschools which are situated all over the country (2007). Other than MOE, KEMAS and PERPADUAN, other providers of preschool education include also the State Religious Department (JAIN) and the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia, ABIM).

An overview of the composition of preschools according to the providing public agencies as of 2007 is given in Table 1. Diagram 1 provides an overview of percentage of preschool classes and students enrolled in the various types of preschools.

Table 1: Three Main Types of Public Preschools in Malaysia 2007

Types of preschool	KEMAS preschool	MOE preschool	PERPADUAN preschool
Number of classes	8307 classes	5905 classes	1496 classes
Percentage (by class)	52.9%	37.9%	9.5%
Enrolment	198,275	147,625	38,952

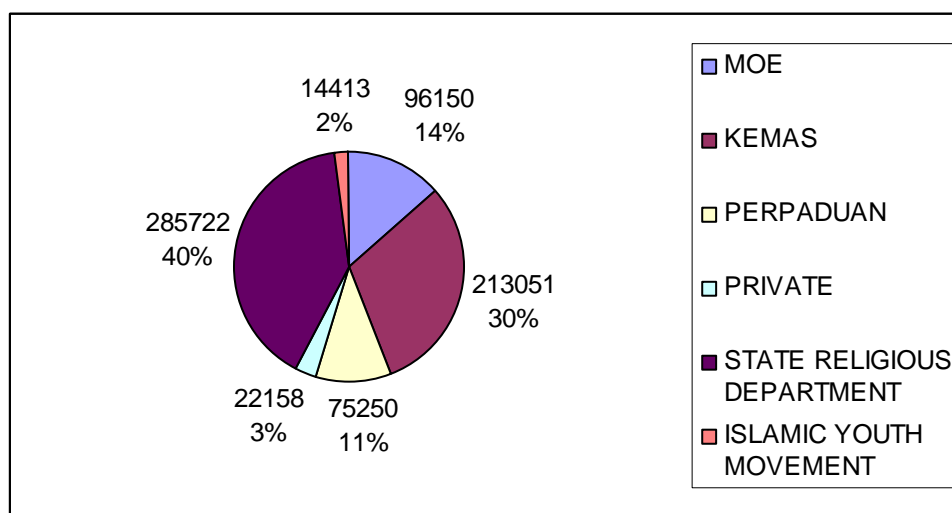


Diagram 1: Number of preschool students in the various providing agencies (EPRD Study, 2008)

## 2.0 NATIONAL CONSTITUTION, POLICIES, LAWS AND LEGISLATIONS ON ECCE

Taking cognizance from practice around the world, Malaysia has taken great effort to formulate comprehensive policies, laws and legislations in ECCE. The major constitution, policies, laws, legislations and programs are listed and explained briefly below. Most of these policies are broadly categorized according to the age group of the children.

- Convention on the rights of the child (CRC)(0-18 years old)  
CRC formed the basis of most of the current regulations and programs for ECCE in Malaysia. The caretaker of CRC is the Ministry of Woman, Family and Community Development (MWFCD).
- Child Act 2001 (Act 611)(0-18 years old)  
Act 611 provides that every child is entitled to protection and assistance in all

circumstances without regard to distinction of any kind.

- Childcare Centers Act 1984 and Childcare Centers Act (Amendment) 2007 (Act 308) (0-4 years old)  
The Act stipulated that every Childcare Centre must be registered with the Department of Social Welfare, MWFCD. All Childcare Providers and Childcare minders must undergo and obtain the basic Childcare Certificate accredited by the Department of Social Welfare.
- Education Act 1996 (Act 550)(4-6 years old)  
Act 550 legally placed preschool education within the National Education System. This Act instructed that all kindergarten (preschool) must be registered with the Ministry of Education. The Act also stipulated that the National Pre-school Curriculum must be used by all kindergarten, private or public.
- Education Act 1996(Regulation of Special Education 1997) (4-6 years old)  
Education Act 1996 also stated that MOE shall provide special education to pupils with special needs: visual impairment, hearing impairment as well as learning difficulties in the form of integrated program or inclusive program.
- Education Development Master Plan (PIPP) 2006 – 2010(5-6 years old)  
PIPP spells out the action plans of MOE in the next 5 years. From 2006 to 2010, MOE intends to extend preschool education to all National School especially those in rural and interior areas, ensure that special needs children obtain opportunity to education, provide qualified and sufficient teachers as well as teacher assistants in the MOE preschools.
- The Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Policy 2007(0-8 years old)  
Early Childcare and Development Policy with its plan of actions has recently been approved (2009). The aim of this ECCD policy is to advocate holistic development and quality care for new born to 8 years old children. This policy will be monitored through the setting up of law and regulations enforcement mechanism and a special accreditation body.
- Child Health Services Policy  
Child health services in Malaysia started since 1950s as one of the programme within the maternal and child health policy under the jurisdiction of the Public Health Department, Ministry of Health. Policies on health services for early childhood are either explicitly stated or implicit within the other general health policy..
- National Child Protection Policy(0-18 years old)  
Legal provisions servicing the National Child Protection Policy includes the Penal Code (Act 574) which cover offences affecting the human body and the Domestic Violence Act 1994 (Act 521) protects a child against any form of abuse committed within the household

- **National Policy on Disabled Child (0-18 years old)**  
In compliance with Article 23 of CRC the Division on Persons with Disabilities under the Department of Social Welfare develops the database on the disabled people as well as setting up the Community Based Rehabilitation centers providing diagnosis and rehabilitation services to these children.
- **National Policy on Indigenous Child**  
Article 30 in CRC stipulates that children belonging to the minority group or the indigenous children have the right to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language. Aboriginal Peoples Act 1954 (Act 134) places the responsibility for the general administration, welfare and advancement of Orang Asli (the indigenous child of the peninsula Malaysia) on the Commissioner of Aboriginal Affairs.
- **Financial assistance to the poor**  
There are three kinds of financial assistance to the children of the poor, namely the Child Assistance (Bantuan Kanak-kanak) and Schooling Assistance (Bantuan Sekolah). Poor is defined based on the combined family income and differs according to areas or states.

### **3.0 STATE OF ECCE IN MALAYSIA**

#### **3.1 Childcare (0-4 years old)**

Currently, childcare centers in Malaysia is mainly run by the private sectors and non-governmental organisation (NGO). Gross Enrolment Ratio, GER for 2005 indicates that only 1.82 % of total population of the age group of 0-4 years old is attending Taska. This is not a very realistic figure. Reports shown that many of the childcare centers are not registered

Childcare centers have undergone many changes in the last few years and many more changes is expected in the next one or two years. Among the changes are the setting up of government supported Community Childcare Center, the subsidised Work-place Childcare Center, the PERMATA Early Childhood Education and Care Center as well of the formulation of the Quality Improvement Accreditation System (QIAS) for Taska. Projects on the improving Home based Childcare Center is also taking shape.

MWFCD is also taking initiative to change the public perception that child minding is a lowly paid job that is only suitable for school dropouts. A task force has been set up to look into the career path of the childcare minders. The Task Force is currently working with the National Vocational Training Council to incorporate the Basic childcare Training into the National Occupational Skill Standards framework.

#### **3.2 Preschool education (4-6 years old)**

Early childhood education in Malaysia for the age group of 4-6 is offered by both the public sector as well as the private sector. GER for registered preschools (4-6 years old) for the year 2005 is 63.67%. Studies conducted by the MOE (2007) discovered % of Primary 1 students with ECCE experience at approximately 7%. Studies by MOE(2007)

also discovered high percentage of unregistered private preschools. In 2005. % of private preschools is 43%. Percentage of students enrolled in private preschools decreases yearly especially since 2003 when MOE started to systematically set up preschools in its primary schools.

Public sectors involved in preschool education are the Ministry of Education (MOE) as leading agency (beginning 1992 as annex to existing primary school, 5905 classes in 2007), Ministry of Rural and Regional Development (MORRD)(beginning 1970's as pioneer, focusing on rural areas, 8307 classes in 2007), and the Department of National Integrity and Unity (DNID)(beginning 1975 especially for areas with a mixed population of different races in urban and suburban areas, 1496 classes in 2007). Other than these, early childhood education is also provided by religious bodies such as the ABIM (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia) and the State Religious Department. Preschools and Taska set up by the private sector have always been seen by the government as an alternative to give quality education to children.

### **3.3 Care and Education for the special children**

Two ministries are involved here, Ministry of Education is in charge of program in the special schools (28 schools as of 2007) and also in the special integrated primary schools for children (72 classes as of 2007), MOE only caters for children with mono disability in the school going age focusing on hearing impaired, visually impaired and learning disability. MWFCDC take care of the other special programs especially for the severely disabled children.

The policy(Special Education Regulation 1997) restricting ECCE accessibility to children with mono-disability only is being relooked currently by MOE. Most of the special children are found to be afflicted with more than one disability. These children have a right for formal education and action has to be taken to ensure that they are not neglected.

Special Education One Stop Centre is being set up by stages beginning 2007. The main objective of this centre is to provide free services for special needs children (1-6 years old)and their parents, in terms of early intervention, rehabilitation and other services.

### **3.4 Indigenous Children**

Many of the indigenous people in peninsular of Malaysia (the 'orang asli') still stay in remote and interior areas of Malaysia and are reluctant to leave their home in remote area. Many of their children either do not go to school or dropped out from school during their primary school years. Department of Community Development, KEMAS has set up childcare centers (catering for 317 children as of 2006) and preschools in the rural areas to cater for the need of these orang asli. Departement of Orang Asli lauched the 'Woman mover' program to give awareness to mothers in indigenous community the importance of education (28 centers, 529 children as of 2006). Indigenous children in Sabah and Sarawak attend preschools which are operated by the MOE, KEMAS, PERPADUAN, private kindergartens as well as the NGOs.

### **3.5 Refugee Children**

Currently NGOs are running informal education classes for some refugee children. Some refugee communities have also taken the initiatives to establish community-based schooling for their children.

### **3.6 Children of Inmate**

Female inmates in the Malaysian Prisons are given the option of caring for their infant children till the age of 4 years. The Prison Department of Malaysia has set up childcare centers in prisons (10 centers and 27 children as of 2006) provides childcare for these children. The mothers are educated on childcare skills too. The Prison Department is also working closely with several NGOs to provide “sensory activities” for children aged 3 and below.

## **4.0 ECCE POLICY ISSUES IN MALAYSIA**

### **4.1 Providing preschool facilities to all children**

The ultimate target of providing ECCE to all children have not been achieved yet. Effective and innovative methods need to be deliberated on and implemented to ensure accessibility of ECCE to all children. Private still play an important role, thus reasons of unregistration of private ECCE providers need to be ascertained and procedures for registration simplified. The resistance by these private sector in registering their preschools also poses a big problem in getting accurate data for future planning of ECCE and for purpose of monitoring too.

### **4.2 Coordination and Standardisation**

Having many ECCE providers raises issue of coordination and standardisation. The question is whether all these agencies/ministries provide similar quality of care and education. There is no study or instruments available to gauge the effectiveness and success of these programs. Could policies formulated by each of these agencies/ministries apply to the other agency/ministry? There appear to be duplication of functions and roles among these agencies/ministries. One can argue too that there is a waste of man power and fund as teacher training, production of material as well as school inspection are conducted separately.

### **4.3 Providing ECCE training to the indigeous community**

To help indigenous children develop to the highest potential possible, they need to have proper care and educational experiences. It is suggested that young girls, youth or women in the indigenous community be given training in basic childcare skills, including activities that help children develop physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally. These childcare providers can then conduct programmes for children in their settlements or communities for both children of ages 2-4 and for mothers with young children.

Indigenous youths with a certain level of education can also be trained to teach children aged 4-6 years old using the National Preschool Curriculum for children. They should be taught to integrate their cultural practices into the activities or programmes conducted for these children not only to make learning meaningful to them but also to

demonstrate that learning is not alien to their culture.

#### **4.4 Database on Special Children and mechanism for cooperation**

All the ministries and agencies involved with special needs children have to develop a mechanism that enable them to cooperate among each other in order to ensure the child will benefit from their services. A database on special needs children has to be generated as a national database and not compartmentalized as it is now. With the national database, they can enhance their services on various aspect including registration, medical record, support programme, planning for individual educational plan and others. Without this database, it is also difficult to gauge how far the country has achieved its target and difficult to make future plan.

#### **4.5 Setting up of a National ECCE Policy Coordination Framework/Mechanism**

Issues pertaining to ECCE fall under the jurisdiction of many agencies/Ministries in Malaysia. Those not familiar with this situation would get confused. There are also instances of duplication and ignorance of what each other is doing. Thus, it would be good to have a comprehensive National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy Coordination Framework/Mechanism. This mechanism will be used to coordinate the implementation of the different policies already in place. A committee could be set up consisting of high officials from the various ministries such as Ministry of Education, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Woman, Family and Community Development, Department of National Unity and Integration. A more structured and effective mechanism might be the setting up of a Department of ECCE.

### **6.0 INNOVATIVE PRACTICES**

#### **6.1 Parental Program**

##### **6.1.1 SMARTSTART**

Smartstart package is for newly-weds and those intending to get married among others, emphasizes equitable sharing of tasks and responsibilities within the family, especially between the husband and wife. Beginning 2004, SMARTSTART courses were implemented at the grass root level by National Women and Family Council.

##### **6.1.2 Family Counseling Services**

Family Counseling Services have been provided on marriage, adolescents and family problems at the NPFDB's state administrative office throughout Malaysia. Between the year 2001 till 2004, 1953 cases were handled by counsellors throughout the country.

##### **6.1.3 Training And Education To Parents And Young Couples On Parenting**

Training and education to parents and young couples on parenting are conducted regularly. A series of five training and educational modules have been developed and are being widely disseminated. These modules are related to preparation for marriage and enrichment of family, parenting of young children, parenting of adolescents, fatherhood and adolescent development.

##### **6.1.4 Family First Campaign**

The Ministry of Women and Family Development, Malaysia has promoted the concept of ‘family first’ by its national awareness campaign, ‘Utamakan Keluarga, Semakin Hari Semakin Sayang’ (Family First, Loves grows). Ten Family First Principles have been identified and promoted and are practiced in the Malaysian family. Among these principles are love and affection, family fun time.

#### 6.1.5 National Family Policy

The United Nation, in proclaiming 1994 as the International Year of the Family and in its subsequent resolutions, recognized that the family is an important resource in a changing world and called its member states to adopt pro-family policies to increase the resilience of the family. The Government of Malaysia has taken the initiative to draft a National Family Policy to bring the importance of the family to public consciousness. In the final stages of its formulation, it aims to galvanize commitment and support of all stakeholders and beneficiaries to promote a family first concept, as a mean to develop and enhance the family institution. Specifically, it hopes to incorporate family well-being based on universal values, in all development programs for nation building, so that the family institution could be strengthened by providing family friendly policies, legislations, programs, services, facilities and a conducive environment. Technical workshops and a public forum were conducted in 2003 and 2004 to elicit input from various government agencies, NGOs and the public. It is hoped this policy could be implemented in the near future.

#### 6.1.6 Parenting Courses at Workplace ‘Parenting@Work’

Cabinet of Malaysia has approved a pilot program on parenting at the workplace to cater for the needs to educate working parents on parenting and balancing work and family life. At the initial stage, this course will be implemented at government office before it will be replicated to the other sectors.

#### 6.1.7 Grandparenting Module

Grandparent is one of the family support system that can function as bridging the gap of extended family. With grandparent around, children will communicate and interact with their cousin. Grandparent is one of the important educators that could inculcate good values in the children by experiences. They can also act as a mediator to marriage and parenting problem. A module on grand parenting will help to guide the grandparent on how to help support the family system and educating the young one with relevant motor skills and cognitive development.

## 6.2 Indigenous Children

Indigenous children in Malaysia are categorized into two major groups, one group in the peninsular of Malaysia (West Malaysia) and the other in East Malaysia (the states of Sabah and Sarawak). East Malaysia is separated from West Malaysia by the South China Sea. In fact, indigenous people form the major population of East Malaysia, they are made up of the ethnic groups of Iban, Dayak, Kadazan, Penan, Bidayuh etc. Though many of these indigenous people are already living in towns and cities, there are still many who are leading a more nomadic life in the interior of Sabah and Sarawak.

Indigenous people in peninsular of Malaysia are known as the 'orang asli'. Many of them still stay in remote and interior areas of Malaysia. Feedback obtained from Curriculum Development Center's visit to the indigenous schools in 2007 indicated that generally the orang asli has their ways of life and are reluctant to leave their home in remote area. Many of their children either do not go to school or dropped out from school during their primary school years.

#### 6.2.1 Childcare Centre Programme (0-4 years old) for the Orang Asli

In Malaysia, children are generally placed in childcare centers because both parents are working and they have no one to care for their children at home. Rarely are children looked after by childcare providers if there are maids or family members to care for the children. This practice of placing children in childcare is not widespread among orang asli communities in Peninsular Malaysia because most of the mothers do not work outside their homes. Nonetheless, childcare facilities are provided by Department of Community Development, KEMAS for orang asli parents who need the facilities beginning from 2005. The Department of Orang Asli Affairs (JHEOA) was of the opinion though the mothers of orang asli children in remote areas are not working outside their homes and do not need alternative care, these children need enrichment to enable them to develop, especially intellectually. Furthermore, mothers need knowledge to give proper care to their children. A program called 'Penggerak Wanita' which can be literally translated as the 'woman mover' was specifically developed for this purpose. The objective of this programme is to give awareness to mothers in indigenous community the importance of education; cultivate a reading habit and a love for knowledge among children; and organize and conduct co-curricular activities which involve the children and their parents.

#### 6.2.2. Preschool Education (4-6 years old)

To ensure socio-economically deprived children, especially indigenous children are not further disadvantaged, the Department of Community Development (KEMAS) in Peninsular Malaysia, set up kindergartens to cater to the needs of the orang asli children in the peninsular Malaysia since 1992.

Indigenous children in Sabah and Sarawak attend preschools which are operated by the Ministry of Education, KEMAS, PERPADUAN and private kindergartens. There are no preschools solely or exclusively for indigenous children in Sabah and Sarawak, unlike those in Peninsular Malaysia (the orang asli preschools by KEMAS). In areas, especially in remote areas that do not have preschools, NGOs such as PACOS or local communities provide some form of preschool education to help children acquire language skill as well as develop motor and social skills.

Besides PACOS, there are other NGOs who provide ECCE to the indigenous children of Malaysia. Eleven of these NGOs (8 in Sarawak, 3 in Peninsular Malaysia) work closely with PACOS. PACOS being the pioneer provides advice and training for the management and running of these NGOs centers.

Ministry of Education Malaysia has also embarked on a project to attract the indigenous children to attend school regularly. Special curriculum tailored made to fit into the cultural background of these indigenous children have been developed, special modules

were developed and used by these children. Parents are being invited to attend school with the children for a certain period to enhance their basic literacy and numeracy skills, they are given a token to replace the time they have spent in the school. This is done because time taken to attend schools would mean lost of income which is important for the survival of the family.

### **6.3 Standard-based and Modular Curriculum for school children**

Malaysia is taking serious effort to ensure equity and quality in education for the children of Malaysia. A special task force has been set up in the Curriculum Development Division, Ministry of Education to develop the conceptual framework for a curriculum which would help to ensure equity and quality in education. Subsequently a decision was made to develop a standard-based and modular oriented curriculum for preschool, primary and secondary schools.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

ECCE in Malaysia has progressed significantly in the past decade. The gaps between the aspiration of the established ECCE policies and its implementation can be closed through interaction and coordination between the various ECCE providing agencies as well as sensitivity towards the disadvantaged. A national coordination mechanism is inevitable, otherwise ECCE would continually be seem as fragmented in the eye of the general public of Malaysia and wastage of manpower and funding might occurred.

## **Educational Model in Mexico** **An Answer to Educative Needs of Nation**

Article 3 of the Constitution of the United Mexican States, the law for General Education and the National Program of Education; express the commitment of Mexican State to assure the right to education.

A democratic, intercultural, secular and obligatory education, that promotes individual personal and communal development, as well as the sense of belonging to a nation with multicultural and multilingual people, but also promotes an international solidarity conscience between students.

### **Legal foundation**

- Constitution of the United Mexican States, Article 3 and 31
- General Law of Education, Official Federal Diary on July 13th 1993
- Law for Protection of Children and Teenagers Rights, Official Federal Diary on May 29 2000
- National Program for Strengthening of Special Education and Educative Integration, September 2002
- General Law for Handicapped People, Official Federal Diary on June 10th 2005

### **Basic Education**

Basic Education offers to the future citizens, the intercultural, affective and cultural heritage, needed for social coexistence. In Mexico, Basic Education is integrated by Preschool Education, Primary Education as well as Secondary Education. Primary Education was the only mandatory level until 1993; then, mandatory Secondary Education was decreed in 1993 and Preschool Education in 2002. Mandatory Basic Education lasts twelve years, for students between three and fifteen years old.

### **Precedents**

During last decades new definitions has been included in the Mexican Constitution, values and aspirations of the Article 3 have been enriched. Some of the most important ones are: recognition of multicultural and multiethnic character of Mexican Nation, based on its indigenous communities (Article 2 of the Mexican Constitution); in consequence, is mandatory for Federation, States and municipalities to promote equality of opportunities for indigenous people and to avoid any discriminatory practice.

In the 70's decade an important educative reform was made, it required updating legal framework. So, in 1973 the Federal Education Law was promoted. During its validity this Law ruled over the education that was provided by States and

Municipalities.

The efforts to promote early education into a valuable institution for the development of individuals, have been tested across many obstacles, especially those that are about playful vision and non relevant for this period in a formal education context.

During President Porfirio Diaz period, in the late 30's of XX century, Kindergarten had an educational function only, and they were far from being taken as relevant education. The nationwide demand of this service during those years was requested only for some social status in urban cities of Mexico and in 1927 were only 129 schools in the whole country with a few students.

Difficulties began to declare in the post revolution period, when the peak of industrialization, the institutionalization of educative services in Mexico discussed between the educational function and the attendance level that educative services for children below 6 years old should have. Discussion was considered in the educational demands of teachers and caused the starting of parallel projects in the presidential periods of Lazaro Cardenas and Manuel Avila Camacho, including consolidation of structures, practices, uses and institutional identities.

Without deny the legitimacy of the struggle taken by teachers in 1942 to make preschool education dependent of the Public Education Secretary (SEP), the position of President Cardenas doesn't seem so wrong now, when finally institutions that give service to children younger than 6 years old can distinguish between those who offer educational services and those who offer additional or substantive caring services like maternal nurseries. We find both in federal, state, autonomous and private models.

The demand of maternal nurseries is explained by the increasing of poverty and the growth of participation of mothers in the labor world.

Incorporation of working mothers in rural and urban contexts has lead to transfer responsibility of children's care to their grandparents, relatives as well as neighbors, and in families without a father presence, most of the time to older brothers. In some cases older brother's age match with not mandatory education: preschool for children between four and six years old.

Furthermore, the increasing penetration of women to jobs, helps to increase the attendance of children younger than three years old to maternal nurseries and basic educational centers and many times as listeners to their older brother's preschool and kindergartens.

### **Educative system**

National Educative System is formed by government and social institutions that offer educative services, preservation of cultural heritage, knowledge and increasing of user's culture. In 2002, the federal budget destined to educational sector – budget of Public Educational Secretary and other secretaries- was about 277 thousand 38 millions of Mexican pesos (equivalent to 19 thousand 7 hundred 88 million of dollars at the present exchange rate).

### **Mandatory preschool education**

On December 12th 2001, the Mexican Senate approved a Law to make mandatory the

preschool education, agreed with a plan for gradual incoming; and commitments made by Mexico in the framework of international forums, especially during the following events: Children's Rights Convention (1990), Childhood World Summit (1990), EFA Year 2000 Assessment and the Dakar World Forum (2000). Those forums remark the importance of children's education as builder of basic competences that a person needs in life. They entail a significant change in National Educative System.

### **Early Education**

Early education stimulates children's harmonic and healthy growth, helps to increase their intellectual capabilities and makes future learning processes easier.

Early and preschool education look for increasing student's skills and acquisition of required values for their personal development and makes future incorporation to primary and society easier.

Due to actions taken between 1990 and 2002 in favor of childhood, the amount of attendance registered an increase from 3.2% in 1990 to 7.3% in 2000, that is, the amount rise from 295 thousand to 629 thousand of children between 45 days old and three years eleven months old for early education.

To extend and improve the attention and education for children, initial education promotes team participation with the help of parents. In order to increase educational quality of this level, the program has the goal to increase the attendance in 2010, especially of the more excluded and vulnerable children.

### **Preschool education**

Preschool education is provided by Kindergartens of Public Educational Secretary, private centers, community preschools from National Advisor of Education Promotion (CONAFE), maternal nurseries that depends on social security institutions like Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS) and the Institute for Services and Social Security for Workers of State (ISSSTE), other public institutions, private companies that offer this kind of services for their female workers with children, and public or private nurseries.

Childhood Development Centers (CENDIS) and public or private nurseries offer services exclusively for children younger than 4 years old. For those children older than 4, there are public Kindergartens, and private Kindergartens with feeding, attention, and accommodation to children in journeys longer than 3 hours.

In general, the service with educational focus is offered in rural and urban Kindergartens, as well as Community Preschools located in remote areas of the country, with a schedule of 3 hours that does not involve denying additional services. For urban centers the schedule fits to the working hours of female workers.

On December 2001, Congress approved a modification to Article 3 of Mexican Constitution, that establish to make mandatory preschool education in phases, one mandatory year for the 2004-2005 cycle, two mandatory years for the 2005-2006 cycle and the third one for the 2006-2007 cycle.

Nowadays, this change has achieved access of 90% of children to at least one year of educational preschool, through variations of the service for little rural communities dispersed in all nationwide.

Attendance of children between 4 and 5 years old was of 70% in the 2001-2002

cycle. 84.4% of the total amount went to general preschool, 8.6% indigenous preschool and 3.5 community preschool.

Assessment 1990-2002 shows a gradual growth of preschool attendance of 2.4% a year. In 2000 there were three million 400 thousand pupils; that year nine of ten kids joining to primary school would have attended preschool.

Cycle 2001-2002 benefit to 3.4 million of children, which was an increase of 0.3% regarding previous cycle.

For the last cycle (2007-2008), attendance of 3 years old children was 35%, and for children between 4 and 5 years old was of 92.6% and 99.6% respectively.

## **Problematic**

Because of the importance of preschool, making it mandatory has important issues to consider, for example: resources, family's idiosyncrasy, educational character of this level, its linking with the rest of education: plans and programs, etcetera.

Besides, to join to primary school in 2004-2005 cycle, applicants must have attended the third grade of preschool; those who join in 2005-2006 should have the last two grades, and for the next cycle the three grades are mandatory. Do we have the resources to achieve universality of preschool?

Problematic has other issues: training for teachers in preschool; designing the curriculum, attendance for children in condition of poverty.

## **Actions**

In Childhood Development Centers of Mexico City, there is staff that provides educational services without the professional background or career, they have learned through the practice. To respond to educational change of preschool, some actions must be taken:

- Professionalize teachers who have a high school diploma.
  - Achieve the Preschool Education Degree through demonstration of knowledge due to the practice and approve the General Knowledge Exam for Preschool Education (Agreements 286 and 357)
  - A bachelor's degree in Preschool Education can be taken in a partly-schooling modality on Saturdays with duration of 3 years.
- Achieving Technical Normative to staff with studies of primary or secondary school.
- Educational Reform
  - A new educational culture is required to help individual to increase its capabilities of: being a better person, learning to share and learning to think.
  - Education for Children must be centered in the development of competences to make pupils social-functional.
  - Education must attend social demands to provide pupils useful knowledge that allow them being efficient individually or collectively in the social context they manage.
  - Developing social-functional competences liked with:

- a) Construction as a social person.
- b) Relationship with physical and social environment.
- c) Representation and communication should be present during the whole nursery and basic education.

Children that belong to our community are in the range from 45 days to 6 years old. Child Care Center's function is to make them feel at home. That means part of a family. In a family, children integrate gradually to collective activities. That is why we must consider them in our general plan in order to integrate them to actions focused in the development of their intelligence, affection and language.

The operation model of Child Care Centers is a very clear opportunity to keep continuity through 6 years in the following actions of the psycho-emotional development of children and the strategies for their education.

### Strategies

Main sections of strategies are:

- ❖ Integration to Society
- ❖ Cognitive
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Math and Science

*Integration to Society*

#### **Commissions**

Commissions are a basic part of social conscience development; they allow integrating children to the organization and dynamics of school, from the possibilities of every group. They emerge as an answer of community needs and they are taken voluntarily, for those who consider having the capacity and willpower to perform it systematically.

Commissions allow participants feel part of the community; they gain value through other people's eyes, they learn to collaborate with others, and get satisfactions because of it. As well, to accomplish assignments help to make them feel an important part of a group.

For example, the Assignment of Attendance, we could define it as a task that involves being devoted of attendance registration of every member of the group. Some strategies to achieve this task are:

- Elaboration of an attendance list.
- Daily registry of attendance.

When children assume an assignment, it is important to complete it, but also to communicate to others about its operation. They are suggested to make a written register to keep the information every day, in order to have enough and valuable information at the end of the week.

Participating in assignments allow to learn to work autonomously; also to take group decisions, achieve responsibilities and solve organizational problems.

When children share tasks, they need:

- ❖ Planning actions

- ❖ Share points of view
- ❖ Make the work
- ❖ Evaluate their achievements
- ❖ Report completing goals to the group

In order to make assignments work, they must:

- ❖ Be chosen freely
- ❖ Be organized by children basically
- ❖ Be executed in some specific place, it could be an space or a corner in the classroom
- ❖ Be evaluated by the group constantly

## **Regulations**

Everybody in school must participate elaborating the regulations. We consider that regulations must be a way to create conscience about conditions that guarantee moral and physical integrity of every member, in order to develop school activities.

Nevertheless, it is worth to consider some important conditions to make useful the Regulations for education of autonomous and responsible individual. An important issue to consider is the need to write “positive” regulations and avoiding “prohibitive” ones. Perhaps, the first thing that comes to mind when designing regulations is what is “forbidden”, what we “should not” do.

Likewise, is convenient that regulations propose some steps to “fix” the damage. This allows children to feel better with themselves and with those that have been hurted. The possibilities to make some change, fix the damage, heal the wound, replace the broken things, and fill them with positive thoughts. This is the way to allow them to build positive images of themselves despite of the mistakes they could have made.

At the beginning of the course it’s important to get agreements about what is allowed (to do or to say) and what is not. It is important to pay attention in both, to keep them balanced and avoid a different weight.

Once agreements have been made, children can draw representations of every rule. Teacher can write the rules below or upon the drawings.

These agreements must be placed where everybody can see them, including a classification with what is allowed and what is not.

The agreements can grow or be modified through the year, based on daily experience. If some day, a kid hits another one, the teacher will encourage them to talk about the situation, then, the teacher will suggest them to make a drawing to remember the experience. The agreements will be updated with this.

## *Cognitive*

### **The right to the word: children’s conferences**

The conference is one of the Tools proposed by Freinet to invite children to get information from many sources, in consequence, to do research. Through the years conferences have evolved to adapt to educational needs, children needs and teachers needs.

Using this tool allow students to develop their skills to access information, register it, summarize it, and then spread it from their own linguistic parameters to other kids; Information is given since the point of view of children's level.

In preschool children choose spontaneously the topic they want to tell to their partners. Topics can cover things such as the subway, horses, dogs, cats, flowers or firemen.

In this period, information comes from their living experiences. That means we do not intend them to write a long summary or seeking advice from a lot of sources. At this moment, the most important thing is to encourage children to go to the information in an easy and educative way, starting from their own experiences of life and the knowledge they already have.

Building the object for preschool children is about recognizing it through direct perception. Thus, in order a child get able to speak other children about cats, he had to have touched a cat, stroked a cat, played with a cat, looked into cat's eyes, touched cat's feet. From this experience, the child will take the most valuable information from his own perception, to talk about cats to the group.

It is very important to highlight the adult collaboration in the process of researching. Parents will be responsible for giving children the necessary means to perform their first researches. They will help their sons and daughters in making the school materials for the conference, even will help them in the presentation of the conference at the classroom. It is very valuable if parents write a short summary with the main ideas for the conference in order to help teachers to support children during their presentation.

A task for the teachers is to assign dates to conferences, provide spaces for supporting material and recover important topics from conferences for future classes.

### *Communications*

#### **Making books of life**

Children are knowledge producers; knowledge that can be valued when it's spread and shared with others through publishing. Editing texts, stories, memories or jokes implies give children presence in our written culture. We give them a chance to remain in time and the possibility to travel through the universe.

That is why we propose to start in children a written culture, which makes them not only text consumers, but also creators of written material that can be shared, and their capacity to explain things, grows as well.

The idea is creating books of life, collective diaries, shared memories about a visit, or a show, stories for children, rimes, poetry for children, cartoons, newspapers and every sort of written material and drawings that represent children's Cosmo vision.

Taking that universe of representation, write it down and give it permanent life. Books of life can be shared with others, can be read, can be discussed, can be tasted, and can be commented.

Generating a Readers club of books made by children for children and adults, will increase the creation of a culture where the written material is not only a recognizable source for knowledge, but also will encourage the intellectual creation that visualize our children as authors of a written culture that allow us to see them, know them and love them.

## **Preschool theater**

At preschool, plays that are performed come from adaptation of short tails that are read in the literary workshop class. At this period, children live the experience over a stage and they tell a collective chosen story with their own words.

Teacher's role is like a motivator, which helps to choose the story, gives ideas about the representation over a stage, helps to construct the set design, and talks to the parents about how to dress children for the performance. Teacher looks for minimize children's work in order they can focus to live the experience in a very creative and artistic way.

## **Music, cadenza and intern rhythm**

- ***Musical Appreciation Project.*** This Project is focused in children to go deep into the wide musical expressions of Mexico and the World, without physical borders, no cultural limits or time boundaries. Music as an artistic and creative product is a form to express or communicate thoughts. It is very important to allow children to experiment music, to imagine from inside, to start from this exploration of harmonic sounds and musical languages to express their emotions through singing, dancing and other musical ways. This workshop shows children how composers lived and their musical gender, from Mexico to other countries that enrich musical culture.
- ***Games and Singing Workshop:*** This Project has been made to show children how music can be part of their life, through games and other activities that help them to develop their expressive capabilities, imagination, ear for music, to encourage them to integrate as a team in order to reach common goals. We suggest using songs, games and rimes from *La Lírca Infantil Mexicana y Latinoamericana*, which is a collection of quality music of many genders, supporting material such as puppets, scarves, ribbons, papers and percussion instruments. Children live the music through their bodies, feeling the movement and the sensations that music brings. Enjoying the activities is the main aim.

## ***Math and Science***

Two important skills that must be developed in children's mind through math are: sense over numbering and symbol concept (its representation). The way to do it is through active participation of children.

In preschool is necessary to have a classification space for ordering, serializing, and comparing, one to one relationships. This can be done with construction materials, and assembly materials.

Ordering things, must be a natural and constant activity in group, with harder an more complex challenges. For an example, sorting by class: little red objects and rounded green objects.

Activities such as distributing things in the classroom (one pencil for every child, a spoon in every place) are excellent opportunities for building this useful logic construction.

The working way in Science starts from the explanation of the ideas that children have about the topic. They investigate organisms, objects and phenomenon in order to discuss their observations and reorganize their ideas. The objective is that children can apply in other situations what they have learned with the new concepts.

### **Assessment and following**

#### **Teacher's Dairy**

In order to follow children's development, it is a good idea that teachers who deal with preschool and younger kids made a Diary that allows registering children's experiences, their difficulties and the interventions that adults do. The Diary makes easier to track children's development.

#### **Single expedients: children's personal profile**

One of the Basic strategies of our educative mission is to track kid's cognitive development. We can take part in the solution of problems and issues that children use to have. It is very important to have an expedient with information of every one of them. Expedient starts since our first contact with children.

Tracking their development includes aspects of their family context, academic history, mental and physical health, and different moments of their life at school when he or she needed special help, or family support to get over some physical, cognitive, social or affective difficulty.

It is very important to have this information, due we can understand the process and phases of children's development. It gives to us necessary parameters to get involved or ask for external specialized collaboration to solve problems, as well as recognize the level of participation and family commitment during kid's development at school. We look for a better participation in their kid's education.

#### **Psycho educational studies: a deep vision.**

Cognitive, affective and social aspects can't be separated from children's development because weakness in one of them has an impact in the others. Evaluate those aspects is a permanent exercise and has to be done during school activities. This can be done with appropriate strategies that allow detecting problems in all the areas.

Instruments that allow knowing cognitive, social and affective problems in our children are: Initial evaluation, diary evaluation registers and competence curriculum.

Some strategies are: daily working observation (playful activities and specific exercises in subjects), integration activities, meetings, and single sessions with children and parents consultancy.

For cognitive problems detection we can watch and evaluate their skills and knowledge, as well as the quality and level of their school work and home work.

Subsequently, information can be completed with teacher's comments about

children's mood, attitude, single and social behavior. So we can put in context the situation of every kid and set out theories about the case in order to be able to make decisions about problematic.

### **Professional involvement in learning and development problems**

Children's development in all areas is a priority; which means that those with special needs have to be accepted in school community, to enrich it and setting out new challenges in the looking for a democratic justice and respectable society.

That makes us focusing in children's needs to be able to propose attention strategies, which make possible a full development. Most of the time, this is possible just with special attention of psychologists, psychiatrists, therapists, neurologists among others. Integral work with these specialists, allow us to identify children's needs and skills, to understand their problematic and to design strategies for a better attention.

School sets out a group of actions to track professional intervention: valuation request, meeting with specialists, constant reports, suggestions and a working plan.

## Early Childhood Education Trend and Childcare Policy in Korea

### I. Legal Framework for Early Childhood Education and Childcare

#### 1. Early Childhood Education Act

The Early Childhood Education Act of Korea promulgated in January 2004 is an independent legal framework promoting three years of education for children age 3~5 at kindergarten by reviewing and streamlining the existing laws and regulations on early childhood education. The Act provides a basic foundation for early childhood education aimed at balanced and harmonious development of children by establishing a more consistent and systematic nationwide human resource management process starting as early as the pre-school stage.

The Act promotes the following main initiatives: i) one-year free education program shall be implemented and expanded in a phased manner for five-year old children before entering elementary school, and education subsidy shall be provided for three- or four-year old children in low income families; ii) government support shall be provided for full-day kindergarten classes in line with major socioeconomic changes such as the increasing number of families with two working parents; and iii) financial support such as a subsidy for teacher's salaries shall be provided to private kindergartens (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2004).

With the enactment of the Early Childhood Education Act, the public education for kindergarten age children is strengthened as more support and attention is given to early childhood education, which has received relatively less attention compared to elementary or middle school education, and the new measures bring more financial stability to Korean homes as the burden of private education expenses for the children are eased.

<Table 1> Legal Basis of Early Childhood Education

Age Group	Age 3~5	Age 6~11	Age 12~14	Age 15~17	Age 18~21	Age over 22
Classification	Kindergarten	Elementary School	Junior High School	High School	College, University	Lifelong Learning Institute
Legal Basis	Children's Education Law	Elementary and Secondary Education Act			Higher Education Act	Lifelong Learning Act
	Article 9 Item 1 of the Fundamentals of Education Act					
	Article 31 Item 6 of the Constitution					

#### 2. Infant and Child Care Act

The Infant and Child Care Act enacted in 1991 holds its significance in the fact that it has laid a foundation for building a systematic childcare program in Korea beginning at

birth through five years of age. Before the Act was introduced, many different types of childcare facilities were in operation based on different laws and regulations(e.g. a nursery facility based on the Child Welfare Act, workplace nursery and pilot care center based on the Act on the Equal Employment for Both Sexes, and saemaetul nursery based on the Early Childhood Education Promotion Act). The Infant and Child Care Act unified these different care facilities under one regulation, and the matter of childcare, which has long remained under the responsibility of parents and private sector, became part of the government initiative(Rhee O, 2007).

However, some have continued to argue for the amendment of the Act as it provided a weak ground for social responsibility to provide a strong public childcare service. The Act reflected the State's reservations in its childcare responsibilities and only stated its passive involvement. As a result, during the implementation phase of the Act, the private sector was at the center of the quantitative growth of childcare facilities in the country. Therefore, the Infant and Child Care Act was amended in January 2004 to include several provisions emphasizing the public interest of childcare and enhancing the overall quality of childcare services.

## **II. Early Childhood Education System of Korea**

Korea's early childhood education has a two-tier system, that is, kindergartens(age 3~5) under control of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and childcare(age 0~5) facilities under control of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Family Affairs.

Kindergartens, institutions to prepare children aged three and older for elementary school, are either government-run or privately controlled. Depending on the nature of their founding organization, childcare facilities-for preschool children including infants-are classified into national/public, corporate, workplace, in-home, parent co-op, and other private facilities.

### **1. Current Conditions of Kindergartens**

Kindergartens in Korea provide half-day, extended hour, and full-day programs.

<Table 2> Operation hours of kindergarten

Classification	Operation hours
Half-day kindergarten	3-5 hours per day
Extended hour kindergarten	5-8 hours per day
Full-day kindergarten	Longer than 8 hours per day

A half-day kindergarten runs daily activities of 3-5 hours, and an extended hour kindergarten opens for 5-8 hours. A full-day kindergarten is based on daily curriculum lasting longer than eight hours. In recent years the number of full-day kindergartens has been on the rise. Statistics indicate that as of April 2008, 91% of kindergartens in Korea provide full-day program, a marked increase from 29.5% in 2002.

As shown in the table below, the kindergarten enrollment rate in 2008 tends to rise in accordance with age increases-22.0%, 38.7% and 51.9% for children aged 3, 4, and 5 respectively. Private kindergartens have a higher enrollment rate than their public counterparts.

<Table 3> Number of Kindergartens and Children's Enrollment Rate (2008)

Classification		National/Public	Private	Total
Kindergartens	Number of facilities	4,480(53.7%)	3,861(46.2%)	8,341(100%)
	Enrolled children	119,128(22.1%)	418,694(77.8%)	537,822(100%)

Source: Education Policy Information Center of Korean Educational Development Institute (2008)

## 2. Current Conditions of Childcare Facilities

Childcare facilities range from national/public to corporate, workplace, in-home, parent co-op and other private childcare centers. These facilities offer extended-hour, holiday, hourly, after/before-school, or full-day programs. As in the case of kindergartens, an overwhelming majority of childcare facilities are run privately. The following table shows their current conditions.

<Table 4> Classification of Childcare

Classification	Established and Operated By
National/Public	Established/operated by the national and local governments
Corporation	Established/operated by community welfare centers
Workplace	Established/operated by employers for their employees
In-home	Established/operated by individuals at homes or similar places
Parent co-operation	Established/operated by a group of 15 or more parents
Private	Established/operated by non-profit organizations/corporations or individuals

As of December 2008, the total number of childcare facilities is 32,149, 5.50%(1,769 facilities) of which are national or public institutions. Private facilities amount to 43.9%(14,127 facilities) of the entire group. In-home childcare facilities, which have steadily increased since 2000, show the highest spike in number. It is reported that there were 14,375(44.7%) in-home childcare centers in 2008. With the exception of national or public childcare establishments, various privately-run childcare facilities total 30,380. Therefore it can be said that a considerable increase in the number of childcare facilities in the past five years has been driven mainly by the growth of privately run facilities.

<Table 5> Number of Childcare Facilities (2008)

Date	Total	National/ Public	Corporation	Private			Parent co-operation	In-home	Work place
				Subtotal	Association	Individual			
2008.6	32,149	1,769 5.50 %	1,482 4.61%	14,127 43.95 %	973 3.03%	13,154 40.92 %	61 0.19 %	14,375 44.71 %	335 1.04 %

The operating hours of the facilities are as follows.

<Table 6> Operation hour of Childcare

Classification	Under 5 hours	Under 5 to 8 hours	Under 8 to 10 hours	Under 10 to 12 hours	Over 12 hours	Total (%)
percent	8.8	30.2	36.8	20.3	3.8	100.0

### 3. Kindergarten and Childcare Teachers

A kindergarten teacher's certificate is granted by the Minister of Education, Science and Technology on the basis of the Children's Education Law. A childcare teacher's certificate, on the other hand, is granted by the Minister of Health, Welfare and Family Affairs on the basis of the Early Childhood Education Law. The following table compares differences between kindergarten and childcare teachers.

<Table 7> Comparison between Kindergarten and Childcare Teachers

Classification	Kindergarten Teachers	Childcare Teachers
Legal Basis	Children's Education Law	Childcare Law
Ministry in Charge	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs
Certificate	Granted by the Minister of Education and Science and Technology	Granted by the Minister for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs
Minimum Educational Requirement	Associate's degree from a junior college or higher degree	High school diploma or higher degree

As indicated in Table 7, the minimum educational requirement for a kindergarten teacher and a childcare teacher is an associate's degree from a junior college and a high school diploma respectively. Completion of four areas of study-teaching profession, liberal arts, major subject of study, and teaching practice-is required to become a kindergarten teacher. A prospective childcare teacher must complete six areas of study: fundamentals of childcare, development and guidance, childcare education, health and safety, cooperation with family and community, and childcare practice.

### 4. Kindergarten and Childcare Curriculum

Kindergartens follow a curriculum based on the Kindergarten Education Curriculum that was enacted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Development.

The Kindergarten Education Curriculum, first introduced in 1969, underwent its 7<sup>th</sup> revision in 2007. Developed to teach children age three to five, the Curriculum consists of five subjects: health, social skills, expression, language arts, and exploration. The Curriculum can be run on a two-tier system-Level I and Level II-in order to accommodate the difference in the level of children’s understanding.

Childcare facilities provide a curriculum grounded in the 2006 Standard Childcare Curriculum. The Standard Curriculum is designed to teach children up to age five, and includes six subjects of study, which are physical activities, basic life skills, communication, nature exploration, artistic experience, and social interaction. Children are divided into three different age groups: children younger than two, age two, and age three to five. Each age group is further broken down into three levels so that each child is adequately educated in accordance with their age and level of understanding.

<Table 8> Kindergarten and Childcare Curriculum

Institution	Kindergarten	Childcare Facilities
Name	Kindergarten Education Curriculum (Enacted in 1969, Revised in 2007 for a 7 <sup>th</sup> time)	Standard Childcare Curriculum (Enacted in 2006)
Ministry in Charge	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs
Age group	Children age 3 to 5	Children age up to 5
Areas of Study	5 areas of study (health, social skills, expression, language, art, and exploration)	6 areas of study Physical activities, basic life skills, communication, nature exploration, artistic experience and social interaction)
Classification	Level difference: Level I and II	Different and groups children younger than 2, age 2, and age 3 to 5) Level difference (ach age group divided into 3 levels)

### III. Current Conditions of Childhood Education in Korea

#### 1. Fewer School Age Children Due to Decline in Birth Rate

The Korean birth rate dropped from 1.78 in 1992 to 1.17 in 2002. The 2005 birth rate fell to a record low of 1.05. Since then, the government has augmented its interest in and support of childcare policy, thereby helping increase the nation’s total birth rate. As the government’s interest and support in childcare support policies grew afterwards, the total fertility rate increased from 1.13 in 2006 to 1.20 in 2008, but it decreased once again in 2008 to 1.19 compared to the year before (JoongAng Daily, 2009.8.20). The Korean total birth rate still remains low in view of OECD’s average of 1.60.

#### 2. Changes in Family Structure and Values of Korean Society

The present Korean society is undergoing rapid changes in family structure and values. A conspicuous change in the Korean family structure in the past 30 years is a

steady rise in the number of nuclear family that centers on a married couple and their unmarried children, and a drastic fall in the extended family where three generations live together(Yu, Seo, Kim & Choi, 2006). A recent increase in the divorce rate and the number of single-parent households has made it more difficult for families to raise children, as bread winning and housework, which was shared jointly between two parents before, falls on the shoulders of one parent.

### **3. Early Childhood Education**

Korean parents' zeal for education has been transforming the nature of childhood from a time of encouraging children to literally enjoy themselves into a learning period in preparation for future competition. The early childhood education craze in Korea is bringing about changes in the culture of childhood education to such an extent that hardly any child passes a day without receiving talent education. Currently, 86% of kindergarten children are getting private lessons in Hangeul, math, English, or other subjects(Lee, 2002). Research done in Korea, China, and Japan also have shown that Korean children spend the most time on early childhood activities aimed to foster special talent in addition to regular education(Lee, 2006). This early childhood education, which has sharply grown in the recent years, has not only worked against children but it has also been an enormous burden on household economy

### **4. Increase in Women's Employment Rate**

For the past 20 years, the number of economically active women rose to 10 million in 2006 from 6 million in 1985, with the female participation rate in economic activities continuously climbing from 1.9% in 1985 to 50.2% in 2006(Korea National Statistical Office, 2008). Accordingly, the employment rate of mothers is also steadily rising. Women in their early 30's, however, tend to leave the labor market due to childbirth and childcare. As a result, the burden of childcare is regarded as the biggest factor in undermining working mothers' economic activities despite a social milieu where women generally engage in vigorous economic activities.

### **5. Childbirth and Childcare Leave System**

Childbirth leave has been established and implemented since 1987. A childcare leave system that allows more than 30 days of leave from work was first introduced in 2001 in order to support the childcare of workers with infants. Since November 2001, men have been able to apply for this system. As of October 2007, 17,390 workers have been paid 500,000 won per month through the childcare leave system.

Working women are entitled to 90 days of childbirth leave, the first 60 days paid by their employer and the remaining days paid by the government. In reality, however, the rate at which workers utilize childbirth or childcare leave is, if anything, low: only 22.5% of working women who gave birth took leave and 28% of those used childcare leave benefits.

### **6. Establishing Childcare Facilities in the Workplace**

The enforcement ordinance of Childcare Law stipulates that workplace childcare centers be established as a childcare support system for working women. Under Section 1 of Article 20 in the ordinance, any workplace that employs more than 300 full-time female workers or more than 500 total workers is required to provide a workplace

childcare center. Still, only 15,124 (1.4%) out of 1,099,933 preschool age children participate in childcare provided by their parents' workplace.

### **7. Childcare Policy Development Center Operation**

In December 2005, the Center for Development of Childcare Policy was established as a policy research institute aimed at conducting comprehensive studies on childcare policy. The center has been run with financial support from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Development and the Ministry of Gender Equality. In the process, studies on childcare, which had been divided into kindergarten education and childcare, have been done in a more systematic and unified manner.

### **8. Efforts to Achieve Qualitative Improvement and Standardization of Childcare Support Service**

Efforts have been made to strive for qualitative improvement and standardization of childcare support services by introducing an evaluation system for childcare facilities and kindergartens. The evaluation and certification system for childcare facilities, a system inspecting childcare centers on the basis of the evaluation and certification table and guide, was first test-operated in 2005 before being fully introduced. As of June 2008, the number of childcare facilities applying for the evaluation and certification amounted to 11,709, 55.4% of the total 30,856 childcare facilities, out of which only 19.6% passed.

The kindergarten assessment system was implemented in 2007 and pilot tests were carried out on 100 kindergartens out of the nation's 8,290 facilities. Annual assessments began in 2008 and will continue until 2010. In 2008, assessments were conducted on a total of 2,731 kindergartens, including 1,466 national-public facilities and 1,265 private institutes (Child Care Policy Forum 2008).

### **9. Childcare Subsidy**

Support for children's education and childcare is one of the government's important policy priorities as a measure established to ensure the nation's human resources development and to deal with its low birth rate. The government has instituted both a basic childcare subsidy and various education and childcare subsidies to support childrearing.

#### **1) Basic Childcare Subsidy**

In 2004, the government calculated the standard cost of childcare required to provide a minimum level of childcare service. However, the calculated standard childcare cost was higher than what parents had been paying. The basic subsidy, therefore, means a difference between the standard cost and the actual cost shouldered by parents, which is covered by the government. In 2006, the basic subsidy was first provided for children two years old or younger in childcare facilities. From September 2006 to February 2008, the basic subsidy for children age three to five was administered as a pilot project in three regions.

#### **2) Graded Childcare and Education Subsidy for Low-Income Families**

Graded childcare and education subsidy is provided for children of low-income families who are four years old or younger. With the range of beneficiaries gradually expanded, in 2007 the subsidy is being given up to the average income bracket of urban worker households. The subsidy is provided according to different grades based on

income levels (five levels) and age.

3) Childcare and Education Subsidy for Families with Two or More Children

This subsidy is provided for households who are below the average income bracket for urban workers and who have two or more children attending a kindergarten or a childcare center. Siblings except for the first child are eligible for the subsidy. The government is planning to increase the subsidy rate every year in order to eventually support childcare regardless of a family's income level.

4) Free Childcare and Education for Children Age Five

In order to ensure equal opportunity of education, a monthly subsidy of 162,000 won is provided for preschool children of households with income below the average monthly income bracket for urban workers. In 2007, through the childcare fee support for children below five, about 70% of all the children below five were supported and currently as of April 2009, the childcare fee support for children below five is given to those with up to 100% average monthly income. Starting from 2009, this subsidy is projected to expand to cover households earning 130% of the average monthly income bracket.

The following table shows the number(rate) of children who receive a childcare subsidy for childcare facilities.

<Table 9> Number of Children Receiving Childcare Subsidy of Childcare Facilities (2006)

Classification	Infant	Children age 5 or younger	Total
Total	223,700 (63.9%)	442,943 (64.2%)	666,643 (64.1%)
Graded Subsidy	186,655 (53.5%)	277,211 (56.4)	463,867 (44.6%)
Two Children	37,045 (10.6%)	26,700 (3.9%)	63,745 (6.1%)
Children Age 5	-	139,031 (70.0%)	139,031 (13.4%)

As indicated in Table 9, 63.9% of infants and 64.2% of preschoolers(five or younger) attending childcare centers are receiving a childcare subsidy. The following table shows the number of kindergarten children receiving an education subsidy.

<Table 10> Number of Kindergarten Children Receiving Education Subsidy (2006)

Classification	Number of Children	% of Children
Total	317,000	58.7
Graded Subsidy	162,000	65.2
Two Children	10,000	1.8
Children Age 5	145,809	50.2

The number of kindergarten children receiving an education subsidy is 317,000, or 58.7% of the total kindergarten children.

#### **10. Shortage of Support Measures for Working Parents, Including Working Married Couples**

The reality in which coexistence of work and family is impossible has been pointed out as the factor that not only lowers women's participation in economic activities but also lowers childbearing by fertile women. As part of the policy to prevent childbearing age women from leaving the labor market and to support the coexistence of work and family, measures such as the maternity protection system, setting up childcare facilities at the workplace, and tax benefits, have been enacted and revised, but actual implementation has been sluggish. Therefore, these measures need to be enhanced and there must be more active utilization of them.

#### **11. Poor Working Conditions of Private Kindergarten and Childcare Center Teachers**

The working conditions for private kindergarten teachers and childcare teachers are very poor, and this directly affects the quality of early childhood education. The excessive working hours, in particular, is an obstacle to raising the level of education and care quality. The compensation is also very low compared to the work intensity, time, and expertise level required. Therefore, it is imperative to reevaluate the compensation of private kindergarten and childcare teachers.

#### **12. Problems with Childcare and Education for Farming and Fishing Village Infants and Preschoolers**

The farming and fishing village regions, with low child population and low income, have been alienated in terms of having access to high-quality early childhood education and childcare. Creating farming and fishing communities with a good nurturing environment for children is significant from the point of contributing to the balanced development of the nation as a whole.

According to 2006 statistics, the majority of institutions in the farming and fishing regions are public kindergartens(81.9%), but the enrollment rate(45.1%) is very low compared to the number of institutions. Short attendance period, long school breaks, and lack of school bus service are among the reasons for not choosing public kindergartens. Seen nationally, compared to the population of children in the farming and fishing villages, there are not enough childcare facilities, and thus an increase in such facilities is urgently needed.

#### **13. Shortage of Comprehensive Services for Handicapped Children**

According to the 2001 data from the Korea Institute for Special Education, 2% of infants and toddlers ages zero to five are handicapped. As of 2006, 19.8% of the handicapped children are assigned to preschool education centers or childcare facilities, meaning that only one out of five is receiving education and childcare benefits.

According to the June 2008 research, currently 667 infant daycares exist in Korea,

and the number of infants they care for are 30,856 in 60 national/public facilities (9.0%), 551 private facilities (82.6%), and 56 in-home facilities (8.4%). There are 159 childcare facilities for disabled children, of which 28 are national/public (17.6%) and 129 are private childcare facilities (81.1%).

<Table 11> Number of Childcare facility: Infant/ Young Children with special need (2008)

Classification	total	National/ Public	Corporation	Private		In-home	Parent co-operation	Work place
				Association	Individual			
Infant Dedicated	667	60	231	59	261	56	-	-
Dedicated Disability	159	28	93	11	25	2	-	-
Integrate Children with Disability	7 68	335	47	42	280	62	2	-

#### IV. Korea's Early Childhood Education ·Childcare Policy

##### 1. Five-Year Development Plan for Early Childhood Education

The 5-Year Development Plan for Early Childhood Education aims to create policies and kindergartens that make the child happy and are helpful to the child while improving kindergarten education services so that more benefits will be provided to the users of kindergarten education, the children and their parents. Furthermore, the plan supports children of the lower income levels to guarantee a proper start for their education and prevent the education gap from following them throughout their lives caused by differences in their starting points of education. The plan also provides the basis of an advanced early childhood education that advances through collaboration between private and public kindergartens. Under such purposes, the plan pursues strategies to increase the teachers' morale, offer a fun kindergarten education curriculum, and build a strong infrastructure for early childhood education.

##### 2. Implementation of the Electronic Card System

The electronic card system is a system that issues electronic cards to the beneficiaries of the early childhood education fee policy and allows them to use the cards instead of cash through electronic certifications at selected kindergartens. Cards were first issued in June 2009 and, after conducting national pilot tests in September to November, the system will be implemented in December. This will build an efficient and transparent delivery system of the early childhood education fee and enhance reliability of financial expenditures for childcare. Moreover, this will construct an information system which parents can easily access regarding any specific kindergarten from wherever they are by modifying the service delivery system to be more user-oriented and providing a computer system for providing financial support.

After the development and construction of the electronic information system for kindergartens is completed, it will officially open in December after conducting pilot

tests from September 2009. It is designed to mainly deal with information such as the child's basic personal information, the state of education fee support system, current status of kindergartens, the child's health, and safety status. With this system, the social perception on kindergartens can be raised and another basis to offer high-quality early childhood education will be provided. For the parents, their rights to choose a facility will be ensured, and credibility for the policies and support system will be enhanced socially as people will be able to clearly observe the whole process and see how the system is carried out.

### **3. Construction of a Support System for Low-income Children**

The support system for low-income children aims to make education welfare for young children possible and relieve the burden of early childhood education fees for the parents by financially supporting three to four-year-old children of low-income households. The plan divides the children from homes below the average income level of an urban worker into five groups, and differential payments are made. The plan is designed to expand gradually by giving 100% support for the legally-defined low-income level and the second level, 80% for the third income level, 60% for the fourth income level, and 30% for the fifth income level.

In 2009, the plan to give 100% support for the third income level was developed, but as the standards for classifying the levels changed in July 2009, they help is expected to extend further to support the full education fees even for the children of the 3.5 income level.

### **4. Supporting the Development of Basic Learning Abilities of Young Children**

With increasing awareness of the importance of early education, there has been increasing need for a social support system regarding the delay in the development and learning for children who do not use early education facilities. The policy supporting the development of basic learning abilities of young children aims to reduce the development and learning gaps by assessing children who do not attend the facilities and developing/treating children with developmental delay using programs that aid development in linguistic, cognitive, and social-emotional areas. Such educational treatment is carried out by "Heemang (Hope) Educators," and children attending kindergartens who are at the bottom 2~3% can also receive such assessment and educational treatment. Children from the age of three to those before entering school can apply for Heemang Educators. Heemang Educators were pilot tested in 2009 and 92 children were selected to be aided through educational activities. After being confirmed as an official project in 2009, the number of beneficiaries expanded to 172 and the application standards for the educators are those with kindergarten teacher certificates (preferred applicants), childcare teacher certificates, or related majors. Heemang Educators provide not only assessment and educational support for children with developmental delays, but also education on Korean and the Korean culture for the children and parents of multicultural households.

### **5. Overall Welfare Services in Kindergartens**

This is a service supporting households that is carried out together with kindergarten education, as education for young children have centered on the facility itself, while the household is the most important group for early childhood education. Overall

kindergarten welfare services were pilot tested in 2009 and are planned to be officially implemented in 2010 and support is provided both to children and parents. For children, developmental delay is inspected and they are supported through periodical assessments. For the parents with especially low interest and participation, help that can ultimately support the child is offered through consultation services and providing information regarding parenting education.

#### **6. Third-Generation Harmony Education Policy Project**

As a plan to strengthen and improve services for full-day kindergartens, supplementary labor force will be hired to help with work such as reading books, assisting in serving food and snacks, helping to use bathrooms, instructing safety, and cleaning. The Harmony Education Policy Project has its significance in providing a stable educational environment for young children by using the childcare experiences of middle-aged and elderly women in kindergartens and creating an environment allowing interactions between the different generations. Currently as of 2009, plans are being carried out for consistent recruitments in the labor force that increased from 3,543 to 4,392 people and providing help on the scene. The Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education is currently recruiting one child from each kindergarten operating third-Generation Harmony Education for women in their 40-60s specifically, while paying a certain amount monthly.

#### **7. Saessak Plan: The First Mid-Long Term Child Care Plan**

Despite social changes such as changes in the family structure, weakening childcare function within homes, decreasing birthrate, and increasing number of women participating in economic activities, social support for childcare is still lacking. Furthermore, due to the improvement in the overall quality of life on a national level and increasing expectations, the expectations for high-quality childcare services and basic awareness on childcare services are high, along with the importance of childcare. Based on such social background, the demand for childcare is becoming diverse according to the age of the child, location, and whether both parents work or not. The demand is also increasing for a childcare process and program suitable for development. In social context, providing high-quality childcare services to all children is vital when considered from the aspect of early development of human resources.

Hence, 'The First Mid-Long Term Child Care Plan' proposed by the Ministry of Gender Equality & Family is a five-year plan for childcare policy from 2006 to 2010. The purpose of the policy is to overcome the reality of having a system mainly consisting of private facilities that does not provide adequate or diverse childcare services and fails to meet the users' expectations and offer good-quality childcare services by strengthening the public aspect of childcare. The plan effectively responds to childcare demands that have regional differences and expand national/public childcare facilities, while raising the ratio of the children benefitting from childcare fee support up to 80% by 2010 through amplifying basic subsidy and childcare fee support. The First Mid-Long Term Child Care Plan includes "establishing the basis of public childcare," "reducing the burden of childcare for parents," "providing a variety of childcare services," "creating a childcare environment focused on the child," and "strengthening the childcare service management system."

## 8. SEROMAZI Plan 2010: The First Basic Plan for Low Birth-Aging Society

SEROMAZI 2010 is a foundational plan for the low birth-aging society from 2006 to 2010. As it takes a long time for the effects of measures dealing with the low birth-aging society to emerge, immediate actions must be taken. Hence, the First Basic Plan focuses on securing a sustainable development by building the foundation to actively deal with the problems of low birth-aging society. The First Plan includes projects in three main areas: “creating an environment favorable to giving birth and fostering,” “constructing a framework to improve the quality of life in an aging society,” and “securing future driving forces of growth.” Through this, the plan attempts to establish a family-oriented social culture with gender equality and strengthen social responsibility in giving birth and raising children. Moreover, the plan supports a recovery policy that counters the low birth-aging society through the improvement in the environments regarding pregnancy-giving birth-childcare, while respecting the individual and family’s decision on giving birth. To reduce the burden of raising children for households, main points include extending education-childcare fee support for young children even to the middle class and expanding the ratio of children being supported to 30% by 2010 compared to the children using national/public childcare facilities for those up to 130% of the average income of an urban worker household.

### 9. i-Sarang Card (Childcare Electronic Voucher)

i-Sarang Card refers to a policy that provides cards to parents with certificates to use services based on age and income levels, electronic cards that can be used for childcare services. The childcare electronic voucher system attempts to increase the parents’ participation in the implementation of the policy and reduce administrative matters for childcare facilities by granting the government childcare support fee directly to the parents, fees that were originally distributed through the childcare facilities. After conducting the secondary pilot tests for two months in July and August 2009 that considered the suggestions for improvements generated through four months of pilot tests carried out in May-August 2009, this system was initiated nationally in September 1, 2009. It is nationally the same for infants since infants are granted with basic subsidies for the childcare fees, but for toddlers, it is the same for government-supported childcare facilities, while it is different for private/in-home childcare facilities according to the province and city. Basic subsidy is given to infants of ages 0-2 and is provided according to age, not income levels.

### 10. IDOLBOMI (Childcarer) Service

Limitations exist when there are only childcare facilities to support the urgent and temporary childcare demands arising from various factors. That is, there is a need for more flexible supplementary childcare services oriented on various users, while providing childcare support service with its emphasis on childcare facilities.

<Table 12> Non-usage rate of facilities

Classification	Total	Age 0	Age 1	Age 2	Age 3-5
Non-usage rate of facilities	52.4%	87.1%	70.5%	46.8%	22.8%

Source: June 2008 Childcare Statistics (Ministry of Health, Welfare, and Family Affairs), 2008 Education Statistics

(Korean Educational Development Institute)

The Ministry of Gender Equality & Family has been carrying out the IDOLBOMI (Childcarer) Service as a timed service limited to 120 hours per month at 38 health and family support centers since April 2007. Health and family support centers operating the IDOLBOMI service increased from 38 in 2007 to 193 in 15 regions as of today (2009). The number of active child caregivers is currently 1,300 and about 5,000 families are connected to these caregivers. Over 50% of the families using the child caregiver service are dual-income families and IDOLBOMI is capable of supporting childcare for the low-income level as more inexpensive types of the low-income levels exist than the regular type.

Applicants for IDOLBOMI must be physically healthy, below age 65 and complete a 50-hour training course. These child caregivers are managed consistently through monthly continuing education and monthly meetings. The users of this service are families with children from ages 0 (more than 3 months old) to 12 that seek such service. IDOLBOMI offers various services such as walking to and picking up from childcare facilities and schools, serving meals and snacks, temporary childcare before the parents arrive, take to hospitals, play, and secure protection and safety. The service can be used after applying for it at least 24 hours beforehand.

#### **11. Improvements in Working Conditions for Private Kindergarten Teachers and Providing Substitute Teachers for Childcare Facilities**

“The substitute teachers support project” aims to offer high-quality childcare service and improve the qualities of the childcare teachers through self-development by helping with the labor expenses for substitutes who can replace the childcare teachers, who will then have the opportunities to recharge by going on vacations throughout the year. This support is given for 10 months from March to December 2009 to childcare teachers who have worked for more than one year at the current facility.

The harsh working conditions for private kindergarten teachers can result in deterioration of education quality. Improvements that fulfill the working conditions set by the Labor Standards Law are needed. The problems arose from the oversupply of teachers with 26,110 teachers working (2008 standards) and 12,000-15,000 obtaining teaching licenses every year. Plans are being pursued to support temporary substitute teachers for private kindergartens and compensate them with bonuses.

### **V. Future Direction of Childcare Support Policy**

#### **1. Guarantee of Right to Education and Childcare for Underprivileged Infants and Preschoolers**

For handicapped and farming and fishing village infants and preschoolers, who had been neglected compared to other children in policies on education and childcare access, the government must expand access to education and childcare and provide support so that these underprivileged children can have a fair start in life.

1) Provide more education and childcare opportunities for handicapped infants and preschoolers.

To provide more education and childcare opportunities for handicapped infants, better access to education and care facilities is required. The number of special institutions

dedicated to the care of handicapped infants and integrated care facilities embracing both handicapped and non-handicapped children should be increased. More childcare professionals and assistants should be fostered considering the special needs and characteristics of the integrated care centers to provide quality education and care services to handicapped infants and preschoolers. Also, to introduce family centered support programs, existing social welfare centers in local communities should strengthen their family support programs with a special focus on nurturing parental skills of parents with handicapped children.

2) Provide more education and childcare opportunities for infants in farming and fishing villages.

To provide more education and childcare opportunities for infants and preschoolers in farming and fishing villages, kindergartens in elementary schools should take a more active role. More school bus support should be provided to elementary school kindergartens, and in some cases, two or more kindergartens in the nearby area should be encouraged to use the same bus to transport their children. Also, new national and public childcare facilities should be built in the areas with no childcare facilities, and free education and care service for five-year old children should be expanded to include every child in farming and fishing villages. Multi-service community centers should be established to provide a variety of quality childcare, family, and health related services such as infant education and care service, children's after-school programs, resident counseling service, and other educational services.

## **2. In-Home Nurturing and Support for Working Mothers**

For families that prefer childcare at home rather than facilities such as kindergartens and childcare centers, a caregiver dispatch system should be introduced and developed to enable in-home nurturing, and the current childcare support system for working mothers should also be expanded and enhanced.

1) Provide at-home babysitting services.

Government sponsored babysitting service includes full-time, part-time, and other types of childcare services. The child's home should be the first place of choice for babysitting, but the babysitter may babysit at his/her home upon the request of the child's parent. The babysitter should be at least 20 years old and have completed the necessary training courses certified by the related organizations. The training course shall be consisted of minimum 40 hours of childcare training and additional hours of actual babysitting sessions.

2) Strengthen the childcare support policy for working mothers.

Parental leave payment should be increased. Currently, paid parental leave has a very low income replacement ratio, paying a fixed amount of only KRW 500,000 per month, which in fact discourages working mothers from taking a parental leave. Also, the full amount of employee parental leave benefits should be paid from social insurance for every company so that the financial burden of the employer may be eased when an employee takes a parental leave before or after childbirth.

## **3. Preschool Children Facilities Expansion and Support**

Government policy should support further expansion of public kindergartens and

childcare facilities and give more government subsidies to private kindergartens and childcare facilities to secure public service, so that all children, regardless of age, class, and region, can receive safe and high-quality childcare and education services.

1) Expand public kindergartens and childcare facilities.

Priority should be given to expanding public childcare facilities in farming and fishing village areas and low-income areas, as well as regions with a shortage of childcare facilities. To expand public kindergartens, newly establish or enlarge existing annex kindergartens in primary schools, and expand annex kindergartens of 1 to 2 classrooms to 2 to 3 classrooms or more. In addition, of the areas with a kindergarten shortage, the welfare investment priority areas and other low-income class concentration areas should be given priority for establishing public stand-alone kindergartens.

2) Support private kindergartens and childcare facilities with enhanced public service.

For enhancing and supporting public service of private kindergartens, introduce a kindergarten evaluation system, and link the evaluation results with the government support currently provided, such as a teaching materials and aids subsidy, a teacher accommodation improvement subsidy, and an all-day program support subsidy. In addition, encourage incorporation of private kindergartens by revising regulations to make the school incorporation process easier.

By clearly presenting the link between evaluation and certification results and financial support, the social responsibilities of private childcare facilities must be emphasized. In the case of private childcare facilities, different grades can be given for a teaching materials and aids subsidy, vehicle operation cost subsidy, and wages subsidy, depending on whether the evaluation and certification standard has been met. Private childcare facilities should also be encouraged to incorporate.

#### **4. Childcare Cost: Rationalization of Support System**

Expand the beneficiary group for the existing income-level graded childcare and education subsidy, and increase the support from the existing subsidy focused on public facilities and the low-income groups to cover private kindergartens and childcare facilities and the children using them.

1) Enhance childcare subsidy support.

To raise the quality level of kindergartens and childcare facilities, government support is also needed for children using private facilities. Therefore, a basic subsidy should be provided to children attending all kindergartens and childcare facilities.

Until 2009, childcare and education will be subsidized for family earning below the average income of urban workers, graded by differences in income groups. The subsidy for five-year olds will be increased after 2009 to include families earning up to 130% of the average income of urban workers and expanded to cover up to 80% of total children. Exemption of childcare and education fees for handicapped children will be provided to all handicapped children 12 years or younger. For families with two or more children using a childcare facility or a kindergarten, a subsidy will be given starting with the second child.

2) Develop preschool education and childcare subsidy system.

Maintain the current graded education and childcare subsidy system, but develop it further into a system able to provide more balanced and fine-tuned graded financial

support between income classes. To do so, rationally apply the electronic voucher system currently under consideration.

In addition, increase citizens' awareness of the government support for childcare by expanding and further developing support for private childcare facilities and kindergartens.

## **5. Childcare Service: Raise the Quality Level**

In order to raise the quality level of kindergarten and childcare facility services, the public service aspect must be enhanced by linking the evaluation and certification results of private kindergartens and childcare facilities to financial support, and the working conditions of kindergarten and childcare center teachers must be substantially improved by adopting a support system that provides supplementary personnel such as substitute teachers.

1) Establish kindergarten and childcare facility evaluation system and draw results.

Implement the kindergarten evaluation system nationwide starting in 2008 and ensure that the evaluation system will lead to improvement of kindergarten education quality level. Set up a management procedure for childcare facility evaluation and a certification system, and provide support to maintain and improve the quality level of childcare facilities.

2) Improve the working conditions for private kindergarten and childcare center teachers.

The average working hours for teachers are over 10 hours a day, and in order to abide by the 8 hours labor rule, regular teacher aids need to be supplied. In addition, substitute teachers are also needed.

3) Improve preschool teacher qualifications system.

The standard for preschool teacher qualifications should be the same as the primary and middle school teacher qualifications and be unified into one standard. Currently junior college graduates make up the largest proportion of childcare center and kindergarten teachers, and the academic qualifications should be gradually raised to four-year college degree or higher level.

Official certification and issuance, management, and administration of teacher qualifications approval will be handled by a single government body, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Such unification of administrative work will enable efficient teacher qualifications management.

4) Restructure the two-tier system of kindergartens and childcare centers.

Establish a department at the central government level to handle coordinated preschool education, and restructure the administrative system to eliminate administrative waste and disorder due to overlapping of ages and functions of kindergartens and childcare facilities. In addition, overlaps between support of childcare and education provided by different agencies and childrearing support policies must be linked together so that service can be implemented under a system of close cooperation.

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## **The Development and Challenges of Early Childhood Education and Care in Taiwan –The Impact of Low Fertility**

### **I. The ECEC System in Taiwan**

#### 1. Dural system of Early Childhood Education and Care

The ECEC (Early Childhood Education and Care) system in Taiwan can be divided to two systems: one is the social welfare domain and another is education domain. Early Childcare as part of the social welfare characterizes an environment providing childcare for young children age 2-6. Early childhood education aims to provide preschool education and curriculum for young children age 4-6. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to differentiate childcare and preschool education in both kindergartens and childcare settings nowadays. Kindergartens and childcare settings though have different orientation and goals, both of them take children from 4-6 and they conduct care and education within an institute. The following table illuminates the differences between kindergartens and childcare settings:

Table 1. Comparisons of Kindergartens and Childcare Settings

Item	Kindergartens (幼稚園)	Childcare Settings(托兒所)
Children's age	4-6	2-6
Domain	Education	Welfare
Governing Authority	Ministry of Education Local Educational Bureau	Ministry of the Interior Social Welfare Bureau
Law	Law of Early Childhood Education	Children and Youth Welfare Act
Teacher's Qualification	Kindergarten teacher license issues by Ministry of Education	Caregiver's qualification based on Children and Youth Welfare Professions' Training Regulation
Class size	30 pupils/2 teachers	15 pupils/ 1 caregiver
Environment	Ground floor (compulsory) and up to the third floor	Ground floor to the third floor (or any of them)
Curriculum	Standard Curriculum for Kindergartens	Handbook for Caregivers

The dual system of ECEC approaches to termination with the integration of early childhood education and care policy and Children's Education and Care Law. Children's Education and Care Law (draft) passed by the The Executive Yuan (the highest administrative governmental unit in Taiwan) in February 2009. The next step will go to The Legislative Yuan after three readings of the bill before the law effects.

#### 2. Integration of Early Childhood Education and Care

The early childhood education and care belong to two different systems: one is in

education domain and another is in welfare domain. However, both kindergartens and childcare settings take young children of same ages and they have similar tasks of childcare and education. In order to integrate the two divided systems, the Taiwanese government started the integration plan in 2003.

According to the Children’s Education and Care Law (draft, 2009), the structure of ECEC system can be illustrated as follows:

The ECEC contains 0-2 baby care, 2-6 pre-schooling, and 6-12 after school care. The institutional childcare includes after school care provided by private setters or primary schools, educare kindergartens (幼兒園) (combined kindergartens and childcare settings), and babies centres (托嬰中心). The non-institutional childcare includes home-care child minders and community mutual aid groups. Apart from babies centre and home-care child minders, the rest settings and groups are governed by the educational department.

Table 2. The structure of ECEC system after integration

Age	After school care provided by private setters	After school care provided by primary schools	Home-care Child minders (governed by welfare department)	Community mutual aid groups (governed by education department)
6-12 After school care				
2-6 Pre-schooling	Educare Kindergartens (幼兒園) (governed by education department)			
0-2 Childcare	Babies Centre (governed by welfare department)			
	institutional		Non-institutional	

The ECEC professions will include the following five categories: kindergarten teacher, caregiver, assistant caregiver, child minder, after-school caregiver. Kindergarten teachers are the only one among these authorized teachers’ certification (national license) by the Ministry of Education. They have to get the degree from Department of Early Childhood Education, or to finish nursery teacher training courses, and pass the teachers’ qualification examination. Professions who own the degrees of the Department of Early Childhood Care (normally university of techniques, in vocational training system) can be offered the qualification of caregiver. Those who graduate from vocational high school can be offered the qualification of assistant caregiver. However, both caregiver and assistant caregiver can teach young children under 5. Those who want to become home-care child minders or nannies require the vocational licenses from government when they actually care babies (age 0-2). Every home-care child minders can take up to two babies, or up to 4 children under age 12. If there is more than one home-care child minder, they can take up to 5 children age under 12.

## II. ECEC Policy against Low Fertility

### 1. Low Fertility in Taiwan : the lowest fertility ever since

Low fertility becomes the most important issue that impacts the ECEC policies and the nursery and childcare environment in Taiwan. According to the governmental

statistics in Taiwan, the total number of new born babies was less than 200,000 in 2008 – the lowest ever since. Compared with 10 years ago, there were 271,450 babies in 1998 (reduced 27%)(Ministry of Interior, 2009a).

The low fertility rate, from one point of view, reduced government’s costs in early childhood education and care, from another point of view, it will cause dramatic impact on the nation’s economic development, tax receives, and welfare expenditures. Therefore, increasing fertility rate becomes a priority task for the Taiwanese government.

From the table below, the numbers of children under age 12 decreased from 18.75% in total population in 1998 to 10.14% in 2008 (Child Welfare Bureau, 2009a). According to OECD experiences, the women in Northern European countries continue their job because the governments provide support for career women. Parental leave is a key factor. Such as Austria (OECD, 2003), the government encourages working parents to look after their babies themselves if they prefer to do so. Parental leave policies have been established longest in Austria, where such leave was introduced in the 1960s for working mothers and in 1990 for working fathers. For the parents who apply parent leave, they can also claim Childcare Benefit up to 36 months which compensates their costs during parental leave.

Table 3. Percentage and Numbers of New Born Babies from 1998 to 2008

Year	Total Population	New Born Babies	Babies Born by Immigrant Mothers (N/% <sup>1</sup> )	% of Children under age 12 in Total population
1998	21,928,591	271,450	13,904 5.12%	4,112,592 18.75%
2004	22,689,122	216,419	28,666 13.25%	2,733,157 12.05%
2005	22,770,383	205,854	26,509 12.88%	2,653,152 11.65%
2006	22,876,527	204,459	23,903 11.69%	2,557,643 11.18%
2007	22,958,360	204,414	20,905 10.23%	2,451,221 10.67%
2008	23,037,031	198,733	19,086 9.6%	2,336,976 10.14%

Data from: Child Welfare Bureau (2009).

Table 4 shows that the numbers and percentages of children enrolled at kindergartens and childcare settings from 1998 to 2008 (Ministry of Education, 2009; Child Welfare Bureau, 2009b). More than 99,000 pupils were reduced within these five years (2004-2008), including 42,694 pupils at private kindergartens and 22,535 pupils at public childcare settings (used to belong to the farmers’ society or the village/town office), and 38,711 pupils at private childcare settings. The pupils’ numbers at public

<sup>1</sup> Percentages of the babies born by immigrant mothers in all new born babies in that year.

childcare settings were slimmed down because many of them were set up for the purpose of assisting farmers' family during the harvest seasons. The public childcare settings were replaced by primary school affiliated kindergartens. Therefore, the severe crisis of low fertility impacts the private kindergartens and public childcare settings.

Table 4. Numbers and Percentages of Children Enrolled at Kindergartens and Childcare Settings

Year	Public Kindergartens	Private Kindergartens	Public Childcare Settings	Private Childcare Settings	Total
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
1998	64,936 13.8%	173,851 36.9%	98,369 20.9%	133,883 28.4%	471,039 100%
2004	69,186 13.3%	155,033 29.8%	83,156 16.1%	212,229 40.8%	519,604 100%
2005	69,186 13.6%	155,033 30.4%	76,393 14.9%	209,375 41.1%	509,987 100%
2006	76,334 16.3%	128,481 27.5%	70,511 15.1%	191,996 41.1%	441,374 100%
2007	73,224 16.6%	118,549 26.9%	65,938 14.9%	183,663 41.6%	441,374 100%
2008	73,329 17.5%	112,339 26.8%	60,621 14.4%	173,518 41.3%	419,807 100%

## 2. ECEC Policies against Low Fertility

Three important ECEC policies that government proposed to against low fertility will be presented and explained. They included: nursery vouchers (initialed in 2000), Supportive Scheme for Children Under Age 5 (for low-income and socially disadvantaged children) (initialed in 2004), and management of child minders and subsidy for parents who take care children Age 0-2 (initialed 2008).

### **Strategy 1: Nursery Vouchers (2000)**

The Nursery Vouchers (Ministry of Education, 2009b) aims to minimize the tuition fee differences between public kindergartens and private setters, in order to release parents' burden in raising young children. In Taiwan, there are 73% of the kindergarten providers are private. Because of the limited places in the public kindergartens, many parents are forced to send their children to private kindergartens. The tuition fee for public nursery would be about NT\$ 5,000 per month (equal to US \$ 157) and NT\$ 6,000 to 12,000 for private ones. The tuition fee would amounts to 26% of a family's average income per month<sup>2</sup>. That is the reason why many young couples complain that it is not easy to bring up a child. Therefore, the government provides NT\$ 10,000 per year for parents if they have one 5-year-old child studying at private kindergartens. Nursery vouchers do not apply to those who study at the public setters. In addition, the

<sup>2</sup> The average annual income per person in Taiwan in 2008 would be US \$ 17,040 per year, and US \$ 34,312 for Japan.

nursery voucher scheme would exclude those unregistered private kindergartens and those which take more than issued pupil numbers. The government's intention was also to force the unregistered kindergartens legalized.

### **Strategy 2: Supportive Scheme for Children Under Age 5 (2004)**

Origin:

'Head Start' in the USA and 'Sure Start' in the UK both target on the early intervention for the social disadvantaged children. The reason for government intervention in the provision of childcare is distributional: to strengthen families in need of help by providing childcare services at little or no cost to people living in economically disadvantaged areas or circumstances. The aim is to promote the inclusion of such families in society and to combat educational disadvantage.

The Supportive Scheme for Children Under Age 5 in Taiwan (Ministry of Education, 2009c) is also based upon the above reason. Besides, the most top 20% of the family disposable income was NT \$ 1.9 million per family (equals to US \$ 60,000) whereas the lowest 20% of the family disposable income was NT \$ 245,000 (equals to US \$ 7,660). In other words, this is the phenomenon of 'M-type' society. Young children from socially disadvantaged families are normally excluded from expensive pre-schooling market. If the poor parents cannot find their children a place in public nursery, they have to select a cheaper private nursery and yet expensive for most poor families. The aims of the Supportive Scheme for Children Under Age 5 are to alleviate young couple's economic burden and to encourage young children from disadvantaged family enter kindergartens earlier in order to ensure that they receive good quality early childhood education.

The Supportive Scheme for Children Under Age 5 starts from an experiment project at three small towns in remote islands and aboriginal villages. The qualification was limited to low-income<sup>3</sup> family at the first stage in 2007. Low-income families with children age 5 are free to study at a public kindergarten, or the government provided NT\$ 60,000 subsidy for studying at private kindergartens. The qualifications for applying subsidy will be expanded stage by stage. From 2008, the second stage lower the threshold and the family matches any of the following conditions are legal for subsidy: (1) Family annual income is less than NT\$ 600,000 and the family has only one child. (2) Family with two children and their annual income is less than NT\$ 700,000. (3) Family with three or more children and their annual income is less and NT\$ 800,000.

The third stage, starting at Year 2011, will extend to the subjects whose family annual income is lower than NT\$1.1 millions. They can receive up to NT\$ 10,000 subsidy if their children study at the private setters, which equals to the value of nursery voucher.

However, the Supportive Scheme for Children Under Age 5 arouses some controversies. First of all, the recognition of family income is ambiguous. The low-income families who are listed by the Social Welfare Office of Local Government based upon the Law of Social Aids are definite. The others who are not registered low-income family shall agree to presents their tax-paying statement. Some labour types

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<sup>3</sup> Annual family income is lower than 600,000 NTD.

in Taiwan, for example night-market stall keeper, or self-managed stall keeper (a noodle stand in front of their own house), may not pay any tax at all. Military officers, soldiers, primary and secondary school teachers, and public servants are excluded who receive regular salaries from the government are excluded from subsidy. The equality of subsidy is questioned and criticized. The cash-benefit policy would alleviate the economical tense of poor families, however, it may not to improve the caring and teaching environment of most kindergartens.

### **Strategy 3: Management of Child Minders (保母) and Subsidy for Parents who Takes Care Children 0-2 (2008)**

According to the 2004 national survey of children's living and welfare, there were 4.4% young children cared by home-care child minders/ nannies (Child Welfare Bureau, 2004). There are 55,679 qualified child minder licenses issued by the Labour and Vocational Training Bureau until Year 2008 (Child Welfare Bureau, 2009c). However, quite a number of babies are cared by the unlicensed and untrained women, and sometimes relatives, neighbours, or friends. The government cannot manage and monitor the caring place and these unqualified nannies. At the initial stage, the Child Welfare Bureau of the Ministry of Interior set up the 'Child Minders and Nannies Supporting Network' (Child Welfare Bureau, 2009d) to assist the unqualified child minders to get the licenses, to play the role of broker between parents and child minders, and to inspect the child minders. However, many child minders are not qualified and have no license. They perceive the system as playing the role of 'monitor' instead of 'assistant'. Many of them lack incentives to join the network. It becomes one of the reasons that the Child Welfare Bureau proposes the 'Management of Child Minders and Subsidy for Parents who Takes Care Children 0-2' policy (Child Welfare Bureau, 2009e).

The local government has to manage the child minders and evaluate and inspect the caring quality of each child minder in a regular interval. The applicants send their application for subsidy through the Child Minders and Nannies Supporting Network or Babies Centres. The child minders have to be the members of the supporting network, or affiliated to a baby centre. They also must have the vocational license of child minders. For the applicants, the couples both need a full-time jobs, or one of the couple is full-time worker and another one is severe disabled, serves a sentence in a jail, or serves military. The subsidy is categorized to two types according to the annual family income: (1) The subsidy is NT\$ 3,000 per child per month for those whose annual family income is lower than NT\$1,500,000. (2) The subsidy is NT\$ 5,000 per child per month for low-income family (Child Welfare Bureau, 2009e).

In addition, there are other ECEC policies for specific population, for example the 'Aboriginal Approach to Childcare Subsidy' and the 'Childcare Subsidy for Disabled Children age 3-5'. 'The Childcare Subsidy for Aboriginal Children Studying Public and Private Nursery Schools' (Council for Indigenous Peoples, 2005), based upon the Aboriginal Education Law, aims to provide sufficient early childhood education and care for aboriginal children. The project provided nursery and childcare training for aboriginal women and encourage the aboriginal tribes to set up nursery classes in the

mountain and remote areas.

### **III. Challenges for ECEC in Taiwan**

#### **1. Privatized Childcare Market: An Obstacle to Improvement?**

The statistics show that more than 70% of young children in Taiwan are placed in private kindergartens. The privatized childcare market seems to be unusual in the world. For example, the children age 5-7 are free to enter primary schools in Britain, and the state kindergartens in France are more than 85% (Yeh, 2006). There are limited primary school affiliated kindergartens, public kindergartens, and public childcare settings. So the parents have to send their children to private ones if they do not get a place in public settings.

However, the privatization of childcare market will be profit-oriented. The private kindergartens have to calculate their most profit in the market. So they would choose to set up kindergartens at the highly-condensed population area. The rural area, mountain, or small villages can seldom catch any attention of private managers. Besides, the business persons have to reduce their cost in order to create the most profit. So some kindergartens do not want to hire a kindergarten teacher with kindergarten teachers' license because they have to pay more. They find unqualified teachers with college degrees or non-childcare professions.

The Experimental Project of Supporting Friendly Childcare Services (教保友善計畫) (Ministry of Education, 2008) is run and managed by non-profit organizations or sometimes, local childcare societies. They offer all qualified teachers and cheaper tuition for parents since their intention of running a kindergarten is not profit-oriented. The local governments provide some funding for facilities and offer them a space at the primary schools<sup>4</sup>. The Ministry of Education would subsidize part of the salaries of the qualified kindergarten teachers. So the kindergarten teachers will get reasonable salary<sup>5</sup> at these experimental kindergartens. The private childcare setting holders regard the NPO-model kindergartens as 'taking the young children from them'. The NPO-model experimental project unfortunately was forced to end.

A private-dominated childcare market frequently becomes an obstacle for improvement. Because the nursery holders have to reduce the cost in order to create the most profit and it sometimes conflicts with quality-improving which always needs expenditures. For example, the private nursery holders expect to lower down the requirement of the regulations on childcare settings facilities and nursery teachers' qualifications in the Integration of Early Childhood Education and Care Policy. The unqualified caregivers remain staying at the private childcare settings for long time because their salaries are much cheaper than the qualified kindergarten teachers with licenses. Once the Children's Education and Care Law passes, the caregivers at the educare kindergartens must have teachers' licenses if they teach children age 5 and the caregivers must own the college/university degrees of Childcare, or the credits proof. This causes anxiety of the unqualified caregivers and the childcare setting holders.

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<sup>4</sup> Because the low fertility, some primary schools do not have many pupils as before. So the government releases the space for NPO-model kindergartens.

<sup>5</sup> Kindergarten teachers get very low pay at private childcare settings, from NTD 18,000 to 25,000. Compared with the public kindergarten teachers, their salary is about NTD 40,000. But the nursery teachers can get up to NTD 33,000 at the experimental kindergartens. So the good and qualified kindergarten teachers are more willing to work here.

## **2. The outsourcing parenting**

Supporting a young-couple family rearing children and expecting responsible parents seems to be a dilemma. The Ministry of Education and the Child Welfare Bureau proposed a numbers of ECEC policies to assist parents, for example the 'After-school Class for Disadvantaged Families' or the 'Supportive Scheme for Children Under Age 5'. The government expects to raise the fertility with providing childcare support. On the one hand, the ECEC policies alleviate child-rearing burden for parents, on the other hand, they may weaken parenting ability. With the increasing double-career families and the nuclear-family<sup>6</sup> structure, the outsourcing parenting becomes a characteristic of modern society. This is also the situation in Taiwan. Most private kindergartens and nursery schools look after children until 6:00 p.m. They can extend the caring hours if parents actually need. So would the private after-school care settings. The after-school care settings provide coaching courses for school academic courses and selective talent courses such as English, art, music, etc.<sup>7</sup> Children are cramped with a lot of courses. The children go to other educational institutes instead of home after primary school. The after school care settings go to primary school to pick up children at 4:00 when primary school finishes and it is very convenient for parents. On the one hand, when the government makes a great effort to create a friendly environment for concerning double-career parents' needs; on another hand, parents may continuously rely on the 'purchasable' childcare services. This comes to the discussion of the boundary about a state's ECEC policy versus family's responsibility in domestic sphere. The children who grow up constantly at educational settings when they are very young might have a negative impact on their parent-children relationship and the development of children's personality remains ambiguous.

## **3. Preschool Education of Age 5 becomes Compulsory Education?**

With the rapid expansion of teacher training<sup>8</sup> after 1994, the numbers of nursery, primary and secondary school teachers exploded suddenly. Soon after the slide down of pupils, primary schools are forced to reduce the average numbers of every class. The severe low fertility keeps impacting the teaching environment. The Ministry of Education regards that it might be a good time to extend the compulsory education from age 6-15 to age 5-15, which means free preschool education at age 5 may occur.

However, two issues need to be addressed. The first issue is that the kindergartens are mostly private as I described above, and the public kindergartens may not have enough places for all five-year-olds. How would the local educational authority provide the sufficient enrolled quotas for age-5 children? The government would need to cooperate with private childcare settings. The government tends to adopt the 'Supportive Scheme for Children Under Age 5' and they explained that subsidy NTD 60,000 per year for parents can be regarded as 'free nursery' provided by government. However, the aim of the scheme is to assist parents from low-income and disadvantaged

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<sup>6</sup> 'Nuclear family' means a couple living with at least one child.

<sup>7</sup> After school classes are not allowed to 'teach' school curriculum or to provide any talent courses. Most private after school care setting registered as 'Ju-ku' instead of childcare settings because the requirements for Juku is much more less.

<sup>8</sup> The teachers used to be educated at Teachers Colleges or Teachers Normal Universities. After 1994, the teacher training centres of all universities can provide teacher training courses which led to qualified teachers' licenses.

family. It would not cover those whose family annual income is more than NTD 1.1 millions.

The second issues would be related to qualified teachers. Because of the low fertility, the numbers of kindergarten teachers reduced from 21,883 (in school year 2005-2006) to 17,369 (in school year 2008-2009)<sup>9</sup> (Ministry of Education, 2009d). The total amount of primary school teachers will be more than demand with the impact of low fertility, excludes the 100,000 teachers with licenses but unemployed after the rapid expansion of teacher training. Because the current public kindergarten teachers are under the protection of public servant law, the teaching job, so-called 'iron-rice bowl', cannot be dismissed unless they are proved to be inappropriate for that job. In order to resolve the redundant personnel, the government may expect the primary school teachers to teach children of Age 5 after they take some nursery curriculum and pedagogy trainings. These two issues have not yet come to a conclusion. However, both create impact on ECEC market.

### **Conclusions: Next Step, Which Direction Shall We Go?**

The low fertility rate creates tremendous impact on the whole early childhood environment which can be illustrated by the shrinking of kindergarten teachers' posts and the recruitment competition among kindergartens and childcare settings. When the government tries to integrate the dual system of nursery education and childcare, and to provide a variety of subsidy for parents to relieve their child-rearing burdens, the priority of the policy needs to be evaluated. 'In-cash' welfare subsidy though resolve the low-income and disadvantaged family's economic crisis, their benefit to quality-improvement of the early childhood education is in fact limited. What shall be put in the first priority?

I would argue that the low income and disadvantaged family are particularly easily impacted by economics. The 'in-cash' policies actually assist and ensure the children receive the childhood education system continuously. However, some welfare-dependants have to remain their 'poor' status for the reason of applying subsidy. They may not care about children's education at all. From this point of view, a good quality of early childhood education and after school care would be important for the second generations instead of residual compensation to their parents.

For the other parents in general, subsidy may not become the only factor affecting their decision of selecting kindergarten or childcare settings. According to the national survey I conducted in 2006, most parents with young children would prefer to create a family-friendly working environment such as parental leaves and flexible office hours. ECEC policy in Austria provides a good example as I described on page 3.

There are still some experienced but unqualified caregivers at the private kindergartens and childcare settings. These caregivers also have pressures in getting qualifications before the Integration actually practices. As I mentioned before, this is a dilemma in a profit-oriented private childcare settings. The low-paid salary, long working-hour, and recruitment pressure becomes obstacles to maintain qualified nursery teachers. The graduates from the Department of Early Childhood Education who have kindergarten teacher licenses may not satisfied with the working environment. Before the government proposes furthermore cash-payment policies and shortens the gap

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<sup>9</sup> Mainly reduced in private kindergarten teachers.

between low-income families and the others, the policy makers may need to evaluate the effectiveness to young children.

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## **Preshcool Education in Turkey**

### **Turkish Education System**

Education in Turkey proceeds under the patronage of government administration and control as a main duty of the government such as justice, security and health. The Ministry of National Education central, rural, and abroad organizations, take great responsibility in providing educational services. The right for education is insured by the Constitution of Turkish Republic; today's organizational structure of Turkish Education System is shaped based on the legislation on educational units and stages. General framework of Turkish National Education System is set by the Basic Law of National Education no 1739.

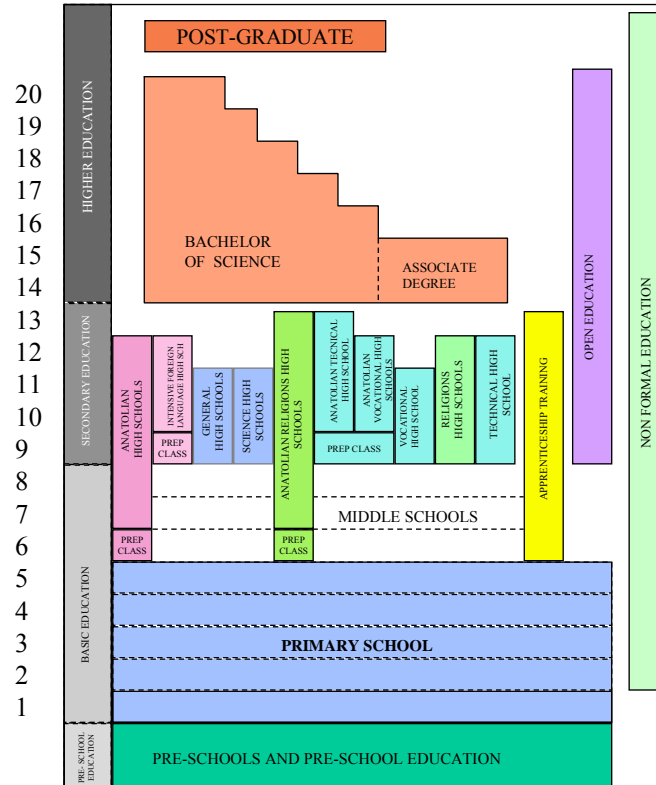
Turkish Education System has democratic, modern, scientific secular and coeducational characteristics. The purpose of the Turkish Education System is to increase the welfare and happiness of the Turkish citizens and Turkish society, to support and facilitate economic, social and cultural development in national unity and integration and to make the Turkish nation a constructive, creative and distinguished partner in modern civilization (<http://www.meb.gov.tr/english/indexeng.htm>)

The National Education System, determined by National Education Basic Act No. 1739, consists of two main parts, namely "formal education" and "non-formal education". Formal education is the regular education of individuals in a certain age group and given in schools at the same level with programs prepared for definite purposes. Formal education includes preschool education, primary education, secondary education and higher education institutions.

Preschool education includes the optional education of children between 36-72 months who are under the age of compulsory primary education. Preschool education institutions, independent preschools are opened as nursery classes and practical classes within formal and non-formal education institutions with suitable physical capacity. The purpose of preschool education is to ensure physical, mental and sensory development of children and the acquisition of good habits, to prepare children for primary education, to create a common atmosphere of growth for those living in inconvenient circumstances and to ensure that Turkish is spoken correctly and well.

The purpose of primary education is to ensure that every Turkish child acquires the basic knowledge, skills, behaviors, and habits to become a good citizen, is raised in line with the national moral concepts and is prepared for life and for the next education level parallel to their interests and skills. Primary education is compulsory for all citizens, boys or girls, and is given free of charge in public schools. Primary education institutions are schools that provide eight years of uninterrupted education, at the end of which graduates receive a primary education diploma. Primary education involves the education and training of children in the age group of 6 to 14 since 1997-1998 academic year.

## TURKISH NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM



### The Definition of Preschool Education

Preschool education is a period that covers the duration from birth to primary school (0-72 months). During this period, the parents, the environment of the child and the friends and education institutions play an active role in the child's education. In Turkey, this period includes children who are not at the age of compulsory education. In addition, preschool education is not in the scope of compulsory education but the studies continue to include preschool education into the compulsory education.

Despite the fact that early childhood education is a period that involves 0-8 years of age and includes the first two years of elementary education as well as preschool years (0-6 year olds), it was called as preschool education in Turkey at the moment.

### What is Preschool Education?

In accordance with the individual characteristics of the child, preschool education is a period that;

- directs the development of the child according to the cultural values of the society
- supports the child's emotional development, helps the child's thought processes and increases their creativity
- develops their ties to the national, spiritual, cultural, ethical and social values

- helps them to express themselves, to acquire a self-control system, and to gain their independence
- in addition, preschool education helps the children to speak Turkish correctly, and prepares them for primary school education and finally, educates both the parents and the children

For this reason, preschool education, the first step of our education system, is a period that moulds the whole life of a child (<http://ooegm.meb.gov.tr/>).

### **The Aims of Preschool Education**

In accordance with the general objectives and basic principles of the Turkish National Education System, the aims of preschool education are;

- to work to bring up children who love Atatürk, the country, the nation, the flag, their families and other people, who are bound to national and spiritual values and have self-confidence, who can establish good communication with their environment and who are also honest, modern and tolerant
  - to help children to acquire good habits and grow up well both physically and psychologically
  - to make children speak Turkish correctly
  - to teach children to work cooperatively and help each other with love, respect and tolerance
  - to help children to use their creativity, their critical thinking and ability of self-expression
  - to prepare them for primary education
- (<http://ooegm.meb.gov.tr/yonetmelik.doc> ) (Oktay, 2005).

### **Principles of Preschool Education**

During the preschool period the speed of learning is high. Every age group has general properties of development, however it should not be forgotten that each child is an individual.

Preschool education relies on some basic principles. These principles are given in the following statements.

During preschool education;

A proper environment for education is prepared to support physical, psychological, social, cultural, linguistic and behavioral development.

The age of children, characteristics of their development, their speed of learning, their interests and needs, and the opportunities of the school and the environment are taken into consideration.

Besides the needs of children such as nutrition, sleeping, taking care of themselves and possessing good habits, their living with a love of nature and a sensitivity to the environment is also ensured.

The qualities of such education develop the abilities of children to work in cooperation and encourage them to be participants as well as develop their feelings of love and respect.

The education is continued in an understanding of love and kindness. Children are treated equally and their individual differences are considered. In order to develop their self-confidence, no punishment or restrictions are exercised. While evaluating the educational activities, to what extent the aims are achieved is determined.

Whether the child speaks Turkish correctly while expressing themselves is given great importance.

An attempt is made to establish an environment of equality for the children who come from an environment and families that have insufficient conditions.

Play is used as the most appropriate way of teaching.

As the educational program is prepared, the conditions of the environment and the parents are taken into consideration and parents taking an active part in the education is ensured.

The child's development and the schedule of his preschool period are systematically evaluated (<http://oogm.meb.gov.tr/yonetmelik.doc>) (MEB-Ministry of National Education, 2006) (Oktay, 2005).

### **Historical Development in Preschool Education**

The idea of educating children at a young age goes back to 400 B.C. Great thinkers and educators who lived between 1782 and 1852 were meticulously interested in children's education and produced ideas which guide us now. In 1816 kindergartens were opened for children aged between 3 and 6 (<http://www.meb.gov.tr>).

Sultan Mahmut II published his edict stating that elementary education was compulsory in 1824 (Akyüz, 1996). In 1847 a regulations book on elementary education and teachers was published. It was mentioned in the book that there were tendencies for children to play games, to behave naughtily and to find pleasure in doing these things during their natural course of life, and the period of compulsory education including secondary schools was increased to 6 years because of the fact that traditional schools for young children did not give the necessary information about real life and life after death (Akyüz, 1996).

Beginning from the 1860s, educators and writers started to express ideas about the educational duties of families and schools different from the traditional ones and in written documents the authorities started to regard the child as a living thing that must be respected for herself, her growing up and being educated and dealt with sensitively (Akyüz, 1996).

Establishing kindergartens in the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century was the natural result of these developments (Akyüz, 1996).

The development of preschool education in Turkey can be chiefly dealt with in two periods:

- The Empire Era
- The Republic Era

## **The Empire Era**

Before the establishment of preschool educational institutions like the ones today in Turkey, there were secondary institutions responsible for children at this age. Among them there were secondary schools, local schools providing very simple education and teaching; reformatories, opened so that male and female children with no relatives could be cared for, brought up and provided with a profession, and orphanages, all of which are regarded as institutions of primary education particular to that era. It was determined that children who were at a suitable age for kindergartens were also accepted and provided accommodation in these institutions, and given education at the elementary level. The instructors in primary schools didn't have a responsibility for caring and educating the children at a young age. The only aim was not to teach the child but that the child would spend time sitting quietly and therefore the mother would be relaxed at home.

Establishing preschool institutions in various provinces of the Empire was almost in the same period as that just before the II Constitutional Monarchy. It was known that private kindergartens were first established in some provinces on 23rd July 1908 and in İstanbul after that time. But establishing state kindergartens started to be generalized after the Balkan Wars. Satı, a famous educator, established a private kindergarten in Beyazıt, İstanbul. This kindergarten became a kindergarten which was quickly preferred by rich families. The Balkan Wars (1912-1913) hindered those efforts on a large scale; nevertheless, state kindergartens were established within the borders of the Empire when Şükrü was the Minister of Education between 1913-17. While balancing the budget of the Ministry of Education in 1914, they put a fund into the budget to establish schools called Kindergartens and it was planned to establish ten schools that year. These are the institutions aimed at helping children get accustomed to social life, providing them with useful information without dullness but in an entertaining way, encouraging them to develop some of their skills in the open air in big yards, preparing them for primary education and most importantly providing every child with the equal educational opportunities that they need to grow up for those families who can't take care of their children well due to being busy with the housework and for families who lack the chance to educate their children (Akyüz, 1996). It was clearly seen here that the government aimed to make kindergartens widespread to reduce the educational insufficiency and differences among families. As a result of all those developments, it was found that some legitimate regulations in the field of kindergarten education were made in 1913 as well. *Tedrisat-i İptadiye Kanunu-i Muvakati* (Primary Education Temporary Law) was issued on 6 October 1913. In the third article of this law, it was stated that kindergartens and young children's classes were in institutions of primary education and in the fourth article of this law, kindergartens and young children's classes were described as institutions serving children's psychological and physical development with spoken lessons concerning useful games, trips, handicrafts, hymns, patriotic poetry and knowledge of nature, suitable for the children's age. The law stated that kindergartens would be established for children aged from 4 to 7. In addition, the law stated that a book of regulations would be prepared for schools. As a result of this, a book of regulations for kindergartens was drafted on 15 March 1915 and therefore kindergartens started to be established in our country (Akyüz, 1996).

### **The Republic Era**

Because the conditions in which the country was during the establishment of the Republic necessitated giving priority to primary education particularly, an increase in the number of preschool educational institutions in the early years of the Republic was not seen. As Ergin (1977) stated, schools were notified of the suggestions by the Ministry on transferring the budget allocations from kindergartens to elementary school with two circulars. Therefore the kindergartens which had already opened were closed as well. But a kindergarten was opened by the Municipality of İstanbul in 1932 to dress, to feed, to train, and to look after children from morning until evening between the ages of 3-7, whose old and widowed mothers had to earn their living as workers. It is stated that the institution where the working mothers left their children in the morning and picked them up in the evening when returning from work was described as a kindergarten including board (Akt. Oktay, 1983, Akt, Oktay, 1999).

In the IV. National Education Assembly held in 1949 during the Republic period, family education performed in order to educate children who hadn't reached the suitable age for being able to read was mentioned for the first time. The decisions about opening preschool educational institutions were included in the V. National Education Assembly held in 1953. It was mentioned in the VII. and VIII. National Education Assembly that preschool education was optional in the elementary school education system (Akt. Oktay, 1983, Akt, Oktay, 1999). After the Elementary Schools and Education Law, No:222 was issued, The book of instructions of kindergartens and preschool classes was issued on 16 June 1962. After that in the 2nd Five-year Developmental Plan, preschool education was defined as educating children aged 3-6, and it was stated that children who lacked the care of their mother could get that education. During the period between 1968-72, it was declared that preschool education services would be developed by establishing independent kindergartens and preschool classes in elementary schools and Day Care Centers would be opened in all the Girls' Institutions. It was decided to spread preschool education more in rural areas and regions where there was a dense population of workers' children who didn't have parental care and that it was necessary to develop a model which was suitable for the country's needs in the 3th and 4th Five-year Developmental Plan.

The purpose and duties of preschool education were determined again according to the general purpose and basic principles of National Education in the IX National Education Assembly held in 1974. It was also stated that preschool educational institutions might be opened as independent kindergartens or classes for preschool children in the first level of basic education institutions where necessary or application classes in other related educational institutions (Akt, Oktay, 1999).

In addition to deciding to benefit from facilities of the state and for private institutions to increase by 10 % the preschool education schooling rate of the 5-6 year-old population in the 5th Five-year Developmental Plan, in the 7th Five-year Developmental Plan, Preschool Education came under the heading of Elementary School and the title was agreed on as was a 72 month age limit of starting school. A 16 % schooling rate was envisaged for preschool education and it was targeted to increase the quality in all the education-training levels. And in the 7th Five-year

Developmental Plan (1996-2000) to gradually generalize the preschool education was decided.

### **Legal Regulation on Preschool Education**

‘The Elementary School and Education Law no 222’ that came into effect in 1961 identified preschool institutions as the optional places of educating children who did not yet reach the age of compulsory education gave momentum to offering preschool education. ‘Basic Law of National Education no 1739’ that came into effect in 1973 placed preschool education under the formal education division within the Turkish National Education System.

A detailed work was done for the first time under the headings of preschool class programs, aims, categories of content and activities in class and suggestions for practice and the necessity for preschool education in the country was clearly stated in the X. National Education Assembly held in June 1981. Therefore, as a result of the decision taken in the Assembly, necessary measures were decided to be taken to generalize the preschool educational institutions starting with the particularly underdeveloped regions by giving more importance to the education in the Turkish language (Akt. Oktay, 1983). The Department of Preschool Education Teaching was decided to be a two year undergraduate university program in XII. National Education Assembly in July 1988. One of the two items of the agenda in XIV. National Education Assembly, held on 29 September 1993, was allocated to preschool education. XV. National Education Assembly was held in May 1996, and in addition to the suggestion to increase compulsory education to 8 years, a very important decision was made to include at least two years of preschool education in compulsory education in the near future (Oktay, 1999).

General Directorate for Preschool Education was established in 1992 under the body of Ministry of National Education grounded on the Law no 3797 for a better coordinated preschool education in Turkey and to meet the increasing social need. Since then preschool education activities have been performed by the aforementioned directorate.

In the 8th Five-year Development Plan (2001-2005), it is stated that within not only primary schools but also secondary schools preschool education need to be integrated. In addition, Mobile Kindergarten Project to be piloted in 2004-2005 academic year was developed to inform the parents. It was also stated that though many recent developments in preschool education, schooling rate was far below that of the average in EU countries. Moreover, in order to eliminate different practices between preschool education institutions, it was decided to develop standards. It has been also decided that the classrooms in preschool education, logistic, environmental and personal wise meet the needs of handicapped children as well as all children (<http://ekutup.dpt.gov.tr/program/2005/destek05.pdf>) (DPT, 2008).

XVII. National Education Assembly held a meeting between 13th and 17th November 2006 and decided that actions to make preschool period for 60-72 month olds compulsory need to be taken. In accordance with this decision, appointing guidance counselors to independent preschools should be obligatory, private sector should be encouraged to establish preschool education institutions, funds need to be

transferred, legal responsibility should be granted to local authorities to supply estate and buildings, incentives and governmental support need to be increased to improve kindergartens, daycare centers, nurseries, rehabilitation centers for the disabled and such social facilities. Moreover, tax exemption for these institutions; promoting and supporting municipalities, special provincial administrations, charities and such entrepreneurs to establish preschool institutions; making necessary amendments on Basic Law of National Education no 1739, and forming the “Preschool Education Law”; establishing cooperation and information flow among Turkish Statistical Institute-TSI, health and registration offices, offices of chief and provincial directors of national education to form database on the number of preschoolers and their demographic information; providing guidance and counseling at preschool period; reaching 80% schooling rate for 36-60 month olds in 2023 that coincide with the 100th anniversary of Turkish Republic and increasing the share for preschool education from general budget were also discussed.

In the 9th Five-year Developmental Plan (2007-2013), the positive aspect of education are; the increase in the number of children attending schools, free primary school education in public schools due to its compulsory nature, the effort to train qualified and quantitative teachers, the existence of smiling faced teachers, the increase in numbers of sacrificed teachers and the power gained by educational institutions from staunch Turkish family formation. Meanwhile, the negative aspect of education are; the unsatisfactory resources reserved for education, the lack of benefit of 48-72 months children from preschool education, the unsatisfactory salaries of teachers, the lack of improvement in the working conditions of the teachers, the lack of excitement and motivation of the teachers and the lack of number of qualified teachers. It was also indicated that the current resources should be efficiently used, and different educational models should be developed in accordance with different life styles (DPT, 2009).

### **Recent Developments in Preschool Education**

Based on the XVII. National Education Assembly decisions, in 2009-2010 academic year, 32 cities (Amasya, Trabzon, Burdur, Rize, Nevşehir, Yalova, Kırklareli, Isparta, Çanakkale, Karaman, Muğla, Kırşehir, Bilecik, Tunceli, Düzce, Giresun, Edirne, Kilis, Bartın, Uşak, Karabük, Bolu, Artvin, Eskişehir, Ardahan, Kırıkkale, Çankırı, Sinop, Gümüşhane, Bayburt, Kütahya, Samsun) were included in the pilot study for the schooling of 60-72 month olds. Schooling rate below 50 %, number of classrooms and teachers were the criteria in selecting these cities.

Firstly, Governors and Provincial Directors of National Education at the pilot cities were invited to a meeting and their opinions were asked; then, a notice dated 15/06/2009 numbered 321/1744, no 53 was issued. Full support was received from Governors and Directors of Provincial Directorate of National Education. Furthermore, cities that were not piloted demanded to be involved. After the year end evaluations, other cities will be progressively included. Meanwhile, by hiring more teachers and opening new schools and classrooms is accelerated.

## **Teacher Training in Preschool Education**

Preschool teacher training in Turkey has started quite early. This issue was discussed as early as 1925 (after the Turkish Republic was formed in 1923) during the Convention of Education Inspectors and for this purpose opening a branch in the training girl teacher schools was proposed. Later in 1926, the establishment of a training school for preschool teachers in İzmir was decided, but somehow it did not come through. The first training school for preschool teachers was officially in service in Ankara in 1927. This school was moved to İstanbul from Ankara in the academic year of 1930-31, the school was active for two years and then it was closed. Regarding the demand for preschool teachers, teacher training was quite frequent in the 1960's (Akt, Oktay, 1999).

In 1961 training preschool teachers was determined by law (Article 17 of the 222 numbered 'The Elementary School and Education Law'. In regard to this article, it was indicated that, graduates of teacher training schools or special branches of these schools or Turkish people educated similarly abroad or graduates of any high-schools, special girls vocational high schools, or ownership of a certificate from a related course could be appointed as a preschool teacher. In the academic year of 1963 –1964 Department of Child Development and Education was legally started in the girls' vocational high schools. According to Educational Board's 120th decision dated as 1967, the schools mentioned above were accepted as training schools for preschool teachers (Oktay, 1999). Later, according to article 43 of the law numbered 1739, has made it necessary that training teachers for preschools was transferred to higher institutes. The two year education for training preschool teachers which was developed in 1979 began to be implemented as an associate degree level starting from the 1980-1981 academic year. And after that, since 1982, it began to be implemented in higher institutes and high level teacher training schools. And, starting from 1987, not only Faculty of Arts Education and Faculties of Vocational Education but also Faculties of Education were entitled to graduate preschool teachers. But the real change for preschool teachers came in the 1991-1992 academic year where 4 years of education in the Faculties of Education was needed to be a preschool teacher (Oktay, 1999). Currently, after the reconstruction of Faculties of Education in 1997, Division of Preschool Education is an independent branch in the Department of Primary Education.

According to data of 2009 in Turkey, there are 139 universities- 94 are public university and 45 are private university. By the year 2009, bachelor degree in preschool education exist in 68 university (7 of them is private) in Turkey. One of them is Faculty of Open Education, and 17 of the universities educated not only during the day but also during the evening (Higher Education Council Student Selection and Placement Center-ÖSYM Guidance, 2009). In Turkey Preschool Education Undergraduate Program takes place under the Department of Primary Education in Faculty of Education. Preschool teachers are trained only through these programs. The program that is determined by Higher Education Council is carried out simultaneously in all faculties. The program consists of the theoretical and practical courses that are intended for improving the knowledge and skills which are necessary for being a teacher in preschool institutions and kindergarten classrooms. The program includes the courses, Mathematic, Science, Art, Music in Preschool Education, Physical Education and Teaching Games, Drama in Preschool Education, Development of Play in Children,

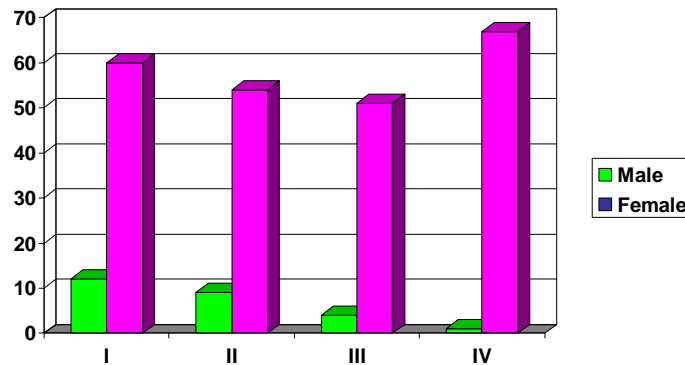
Designing Materials, Children Literature, Special Teaching Methods, and Development in Early Childhood, which prepare teachers to teaching practices, as well as fundamental courses. In addition to all these courses, the program includes the teaching training courses, such as Introduction to Educational Sciences, Educational Psychology, Principles and Methods in Teaching, Planning and Assesment in Teaching, Classroom Management, and Guidance. Moreover, Special Education and Parent Education in the program serve as a guide for teacher candidates to learn how to educate parents about child development and education and guide both children typically developing and children with special needs in group. Teacher candidates are expected to do observation and then implement the preschool education program in the preschool institutions during the School Experience course taken in the first semester and Teaching Practice course taken in two semesters. Each teacher candidate graduate by completing 127 theoretical and 48 practical courses, total 175 course hour and 151 credits and start their professional life.

Preschool Teacher Education Undergraduate Program is preferred by female students but it is known that the number of male students preferring the program have increased. As an example of this increase, when the Table 1 and Figure 1 that show the enrollment ratio of Ankara University, Department of Primary Education, Preschool Teacher Education Undergraduate Program according to gender, is analyzed, it is seen that the number of male enrollment is 1 in the 4th year while the number of male enrollment is 12 in 1st year. It is determined that 10% percent of total students are male students.

**Table 1 The Distribution of Students Enrolled in Preschool Teacher Education Undergraduate Program According to Gender (Ankara University Example)**

Class	Female	Male	TOTAL
1.Class	60	12	72
2.Class	54	9	63
3.Class	51	4	55
4.Class	67	1	68
TOTAL	232	26	258

**Figure 1 The Distribution of Students Enrolled in Preschool Teacher Education Undergraduate Program According to Gender (Ankara University Example)**

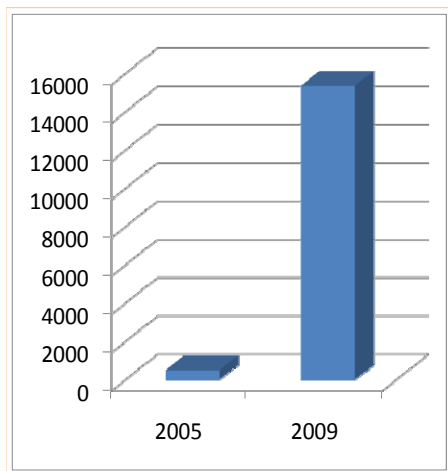


When the gender distribution of teachers working in the field is analyzed, it was determined that 1.644 male teachers served in preschool education as well as 27.698 female teachers in 2008-2009 academic year. It is also determined that 5.6 % percent of total teachers are male teachers and it is expected that this rate will be increased.

Teaching is highly preferable profession nowadays. Teacher candidates who completed their 4-year undergraduate program successfully enter an exam that is carried out to determine the all personnel for public institutions and are placed to start their jobs in two months according to their scores in the exam and their order of the district preferences. This situation is not common for most of the other professions. Finding a job in a public institution is not a common situation that happen these days.

Ministry of National Education (MONE) in 2005, appointed 500 preschool teachers on payroll and 1.000 master instructors not on payroll. Instead of covering the gap of preschool teachers with graduates of faculties who have a bachelor degree in teaching, master instructors who were paid less were preferred. First in the academic year of 2009, 15.356 preschool teachers are appointed that is the highest number in recent years. Thus, Ministry of National Education clearly states the importance they attach to the issue (Figure 2).

**Figure 2 The Distribution of The Number of Appointed Teachers with Graduates of Faculties in the Field of Preschool Education.**



When the working hours and salaries of preschool teacher who graduated from four year programs are analyzed, the situation is not pleasant. On the other hand, their salaries are higher than the research assistants who graduated similar faculty and highly lower than other professions. When the salaries of preschool education teachers are analyzed, while part-time preschool teachers approximately earn 1.700 Turkish Liras (\$ 1200), full time preschool teachers in private and public institutions earn almost 2.000 TL (\$ 1400). Preschool teachers in kindergarten classrooms work from 8.00-13.00 or 13.00-18.00 as part time. In addition, public preschool teachers working from 8.30-16.30 earn almost the same salary as private preschool teachers who work from 8.00-18.00. Therefore, while teachers who are young and have less experience chose to work in private institutions with the same salary but busy schedule, experienced teachers mostly prefer to work in public institutions. On the other hand,

private institutions prefer to hire the preschool teachers with high school diploma with economical reasons.

### The Cost of Preschool Education

Preschool education in Turkey is not compulsory. Therefore parents have to pay a somewhat price. In public preschools which belong to the Ministry of National Education (MONE), a board determines the price. This board consists of some parents, teachers, school directors and National Education Directory counties. The prices are determined by this board every year. In the year 2009, the prices of public preschool classes which belong to the primary schools of Ministry of National Education (MONE) are approximately 35 TL (\$ 25) per month, in independent preschools where there is no study time attending full day is 190 TL (\$130) and children who are on part time basis, pay 120 TL (\$ 80). For children who go to private preschools, per children prices differ between 450 TL and 1000 TL (\$ 300-700). Besides, there are preschools of certain government institutions (e.g Court of Accounts, General Directorate of Highways or Waterworks Directory). The prices determined by these institutions per child differ between 300-350 TL (\$200-240). Some extra courses like seramics or drama and transportation fees are not included in this price.

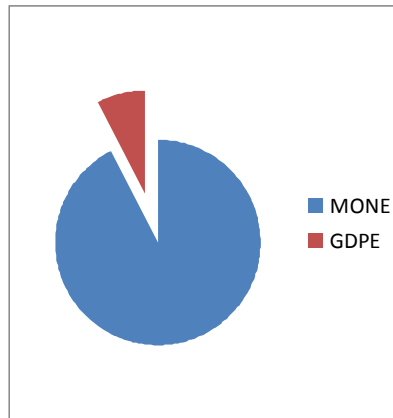
### Budget for Preschool Education

When we compare the human progression indicators, Gross National Product (GNP) and national income of European countries, it is revealed that Turkey is far behind. But somehow, Turkey is among 50 big economies in the world based on GNP. This means that, Turkey does not allocate necessary funds for education and because of her high population, her national income is considered low (Baykal, 2007).

It should be pointed out that, the share of General Directorate of Preschool Education from Ministry of National Education is low as (1.23 %) (344.083.000 TL. approximately \$ 200 million). And the share of MONE from general budget is 10% in 2009 (Figure 3).

Although it has to be reminded that, the result of a recent research by Mother and Child Education Foundation (MOCEF), showed investing one unit in preschool education gives 8 unit back (Kaymaz, 2005).

**Figure 3 The Share of General Directorate of Preschool Education from Ministry of National Education**



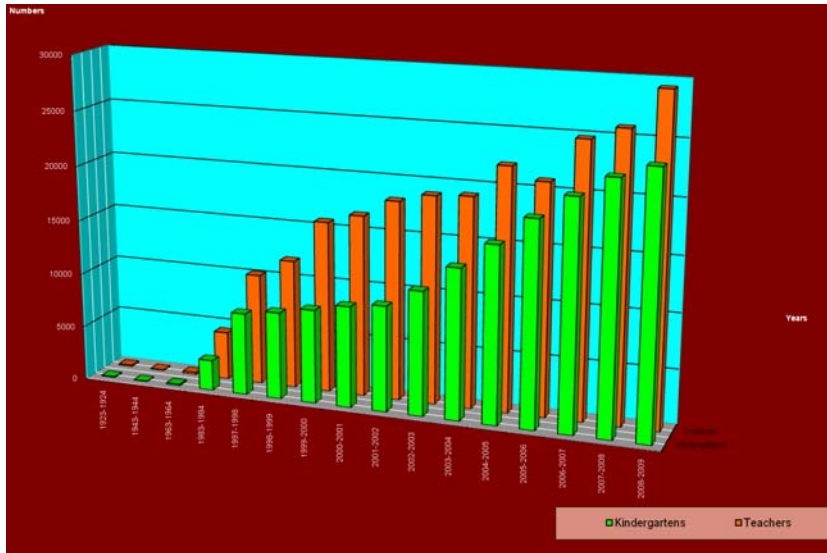
**Preschool Education in Numbers**

It is known that in 1923, when Turkey was proclaimed a republic, there were 5,880 children and 136 teachers in 80 kindergartens. Today, this number has increased to 804.765 children and 29,342 teachers in 23,653 kindergartens (39.481 classroom) as of the 2008-2009 academic year (Table 2) (Figure 4) (MEB-Ministry of National Education, 2009) (OECD, 2005).

**Table 2 The Distribution of Development in Preschool Education From The Foundation of The Republic Until Today (1923-2009)**

ACADEMIC YEAR	KINDERGARTENS	CHILDREN	TEACHERS
1923-1924	80	5.880	136
1943-1944	49	1.604	63
1963-1964	146	4.767	180
1983-1984	2.784	78.981	4.414
2003-2004	13.692	358.499	19.122
2004-2005	16.016	434.771	22.030
2005-2006	18.539	550.149	20.910
2006-2007	20.675	640.849	24.775
2007-2008	22.506	701.762	25.901
2008-2009	23 653	804 765	29 342

**Figure 4 The Distribution of Development in Preschool Education From The Foundation of The Republic Until Today (1923-2009)**

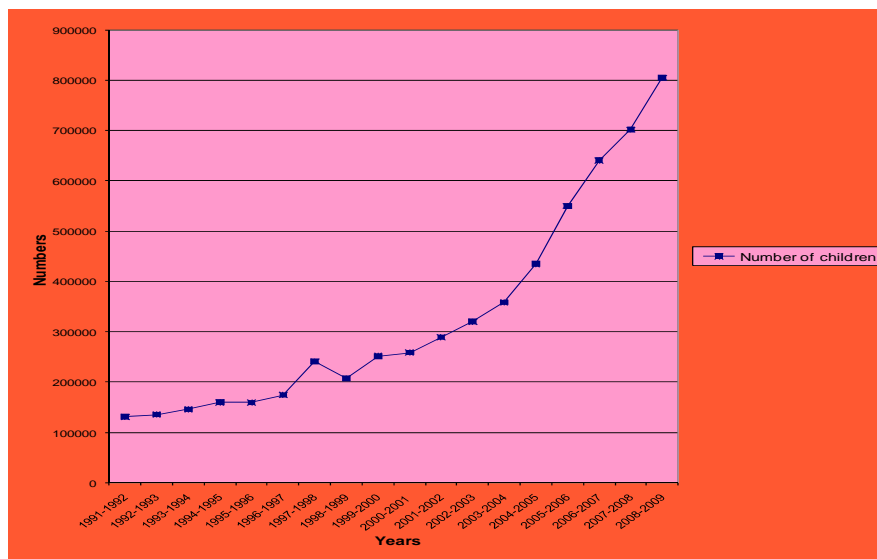


**Table 3 Increase in The Number of Children in Preschool Education Between 1992 and 2009 (Per Year)**

YEARS	NUMBER OF CHILDREN
1991-1992	131.023
1992-1993	135.465

1993-1994	145.973
1994-1995	159.766
1995-1996	159.347
1996-1997	174.275
1997-1998	240.885
1998-1999	207.319
1999-2000	251.596
2000-2001	258.706
2001-2002	289.118
2002-2003	320.038
2003-2004	358.499
2004-2005	434.771
2005-2006	550.149
2006-2007	640.849
2007-2008	701.762
2008-2009	804.765

**Figure 5 Increase In The Number of Children in Preschool Education Between 1991 and 2009 (Per Year)**



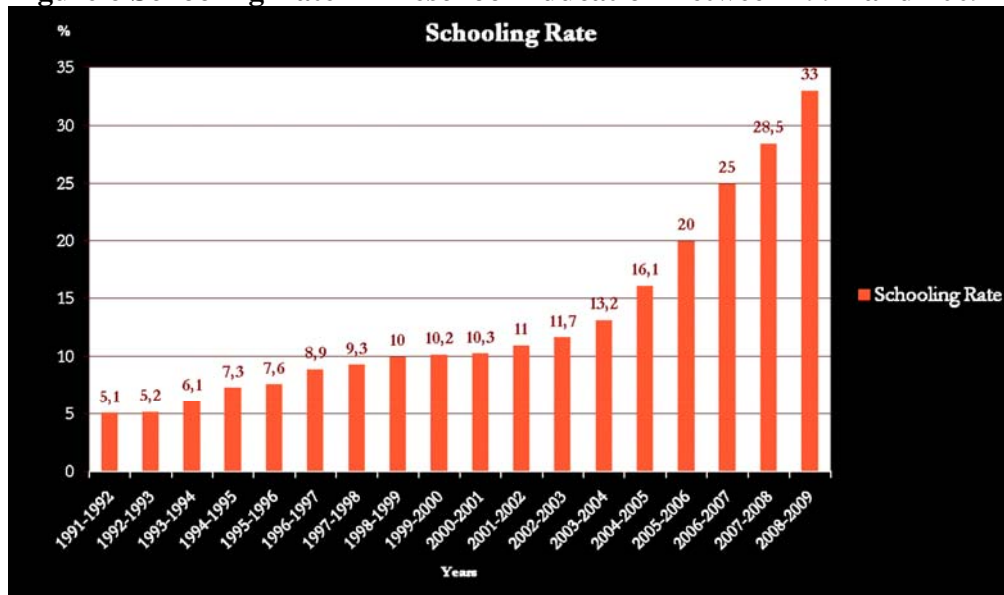
Turkey has a high population and according to estimations, it will be about 82 million by the year 2015. As of December 31, 2008, the population of Turkey is 71 million 517,100 people. In 2008 the population growth rate was recorded as 13.1 per thousand. 75 % of the population in Turkey lives in the city centers. The target population in preschool education in Turkey includes 2,702,912 children currently between 4 and 6 years old (48-72 months). Only 804.765 of these children are educated in preschools (Table 3) (Figure 5) (MEB-Ministry of National Education, 2009). Schooling rate is 23% for 36-72 months and 50% for 60-72 months (ERG, 2008, OECD, 2005).

**Table 4 Schooling Rate in Preschool Education Between 1992 and 2009 (between 4 and 6 years old)**

YEARS	SCHOOLING RATE (%)
1991-1992	5,1
1992-1993	5,2
1993-1994	6,1
1994-1995	7,3
1995-1996	7,6
1996-1997	8,9
1997-1998	9,3
1998-1999	10,0
1999-2000	10,2
2000-2001	10,3
2001-2002	11,0
2002-2003	11,7
2003-2004	13,2
2004-2005	16,1
2005-2006	20,0
2006-2007	25,0
2007-2008	28,5
2008-2009	33,0

The schooling rate ranges from 36 % and 100 % in developed countries, whereas this rate is rather low in our country. The schooling rate in preschool education when our General Directorate was established (in 1991-1992 academic year) was 5.1% and it increased to 33.0 % in the 2008-2009 academic year (Table 4) (Figure 6).

**Figure 6 Schooling Rate in Preschool Education Between 1991 and 2009**



**Table 5 The Distributions of the Children Attending Preschools According to The Regions of Turkey (In the 9th five year-Developmental Plan)**

REGIONS	2000-2001	2002-2003	2004-2005	Increase (%)
<b>Marmara Region</b>	66.644	84.734	111.470	67,3
<b>Aegean Region</b>	38.058	49.607	60.595	59,2
<b>Mediterranean Region</b>	32.598	54.074	57.756	77,2
<b>Central Anatolia Region</b>	42.587	54.812	75.774	77,9
<b>Black Sea Region</b>	24.095	35.389	47.534	97,3
<b>Eastern Anatolia Region</b>	11.950	19.683	33.769	182,6
<b>Southeastern Anatolia Region</b>	12.571	21.739	47.873	280,8

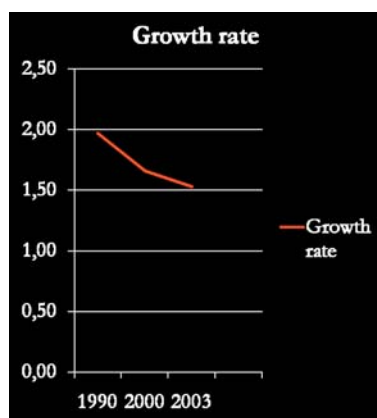
(DPT, 2009, AÇEV, 2009).

Children attending preschool has increased in all regions. But, most of the increase was seen in Eastern Anatolia and Southeastern Anatolia Regions (Table 5). These regions are most underdeveloped parts of Turkey. For this reason, they attract national and international resources and financing.

In Turkey, the cost of a student in preschool per year is \$ 213, in primary school \$ 527, in secondary school \$ 1.305 and in university \$ 3.344 (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2002; DPT, 2009).

Turkey, in contrast to other European countries, has a young population. The rate of the population which is involved in education (5-29 age) is 48%. The average in OECD countries is 32 %. The growth rate population in Turkey has decreased unexpectedly. The population growth rate which was 1.97 % in 1990 and 1.66 % in 2000 was reduced to 1.53% in 2003 (Figure 7). It is envisaged that in the year 2025 it would be reduced to 0,81 %. The ration of (0-14) age group in general population was 41.8 % in 1970, was reduced to 26.4% in 2003. The average in EU countries is 16.7 %. This data shows that the political pressure has been reduced on education policies (DPT, 2009, TÜSİAD, 2005).

**Figure 7 Increase in the growth rate in population of Turkey**



## **Where is Preschool Education Provided?**

In Turkey, preschool education is handled within the framework of different laws.

The Basic Law of National Education, no: 1739 and Elementary Schools and Education Law, no: 222 discuss the matter in general aspects, whereas the law, no:625 makes necessary regulations. Social Services and Society for the Protection of Children Law, no: 2828, discusses the matter with regards to families and children in need of protection, care and help. The State Employees Law, no: 657, also makes necessary regulations. “Regulations on Working Conditions of Pregnant Women or Breast-feeding Mothers, Breastfeeding Rooms and Child Care Establishments” issued on 14 July 2004 includes provisions stating the obligation of employers to open educational institutions for children at preschool ages in workplaces where 150 women or more are employed (TÜSİAD , 2005).

Given the institutional structure of preschool education in our country, we see that services are performed by state or private institutions and non-governmental organizations. For services given by governmental institutions, there is more than one governmental organization. At the Ministry of National Education, General Directorate of Preschool Education, General Directorate of Apprenticeships and Common Education, and General Directorate of Girls’ Technical Education provide that service. With regards to Labour Law, no: 1475 of Social Services and Society for the Protection of Children, institutions under supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, universities and local governments may also provide such a service.

Given their provision of service, three general directorates under supervision of the Ministry of National Education carry out preschool education services.

Independent preschools (for 3-6 years) and kindergarten classes (for 5-6 years) fulfill their functions under the supervision of the General Directorate of Preschool Education; training schools and classes (3-6 year old children, Parents and Child Education Project) fulfill their functions under supervision of the Directorate of Girls’ Technical Education; Mother and Child Education Program (MOCEP) and Mother and Child Education Program for 0-4 year old children fulfill their functions under supervision of the Directorate of Apprenticeship and Common Education. Day schools (0-12 year old children), creches and day care centers (0-6 years old) fulfill their functions under supervision of Social Services and Society for the Protection of Children.

In addition to governmental establishments, non-governmental organizations (NGO) provide different educational services in cooperation with various governmental institutions or on their own. Among these are the Mother and Child Education Foundation (MOCEF), Foundation For the Support of Women’s Work, Association for Supporting Contemporary Life and an international organization, UNICEF (TÜSİAD , 2005).

In Turkey, preschool children are divided into age groups. In accordance to the age groups provided with service, these institutions are;

- Creches responsible for child care and education (for 0-36 months old)
- Preschools responsible for children’s education (for 36-60 months old)
- Kindergarten classes in informal education organizations responsible for children’s education (for 60-72 months old)

- Preschool education classes, namely training classes in other educational organizations under supervision of the Ministry of National Education, responsible for children's education (for 36-72 months old)

In Turkey, preschool education is mostly provided regarding the age of the children. Children are distributed to the classroom in terms of their age and are provided education by teachers who graduated from a faculty. A teacher is responsible for approximately 20-25 children while this rate changes in private institutions. The number of children per teacher is 27.4. Moreover, in order to support children self care and provide classroom hygiene there can be a classroom aid teacher in the classrooms. However, the number of aid personnel changes according to needs of institutions.

However, in our country there is a lack of institutions that provide education for 0-3 year old children. The children in this group are provided care and education in their home by their mothers; when the mother is working, the close relative (grandmothers, etc.) or the person who is called care-giver and who has low education level provide education and care to these children. The number of institutions under Social Services and Child Protection Institution are 1.505.

There are many forms and development charts that help to monitor development of children who attend preschool education institutions. These forms are filled by teachers twice in a year and used for providing families with information about children development.

Together with all other institutions, preschool education institutions are controlled by superintendents at least once in a year. During this controlling process, superintendents enter the classrooms, observe, and monitor the teachers. Moreover, yearly and daily plans prepared by preschool teachers as other teachers as well as development forms, charts, and etc. filled for each child are analyzed.

90% of preschool education services is provided by the Ministry of National Education, 10% by Social Services and Child Protection Institutions and establishments according to article 191 of the State Employees Law, no: 657.

### **Curriculum for Preschool Education**

Preschool education program was developed firstly in 1989 and start to implement to improve the trial version during 1994-1995 academic year. Later than during the program improvement studies in 2002, Nursery Program for 0-36 months old children stayed the same, Preschool and Kindergarten programs are revised as "Preschool Education Program for 36-72 month old children" In 2006, this program was revised again. In cooperation with universities, the General Directorate of Preschool Education has developed a children centered framework program where active learning and acquisition of foundational attitudes is encouraged. The program is still in practice nationwide, particularly in state kindergartens (MEB-Ministry of National Education, 2006).

In the preschools of MONE (Ministry of National Education), latest version of "Preschool Program for 36-72 months-old children" has been used since 2006. Formal preschool education centers are supposed to utilise the educational program prepared by MONE. Private preschool education centers are free to use different educational approaches and programmes. But MONE's preschool education program is widely used.

In 2006 a curriculum book was reviewed and for the first time a teacher guide

was prepared in line with the principles, approaches and features adopted in the new program for primary school education and changing educational needs as well as the contemporary program development, growth and learning theories.

Parent involvement is expected to be pursued in the official preschool education curriculum as parent meetings (at least once a term), individual meetings with parents (as required by the teacher and/or parent) and home visits (once a term to each child's house).

This program aims to support the psychomotor, social-emotional, language and cognitive development, gain self-care skills, provide readiness to elementary education of 36-72 month-old children who are attending preschool. Gains in this program contain all the common skills in the elementary programs. Problem solving, communication, implication, deciding, responsibility taking and administering, research, enterprising, conscious consumerism, nature consciousness, creativity and some other skills will be gained easily and in a natural way through the learning situations and learning environments towards the gains in the program, with play based activities, active participation of the child and the configuration of the information through themselves by the child. While meeting the developmental needs, this developed program also aims to support the dynamic interaction interrelated with each other, to increase behaviors of the child in all the developmental areas to an upper level, to diversify and to enrich. With this characteristic of the program, it is also correlated with the defense and emphatics of "Multiple Intelligence Theory".

### **Main Characteristics of the Program**

It is for 36-72 month-old children.

It is child centered.

Aims and gains are essential.

Developmental characteristics are separately arranged for every age group.

Subjects are not aims but tools.

It is flexible.

It gives the teacher independence.

Creativity is in the forefront.

It requires the teachers to study in a plan.

Problem solving and games are main activities.

Parent participation is important.

The process of evaluation is multidirectional (MEB-Ministry of National Education, 2006).

### **Explanations regarding with educational activities in preschools**

#### **Free Time**

Free time activities are the first activities of the program. These activities have the characteristics to prepare children for other activities and for the day. However, it is not necessary to start the day with free time activities. Instead of free time activities, the teacher may start the day with another activity. The teacher should introduce a variety of activities at the same time towards the individual needs and interests of the children in free time activities. Free time activities are composed of game and art activities in the centers. Centers in the preschools include centers of playing house, science and math,

arts, picture books, blocks, music, puppets, educational toys and temporary centers arranged in the direction of aims and gains. In the free time, children choose the centers and playmates that they will play towards their interests.

### **Turkish**

Turkish activities include rhymes, finger games, poems, riddles, chats, reading picture books, telling stories, playing pretend play, pantomimes, dramatizations, story completions and etc. During Turkish activities, the children must be provided to speak Turkish correctly and well, and it is also necessary to develop their vocabulary.

### **Game and Movement**

They are activities which are structured by teachers or children, which have rules and which are played in the group. They may be played in class or in the garden. Another need of the preschool child is movement. These needs can be naturally met during play activities. However, specially planned physical education activities (movement development) must be given importance to reach the aims in the psychomotor area in the program. These activities may include such activities as bodily coordination, balance, speed power and etc.

### **Music**

Musical activities are those which can also be used during other activities which take part in the daily plan. It contains listening to the sound and differentiation, singing songs, rhythm activities, creative movement and dance, movement together with music, developing musical stories and various auditory perception activities.

### **Science and Math**

They are activities for the children to observe, research, examine and discover. These activities are experiments, identifying and using tools, using various methods and techniques, explorations and inventions, kitchen studies, nature trips and walks, picnics and camps, collections, inviting scientists in the related fields, examining books and journals, taking and examining pictures, watching documentaries and etc. Moreover, ordering, matching, grouping, measuring activities may be done as well as these activities.

### **Preparation Activities for Reading and Writing**

They include activities with the purpose of the children to pass the primary education easily and to increase the readiness level of them but not include the purpose of teaching reading or writing. These activities should be realized all year round in several activities. These activities are;

- Visual perception activities
  1. Hand-eye coordination
  2. Separation of figure and ground
  3. Figure fixation
  4. Position in the location
  5. Locational relations
- Auditory perception activities (phonological awareness)  
Listening

Speaking

Sound separation

Matching sounds with objects or object pictures

- Activities of attention and memory
- Activities of basic concepts
- Activities of problem solving
- Activities of hand skills
- Drawing, painting, cutting, folding, molding, sticking and etc.
- Activities to develop self-care skills
- Activities to develop confidence and independent behavior

### **Drama**

They are composed of such activities as warming movements, pantomime, role playing, improvisation, story developing and dramatizations.

### **Field trips**

Every location which will take the attention of the children and which has got regional, professional and daily importance is a natural learning area for the child. These areas may be a historical building, a museum, a painter's art studio, a printing house, a factory and etc.

### **Art**

Art activities may also be used as an active learning possibility for the children in various forms during the day. Art activities may also be used to reach the aims and gains in the educational program (MEB-Ministry of National Education, 2006).

## **Preschool Education Models in Turkey Institution Based Model**

A large number of institution based programs are under supervision of the Ministry of National Education, Social Services and Society for the Protection of Children.

### **Institution Based Programs Under Supervision of the Ministry of National Education**

#### **1. Independent Private or State Preschools**

These are institutions under supervision of the Ministry of National Education, with an aim of teaching children between 3 and 6 years old. In every school, there is a headmaster, a deputy director, teachers, master instructors and auxiliary staff. Such institutions function under the supervision of the General Directorate of Preschool Education. And they are generally full day schools.

#### **2. Private or State Kindergartens**

These are units included in elementary schools, with an aim of teaching children between 5 and 6 years old. They are often included in state schools as well as private schools. The headmaster of the related school is also the director of preschool unit.

#### **3. Training Kindergartens and Preschools**

These are preschool classes included in other educational institutions under supervision of the Ministry of National Education, with an aim of teaching children between 3 and 6 years old. Students do practical work under supervision of teachers, since these institutions have been planned to provide experienced students of Girls' Vocational Training High Schools.

4. According to the MONE Preschool Institutions Instruction, it is aimed to open Child Clubs in convenient institutions and thus, more children would benefit from this service. It means that the preschool teacher must work from 8.30-16.30. In 16.30-18.30 it is the extended time. If the parents wants to use this time, the government pay an extra money to the teacher and also families should pay extra fee (MEB-Ministry of National Education, 2008).

## **5. Projects Implemented by the General Directorate of Preschool Education**

### **a. Early Childhood Education Project**

This project aims at creating improved learning atmospheres for baby-sitters and young children from birth until they get used to informal education and at the same time, guaranteeing children's rights of psycho-social and cognitive development.

### **b. From Preschool Education to Elementary School Transfer Project**

In this project, there have been studies to make preschool education programs and elementary school grade 1 programs coherent.

### **c. School-Parent-Children Education Program**

It is aimed at ensuring the cognitive development of children between 61 and 72 months in kindergartens, preparing them for elementary school and strengthening cooperation between school and parents.

### **d. Mobile Kindergarten Project**

There has been cooperation between local governments and universities in different areas to reach children between 36 and 72 months and their financially underprivileged families, to generalize preschool education, to prepare educational programs particularly for children's language development in various regions, to make parents aware of children's education and to develop educational materials and programs. This model an alternative to institutional based school models. In the academic year of 2007-2008 the project was realized in thirteen cities. And the total of 1353 children benefit from these facilities. This is a model an alternative to institutional based school models. ([http://ooegm.meb.gov.tr/14\\_mobil.asp](http://ooegm.meb.gov.tr/14_mobil.asp)) (MEB-Ministry of National Education, 2007).



#### **e. Summer School**

Preschools cease their education in the summer. Preschools can be opened in this period for children who have not previously had preschool education. In the summer of 2007 (in July and August), 9572 children received preschool education in 349 classes in summer school (MEB-Ministry of National Education, 2007).

#### **f. EU Support the Basic Education Program in Turkey**

“Preschool Program for 36-72 months-old children” has been updated and guidance book for teachers has been prepared. This program went into effect in 2006-2007 academic year. And in order to publicize the program seminars were held for teachers, educational directors and education inspectors.

#### **g. MATRA Project supported by the Government of Neatherlands “No Child Left Behind”**

This program aims to generalize and increase the quality of preschool education in Turkey. In the academic year 2006-2007, five workshops were held and a Stratejic Action Plan has been prepared to determine the aims, targets and methods of preschool education.

#### **h. The Government of Turkey and UNICEF Joint Action Plan 2006-2010**

The aim of action plan is to enable 30 percent of the children to benefit from preschool education. And also in this programme named, “My family”(16 sessions) and “Core Training Programme for Families” (6 sessions) aimed at reaching parents having

children aged 0-6 through preschool teachers who have been trained by international experts on effective parenting. Until now approximately 5000 families participated in programmes provided by 200 preschool teachers in pilot provinces.

## **Programs Under Supervision of Social Services and The Society For The Protection Of Children**

### **a. Creches and day nursery schools**

These are non-boarding social service institutions established to protect and improve physical and mental health of children between 0 and 6, while nursing and encouraging them to form basic values and habits. They are paid for such services. The creches serve those who are between 0 and 3, whereas day nursery schools provide children between 3 and 6 years with services. These institutions might be established together or they may function by themselves, as a creche or a day nursery school.

### **b. Day care centers**

These are boarding social service institutions whose duties and responsibilities include children in need of protection (between 0 and 12) and when necessary, girls who complete their 12th year regarding their physical, educational, psycho-social development, gaining sound personalities and good habits.

## **Home Based Model**

### **Programs Implemented by the Ministry of National Education**

#### **a. Mother and Child Education Program (MOCEP)**

It is a program for children aged 6 who do not go to preschools and their mothers who suffer from negative economic and social conditions. This work has been carried out by the Mother and Child Education Foundation (MOCEF). The program has three parts:

Mother Support Program, Mental Support Program, Reproductive Health and Family Planning

#### **b. Family-Children Education Program**

Through the Family Education Program and the Developmental Education Program, the following goals are: Developing skills and knowledge of family members about child development, health and discipline, thus supporting the child's development and enriching the atmosphere at home. The target population of the program is children between 0 and 6 and their families who suffer from negative social and economic conditions. The program consists of two parts: *Family Education Program (FEP)* and *Developmental Education Program (DEP)*. Between 1993-2003, 28,854 mothers have been provided with education over the past ten years through these programs.

#### **c. Mother Father and Child Education Project:**

Mother-Father and Child Education Project is aimed at education of family members. Therefore, it is addressed to young girls, future mothers, and other women and men. The project has reached 1,399,741 individuals over the past five years (Temel, 2003).

## **Programs Implemented by Other Organizations**

### **Schools for Parents**

This project is aimed at helping parents encourage their children to acquire desirable behavior, habits, self-control, and to become individuals who express their feelings and opinions freely. The target population of the project is parents at a low socio-economic level, living in the shanty towns of Istanbul. Through this program 16,000 parents in total have been provided with education in 24 provinces (Temel, 2003).

### **Project of “Support and Generalization of Preschool Education” during the Second Phase of the Basic Education Program**

The project implemented according to an agreement signed between the government of the Turkish Republic and the World Bank and prepared for Basic Education Program Phase II is aimed at providing for children who do not attend preschool institutions with education opportunities in order to increase the schooling rate to 25% by the end of 2005 as envisaged by VIII. Five-Year Development Plan, preparing such children for elementary schools and increasing quality in education.

Through the Project, it was planned to:

- build preschool classes in 300 elementary schools with eligible schoolyards in provinces included in the project
- equip these 300 preschool classes
- purchase educational materials for 800 preschool classes
- provide teachers and 4,500 administrators of preschool institutions with in-service training regarding “Program Development”, “Preparing Educational Materials” and “Drama in Education” (Ulus, 2004).

## **Early Childhood Services by Non-governmental Organizations**

### **a. Association for Supporting Contemporary Life**

The Association for Supporting Contemporary Life has been supporting preschool education since 1999 in different ways. Through some of the work, namely *Equipping Preschool Classes*, *Supporting Preschool Education Programs*, *Providing “Developing Early Childhood Project” With Financial Support*, *Providing Children With Direct Education*, *Providing Parental Education*, *In-Service Training For Preschool Teachers*. *Providing “Developing Early Childhood Project” With Financial Support*, 8,500 children on average were provided with preschool education. Within the framework of *Providing Children With Direct Education Project*, 3,000 children were supported, including preschool children.

### **b. Mother and Child Education Foundation**

It is seen that the work of the Mother and Child Education Foundation has been largely in program development for Early Childhood Education and in training.

Through the Mother and Child Education Program, 180,000 mothers and children were reached. Through the Mother Support Program, 4,000 people were reached. The Preschool Period Parent-Children Education Program has reached 14,000 people up to today. The Summer Kindergartens and Mother Support Program have reached 1,650 people up to today. Winter Practice at Family-Children Education Centers has reached nearly 250 people. 9,200 people have been reached up to today through the Father Support Program. “Will you play with me?” is an amusing and educative children’s program that has been prepared in cooperation with TRT (the national broadcaster of Turkey). The *Family Letters Project* has reached 2,500 mothers up to today. Through *Seminars On Communication With Children*, nearly 2,000 parents were reached.

“*Seven: Too Late Campaign*”: Mother and Child Education Foundation (MOCEF) has started a campaign called “Seven: Too Late” in order to make the public aware of the importance of education between 0 and 6 years in life and to provide many more children with preschool education.



### **c. Foundation For the Support of Women’s Work**

These centers were founded to give support to mothers through the *Women and Children’s Centers Project* and within the framework of a protocol with Social Services and Society for the Protection of Children. In order to set up a centre, mothers/women determine the needs in districts and taking these needs into account, a day care centers or a playroom is founded. In the current 15 centers established, more than 1,000 women and children are provided with services every year.

In the centers, there are district day care units for children between 3 and 6 years old, part time play groups accompanied by mothers and a professional group leader, a toy library as well as district motherhood services.

The aim of all the projects and programs being implemented is to make Turkish preschool education more widespread and to increase the quality of this education.

## **CONCLUSION**

Although, Turkey recently has shown some development in this field, there are still some steps need to be taken.

### **PROBLEMS REGARDING INSTITUTIONS;**

- There is no quality standarts regarding preschool education,
- Lack of and the difference between physical charecteristics and equipment in

public and private preschool institutions.

- The right to open private preschool institution to anybody (using the diploma of the Professional person)
- The crowdedness of classrooms in excuse for educating lots of children
- Nearly the non-existence of institutions regarding children (aged 0-3) and its significance not to be understood.

#### **PROBLEMS REGARDING TEACHERS;**

- Opening Faculty of Education, Department of Preschool Education as a state policy in every city, and the lack of qualified instructors and as a result novice teachers in this field being educated by these unqualified instructors.
- Hiring non-relevant teachers (instead of teachers with bachelor degree, teachers with associate degree or graduate of secondary school) especially in private preschools.
- Extra quotas (for undergraduate students) given to Department of Preschool Education Undergraduate Program in the Faculty of Education
- Lack of male teachers in this field
- Using master instructors or teachers on contract as teachers in public and private preschools to achieve cheap-labour
- Psychologically the burning out of the preschool teacher due to difficult conditions (crowded classrooms, naughty children and long working hours).

#### **PROBLEMS REGARDING PARENTS;**

The non awareness and the wrong attitudes and behaviours of the parents (who have preschool aged children) on the needs of the preschool education.

The lack of awareness and inquiry of the fathers on young childrens' development and education.

Considering preschool institutions as care-oriented instead of educated-oriented.

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