

## **STATUS OF PLAY SCHOOLS IN ODISHA**

**Soumya Shubhadarshinee**

Research Scholar in Education, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar (Odisha)

**Bimal Charan Swain, Ph. D**

Associate Professor in Education, Nalini Devi Women's College of Teacher Education  
Bhubaneswar (Odisha)

**Surekha Sundari Swain, Ph. D**

Professor of Education and Ex- Principal, Shailabala Women's (Autonomous) College, Cuttack  
(Odisha)

---

### **Abstract**

---

*The early years of life is critical for the child's cognitive, social and psychological development. In this context role of Play School is very significant. The most essential ingredient in Play School is the provision of engagement of children in play. The teachers in Play Schools are vibrant, enthusiastic, courageous and lovable to tackle with toddlers within the school premises. The investigation aimed at studying the status of Play Schools in Odisha. The sample of the study consisted of 60 teachers selected from 15 Play Schools of Cuttack city of Odisha through the method of purposive sampling. A questionnaire was developed by the investigators for collection of data from the teachers. The findings of the study revealed that the Play Schools were privately run units in rented houses. The schools had good infrastructural facilities but there was hardly any provision for outdoor play. There were no park, pantry, library etc in the Play Schools. All the teachers were female. There was need of adequate number of trained teachers for Play Schools. The teachers were mostly following play way method for classroom transaction. Teachers were not well paid. Suggestions have been given for improving the status of Play Schools in Odisha.*

---

**Keywords:** Play School, Play



*Scholarly Research Journal's* is licensed Based on a work at [www.srjis.com](http://www.srjis.com)

### **Introduction**

The Play Schools portray a crucial role in shaping the learning experiences in a desirable way which makes the toddlers ready for school. Play Schools perform a vital role where toddlers learn age-appropriate behaviors through observation and imitation. Varieties of plays are judiciously implemented through play way method in Play Schools for construction of

knowledge. The Play Schools have gained popularity all over the country, especially in urban areas. A Play school is essential for foundation of mental and physical development of little children. It nurtures cognitive abilities, social skills, table manners, personal hygiene and emotional intelligence of children in a joyful environment. The Play Schools have become a unique platform for the development of academic and social skills and preparing children to face the world.

The Play School sector in Odisha has taken a significant role in providing early education. The Play Schools are privately run institutions promoting Nursery, Montessori and kindergarten type of education in a playful environment. Some of the popular Play Schools in Odisha are Bachpan, Kidzee, Euro Kids, Hello Kids, Info Kids School, Little Star Play school etc. The Play Schools provide core preschool education while fostering life skills at a young age to nurture the roots of the toddlers with value-based learning. Play School in Odisha promote child-oriented environment with specialized teachers for a better learning and fruitful day at kindergarten. But the issues like quality of learning, opportunities for adequate play, availability of trained teachers, regulatory bodies to monitor the business sector etc need to be taken care of.

Studies have been conducted by researchers on status of Play Schools in different states. Prochner (2002) found that privately run Play Schools were charging fees and doing good business. Children from disadvantaged communities attended government preschool programme where as well to do parents sent their kids to private Play Schools. In India privately operating Play Schools covered near about 10 million children. There was an intense competition for spaces in private Play schools. The investigation by Dixit (2002) in Kanpur City revealed that most of the preschools had properly illuminated and ventilated class rooms with modern amenities like fans, taps, basin, mirror while some of them had cooling facilities also. Provision of outdoor play material like swings and various toys were available in most of the schools but very few had adequate outdoor playing space. The common teaching materials consisted of charts, models, drawings and paintings, paper and craft works etc. Most of the schools had first aid facilities, but there was no sick room.

The study conducted by Kaur (2014) revealed that Early Childhood Care and Education in private sector of Punjab was quite satisfactory. The parents were found to be satisfied with services provided in private preschools as they were well occupied with physical facilities,

equipments and material. The study reported that there was lack of adequate open space for children to experiment in natural environment. There were demand of inculcation of health and psycho-social aspects of development in curriculum of Early Childhood Care and Education by both parents and teachers. The investigation by Swain (2014) revealed that all the Play Schools were privately managed in Bhubaneswar city of Odisha. The curricular activities were designed to develop colour perception, numerical abilities, understanding of spatial relationship and language development. There were ample playing materials for play way method of study. The teachers were found to be very active and efficient in managing the schools properly.

The investigation by Lynch (2015) revealed that some kindergarten teachers valued play-based instruction and found it developmentally appropriate. Kindergarten had become more academically rigorous and teachers felt pressure to prepare children for standardized tests. Some kindergarten teachers argued that students were not academically ready for kindergarten because of play-based preschools. They contended that with too much play, there was not a focus on academics and therefore students were behind on kindergarten curriculum standards. The investigation undertaken by Shashi Rekha (2018) revealed that children got least opportunity for playful activities in Preschools of Bangalore and Chennai. In most of the private pre-schools the early childhood education was painfully academic without scope for play or any other physical activity. The preschools were not encouraging playful activities due to lack of adequate space and play materials. There was use of non Montessori approach in class which focused on teaching languages and arithmetic with less scope for learning through play.

The study undertaken by Ghosh and Dey (2020) revealed that private preschool stood as first choice for parents if they were affordable. Most of the parents sent their children to preschool for early education and school readiness. High income and educated parents had preference towards private schools where as parents from lower socioeconomic background sent their children to Anganwadis. The study suggested for inculcation of educational and school readiness component to public preschools system in India along with its nutrition and health monitoring component.

The investigation by Nilsen (2021) revealed that teachers believed that play materials enriched children's play, created possibilities for play, promoted children's interaction with peers, teachers and enhanced social competence, learning, and development. Hectic daily schedule in

school, inadequacy of time, insufficient staff, lack of resource to replace broken toys etc inhibited teacher's interest in play based learning activities. It was also observed that many of the teachers expressed uncertainty about facilitating children's play, learning, and development. It was also found that teachers who collaborated, shared ideas, and explored their beliefs expressed higher confidence when discussing their beliefs and their play materials choices.

After reviewing the related literature, it was observed that the status of Play School is a significant field of research in context of Odisha. In Odisha very few studies have been undertaken in this area. Furthermore, hardly any study has been conducted on Evaluation of Play Schools in Odisha. Keeping in view the non-existence of significant studies on status of Play School in Odisha the present study was undertaken.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions of the present study are:

1. What is the status of Play Schools in Odisha with regard to:-
  - Availability of infrastructural facilities
  - Student teacher ratio
  - Timing of the school
  - Availability of Teaching Learning Materials
  - Availability library
  - Availability of play materials
  - Teachers and their qualifications
  - Procedure of admission
  - Fees structure
  - Parent Teacher Association
  - Provision of safety measures
2. What are the methods of teaching followed by teachers in Play Schools?
3. What are the co-curricular activities organized in different Play Schools for the harmonious development of children?
4. What are the activities performed by kids of Play schools?
5. What are the problems faced by teachers in Play Schools in Odisha?

## **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:-

1. To study the status of Play Schools in Odisha with regard to:-
  - Availability of infrastructural facilities
  - Student teacher ratio
  - Timing of the school
  - Availability of Teaching Learning Materials
  - Availability library
  - Availability of play materials
  - Teachers and their qualifications
  - Procedure of admission
  - Fees structure
  - Parent Teacher Association
  - Provision of safety measures
2. To study the methods of teaching followed by teachers in Play Schools
3. To study the co-curricular activities organised in different Play Schools for the harmonious development of children.
4. To observe the activities of kids of Play Schools.
5. To study the problems faced by teachers of Play Schools in Odisha.

## **Method**

In the execution of present study Descriptive Survey method was employed to study status of Play Schools in Odisha.

## **Sample**

The sample of the present study was confirmed to 60 teachers across 15 different Play Schools in Cuttack city. The sample was selected through the method of purposive sampling.

## **Tools used**

To collect information regarding status of Play School in Cuttack city of Odisha, the investigators developed and used a Questionnaire.

### **Findings of the Study**

- ❖ As per the information given by the teachers all the Play Schools (100%) were privately running units furnished with Sufficient class room for children , had boundary wall or fencing, adequate movement area and ventilation ,separate rest room for children ,barrier-free access, separate child-friendly toilets ,soap, clean cloth/towel, garbage bin, wash basin/sink at low level, safe and adequate drinking water facility, play area, fire safety measures and play ground .Very few (30%) Play Schools had display board to show activities of the children.
- ❖ None of the school had a pantry for providing cooked food to the children. About 23% of the schools had children's park.
- ❖ About 78% of school were maintaining proper student teacher ratio.
- ❖ The timing of the Play Schools was found to range between 8am to 1pm.
- ❖ All the teachers (100%) used adequate number of TLM like blackboards, charts, posters, photographs, flannel boards, maps, colour chalk, flash cards, vocabulary cards, alphabet cards, picture cards ,picture books , seeds and pebbles, coloured wooden balls, coloured wooden squares/ cubes / cylinder, building blocks, beads and buttons, audio visual aids etc. However science kit box was not used by the teachers (100%) in the Play Schools.
- ❖ There was no library facility (100%) in the play schools for kids.
- ❖ All the Play School teachers (100%) used different play materials like ball, building blocks, plastic clay, drawing materials, water Centre, maze, jigsaw puzzle, music system etc.
- ❖ Majority of the teachers of Play Schools (65%) used outdoor play materials like swing, see-saw, merry- go- round, slides etc for outdoor play.
- ❖ All the Play School teachers (100%) were female. Their age group ranged between 25 to 55 years. Educational qualification of teachers revealed that about 60% of teachers were trained while rests were untrained. The teachers were mostly having NTT training (45%). Majority of the teacher's (75%) had 1 to 5 years of teaching experience.
- ❖ About (80%) of the Play Schools admitted the children on the basis of age.

- ❖ All the Play Schools (100 %) were found to collect admission fees and monthly fees.
- ❖ The Parent Teacher Association was found in all the Play Schools (100 %).
- ❖ All the Play Schools (100 %) were found to maintain proper safety measures. However CC TV surveillance was available in only 70% of the schools.
- ❖ Regarding subject taught in Play School majority of the teachers (90%) reported that they taught Language, Math, Science, Art, Dance, Music etc. In few schools (10%) there is practice of teaching phonetics, karate, yoga etc.
- ❖ The learning methods used in Play Schools by the teacher were activity, story-telling, play way, team work etc. Majority of the teachers (80%) used play way method of instruction.
- ❖ All the Play Schools (100%) used observation of the activities of students, task completion, identification, and oral skill observation etc as procedure of evaluation.
- ❖ Majority of the Play Schools (80 %) were found to use English as medium of instruction. Rest of the schools (20%) used both English and Hindi as medium of instruction.
- ❖ About 80 % of the teachers followed Play way method of instruction while 20% of the teachers followed integrated approach of method to transact the curriculum.
- ❖ All the teachers of the Play Schools (100%) reported that the learning objectives of their schools were: holistic well-being of children, development of a good physique / basic motor skills in the child, inculcation of good health habits, development of readiness for schooling, development of self help skills like lacing the shoes/buttoning the shirt/ using toilet independently / eating by using spoon etc.
- ❖ Regarding skills taught in Play School, all the teachers (100%) reported that they provided instructions for development of cognitive skill, gross motor skill, fine motor skill, pre-writing skill, pre-reading skill, pre- mathematical skill and listening skill to the learners.
- ❖ Majority of the teachers (80%) were found to organise learning activities like learning alphabets, number, language, storytelling, self help skills and dance / music etc.
- ❖ All the teachers (100%) were organising daily activities like prayer, indoor play, indoor activities, outdoor activities, group games for language development, wash up, lunch, toilet training, music/dance/art, action songs etc. However free outdoor play was not organised in all the Play Schools (64%) only.

❖ The problems faced by the teachers include managing kids in initial stage of entry in school, and unsatisfactory salary.

### **Educational Implications**

The following suggestions may be given for improving the status of Play Schools in Odisha.

- ❖ The Play Schools need to have pantry for providing cooked food to the children.
- ❖ There is need of library in each Play School.
- ❖ The Play Schools needs to develop a park with different outdoor game units like see-saw, swing, marry-go-round, and slide.
- ❖ The Play Schools need to maintain proper student teachers ratio 20:1 for better individualised attention to the kids.
- ❖ The Play Schools need to use display boards in the school for displaying the achievements of the kids to encourage them.
- ❖ There is need of well trained teachers in the Play Schools for proper development of children.
- ❖ In-service teacher training programmes need to be organised on regular basis to provide better exposure to the Play School teachers.
- ❖ There is need of proper monitoring of quality of learning activities organised in the Play School.
- ❖ There should be less stress on writing activities for the kids as they learn better through games in their early stage.
- ❖ The circle time should be more for better socialization and verbal development of the toddlers in the Play Schools.
- ❖ The teachers should emphasize on fine motor and gross motor skills through both indoor and outdoor games.
- ❖ The salary of teachers needs to be increased as per the need of the hour.

The Play School teachers are versatile and perform different activities like fun games, storytelling, dramatics, dancing, etc to teach children in different ways. They engage parents in friendly activities to improve their relationship with the children in school activities. The success



of Play School education truly resides in healthy mental state of teachers with their job satisfaction.

### References

- Chandra, R., Gulati, R., & Sharma, A. (2017). Quality Early Childhood Care and Education: Initiatives, Practice, Challenges and Enablers. *Asia Pacific Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education*, 11(1), 41-67 .
- Chopra, N. (2012). A study of early childhood education programmes in Delhi, India. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 20(2), 159-174.
- Dixit, R. (2002). A study on status of Pre-school education in Kanpur City . *Doctoral Thesis* . Chhatrapati Shahu ji Maharaj University , Kanpur. <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/266580>
- Fardlillah , Q., Suryono, Y. (2018). Physical Environment Classroom: Principles and Design Elements of Classroom in Early Childhood Education. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*,.
- Ghosh, S., Dey, S.(2020).Public or private? Determinants of parent's preschool choice in India . *ICEP* 14 (3). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40723-020-00068-0>
- India Today (2016) . Government to monitor Play Schools to ensure quality standards . Mail Today, News .
- India.com (2017) . Playschools in country soon to come under Government Regulation, NCPCR ready with guidelines . India, News.
- Kanak,M., Pekdogan,S.(2018) .Examination of Science and Mathematics Activities in Pre-School Education . *Research in Pedagogy*, 8(1),111-122.
- Kalapriya, C.(2007).Status of Play and Play materials in Preschool . *Doctoral Thesis*. Sri Venkateswara University,. <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/89286>
- Kaur, G.(2014). Early childhood care and education a study of private schools in Punjab . *Doctoral Thesis*. Punjabi University , Education.
- Lynch, M. (2015). More play, please: The perspective of kindergarten teachers on play in the Classroom . *American Journal of Play*, 7(3), 347-369. Retrieved from <http://www.journalofplay.org/sites/www.journalofplay.org/files/pdf-articles/7-3 -article more-play-please. pdf>.

- Nilsen, T.R. (2021). Pedagogical intentions or practical considerations when facilitating children's play? Teachers' beliefs about the availability of play materials in the indoor ECEC environment. *International Journal on Child Care and Education*, 15( 1). Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40723-020-00078-y>
- Swain, B.C. & Mishra, G. (2014) .Status of Play Schools in Bhubaneswar City. *TEEKA*, 3( 192).
- Prochner, L. (2002). Pre School and Play Way in India .*Childhood*. 9(4), 435-453.
- Regulatory guidelines for private Play schools (2013) .Education Division National Commission for Protection of Child Rights .
- Roy, S. (2001). Administrative, Curricular and Infrastructural aspects of Select Nursery schools of Chandigarh: a Case Study .*Doctoral thesis* .Punjab University, Chandigarh. <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/80749>.
- Shashi Rekha, M.(2018). Play in Early Childhood Education: Its Importance in Montessori and non-Montessori Approaches .School of Humanities and Social Sciences .*Doctoral Thesis*. Jain University .
- Shiple, D.(2008).Empowering children. Play based curriculum for lifelong learning. (Fourth edn). USA: Nelson Education.
- Singh, R., & Colin, B. (2014).Low fee private schooling in India–More questions than answers? Observations from the Young Lives longitudinal research in Andhra Pradesh. *International Journal of Educational Development* (39)132-140.
- Yashpal Netragaonkar, Sachin Sakhare, (2023), Inclusive Education, Eds. I, Pune, Amitesh Publishers & Company.

**Cite Your Article as:**

Soumya Shubhadarshinee, Dr. Bimal Charan Swain, & Prof. (Dr.) Surekha Sundari Swain. (2023). STATUS OF PLAY SCHOOLS IN ODISHA. *Scholarly Research Journal for Interdisciplinary Studies*, 10(76), 18551–18561. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7963300>