

'NAVTIKA' - a Journal on 'Early Childhood Care and Education' (ECCE)

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Need – A platform for all beneficiaries who are involved with the early years of schooling is required. Little work / research has been done in the early years of child's development. There is not enough literature or journal available on early childhood care.

I. Area of Reporting Innovation:

- 'Navtika' - a journal on **'Early Childhood Care and Education'** reflects on the first six years of a child's life that have been recognized as the most crucial years for optimal development.
- The process of human development is essentially cumulative in nature. Investment in spreading awareness on ECCE has begun to be accepted as the foundation for basic education and lifelong learning.
- Over the years, the field of childcare, inspired by research and front-line experiences, has developed into coherent vision for ECCE.
- Primarily, training of teachers working with the early year's age group children is essential to prepare lifelong learners.
- The necessity for reforms and policies by the Government of India in the field of ECCE.
- 'Navtika' is a comprehensive and collaborative journal that emphasizes on comprehending the underlying processes through constructivism and varied perceptions of renowned educationists.

II. Objective of Early Childhood Care and Education

The objective of 'Navtika' is to promote ECCE for fostering the overall development of children between the age of 0-6 years.

Guidelines and systematic provision of Early Childhood Care and Education in Navtika will further –

- Improve group socialization
- Inculcate healthy habits
- Stimulate creative learning processes
- Enhance scope for overall personality development
- Develop adequate muscular coordination and basic motor skills.
- Independence and creativity by providing children with sufficient opportunities for self-expression.

- To stir the intellectual curiosity and foster new interests by providing opportunities to explore, investigate and experiment.
- Promotes social attitudes and manners, and sensitize the child to the rights and privileges of others.
- Enhances aesthetic appreciation through suggested activities.

III. Methodology

- ‘Navtika’ the Journal of Early Childhood Care and Education is published quarterly in a year (viz.) February, May, August and November.
- The journal is registered under the registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI No. HARENG/2010/35200).
- It has on its Editorial on Advisory Board to provide strategic direction and suggestions for the development of the Journal.
- The Editorial Advisory Board members are from:
 - Department of Elementary Education, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi
 - Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development, Ambedkar University, New Delhi
 - Department of Human Development and Childhood Studies, Lady Irwin College, New Delhi.
- The contents include thought provoking articles by distinguished educationists, research papers, innovative practices, insights by the teachers, experiences of the parents, calendar of workshops and conferences, helpline for parents, book reviews and other features pertinent to the field of Early Childhood Care and Education.
- It is intended for parents, teachers, educators, research workers and teacher training organizations.

IV. Themes of Each Publication

Year	Themes
2013	[1] First Issue: Multiple Intelligences: A Holistic Development. [2] Second Issue: Parents As Partners In Early Childhood Education.
2012	[1] First Issue: Pre-school Teacher. A Mentor, Guide OR Facilitator [2] Second Issue: Challenges In Early Childhood. [3] Third Issue: Emergent Literacy. [4] Fourth Issue: ICT Culture In Early Childhood Education.
2011	[1] First Issue: Importance Of Music. [2] Second Issue: ICT In Early Years. [3] Third Issue: Exploring Science through Childhood Experiences. [4] Fourth Issue: Value Inculcation In The Early Years.
2010	[1] First Issue: Weaving A Wonderful World Of Words. [2] Second Issue: Right To Education Act Coming Into Force. [3] Third Issue: Wonders of Play. [4] Fourth Issue: Math for Everyone.
2009	[1] First Issue: Early Brain Development. [2] Second Issue: Language Development. [3] Third Issue: Understand Child's Mind To Be An Effective Teacher.
2008	[1] First Issue: Holistic Early Childhood Curriculum. [2] Second Issue: Healthy Psycho-Social Development. [3] Third Issue: Assessment Of Children's Progress.
2007	[1] First Issue: NCF- A Set Of Guidelines For ECCE Services, Nursery Admission, Etc. [2] Second Issue: The Judgment In The Best Interest Of The Pre School Child. [3] Third Issue: Parents Involvement In Early Childhood.

V. Contents of Navtika

The Journal comprises of articles in the following order:

- **Guest Editor's Desk** – A message is written for the Journal by an expert from the field of Early Childhood Care and Education.
- **Articles:**
 - Educators and Practitioners share articles related to **implementation in a real life/classroom situation**
 - Students share **Research based** articles and emerging practices in the field of ECCE.
 - Every issue has a section **Teacher's Corner** related to the theme/topic.

- From a **Stakeholder’s perspective** – an article is even shared by a parent concerning the topic being discussed.
- **Book Review** – A review of a specific and latest book related to the theme is given in the journal.
- **Ask the Expert** – a special section where the queries of parents, teachers, and students are answered.

Navtika encompasses all areas related to ECCE.

VI. Conference on ECCE and its impact

Year	Topic
September 2008	‘Is Early Education in India Child Friendly?’
September 2011	‘Nurturing the Genius’
September 2012	‘ICT – Early Childhood Education’

Outcome:

The Navtika conferences are an attempt to provide support to all those in the field of early childhood education, including parents and teachers of small children; with information that will enable them to provide better care and educational opportunities to young children and help them achieve their maximum potential.

Impact:

- The early years of children constitute the most significant period in life. It is important to understand the needs of the children and the right practices to be followed.
- As each child is unique, educators and parents today are attempting to research and give children great learning experiences according to their abilities.
- The ECCE programme fosters the mental development of children, encourages them to explore the environment and express themselves.
- The ECE should be based on the 3H’s (Head, Heart and Hand) and not the 3R’s (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic)
- Children possess all eight intelligences but the degree of strength varies. It is important for the facilitator to identify the abilities of the individual child and nurture it further.
- Active listening skills facilitates effective communication throughout life.
- ECCE is an indispensable foundation for lifelong learning and development. Therefore it becomes imperative to accord priority attention to ECCE and invest adequately by providing commensurate resources.
- Inclusive education is not just to help children who have learning disabilities. It is based on social justice, understanding of neuro developmental differences, children’s emotional, social and other needs, and understanding of social and cultural realities.
- Free and unstructured play is healthy and essential for helping children reach important social, emotional and cognitive milestones as well as helping them manage stress and become resilient.

- A good multi-sensory ECCE programme must have most of the components required for children with difficulties in different areas of functioning.
- ICT strengthens many aspects of ECCE practice. It can be a useful tool for supporting young children’s learning and development. It is important to focus on developing the right resources and empower children with the skills required to use ICT in a purposeful manner.

VII. At the Macro Level

- In most countries of the world addressing quality aspects of ECCE has not yet received the required attention, while focus continues to remain largely on ‘achieving quantitative target figures.’ ‘Navtika’ lays stress on child centered pedagogy and connecting learning to real life experiences.
- The balance between quality and quantity is now more precarious than ever before. ‘Navtika’ spells through its articles the fact that there is an urgent and imperative need to appreciate that a balanced approach is crucial.
- Brain development patterns suggest that the learning opportunities in the environment have a dramatic and specific effect, not merely influencing the general direction of development, but also affecting how the brain functions.
- In ‘Navtika’ closely related issues that emerge in the wake of an awareness for quality of pre-school centres are deliberated (viz.)
 - a) Appropriate qualifications and training of care givers and educators.
 - b) Prevention of pressure being imposed on the children for performance and achievement (without consideration for the pace and readiness of an individual child).
 - c) Channelling undue parental anxiety and demand for formal learning.
 - d) Neutralizing/balancing the ‘over emphasis’ on developing emergent literacy.
 - e) Checking the over-crowding in the classrooms in gross violation of minimum space requirement per child.
 - f) Including parents as partners to enhance the overall development of children.
 - g) Help parents and teachers to identify the strengths (intelligences) and foster their talent and nurture their abilities.

VIII. At the Micro Level

- It is vital that all the stakeholders (children, parents, neighbourhood and society at large) in the system advocate the well being of children in the age group of 0-6 years.
- At the outset ‘Navtika’ clarifies stereo type and dogmas identified with the following:-

Sr.No.	Stereotype	Reality of ECCE
1	Not syllabus bound programme for teaching 3R’s or a nursery rhyme package.	A balanced play based programme of language, cognitive, creative and psychomotor activities.

2	Not a teacher centered programme that follows formal classroom approach as in school.	A child centered programme catering to individual learning and emotional needs through individual, small and large group activities and one to one communication.
3	Not a programme for formally 'teaching' reading, writing and arithmetic which is to be done at the primary level.	A school readiness programme which 'readies' children for learning to read, write and do arithmetic later.
4	Not a programme which demands unquestioning obedience or strict classroom discipline.	A programme which indirectly promotes self-control and thereby inner discipline in children through interaction.

IX. Futuristic Trends of Navtika – Journal of ECCE

- Through deliberations, discourses, conferences and articles assign continuous priority to ECCE in education sector.
- To initiate advocacy to ensure developmentally appropriate play based programmes, coupled with appropriate climate for children.
- To create public awareness and strong parent lobby with not only CONSCIOUSNESS and AWARENESS but also CONSCIENCE and CONVICTION.
- To train all levels of functionaries to provide the resource capacity to enable planning, implementation and monitoring of normative standards.
- To strengthen ECCE – Primary School linkages in both operational and programme terms.
- To undertake action research, and to assess the relative long-term impact of ECCE on the development of children.
- To ensure that learning needs of all children are met through equitable opportunity for appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
- To eliminate gender disparities and achieve gender equality and sensitivity.
- To improve all aspects of the quality of education, and to facilitate recognized and measurable learning outcomes for all especially readiness for literacy, numeric and essential life skills.

X. References

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