REGIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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SCHOOL READINESS OF CHILDREN FROM SCHEDULED TRIBE COMMUNITIES

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School Readiness of Children from Scheduled Tribe Communities

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ABBREVIATIONS

AWCs	Anganwadi Centers
AWWs	Anganwadi Workers
CSG	Civil Social Group
CSWB	Central Social Welfare Board
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DWCD	Department of Women and Child Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA	Education For All
GOI	Government of India
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
NCERT	National Council of Education Research and Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NIPCCD	National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development
NPE	National Policy on Education
NTT	Nursery Teachers Training
NUEPA	National University of Educational Planning and Administration
POA	Programme of Action
RPM	Raven's Progressive Matrices
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SSA	Sarva Sisksha Abhiyan
TTCT	Torrance Test of Creative Thinking
TLM	Teaching Learning Material
UEE	Universalisation of Elementary Education
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The early six to eight years of child's life are regarded to be the most critical years for lifelong development as the pace of development during these years is extremely rapid. So the National Policy on Education (1986) recognized the importance of early childhood care and education (ECCE) and suggested to make ECCE programmes child oriented with a focus around play and individuality of the child. The present study was conducted in Koraput district of Odisha with the following objectives. (1)To analyze school readiness of children from the scheduled tribe community in terms of physical, social, emotional and cognitive (language and arithmetic) dimensions(2)To examine gaps in school readiness of children in general and also with specific reference to gender and disability (3)To identify contextual interventions with a view to prepare children for formal schooling

The survey and case study procedure, under descriptive research, was used for carrying out the study. The main purpose of the study is to assess school readiness of children belonging to the Scheduled Tribe (ST) community of KBK districts of Odisha in terms of physical, social, emotional and cognitive (language and arithmetic) competencies. *Inter alia,* the study seeks to assess the perceptions of the primary school teachers, Anganwadi workers, parents concerned on school readiness of the children belonging to from the Scheduled Tribe communities as well as to assess the school readiness of the Scheduled Tribe children.Out of three KBK districts, one district i.e., Koraput was selected purposively for the study with reference to developmental patterns and diversity in socio-cultural aspects representing different scheduled tribe communities. Three out of 14 blocks of Koraput such as: Koraput, Similiguda and Baipariguda were selected randomly for the study. From among total 297 Anganwadi Centers in these blocks, 30 were selected randomly, 10 from each block, for the purpose. However, 30 Anganwadi Workers working in these centers were selected as informants. Besides, 28 teachers belonging to neighborhood primary schools, 152 children, and 38 parents of children concerned were selected randomly. The detail of sample distribution is as following:

The tools used for data collection for the study comprised observation schedules, interview schedules and assessment test. The informants in the study were Anganwadi workers, primary school teachers and parents. Besides, Anganwadi centers were observed along with activities of the children at such centers. The validity (credibility) and reliability (dependability) of the tools and the data were established through piloting. The data collection was done by the field investigators personally visiting to all the Anganwadi centers, Schools, Teachers, Parents selected for the study from 3 blocks of Koraput district of Odisha . Interviews were conducted with teachers, parents and Anganwadi workers through pre-developed schedules. Anganwadi centers and the activities were observed with

the help of observation schedules. School readiness of the children was assessed through the reading readiness assessment test and scores were marked for each domain on the basis of the performance of the children. The data collected through the tools such as observation schedules, interview schedules and readiness assessment test pertaining to the objectives of the study were analysed quantitatively by using percentage analysis technique as well as qualitatively with thick description.

Enrolment of ST Children in ECCE Centres under Study

Enrolment trend presents a very good picture with regard to the enrolment position of ST and girl children. The enrolment position of ST children is around 70% of total enrolment in the past five years. In the year 2013 -14 & 2014-15 the girls enrolment was 53 % in both the admission sessions where as the boys enrolment was 49 % and 48 % respectively. The number of children with special needs record shows 0-2 in the past five years. However the number of children with special needs in the locale is not known to ascertain whether they remain out of school. This needs further investigation. Children with special needs among the tribal population are observed to be the lowest in the age group of 5-49 compared to other social groups (Census 2011)

Infrastructural Facilities at the Pre-School

- There are 64% of the centres functioning in the rooms provided in the schools. Only one centre is running in the own building of the centre. The rest of the centres are functioning in the corridor of a community Members house, Rooms provided by the Community Members and corridor of the school (11% each)
- Around 86% of the centres have easy access to road and connected well to the main roads and it is easy and safe for the children. Only one centre has difficulty for children to access and 3 centres are unsafe for small children with regard to access.
- Two AWCs have more than 2 rooms for play activities of the children and 89% of AWCs have 1 room for the play of the children. In 32 % of centres where clean drinking water facilities are not available in the centre for the children. Regarding the sources of drinking water 85 % of centres provide water to the children from public tap where as 2% of centres use the water from hand pump as well as common well for the drinking of children.
- There are 68% of Anganwadi centres where toilets are not available for the children. Out of the available toilets of the centres 34 % of toilets are not functional and not clean and hygienic for the children. This finding paints a grim picture as toilet facilities are necessary for maintaining healthy habit and this has to be developed in the young age. If these facilities are not available children grow up believing that it is alright to use the open space for that purpose and develop that habit. Authorities have to

consider this as major lapse in the programme and take immediate corrective steps to facilitate the formation of healthy habit in the young age.

- For the all-round development during the growing age, play occupies an important place in the daily routine of the small children. In all the centres where the outdoor equipments like swings, slides, sea-saw and water play are not available for the children. Only Rubber rings and balls are available in 78 and 71 percentages of the centres respectively. Gross motor development precedes the fine motor development which is one of the readiness skills. If outdoor play equipments are not provided, it is affecting the child's natural development process. Neither we allow them to be in their natural environment where they climb trees and swing in branches nor provide such a situation in the pre-school centres. In a way we are curbing or creating a hurdle in their natural motor development.
- In half of the sampled centres children sit in the mat where as in the rest 50% of the centres do not have even mat for the children. With regard to the toys and pictures 23% of centres have that facility for the children, out of that again 9 % of the centres don't use pictures for the children. Similarly 71% of centres have flash cards and masks out of that 25% of centres don't use flash cards and 70 % of them don't use masks for the children in the classroom. With regard to Carom Board and Musical instruments 85% of centres don't have this equipment in the centres. TV and Videos are not available in any of the centres studied under this project.
- 96% of the centres don't have first aid kit as well as height measuring scale, though both these equipments are highly necessary for the pre-school children. Children with special needs are found to be very less in the centres (1 and 2 per 500 to 600 children). It is not investigated further to know whether they are not admitted to AWs, or their number is less in the region. As per census 2011, children with special needs among the tribal population are lowest in the age group of 5-19 compared to other social groups (Census 2011)
- Toilets, outdoor games are the barest minimum to be provided for young children which is found to be absent in most of the centres. Bare minimum, a mat to sit in the room is also not found in many centres. Absence of greenery is also a cause for concern, as the location of study is a forest belt with several schedule tribes living. As noticed in the study, some of the centres have all the facilities and the same should be available for all the children with minimum facilities.

Findings related to Relevance/ Significance of Pre-School Education

- Pre-school education imparts fundamental concepts in language, arithmetic and environmental science as perceived by half (50%) of the teachers. Nearly half (42.85%) reported that pre-school education makes acquainted with school structure and system so that the children would not feel isolated at primary school or they would not find any difficulty in primary school. Besides, 28.57% of teachers reported that pre-school

education aware of daily chores and health hygiene which were treated as basic to healthy children. Only 14.28% of teachers perceived that self-dependency among children were developed through pre-school education.

- The major objective of pre-school being transition from home to school, it is found that AWWs are well aware of their responsibilities.
- All the teachers (100%) perceived pre-school as important for Scheduled Tribe children because language developments like identifying letters, reading, writing them; creation of interest and motivation for school education; removal of fear from going to school; and providing equal opportunity to ST children were the justified reasons.
- Perceptions on usefulness of pre-school education of the parents whose children were getting pre-school education were multi-faceted. Healthy food, getting a chance to learn something, keeping children occupied and out of mischief, developing basic discipline like learn how to sit in a group with other children, get prepared for primary school are the reasons given by many parents.

Findings related to Functioning of Pre-School

- Under physical & motor development indoor activities like, singing and dancing activities for physical & motor development area are conducted as per all the AWWs (93.33%); playing games with toys and playing imaginary games reported by one-tenth of total AWWs; and toy making through clay is negligibly conducted. Outdoor activities, for physical and motor development, like ball and ring game is mostly organised as perceived by 80.00% of Anganwadi workers; organisation of individual & group activities reported by 33.33 %; and only 6.67% of AWWs reported about organisation of indigenous activity in the AWCs.
- Under language development,indoor activities such as picture reading & reciting names of flower, fruits, vegetables, plant, animal & birds and telling story & singing song are organised as perceived by 90 % and 10% of AWWs respectively. Outdoor activities such as field visit and visit to local market are arranged by 70% and 13.33% of AWWs respectively.
- For socio-emotional development, children are familiarized with important offices, and taught how greet elders & fiends as perceived by 43.33% of the AWWs. Besides, the children are taken to local market to know the life style, people, behaviours, culture as perceived by three-fourth of AWWs.
- Playing with clay is negligibly organised. Outdoor activities include making home with sand perceived by 40%, and craftwork is organised as perceived by 16.67% of AWWs. Playing with clay, sand and involving in other craft related activities are useful during early childhood period. It is crucial in sensory motor development which leads to higher cognitive development. Experiences in such outdoor activities have to be given greater importance for children from tribal community as they naturally live close to nature. As a

beginning stage into school, it is necessary to conducted context specific games but it is observed that such activities are organised by least number of centres.

- The sources of play materials which used for activity session in Anganwadi centres are self-made, and provided by organisation as reported by 40% and 70% of AWWs receptively. Some play materials are collected by teachers perceived by 23.33% of AWWs.
- Age-wise conduction of activities were organised sometime as reported by half of AWWs. One-fourth of AWWs reported that activities were organised age-wise. Even activities were not conducted referred to age of children as reported by one-fourth of AWWs. Learning materials were used on the basis of interest of some children as reported by 56.66% of AWWs.
- AWWs plan on daily basis for their activities as reported by almost all the AWWs.
- Community support / parental support to run the AWCs is mainly through people in the surrounding as reported by 60% of AWWs. Material support from the community/parents is negligible which was reported by only 3.33% of AWWs. Material support from the community/parents is negligible which was reported by only 3.33% of AWWS. Financial support is not received by the community and it is justifiable knowing the background of people living in the location. The fact that people are involving in the programme itself is encouraging, and that is the main support expected from the community towards education of its children.
- Out of 30 Anganwadi centres under study, 2 centres are having children with disabilities one each. One is of speech impairment & other is of intellectual disability. However, it was found that they were very irregular in terms of attendance. When they came for school the other children were reluctant to mingle and on the contrary they were laughed at. It was difficult to manage the child with intellectual disability in the class. They could not be given the test on school readiness. As revealed from the table 4.10, AWWs paid more attention so that child would get conducive environment to built rapport with other children. Still it is noticed that they do not attend the centre regularly. Community awareness and parental education have to be undertaken to develop sensitivity towards the importance of education and provisions available for them in schools to support their education.
- Dramatization approach was followed to teach simple to complex concept and the activities such as collection specimens like flower, plant etc. were organised. They prepared learning materials from coconut waste, bamboo & ice-cream stick for the purpose. For creating awareness for health & hygiene, play-method was adopted by using mobile for song and dance.
- The efficiency as reported on organisation of different curricular activities in a rating scale, is observed to be very efficiently by 10%, efficiently by 30%, somewhat efficiently by 40% and not very efficiently by 20% of AWWs. It was evident that the AWWs were efficiently organising the activities. They were handling the children very sensitively and somewhat sensitively as reported by half of the AWWs .Besides, only

10% reported as not very sensitively. However it is crucial to note here that handling children at this stage has an impact in their future development. So it would be necessary to provide certain guidance on importance and ways of dealing with situation appropriately.

- Almost all (96.42%) the teachers reported that there was strong linkage of school education with pre-school education. They celebrate independence & republic day together, some administrative supports were provided during admission of children in pre-school centres. In some cases, AWCs and primary schools function in same building. AWWS visit primary schools for academic and non-academic assistance. This indicates a strong linkage between school and preschool.
- Attendance of pre-school children is taken and maintained on daily basis as per 81.57% of parents. As per majority of parents the quality of food provided to the children was good (84.21%) and some parents (13.15%) reported as food given is not good.
- The activities performed by pre-school children such as eating food and playing games is undertaken regularly as reported by all the parents. Children were singing and reciting rhymes, songs and poems reported by half of the parents (47.36%); listening to stories reported by 55.26% of parents; playing with toys/puzzles/beads available at the centre reported by 36.84% of parents; Writes/works on worksheets and Learns to read and write reported by one-fourth of parents.
- More than 90% of parents reported that health check-up was done. Only one parent reported as health check up was not done. Two parents were not aware of such activity.
- One-fourth of teachers reported as very few children were happy in AWCs. Forty percent of teachers reported some children were happy; 32.14% of teachers reported most of the children were happy in AWCs. Regarding neatness of children, 35.71% of teachers reported some children had learnt neatness; same percentage of teachers reported most of the children learnt neatness; 17.85% of teachers reported very few children were found to be neat.
- They were enjoying in doing all these activities for the children as reported 85% in mostly and somewhat. It was found that AWWs did enjoy while organize the activities. The response to the question 'Was the worker attending to all children?' was reported through observation that a mixed status of attending to the children in Anganwadicentres. Equal percentage (28.57%) of AWWs were attending AWWs were attending 'Only 1 or 2' , 'A few children' , and 'all children'. Besides, it was olaos observed 14.28% AWWs were not attending to all children. It was evident from the above AWWs taking care of the children for their neatness, happiness and academic development. It is evident from the above that majority of AWWs are taking care of the children for their neatness, happiness and academic development. Though negligible, there are some centers where this factor is missing which has to be probed further to bring in the best from the young children attending preschool. This

needs to be investigated further to see if it can be improved as per the need of parents.

- Timetable was available and activities were conducted as per the time table prepared for the centre as observed in 78.57% of cases. Timetable was neither available nor the activities were conducted on the basis of any schedule in 21.43% of cases. The basic displays to be maintained like timetable and activity chart were also not found in all the centres observed. Picture charts and other relevant displays materials are very essential for development of reading readiness. It is to be ensured that all centres do these minimum to create a climate of learning without any reason. Besides, it was observed some kind of displays on the walls in the centres such as art, picture, habits, and cultural content to create a homely and cultural responsive environment is present in only half of the samples taken. Such displays were installed at the eye-level of children in fifty percent of the centres; and were mainly the works done by the children. In rest of the centres such activities were not observed.

Issues and Challenges of Pre-School Education as perceived by the Parents and AWWs

- From among the total parents, only 13.15% parents reported on irregularity of AWW as a cause. The child lacked interest to go AWCs as reported by 5.26% of parents. Only 2.65% reported as quality of Anganwadi education was not good. Three causes, mainly, were identified such as regularity of AWWs, interest aspect of the child and quality of Anganwadi education. Regularity of AWW is seen to be the reason as per many parents for not sending their children to the centre. It is to be reminded here that in rural areas as both parents go out to work, they look for the AWW to take the child to the centre daily which is a immense responsibility. As per the response of the AWW the absence is due to official visits to collect materials, attend meetings and related issues. It has to be taken into account that AWW during the working time should not be disturbed for other responsibilities which may hamper the child's attending to the centre regularly which in turn is seen as a major deterrent to enrolment/premature dropout from elementary stage of education.
- Distance of AWCs from the residence was within 1 km as reported by 56.66% of AWWs. One-third of AWWs reported the distance as more than 3 km, 10% as 2-3 km. Distance is an issue for facing difficulties in coming to AWCs. Although, more than fifty percent AWWs were staying within 1 km from centres. Other difficulties as reported by AWWs as were additional responsibility assigned to them from time to time and transportation problem faced in coming to centre.
- Irregular attendance of children was the main problem as reported by 33.33% AWWs. Language barrier, lack of encouragement for them, additional responsibility other than scheduled and lack of resources in the centre were reported by 23.33%, 20%, 13.33% and 10% of AWWs respectively. Other factors such as personal problem, accessibility to

the centre were also reported by nearly 5% AWWs. Other difficulties as reported by AWWs as were additional responsibility assigned to them from time to time and transportation problem faced in coming to centre. The findings form table 4.23 and 4.24 clearly gives direction to the authorities to make small changes in their routine so that this huge challenge could be addressed easily. It is to be taken to cognisance that irregularity to preschool centre is an issue which may continue to the cycle of elementary education which may be a huge barrier to reach the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education. Effort has to be concentrated from all the agencies working towards this direction at this level itself through community awareness and building confidence among parents regarding the system of education.

School Readiness of Children

- Maximum number of children, up to 67.5% have performed at an average level and almost equal number, around 16% of children fall both under above average and below average category. This suggests that 86% of children are prepared for school as per the items measured in the test used in the present study. The remaining 16% of children will have to be observed for specific skills to be developed before leaving preschool centre. The scores were further grouped under language, arithmetic and environment related items and it is seen that language related and environment related tasks are performed better by the students and arithmetic related tasks are found to be difficult for maximum number of children. But the distribution in average, above and below average scores of children on arithmetic related tasks are showing an unusual trend with maximum children showing above average performance followed by below average and few children showing average performance. This needs to be investigated further to ascertain the cause for this kind of a distribution.
- The scores were further grouped under language, arithmetic and environment related and it is seen that language related and environment related tasks are performed better by the students and arithmetic related tasks are found to be difficult for maximum number of children. But the distribution in average, above and below average scores of children on arithmetic related tasks are showing an unusual trend with maximum children showing above average performance followed by below average and few children showing average performance. This needs to be investigated further to ascertain the cause for this kind of a distribution.
- In the language related items, maximum number of children are seen to be performing at below average level in story telling and recitation, which calls for attention of teachers to give more importance to this area in preschool. Story and rhyme is found to be important activities to develop listening and expression skills. Identifying pictures with sound and describing picture along with following instruction are seen to be performed well by many children. In the language related items, maximum number of children are seen to be performing at below average level in storytelling and recitation, which calls for attention of

teachers to give more importance to this area in preschool. Story and rhyme is found to be important activities to develop listening and expression skills. Identifying pictures with sound and describing picture along with following instruction are seen to be performed well by many children.

- The performance of children under the environment related knowledge is seen to be distributed among all the three categories evenly. As the classification items were for fruits and vegetables, it is shown under environmental science. Spatial items are also related to the surrounding of living and hence it is clubbed under the environmental science. However, these skills are very closely related to arithmetic readiness also. The concept of more and less is seen to be mastered by maximum number of children whereas sequencing is found to be difficult to many children. However, it could be noticed that many children have performed this item at an above average level . The performance of children under the environment related knowledge are seen to be distributed among all the three categories evenly. As the classification items were for fruits and vegetables, it is shown under environmental science. Spatial items are also related to the surrounding of living and hence it is clubbed under the environmental science. However, these skills are very closely related to arithmetic readiness also. As it is found that still many children are seen to be performing at below average level, measures can be taken by the AWCs to include activities which would develop these skills. As mentioned earlier, these are pre requisite skills for arithmetic which is crucial at the elementary stage to be picking up arithmetic concepts.
- From the qualitative analysis it was evident that without any exception all the teachers expressed that there exists difference among children coming to primary school with and without preschool experience.
- All the teachers said children will not have any fear to come to school and they have some exposure into formal schooling and know some games, songs and dance. In addition help seeking behaviour, taking food independently and appropriate behaviour are also were noticed by teachers as readiness acquired due to preschool exposure.
- Based on the response of parents the following categories were made as activities catering to cognitive development, social development and language development.
- All the activities under the three major domains taken in the study to assess school readiness, physical, cognitive and soical were found to be covered in the preschool centres. However, cognitive and social development activities are observed to be given more importance. Some language related activities like writing names is seen to be endorsed by least number of parents. It may be pertinent to mention here that formal reading writing (language) related activities are not coming under the objective of preschool experience.
- All the listed behaviours relating to the school readiness were present among children observed in the preschool centres. But maximum number of children were found to be at the 'not at all' category, which indicates that many are yet to pick up the skills. The positive trend is seen with many children exhibiting the expected behaviour 'almost always'. This

suggests that the readiness skills are being picked up and moving towards a fully formed behaviour.

- Without any exception all the teachers expressed that there exists difference among children coming to primary school with and without preschool experience in their readiness. As indicated in the table above, all the teachers said children will not have any fear to come to school and they have some exposure into formal schooling and know some games, songs and dance. In addition help seeking behaviour, taking food independently and appropriate behaviour are also were noticed by teachers as readiness acquired due to preschool exposure.
- However, cognitive and social development activities are observed to be given more importance. Some language related activities like writing names is seen to be endorsed by least number of parents. It may be pertinent to mention here that formal reading writing (language) related activities are not coming under the objective of preschool experience. In the earlier analysis of performance of children under the language related items it is noticed that the performance was poorer compared to arithmetic and environment related items in the school readiness assessment test. Thus it can be concluded that activities to develop language competencies are not sufficient in the AWs in the location taken for study.
- Maximum number of children were found to be at the 'not at all' category, which indicates that many are yet to pick up the skills. The reason for this may be the time spent observing children for the purpose is limited and the behaviour under focus may not have been exhibited by the child due to lack of opportunity during the period under observation. The positive trend is seen with many children exhibiting the expected behaviour 'almost always'. This suggests that the readiness skills are being picked up and not fully formed among all the children.

CONCLUSION

Early childhood care education (ECCE) is a critical input for child development. While in long term perspective, it serves to provide a sound foundation for all round development of the child, it has also proved to be an effective input for primary schooling. For achieving universalization of elementary education the school readiness of children needs to be enhanced. As evident from the study the facilities like out door in ECCE Canters need to be developed. The children face problem in listening probably due to language problems and this need to be addressed. In the language related items, maximum number of children are seen to be performing at below average level in storytelling and recitation, which calls for attention of teachers to give more importance to this area in preschool. Story and rhyme is one of the important activities to develop listening and expression skills. It would be appropriate to collate the local specific games, songs and stories, publish it in audio and video forms and made available in pre-schools as per the language requirement. As found during profiling the District, songs and dances are performed as an indispensable part of

all individual and communal functions and festivals of the tribal community of Koraput. They enjoy different forms of singing and dancing all the year round. They observe festivals like Pus Parab and Chait Parab with pomp and ceremony, each for a couple of days. They can be linked to the daily routine of the pre-school in the location. Dance, song and music are a characteristic feature of the tribals. Their inborn talent finds expression in dances and songs like Dhemsa Nacha, Dundunga Nacha, Laga Gita etc. This may well knit into the pre-school education to make it more significant. The tribal life in the region is very colourful with simple forms of enjoyment woven in their daily life. A pre-school has to be a bit of home and culture especially for communities who have a closed life like the tribals. Community resource may be utilised for this purpose, by inviting aged members to sing, dance and prepare materials from the waste resource available abundantly. The ritualistic and ordinary ambience of pre-school will not attract a tribal child. It is high time pre-school in the tribal region become vibrant to reflect the culture of the soil and develop school readiness especially to take up formal education.

Chapter-I

INTRODUCTION

1.0. INTRODUCTION

The early six to eight years of child's life are regarded to be the most critical years for lifelong development as the pace of development during these years is extremely rapid. So the National Policy on Education (1986) recognized the importance of early childhood care and education (ECCE) and suggested to make ECCE programmes child oriented with a focus around play and individuality of the child. The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE Act), 2009 which came into effect from April 1, 2010 has addressed ECCE under section-11 of the act which states: "with a view to prepare children above the age of three years for elementary education and to provide early child hood care and education for children until they complete the age of six years, the appropriate government may make necessary arrangements for providing free pre-school education for such children". Quality ECCE programme provides for the school readiness activities which help children in making smooth transition to elementary schools. Children have diverse needs and they come from different cultural, linguistic and social backgrounds. This results in children participating in early child hood environments differently. Children's access to quality early childhood education programmes which address issues of equity and social justice is crucial for maximising children's participation in the learning experiences. The Position Paper on ECE developed by NCERT has discussed the issue of sharp contrast in quality between the services available to different segments of the population, divided along the lines of urban–rural and rich–poor, and discriminating against various groups such as the Dalits, the tribals, isolated communities, socially marginalised groups, the disabled, etc.(NCERT,2006).

1.1. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION: POLICY AND PERSPECTIVES

Recognising the importance of ECCE and play for all-round development of children, curriculum in ECCE needs to be play and activity based. Various committees and commissions along with policy documents have recommended child-friendly, need based and age appropriate curriculum. The Education Commission (1964-66) had recommended activity-oriented and play-way curriculum, including play activities, physical activities, group activities, physical training, including simple exercises and dance, manual activities, sensorial education, handwork and artistic activities, including finger skills, drawing, painting, music, personal hygiene, self-service etc. The spirit of the recommendations lies in providing informal, activity-rich and interesting learning experience for the children.

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 considered ECCE as a "feeder and support programme for primary education; a support service for working women". It emphasised that the programmes of ECCE need to be child-oriented, focused around play and the individuality of the child. Formal methods and introduction of the 3 R's (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) need to be discouraged at this stage. The local community should be fully involved in these programmes. A full integration of child care and pre-primary education needs to be brought about, both as a feeder and a strengthening factor for primary education and for human resource development in general. In continuation of this stage, the School Health Programme needs to be strengthened.

Minimum Specifications for Pre-schools (NCERT, 1996), a booklet, on the issue of curriculum and content, states, "The content of any programme is necessarily determined by its objectives. An ECCE programme should also therefore be consistent with the objectives specified for preschool education". The document further states:

- The preschool programme should be holistic in nature. It should include components of Health, Nutrition and Early Childhood Education (ECE).
- The preschool should, therefore, provide for regular medical check-up of children and provide follow-up and referral services where necessary, snack time, daily provision of supplementary nutrition in accordance with the nutritional status of children to which the preschool is catering, and
- Growth monitoring through maintenance of height and weight records on monthly/bi-monthly basis.
- The ECCE curriculum should be child-centred and development and process oriented. Play activities should be planned in ways that would expose children to a variety of experiences which will enable them to feel secure and happy, develop their large and fine muscles, promote their language and cognitive skills, foster creativity in them and enhance their social and emotional development.
- The daily activities should be planned according to the age and developmental level of the children. There should be a flexible balance of activities for all aspects of development as well as a balance between individual and group activities, indoor and outdoor activities, vigorous and quiet activities, and guided and free activities.
- The methodology for preschool programme should be play and activity oriented, and there should be no formal teaching of the 3 Rs. A record of the children's work should be maintained.
- Evaluation of children should be continuous and comprehensive. It should be informal through systematic observation of children's play and other activities, such as through work sheets, quiz, games, etc. There should be no formal tests and examinations at this stage.

- Frequent parent contact activities, for example, home visits, meetings, etc. should form a vital part of the preschool programme. These should focus upon eliciting parental involvement in order to develop awareness in them regarding the preschool programme and facilitate smooth running of it.
- Medium of communication should be the mother tongue/regional language; there should be a link between mother tongue and dominant language of the region.

Yashpal Committee, in its report titled Learning without Burden (1997) observes that 'deeply harmful practices in preschools and primary schools, such as early emphasis on shapely drawing, writing and memorising information' result in a lot of stress and anxiety for the children. The report states, "A curriculum policy that takes away the elements of joy and inquiry from learning obviously contributes to the rate at which children leave school in the early years". The report further states that:

- It should be ensured that institutions do not perpetrate violence on young children by inflicting a heavy dose of 'over-education' in the form of formal teaching of Reading,
- Writing and Numbers.
- The practice of holding tests and interviews for admission to nursery class is abolished.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005 describes the early childhood stage as the most critical period when foundations are laid for lifelong development and realisation of the child's full potential. The NCF recommends that:

- To promote children's learning in the early years, efforts must be directed by each child's interests and priorities, be flexible and not structured formally and within an enabling this group of children should be developmentally appropriate and be realised through play-way, activity-based methodology. Caution should be taken against pressurising children into the learning of 3Rs and early introduction of formal learning.
- Assessment practices commonly observed also add to the pressure on the young child. According to the NCF, "At this stage, assessment must be purely qualitative judgements of children's activities in various domains and an assessment of the status of their health and physical development, based on observations through everyday interactions. On no account, should they be made to take any form of test, oral or written". *(Page 76, NCF-2005)*.
- To provide ECCE of equitable quality to all children, it is essential to address five basic dimensions namely: developmentally appropriate curriculum, trained and adequately rewarded teachers, appropriate teacher-child ratio and group size, infrastructure supportive of children's needs and an encouraging style of supervision. All pedagogic efforts during the primary classes greatly depend on professional planning and the significant expansion of ECCE.

The NCF, 2005 Focus Group Position Paper on ECCE has highlighted a number of critical issues, such as societal divides that influence equity, access and quality of ECCE programme and practices. Surveys conducted by the NCERT in all the major cities indicate that children as young as 3 to 4 years old at the preschool stage are being taught the syllabus prescribed not only for Class I but even for Class II, for which they are neither cognitively nor physically mature enough.

- Testing the child for any reason, results in pressure, tension, and anxiety for both parents and children, and has harmful effects on children.
- The problem of early start in structured learning inmost ECCE programmes today is merely a downward extension of primary education. The heavy curriculum exposes children to very structured and rote learning at an age when they are not developmentally ready for it. *(Page 18, Position Paper-National Focus Group on Early Childhood Education)*.
- All these issues need to be carefully addressed while planning and implementing the ECCE curriculum.

The National Policy on ECCE formulated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), 2013 envisages age and developmentally appropriate ECCE curriculum framework. For providing a quality ECCE curriculum the policy states that:

- Provision for safe, child-friendly and developmentally appropriate play and learning materials and appropriate play spaces by appropriate instruments and instructions, use of traditional songs, stories, lullabies, folk tales, local toys and games as play and learning material will be made.
- The mother tongue/home language/local vernacular of the child will be the primary language of interaction in the ECCE programmes. However, given the young child's ability at this age to learn many languages, exposure to other languages in the region and English, as required, in oral form, will be encouraged in a meaningful manner. A multilingual strategy will be adopted respecting the children's language and, at the same time, using the plasticity of the early years to expose the child to many languages.
- Formative and continuous child assessment will be conducted at the ECCE centre in order to ensure that the ECCE programme is responsive to the developmental needs of the child.
- An enabling and loving environment devoid of corporal punishment will be ensured.
- Modern technology, including ICT potential will be optimally and appropriately harnessed to promote developmental and learning needs of children and also for monitoring, evaluation, capacity building and training.
- Programme evaluation of all ECCE service provisions adopting consistent assessment criteria and methodologies as per quality norms relating *inter alia* to building and infrastructure; pupil-teacher interaction; learning experiences planned for children; health, nutrition and protection measures; qualification and professional development of staff; parent and community involvement and organisation and management of the ECCE provision, including fee-related matters will be done. A regulatory framework must be developed to ensure basic quality inputs and outcomes.

The National ECCE Curriculum Framework (NECCECF) ,2013 was developed by the MWCD after formulation of the National ECCE Policy 2013. It mentions that the ECCE curriculum must address the following interrelated domains of holistic development through an integrated and play based approach which focuses on development of life skills. It has outlined the different domains of development as:

- ***Sensory and Perceptual Development:*** Development of the five senses through visual, auditory and kinaesthetic experiences.
- ***Physical, Health and Motor Development:*** Gross motor skills; coordination of fine muscles with dexterity; eye-hand coordination; sense of balance, physical co-ordination, and awareness of space and direction; nutrition, health status and practices.
- ***Language Development:*** Listening and comprehension; oral skills/speaking and communicating; vocabulary development; pre-literacy/emergent literacy skills like phonological awareness; print awareness and concepts; letter-sound correspondence; recognition of letters; building words and sentences and early writing and introduction to language of school transaction.
- ***Cognitive Development:*** Development of various concepts, including pre-number and number concepts and operations (knowledge and skills related to comparing, classification,seriation, conservation of space and quantity, one-to-one correspondence, counting); spatial sense; patterns and estimations in measurement; data handling; skills related to sequential thinking, critical thinking, observing, reasoning and problem solving; and knowledge of concepts related to the physical, social and natural environment.
- ***Development of Creative and Aesthetic Appreciation:*** Exploring different art forms, developing dispositions, expression and appreciation for artistic, dance/ drama and musical activities.
- ***Personal, Social and Emotional Development:*** Development of self-concept; self-control; life skills/ self-help skills; habit formation; initiative and curiosity; engagement and persistence; cooperation; compassion; social relationships; group interaction; pro-social behaviour; expressing feelings, accepting others' feelings.

1.2 SCHOOL READINESS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

School readiness has been based on the assumption that there is a predetermined set of skills and abilities that all children need before entering primary school. Most specifically in India, it is assumed that children entering primary schools would have achieved the basics of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (commonly known as 3R's). A large number of children in our country are first generation learners and come to school without social, academic or language readiness (Govt. of India, 2013).What we expect children to know and do before entering school will be guided by three basic factors:

- the diversity of children's early life experiences as well as inequity in experiences;
- the wide variation in young children's development and learning; and

- the degree to which school expectations of children entering preschool are reasonable, appropriate, and supportive of individual differences.

Children are not innately ready or not ready for school. Their skills and development are strongly influenced by their families and through their interactions with other people and environments before coming to school. Children, schools and families are
Considered ready when they have gained the competencies and skills required to interface with the other dimensions, and support smooth transitions of children from home to ECCE centre and, subsequently to primary school. The concept of readiness includes much more than children's readiness. School readiness is currently defined by three interlinked dimensions: (a) ready children; (b) ready schools; and (c) ready families and communities.

Table 1.1 Dimensions of School Readiness

Ready Children	Ready Schools	Ready Families and Communities
• Children are eager to learn, thereby enabling a smooth transition to a primary school environment. • Children learn in their mother tongue/first language as a prelude to and complement bilingual and multilingual education. • Children who enter school without having mastered specific skills or little or no ECCE experiences, primary curriculum should include child-initiated as well as teacher supported activities, and should emphasise hands-on, integrated learning to boost their school readiness. • Children develop readiness for reading, writing and numeracy. Reading readiness is developing familiarity with print material, developing vocabulary and ability to handle books. • Writing readiness involves fine motor development, understanding directionality and finding meaning in writing. • Number readiness includes pre-number concept, categorisation, classification, sequential thinking, seriation, problem-solving and reasoning (shapes, colours).	• Children have access and opportunity to develop their Behaviours and abilities across all domains of development. • Schools accept that children learn at a different pace. • Schools may be transformed to accept and accommodate different kinds of learners. • Effective preschool-primary programmes meet children where they are and take extra care to help make meaningful connections with each child's home, culture and community. • Curriculum in preschool and the early grades builds on prior learning, and the skills that children learn and practice are embedded in meaningful experiences. • Ensure smooth transition from ECCE to primary school through different strategies (such as training ECCE and primary school educators together, integrated curricula and options that bridge ECCE programmes with primary schools). • Teachers must know how to teach young children and have the resources to do SO.	• Supportive parenting and stimulating home environment is one of the strongest predictors of school performance during primary years and beyond. In the ECCE programmes, home-based/ Centre-based stimulation for mother and child is imperative to bring in parental involvement, address their beliefs, attitudes and commitment. • Enable parents and family members to reading books, playing games, singing songs, narrate stories and converse with Children. • Ensure parental commitment to enrol their children at the right time for getting timely intervention. • Ensure the local community members who have a good understanding of the ECCE programme are involved in the Centre.All the above dimensions are equally important and must work together to ensure the transition is smooth for the child, from the Family to the school system.

Source: NECCECF,Govt of India(2013)

However the scope of the present study is limited to the first component of school readiness that is readiness of the children. The school readiness of children is studied from the perspective of physical, cognitive and socio-emotional domain.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

School Readiness Research

Factors that have been associated most consistently with children's cognitive and/or social-emotional preparedness for school are socioeconomic status (which often interacts with race or ethnicity); the child's health; family background characteristics, particularly the mother's education, single-parent status, and mental health; the home and community environment, including risk factors and literacy-related factors and participation in some type of preschool program (Boethel, 2004). Arnold (2004) in a study on positioning ECCD in the 21st century found that ECCE programmes can enhance physical wellbeing and motor development, social and emotional development, language development and basic cognitive skills. Such programmes can improve school readiness and make enrolment for the grade I more likely, reduce delayed enrolment, dropout and grade repetition and increase completion and achievement. The impact of these programmes is stronger for children from poor families in terms of lower dropouts and repetition rates than those for more advantaged children. ECE programmes can compensate for the priority that is given to boys in access to basic health care in some societies. Girls who participate in early childhood programmes are much more likely to begin school at the appropriate age and complete primary school than girls who do not.

Patel (1983) studied the development of reading readiness programme and its effect on reading readiness of the pupils of pre-primary school. In order to study the impact of the reading readiness programme, a criterion referenced list of reading ted to readiness was constructed to measure concept formation, visual discrimination, auditory discrimination, knowledge of alphabets, acquisition of vocabulary, associating meanings with printed symbols and copying simple figures. The reliability of the test was established by the test-retest method, split half method and K.R. formula 20 and 21. The RRP was prepared to develop the components of concept formation, knowledge of alphabets, vocabulary, visual discrimination and auditory discrimination. The experiment was carried out on 320 pupils of whom 160 were boys and 160 girls. A second group of 320 pupils of which 160 were boys and 160 girls was the control group. To draw conclusions a factorial design was developed. The findings of the study are (i) the reading readiness programme had a positive impact on the reading readiness scores of the pupils of experimental group; (ii) the children of the urban group were better in reading readiness than of the rural group; (iii) the children of the higher income group parents were superior in reading readiness to those of the lower income group; (iv) reading readiness appeared to be dependent on treatment as well as

parent's education; (v) reading readiness was also dependent on area (rural and urban) and parents' education; (vi) the development of reading readiness was dependent on treatment, parents' education, parents' education and sex of the pupils. Some educational implications from the study are: (i) the pupils coming from low income group should be administered a reading readiness programme; (ii) in order to minimize the occurrence of reading disability, wastage and stagnation in education, children seeking admission in class I should be administered RRP (iii) the poor readers in class I and II should be treated as disabled readers and a remedial programme in reading should be prepared and used.

Reading and writing readiness among children attending ICDS and non ICDS centres was studied by Sharma and Agarwal (1998). The findings of the study are that there was a significant difference in reading and writing skills of ICDS and non-ICDS group of children and there was significant difference in reading and writing skills of boys and girls in non ICDS group, whereas no sex difference was observed in reading and writing skills among ICDS group of children.Sharma, Vaid and Dhawan (2004) studied the parental concepts about the pre-school education. Findings of the study indicate that though parents consider early childhood education as important for development of child yet they are ignorant about the play way approach. They lay more emphasis on 3R's (reading, writing and arithmetic). Pre-school has emerged as a downward extension of formal system of education where teaching is aimed at learning skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. Parents report that pre-schools in which their children are studying consider play-way as good but lay emphasis on training in 3R's even as early as the child joins the school. Teaching aids and educational games are also used but not very frequently, as reported by the parents. Parents are generally satisfied with type of education being imparted to their children in the pre-schools, as they have no alternatives. A study was carried out in Haryana and Union Territory of Chandigarh by Singh and Chhikra (2005) to know the status of facilities available for socio-emotional development in pre-schools. The perusal of results indicated that activities for socio-emotional domain were conducted but not appropriately. Major differences were observed in activities like celebration on birthdays, National days, and availability of separate place for doll play etc. Pre School of Chandigarh provided more opportunities for activities related with socio-emotional domain.

Saikia (2010) studied the impact of pre-school on the language development of children between the ages of 3 to 6 years. The results revealed that percentages of achievement regarding different norms of language skills of school going boys are much more higher than those of non-school going boys; boys of 4½ years to 6 years age group have shown better results on both the cases – school going and non-school going; school going boys belonging to the age group of 3 to 4½ years have shown better results that those of non-school going boys the age group 4½ years to 6 years; it is found that the school going girls from both the age groups have shown much better achievement results than non-school going girls; girls belonging to the age group of 4½ years to 6 years have shown greater scores in both the cases-school going and non-school going; school going girls belonging to the age group of 3

years to 4½ years have shown better results than the non-school going girls belonging of 4½ years to 6 years age group; in most of the developmental tasks both school going boys and girls have shown similar results; it has been found that regarding the non-school going children, boys have shown slightly better results that girls in most of the developmental tasks; in case of 'general observation regarding speech', girls have shown slightly better results that boys.

Myers and Hertenberg (1987) conducted a study to re-examination Early Childhood Development Program and found that the value of early childhood programming went far beyond the children and extended to the caregivers and community as well. It was, therefore, important that early childhood programming should not restrict itself to children alone but also the family and community as a whole. There is also increasing evidence that since the needs of women and young children intersect, programming for one should not be done in isolation from the other. Myers (1988) showed by reviewing Latin American and Asian studies that early childhood provisions helped to address social equality issues. Early intervention programmes showed a positive effect on primary school enrolment, initial adjustment and on achievement in the early years of primary school.Harradine and Clifford (1996) compared the beliefs of parents of pre-schoolers, kindergarten teachers, and child care providers in North Carolina about the characteristics children should have upon entry to public school kindergarten. Surveys were administered state-wide through in-person or telephone interviews to 757 parents (half receiving public assistance), 575 kindergarten teachers, and 553 child care providers. Respondents were asked to select the 3 most important characteristics for children's kindergarten readiness from a list of 15 characteristics derived from the National Education Goals Panel. Results indicated that the three most important qualities identified by all groups were: (1) being healthy, well-nourished and well-rested; (2) being able to effectively communicate needs, wants, and thoughts; and (3) being enthusiastic and curious when approaching new activities. School-related skills such as knowing the alphabet, knowing shapes and colours, using pencils and paint brushes, counting, finishing tasks, and solving problems fell at or near the bottom of the rankings for all groups. Chi square tests of homogeneity indicated that families and child care providers ranked counting, knowing English, and knowing the alphabet significantly higher than kindergarten teachers. Providers put greater emphasis than the other groups on having good problem solving skills, being sensitive to others, and knowing colours and shapes. Teachers were more likely than the other groups to rate being enthusiastic, being able to communicate effectively, and being able to not disrupt the class as most important.

Brember and Davies (1997) examined the reading attainment level of a group of elementary students who had either experienced nursery, day care or no pre-school provision outside the home. Although the results of the study were inconclusive, they suggest positive reading attainment outcomes related to pre-school experience.Garner (2004) showed that those who spent three years or more in nursery education were 10 to 12 months ahead on average, compared with youngsters kept at home by parents until they started compulsory schooling at five. It showed that the longer the time spent in nursery education the better the

performance at school - so children who started nursery education at three were likely to be only four to six months ahead instead of 10 to 12.Aram (2005) examined continuity in literacy achievements from kindergarten to school, among low SES Israeli children, controlling for family factors. Kindergartens' early oral and code-related language skills as well as family measures were assessed at age 5½. In school, 2½ years later, their literacy achievements were evaluated. Correlations emerged between all kindergarten literacy measures and school literacy achievements. Oral and code-related early literacy measures similarly predicted all school literacy achievements. Moreover, early literacy predicted literacy achievements at the end of second grade beyond home environmental measures. Results highlighted the stability in children's learning through the kindergarten-to-school transition, confirming the importance of promoting early literacy in kindergarten, especially among low SES children.Ryan (2004) describes a natural experiment that occurred in South Australia in the 1980s on the effect of schooling on literacy and numeracy performance of school students in their middle years of secondary school. During the 1980s the Early Years of School policy changed the way in which a subset of students progressed through junior primary school by providing an additional year of schooling. Two waves of longitudinal data show that an additional year of junior primary school increased the numeracy and literacy performance in mid-secondary school significantly (by about half of a standard deviation). The benefits were the same for boys and girls and were the same for low and high school achievers. Barnett and Lamy (2006) estimated the effects of attending pre-school for one or two years on measures of early vocabulary development, literacy and math skills shortly after children entered kindergarten. For vocabulary growth it is found that 2 years of pre-school significantly increases children's vocabulary over scores for children who did not attend, but the effects of 1 year at age 4 are not statistically significant. For both print awareness skills and math skills were found statistically significant for children who attended for 1 or 2 years over children who did not attend. However, while children who attended pre-school for 2 years have slightly higher scores than children who attended only 1 year, those scores were not statistically significant.

Duncan et.al. (2007) using 6 longitudinal data sets, estimated links between three key elements of school readiness—school-entry academic, attention, and socio-emotional skills—and later school reading and math achievement. In an effort to isolate the effects of these school-entry skills, the authors ensured that most of their regression models control for cognitive, attention, and socio-emotional skills measured prior to school entry, as well as a host of family background measures. Across all 6 studies, the strongest predictors of later achievement are school-entry math, reading, and attention skills were analysed. A meta-analysis of the results shows that early math skills have the greatest predictive power, followed by reading and then attention skills. By contrast, measures of socio-emotional behaviours, including internalizing and externalizing problems and social skills, were generally insignificant predictors of later academic performance, even among children with

relatively high levels of problem behaviour. Patterns of association were similar for boys and girls and for children from high and low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Kariuki et al (2007) studied the effectiveness of early childhood education programme in preparing pre-school children in their social emotional competencies at the entry to primary one. It showed that majority of teachers felt that the Pre-school children were not as prepared in social –emotional skills as they were in academic skills. Analysis of variance results indicate significant variations in the perceptions of the pre-school staff on social-emotional importance Social-emotional preparedness and academic preparedness. The pre-school staff unanimously agreed that academic skills were important for pre-school children at primary one entry. It was recommended that readiness instruments for primary one entry should include both academic and social–emotional competencies.

Kiernan et al (2008) examined the multiple factors that contribute to the school readiness and early school progress of children living in an urban disadvantaged area. Findings indicated that while the majority of children were ready for school, over one-third evidenced difficulties in relation to their cognitive abilities and socio-emotional skills. Regression analyses indicated that factors predictive of school readiness included parental living situation, parenting skills and pre-school attendance. The factors cited as important in influencing children's subsequent school progress included children's characteristics, their home context, and school and neighbourhood environment.

Quality of Pre-school Education Programme

Rajalakshmi (1992) assessed the existing preschool education programme in Kerala. The major findings are: (i) 8% of nursery schools were recognized but not funded by the Government of Kerala. (ii) 50% of schools were conducted in temporary buildings. (iii) 80% did not have playgrounds. (iv) 60% of nursery teachers prepared some kind of materials. (v) The teacher-child ratio was 1:20. (vi) 96% of nursery schools used the Malayalam language as medium of instruction. vii) 64% of parents were involved in the activities of the nursery schools.

Srivastava and Singh (2006) studied on the present scenario of Early Childhood Education in Bhubaneswar. The major findings were: (i) 20% of ECE centres of Bhubaneswar fulfilled the NCERT norms regarding the catchment area. (ii) As precautionary measures 90% of ECE centres have school boundary. (iii) In 40% of ECE centres the classroom area for 30 children is more than 35 sq.mts. (iv) All ECE centres have toilet, 70% of centres have veranda and only 10% have food storage and cooking facility in addition to classrooms. (v) 80% of ECE centres display children work on classroom walls at children's level. (vi) Though 60% of centres provide aqua guard facility but mostly children use their own water bottle. (vii) All the ECE centres have Indian type toilet with regular water supply and 80% of them provide soap and towel as sanitary facility to children. (viii) Only 20% of ECE centres have outdoor play area of 300 to450 sq.mts. (ix) For outdoor play, 80% of ECE centres provide ball to children whereas other play materials are hardly found. The pre-school education (PSE) component of

ICDS does not get as much time and attention as it requires as the AWW is loaded with many other tasks to perform.Behera and Rath (2009) studied the quality of early childhood and found the poor status of ECE i.e. infrastructure and teaching learning process in government run ECE canters of Odisha. Lack of indoor and outdoor space, inadequate teaching learning materials, poor infrastructure facilities and less community participation are found to be some reasons for the poor status of the ECE centres studied.

Preschool Exposure and Cognitive Development

Mandke (1989) conducted a study to determine the effects of exposure to pre-school education on the learning abilities of pre-school children. The major findings are: (i) The non-school going children required varied language experiences though they were not poor in all aspects of language development. (ii) Non-school going children needed preparation to learn the formal school tasks.

Tripathy (1989) studied on effects of pre-school education on cognitive ability and academic achievements of pre-adolescents and adolescents with the objective to evaluate the long-term effect of formal pre-school education on the cognitive ability and academic achievements of pre-adolescents and adolescents. The sample consisted of 80 students divided into 4 subgroups on the basis of their age (pre-adolescents and adolescents) and pre-school experience (with and without). In each group 20 students were included. The tools used included Raven's Progressive Matrices and Digit Span (forward). The statistical techniques used were mean, standard deviations and ANOVA. The major findings are: (i) The pre-adolescents and adolescents with formal pre-school education were found to be better than the students without formal pre-school education. (ii) The mean scores of matrices showed that students with pre-school experience performed better than students without such experience in both the groups.

Asi (1989) conducted a study on young children and their learning readiness (with and without pre-primary education) The major findings were: (i) Parents from all walks of life was found to value pre-primary schooling for their children. (ii) The teachers considered pre-primary education a prerequisite to formal school entry. (iii) Pre-primary education contributed to a large extent to the personality development of the youngsters and hence equipped them for better adjustment in school.

Chandrika (1989) studied on the role of Anganwadi experience on the cognitive development of children. The major findings are: (i) there was no significant difference in the scores of CPM and WISC of children with Anganwadi experience and children without it. (ii) No significant difference in these scores of children whose mothers had a favourable attitude and those who had a negative attitude towards Anganwadi. (iii) Mothers' awareness or otherwise of the activities of the Anganwadis did not affect these scores. (iv) Mother's or father's level of education or type of family to which the child belonged did not have any significant effect on these score. (v) The income level of family did not have any significant

effect on these score. (vi) In the case of the WISC scores of group 2 children, the children of high income families obtained the highest scores and those from low income homes lowest scores.

Jachuk (1990) conducted a study on socio-economic status and time-related effects of pre-school education on cognitive abilities. The major findings of the study were: (i) in study I SES and pre-school education were found to have a positive impact on cognitive abilities. (ii) In study II, age and pre-school education had significant effect on cognitive abilities. Adolescent students performed significantly better than their pre-adolescent counterparts, irrespective of their schooling experience.Pattanaik(1991) studied on effects of pre-school education on cognitive development of primary school children with the objectives of studying the cognitive gains of pre-schooling and the differences between pre-schooled and non-pre-schooled children in Grades I through III in certain selected cognitive tasks. The major findings revealed a correlation between children's intelligence and storytelling.

Impact of Preschool Education on Primary Education

Kaul (1992) studied on the impact of Early Childhood Education on the retention in primary grades with the objective to assess the impact of ECE on the retention of children in primary grades. The sample was drawn from the primary schools located near the ECE centres in 8 states. The major findings are: (i) Children with ECE experience was found to have a better retention rate in comparison to children who had direct entry in the schools. The difference in percentage of the two groups was higher in favour of ECE children. (ii) The drop-out rate for the ECE group was less than that for the direct early children. (iii) The maximum drop-out was when children moved from grade-I to II. (iv) The impact of ECE experience on retention in primary grades was greater for girls as compared to boys.

Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Chopra, (1982) studied the effect of partial reinforcement and different types of re-inforcers on resistance to extinction among pre-primary children and found that both praise and candy reinforced the children; however candy proved to be more effective and also that children from lower socio economic status families reacted to candy more favourably than children from upper socio economic status families.

Patel, (1982) conducted an investigation into the role of general ability of pre-primary school children in relation to reading readiness and found that children of urban area displayed higher achievement in the total score of reading readiness. Wells (1985) conducted a study on correlation between the amount and quality of the dialogue children experience at home in the pre-school years eventual academic attainment. Findings of the study are that children from the poorest homes may do worse at school because their parents do not talk to them enough, the average child from a well-off home will have heard 44 million 'utterances' by the time they are four, those from less well-off backgrounds will have only heard 12 million words and hearing language and engaging in play in the classroom as well as direct teaching

help in motivating children. Nagalakshmi (1991) studied on establishing certain essentials for the pre-school stages. The major findings were: (i) Encouraging free motor activity was a must, especially in urban areas for children who came from congested home environment. Even though it was noisy, still rough and tumble play / chasing games must be retained because they offered opportunities for children to make friendship. (ii) For encouraging social behaviour, co-operative play was encouraged. (iii) If play equipment was increased, making provision for every child to obtain the same material, it helped in controlling stress, strain and aggressive behaviour among children. (iv) If the staff-child interaction was increased, the child-child interaction could decrease. (v) If the number of staff per child in terms of ratio was improved, then individual attention increased, this developed the cognitive, and linguistic stimulation of children. Kanta and Ahuja (1992) conducted a study on minimum specification of pre-schools. They found out that 50% of nursery schools were running in temporary buildings. Eighty per cent of nursery school did not have play grounds.

Studies on ECCE of Socially Disadvantaged Sections

Muralidharan and Kaur (1987) conducted a study of the relationship between physical development and language and cognitive development of tribal pre-school children. The objective of the study was to examine the relationship between the indices of physical development and indices of language and cognitive development in the tribal pre-schools. The indices of physical development were height, weight, mid-arm circumference and head circumference. The indices of cognitive development were shape and colour discrimination, time perception and sequential thinking. The sample consists of 12 anganwadis from Tokapal block of Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh. From each anganwadi 12 children (six boys and six girls) were selected. Thus the total sample consists of 144 children. The results indicated (i) all test scores in language and cognitive development were significantly correlated with height and weight of children. (ii) no significant correlation between mid-arm circumference and language test scores was found. (iii) A significant positive correlation was found between colour discrimination and sequential thinking and head circumference. On the whole, it may be said that there did exist a positive correlation between physical development of children and their development in language and cognitive areas. In the second part of the study it was observed whether educational intervention on heavier children as compared to lighter children and taller children as compared to shorter children had any effect or not. A pre-test, post-test, experimental control group design was used. From the experimental and control group, those children who formed the two extreme group in height and weight were focused upon to study the effect. The sample comprised of 16 heavier and 16 lighter children and 16 taller and 17 shorter children and the experimental group. The control group consisted of 17 heavier and 18 lighter children and 18 taller and 17 shorter children. The result showed that no matter whether the children were taller or short, heavy or light, the experimental group children made positive gains in language and cognitive tests after educational interventions. The control group too made some gains which were expected due to maturation.

Melhuish et al (2008) studied the impact of pre-school experience on young children's cognitive attainments at entry to primary school. Duration of time in pre-school is found to have a significant and positive impact on attainment over and above important influences such as family socio-economic status, income, mother's qualification level, ethnic and language background. The research also pointed to the separate and significant influence of the home learning environment. It is concluded that pre-school can play an important part in combating social exclusion by offering disadvantaged children, in particular, a better start to primary school.

Arnoldet al. (2000) studied on pre-school children of Nepal. They found the followings: (i) In a disadvantaged district of Nepal more than 95% of children attending an ECCE programme went on to the primary school, compared to 75% of non-participants; (ii) The grade I repetition rate of participants was one-seventh that of non-participants, they had significantly higher marks on grade I examinations; (iii) ECCE also helped in removing the gender inequality. Among the Nepalese children studied an equal proportion of girls and boys began 1st grade, compared with 39% of girls and 61% of boys who did not participate.

Kagitcibasi (2001) studied on long term effects of early intervention: Turkish low-income mothers and children. The findings were: (i) The Turkish early enrichment project in low-income, low education areas of Istanbul, comprising parenting skills and pre-schooling resulted in 86% of the children still being in school after seven years, compared with67% for non-participants. (ii) Over the long run, participant children had higher school attainment, were more likely to attend university and began working at a later age and had higher occupational status.

Sylva et al. (2004) conducted a longitudinal study on the effective provision of pre- school education (EPPE) project and found that pre-school experience in the United Kingdom resulted in improved measures of intellectual development, independence, concentration and sociability during the first three years of primary schooling. The benefits were higher the longer children participated in pre-schools.

Mwaura (2005) studied on the pre-school impact on the readiness, continuity and cognitive process at pre-school and beyond and found that children who had attended pre-school in Keniya, Uganda and Zanzibar (in the United Republic of Tanzania) had better language skills than non-participants and achieved better results in schools until grade-IV.

Vinnarasan, A. (2007) in a study on factors influencing on enrolment of children in the ICDS anganwadi centres at Chennai corporation evaluated the factors influencing non-enrolment of children in ICDS AWCS run by Chennai corporation. In the study 47.3% respondents believed that the purpose of existence of the AWC was to look after young children. Respondents mentioned that providing nutrition in the AWC was for the growth of children (47.3%) and to provide nutrition (32.7%) to children. They were aware of the provision of supplementary nutrition, but not aware of the special care given to malnourished children under the supplementary nutrition component of ICDS. 40% respondents mentioned that

they were not aware that ECE (early childhood education) contributed to the child's holistic development. 77.3% respondents were approached by either the anganwadi worker or helper for enrolment in the ICDS centre. Only 17.3% respondents had made any attempt to enrol in ICDS. Except 11.3% of the respondents, the others were not convinced that ICDS had been offering good quality services to the beneficiaries. 29.3% respondents said that poor physical infrastructure was the reason for their child's non-enrolment in the AWC. 34% respondents felt pride in sending their children to English medium preschools. More than half of the respondents (60%) had attributed medium of instruction, which was Tamilin AWCS, to be the reason for their child's non-enrolment. 25.3% mothers felt that AWWS attitude was also the reason for not sending their children to the AWC. Nearly 22.7% respondents mentioned that community participation in children's enrolment was high in their habitation. Adequate funds should be allotted to improve the physical infrastructure of AWCS and provide them with basic facilities.

Pandey et al (2008) in a study on Quality of pre-schooling under different programmes including ICDS assessed the qualitative inputs being provided under different public initiatives of preschool in India. A total of eight districts were selected from 4 states namely Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, and two clusters (one each from rural and urban areas) were selected, bringing the number of clusters up to 16. It was found that PSE kits were available in 65.62% ICDS centres, 62.5% SSA/ NPEGEL (national programme of education of girls at elementary level) centres and 40.62% RGNCS (Rajeev Gandhi national crèche scheme) centres. Higher number of ICDS centres in Himachal Pradesh (87.5%) had pre-school education in ICDS. About 50% of SSA centres in Himachal Pradesh and ICDS centres in Uttar Pradesh had half attendance.

Josephine and Mary (2010) conducted the study on assessment of existing curriculum under ICDS. The study was done in Coimbatore city, Tamil Nadu in ICDS Project III.Assessment of the existing curriculum in the selected AWs revealed that:i) All AWWs planned the programme in advance based on the theme approach once in 15 days.ii) About 80% AWWs preferred to plan out the programme in advance as it enabled them to teach various concepts. Out of these, 70% AWWs also mentioned that planning helped them to give a better coverage to the contents.iii) All AWWs had a prayer, informal talks, song sessions, story sessions, group play, physical exercise and teaching alphabets in their daily schedule of events. Creative activities, science experience and readiness activities were totally absent in their curriculum, even though all AWWs had a minimum of two years of job experience.

Magnuson and Meyers et. all (2004) carried their research study with some specific research questions, do children who attend preschool prior to school entry have better reading and math skills in kindergarten and first grade, and do these effects hold up after controlling for child, family, neighbourhood and school characteristics that might be associated with preschool attendance and with reading and math achievement? The study ushered answer to this question is yes, children in centre-based preschool programs in the year prior to

school entry have better reading and math skills, and this advantage persists to the spring of first grade. These children also less liked to repeat kindergarten. However, the study designed including assessment of children's academic skills, surveys of parents, teachers and school administrators and observational ratings of school environments.

Dickens (2005) reported in his study that an environment factor plays a vital role in affecting school readiness of children than their genes. For this study he had raised one research question "could some of these differences in school readiness be the consequences of difference in genetic endowment"? For this research question he had taken some direct and indirect evidenced based on different aspects of genetic differences. The indirect evidence on the role of genes in explaining the racial (black-white) gap does not tell us how much of the gap genes explain and may be of no value at all in deciding whether genes do play a role. But the direct evidence on ancestry, adoption and cross fostering is most consistent with little or no role for genes, it is unlikely that the racial gap has a large genetic component. Finally, the study revealed that environmental difference explains more variation than do genetic differences.

Joe and Davis (2009) examined parental influence through their academic beliefs and parenting behaviours, on African American boys during their kindergarten year. The multivariate analyses provided evidence that specific parental factors, beliefs and parenting behaviors do relate to the cognitive performance of African American boys. Findings from this study also revealed that the frequency of parents' engagement in certain behaviors has differing effects on reading, math and general knowledge outcomes for African American boys. Ex.- the frequency in which parents read books to their sons was significantly related to how well these young boys performed on the reading assessment in kindergarten.The acquisition of language comprehension and expression are key development tasks of early childhood. Mashburn and Justice conducted a study on Peer Effects on Pre -school Children's Language Development. In this study, researchers studied the extent to which the language skills of classroom peers may serve to accelerate language skill growth in 4 year old children. Researchers used the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Third Edition as an index of children's single-word receptive vocabulary ability and the oral Expression scale to assess children's expressive language ability. The study resulted children's expressive and receptive language achievement during the prekindergarten year was positively related to their peer's expressive language ability. The study findings suggested that children with relatively advanced language skills may benefit more from sharing a classroom with other advanced peers than would children with less advanced skills. The positive influence of peers' expressive language ability on children's language development was found to be even stronger in better-managed classrooms.

Missal (2012) in a survey on school readiness among preschoolers in the community level and reported the percentage of the children under various level of school readiness. A population of 100 preschoolers of age 3 to 5 years was selected through convenient sampling from the community (Balwadis and Anganwadis). The Early Development Inventory

(EDI) which is a developmental questionnaire was completed based on the information provided by the teacher regarding each individual child. According to the scores attained, the study population was categorized into different levels of readiness, namely, Very Ready, Ready, At Risk and Vulnerable.The study reported that 57% of the study population was able to meet the criterion for school readiness while the rest 43% failed to meet the criterion for school readiness.Out of the 100 children of the selected population from the community, 57% were ready for school, 23% were vulnerable and 20% were At Risk. Thus 43% of the total study population was Not Ready for school.The study concluded that EDI can be used on the Indian population for assessing school readiness at the community level and also that conceptualization of school readiness was possible on the basis of child characteristics.

Downer and Pianta (2009) in a study on Peer effects on children's language achievement during pre-kindergarten found those children's abilities to speak and understand words developed faster when they were with classmates with better language skills. Going to school with children who had better language skills was even more beneficial for children who began preschool with higher language skills and for those who were in classrooms that were well-managed by the teacher.

Arnold et al (2000) studied pre-school education in a changing world taking into account the children of Nepal. They found the followings: (i) In a disadvantaged district of Nepal more than 95% of children attending an ECCE programme went on to the primary school, compared to 75% of non-participants; (ii) The grade I repetition rate of participants was one-seventh that of non-participants, they had significantly higher marks on grade I examinations; (iii) ECCE also helped in removing the gender inequality. Among the Nepalese children studied an equal proportion of girls and boys began 1st grade, compared with 39% of girls and 61% of boys who did not participate.

Kagitcibasi (2001) studied on long term effects of early intervention: Turkish low-income mothers and children. His findings were: (i) The Turkish early enrichment project in low-income, low education areas of Istanbul, comprising parenting skills and pre-schooling resulted in 86% of the children still being in school after seen years, compared with67% for non-participants. (ii) Over the long run, participant children had higher school attainment, were more likely to attend university and began working at a later age and had higher occupational status. Lwin and Arnold (2004) in their ECD impact study found that participants in a Myanmar ECCE programme were more likely to enroll in primary schools and had better examination results and test scores over the first three years of schooling. Sylva et al. (2004) conducted a longitudinal study on the effective provision of preschool education (EPPE) project and found that pre-school experience in the United Kingdom resulted in improved measures of intellectual development, independence, concentration and sociability during the first three years of primary schooling. The longer children participated in pre-schools the benefits were higher.

Yong Jiang (2004) conducted a study on the influencing and effective model of early childhood teachers' job satisfaction in China with the objective to explore the influencing and effective models of Chinese early childhood teachers' job satisfaction. The sample consisted of 317 teachers of 21 kindergartens in Sanghai, China. The tool used was a questionnaire for all the teachers. The results demonstrated that organizational climate and teacher's involvement are the direct factors to affect teachers' job satisfaction, which is the important intermediate variable to influence on teachers' professional commitment, autonomy and burnout. It is also concluded that organizational climate improves teachers' professional commitment. Involving in curriculum reform not only facilitates teachers' autonomy but also declines teachers' burnout.

Mwaura (2005) studied on the pre-school impact on the readiness, continuity and cognitive process at pre-school and beyond and found that children who had attended pre-school in Keniya, Uganda and Zanzibar (in the United Republic of Tanzania) had better language skills than non-participants and achieved better results in schools until grade-IV.

Research has proved that children attending pre-school overcome their differences which are caused by being born in a particular type of family. Duration of time in pre-school is found to have a significant and positive impact on attainment over and above important influences such as family socio-economic status, income, mother's qualification level, ethnic and language background. (Melhuish et al., 2008). Aram, (2005) examined continuity in literacy achievements from kindergarten to school, among low SES Israeli children, controlling for family factors and found stability in children's learning through the kindergarten-to-school transition, confirming the importance of promoting early literacy in kindergarten, especially among low SES children.

In the national arena studies on pre-school children have been conducted. The aspects covered are to find the behavioural problems among pre-school children. A few studies were conducted to find the effect of preschool education. A few studies have been conducted to find out the programmes being conducted at preschool level and the facilities being provided. Kapadia, (1980) conducted a study of the early childhood education programmes for the under privileged children. Sharma and Agarwal (1998) conducted a comparative study of reading – writing readiness among children attending ICDS and non ICDS centres and found that there was a significant difference in reading and writing skills of ICDS and non-ICDS group of children and there was significant difference in reading and writing skills of boys and girls in non ICDS group, whereas no sex difference was observed in reading and writing skills among ICDS group of children.

Hence, it can be seen that although a number of studies have been conducted on pre-school education both in the country and abroad but very few studies are conducted to find out the effect of family characteristics on preschool readiness. There are a few studies involving parents but none of them is conducted to find out the effect of parental involvement on preschool readiness especially in the Indian context. Therefore, there lies a huge gap in

finding out the effect of family characteristics and parental involvement on pre-school readiness.The quality of education depends mainly on the provision of access; i.e. infrastructure, equipment and materials. Different studies have been conducted on ECCE in the last twenty years. Studies of Pattanaik (1991), Tripathy(1989), Kaul (1992), Arnold et al. (2000), Lwin and Arnold (2004) and UNESCO(2007) show that early childhood education helps in more enrolment, better retention and less repetition in primary grades. Studies conducted in different states of our country by Rajalakshmi (1992), Bhatnagar and Duhan (2003) and Singh (2006) reveal the status of early childhood education in our country is not so much developed so as to achieve the goal of UEE. .

1.4. NEED AND JUSTIFICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The Scheduled Tribes (ST) is one of the principal categories of backward classes of society. Despite the Government initiatives and efforts to promote education among STs, the literacy rate among STs as compared to national average has remained low and the female literacy rate has been still lower compared to national female literacy rate. (Standing committee report, M SJ & E, 2013-14). As reported in a survey conducted by Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB) International, New Delhi in 2009, the dropout rate of ST children both in the elementary and secondary as compared to the National average, is quite high with 55% at the elementary level. However, the outcomes related to quality of education are still far from satisfactory, as reflected in the low levels of learning and high drop outs. The annual ASER (2005-2014) and more recently,NCERT achievement surveys indicate low levels of learning in the primary grades, with even the basic competencies of Grades 1 and 2 not getting mastered by a large number of children. Overall dropout rate by Grade 5 continues to be on an average as high as 25.7 per cent, with the SC and ST rates even higher at 32.9 per cent and 39.8 percent respectively, (SES, 2005-06) which indicates a significant social equity issue. Another important finding is that the rate of drop outs is consistentlyMany studies reveal the isolation of curricular process from the daily lives of tribes especially the difference of medium of instruction from their mother tongue as the primary cause for it. It necessitates a strong mechanism of early childhood care and education in terms of school readiness programme to better prepare them for schooling process.

School readiness , a set of skills and competencies that relate to a child's preparedness for schooling include aspects such as physical well-being, emotional maturity, social confidence, cognitive skills, language richness, and general knowledge (Boethel, 2004; Pianta, 2002). The three dimensions of school readiness are:(a)Ready children, focusing on children's learning and development(b)Ready schools, focusing on the school environment along with practices that foster and support a smooth transition for children into primary school and advance and promote the learning of all children and (c)Ready families, focusing on parental and caregiver attitudes and involvement in their children's early learning and development and transition to school.It is essential that the specific problems in acquiring school readiness skills be explored to know the areas of difficulty so that it can be addressed as early as possible. Such an analysis would help know the performance level of children and help in making appropriate decisions regarding educational placement, the types of support

required and referral for any additional services depending on the need. In this context, the present study examines the early developmental pattern of children from tribal community of Odisha being a tribal concentrated state.

1.5 OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze school readiness of children from the scheduled tribe community in terms of physical, social, emotional and cognitive (language and arithmetic) dimensions
2. To examine gaps in school readiness of children in general and also with specific reference to gender and disability
3. To identify contextual interventions with a view to prepare children for formal schooling

Chapter-II

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

2.0 Introduction

Methodology of the study includes the procedures followed to gather data based on practical evidence and analyse it with reference to the objectives of the study. This chapter presents detail description of the research procedures used in this study such as *Design of the Study*, *Selection of Participants* (Population and Sample), *Tools Used for Data Collection*, *Procedures of Data Collection*, and *Analysis of Data and Statistical Technique Used*.

2.1 Design of the Study

The survey and case study procedure, under descriptive research, was used for carrying out the study. The main purpose of the study is to assess school readiness of children belonging to the Scheduled Tribe (ST) community of KBK districts of Odisha in terms of physical, social, emotional and cognitive (language and arithmetic) competencies. *Inter alia,* the study seeks to assess the perceptions of the primary school teachers, Anganwadi workers, parents concerned on school readiness of the children belonging to from the Scheduled Tribe communities as well as to assess the school readiness of the Scheduled Tribe children.

2.2 Sample

The study was conducted in the three undivided districts of Koraput, Bolangir and Kalahandi (known as KBK districts) of the western region of Odisha. Out of KBK districts, one district i.e., Koraput was selected purposively for the study with reference to developmental patterns and diversity in socio-cultural aspects representing different scheduled tribe communities.

(Figure 2.1 KBK Districts and Koraput District Maps)

Three out of 14 blocks of Koraput such as: Koraput, Similiguda and Baipariguda were selected randomly for the study. From among total 297 Anganwadi Centers in these blocks, 30 were selected randomly, 10 from each block, for the purpose. However, 30 Anganwadi Workers working in these centers were selected as informants. Besides, 28 teachers belonging to neighborhood primary schools, 152 children, and 38 parents of children concerned were selected randomly. The detail of sample distribution is as following:

Tabel-2.1: Distribution of Samples

Blocks	Anganwadi Centres	Anganwadi Workers	Primary School Teachers	Parents	Children
Koraput	10	10	10	12	40
Similiguda	10	10	8	12	42
Baipariguda	10	10	10	14	70
Total	**30**	**30**	**28**	**38**	**152**

2.3 Tools used for Data Collection

The tools used for data collection for the study comprised observation schedules, interview schedules and assessment test. The informants in the study were Anganwadi workers, primary school teachers and parents. Besides, Anganwadi centers were observed along with activities of the children at such centers. Hence, six tools were developed in five-day planning workshop for preparing tools, translation of tools, and data gathering procedures at RIE BBSR. These tools are:

i. ***Observation Schedule for Anganwadi Centers:***

Observation Schedule for Anganwadi Centers was used for collection of data regarding the centre such as: general information including enrolment status in the center, children's attendance infrastructure facilities at the AWCs, physical facilities at the AWC including outdoor/indoor equipment for play, health equipment in the center, transaction approaches

with children including conversation, storytelling, rhymes and songs, dramatization, puppet play, coloring/drawing/painting, clay work/sand play, guided activities on topics, circle games, teaching of reading and writing, children's neatness and orientation, Classroom Climate.

ii. *Child Observation Schedule:*

Child observation schedule was used for collection of information on the activities demonstrated by the child in the Anganwadi centers. The dimensions of the activities include behaviors (e.g., shares with others, expresses curiosity, asks questions etc.) of the sampled child, physical development including proper weight, height of the child and cleanliness such as cleaning of teeth, nails, nose etc.

iii. *School Readiness Assessment Test*

The school readiness assessment test includes cognitive competencies of child, in *Language* such as: reading readiness, sentence comprehension, storytelling & reciting rhyme, and listening comprehension; and in *Arithmetic* such as pre-number concept, sequential thinking; *Environmental Studies* including the competencies such as classification skill, space concept and knowledge on general aspects. School readiness assessment test was conducted on children above 4 years age.

iv. *Interview Schedule for Anganwadi Workers*

The interview schedule for Anganwadi Workers was used for collecting data regarding general information on centers and the workers. It aims to gather perception of Anganwadi Workers on relevance of pre-school education whether it helps for cognitive, emotional and social development of the child; what kind of play and other materials are available and used in the centers; and innovative methods are followed in making transaction with the children.

v. *Interview Schedule for Teachers*

The interview schedule for teachers was used for gathering information on perception of neighboring primary school teachers on significance of pre-school education; whether they have observed any difference among children with and without having pre-school education; whether pre-school education works as a prerequisite for primary school education and whether there exists any linkage to primary education in terms of academic priori-knowledge of children coming from pre-school education centres.

vi. *Interview Schedule for Parents*

The interview schedule for parents was used for gathering perception of parents whose children were getting pre-school education at Anganwadi centers pertaining to significance of pre-school, regularity in sending their children to Anganwadi centers, and quality of such centers. Besides, the perceptions were gathered on the benefits in terms of developments in cognitive, social, linguistic, and emotional.

vii. *Field Notes*

During field visits extensive field notes were taken by the investigators about major events, e.g. typical events, ideal events to supplement the field data with reference to the quality of Anganwadi Centres, transactional approaches, activities at the canters etc. It helped a lot for analysis of the data.

viii. *Photographs/Videos/Audios*

The investigators took some photographs of situations depicting the process of data collection during the visit to supplement or substantiate the data collected though the above tools; recorded in video/audio forms of Anganwadi /school activities.

ix. *Documentary Analysis*

The investigators analysed and verified various records, e.g. student's attendance register, Anganwadi workers' activity records, learning materials, etc. to have an understanding about the scenario of pre-school education organised in Anganwadi centres in Koraput district of Odisha.

2.4 Procedures of Data Collection

The validity (credibility) and reliability (dependability) of the tools and the data were established through piloting. The data collection was done by the team members and field investigators personally visiting to all the Anganwadi centers, Schools, Teachers, Parents selected for the study from 3 blocks of Koraput district of Odisha with proper permission from the authorities concerned. Interviews were conducted with teachers, parents and Anganwadi workers through pre-developed schedules. Anganwadi centers and the activities were observed with the help of observation schedules. School readiness of the children was assessed through the reading readiness assessment test and scores were marked for each domain on the basis of the performance of the children.

2.5 Analysis of Data and Statistical Technique Used

The data for the study were collected with the help of 6 tools to ascertain the reading readiness of children from the Scheduled Tribe communities in Koraput district of Odisha.

The data collected through the tools such as observation schedules, interview schedules and readiness assessment test pertaining to the objectives of the study were analyzed quantitatively by using percentage analysis technique as well as qualitatively with thick description. The analysis was done in two sections as: Section-I, *Pre-school Education* and Section –II, *School Readiness of Children* through both quantitative analysis with percentage analysis and qualitative analysis with thick description.

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CHAPTER – III

CASE PROFILE

3.0 BACKDROP

This chapter contains two parts, part-A as "Profile of the district" and part-B as "Profile of the Case under Study". In part-A a brief profile of the district has been presented with reference to various aspects of the district, including, demography, location, size, literacy, population etc. and part-B contains the profile of the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) covered under the study.

PART A

3.1 Profile of the District

Koraput district is a Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) district of Odisha constitutes the study area for the present project. The entire District has been declared as a scheduled area under the Presidential scheduled Areas Order, 1950. A brief profile of the district with reference to formation, demography, location and size, hills system, forest and vegetation, population, agriculture, industry, mineral resources, and administrative set-up, is presented as follows:

3.1.1 Formation of new Koraput district.

The Koraput district formed into a district on 1st April, 1936 out of Vizianagaram district under Madras Presidency, was further converted into four districts, namely, Koraput, Rayagada, Malkangiri and Nowrangpur with effect from 1st October, 1992 (Notification No. 49137, dtd. 01/10/1992 of Revenue and Excise Department, Govt. of Orissa, Bhubaneswar) with an intention of bringing the administration more closer to the people. Koraput is a mosaic of tribal life and culture.

3.1.2 Administrative Setup of the District

The District of Koraput derives its name from its headquarters, the present town of Koraput. The District spreads over a geographical area of 8379 Sq. Kms. It is divided into 02 Revenue Sub-division (Koraput and Jeypore, 14 Tahasils and 14 community Development Blocks, 01 Municipality and 03 Notification Area Councils. There are 226 G.P.s,1985 Revenue villages in the district. The Collector and District magistrate is the administrative head of the district. He is assisted by the Addl. District Magistrates, Deputy Collectors, Sub-Collectors, Block Development Officers and *Tahasildars*. There are also District level officers of other departments and they are under the control of their departmental heads but Collector being the administrative head of the district, exercises general supervision over them. The district consists of two sub-divisions namely Koraput and Jeypur and each Sub-division under the control of a Sub-Collector. For convenience of revenue administration, the district is divided into 14 tahasils namely Kotpad, Boriguma, Koraput, Narayanpatana, Pottangi, Machhkund, Jeypur, Dasamantapur, Laxmipur, Bandhugaon, Similiguda, Nandapur, Kundura and Boipariguda. Each tahasil is kept under the charge of a Tahasildar. Similarly for carrying out developmental works in rural areas smoothly, the district is divided into 14 CD Blocks. Each CD Block is under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer.

3.1.3 Location and Size

The present Koraput district has limited its geographical size from 27,020 square kilometres to 8,379.3 square kilometres. It is located between 18^0 and 19^0 North Latitude and 82^0 and 83^0 East Longitude in extreme southern part of Orissa. It is surrounded by the Rayagada and Nowarangpur districts in the North, Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh in the West, Malkangiri district and Vishakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh in the South and Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh in the East.

3.1.4 Physiography

The District located on a section of the Eastern Ghats gives a wavy form of topography. The District has vast expanse of mountain ranges along with hill streams which ultimately pass to rivers namely Indravati, Kolab and Machkund. The District has an altitude up to 1000 M above MSL, Koraput, Semiliguda, Pottangi, Nandapur, Lamtaput, Dasmantapur and

Laxmipur Blocks are having altitude over 900M above MSL. Narayanpatna and Bandhugam Blocks, have altitude ranging 300M to 600M above MSL Jeypore Subdivision has altitude up to 600M. The District falls into two agro climatic zones namely Eastern Ghat High Land comprising all the blocks of Koraput Sub-Division and Kotpad Block and South Eastern Ghat comprising the four blocks of Jeypore sub-division.

3.1.5 Forest and vegetation

The Koraput region was once covered with forests upto as much as 70 percent of its geographical area (Behuria, 1965; Senapati and Sahu, 1966) . But subsequently there has been a rapid decline in its forest areas. The total forest area of the region was 66.3% of its geographical area in 1960-61, which was reduced to 51.8% by 1971-72 to 45.32% by 1981-82 and to 32.82% by 1989-90 (Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Orissa, 1995). After the division of the region into four districts in 1992-93, the forest area of Koraput district was estimated to be only 16.80% of its geographical area.

3.1.6 Agriculture

The district experiences two types agricultural practices, namely, shifting cultivation and settled cultivation. Shifting cultivation is adopted by tribals in the forests and hills. It may be noted here that the shifting cultivations is one of the most dominating factors leading to large scale deforestation and soil erosion in the district. The yield from the *podu* cultivation hardly supports a tribal family for about two to four months, but the damage caused to the ecology by this takes several years to recoup. The settled cultivation is made in plains, plateaus and valleys of mountains or hills and rivers.

3.1.7 Population

In 2011, Koraput had population of 1,379,647 of which male and female were 678,809 and 700,838 respectively. In 2001 census, Koraput had a population of 1,180,637 of which males were 590,743 and remaining 589,894 were females. Koraput District population constituted 3.29 per cent of total Maharashtra population. In 2001 census, this figure for Koraput District was at 3.21 per cent of Maharashtra population. There was change of 16.86 per cent in the population compared to population as per 2001. In the previous census of

India 2001, Koraput District recorded increase of 14.67 per cent to its population compared to 1991.

Out of the total Koraput population for 2011 census, 16.39 per cent lives in urban regions of district. In total 226,169 people lives in urban areas of which males are 115,038 and females are 111,131. Sex Ratio in urban region of Koraput district is 966 as per 2011 census data. Similarly child sex ratio in Koraput district was 944 in 2011 census. Child population (0-6) in urban region was 26,089 of which males and females were 13,417 and 12,672. This child population figure of Koraput district is 11.66 % of total urban population. Average literacy rate in Koraput district as per census 2011 is 81.80 % of which males and females are 88.48 % and 74.90 % literates respectively. In actual number 163,665 people are literate in urban region of which males and females are 89,917 and 73,748 respectively. (Census,2011).

3.1.8 The Tribal communities

Koraput district occupies a unique position in the tribal map of Orissa. As per the 2001 census, the tribals constitute 49.73 percent of the district's population with concentration of 11 tribes though a few from each of 62 scheduled tribes of Orissa show their presence. The major tribes of the district constitute : the Kandha , the Paraja, the Gadaba, the Kotia, the Dhurua, the Bhumiya, the Bhunia, the Bhatra, the Pentia, the Halva, and the Amantya. These tribal communities have their own set of values, ethos, beliefs, rites, and the problems. Marriage is the most significant event in a tribal life. It is also an important ceremony in the tribal villages. Tribals observe many festivals round the year to mark first sowing, eating of new rice, eating of mango as well as for their own enjoyment. The most significant and colourful festivals of the year are *Pus Parab* and *Chait Parab*. They observe these two festivals with pomp and ceremony, each for a couple of days. Rice is the staple food of the tribals. It is supplemented by millets, maize, vegetables grown by themselves and other edible fruits, roots, leaves collected from forest. Dance, song and music are a characteristic feature of the tribals. Their inborn talent finds expression in dances and songs like *Dhemsa Nacha, Dundunga Nacha, Laga Gita* etc. Songs and dances are performed as an indispensable part of all individual and communal functions and festivals. The tribal enjoy singing and dancing all the year round.

PART B

3.2 Profile of the Case under Study

In this section the details of the sample AWCs with reference to their enrolment, infrastructure, location etc. have been presented.

3.2.1 Enrolment Scenario

3.1 Enrolment Scenario of the AWCs during Last 5 years

YEAR	No. of Children Enrolled				
	Boys	Girls	Total	No. of ST Children	No. of CWSN
2010-11	247	245	489	366	0
2011-12	297	266	553	384	1
2012-13	296	259	554	521	2
2013-14	308	328	623	501	1
2014-15	287	322	602	491	2

The table- 3.1 presents the enrolment scenario of last five years in the 30 AWCs studied under this project. The enrolment trend presents a very good picture with regard to the enrolment position of girls. In the year 2013 -14 & 2014-15 the girls enrolment was 53 % in both the admission sessions where as the boys enrolment was 49 % and 48 % respectively. From the table it is also revealed that the enrolment position of ST children is around 70% of total enrolment in almost all the years. The number of children with special needs record shows 0-2 in the past five years. However the number of children with special needs in the locale is not known to ascertain whether they remain out of school. This needs further investigation. As per census 2011, children with special needs among the tribal population are lowest in the age group of 5-19 compared to other social groups (Census 2011)

3.2.2 Infrastructural Facilities at the Pre-School

This sub-section gives the infrastructural facilities available at the Anganwadi centres studied under the project.

Table 3.2 Location of the AWCs N=30

Sl.No	Items	Percentage of AWCs where the facility is available
1	Verandah or Corridor of a Community Members House	3 (10%)
2	Room in Community Member's House	3 (10%)
3	Verandah or Corridor of School	3 (10%)
4	Room in the School	20 (66.6%)
5	Rented House / Own Building	1 (3.3%)

Fig:3.1-View of infrastructure of AWCs and Learning resources

The table-3.2 provides the information with regard to the location of the AWWs of the study area. More than half of the centres are functioning in the rooms provided in the primary schools of the locality. Only one centre is running in the own building of the centre. The rest

of the centres are functioning in the corridor of a community Member's house and rooms provided by the Community Members and corridor of the school (11% each)

Table 3.3 Infrastructural Facilities in AWCs N=30

Approach to the Centre			Building			
Easy/Safe	Unsafe	Not easy	Kachha	Pakka	Semi Pakka	Other
26 (86.66%)	3 (10.%)	1 (3.3%)	2 (6.66%)	22 (73.33%)	4 (13.24%)	2 (6.66%)

The table-3.3 presents the information related to three major aspects of the infrastructural facilities of the centres with regard to the approach and type of building. There are around 87% of the centres where the road connectivity is easy and safe for the children. Only one centre has no easy access facilities for the children and 3 centres are unsafe for small children. With regard to the building there are 73 % of the centres where it is pakka whereas around 7 % of the centres have kachha and 13% have semi pakka buildings.

Table – 3.4 Space for Play Activities in AWCs N=30

Rooms for Play			Outdoor Space		Greenery	
1 Room	1 – 2 Room	More than 2 Room	Adequate	Inadequate	Available	Not available
27 (90%)	1 (3.3%)	2 (6.6%)	12 (40%)	18(60)	2 (6.66%)	28 (93.34%)

Fig:3.2 Indoor Play in ECCE Centers

The table 3.4 presents the information regarding the availability of space for play activities in AWCs. There are two centres having more than 2 rooms for play activities of the children and 90% of centres have 1 room for the play of the children. With regard to the outdoor space, 60% of AWCs have inadequate space and 40 % have adequate space for the play of the children. Regarding greenery only 2 centres have greenery around. As most of the children in the AWCs are from the tribal background, the location and space of the centre has to be like their own habitat with without space and greenery.

Fig:3.3 Organisation of Outdoor Activities in two diffrent AWCs

Less space and lack of greenery may make the children feel congested and this could be one of the reasons for them to show less interest in coming to the centres. Care has to be taken to preserve greenery around the school as it not only gives the feeling of natural surrounding but also creates a healthy environment.

Table – 3.5 Sanitation Facilities at the Pre-School N= 30

Clean Drinking Water		Source of Drinking Water			Toilet in the Centre		Is the Toilet functional		Is the Toilet clean/hygienic	
Available	Not Available	Public Tap	Hand Pump	Common Well	Available	Not available	Yes	No	Yes	No
20 (66.6%)	10 (33.41%)	24 (80%)	3 (10%)	3 (10%)	10 (33.4%)	20 (66.6%)	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	6 (60%)	4 (40%)

Table 3.5 presents information on different dimensions of sanitation facilities of the AWCs of the study area. There are 33 % of centres where clean drinking water facilities are not available for children. Regarding the sources of drinking water, 80 % of centres provide water to the children from public tap where as 3% of centres use the water from hand pump as well as common well for the drinking of children. There are 68% of Anganwadi centres where toilets are not available for the children. Out of the available toilets of the centres 40 % of toilets are not functional and not clean and hygienic for the children.

This finding paints a grim picture as toilet facilities are necessary for maintaining healthy habit and this has to be developed in the young age. If these facilities are not available children grow up believing that it is alright to use the open space for that purpose and develop that habit. Authorities have to consider this as major lapse in the programme and take immediate corrective steps to facilitate the formation of healthy habit in the young age.

Table- 3.6 Outdoor Equipment for Play (N= 30)

Equipments	Available	Whether Used		Not Available
Outdoor		Yes	No	
Swings	0	0	0	30 (100%)
Slides	0	0	0	30 (100%)
Sea-Saw	0	0	0	30 (100%)
Water Play	0	0	0	30 (100%)
Rubber Rings	22 (73.33%)	22 (100%)	0	8 (26.7%)
Balls	20 (66.6%)	20 (100%)	0	10 (33.3%)
Any other	10 (33.3%)	3 (30%)	7 (70%)	20 (66.7%)

For the proper physical and mental development play occupies an important place in the daily routine of the small children. The table-2.6 provides information with regard to the facilities of outdoor play equipment of the centres. As per the information provided in the

table there are 100 % of centres where the outdoor equipment like swings, slides, sea Saw and water play are not available for the children. Only Rubber rings and balls are available in 73 and 66.6 percentages of the centres respectively. *Gross motor development precedes the fine motor development which is one of the readiness skill. If outdoor play equipments are not provided, it is effecting the child's natural development process. Neither we allow them to be in their natural environment where they climb trees and swing in branches nor provide such a situation in the pre-school centres. In a way we are curbing or creating a hurdle in their natural motor development.*

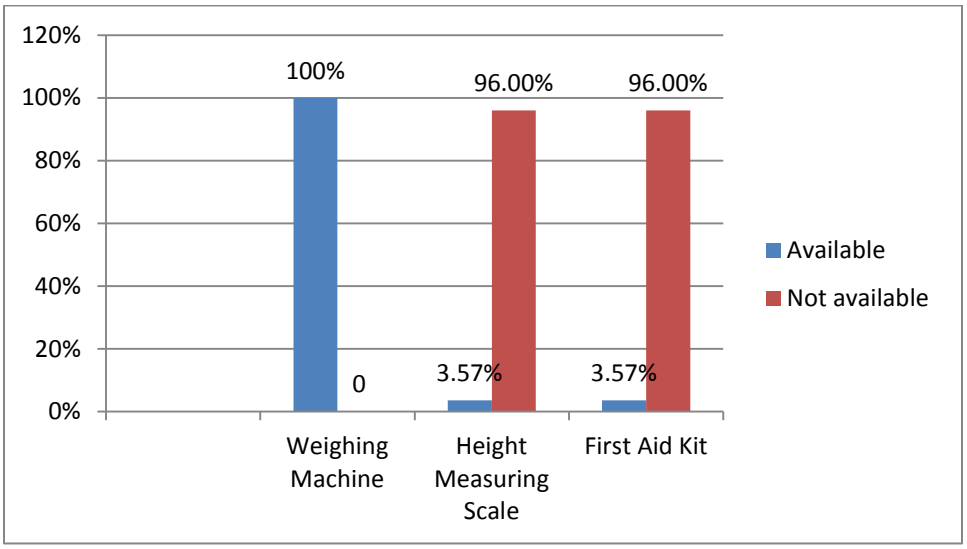
Table- 3.7 Indoor Equipments for Play (N= 30)

Indoor	Available	Whether Used		Not Available
Mats	15 (50%)	15 (50%)	0	15 (50%)
Toys	24 (80%)	24 (100%)	0	6 (20%)
Pictures	24 (80%)	21 (87.5%)	3 (12.5%)	6 (20%)
Wooden/ Rubber Balls	15 (50%)	12 80%	3 20%	15 (50%)
Flash Cards	20 (66.6%)	15 (75%)	5 (25%)	10 (33.3%)
Masks	22 (73.33%)	8 (30%)	14 (70%)	8 (28.57%)
Drawing and Painting Materials	21 (75%)	13 (63.6%)	8 (36.36%)	7 (25%)
Carom Board	4 (13.33%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	26 (86.66%)
Musical Instruments	4 (13.33%)	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	26 (86.66%)
TV	0	0	0	30 (100%)
Video	0	0	0	30 (100%)

The table 3.7 provides a comprehensive picture regarding the availability and use of various indoor equipment of the centres. There are 50% of the centres where children sit in the mat where as in the rest 50% of the centres don't have the mat for the children. With regard to the toys and pictures 20% of centres do not have that facilities for the children. Although these are available 12 % of the centres don't use pictures for the children. Similarly three fourth of the centres have flash cards and masks out of that 25% of centres don't use flash

cards and 70 % of them don't use masks for the children in the classroom. With regard to Carom Board and Musical instruments 85% of centres don't have these equipment in the centres. TV and Videos are not available in any of the centres studied under this project.

Graph-1 : Availability of Health Equipments



The Graph-1 presents the basic information regarding the health equipment of the AWC. There are 100% centres have the weighing machine for the children. Whereas 96% of the centres don't have first aid kit as well as height measuring scale, though both these equipment are highly necessary for the pre-school children.

3.3 Over all view

Though there are certain facilities as shown in Part B above, for promoting school readiness in the AWCs, it is not satisfactory with reference to many facilities. Toilets, outdoor games are the barest minimum to be provided for young children which is found to be absent in most of the centres. Bare minimum, a mat to sit in the room is also not found in many centres. Absence of greenery is also a cause for concern, as the location of study is a forest belt with several schedule tribes living. As noticed in the study, some of the centres have all the facilities and the same should be available for all the children with minimum facilities.

Chapter-IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretations of the study which aims at analysing the school readiness of children from the Scheduled Tribe (ST) community of KBK districts of Odisha in terms of physical, social, emotional and cognitive (language and arithmetic) dimensions. To have a clear picture on the aspects mentioned under the objective on which the study is based, data were collected from major stakeholders involved in pre-school education system such as: Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Teachers of neighbouring primary schools, Parents whose children received or were receiving pre-school education, and children enrolled in pre-school. In the present study pre-school is Anganwadi as in the locale there were no other pre-schools other than Anganwadis. Besides, to have an understanding on the functioning of pre-school education, Anganwadi centres (AWCs) were observed in-depth pertaining to enrolment status in the center, children's attendance, infrastructure facilities, availability of physical facilities like outdoor/indoor equipment for play and health equipment, and methods followed for transaction with children. The sampled children were observed for their developmental and academic readiness to enter school for formal education. The tools used for collection of data pertaining to the above were: Observation Schedule for Anganwadi Centers; School readiness assessment test, Child Observation Schedule; Interview Schedule for Anganwadi Workers; Interview Schedule for Teachers; and Interview Schedule for Parents.

On the basis of data collected from the sources through the tools mentioned above, the analysis was done through four board dimensions such as: *Relevance/ Significance of Pre-School Education; Functioning Pre-School Education; Issues and Challenges of Pre-School*

Education; and *Suggestions for Improvement of Pre-School Education.* In addition, data collected to assess the school readiness of children are analyzed and presented.

4.1 Relevance/ Significance of Pre-School Education

The responses pertaining to the perception of Teachers, AWWs and Parents on Relevance/ Significance of Pre-School Education are presented below:

Table 4.1: Objectives of Pre-School Education as Perceived by Teachers (N=30)

Sl. No.	Objectives suggested by Teachers	F	Percentages of Responses
1	To impart basic education through playful activity	30	100%
2	To make aware child through daily chores and importance of health hygiene	9	30%
	To acquaint with school structure & system	12	40%
3	To teach fundamental concepts in language, arithmetic & environmental science	15	50%
4	To reduce fear	30	100%
5	Self dependent	4	13.33%
6	Interest & importance of schooling	2	6.66%

The objectives of pre-school education as perceived by all the primary school teachers (100%), as revealed from the table 4.1, are to impart basic education through play activities and to reduce fear from further schooling. Pre-school education imparts fundamental concepts in language, arithmetic and environmental science as perceived by half (50%) of the teachers. Nearly 40% reported that pre-school education makes acquainted with school structure and system so that the children would not feel isolated at primary school or they would not find any difficulty in primary school. Besides, 28.57% of teachers reported that pre-school education aware of daily chores and health hygiene which were treated as basic to healthy children. Only 13.3328% of teachers perceived that self-dependency among children were developed through pre-school education.

Table 4.2: Perception of AWWs on the relevance of Pre-School Education (N=30)

Pre-School Education is relevant		If Yes, What are the reasons?			
Yes	No	Helps for school education	Reduces fear	Helps in Learning Letters	Tests the health
30 (100%)	0 (0%)	5 (16.67%)	10 (30.33%)	5 (16.67%)	17 (60%)

Table 4.2 reveals, pre-school education is relevant as perceived by all the AWWs who deal the children prior to primary school. One-third of Anganwadi workers (30.33%) justified as pre-school education reduces fear from children; more than half of teachers (60%) reported as health aspects were taken care of in pre-school education through various health tests/check-ups/vaccinations etc. And only 16.67% of them opined that pre-school education was helpful for school education and learning of fundamentals of languages/letters. *It is found that some AWWs felt that pre-school education is relevant in health aspects and reducing fear for school education.*

Table 4.3: Perception of Teachers on the relevance of Pre-School Education (N=30)

Pre-School Education experience is important for ST children		If Yes, What are the reasons?
Yes	30 (100%)	Language development
		Interest & motivation
		It prepares them for school
No	0 (0%)	Equal opportunity
		Removes fear

As revealed from the table 4.3, all the teachers (100%) perceived pre-school as important for Scheduled Tribe children because language developments like identifying letters, reading, writing them; creation of interest and motivation for school education; removal of fear from going to school; and providing equal opportunity to ST children were the justified reasons.

Table-4.4: Perception of Parents on the Usefulness of Pre-School Education

(N = 38)

Sl.No.	Dimensions	F	Percentages of Responses
1	Child gets to eat food	35	92.10 %
2	Child is kept occupied and out of mischief	22	57.89 %
3	Child learns something	37	97.36 %
4	Child learns to sit	26	68.42 %
5	Child gets prepared for primary school	27	71.05 %
6	Neighbourhood children go to the centre	7	18.42 %
7	AWW comes to collect the child	6	15.78 %
8	Child likes to go to the centre	20	52.63 %

Table-4.5: Perception of Parents on the relevance of Pre-School Education

(N = 38)

Sl. No.	Dimensions	f	Percentages of Responses
1	Very relevant	25	65.78 %
2	Somewhat relevant	14	36.84 %
3	Not very relevant	0	0 %
4	Not at all relevant	0	0 %
5	Don't know/ Can't say	0	0 %

Perceptions on usefulness of pre-school education of the parents whose children were getting pre-school education were multi-faceted as revealed from the table 4.4. The children get food to eat and learn something (more than a vacant mind) as perceived by almost all the parents (≥ 92.10%); the children are kept occupied and out of mischief as perceived by 57.89% of parents; learn how to sit in a group with other children perceived by 68.42% of parents; get prepared for primary school perceived by 71.05% of parents; and like to go to the centre daily by developing an interest as perceived by more than half of parents (52.63

%).Table 4.5 reveals that pre-school is very relevant as perceived by 65.78 % of parents where as 36.84 % perceived as somewhat relevant. It is clear from the table that pre-school is relevant in the sense as it provides scope for learning, reducing fear, creating interest for school education, and provides food to eat as per the stake holders.

4.2 Functioning of Pre-School Education

The responses pertaining to the perception of AWWs and teachers on the functioning of pre-school education are presented below:

Table-4.6: Activities conducted in the AWCs as perceived by AWWs (N=30)

Dimensions of Activities	Activities being Conducted					
	Indoor	F	Percentage of Response	Outdoor	f	Percentage of Response
Physical & Motor	Singing and Dancing Activity	28	93.33 %	Individual activity	10	33.33 %
	Playing games with toys	3	10 %	Group activity	10	33.33 %
	Playing imaginary games	2	6.67 %	Ball and ring game	24	80 %
	Toy making (through clay)	1	3.33 %	Indigenous activity	2	6.67 %
Language Development	Picture reading & Reciting names of flower, fruits, vegetables, plant, animal & birds	27	90 %	Field Visit	21	70 %
	Telling story & Singing song	3	10 %	Local market visit	4	13.33 %
Socio-Emotional	To familiarize with important offices	13	43.33 %	Visit to local markets & monuments	23	76.67 %
	Greetings to elders & friends	13	43.33 %	Field visit for collection	23	76.67 %
Cognitive	Colouring & joining pictures	21	70 %	Making home with sand	12	40 %
	Drawing pictures & shapes	18	60 %	Playing outside	3	10 %
	Play with clay	2	6.67 %	Craftwork	5	16.67 %

Fig-4.1 Activity Display Board in One sampled AWC

Fig:4.2 Seating arrangements and activity in two different AWCs

Fig: 4.3Indoor activities organised in one AWC

Table 4.6 depicts various indoor and outdoor activities conducted in Anganwadi centres for development of children so as to prepare them for school education. The activities are categorised into four broad areas such as *Physical & Motor development*, *Language Development*, *Socio-Emotional development*, and *Cognitive development*. The Anganwadi workers have reported their responses on each of the areas in terms various activities conducted in the centre.

Under physical & motor development indoor activities like, singing and dancing activities for physical & motor development area are conducted by almost all the Anganwadi workers (93.33%); playing games with toys and playing imaginary games are reported by one-tenth of total AWCs; and toy making through clay is conducted by only two centres. Outdoor activities, for physical and motor development, like ball and ring game is mostly organised by Anganwadi workers; organisation of individual & group activities are conducted by one third of the AWCs and only 6.67% of AWWs reported about organisation of indigenous activity in the Anganwadi centres.

Under language development, indoor activities such as picture reading & reciting names of flower, fruits, vegetables, plant, animal & birds and telling story & singing song are organised by 90 % and 10% of Anganwadi workers respectively. Besides, outdoor activities such as field visit and visit to local market are arranged as by 70% and 13.33% of AWWs respectively.

Fig:4.4 Role playing by children using mask and colour concept(Story) in an AWC

Similarly, under socio-emotional development, children are familiarized with important offices, and taught how to greet elders & friends by 43.33% of the AWWs. Besides, the children are taken to local market to know the life style, people, behaviours, culture by three-fourth of AWWs.

The indoor activities such as colouring & joining pictures, and drawing pictures & shapes, for cognitive development of children, are organised in the AWCs by ≥ 60.00% of AWWs. Playing with clay is found to be given least priority. Outdoor activities include making home with sand and craftwork is organised by 40% and 16.67% of AWWs respectively. *Playing with clay, sand and involving in other craft related activities are useful during early childhood period. It is crucial in sensory motor development which leads to higher cognitive development. Experiences in such outdoor activities have to be given greater importance for children from tribal community as they naturally live close to nature. As a beginning stage into school, it is necessary to conducted context specific games but it is observed that such activities are organised by least number of centres.*

Table-4.7: Play Materials used by AWWs for Activity Session (N= 30)

Sl. No.	Kinds of Play Materials	F	Percentages of Responses
1	Self made	12	40 %
2	Provided by Organisation	21	70 %
3	Provided by Community	0	0 %
4	Collected by Teachers	7	23.33 %
5	Collected by Students	0	0 %

Table-4.8: Age wise conduction of activities and use of materials based on Interest as perceived by AWWs

Age wise conduction of activities			use of materials based on interest		
All the time	Sometimes	Never	All of them	Some of them	None
7 (23.33%)	15 (50%)	8 (26.66%)	3 (10%)	17 (56.66%)	10 (33.33%)

Table-4.9: Planning of Activities by Anganwadi Workers

(N = 30)

Planning of Activities		If Yes, frequency					
Yes	No	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Half yearly	Yearly
30	0	28 (98.33%)	2 (6.66%)	0	0	0	0

Table – 4.10: Support of the Community / Parents to run the Centre as perceived by AWWs

Sl. No.	Support in terms of Resources	F	Percentages of Responses
1	Material	1	3.33%
2	Financial	0	0%
3	Human	18	60%

Table 4.8 reveals that the sources of play materials used for activity session in Anganwadi centres are self-made, and provided by organisation as reported by 40% and 70% of AWWs receptively. Some play materials are collected by AWWs (23.33%). Table-4.8 depicts age-wise conduction of activities and use of materials based on interest of the children. Age-wise conduction of activities were organised sometime as reported by half of AWWs. One-fourth of AWWs reported that activities were organised age-wise. Activities were not conducted

keeping in mind the age of children as reported by one-fourth of AWWs. Learning materials were used on the bais of interest of some children as reported by 56.66% of AWWs.

Table 4.9 depicts about planning of activities by Anganwadi workers. As revealed from the table, AWWs plan on daily basis for their activities as reported by almost all the AWWs. From the table 4.10, it is clear, community support / parental support to run the Anganwadi centre is mainly through human resource as reported by 60% of AWWs. Material support from the community/parents is negligible which was reported by only 3.33% of AWWS. Financial support is not received by the community as depicted in the table and it is justifiable knowing the background of people living in the location. The fact that people are involving in the programme itself is encouraging, and that is the main support expected from the community towards education of its children.

Table -4.11: Attendance of Children with special needs as reported by AWWs

Regular Attendance of Differently abled Children		Percentage of Responses	If yes, Extra Care Taken by the Anganwadi Workers
No	2	100	Paid more attention to the child so that child will get conducive environment to build rapport with other children
Yes	0	0	

Out of 30 Anganwadi centres under study, 2 centres are having children with disabilities one each. One is with speech impairment & other is with intellectual impairment. However, it is found that they were very irregular in terms of attendance. When they came for school the other children were reluctant to mingle and on the contrary they were laughed at. It was difficult to manage the child with intellectual impairment in the class as reported by the AWW. They could not be given the test on school readiness as they were not present in the centre. However, the AWWs said they paid more attention to these children so that child would get conducive environment to built rapport with other children.

Still it is noticed that they do not attend the centre regularly. Community awareness and parental education have to be undertaken to develop sensitivity towards the importance of education and provisions available for them in schools to support their education.

Table –4.12: Innovation Adopted by the Anganwadi Workers

Sl. No.	Innovations			
	Methods	Approaches	Activities	TLMs
1	Simple to complex	Dramatization	Collecting specimens like flower, plant etc.	Prepared learning materials coconut waste, bamboo & ice-cream stick
2	Playing	Creating awareness for health & hygiene	Use of mobile for song and dance	Constructed a blackboard to teach

Innovative activities adopted by AWWs as depicted from the table 4.12, shows that dramatization approach was followed to teach environmental concept and the activities such as collection specimens like flower, plant etc. are being taken up. They prepared learning materials from coconut waste, bamboo & ice-cream stick for the purpose. For creating awareness for health & hygiene, play-method was adopted by using mobile phone for song and dance. This shows that some AWWs are creating an environment to involve children in the activities within their limitations which is a welcome sign and can show the way for other practitioners.

Table-4.13: Efficiency of Anganwadi Workers on organising activities

Sl. No.	Levels of Efficiency	F	Percentage of Responses
1	Very Efficiently	3	10
2	Efficiently	9	30
3	Somewhat Efficiently	12	40
4	Not very Efficiently	6	20
5	Not at all Efficiently	0	0

Table-4.14: Sensitivity of Anganwadi Workers in Handling the Children

Sl. No.	Levels of Sensitivity	F	Percentages of Responses
1	Very Sensitively	13	43.33%
2	Somewhat Sensitively	14	46.66%
3	Not very Sensitively	3	10%
4	Not at all Sensitively	0	0%

Table 4.134 and 4.14 depict how efficiently Anganwadi workers were organising activities and how sensitively they were handling the Children. The efficiency they had reported on organisation of different curricular activities in a rating scale. It can be observed that no one were in the category of not at all efficient and not at all sensitive. It was evident that the AWWs were efficiently organising the activities. They were handling the children very sensitively and very few were observed to be not very sensitively.*However it is crucial to note here that handling children at this stage has an impact in their future development. So it would be necessary to provide certain guidance on importance and ways of dealing with situation appropriately.*

Table-4.15: Linkages of School with Pre-School as reported by primary school Teachers (N=30)

Linkages of School with Neighbourhood Pre-School		If Yes, Types of Linkages
Yes	28 (93.33%)	During admission administrative linkage is observed; celebration of independence & republic day are managed together; In the same building or campus Anganwadi and schools, Anganwadi worker occasionally visit to school

The linkage of primary school with neighbouring pre-school is reported in the table 4.15. Almost all the teachers reported that there was strong linkage of school education with pre-school education. They celebrate independence & republic day together, some administrative supports were provided during admission of children in pre-school centres. In some cases, Anganwadi centres and primary schools function in same building. Anganwadi workers visit primary schools for academic and non-academic assistance. *This indicates a strong linkage between school and preschool which is a positive sign in preschool education.*

Table-4.16: Attendance of Pre-School Children according to Parents (N=38)

Sl. No.	Frequency of Regularity	F	Percentages of Responses
1	Daily	31	81.57%
2	3 to 4 days a week	7	18.42%
3	Once or twice a week	0	0%
4	Once or thrice in fifteen day	0	0%
5	Even less than that	0	0%

Table-4.17: Quality of Food in Pre-School according to Parents (N=38)

Sl. No.	Dimensions of Quality	F	Percentages of Responses
1	Good	32	84.21%
2	Not good	5	13.15%
3	Not able to tell	1	2.63%

Table 4.16 depicted that attendance of pre-school children was taken and maintained on daily basis as per majority of parents. Table 4.17 revealed that the quality of food provided to the children was good and very few parents opined that it is not good. *This needs to be investigated further to see if it can be improved as per the need of parents.*

Table-4.18: Activities performed by Pre-School Children according to Parents (N=38)

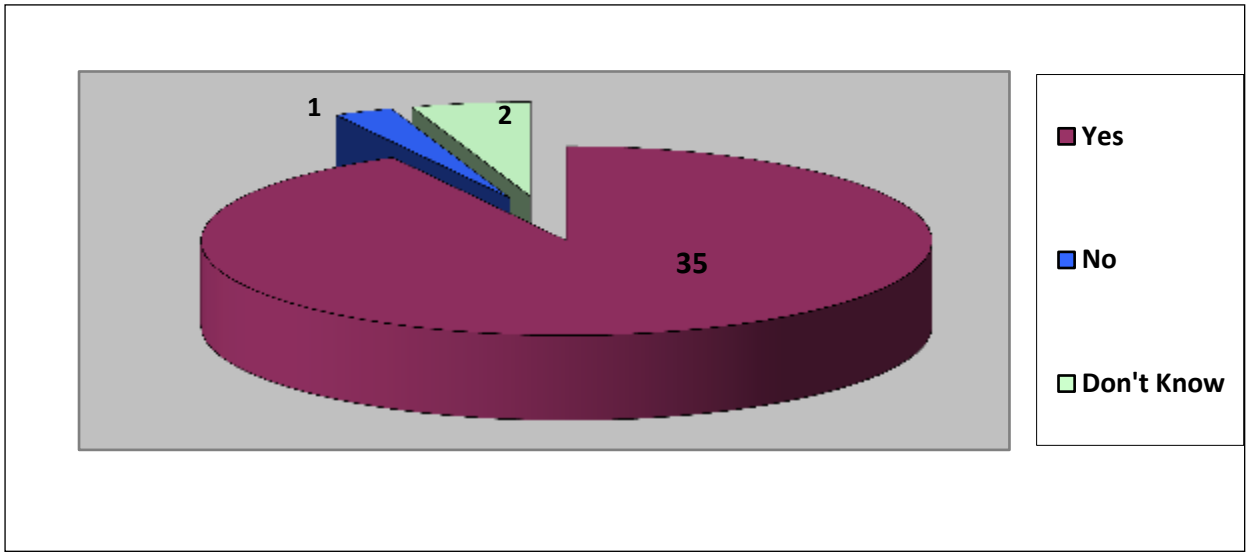
Sl. No.	Dimensions of performance	F	Percentages of Responses
1	Eats food	38	100%
2	Play games	37	97.36%
3	Sings Rhymes, Songs and Poems	18	47.36%
4	Listens to Stories	21	55.26%
5	Draws and Colours	13	34.21%
6	Reads Books (picture books)	2	5.26%
7	Writes/works on worksheets	10	26.31%
8	Does activities organized by the worker	19	50%
9	Plays with toys/puzzles/beads available at the center	14	36.84%
10	Learns to read and write	9	23.68%
11	Don't know/ Can't say	1	2.63%

As evident from Table 4.18, the activities performed by pre-school children such as ate food and played games reported by all the parents. Children were singing and reciting rhymes, songs and poems reported by half of the parents (47.36%); listening to stories reported by 55.26% of parents; playing with toys/puzzles/beads available at the centre reported by 36.84% of parents; Writes/works on worksheets and Learns to read and write reported by one-fourth of parents.

Table-4.19: Health Check up at Pre-School as perceived by Parents (N=38)

	Yes	No	Don't Know/ Can't Say
Health Check up at Pre-School	35 (92.10%)	1 (2.63%)	2 (5.26%)

Table 4.18 depict about perception of parents whether health check-up was done in Anganwadi centres. More than 90% of parents reported that health check-up was done. Only one parents reported as health check-up was not done. Two parents were not aware of such activity.



(Figure-4.5: Responses parents on Health Check up at Pre-School)

Table-4.20: Neatness and Happiness of Children as observed in the AWCs (N=28)

	Happiness of Children	Neatness of Children
None	0	1 (3.57%)
Very Few	7 (25%)	5 (17.85%)
Some	11 (39.28%)	10 (35.71%)
Most	9 (32.14%)	10 (35.71%)
All	1 (3.57%)	2 (7.14%)

One-fourth of teachers reported as very few children were happy in AWCs. Forty per cent of teachers reported some children were happy; 32.14% of teachers reported most of the children were happy in centres. Regarding neatness of children, 35.71% of teachers reported some children had learnt neatness; same percentage of teachers reported most of

the children learnt neatness; 17.85% of teachers reported very few children were found to be neat.

Table 4.21: Conduct of Activities for Children as observed in the AWCs (N=30)

Enjoying Activities for Children				Attending to all Children			
Not at all	Rarely	Somewhat	Mostly	None	Only 1 or 2	A few children	Mostly all Children
3 (10.71%)	1 (3.57%)	12 (42.85%)	12 (42.85%)	4 (14.28%)	8 (28.57%)	8 (28.57%)	8 (28.57%)

Table 4.21 revealed observation at AWCs on the orientation of different activities conducted by the AWWs, it was perceived, they were enjoying in doing all these activities for the children as reported 85% in mostly and somewhat. It was found that AWWs did enjoy while organize the activities. The response to the question 'Was the worker attending to all children?' was reported through observation that a mixed status of attending to the children in centers. Equal percentage (28.57%) of AWWs were attending AWWs were attending 'Only 1 or 2' , 'A few children' , and 'all children'. Besides, it was also observed 14.28% AWWs were not attending to all children. *It is evident from the above that majority of AWWs are taking care of the children for their neatness, happiness and academic development. Though negligible, there are some centers where this factor is missing which has to be probed further to bring in the best from the young children attending preschool.*

Table 4.22: Classroom Climate and Display in the AWCs (N=30)

Display of Work	Yes	No
Availability of time table/activity plan	24 (80%)	06 (20%)
Activities as per the time table	24 (80%)	06 (20%)
Any display on the walls of the centre	14 (46.66%)	16 (53.34%)
Displays at the eye-level of the children	15 (50%)	15 (50%)
Display of work done by Children	15 (50%)	15 (50%)

The classroom climate with reference to timetable, display on the walls etc. was observed in all the 30 AWCs. As revealed from table 4.22, the basic displays to be maintained like timetable and activity chart were also not found in all the centres observed. Picture charts and other relevant displays materials are very essential for development of reading readiness. It is to be ensured that all centres do these minimum to create a climate of learning without any reason. Besides, it was observed some kind of displays on the walls in the centres such as art, picture, habits, and cultural content to create a homely and cultural responsive environment is present in only half of the samples taken. Such displays were installed at the eye-level of children in fifty per cent of the centres; and were mainly the works done by the children. In rest of the centres such activities were not observed.

4.3 Issues and Challenges of Pre-School Education

The responses pertaining to the issues and challenges of pre-school education as perceived by the parents and AWWs are presented below:

Table-4.23: Perception of Parents towards the irregularity of their children in pre-school (*N=38*)

Sl. No	Causes of Irregular Attendance	f	Percentage of Responses
1	AWW not regular	5	13.15%
2	Quality of *Anganwadi* education was not good	1	2.65%
3	The child was not interested in going to school	2	5.26%
4	The child has to look after younger siblings	0	00%
5	The child is earning or helping in earning	0	00%
6	Helps in household chores	0	00%
7	Takes private tuitions	0	00%
8	The child is generally sick	0	00%

The perception of parents, whose children were not attending the centre regularly, was gathered on the causes of irregularity by interviewing them. It is revealed from the table 4.22, from among the total parents, only 13.15% parents reported on irregularity of AWW as

a cause. The child lacked interest to go Anganwadi centre as reported by 05.26% of parents. Only 2.65% reported as quality of Anganwadi education was not good. Three causes, mainly, were identified such as regularity of Anganwadi workers, interest aspect of the child and quality of Anganwadi education.

Regularity of AWW is seen to be the reason as per many parents for not sending their children to the centre. It is to be reminded here that in rural areas as both parents go out to work, they look for the AWW to take the child to the centre daily which is a immense responsibility. As per the response of the AWW the absence is due to official visits to collect materials, attend meetings and related issues. It has to be taken into account that AWW during the working time should not be disturbed for other responsibilities which may hamper the child's attending to the centre regularly which in turn is seen as a major deterrent to enrolment/premature dropout from elementary stage of education.

Table-4.24: Distance and other difficulties faced by the Anganwadi Workers in coming to the Centre (N=30)

Sl. No	Distance of the centre from the Residence	f	Percentage of Responses	Difficulties Faced by the AW Workers	f	Percentage of Responses
1	Within 1 km	17	56.66	Additional responsibility	1	3.33
2	1 km to 2 km	1	3.33	Transportation issue	2	6.66
3	2km to 3 km	3	10			
4	More than 3 km	9	30			

Table 4.24 revealed that distance of Anganwadi centre from the residence was within 1 km as reported by 56.66% of AWWs. One-third of AWWs reported the distance as more than 3 km, 10% as 2-3 km. Distance is an issue for facing difficulties in coming to AWCs. Although, more than fifty present AWWs were staying within 1 km from centres. *Other difficulties as reported by AWWs as were additional responsibility assigned to them from time to time and transportation problem faced in coming to centre. The findings form table 4.23 and 4.24*

clearly gives direction to the authorities to make small changes in their routine so that this huge challenge could be addressed easily.

Table-4.25: Problems faced by the Anganwadi Workers in Implementing ECE programmes (N=30)

Sl. No.	Problems	f	Percentage of Responses
1	Irregular Attendance	10	33.33
2	Lack of resources	3	10
3	Additional responsibility	4	13.33
4	Language barrier	7	23.33
5	Personal or others	2	6.66
6	Accessibility	1	3.33
7	Lack of encouragement	6	20

The problems faced by the AWWs in implementing early childhood care and education at pre-school centres were cited in table 4.25. It was revealed from the table, irregular attendance of children was the main problem as reported by 33.33% AWWs. Language barrier, lack of encouragement for them, additional responsibility other than scheduled and lack of resources in the centre were reported by 23.33%, 20%, 13.33% and 10% of AWWs respectively. Other factors such as personal problem, accessibility to the centre were also reported by nearly 5% AWWs. *It is to be taken to cognisance that irregularity to preschool centre is an issue which may continue to the cycle of elementary education which may be a huge barrier to reach the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education. Effort has to be concentrated from all the agencies working towards this direction at this level itself through community awareness and building confidence among parents regarding the system of education.*

4.4 Suggestions for Improvement of Pre-School Education

The suggestions for improvement of pre-school education as given by Anganwadi workers, teachers and parents are presented below:

Table 4.26: Suggestions given by the Anganwadi Workers for the improvement of Pre-School Education

Suggestions		% of responses
1	Parents involvement	16.66
2	Additional staff & resources	56.66
3	More funding	6.66
4	Motivating the parents to send child to PSE	10
5	By getting more Training	3.33
6	Emphasized on activity based learning	18.42
7	Basic reading, writing & number should be taught	34.21
8	Regularity (worker should be given less administrative work)	13.15
9	Privatization of functionaries	2.63
10	Education should take place	5.26
11	No suggestions	26.31

Table 4.27: Suggestions given by Teachers for bringing children from ST community, Disability and Girls to Pre-school School Education

Sl. No.	Suggestions bringing children from ST community, Disability and Girls to PSE	% of Responses
1	Stakeholders should be made aware of the government facilities so that child get benefited	50
2	Teacher should get trained to carter the needs and should able to promote awareness	21.42
3	Infrastructure to be improved	17.85

Table 4.28: Suggestions given by Parents to make pre-school useful for the children (N=38)

Sl. No.	Suggestions given by the Parents to make PSE useful	% of Responses
1	Imparting Education with playful activity	15.78
2	Regular attendance of worker	10.52
3	Need more resources	18.4
4	Quality & basic education (formal including reading and writing of alphabets and numbers)	31.57
5	Involvement of private parties	3.57
6	No comment or response	21

The tables 4.26, 4.27 and 4.28 gives the details of suggestions to improve the pre-school education by different stakeholders. It can be observed that very thoughtful suggestions have come up which may be discussed and implementation could be tried out by the authorities.

4.5 School Readiness of Children

4.5.1 The analysis aims at knowing the level of performance of children based on the school readiness test. To do this mean and standard deviation is computed and three categories were made as average, above average and below average. The results are depicted in the table below.

Table 4.29-Overall Performance on School Readiness Test

Overall Performance on School Readiness Test					
Below Average (-1 SD)		Average (scores between plus minus 1 SD)		Above Average (+1 SD)	
N	%	N	%	N	%
24	15.89	102	67.54	25	16.5562

The table shows that maximum number of children, up to 67.5% have performed at an average level and almost equal number, around 16% of children fall both under above average and below average category. This suggests that 86% of children are prepared for school as per the items measured in the test used in the present study. The remaining 16% of children will have to be observed for specific skills to be developed before leaving preschool centre.

Table 4.30: Area/Subject wise performance of Children on School Readiness

Performance Areas Tested	Overall Performance on School Readiness Test					
	Below Avarage		Average		Above Average	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Language	31	20.51	63	41.72	57	37.74
Arithmetic	43	28.47	16	10.59	92	60.92
Environmental Studies	32	21.19	54	35.76	65	43.04

The scores were further grouped under language, arithmetic and environment related items and it is seen that language related and environment related tasks are performed better by the students and arithmetic related tasks are found to be difficult for maximum number of children. But the distribution in average, above and below average scores of children on

arithmetic related tasks are showing an unusual trend with maximum children showing above average performance followed by below average and few children showing average performance. This needs to be investigated further to ascertain the cause for this kind of a distribution.

Table-4.31Subject & Competence wise Overall performance of Children on LANGUAGE

Area	Major Competence	Sub-Competence	Level of Performance		
			Below Average	Average	Above Average
Language	Reading Readiness	Matches Letters	41	80	30
		Identifies pictures With sounds	12	44	95
	Sentence Comprehension	Describes Pictures	19	40	92
	Story Telling & Reciting a Rhyme	Story Telling & Reciting a Rhyme	89	35	27
	Listening Comprehension	Listening Comprehension	17	102	32
		Following Instruction	7	75	69

In the preschool years children's language and communication skills grow by leaps and bounds. These early childhood years are characterized as the sensitive or critical period for language development when children must be "immersed" in a rich language environment to be able to develop these skills optimally. Language and communication skills are important not only in themselves, but have significant implications across other domains of development and learning too, since language is integral to emotional, social and cognitive development. Language development activities and experiences, thus, form an important part of any developmentally appropriate ECE curriculum. Language development activities at the preschool stage are linked primarily to development of the four language skills of listening, speaking, and readiness for reading and for writing.

In the language related items, maximum number of children are seen to be performing at below average level in storytelling and recitation, which calls for attention of teachers to give more importance to this area in preschool. Story and rhyme is found to be important

activities to develop listening and expression skills. Identifying pictures with sound and describing picture along with following instruction are seen to be performed well by many children.

Storytelling is universally a favourite activity of children, with a great deal of significance for not only language learning but also for social and cognitive development of children, in terms of understanding social relationships and learning to think sequentially. Guided language and vocabulary games need to be organized in the preschool classroom to expand children's vocabulary and enhance their expressive skills.

Table 4.32: Subject & Competence wise Overall performance of Children on Arithmetic

Area	Major Competence	Sub-Competence	Level of Performance		
			Below Average	Average	Above Average
Arithmetic	Pre-number concept	Identifies more numbers (goats), Identifies less numbers (mangoes)	2	26	123
	Sequential Thinking	Describe the sequence in words, Identified the sequence only by pointing the pictures	83	06	62

The concept of more and less is seen to be mastered by maximum number of children whereas sequencing is found to be difficult to many children. However, it could be noticed that many children have performed this item at an above average level also. Sequential thinking is a difficult task developing slowly among many children in the developmental stage which has been recorded in earlier researches too (Kaul, 1992;Wells,1985).

Table 4.33-Subject & Competence wise Overall performance of Children ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Area	Major Competence	Sub-Competence	Level of Performance		
Environmental Science	Classification Skill of Pre-School Children		Below Average	Average	**Above Average**
		Differentiating Edible & Non Edibles, Identifying Fruits and Vegetables	42	53	**56**
	Space concept	Concepts on under the table/ behind the house/ inside the box	21	32	**98**
	Knowledge on General aspects	Concept on General Aspects (Fathers name, village name, Counting of numbers, naming vegetables etc.)	32	78	**41**

The performance of children under the environment related knowledge are seen to be distributed among all the three categories evenly. As the classification items were for fruits and vegetables, it is shown under environmental science. Spatial items are also related to the surrounding of living and hence it is clubbed under the environmental science. However, these skills are very closely related to arithmetic readiness also. As it is found that still many children are seen to be performing at below average level, measures can be taken by the ***AWCs*** *to include activities which would develop these skills. As mentioned earlier, these are pre requisite skills for arithmetic which is crucial at the elementary stage to be picking up arithmetic concepts.*

4.6 Qualitative Analysis

As discussed in the methodology chapter interview was conducted on primary school teachers of the catchment areas to study their views on school readiness of children. The results are presented below.

Table 4.34 Perception of Teachers on School Readiness of Children: this was collected through interview from teachers at primary schools.

Perception of Teachers on School Readiness	Yes	No
Difference between children coming to school with and without pre-school experience	28 (100%)	0 (0%)
Areas where the difference is noticed		
Free from Fear	28	0
Take food timely	26	2
Behave Properly	24	4
Able to seek the help of others at the time of need	22	6
Have some knowledge on basic education, song, play, dance etc.	28	0
Not able to receive anything in class-I	28	0

Without any exception all the teachers expressed that there exists difference among children coming to primary school with and without preschool experience. As indicated in the table above, all the teachers said children will not have any fear to come to school and they have some exposure into formal schooling and know some games, songs and dance. In addition help seeking behaviour, taking food independently and appropriate behaviour are also were noticed by teachers as readiness acquired due to preschool exposure.

B. Perception of Parents on School Readiness of Children

Based on the response of parents the following categories were made as activities catering to cognitive development, social development and language development.

Table 4.35: Perception of Parents on Learning of Children at Pre-School: parents were interviewed on activities conducted at preschool (N= 38)

Cognitive Domain	Percentages of Responses	Social Domain	Percentages of Responses	Language Domain	Percentages of Responses
Draw and color	23 (60.52%)	Overcome shyness	22 (57.89%)	Recognize alphabets	11 (28.94%)
Concentrate on a task	11 (28.94%)	Become more friendly	14 (36.84%)	New words	10 (26.31%)
Recite number names in order	13 (34.21%)	Sharing and cooperation	24 (63.15%)	Speak correctly and confidently	4 (10.52%)
Count	11 (28.94%)			Write own name	3 (07.89%)
Sit at one place at a time	20 (52.63%)			Write alphabets	5 (13.15%)
				Poems and songs	9 (23.68%)

All the activities under the three major domains covered in the interview are being covered by preschool centres.

However, cognitive and social development activities are observed to be given more importance. Some language related activities like writing names is seen to be endorsed by least number of parents. It may be pertinent to mention here that formal reading writing (language) related activities are not coming under the objective of preschool experience. In the earlier analysis of performance of children under the language related items it is noticed that the performance was poorer compared to arithmetic and environment related items in the school readiness assessment test. Thus it can be concluded that activities to develop language competencies are not sufficient in the AWs in the location taken for study.

School Readiness of Children as observed for the purpose of the study

Observation of Behavioural Aspects of Children: based on the observation schedule, the behaviour present with reference to frequency and intensity of the same are recorded and analysed. It is presented below for each behaviour.

Table 4.36Observation of the Behaviour of Pre-School Children

Behaviour	Frequency and Intensity							
	Not at all (1)	%	To some Extent (2)	%	To a great extent (3)	%	Almost Always (4)	%
1. Shares with others	**60**	**48**	**33**	**26.4**	**10**	**8.0**	**22**	**17.6**
2. Expresses curiosity and asks questions	46	36.8	25	20	23	18.4	31	28.4
3. Learns to wait for turn	37	29.6	58	46.4	11	8.8	19	15.2
4. Plays with other children	14	11.2	43	34.4	15	12	53	42.4
5. Works with other children	54	43.2	32	25.6	20	16	19	15.2
6. Washes hand before and after meal	27	21.6	61	48.8	13	10.4	24	19.2
7. Does his/her work independently	21	16.8	50	40	35	28	19	15.2
8. Balances body using limbs freely	12	9.6	39	31.2	27	21.6	**47**	**37.6**
9. Greets teachers / friends	51	40.8	24	19.2	20	16	**30**	**24**
10. Listens attentively to story with appropriate facial expressions.	29	23.2	53	42.4	21	16.8	**22**	**17.6**

The table above shows that all the listed behaviours to be observed were present among children observed in the preschool centres. *Maximum number of children were found to be at the 'not at all' category, which indicates that many are yet to pick up the skills. The reason for this may also be due to the fact that the time spent observing children for the purpose is limited and the behaviour under focus may not have been exhibited by the child due to lack of opportunity during the period under observation. The positive trend is seen with many children exhibiting the expected behaviour 'almost always'. This suggests that the readiness skills are being picked up and not fully formed among all the children.*

Chapter-V

MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

Based on the analysis of the data, an attempt has been made in this chapter to briefly discuss the findings of the study. Conclusions are drawn based on the discussion which is presented below.

5.1 Profile of the Centres under Study

Enrolment of ST Children in ECCE Centres under Study

- Enrolment trend presents a very good picture with regard to the enrolment position of ST and girl children. The enrolment position of ST children is around 70% of total enrolment in the past five years. In the year 2013 -14 & 2014-15 the girls enrolment was 53 % in both the admission sessions where as the boys enrolment was 49 % and 48 % respectively. The number of children with special needs record shows 0-2 in the past five years. However the number of children with special needs in the locale is not known to ascertain whether they remain out of school. This needs further investigation. *Children with special needs among the tribal population are observed to be the lowest in the age group of 5-49 compared to other social groups (Census 2011)*

Infrastructural Facilities at the Pre-School

- There are 64% of the centres functioning in the rooms provided in the schools only. Only one centre is running in the own building of the centre. The rest of the centres are functioning in the corridor of a community Members house, Rooms provided by the Community Members and corridor of the school (11% each)

- Around 86% of the centres have the easy access to road and connected well to the main roads and it is easy and safe for the children. Only one centre has difficulty for children to access and 3 centres are unsafe for small children with regard to access. With regard to the building there are 71 % of the centres where it is pakka whereas only 7 % of the centres have kachha and 20% have semi pakka buildings.
- There are two anganwadi centres having more than 2 rooms for play activities of the children and 89% of anganwadi centres have 1 room for the play of the children. With regard to the outdoor space there are 61% of Anganwadi centres have inadequate space and 41 % have adequate space for the play of the children. Regarding greenery only 2% centres have those facilities. *Less space and lack of greenery may make the children feel congested and this could be one of the reasons for them to show less interest in coming to the centres. Care has to be taken to preserve greenery around the school as it not only gives the feeling of natural surrounding but also creates a healthy environment.*
- In 32 % of centres where clean drinking water facilities are not available in the centre for the children. Regarding the sources of drinking water 85 % of centres provide water to the children from public tap where as 2% of centres use the water from hand pump as well as common well for the drinking of children. There are 68% of Anganwadi centres where toilets are not available for the children. Out of the available toilets of the centres 34 % of toilets are not functional and not clean and hygienic for the children. *This finding paints a grim picture as toilet facilities are necessary for maintaining healthy habit and this has to be developed in the young age. If these facilities are not available children grow up believing that it is alright to use the open space for that purpose and develop that habit. Authorities have to consider this as major lapse in the programme and take immediate corrective steps to facilitate the formation of healthy habit in the young age.*
- For the all-round development during the growing age, play occupies an important place in the daily routine of the small children. In all the centres where the outdoor equipments like swings, slides, sea-saw and water play are not available for the children. Only Rubber rings and balls are available in 78 and 71 percentages of the centres respectively. *Gross motor development precedes the fine motor development*

which is one of the readiness skill. If outdoor play equipments are not provided, it is affecting the child's natural development process. Neither we allow them to be in their natural environment where they climb trees and swing in branches nor provide such a situation in the pre-school centres. In a way we are curbing or creating a hurdle in their natural motor development.

- In 50% of the centres children sit in the mat where as in the rest 50% of the centres do not have even mat for the children. With regard to the toys and pictures 23% of centres have that facility for the children, out of that again 9 % of the centres don't use pictures for the children. Similarly 71% of centres have flash cards and masks out of that 25% of centres don't use flash cards and 70 % of them don't use masks for the children in the classroom. With regard to Carom Board and Musical instruments 85% of centres don't have these equipments in the centres. TV and Videos are not available in any of the centres studied under this project.
- All the centres have the weighing machine for the children. Where as 96% of the centres don't have first aid kit as well as height measuring scale, though both these equipments are highly necessary for the pre-school children.
- Children with special needs are found to be very less in the centres (1 and 2 per 500 to 600 children). It is not investigated further to know whether they are not admitted to AWs, or their number is less in the region. As per census 2011, children with special needs among the tribal population are lowest in the age group of 5-19 compared to other social groups (Census 2011)
- Though there are certain facilities as shown in Part B above, for promoting school readiness in the AWCs, it is not satisfactory with reference to many facilities. Toilets, outdoor games are the barest minimum to be provided for young children which is found to be absent in most of the centres. Bare minimum, a mat to sit in the room is also not found in many centres. Absence of greenery is also a cause for concern, as the location of study is a forest belt with several schedule tribes living. As noticed in the study, some of the centres have all the facilities and the same should be available for all the children with minimum facilities.

5.2 Findings related to Relevance/ Significance of Pre-School Education

- The objectives of pre-school education is perceived by all the primary school teachers (100) is to impart basic education through play activities and to reduce fear of school. Pre-school education imparts fundamental concepts in language, arithmetic and environmental science as perceived by half (50%) of the teachers. Nearly half (42.85%) reported that pre-school education makes acquainted with school structure and system so that the children would not feel isolated at primary school or they would not find any difficulty in primary school. Besides, 28.57% of teachers reported that pre-school education aware of daily chores and health hygiene which were treated as basic to healthy children. Only 14.28% of teachers perceived that self-dependency among children were developed through pre-school education.
- Pre-school education is relevant as perceived by all (100%) the AWWs who deal the children prior to primary school. One-third of AWWs(30.33%) justified as pre-school education reduces fear from children; more than half of teachers (60%) reported as health aspects were taken care of in pre-school education through various health tests/check-ups/vaccinations etc. And only 16.67% of teachers agreed that pre-school education was helpful for school education and learning of fundamentals of languages/letters. It was clear from the discussion that, pre-school education was relevant in health aspects and reducing fear of school. The major objective of pre-school being transition from home to school, it is found that AWWs are well aware of their responsibilities.
- All the teachers (100%) perceived pre-school as important for Scheduled Tribe children because language developments like identifying letters, reading, writing them; creation of interest and motivation for school education; removal of fear from going to school; and providing equal opportunity to ST children were the justified reasons.
- Perceptions on usefulness of pre-school education of the parents whose children were getting pre-school education were multi-faceted. Healthy food, getting a chance to learn something, keeping children occupied and out of mischief, developing basic discipline like learn how to sit in a group with other children, get prepared for primary school are the reasons given by many parents.

- Pre-school is very relevant as perceived by 65.78 % of parents where as 36.84 % perceived as somewhat relevant. It is clear from the table that pre-school is relevant in the sense as it provides scope for learning, reducing fear, creating interest for school education, and provides food to eat.

5.3 Findings related to Functioning of Pre-School

- Under physical & motor development indoor activities like, singing and dancing activities for physical & motor development area are conducted as per all the AWWs (93.33%); playing games with toys and playing imaginary games reported by one-tenth of total AWWs; and toy making through clay is negligibly conducted. Outdoor activities, for physical and motor development, like ball and ring game is mostly organised as perceived by 80.00% of Anganwadi workers; organisation of individual & group activities reported by 33.33 %; and only 6.67% of AWWs reported about organisation of indigenous activity in the AWCs.
- Under language development, indoor activities such as picture reading & reciting names of flower, fruits, vegetables, plant, animal & birds and telling story & singing song are organised as perceived by 90 % and 10% of AWWs respectively. Besides, outdoor activities such as field visit and visit to local market are arranged by 70% and 13.33% of AWWs respectively.
- Similarly, under socio-emotional development, children are familiarized with important offices, and taught how greet elders & fiends as perceived by 43.33% of the AWWs. Besides, the children are taken to local market to know the life style, people, behaviours, culture as perceived by three-fourth of AWWs.
- The indoor activities such as colouring & joining pictures, and drawing pictures & shapes, for cognitive development of children, are organised in the AWCs as perceived by ≥ 60.00% of AWWs. Playing with clay is negligibly organised. Outdoor activities include making home with sand perceived by 40%, and craftwork is organised as perceived by 16.67% of AWWs. Playing with clay, sand and involving in other craft related activities are useful during early childhood period. It is crucial in sensory motor development which leads to higher cognitive development. Experiences in such outdoor activities have to be given greater importance for children from tribal community as they naturally live close to nature. As a beginning

stage into school, it is necessary to conducted context specific games but it is observed that such activities are organised by least number of centres.

- The sources of play materials which used for activity session in Anganwadi centres are self-made, and provided by organisation as reported by 40% and 70% of AWWs receptively. Some play materials are collected by teachers perceived by 23.33% of AWWs.
- Age-wise conduction of activities were organised sometime as reported by half of AWWs. One-fourth of AWWs reported that activities were organised age-wise. Even activities were not conducted referred to age of children as reported by one-fourth of AWWs. Learning materials were used on the basis of interest of some children as reported by 56.66% of AWWs.
- AWWs plan on daily basis for their activities as reported by almost all the AWWs.
- Community support / parental support to run the AWCs is mainly through people in the surrounding as reported by 60% of AWWs. Material support from the community/parents is negligible which was reported by only 3.33% of AWWs. *Material support from the community/parents is negligible which was reported by only 3.33% of AWWS. Financial support is not received by the community and it is justifiable knowing the background of people living in the location. The fact that people are involving in the programme itself is encouraging, and that is the main support expected from the community towards education of its children.*
- Out of 30 Anganwadi centres under study, 2 centres are having children with disabilities one each. One is of speech impairment & other is of intellectual disability. However, it was found that they were very irregular in terms of attendance. When they came for school the other children were reluctant to mingle and on the contrary they were laughed at. It was difficult to manage the child with intellectual disability in the class. They could not be given the test on school readiness. As revealed from the table 4.10, AWWs paid more attention so that child would get conducive environment to built rapport with other children. *Still it is noticed that they do not attend the centre regularly. Community awareness and parental education have to be undertaken to develop sensitivity towards the importance of education and provisions available for them in schools to support their education*.

- Dramatization approach was followed to teach simple to complex concept and the activities such as collection specimens like flower, plant etc. were organised. They prepared learning materials from coconut waste, bamboo & ice-cream stick for the purpose. For creating awareness for health & hygiene, play-method was adopted by using mobile for song and dance.
- The efficiency as reported on organisation of different curricular activities in a rating scale, is observed to be very efficiently by 10%, efficiently by 30%, somewhat efficiently by 40% and not very efficiently by 20% of AWWs. It was evident that the AWWs were efficiently organising the activities. They were handling the children very sensitively and somewhat sensitively as reported by half of the AWWs .Besides, only 10% reported as not very sensitively. *However it is crucial to note here that handling children at this stage has an impact in their future development. So it would be necessary to provide certain guidance on importance and ways of dealing with situation appropriately.*
- Almost all (96.42%) the teachers reported that there was strong linkage of school education with pre-school education. They celebrate independence & republic day together, some administrative supports were provided during admission of children in pre-school centres. In some cases, AWCs and primary schools function in same building. AWWS visit primary schools for academic and non-academic assistance. This indicates a strong linkage between school and preschool.
- Attendance of pre-school children is taken and maintained on daily basis as per 81.57% of parents. As per majority of parents the quality of food provided to the children was good (84.21%) and some parents (13.15%) reported as food given is not good.
- The activities performed by pre-school children such as eating food and playing games is undertaken regularly as reported by all the parents. Children were singing and reciting rhymes, songs and poems reported by half of the parents (47.36%); listening to stories reported by 55.26% of parents; playing with toys/puzzles/beads available at the centre reported by 36.84% of parents; Writes/works on worksheets and Learns to read and write reported by one-fourth of parents.

- More than 90% of parents reported that health check-up was done. Only one parent reported as health check-up was not done. Two parents were not aware of such activity.
- One-fourth of teachers reported as very few children were happy in AWCs. Forty per cent of teachers reported some children were happy; 32.14% of teachers reported most of the children were happy in AWCs. Regarding neatness of children, 35.71% of teachers reported some children had learnt neatness; same percentage of teachers reported most of the children learnt neatness; 17.85% of teachers reported very few children were found to be neat.
- They were enjoying in doing all these activities for the children as reported 85% in mostly and somewhat. It was found that AWWs did enjoy while organize the activities. The response to the question 'Was the worker attending to all children?' was reported through observation that a mixed status of attending to the children in AWCs. Equal percentage (28.57%) of AWWs were attending AWWs were attending 'Only 1 or 2' , 'A few children' , and 'all children'. Besides, it was olaos observed 14.28% AWWs were not attending to all children. It was evident from the above AWWs taking care of the children for their neatness, happiness and academic development. *It is evident from the above that majority of AWWs are taking care of the children for their neatness, happiness and academic development. Though negligible, there are some centers where this factor is missing which has to be probed further to bring in the best from the young children attending preschool. This needs to be investigated further to see if it can be improved as per the need of parents*.
- Timetable was available and activities were conducted as per the time table prepared for the centre as observed in 78.57% of cases. Timetable was neither available nor the activities were conducted on the basis of any schedule in 21.43% of cases. *The basic displays to be maintained like timetable and activity chart were also not found in all the centres observed. Picture charts and other relevant displays materials are very essential for development of reading readiness. It is to be ensured that all centres do these minimum to create a climate of learning without any reason. Besides, it was observed some kind of displays on the walls in the centres such as art, picture, habits, and cultural content to create a homely and cultural responsive*

environment is present in only half of the samples taken. Such displays were installed at the eye-level of children in fifty per cent of the centres; and were mainly the works done by the children. In rest of the centres such activities were not observed.

- Besides, it was observed some kind of displays on the walls in the centres such as art, picture, habits, and cultural content to create a homely and cultural responsive environment in 42.85% of cases; the displays were installed at the eye-level of children in fifty per cent of the centres; and such displays were mainly the works done by the children. In rest of the centres such activities were not observed.

5.4 Finding related to Issues and Challenges of Pre-School Education as perceived by the Parents and AWWs

- The perception of parents, whose children were not attending the centre regularly, was gathered on the causes of irregularity by interviewing them. From among the total parents, only 13.15% parents reported on irregularity of AWW as a cause. The child lacked interest to go AWCs as reported by 5.26% of parents. Only 2.65% reported as quality of Anganwadi education was not good. Three causes, mainly, were identified such as regularity of AWWs, interest aspect of the child and quality of Anganwadi education. *Regularity of AWW is seen to be the reason as per many parents for not sending their children to the centre. It is to be reminded here that in rural areas as both parents go out to work, they look for the AWW to take the child to the centre daily which is an immense responsibility. As per the response of the AWW the absence is due to official visits to collect materials, attend meetings and related issues. It has to be taken into account that AWW during the working time should not be disturbed for other responsibilities which may hamper the child's attending to the centre regularly which in turn is seen as a major deterrent to enrolment/premature dropout from elementary stage of education.*
- Distance of AWCs from the residence was within 1 km as reported by 56.66% of AWWs. One-third of AWWs reported the distance as more than 3 km, 10% as 2-3 km. Distance is an issue for facing difficulties in coming to AWCs. Although, more than fifty per cent of AWWs were staying within 1 km from centres. Other difficulties as

reported by AWWs as were additional responsibility assigned to them from time to time and transportation problem faced in coming to centre.

- Irregular attendance of children was the main problem as reported by 33.33% AWWs. Language barrier, lack of encouragement for them, additional responsibility other than scheduled and lack of resources in the centre were reported by 23.33%, 20%, 13.33% and 10% of AWWs respectively. Other factors such as personal problem, accessibility to the centre were also reported by nearly 5% AWWs. Other difficulties as reported by AWWs as were additional responsibility assigned to them from time to time and transportation problem faced in coming to centre. The findings form table 4.23 and 4.24 clearly gives direction to the authorities to make small changes in their routine so that this huge challenge could be addressed easily. It is to be taken to cognisance that irregularity to preschool centre is an issue which may continue to the cycle of elementary education which may be a huge barrier to reach the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education. Effort has to be concentrated from all the agencies working towards this direction at this level itself through community awareness and building confidence among parents regarding the system of education.

5.5 Findings related to School Readiness of Children

- Maximum number of children, up to 67.5% have performed at an average level and almost equal number, around 16% of children fall both under above average and below average category. This suggests that 86% of children are prepared for school as per the items measured in the test used in the present study. The remaining 16% of children will have to be observed for specific skills to be developed before leaving preschool centre. The scores were further grouped under language, arithmetic and environment related items and it is seen that language related and environment related tasks are performed better by the students and arithmetic related tasks are found to be difficult for maximum number of children. But the distribution in average, above and below average scores of children on arithmetic related tasks are showing an unusual trend with maximum children showing above average performance

followed by below average and few children showing average performance. This needs to be investigated further to ascertain the cause for this kind of a distribution.

- The scores were further grouped under language, arithmetic and environment related and it is seen that language related and environment related tasks are performed better by the students and arithmetic related tasks are found to be difficult for maximum number of children. But the distribution in average, above and below average scores of children on arithmetic related tasks are showing an unusual trend with maximum children showing above average performance followed by below average and few children showing average performance. This needs to be investigated further to ascertain the cause for this kind of a distribution.
- In the language related items, maximum number of children are seen to be performing at below average level in storytelling and recitation, which calls for attention of teachers to give more importance to this area in preschool. Story and rhyme is found to be important activities to develop listening and expression skills. Identifying pictures with sound and describing picture along with following instruction are seen to be performed well by many children. *In the language related items, maximum number of children are seen to be performing at below average level in storytelling and recitation, which calls for attention of teachers to give more importance to this area in preschool. Story and rhyme is found to be important activities to develop listening and expression skills. Identifying pictures with sound and describing picture along with following instruction are seen to be performed well by many children.*
- The performance of children under the environment related knowledge are seen to be distributed among all the three categories evenly. As the classification items were for fruits and vegetables, it is shown under environmental science. Spatial items are also related to the surrounding of living and hence it is clubbed under the environmental science. However, these skills are very closely related to arithmetic readiness also. The concept of more and less is seen to be mastered by maximum number of children whereas sequencing is found to be difficult to many children. However, it could be noticed that many children have performed this item at an above average level also. Sequential thinking is a difficult task developing slowly among

many children in the developmental stage which has been recorded in earlier researches too (Kaul 1992;Wells,1985).

- The performance of children under the environment related knowledge are seen to be distributed among all the three categories evenly. As the classification items were for fruits and vegetables, it is shown under environmental science. Spatial items are also related to the surrounding of living and hence it is clubbed under the environmental science. However, these skills are very closely related to arithmetic readiness also. As it is found that still many children are seen to be performing at below average level, measures can be taken by the AWCs to include activities which would develop these skills. As mentioned earlier, these are pre requisite skills for arithmetic which is crucial at the elementary stage to be picking up arithmetic concepts.
- From the qualitative analysis it was evident that without any exception all the teachers expressed that there exists difference among children coming to primary school with and without preschool experience.
- All the teachers said children will not have any fear to come to school and they have some exposure into formal schooling and know some games, songs and dance. In addition help seeking behaviour, taking food independently and appropriate behaviour are also were noticed by teachers as readiness acquired due to preschool exposure.
- Based on the response of parents the following categories were made as activities catering to cognitive development, social development and language development.
- All the activities under the three major domains taken in the study to assess school readiness, physical, cognitive and soical were found to be covered in the preschool centres. However, cognitive and social development activities are observed to be given more importance. Some language related activities like writing names is seen to be endorsed by least number of parents. It may be pertinent to mention here that formal reading writing (language) related activities are not coming under the objective of preschool experience.
- All the listed behaviours relating to the school readiness were present among children observed in the preschool centres. But maximum number of children were found to

be at the 'not at all' category, which indicates that many are yet to pick up the skills. The positive trend is seen with many children exhibiting the expected behaviour 'almost always'. This suggests that the readiness skills are being picked up and moving towards a fully formed behaviour.

- Without any exception all the teachers expressed that there exists difference among children coming to primary school with and without preschool experience in their readiness. As indicated in the table above, all the teachers said children will not have any fear to come to school and they have some exposure into formal schooling and know some games, songs and dance. In addition help seeking behaviour, taking food independently and appropriate behaviour are also were noticed by teachers as readiness acquired due to preschool exposure.
- However, cognitive and social development activities are observed to be given more importance. Some language related activities like writing names is seen to be endorsed by least number of parents. It may be pertinent to mention here that formal reading writing (language) related activities are not coming under the objective of preschool experience. In the earlier analysis of performance of children under the language related items it is noticed that the performance was poorer compared to arithmetic and environment related items in the school readiness assessment test. Thus it can be concluded that activities to develop language competencies are not sufficient in the AWs in the location taken for study.
- Maximum number of children were found to be at the 'not at all' category, which indicates that many are yet to pick up the skills. The reason for this may be the time spent observing children for the purpose is limited and the behaviour under focus may not have been exhibited by the child due to lack of opportunity during the period under observation. The positive trend is seen with many children exhibiting the expected behaviour 'almost always'. This suggests that the readiness skills are being picked up and not fully formed among all the children.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The 86th Constitution Amendment Act 2002 has altered the article 45 to read, "The state shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education to all children until they

complete the age of six years". Early childhood care education (ECCE) is a critical input for child development. While in long term perspective, it serves to provide a sound foundation for all round development of the child, it has also proved to be an effective input for primary schooling. For achieving universalization of elementary education the school readiness of children needs to be enhanced. As evident from the study the facilities like out door in ECCE Canters need to be developed. The children face problem in listening probably due to language problems and this need to be addressed. In the language related items, maximum number of children are seen to be performing at below average level in storytelling and recitation, which calls for attention of teachers to give more importance to this area in preschool. Story and rhyme is one of the important activities to develop listening and expression skills. It would be appropriate to collate the local specific games, songs and stories, publish it in audio and video forms and made available in pre-schools as per the language requirement. As found during profiling the District, songs and dances are performed as an indispensable part of all individual and communal functions and festivals of the tribal community of Koraput. They enjoy different forms of singing and dancing all the year round. They observe festivals like *Pus Parab* and *Chait Parab* with pomp and ceremony, each for a couple of days. They can be linked to the daily routine of the pre-school in the location. Dance, song and music are a characteristic feature of the tribals. Their inborn talent finds expression in dances and songs like *Dhemsa Nacha, Dundunga Nacha, Laga Gita* etc. This may well knit into the pre-school education to make it more significant. The tribal life in the region is very colourful with simple forms of enjoyment woven in their daily life. A pre-school has to be a bit of home and culture especially for communities who have a closed life like the tribals. Community resource may be utilised for this purpose, by inviting aged members to sing, dance and prepare materials from the waste resource available abundantly. The ritualistic and ordinary ambience of pre-school will not attract a tribal child. It is high time pre-school in the tribal region become vibrant to reflect the culture of the soil and develop school readiness especially to take up formal education.

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Appendix-1
Study on the School Readiness of Tribal Children of Odisha
Regional Institute of Education, Bhubaneswar

AWC OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Instructions: Please fill up this schedule by noting appropriate information, ticking appropriate codes and providing your remarks as and when necessary. Refer to the codes for activities, materials etc. given at the end of the schedule Please use separate sheets if the space at any point is insufficient. Provide your observation at the end of the schedule.

Date of Visit / Observation: [ ]

Time of Arrival at the Center Time of Departure from the Centre: [ ]

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Name of the AWC: _____

Urban/ Rural/ Tribal Habitation

1.2 Address: AT_____ PO_____PIN Code _____

Panchayat_____ Block_____ District _____

1.3 Name of the AWW_____

Experience as AWW _____ years

1.4 Name of Helper_____

Experience in AWC _____ years

1.5 Any other employee in the AWC (please specify the name and designation) _____

1.6 No. of Working Days per Week of the AWC _____ days, Working Hours on each working day: from _____ AM to _____ AM/PM

II. ENROLMENT IN THE AWC

2.1 Age Range of Children admitted to the AWC: _____

2.2 Enrolment in the Center during last 5 years:

Year	No. of Children enrolled					No. of dropouts with reason if known		No. of children from the Center enrolled in the primary schools		
	Boys	Girls	Total	No. of ST Children	No. of CWSN			Boys	Girls	Total
2010-11										
2011-12										
2012-13										
2013-14										
2014-15										

*children with special needs

2.3 Enrolment in the Center during the current year 2015-16:

Age	All Enrolled Children			ST Children			SC Children			CWSN		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Under 3 years												
3 to 6 years												
TOTAL												

2.4 Children's attendance in the AWC during last three months:

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Remarks/ Observations
No. of working days in the month				
Total attendance during the month				
Average daily attendance during the month				

2.5 Attendance on the days of visit:

		Under 4 years of age				4 to 6 years of age				Total
		SC	ST	CWSN	General	SC	ST	CWSN	General	
Day 1	Boys									
	Girls									
	Total									
Day2	Boys									
	Girls									
	Total									

III. INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES AT THE AWC

3.1 Location of the Centre: Verandah or corridor of a community member's house/ Room in community member's house/Verandah or Corridor of school/ Room in the school/Rented house/Own building

Any other (Please specify) _____

3.2 Approach to the center: Easy and Safe/unsafe/not easy

3.3 Building: Kachha / Pakka / Semi Pakka/ Any Other (please specify)

3.4 Facilities / CWSN: Adequate/Inadequate/Absent

3.5 Space for Play Activities:

a. Rooms for play: No. of Rooms..... Floor Space.....

b. Outdoor space: Adequate/Inadequate- specify/describe area approximately

c. Greenery: Available/Not available- describe

3.6 Any other physical facilities available in the centre (please specify):

IV. PHYSICAL FACILITIES AT THE AWC

4.1 Clean drinking water: Available/ Not available

4.2 Source of drinking water: *Private tap/ Public Tap/ Hand Pump/ Common Well /Open Sources (e.g. ponds/Rivers)/others (Please specify)*.....

4.3 Toilet in the Center: Available/Not available

a. Is the toilet functional? YES/NO

b. Is toilet clean/ hygienic? YES/NO

4.4 Floor covering for children to sit (like Dari, Carpet, Mat etc.): For all/ For some /none

4.5 Outdoor Equipment for play: Available / Not Available

a. If available, please state the number and their functionality:

Equipment	No. available	Whether used	Local Culture specific Equipments if any
Swings		Yes / No	
Slides		Yes / No	
Sea-Saw		Yes / No	
Water Play		Yes / No	
Rubber Rings		Yes / No	
Balls		Yes / No	
		Yes / No	
Any other (specify)		Yes / No	
		Yes / No	
		Yes / No	

4.6 Indoor Equipment for play: Available / Not Available

a. If available, please state the number and their functionality:

Equipment	No. available	Whether used	Local Culture specific Equipments if any

Toys		Yes / No	
Picture books		Yes / No	
Wooden/plastic/rubber balls		Yes / No	
Flash Cards		Yes / No	
Masks		Yes / No	
Drawing and Painting materials		Yes / No	
Carom Board		Yes / No	
Musical Instruments		Yes / No	
TV		Yes / No	
Video		Yes / No	
Any other (specify)			

4.7 Health Equipment in the center: Available / Not Available

a. If available, please state the number and their functionality:

Equipment	No. available	Whether used
Weighing Machine		Yes / No

Height measuring scale		Yes / No
First Aid kit		Yes / No

Any other equipments available (please specify):

5.1 AWW's Transactions with Children

Sl. No.	Time Slot*	Dura-tion	Activities Conducted	Organization			Materials Used	Did you see children getting an opportunity to learn/do the following (If 'yes' score 1, if 'no' score 0)						Children's Level of Participation		
				Individual	In Groups	All Children		A.Learnto share	B.Think and answer	C. Express curiosity and ask questions	D.Learn to wait for turn	E. Play/work with other children	F. Rote Memory	Most Involved	Some Involved	Very few Involved
1				1	2	3										
2				1	2	3										
3				1	2	3										
1				1	2	3										
2				1	2	3										
3				1	2	3										
1				1	2	3										
2				1	2	3										
3				1	2	3										
1				1	2	3										
2				1	2	3										
3				1	2	3										
1				1	2	3										
2				1	2	3										

3				1	2	3											
1				1	2	3											
2				1	2	3											
3				1	2	3											
1				1	2	3											
2				1	2	3											
3				1	2	3											

- *Record every 15 minutes (*Use separate sheet if this page is inadequate)

(Activities are Conversation (genral or any topic), Story telling, Rhymes and Songs, Dramatisation/Role Play/Puppet Play, Free play with materials, Colouring/Drawing/Painting, Clay work/Sand play, Guided activities on topics, Circle games (indoor), Teaching of reading and writing, Outdoor play, or routine activities)

5.2 Children's neatness and orientation

a. How many children look neat and clean? None/Very few children/Some children/Most of the children / All children

b. Is the same set of 2 or 3 children answering / responding? Yes / No

c. Did the children look happy and joyful? None/Very few children/Some children/Most of the children / All children

d. Did the worker seem to enjoy conducting activities for children? Not at all/Rarely/Somewhat/Mostly/Absolutely

e. Was the worker attending to all children? None/Only 1 or 2/A few children/Most children/All children

5.3 Classroom Climate

a. Is there a time table at the centre? Yes/ No

b. What is the time frame for which time table is made? Term wise/ Weekly /Daily

c. Are the ongoing program/activity as per the time table? No/Somewhat/ Yes

d. Is there any display on the walls of the center, which are relevant for children? No/Yes

e. Are the displays at the eye-level of the children? No/Yes

f. Is there any display of work done by children in the center? No/Yes

5.4 Overall Observations:

Signature of Investigator: Date: Time:

Checked by:

Name of the Supervisor:

Signature: Date: Time:

Appendix-2
Study on the School Readiness of Tribal Children of Odisha
Regional Institute of Education, Bhubaneswar

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR AWW

Place: Date: Time:

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name: _____
2. Age: young/middle aged/crossed middle age Sex: Male / Female
3. Community _____
4. Address: _____

   _____
5. Qualification: (a) Educational _____

(b) Professional _____

6. Experience (In Pre School Education): _____years.
7. Any Training / Orientation Programmes attended on PSE.

Details of the Training	Organised by	Date and Duration

8. No. of Registers maintained on daily basis:_____
9. Time spent daily for preparation for PSE: _____ Hours

10. Besides PSE, Other duties performed daily:

Details of other daily duties	Time spent	When Performed (*Indicate whether before or after or during the Center time*)
1.		
2		
3		
4		
5		

11. Distance of the centre from place of living of the AWW:_____

a. Any difficulties faced by the AWW in coming to the center?

B. PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE AWC

1. Do you think PSE is necessary for children? Yes /No

If 'Yes' Why?

2. Do you follow any daily time table at the center?

(*Please attach a copy of the time table*)

3. What kinds of activities are organized in your center for the following areas of child development?

Dimensions of Activities (developments)	Activities being conducted	
	Indoor	Outdoor
Physical and motor		

Language		
Socio-Emotional		
Cognitive		
Any other (Specify)		

4. What kinds of play materials are used by you for conducting activity sessions?

Self made/ Provided by organization/ Provided by community/ Collected by teachers/ Collected by children

5. Do you plan your activities before conducting? Yes / No

a. If 'Yes', how often?

(i)	Daily	☐	(ii)	Weekly	☐
(iii)	Monthly	☐	(iv)	Quarterly	☐
(v)	Half-yearly	☐	(vi)	Yearly	☐

6. In what way do the community / parents help in the running of the center?

Material / Financial / Service / Any other (Please specify) _____

7. Do any differently-abled children are coming regular to the centre? Yes/No

a. If 'Yes' what extra care do you take for them?

8. What innovative methods / approaches / activities / materials have you developed/used in this center?

9. What are the problems / constraints faced by you in implementing ECE programmes? How do you overcome the difficulties? Specify the situation

10. What suggestions would you like to give for the improvement of the PSE programmes of your center?

C. ANGANWADI WORKER'S SKILLS (*OBSERVE/* Do NOT Ask)

1. How efficiently is the AWW organizing activities? Very efficiently / Somewhat efficiently /Not very efficiently/ Not at all efficiently

Evidence/ Justification:

2. How sensitively is the AWW handling the children? Very sensitively / Somewhat sensitively /Not very sensitively / Not at all sensitively

Evidence/ Justification:

3. Are the activities conducted age-wise? All the time / Sometimes / Never

Evidence/ Justification:

4. Are the materials that are being used of any interest to the children? All of them/ Some of them / None

Evidence/ Justification:

Overall Observation of the Investigator on the Performance of the AWW:

Signature of the Investigator

Date

Appendix-3

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS WHO'S CHILDREN ARE ATTENDING *ANGANWADI/ PRE-SCHOOL*

Date: _____Time: _____

Place: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____Sex: _____Community: _____

1 What is the type of the preschool that your child goes to?

a. Government
b. NGO run
c. Private

If different children avail different facilities, ASK:

Why your one child goes to _____ place and another to _____place.

2 Why do you send your child to this centr/program?

a. The child gets food to eat
b. Child is kept occupied and out of mischief
c. Child learns something
d. Child learns to sit
e. Child gets prepared for primary school
f. Neighborhood children go to the center
g. AWW comes to collect the child
h. Child likes to go to the center
i. *other (Any specify)*

3 How regularly does he/she attend the *Anganwadi*?

a. Daily
b. 3 to 4 days a week
c. Once or twice a week
d. or Once twice in fifteen day
e. Even less than that

4 Why is your child irregular in the *Anganwadi*?

(only for parents whose child is not attending the center regularly)

a. AWW not regular
b. Quality of *Anganwadi* education was not good
c. The child was not interested in going to school
d. The child has to look after younger siblings
e. The child is earning or helping in earning
f. Helps in household chores
g. Takes private tuitions
h. The child is generally sick
i. *Any other specify*

5 Whether the child performs the following activities?

a. Eats food
b. Play games
c. Sings Rhymes, Songs and Poems
d. Listens to Stories
e. Draws and Colors
f. Reads Books
g. Writes/works on worksheets
h. Does activities organized by the worker
i. Plays with toys/puzzles/beads available at the center

j. Learns to read and write

k. DK/CS

l. *Any other (Specify)*

6 Please tell me if the child has learnt anything at the *Anganwadi*

a. Cognitive Domain

b. Draw and color

c. Concentrate on a task

d. Recite number names in order

e. Count

f. Sit at one place at a time

g. Social Domain

h. Overcome shyness

i. Become more friendly

j. Sharing and cooperation

k. Language Domain

l. Recognize alphabets

m. New words

n. Speak correctly and confidently

o. Write own name

p. Write alphabets

q. Poems and songs

r. *Any other (Specify)*

7 Do you think that *Anganwadi* experience is useful for the child?

a. Very relevant

b. Somewhat relevant

c. Not very relevant

d. Not at all relevant

e. DK/CS

8 What else should be taught in the *Anganwadi* so that it becomes more useful for your child?

9 How satisfied are you with the *Anganwadi/ preschool* experience of your child?

10. Is there any health check up done by the Anganbadi? Yes/ No/ DS/ CS

11. How satisfied are you with the Anganbadi

Appendix-4

Interview schedule for teacher

Name of the teacher :_____

Age: _____Sex:_____

School: _____

Number of Preschools in the catchment area:
_____

General information:

1. Enrolment in class-I and class-II and information about preschool experience

Class	Boys	Girls	ST	Disabled	Total Enrolment
Class- I					
Class- II					

2. What are the objectives of PSE?

3. Do you find any difference between children coming to school with and without Preschool/Anganwadi experience? Yes/No

If yes/no then in which areas:

4. Do you think for ST children Preschool/Anganwadi experience is a must? Yes/No

Why?

5. Does the school have any linkage with Preschool/Anganwadi of the neighborhood? Yes/No

What type?

6. Whether children coming after attending Preschool/Anganwadi learn and adjust better in class-I? Yes/No

   If yes/no then in which areas:

7. Do you have any suggestions for bringing children for the ST, disability and girls to the school?

Appendix-5

Child Observation Schedule

Name of the Centre: District: Block:

Name of the Child: Age: Gender:

Instructions: The investigator is required to observe each sampled child at the centre as comprehensively and as honestly as possible along the dimensions suggested in this schedule. Each dimension is explained below for your reference. The behaviours would be observed when the child is in the centre environment and/ or when the investigator is interacting with the child. While noting down the child's behaviour and the situations where the behaviour is observed, the investigator would make a judgement regarding how frequently and intensely the behaviour is shown along the four categories given in the schedule and put a tick mark in the appropriate cell. Any additional remark may be given in the 'remarks' column. (Not at all: 1; To some extent: 2; To a great extent: 3; Almost always: 4)

Behaviour	Describe the situations and behaviours of children to demonstrate the presence or absence of these qualities	Frequency and Intensity				Remarks
		1	2	3	4	
1. Shares with others						
2. Expresses curiosity and asks questions						
3. Learns to wait for turn						
4. Plays with other children						

5. Works with other children						
6. Washes hand before and after meal						
7. Does his/her work independently						
8. Balances body using limbs freely						
9. Greets teachers / friends						
10. Listens attentively to story with appropriate facial expressions.						

Physical Development and Cleanliness		
Items		Overall Observation
Physical Development	Height	
	Weight	
	Clothes	
	Nails	

Personal Cleanliness	Teeth	
	Eyes	
	Ears	
	Nose	
	Hair	

Appendix-6

School Readiness Assessment

It would take about 35 minutes for administration to be divided into 2 or 3 sessions.

Activity No.	Category	Activity description	Max score	Scoring guideline
Rapport Building	Joining dots	Joining dots in a dotted picture of a tree	---	---
1	Pre-number concept	Child will be shown 2 rows of pictures on a page. First row: pictures of 2 goats and 5 goats gazing in a field. Second row: Pictures of 4 mangoes and 3 mangoes in trees Child will be asked (for first row): 1. What do you see in this picture? 2. Which picture has more number of goats? Child will be asked (for second row): 3. What do you see in this picture? 4. Which picture has less number of mangoes?	2	* Identifies picture with more goats: 1 * Identifies picture with less number of mangoes: 1 * Unable to answer any of the two: 0
2	Space concept	Child will be shown four rows of pictures on a page.	3	* Correct answer to each question : 1 * Unable to answer any:

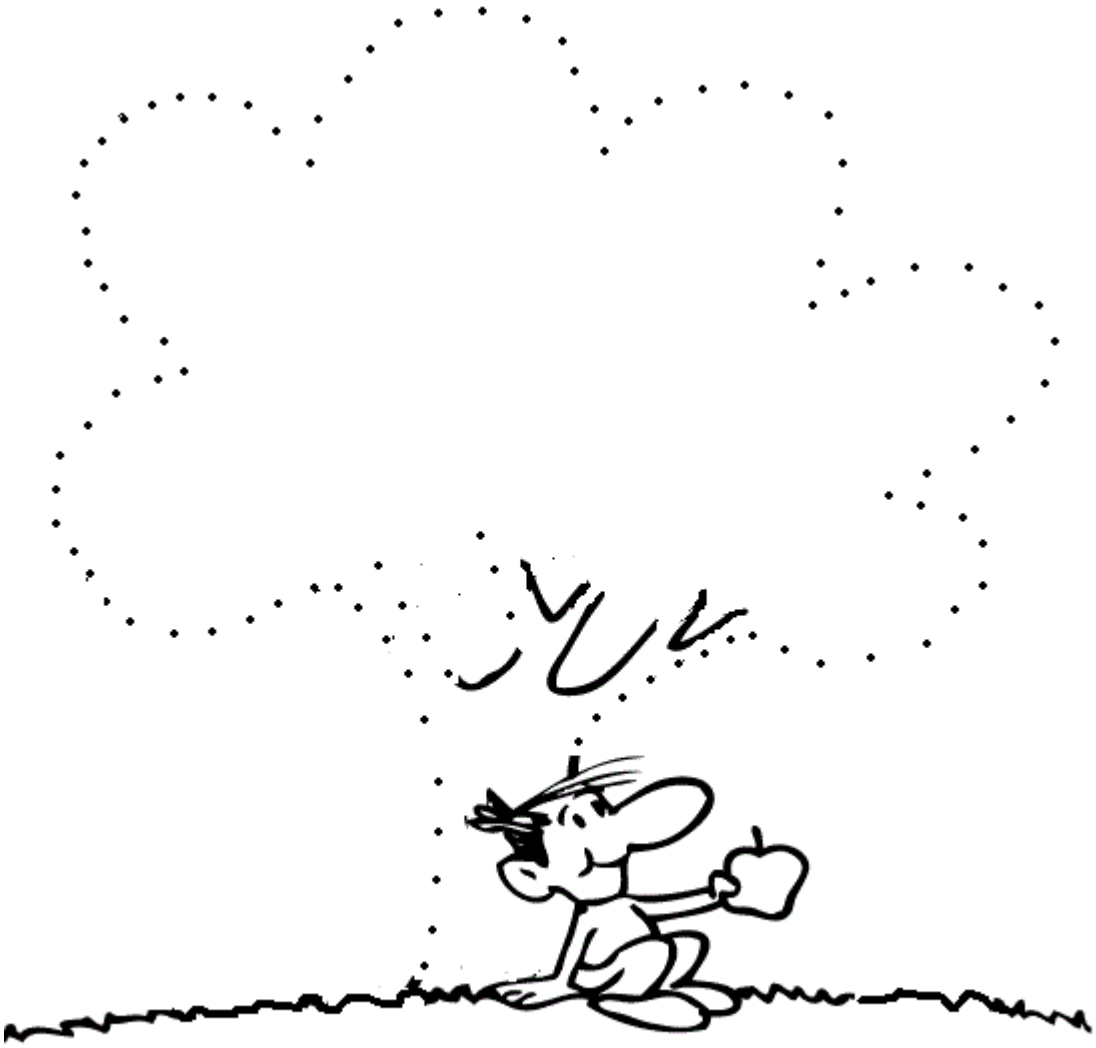
		1st row: on-under (picture of a doll under the table and picture of a doll on the table) 2nd row: in front of-behind (a child in front of the house and the same child behind the house) 3rd row: inside-outside (picture of a ball inside the box and a ball outside the box) Child would be asked questions corresponding to each row: 1. In which picture is the doll under the table? 2. In which picture is the child behind the house? 3. In which picture is the ball inside the box?		0
3	Sequential thinking	Child will be shown 4 pictures of the daily routine drawn on a page. Picture 1: a boy holding a banana Picture 2: boy peeling a banana Picture 3: boy eating a banana Picture 4: boy holding the peel of a banana	4	* Describes the sequence in words: 4 * Identifies the sequence only bypointing to the pictures: 3 * Unable to answer: 0

		Ask the child to describe each picture as he/she sees it. Take away the picture and explain the sequence. After that show the full page and ask which picture comes first, which one would come next and so on.		
4	Classification	Child will be shown 6 pictures on a page, 3 of which are edible (papaya, mango, lady finger) 3 are non-edible (a dog, a man, a tree) Child will be asked: 1. Which are the items that can be eaten? Child will be shown a page with 6 pictures, 3 of which are vegetables and 3 are fruits. Children will be asked: 1. Which items are vegetables ? 2. Which items are fruits?	5	* Identifies all three edibles : 1 * Half-done/Incorrect answer/ unable to answer: 0 * Identifies all 3 fruits and 3 vegetables : 4 * Identifies any two fruits and any 2 vegetables : 2 * Identifies any 1 fruit and any 2 vegetables:2 * Incorrect answer/unable to answer: 0
5	Following instruction	Child will be given two instructions to follow: 1. Touch the tree/wall and come back 2. Take the book from	3	* Follows instruction 1: 1 * Follows both instructions: 3 * Cannot follow any instruction: 0

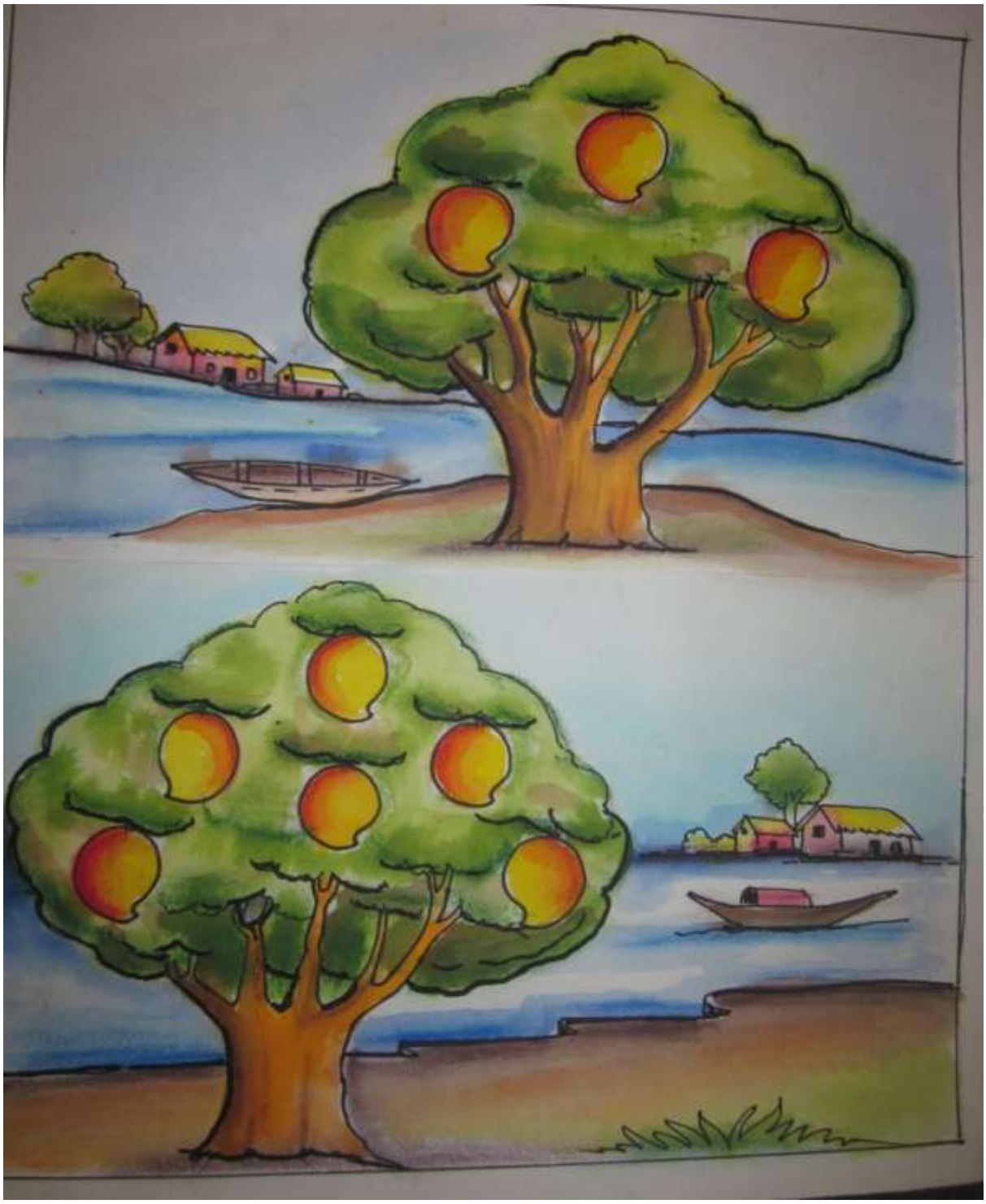
		my bag, give it to ..... (Any child present nearby) and then come back to me.		
6	Shape and letter shape matching	Child will be asked to match pictures of shapes (circle, triangle, square, rectangle) given in one column with those in the other column. One pair would be joined for them.	3	* Joins all the three: 3 * Joins any two: 2 * Joins any one: 1 * Cannot join : 0
7	Reading readiness	Task 1: Child will be shown three pictures (mango, banana, pineapple) and be given the first beginning sound of one of the fruits on the page. He/she is required to point to the picture beginning with that sound. Then another sound will be given and the child would be asked to point to the picture beginning with that sound. 1. The name of which picture begins with the sound '*ka*'? 2. The name of which picture begins with the sound '*sa*'? Task 2: Children will be asked to match letters (*ga, ma, ba, kha)* given in one column with those in	6	* Identifies both : 2 * Identifies one: 1 * Unable to answer: 0 * Matches all letters correctly : 4 * Matches two letters correctly : 3 * Matches one letter correctly : 2 * Unable to match any letter: 0

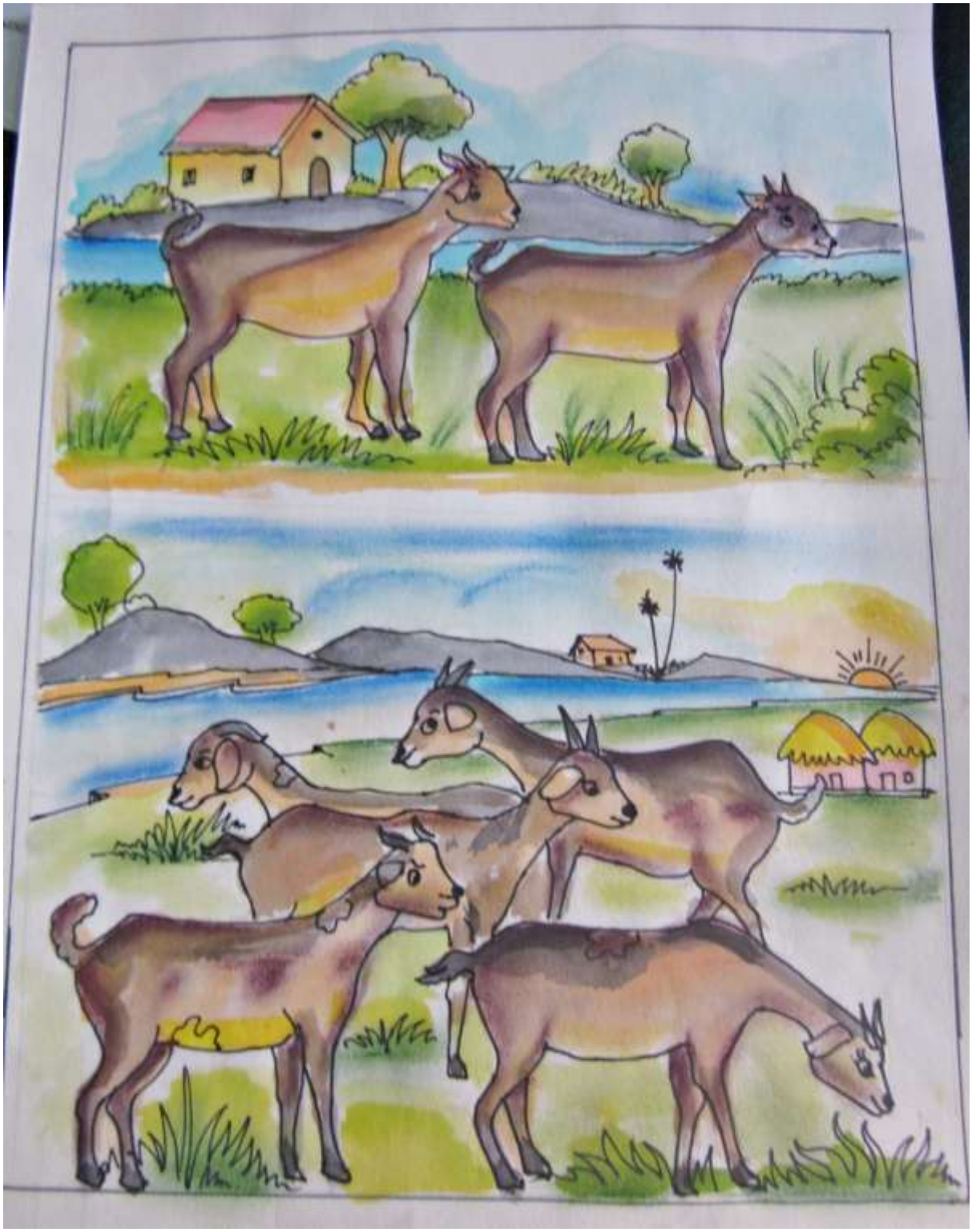
		the other column. One pair would be joined for them.		
8	Sentence meaning	Child will be shown two pictures (Picture 1: a child studying books; Picture 2: a girl eating a banana) and will be asked to look at the pictures carefully. Then ask what do you see in this picture? (one picture at a time) If the child is unable to respond, describe each picture (in one sentence) and ask the child to identify the one that fits your description.	6	* Describes both pictures correctly in complete sentences (Active): 6 * Describes one picture correctly in complete sentence (Active): 3 * Describes either/both pictures correctly but in incomplete sentence (Active): 2 * Able to identify both, once picture is described (passive): 1
9	Story telling/ reciting a rhyme	Children will be asked to tell any story or recite any rhyme.	8	* Tells a story /recite a rhyme with at least five sentences/ five phrases depicting a theme in sequence: 8 * Tells a story /recite a rhyme with four sentences/ four phrases depicting a theme in sequence: 6 * Tells a story /recite a rhyme with three sentences/ three phrases depicting a theme in sequence: 3 * Unable to tell a story or recite a rhyme: 0
10	Listening comprehension	A short story will be told to the child and simple questions will be asked A tiger was hungry. A cow was grazing in the	5	* For each of the questions 1 to 3 correctly answered (1 for each): 3 * For the question 4

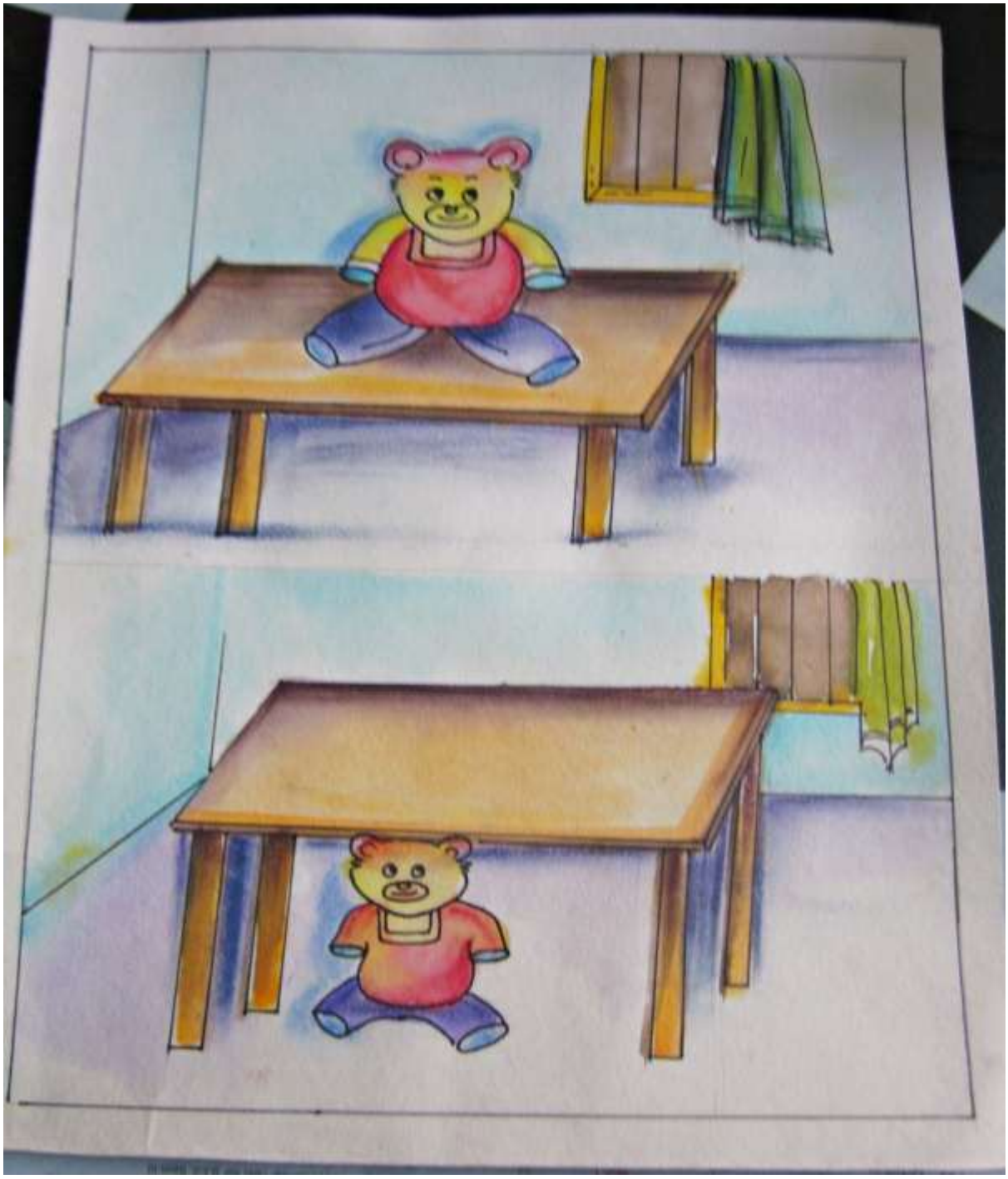
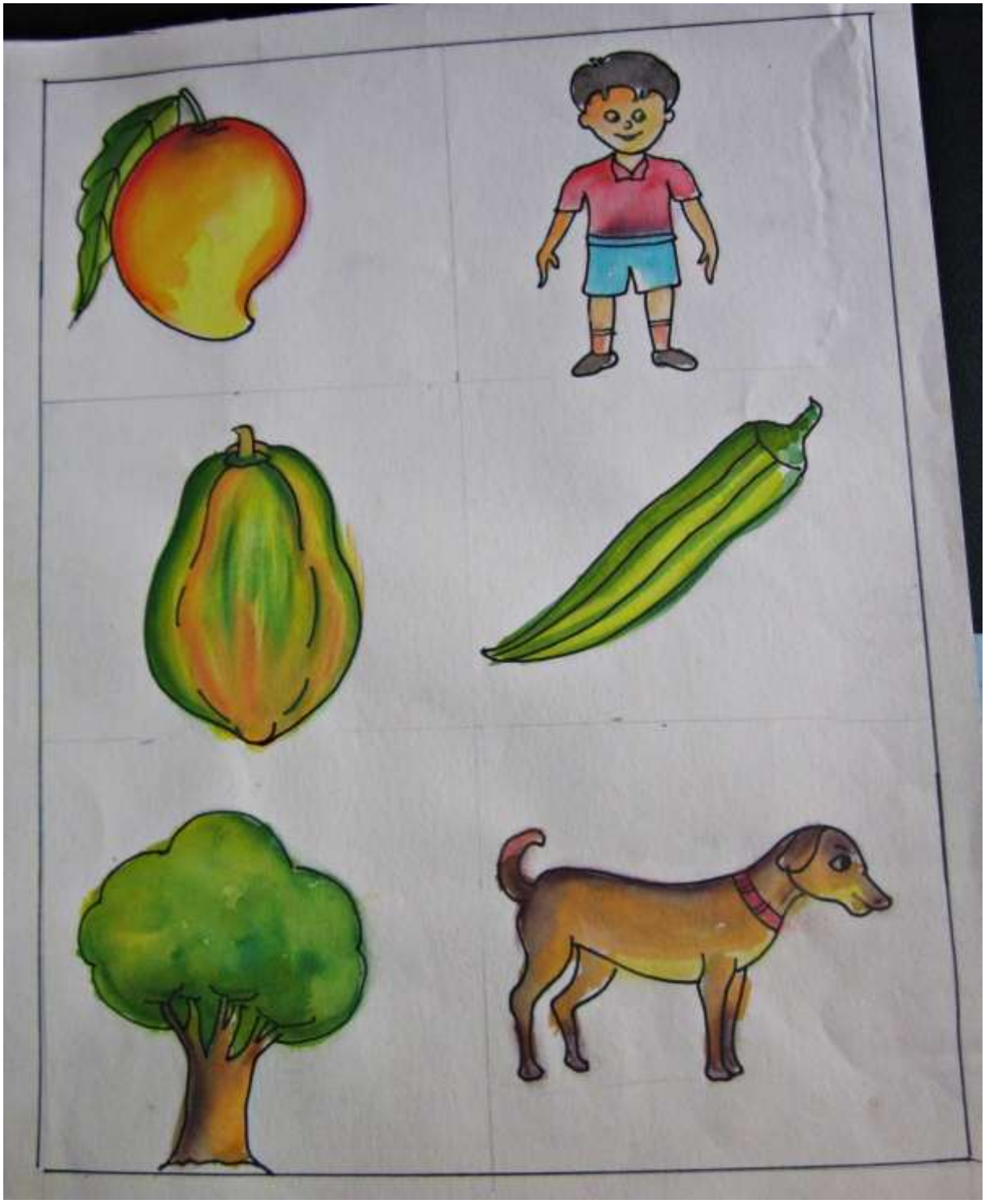
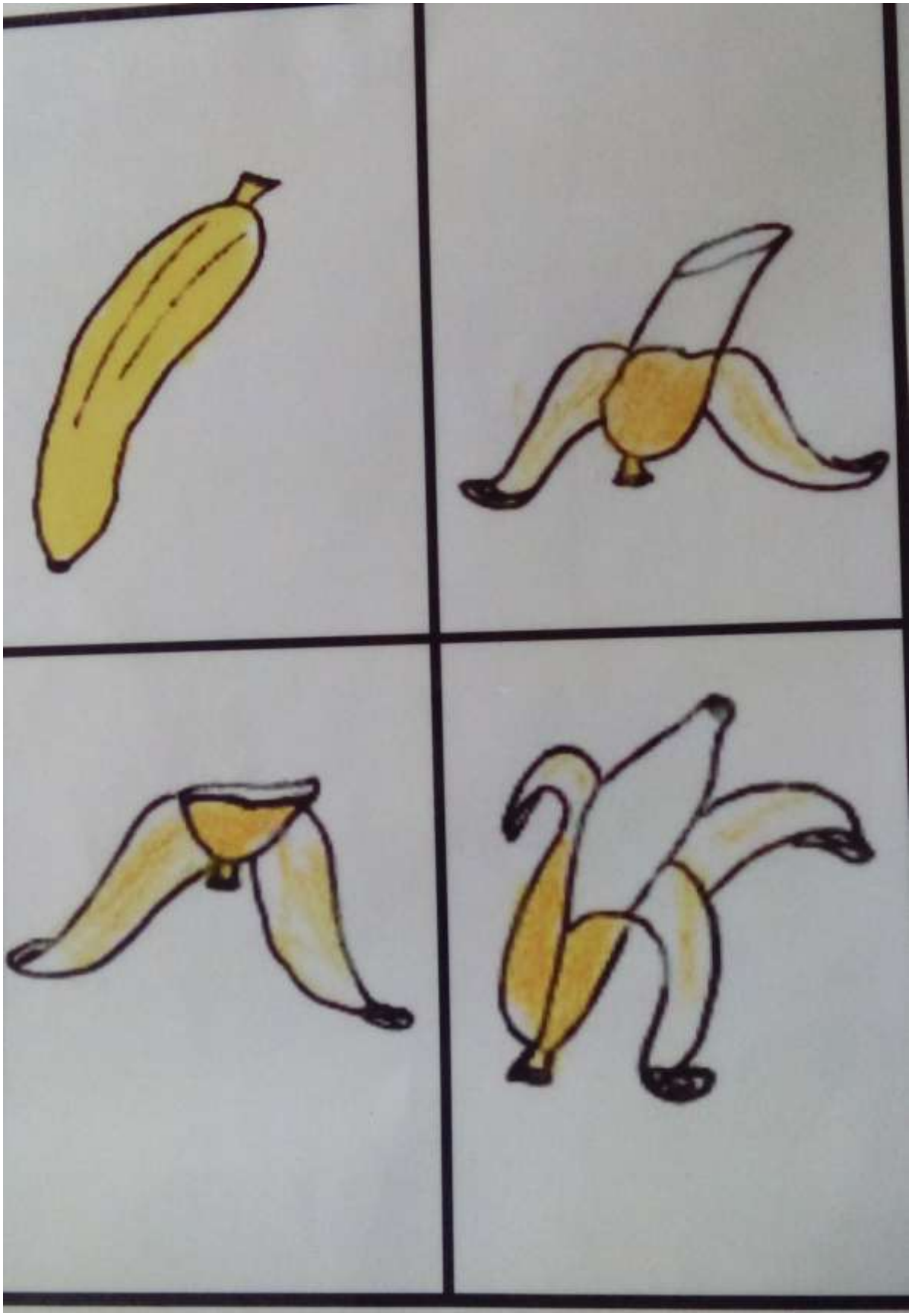
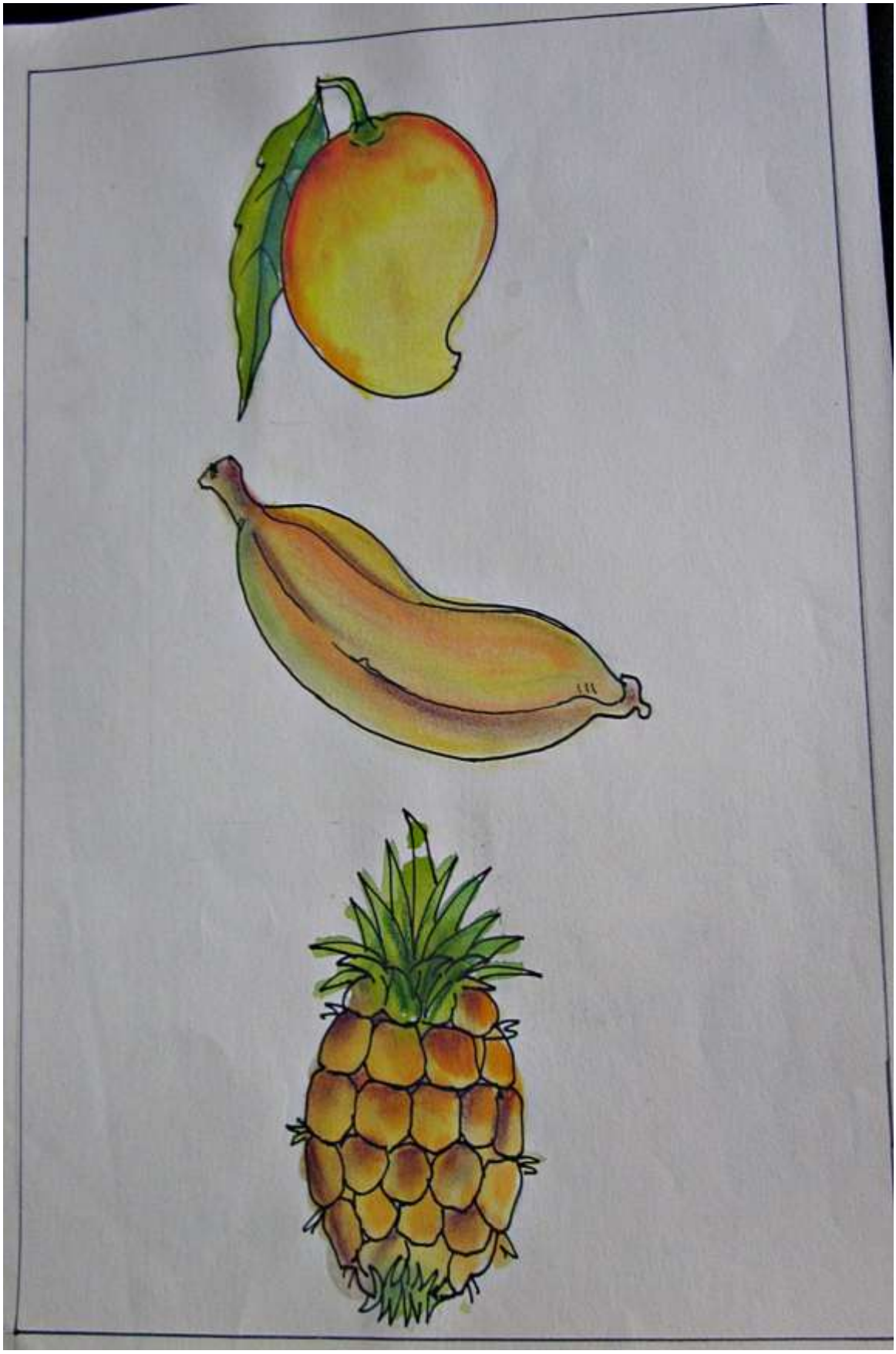
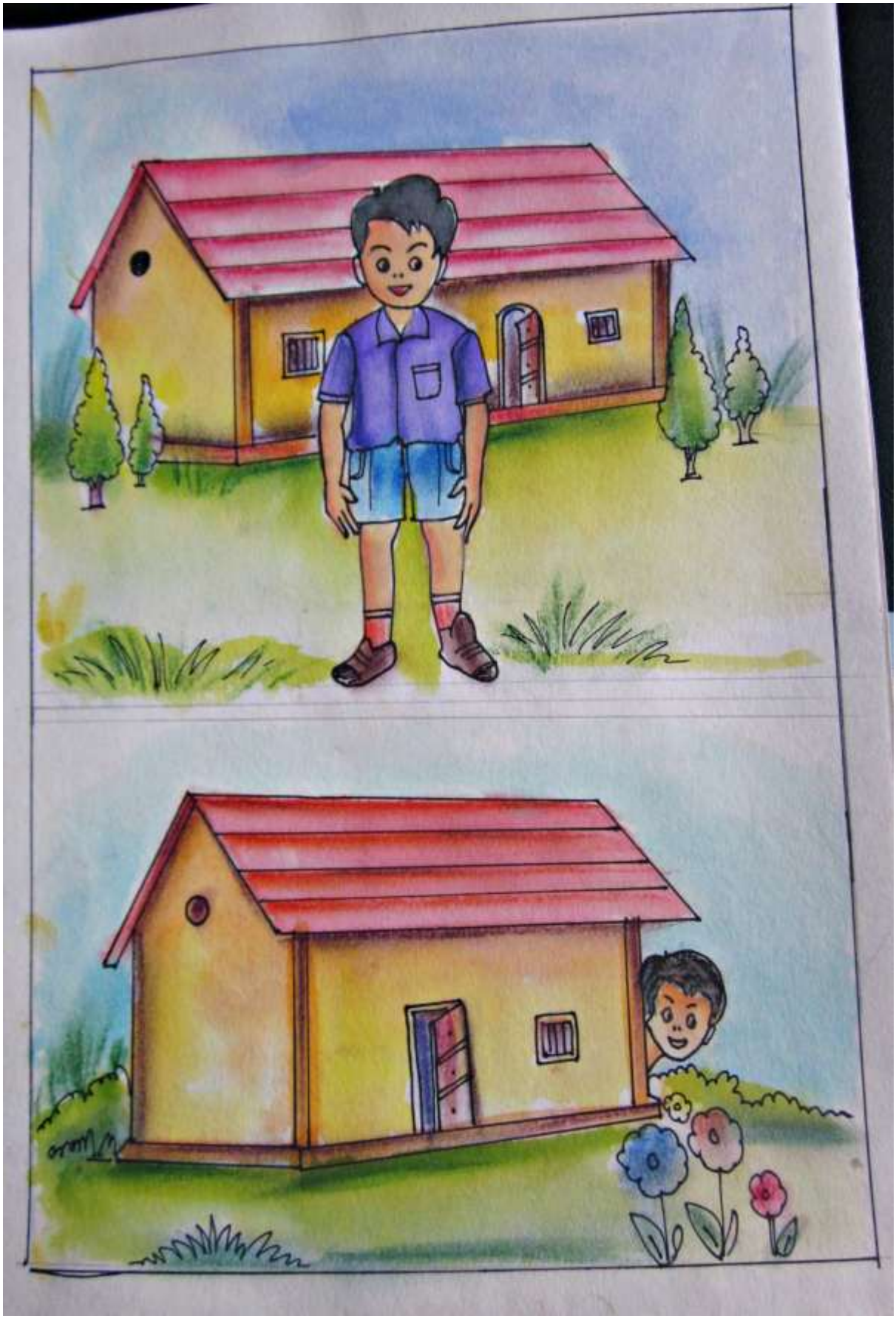
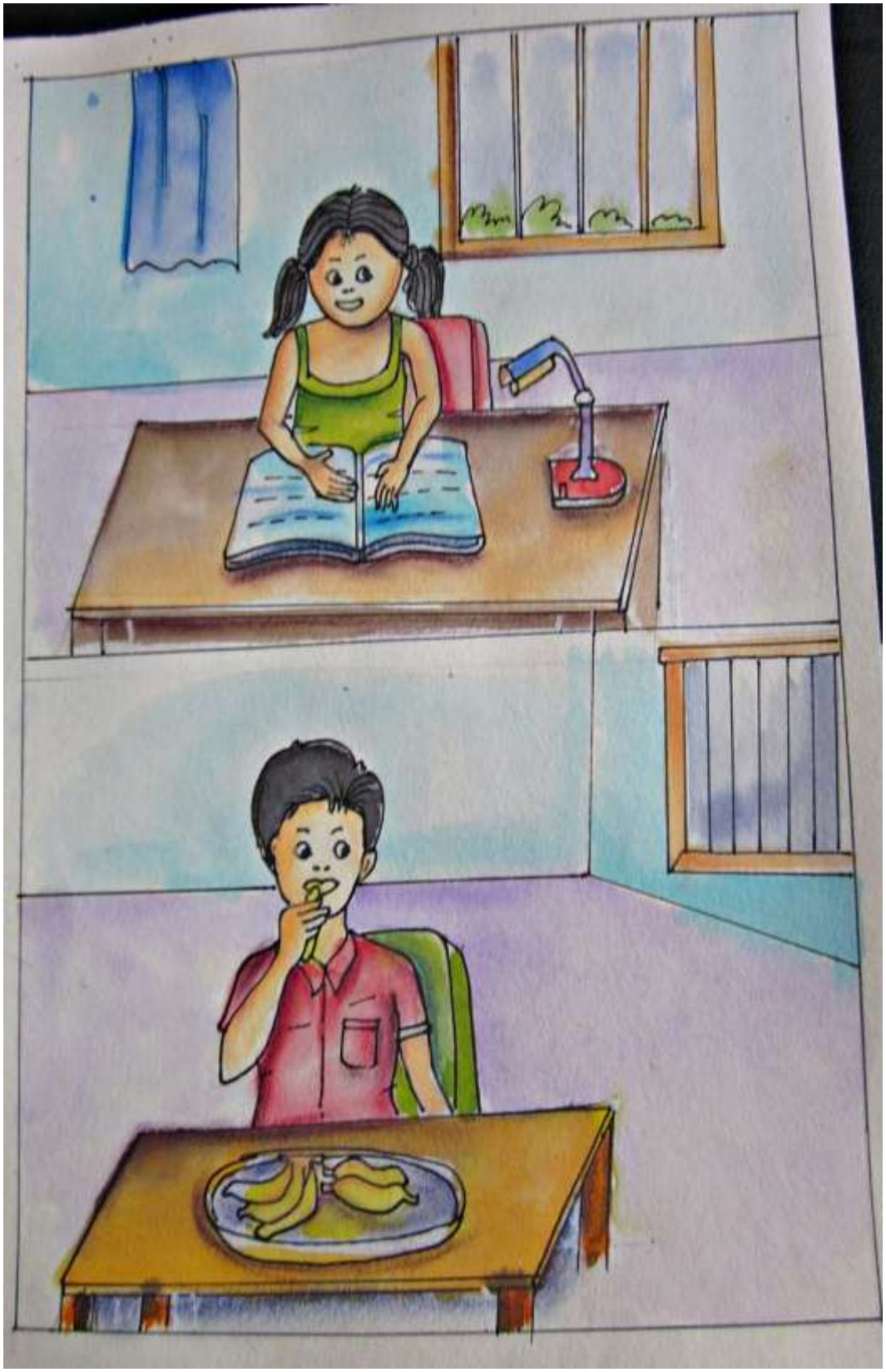
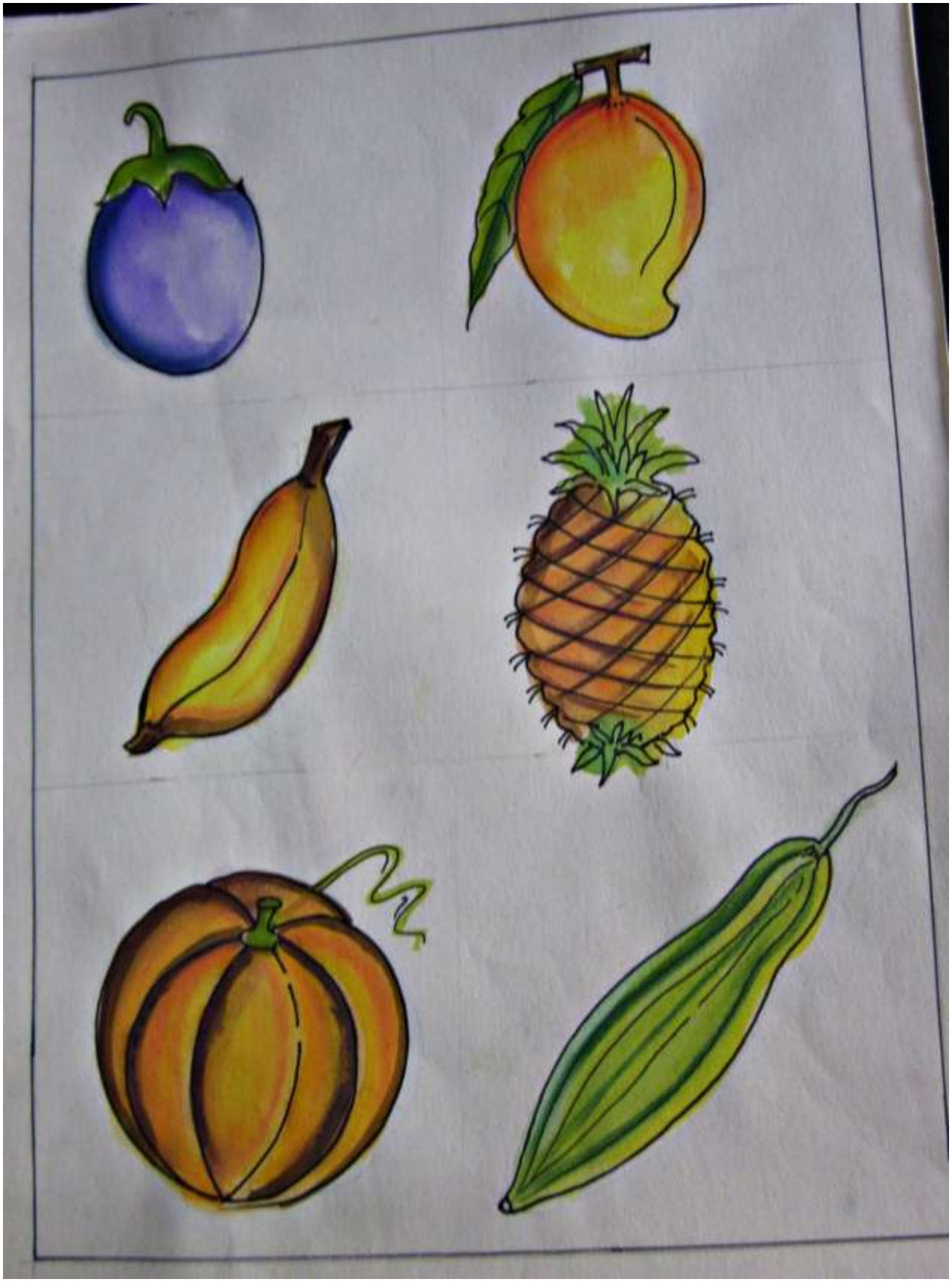
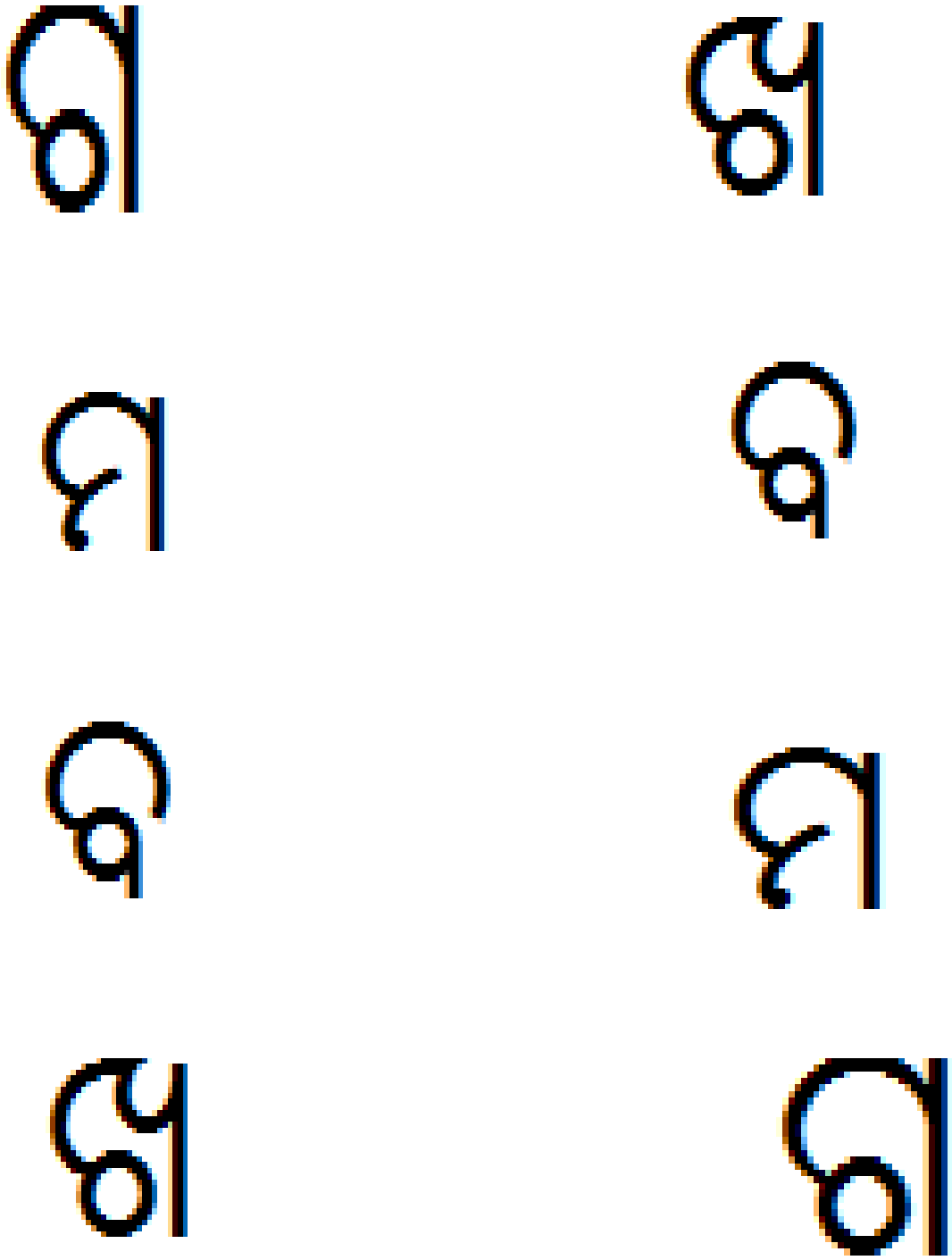
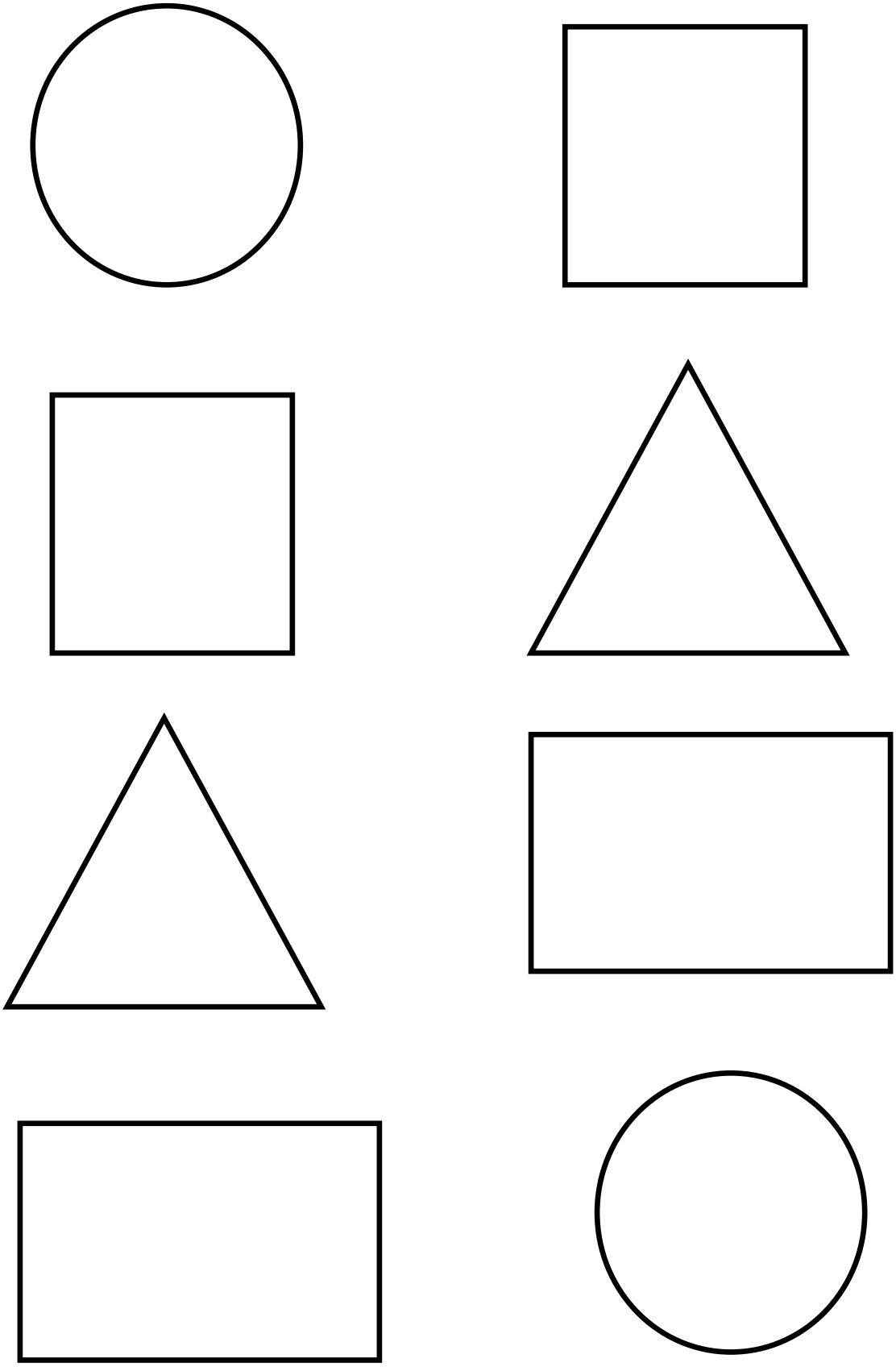
		jungle. The tiger saw the cow and ran after her. The cow ran and reached the village. When the tiger entered the village, people threw stones at him. The tiger was scared and ran away from the village into the jungle. The cow thanked the villagers. Questions 1. Who was hungry? 2. Who was grazing in the jungle? 3. The tiger ran after whom? 4. Why did the tiger run away from the village?		correctly answered: 2
11	General information	Child will be asked the following questions: 1. What is your father's name? 2. What is the name of your village? 3. Count from 1 to 5 4. Show me your right hand 5. Name five vegetables	5	* For each question correctly answered (1 for each) : 6



Appendix-7(Pictures Used for Assessment)



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