

# Study on Issues of Pre Schools-Conducted by Municipal Council, Batticaloa: Based on Manmunai North DS Division, Batticaloa

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**Abstract:** A country is indirectly developed through the direct development of villages, and education is one of the prime instruments to uplift the standard of the village. Thus, the pathways of schooling begin with early education, which is the most essential and unavoidable aspect of human beings, especially for kids; in that respect, preschools play a vital role and lay a strong foundation for the future of children. However, most parents send their kids to private academies for pre-schooling activities instead of having them educated at public preschools, where a smaller number of students study. Therefore, the study aims to reveal the problems at the public preschools monitored by MC and the reasons for admitting the kids to the private sector in Manmunai North DS division, Batticaloa. The mixed method was used to accomplish the research objectives, and 13 preschools conducted by the municipal council were observed as the subjects of this study. A convenience sample of 20 state preschool teachers and 115 parents whose children study at private preschools in Batticaloa were used to collect the data. In order to achieve the objectives of the current study, a questionnaire and an interview were employed as the primary data collection tools. Hence, the result revealed the following factors: Lack of infrastructure (classroom, playground, furniture, sanitary facilities and neatness), lack of authentic teaching materials and curriculum, lack of English language learning, safety issues and careless, lack of supervision and inadequate competency of teachers. Hence, it is the Sri Lankan government's responsibility to consider above issues and build pre-schools with all the necessary supplies and amenities with a strong supervision.

**Keywords:** Batticaloa, early education, municipal council, preschools, private institution.

## Introduction

According to the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, known as a foundational thinker in Western philosophy, "The most important part of education is right training in the nursery. The soul of the child in his play should be trained to that sort of excellence in which, when he grows to manhood, he will have to be perfected." Therefore, primary education, in particular pre-primary, is the most essential step for a child in order to move towards formal education, which is well organized with the proper curriculum. As well, the children get ready to go further in their academic activities through the beginning of pre-school. Thus, the nursery plays an important role in the whole academic system whether private or government. In the Sri Lankan context, especially in Batticaloa district, the state pre-schools are conducted through the Municipal Council of Batticaloa, where the private institutions operate pre-schools in high demand. Even though an ample number of MC pre-schools are in service for each GN division in Manmunai North, Batticaloa, most of the kids are admitted to private preschools for their early education. Hence, the private pre-schools overflow with students, whereas MC pre-schools have a smaller number of children. Therefore, this paper aims to find out the reasons for admitting children to private preschools and the issues in preschools conducted by MC for kids' early education.

## Objectives of the research

- I. To examine the problems at the public preschools monitored by Municipal Council in Manmunai North DS division, Batticaloa.
- II. To investigate the reasons for admitting the kids to the private sector in Manmunai North DS division, Batticaloa.

## Research Questions

- I. What are the problems at the public preschools monitored by Municipal Council in Manmunai North DS division, Batticaloa?
- II. Why are the kids being admitting to the private sector in Manmunai North DS division, Batticaloa?

## Methodology

This research employed a mixed method to analyze and to accomplish the research objectives, and 13 preschools conducted by the municipal council were observed as the subjects of this study.

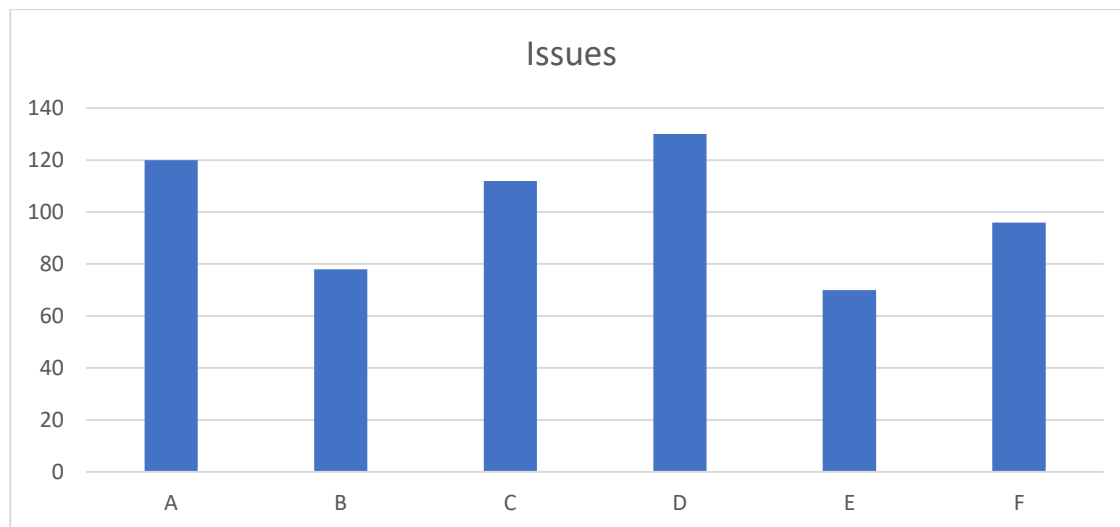
A convenience sampling is used for this present study. The 20 state preschool teachers and 115 parents whose children study at private preschools in Manmunai North, Batticaloa were used to collect the data for this research.

In order to achieve the objectives of the current study, a questionnaire and an interview were employed as the primary data collection tools. Also, the interview was structured for the teachers while the questionnaire was prepared for the parents

## Discussion and Recommendations

This chapter provides the finding of the study and the findings are clearly elaborated as follows.

**Figure 1: Issues reveled from the selected participants of this study in Manmunai North DS division, Batticaloa**



**A: Lack of Infrastructure**

**B: Lack of Authentic Teaching Materials and Curriculum**

**C: Lack of English Language Learning**

**D: Safety Issues and Careless**

**E: Lack of Supervision**

**F: Inadequate Competency of Teachers**

### A. Lack of Infrastructure

There are insufficient classrooms, playgrounds, furniture, sanitary facilities, and libraries-all of which are essential components of a preschool. Adequate facilities are necessary for pre-schools where kids learn and study in order to meet enrollment requirements and motivate kids to attend. For instance, a large, open classroom will allow students to breathe in fresh air and prevent discomfort from sitting and studying inside the small classroom.

Additionally, it is crucial to inculcate in children a positive attitude toward reading from an early age. Therefore, one of the most desired components of early education is the children's library. Moreover, there is no playground where kids can engage in regular games, exercise, and recreational activities that should be offered at schools.

### **B. Lack of Authentic Teaching Materials and Curriculum**

The teaching resources utilized in these MC preschools are antiquated and have not been updated to reflect new teaching methods. In addition to that, educators continue to teach digital native students using outdated methods and curriculum. As well, syllabus revisions are necessary to support students' cognitive abilities, including attitudes and actions.

### **C. Lack of English Language Learning**

The outdated curriculum and the teachers' inadequate command of the English language make it extremely difficult for students to acquire a second language, particularly English, in the MC preschools. However, the majority of state-run preschools do not offer English as a subject matter and do not even set out period for spoken English instruction. However, in order to instill the children with a favorable attitude toward learning a second language, English instruction should be incorporated in a session with the appropriate resources and plans.

### **D. Safety Issues and Careless**

Parents compare MC preschools with those of private institutes where they see high security features like security cameras, a compound wall, and an ample number of teachers in relation to student enrollment. At MC preschools without a suitable fence, it is difficult to find this kind of safety. Also at government preschools, the level of physical and mental care provided to the kids as they eat, play, and study is comparatively low.

### **E. Lack of Supervision**

To raise the standard for organizations, supervision is a tactic and a tool for identifying flaws and fixing errors. Since the private preschools have a well-organized administrative structure, a principal or director is in charge of providing day-to-day supervision. They also keep an eye on the teaching methodology and the resources used in the classroom. But in the state preschool system, it is hard to obtain a role like principal, and there are only one or two teachers to teach the children because there isn't any good supervision available.

### **F. Inadequate Competency of Teachers**

Given their educational backgrounds, the majority of the teachers at MC preschools are either ordinary level or advanced level qualified teachers who hardly hold a pre-school diploma. Furthermore, none of them possess a foundational degree, and their professional credentials are also in doubt. In the meantime, it is evident that the educators working in private preschools are more proficient in their academic fields and they are also competent with their level of English language ability.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, preschool is a child's first educational experience and establishes a solid basis for learning, socializing, and the emotional and cognitive growth of the child. It also serves as a catalyst for the kids' early successes in the classroom. However, parents with low incomes, particularly those in Manmunai North, Batticaloa, are unable to send their children to private preschools due to the high costs associated with such programs. As well, those who face difficult financial circumstances frequently attempt to enroll their kids in private preschools.

Therefore, in order to improve the quality of education, particularly the pre-school education of villages, it is the government's duty to build pre-schools with all the necessary supplies and amenities. Additionally, a commission should be formed to monitor the preschools' activities, to appoint teachers and, to provide appropriate teaching materials and training programme to the teachers.

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