

A comparative study of classroom furniture in urban and rural pre-schools

■ SHIVARTI AND U.V. KIRAN

Received: 01.09.2012; Revised: 21.10.2012; Accepted: 23.11.2012

See end of the paper for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to :

SHIVARTI

Department of Human Development and Family Studies, School for Home Sciences, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, LUCKNOW (U.P.) INDIA
Email: shivarti@rocketmail.com

■ **ABSTRACT** : Furniture is an important component in any classroom which helps in providing a comfortable and functional classroom environment for the children. The functional classroom furniture is a result of its physical design in relationship to the physical structure and biomechanics of human body. Furniture can affect the physical development of children as well as their academic performance. Hence it is necessary that school furniture should be fit to the requirement of school children. To treat the issue of furniture design, the objective of this study was to explore the differences in facilities and furniture design of both urban and rural preschools. For the fulfillment of the objective, five urban preschools and five rural preschools were selected randomly from the selected urban and rural areas of Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh. The evaluation of the facilities and classroom furniture design with their comfortability was made by the self-made questionnaire schedule. The results of the present study revealed that the rural preschools differed in facilities compared to urban preschools in context of their total school area, classroom area, classroom for per-children, enrolment of preschoolers, number of teachers and also profile of the furniture and their comfortability for the user.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Classroom furniture, Comfort feature, Urban and rural pre-schools

■ **HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER** : Shivarti and Kiran, U.V. (2012). A comparative study of classroom furniture in urban and rural pre-schools. *Asian J. Home Sci.*, 7 (2): 464-467.

Furniture is one of the important physical facilities provided in classrooms where the children spend most of their time working with different learning activities (Khanam, *et al.*, 2006). It is generally accepted that classroom furniture need to be designed to allow the children to move in their seats, as it is unnatural to keep still for long periods and localized muscle fatigue and pain can result from postural immobilization. It is required for a pre-school that the furniture should be manufactured to accommodate the requirement of the children, because furniture design may affect the performance of the pre-schoolers and educational qualities too.

Educational qualities are strongly influenced by areas where schools are located and the facilities that are provided to the children in their schools. Recent studies have presented a conflicting picture of rural verses urban pre-school qualities. One prominent study concludes, students in rural pre-school in comparison to urban pre-schools perform less because of affected learning environment and classroom facilities. Many

studies emphasize that the furniture in rural pre-schools is not strong and made using the low cost material without proper finishing, manufactured by the local carpenters. It is not necessary that the furniture is according to anthropometric measurements of children. In rural pre-schools it is often seen that the same size of furniture are used in several classes either in pre-classes or in secondary. In urban pre-schools, majority of pre-school furniture are made by fine wood and by experienced workers. They allocate various type of furniture for different classes. For pre-classes they use small chairs and tables with foot rest and carrying facilities of bags and bottles. On one hand urban pre-schools have sufficient space, between chair and table in the classroom to move, whereas on the other hand the clearance space in room and between table and chair are not available in majority of rural pre-schools. Classroom furniture bought from manufactures is typically not designed to accommodate the dimensions of the individual user including urban pre-schools as well; this problem is quite widespread in many of the rural pre-schools. The reason is