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Sommario/riassunto

This volume makes a comprehensive assessment of the status and quality of early educational experiences at preschool and early primary grades in India. It raises a serious concern that despite high enrolment in preschools, children's school readiness levels remain low at ages five and six, and raises a vital question---are Indian children getting a sound foundation for school and for later life? It addresses three important issues from the Indian perspective: children's school readiness at age five; families' readiness for school; and, most importantly, the readiness of schools for children. India is one of many countries across the global South facing an early learning crisis. High quality early childhood education may be key to improving these outcomes for children, yet little is known about early childhood education programs in India and their impact on children's school readiness. This volume is based on a longitudinal, mixed methods research study which is perhaps the first of its kind in India. The study covers public provisions along with steadily expanding private pre-schools and schools in rural India and provides interesting narratives and insights into the multiple pathways children are adopting in these critical early years, particularly in the context of the expanding role of the private sector. Written in a lucid and narrative style, this volume is of interest to a diverse readership of researchers, educationists and early childhood education policy makers and practitioners in terms of both its design and findings. .
