CHAPTER III
SURVEY OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.1

Related literature represents various aspects related to slum study. But most of them are either descriptive statements or large scale survey types. They are about the physical environment, on conditions of the slums in general or some improvements made by some authorities. None of the surveys concentrate on the nature and conditions of literacy and primary education in multireligious and multilingual slum areas of different cities across the country. Further literature on the issue in question around other countries has been seldom found.

Yet, these describe well the nature of a slum, its peculiar conditions, its environmental problems and the suggestions for improvement by some authorities and others. As such, a review of the literature available seems to be helpful in considering the slums in their appropriate perspectives. For better description several sub­sections have been used on different aspects.

3.2 Origin and Development of Calcutta

Calcutta developed on the Bengal delta with many rivers around it and abandoned swamps and bills. Munshi (1975) also discussed how the river beds gradually rose above the general level of the country...
and created the drainage problem in the city.

Chatterjee (1972) compared this deltaic location of Calcutta with Shanghai of China which is located on the Yangtse river delta and bigger than Calcutta. The land formation in Calcutta had been influenced by the deltaic location.

Spate (1972) noted that on the site between the river and salt water lakes there rose a city of palaces and hovels.

The advent of the christian powers in India created new circumstances for the origin and growth of cities. The first phase of industrialization (1854-1914), an indirect outcome of the British exploitation of Indian resources through this port city provided an impetus to urbanization. After 1860 Calcutta developed from a rural district into a commercial city. The population as estimated in Calcutta in 1901 (Blackwood 1901) was 8,47,796. Gradually a number of British firms came into existence in Calcutta and thus Calcutta had become a commercial town but not an industrial town. (Banerjee 1975).

It has been explained by Banerjee (1967) that the period subsequent to World War I was one of the extensive development in industries and communication as well as the areas. Now the urban character became a reality.
Sirkar (1990) explained that the hinterland extended with transport development. This was accentuated with the development of Calcutta Port through which the traders sent goods to overseas countries. Since the very dawn of this century West Bengal has been experiencing a very rapid pace of urbanisation both in volume of population and urban settlements. So the areas in and around Calcutta with improved communication started to attract population and began to develop as large townships. The economic background was improving.

During World War II urbanisation received further push. Vast hinterlands with rich prospects had inspired its development. Calcutta Port has played a vital role in the development of industrial activities in the eastern part of India in general and Calcutta in particular. Roads and railway development helped industrial growth in greater Calcutta (Spate 1972).

3.3. Problem of migration in the city

Calcutta is suffering from the problem of migration for the last two centuries. As described by C.M.P.O. (1966) the region being noted for its magnetic attraction to the people of the surrounding, neighbouring countries and potential job seekers. Since World War II migrants from Pakistan and Burma moved towards the metropolis in waves and in-migrants from rural areas also in millions causing population explosion in the city.
The partition of the country in 1947 resulted in a large scale migration of people from East Pakistan, major portion of which settled in and around Calcutta for earning livelihood. This in turn, helped to grow industries by supplying workmen or labour class people.

(Banerjee & Roy 1967)

In case of Calcutta, the growth of population has been mainly caused by migration. The famine, the epidemics, the partition of Bengal, Pakistan War in 1970-71 are the major events in the socio-political history of the region that had driven people to the urban areas. (Sirkar 1990).

Large scale immigration of people into the conurbation in general and the city of Calcutta in particular had created various problems and had given rise to slums (Spate 1972). In the industrial belt of Calcutta migrants gravitated into the bustee (Bose 1971).

Sex ratio is disturbed by the migration of male workers in the city. Most of these workers return to their homeland during festival and for cultivation of land at regular interval (Dasgupta 1994).

3.4 Housing and living condition of the poor

For human existence shelter is an essential requirement. Unfortunately a large section of population all over the world run short of meeting these requirement. Due to vagaries of climatic condition,
poverty and allied problems a large section of population are forced to live in the physically sub-human environment where social evils, health hazards, educationally indifferent attitudes, backwardness can be traced. (Parbathamma 1987).

Next to food and clothing, shelter is the most important basic need of human life. Shelter provides the framework where the human should live, work and rear his families. In Calcutta Municipal Area housing is the most important item of household expenditure after food. Due to this acute housing problem there was mushroom growth of sub-standard settlements and proliferation of the slums all over the city. (CMDA 1986).

The bustees are mainly a product of unplanned industrialization as well as unplanned growth of cities in India. (CMPO 1966).

Demographically, it is revealed that almost all the 141 wards under Calcutta Municipal Corporation have slums of varying dimension. Calcutta is now the most dense city in the world with a population density of 31800/sq. km. in developed area and 162800/sq. km. in slum areas. (Civic Affairs 1990).

3.5 The slums in western countries and in India

The slums in Western Countries refer to an area in transition near the central business district as a result of continuous in-vasion and succession of improverished migrants with houses which once were
considered adequate but now are in the process of physical deterioration due to low rents and poor maintenance. But the ecology of Indian slum is entirely different from that of the Western slum. Here in India the slums are "squatter settlement, hutment colony or shanty town" Again the nature of slums also differ from state to state in India. That is why Delhi slums are quite different from Madras or Calcutta slums. The distinctions of slums are related to their city's own peculiarities and types of housing. In Calcutta, the term "bustees" means the rural nature of the housing structures and of migrants who have always largely inhabited them. (Singh 1980).

3.6 Surrounding Problems of the city slum

The problems of this Calcutta as industrial city are many. Slums, defective sanitation, pollution etc. constitute great disadvantages in the development of health of the city.

The development of the city has been haphazard. The factories occupy the best homestead lands and the residential areas are highly congested.

The problem of sanitation involves drainage, sewerage and supply of water in sufficient quantity.

The physical environment or condition of most of the Calcutta slums is inhuman due to poor drainage and sanitation system. Neglect of
sanitation is evidence by heaps of rotting garbage and pools of sewage, while the absence of latrines enhance the general pollution of air and soil. Absence of sunshine in these "death traps" affect the physical and mental development of the dwellers. In those slums 92.3% families occupy only a single room. WHO observed, that poorer people in slum areas have to obtain unfiltered water. Intestinal diseases are common among them.

Over crowding, degradation of housing, health hazards, primitive water supplies, lack of space for new industries, traffic bottlenecks, power shortage, still unsolved refugee problem all are increasing the cost of moving goods and of providing the many services that a growing industrial region demands of its metropolis. (Mukherjee 1984).

Poverty and lack of knowledge in health hygiene added with least sanitary living conditions, have been marked as main factors with the continuation of unsatisfactory condition in the lower strata of population. There are high crude death rate, infant and maternal mortality rate, at the same time high birth rate adding daily increase in population. (1LGUS 1991 Sept.).

There are social and cultural unconformity between the various groups inhabiting in the city of Calcutta. People speaking various languages though live side by side in the city for nearly two centuries, yet they have lived like isolated communities in separate islands.
having no communication with one another. Migrated gravitated in bustees and are closely related to their own people.

Observation had made it clear that though Hindus and Muslim labourers temporarily come closer for securing economic advantage have not so far been able to bridge the existing gulf created by separateness of language and culture. (Majumder, Roychowdhuri & Dutta 1966).

3.7 Status of the slum-dwellers

A survey report (Shivaram Krishna 1977) reveals the status of slum-dwellers in Indian cities. It shows that their status is very low and slum population are predominately from the lower castes and disadvantaged communities.

Slum dwellers have exceptionally low educational levels and low rate of school attendance when compared with the urban poor. (Singh 1980).

Again, poverty has been found to be the main reason why children of a school going age do not attend school though cultural and environmental factors exercise a significant influence on education. The major factors which affecting access to education, literacy and special skills are economic environmental and cultural. (Singh 1980).

Majumder (1977) points out that both the urban poor and rural
poor are lying at the bottom of the social structure and suffering from cumulative inequalities. So the condition of the city slum-dwellers are no better than the urban poor.

The per capita income and expenditure are very low as surveyed by Mukherjee (1971).

Desai & Pillai (1972) explored the relationship between the attitude of the parents and the actual school attendants. Environmental problems as distance to school, lack of school nearby, safe transportation between home and school are factors. They also found that levels of literacy and education found to vary according to a number of factors, specially religion, castes, income, age, sex etc.

There are some important characteristics of slums as had been observed by Desai & Pillai (1990). These characteristics are a) Appearance, b) Economic Status, c) Over crowded, d) Population, e) Health & Sanitation, f) Morals, g) Way of life, h) Social isolation.

3.8 Slum improvement programme

Calcutta's importance in the Indian economy is too great to be ignored. But financial resources for Calcutta's development are inadequate. Calcutta's development should be viewed as an integral part of the state's urban development. There cannot be any detaching of the metropolitan problem from the problem of urban development of the
state. People from far converge to Calcutta in search of amenities which in consequence become over pressed and start to depreciate. With this outlook in view, the task of preparing a perspective plan for Calcutta's development was undertaken to create such dispersal facilities over an wider canvas as would overcome the overspill problem from which the metropolis has been suffering.

Bustee dwellers should be allowed to build shelters legally and within the limitations of building regulations of the local authorities encouraging co-operative Housing Programmes. The non-Government organisation need to be motivated for extension of all possible help to bustee dwellers.

Extension of training facilities should be initiated to the bustee dwellers for proper living and maintenance of their own structures along with preservation of common civic facilities.

Due to poverty, illiteracy they lack knowledge of health and hygiene. Usually the vast majority of the slum people cannot utilize the medical facilities available in hospitals.

Mr. Charles Correa, Chairman of the National Commission of Urbanisation, published his valuable document in 1988 where he desired a proper developmental planning. The commission recommended that -

(a) The urbanisation must be used to improve agricultural performances;
(b) Population control measure must be made really effective both in urban and in rural areas.

(C.M.C. Civic Affairs 1990).

C.M.D.A. took up a number of Projects which can be classified into the following groups viz.

(i) Scheme on sewarage.
(ii) Drainage scheme.
(iii) Improvement of drainage and channels.

Along with other programmes CMDA has undertaken the following programmes -

A. Bustee Improvement Programme
B. Creation of developed land for sites and services.
C. Construction of Public Housing Units.

C.M.D.A. had implemented some of its improvement programmes in the bustee areas like new sanitary latrines, sewarage, water supply, paving of roads, streets and pathways within the bustees in the C.M.C. areas.

(C.M.D.A. 1986).
C.M.P.O. (1966) stressed on the need of a firm conviction and resolution at all levels to carry out the vital administrative and fiscal reforms required to support a sound plan for serving the C.M.D.A.

C.M.D.A. Diary (1994) showed that with financial assistance from Overseas Development Administration of U.K. Government, Calcutta slum Improvement Project (CSIP) has taken up. At the same time CUDP or Calcutta Urban Development Programme have been designed to rehabilitate and augment basic urban infrastructural facilities. Programme for reconstructuring the primary schools community health services have been taken up.

Economic Survey (1994-95) and (1995-96) have given more importance to the development of human capital in our educational system. In most of the states while General Enrolment Ratio (GER) exceed 100 percent, States like Bihar and U.P. and Hariyana have lower ratios. The problem of illiteracy gets more complicated as the dropout proportion continues to be high. Though declining over the years the dropouts are significantly high. As development of India's vast human potential is essential for achieving economic growth, Budget provision for anti poverty programme and education have been enhanced during these years.