CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

A research worker should have good knowledge about the background for his investigation before attempting to a problem in any field of research. Then only he can approach and analyse his problem in an angle converging to the core of the problem with the help of the previous findings and recommendations. Hence, a very effective research for specialized knowledge will be possible only with the help of related literature. “The research for reference material is a time consuming but very fruitful phase of a research programmer”.

This chapter deals with the research studies carried out in India and foreign countries regarding the dropout and stagnation in the schools at primary and middle levels and the relevant matters which serves the purpose of the present review of literature.

2.1 A STUDY ON UPPER PRIMARY EDUCATION IN INDIA: PRESENT STATUS AND FUTURE REQUIREMENTS

N.V. Varghese and Arun C. Mehta, (1998) National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi (INDIA), conducted a study on the present status and future requirements of upper primary education in India. The present study was an effort to analyse implications for provision of upper
primary education facilities to ensure that this level of education is provided to all eligible children. This implies creation of easy geographical access conditions to enroll all the eligible children in upper primary schools, provision reasonable levels of physical and infrastructural facilities in upper primary schools and teaching learning materials in the classrooms to facilitate meaningful curriculum transaction.

This study attempts to make a realistic assessment of the extent of provisions required to universalise upper primary education in India. The study was visualised in two phases. The first phase of the study focused on the existing institutional arrangements to provide upper primary education, patterns of expansion of upper primary education in different states, estimation of future enrollments, trends in teacher-pupil ratios, transition rates from primary to upper primary levels of education and cost estimations to arrive at the magnitude of investment required to universalise upper primary education in India. This part of the study report (Varghese and Mehta, 1998) was based on secondary sources of information and the analysis covered major states of India and was completed in May 1998. The phase II of the study (the present report) focuses more on a direct assessment of level of provisions available in upper primary schools including infrastructural and academic facilities and on the functioning of upper primary schools.

More specifically the objectives of the present study are:

i) To study provision of upper primary schooling facilities in relation to provision of primary schooling facilities in a given locality.
To analyse provision of infrastructural and other academic facilities available in upper primary schools.

To analyse functioning of upper primary schools in the selected localities.

To estimate cost of providing upper primary schooling facilities under different organisational arrangements.

This phase of the study was based on primary data collected from four districts selected from four states of India. While selecting the locations for the study, special care was taken to ensure that the expansion requirements of upper primary education under varying levels of development of primary education are taken care of. The effort was to evolve an educational developmental continuum and hence the study locations are selected from the least developed to the most developed educational localities.

The block forms the unit for the study. There are 8 blocks in the study and these blocks are selected from Malappuram district of Kerala, Bilaspur district of Madhya Pradesh, Aurangabad district of Maharashtra and Muradabad district of Uttar Pradesh.

The following are the important findings of this study:

1. The analysis in the study shows that the pattern of provisions for expansion of upper primary education. The districts which are now educationally advanced were historically well endowed with institutions provide upper primary education.
2. An analysis of geographical access to upper primary schools indicates that there is at least one upper primary school within a distance of less than 1 km. for most of the primary schools. More than 90% of the upper primary schools have primary school within less than 1 km in all districts except one district (Aurangabad). Further analysis shows that upper primary schools are reasonably well provided in most of the locations.

3. Elementary schools are more common in educationally developed localities and independent primary schools are more common in educationally less developed areas. The logistics may demand such varying arrangements since a school also need to be seen from the point of view of economic and educational viability. In general, primary schools are small in age in remote rural areas of the educationally backward states. Hence, independent upper primary schools may be a better institutional arrangement to provide upper primary education in the short run.

4. Many teachers and educational administrators feel that it is better to have primary and upper primary schools together i.e. Elementary schools are considered to be the best arrangement. However, teachers in some of the upper primary schools feel that the subjects like science and mathematics are difficult to handle and therefore attaching upper primary schools with secondary schools has an advantage. They expect that under such arrangements teachers from the secondary schools, who are more qualified, can be drawn to teach these subjects at the upper
primary level. However, this argument is not empirically valid since such arrangement rarely operates at the school level.

5. It seems that even teachers in the independent upper primary schools do not prefer independent upper primary schools. Most of them prefer alternative arrangements like upper primary schools attached to high schools or primary schools attached to upper primary schools.

6. Many primary schools in India are not well equipped which formed the premise for introduction of Operation Blackboard Scheme (OBS). The empirical analysis in the study shows that upper primary schools are better placed in terms of provision of facilities. Most of the upper primary schools are not operating under deplorable conditions as in case of primary schools.

7. Multi grade teaching is almost absent in most of upper primary schools. Most of the schools have at least three rooms and three teachers even when teacher pupil ratios may not warrant it. This is a situation most common in educationally backward districts.

8. Most of the schools are provided with well qualified teachers. In fact, the share of university level educated teachers is quite substantial in all the districts, although the educational qualification requirements for recruitment of teachers to upper primary school are higher secondary level of education. Interestingly, larger share of university graduate and post-graduate teachers are found in educationally backward districts.
9. Female teachers are very rare at the upper primary levels of education. Very few schools have separate toilets for girls in all districts. However, the high inter-stage transition rates indicate that non-availability of separate toilet for girls is not a constraining factor for parents to send their girl children to upper primary schools.

10. Additional investment is required at the upper primary level of education more in the form of creation of additional facilities like additional rooms, physical facilities and teaching-learning materials in the existing schools than in the form of investing in opening of new upper primary schools in new locations.

11. Upper primary schools operate under different managements in India. A pattern that can be generalised in case of enrolment is that the share of enrolment in aided schools is consistently higher than their share in the total number of schools. This is not true in schools under other types of management, especially so in case of un-aided schools. During discussions in the schools, it was found that many parents prefer aided private schools over other schools for many reasons.

12. The input-output ratio, which is an indicator of efficiency of the system, indicates that wastages are relatively less at the upper primary level of education than at the primary levels of education. More importantly, wastage on account of repetition is at least three times higher than that on account of drop-outs.
13. Most of the teachers expressed difficulty in teaching subjects like Science, Mathematics and English. In fact, many of them suggested that they are unable to teach these subjects. In the absence of teacher guide books and adequate training programmes they feel helpless. It seems that the teacher competency development programmes have not kept pace with the changes in the curriculum and text-books. Perhaps one may have to seriously look into the qualification requirements while recruiting upper primary school teachers. Although many teachers are university graduates, most of them had specialization in arts and humanity and hence they are equally ill-equipped as their less educated counterparts to teach Mathematics and Science. Many of them have taken these degrees through correspondence courses while on job and that too at times in regional language medium. Therefore, they are not better equipped to teach English language.

14. At present the headmasters are not in a position to do any evaluation of teachers either through observation of classes through or checking of notes prepared by the Teachers. He/she plays limited role in planning of school activities. Therefore, one may have to develop a system by which the headmaster will be actively taking up these managerial responsibilities. This further confirms our argument for separate headmasters with limited teaching responsibilities for upper primary schools in India.
2.2 CHILDREN LEARNING IN PRIMARY SCHOOL: A STUDY OF WAYNAD DISTRICT (INDIA) – 1998

N.V. Varghese, K.S. Sajeev and M.V. Bijilal (NIEPA, New Delhi) conducted a study on *how much do children learn in primary school*. This study was conducted to analyse the status and functioning of primary schools in different blocks, highlighting the teaching-learning conditions in schools and analysis of variation levels of learner achievement among different blocks and schools were the main objectives of the study. The empirical analysis in the study is based on information collected from 36 schools, 164 teachers, 740 grade II students and 983 Grade IV students.

The study showed that the learner achievement in Grade II both in Mathematics and Malayalam are reasonably high whereas achievement of students in both the subject areas in Grade IV in general is poor. The percentage of student scoring more than 80% in Grade IV examination is 5.9% in Malayalam and only 0.2% in Mathematics. The study clearly indicates inter-school variations in levels of learner achievement. However, in Grade IV the difference between high scoring and low scoring schools is less primarily due to the poor scores in general in Grade IV.

2.3 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH SERIES (SIRS) – NORTH WEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY, USA.

Reducing the Dropout Rate - E. Gregory Woods.

School Completion, Goal 2 of the National Goals for Education, states: "By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90
percent". This high-visibility goal spotlights a problem which has persisted for over two decades. Youth who dropout of school is predicted to be, even larger problem in the future. OERI (Office of Educational Research and Improvement). (1987)

**Who are America's dropouts?**

Different definitions of dropouts, different time periods during the school year when dropout data are collected, different data collection methods, different ways of tracking youth no longer in school, and different methods used by school districts and states to calculate the dropout rate, result in unreliable aggregated national dropout figures.

Various ways of calculating the dropout rate reveal different ways of thinking about the issue. Event rate indicates the number of students who leave high school each year and is compared with previous years. Status rate, a cumulative rate much higher than the event rate, denotes the proportion of all individuals in the population who have not completed high school and were not enrolled at a given point in time. Cohort rate describes the number of dropouts from a single age group or specific grade (or cohort) of students over a period of time. The high school completion rate indicates the percentage of all persons ages 21 and 22 who have completed high school by receiving a high school diploma or equivalency certificate.

As noted by Carson, et al. (1991), the number of dropouts is not really the issue. The point is that the world has changed, and the system's current employment needs do not tolerate dropout rates that have not changed over the last 20 years. Consequences of dropping out, which are identified in the
work of Arnot (1994), Asche (1993), and the General Accounting Office (1987), include the following:

- As the pool of dropouts continues to grow, employment opportunities for them are more limited, because today's economy requires of the labor force increased literacy, more education, enhanced technological skills, and lifelong learning.
- The rate of engagement in high-risk behaviors such as premature sexual activity, early pregnancy, delinquency, crime, violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and suicide has been found to be significantly higher among dropouts.
- Dropouts are more likely than other citizens to draw on welfare and other social programs throughout their lives.
- Income differences between dropouts and other citizens can be expected to widen as the economy evolves, "pitting Americans with less education against computerized machines and people in low-wage nations" (Arnot 1994).
- A growth of unskilled laborers in low-wage jobs will increase the trend toward developing a large American underclass which "some analysts argue that this condition threatens the continuing existence of a democratic way of life" (Asche 1993).

2.3.1 Risk Factors Leading to Students’ Dropping Out Of School

J. A. Asche (1989) states that: based on a thorough analysis of the research literature, and identified four major categories of factors that contribute to a student profile of characteristics that may lead to a student's dropping out of
school. The four categories list risk factors that are school-related, student-related, community-related, and family-related. The likelihood of a student dropping out of school increases as the combination of risk factors becomes more multifaceted. (p. 10).

Poor academic performance is the single strongest school-related predictor of dropping out (OERI Urban Superintendents Network 1987; Hess, et al. 1987; Wood 1994). The most recent department of education annual dropout report relates that students who repeated one or more grades were twice as likely to drop out as those who had never been held back, and those who repeated more than one grade were four times as likely to leave school before completion.

- Student-related risk factors include personal problems independent of social or family background. Substance abuse, pregnancy and legal problems are frequently reported along with school-related problem behaviors such as truancy, absenteeism, tardiness, suspension, and other disciplinary infractions.

- Parents play a crucial role in keeping young people in school. The degree and nature of family support are determined by such factors as a stressful/unstable home life, socioeconomic status, minority membership, siblings' completion of high school, single-parent households, poor education of parents, and primary language other than English (Horn 1992).

- Of the community-related factors, it is poverty that is the strongest predictor of dropping out. "When socio-economic factors are controlled,
the differences across racial, ethnic, geographic, and other demographic lines blur". (OERI Urban Superintendents Network 1987).

- Researchers have also found that working can contribute to a student dropping out. Some research shows that student employment begins to correlate with dropping out when the student regularly works over 14 hours per week (Mann 1986). Other research places the critical level for employment higher, at 20 hours per week (Winters.K.C. 1994), with the likelihood of dropping out increasing with the number of hours worked.

2.3.2 The Literature on Dropout Prevention.

Looking at the subjects of the research, some reports focus on addressing the dropout problem at the high school level, and some are concerned with potential dropouts/students at risk in grades K-12. Subjects in the remaining reports were (1) the age range from 2 to 29, (2) dropouts in general, (3) high school graduates, (4) middle and junior high school students, (5) black high school graduates and dropouts in an urban setting, (6) Hispanic and language minority students, and (7) parents and the community.

2.3.3 Practices and Outcomes Investigated.

The kinds of school practices investigated in relation to dropout rates include (1) data collection and tracking of at-risk students and dropouts, (2) group behavioral therapy, (3) variables that are instructionally effective with students from low-income backgrounds, (4) in-school factors that might influence dropout rates, (5) collaborative efforts between schools and communities on
dropout prevention programming, (6) grading practices, (7) parental involvement and (8) entering high school overage.

- The outcome areas of interest to researchers in these analyses include (1) reduced dropout rates/increased retention of dropout-prone students, (2) behavioral changes leading to academic progress, (3) identifying characteristics of dropouts, (4) school-controllable factors influencing dropping out, and (5) variables that distinguish graduates from non-graduates.

- Other topics examined by those whose work was consulted for this analysis include (1) attendance and factors affecting it, (2) characteristics of effective schools, (3) pupil information files and record keeping on school dropouts, (4) parents' views of alternative programs, (5) the relative importance of programmatic specialization in school selection decisions, (6) legislative efforts to increase school retention and graduation rates, (7) demographic correlates, (8) the value of the GED certificate relative to a high school diploma, (9) second-chance programs, (10) the history of school completion/enrollment in the U.S., (11) methods of evaluating the success of dropout prevention programs, (12) the factors associated with youth returning to school, (13) the similarities between effective schools and successful dropout reduction programs, (14) schools as High Reliability Organizations (HROs), and (15) educational indicators comparing the phenomenon of dropping out in the U.S. and other nations.
2.4 SCHOOL ENROLMENT, DROPOUTS AND STAGNATION IN THE ARAB REGION

Mohamed Maamouri (1998), International Literacy Institute, University of Pennsylvania, USA. prepared a discussion paper for the World Bank - The Mediterranean Development Forum Marrakech. In this paper on *Language Education and Human Development Arabic Diglossia and its Impact on the Quality of Education in the Arab Region*, the problems of wastage and stagnation (repetition of grades) are brought to the light of which the investigator has presented the following which is found to be more relevant to the problem of the present investigation.

**Dropout in Middle School Level.**

The dropout problem relates to the absenteeism usually associated with conditions of poverty and low income. According to Walz.G.R. (1987) sometimes, dropout is related to the difficulties experienced by a considerable number of school children in progressing from one grade to another at the right speed and in getting full benefit from the time spent at school. Repetition of courses and years in the early grades of primary school seems to be closely connected to learning and to school failure. Analyzing the repetition phenomenon, the International Bureau of Education (IBE) study makes the following points:

- There is an obvious connection between repetition in the first grades of primary education and the learning of reading and writing.
• There is a need for significant changes in the teaching of reading and writing and for a thorough overall of the parameters and traditional practices usually applied to first literacy in formal and non formal situations.

• There is also, a need for greater awareness of the impact of linguistic factors on school performance in general and on literacy in particular; and finally.

• The introduction of more harmony between standards of socialization and access to knowledge and learning styles in the school system is both necessary and urgent.

2.5 STUDIES ON REPETITION AND DROPOUT RATES

There are few studies assessing the difficulty of the Arabic reading process in or outside the Arab region. While deploring the total absence of educational assessments in the Arab region, S. Heyneman (1997) noted that only Jordan had participated in an international assessment of educational progress (ETS, 1992). He observed that on top of their low performances in science and mathematics, the tested Jordanian 13-year-olds had acquired less information throughout their educational cycle than in the 14 other countries sampled. One can add to Heyneman's remarks the results reported in the 1995 UNICEF-MENARO basic education profile of the Middle East and North Africa. In this general educational profile report, quotes from an assessment of learning achievement of Jordanian 4th graders done by the National Center for Educational Research and Development (NCERD) show that the average percent correct on the Arabic Language Test (reading, dictation, and grammar) was 54.19% with an even lower differentiated average for male
students with performance totaling not more than 51% as against 57% for girls. The Arabic language test was given to 4908 fourth-grade students in 205 schools representing all educational sectors and governorates in Jordan. If it is considered that Jordan has one the highest educational and literacy percentages in the Arab region, these results seem to confirm the above assumption that Arabic reading and writing are going to be important factors in the degradation of education in the Arab region. In their study on retention of basic skills acquired in primary schools in Egypt.

2.6 ALL INDIA STUDY SHARMA AND SPAR (1965) – STUDY ON DROPOUT AND STAGNATION

Sharma R.C. and Spar C.L. (1965) on their combined research found many reason for the dropout and stagnation. They reveal of the facts as the cause for stagnation and dropout as follows:

1. Parents of the dropouts feel the education performance of the children as poor.
2. The dropouts are not motivated for studying at home.
3. They are educationally backward.
4. Generally their interest in education is low.
5. Caste and the age higher than average age of admission in class I.

The study has been conducted and 790 dropouts and 485 stay in case form 92 sampled schools in various states. The study lays emphasis on causes have been mainly identified by comparing dropouts and stay in on certain variable which over entire amount of personnel, social and environment
relationship. The study has revealed that the total dropout and stagnation is 65 percentages by the time, the children reach grade V and 78.35 percent by the reach grade VIII and that those pupils tend to dropout. Appropriate remedial measures have also been suggested.

The study on dropout and stagnation was done by R.C. Sharma and C. L. Spar sponsored by NIE, Delhi in 1965. The following reasons for dropouts in our school need attention from the professional staff, social workers and the community in general. Educational programmers facilities must be provided to meet the needs of youth who fall into these categories and become dropout.

1. Health reasons.
2. Lack of understanding of the communication language.
3. Lack of understanding about the awareness of the importance of Education.
4. Military services.

This study classified the causes of dropout and stagnation into three major heads as given below:

1. Causes relating to school variables.
   - Shift system
   - Less qualified teachers
   - Lack of co-curricular activities
   - Teachers non-residences
2. Causes relating to pupils variables.

- Academic deficiency
- Lot of irregular attendance
- Higher age
- Lack of interest
- Bad company etc.

These variables are also related to economic factors. Academic deficiency is due to malnutrition in the pre-national and post national.

3. Causes relating to family variables.

- Family size
- Only child
- First born orphans
- Orphans
- Weaker sections of the community
- Belonging to labour family
- Educational status of parents.
- Low income
- Parents reactions to school

**Causes of Dropout and Stagnation**

The causes for dropout are classified as economic, educational and social.
(i) **Economic Causes**

There is about 65% of the dropout is due to poverty. A child is willingly sent to school by parents between ages 6 to 9 because at this age he is more nuisance at home than a help. After the age of 9 or 10 the child becomes an economic asset because he can earn something which will be helpful to the family. The child is therefore with drawn from the school and thus becomes "Dropout causes".

(ii) **Educational Causes**

Educational factors are responsible for 30% of dropout they include

1. The existence of incomplete schools does not teach the full course.
2. The large prevalence of stagnation which discourses children from staying longer at school.
3. The dull character of most of the schools and their poor capacity to attract students and retain them.
4. The absence of ancillary services like school meals and school health.
5. The failure of the average parents or child to see the advantage of attendance at school.

(iii) **Social Causes**

Social causes play dominant role on the part of girls. They are,

1. Betrothal or marriage
2. Unwillingness of parents to send grown up girls to schools, especially to mixed school or schools without women teachers.
3. Lack of appreciation for education.

The study has presented the total dropout per 100 Pupils from standards from I to VIII as known below.

For each 100 pupils entering class 1

- 39 dropout or stagnation in standard 1,
- 11 dropout or stagnation in standard 2,
- 7 dropout or stagnation in standard 3,
- 5 dropout or stagnation in standard 4,
- 5 dropout or stagnation in standard 5,
- 5 dropout or stagnation in standard 6,
- 4 dropout or stagnation in standard 7,
- 4 dropout or stagnation in standard 8,

Total dropouts or stagnation in standards 1-8 is 80

2.7 BOMBAY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION – A SURVEY REPORT (1955-56)

Bombay Municipal Corporation conducted an investigation regarding the incidence of dropouts in primary schools in working of six months between September 1955 and February 1956 and the factors responsible for the same to understand the educational implications of the phenomenon of dropping out to find out the way and means to minimize the same. This study was planned with three objectives:

- To study the incidence of dropout in municipal primary school in world area between the first September 1955 and 29th February 1956.
To compare the incidence of the dropping out found in children who are over aged i.e., eleven years of age in World school and three objectives.

To analyse the reasons for dropping out of children who left school without taking school leading certificates. The sample consists of 7800 children, parents and guardians about 10,784 children who left school without taking the school leaving certificates were also formed the sample for the study.

The study revealed that:

1. 16.5 children on the rolls on 1st September 1955 left the school within 6 months.

2. There is considerable number of dropout in every month, but the number varies from month to month.

3. In every alternate month, from October 1955 to March 1956 there is a steep fall in the number of dropout.

4. The incidence of dropout in standard I is alarming.

5. Incidence of dropout among average children in standard I is very high.

6. In the compulsory age group, the incidents of dropping is 16.8% among the boys and 19.4% among girls.

7. In the average incidence of dropouts in numerically highest in standards IV and V.

Bombay municipal had studied the indications of dropout and stagnation and effectiveness of our educational efforts in primary education in 1967. The objective of the study was to determine the extend of dropout and stagnation in middle schools, the reasons for such dropout, a relationship between
stagnation and dropout and their relation to the age of the children and the similar aspects of the problem.

6400 children selected from 17 schools from years 1950 to 1958 for the study and were assigned to 6 groups so as to find out the performance of various groups. The findings of the study revealed that the percentage of children who will leave school fell from 43.3% to 21.4% in the years 1956 to 1958, about 86.6% children continued in the school in the years 1957 – 1958 after joining of the school. It shows that dropout due to some reason has been considerably reduced. It was also found that 92.9% of children left school after one stagnation in 1957 as against 49.7% in 1950 and 21% left school after passing as against 79%. This shows an intimate relationship between stagnation and dropout.

2.8 LANKIER – SOAR (1965) OF ORISON ON DROPOUT AND STAGNATION

Lankier – soar of Orison gives reasons under five major dimensions.

1. Educational administration
2. Medium of instruction and mother tongue
3. Wastage and failure
4. Causes of illiteracy
5. Social and economic problems affecting education.

The sample of tribe, district and blocks was purposive, while that of villages and respondents was random. Four categories of respondents interviewed for this study were students, parents, village, teachers and officers.
1. The findings of the study revealed that Lanjia - Soaras are cut off from the main stream of Indian life and culture and thus live in isolation.

2. The progress of primary education is hindered by administrative problems such as school buildings, school management's, trained teachers, teaching material and proper inspection of school, the major hindrance is in accessibility of soars village.

3. The incidents of dropouts is very high since the soars students has to help his parents in economic and other walks of life while the non-trial students are in a better position in this respect.

2.9 ACTION PLAN OF RAWAT (NCERT, 1977)

Rawat D.S. in his research on Non formal education for dropout children and the rural development suggests the following intensive programmes to reduce the dropout and the stagnation in the primary schools in India.

1. The fifth five year plan should allocate funds for the central and state programmers to reduce dropout.

2. Individual school should plan and execute programmers in this regard.

3. A concerted national drive should be undertaken to mobilize all the resources for these purposes.

4. Since all the causative factors are interrelated comprehensive programmer should be launched.

5. Proper machinery should be created in implementing the programmers at the levels of centre, state and block.

6. Due emphasis should be given to prevent stagnation in the first two grades.
7. School improvement programmes are very important in this regard.

8. Inter disciplinary research programmes should be undertaken to reduce dropouts.

Das R.C. (1966) on an investigation in the problem of dropout and stagnation at the primary level education in the district of Sibasgar (Assam State) has some objective to study the problem. They were approached from various sources and data gathered. It was found that there were regional differences in the incidence of wastage. There was statistically significant difference in the rate of wastage between rural and urban areas. Communal difference played part in providing a wide range of difference in percentage of dropout. Poverty and economic backwardness claimed a first rank among the 40 cases inquired. Generally it was found that socio-economic causes more responsible for dropout.

2.10 REPORT OF KOTHARI COMMISSION (1964-66) ON DROPOUT AND STAGNATION

Government of India formed an "Education Commission" in 1964-1966 to review the primary and middle schools. The commission submitted a calumnious report, that the stagnation is the highest degree in standard I. It is reduced considerably in standard II and then remains fairly content in standards II and IV. In case of wastage the situation is lightly better. Its result is based upon area, where the study was conducted which was fairly advanced educationally. But the study conducted at Poona shows stagnation is very large at the lower primary stage, about 56% for boys and 62% for girls and about two thirds of this wastage occurs in standard I.
The stagnation percentage has fairly remained constant in the case of boys while showing a slight improvement in the case of girls. Further the most important programme to be implemented during the next 10 years at the primary stage is the improving the quality of education and to reduce stagnation and wastage to the minimum. In fact the task of Universal Education begins when children are enrolled in stagnation I. It is fulfilled only when the children are successfully retained in school till they complete standard VII. In this programme the reduction wastage and stagnation is standard I is obviously the most important element.

Some of the research studies done in the state of Maharrastra and West Bengal have computed incidence of dropout. They are as follows:

TABLE 2.1

Dropout in Maharrastra and West Bengal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Study</th>
<th>Dropout Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satire study</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poona study</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Paragon</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gargoti study</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, it can be seen that dropout is a more serious problem; the major reasons are different teaching, equipped schools, over crowded classes, heterogeneity of the age composition of the classes etc. The main reason for dropout on the other hand is the economic poverty of the people.
According to the report of the Kothari Education Commission (1964-66), the All India dropout percentage is 60.81. This indicates the proportion of school going children. The following statement shows the extent of dropout up to independence.

### TABLE 2.2
Dropout in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Extent of Dropout</th>
<th>Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926-27</td>
<td>77 %</td>
<td>IV and V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-37</td>
<td>92 %</td>
<td>IV and V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947-49</td>
<td>60 %</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.11 SURVEY OF WORLD STATISTICS (UNESCO, 1970)

The world statistics says that retention rates of Japan are 90 %, Malaysia 81 %, Afghanistan 74 %, Philippines 69 %, Ceylon 64 %, Thailand 53 %, Pakistan 26 % and Burma 19 % that last being the other countries with lower retention rates than India.

### TABLE 2.3
UNESCO (1970) Survey on Retention rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Countries</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African countries</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.24 – 3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American countries</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.53 - 2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Countries</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>1.00 – 2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European countries</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.00 – 1.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The median output or input ratio for the African countries indicates that half of the educational provision at the elementary level is ineffective in that is involved with retention and dropout. The geographical distribution of stagnation emphasizes not only the difference between developed and developing countries but also their difference in education. The median ratio for Europe is lower ratio for African and Latin American and Highest European ratio is lower than the median for African and Latin American countries.

**Urban and Rural Variations**

The study reveals that more dropouts occur in urban area is the last two grades and in rural areas in the first two grades than would be expected from chance variation of grade dropout with urban – rural character.

**Gender Variation**

From the dropout figures for the 33 countries supplying separate data for boys and girls are examined, all 8 Asian and 11 Latin American and 12 African show higher dropout for girls than for boys. 6 of the 8 South American and 4 of 5 European countries did not show such variation. Moreover, the number of female dropout is significantly greater than the number of male dropouts in rural groups though not among the urban groups. The following statement shows clearly the different trends of the dropout in different countries of the world as revealed by the UNESCO survey 1970.
“In Alabama, 85 percentage of the fathers and 84 percentage of mothers of dropouts were themselves dropouts and earn more revealing is the fact that almost on half of the fathers and two fifths of the mothers has never completed the seventh grade. The study of Los Angles city school district revealed that the subject marks of the dropouts during their marks of the dropouts during their last school year were substantially below those of the graduate. The dropout had a great point average of 1.19 while the graduate had a grade point of average of 2.63. Also it attempted to answer the question. “How do the parents of dropouts view educators?” A child's attitude towards schooling is developed and nurtured first in the home and then in the community. The study found that almost one fourth of the parents of dropouts encouraged their children to dropout and another one
fourth were indifferent. Fewer than one half of the parents of dropouts encourage their children to dropout and another one fourth was indifferent. Less than one half of the parents of dropouts encouraged to stage in school.

In the Ohio study Nachman and others found that 75.4 % of the dropout for whom reading test information was available scored below the median for their grade level, 53.4 % were in the bottom quantile. The study found that 55 % of the fathers of dropouts were classified as unskilled or semi-skilled. However over 25 were in unskilled or semi skilled jobs. Also the counselors induced that 44 % of dropout came from homes which were below the average economic level of their community and only 2.7 % come from homes which they rated as being above average. It is estimated that 44 % of boys' dropouts and 36 % of girls' dropouts were below the average in emotional maturity and nearly the same figures in social maturity. The dropout tends to reject both in school and self. They feel usually insecure in schools and status is less respected than other students by teachers because of academic in adequacy and usually hostile towards other persons and has not established adequate goals.

2.12 STUDIES ON ANALYSIS OF DROPOUT

Finn (1989) explained that either low participation in school activities or early school failure leads to low self-esteem, problem behaviors, and then alienation from school. In a later study, he added that: "the likelihood that a youngster will successfully complete 12 years of schooling is maximized if he or she maintains multiple, expanding forms of participation in school-relevant activities". Building on this idea, schools can reduce dropout is by
encouraging multiple types of extracurricular opportunities for students and insuring that all students can participate (e.g. avoiding exorbitant fees that would preclude participation by students from lower income backgrounds).

In terms of the financial burden, school dropout is costly. Taxpayers in the United States pay to the tune of well over $75 billion annually in welfare benefits and lost tax revenue because of the dropout problem (Catterall, 1985). This is not to mention many other social costs incurred by dropouts in the society where they live, such as lower lifetime earnings, a higher likelihood of raising children who dropout, and so on. Dropout rates for students from lower income households are over twice as high as the national average for all students and over three times as high when compared to students in middle income (NCES, 2000). In addition, income levels and dropout create a self-repeating cycle since 52% of school dropouts become unemployed members of society or collect welfare payments (Baldwin, Moffett & Lane, 1992). Worse, dropouts are 3.5 times more likely to commit crimes in their lifetime than high school graduates, exacting an additional burden on society from this problem (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2003).

Accordingly, educators are confronted by a major challenge--how to appropriately address the needs of at-risk youth, especially potential dropouts. Brooks and Coll (1994) suggested that interventions consist of first identifying the at-risk youth. Identification methods the researchers suggested were record keeping of problematic behavior in school, teacher observations and referrals, friend and student referrals, parents, and the legal system. Much of the literature suggests that early identification of at-risk youth is a necessary
component of any dropout prevention program, and a variety of identification methods have been used.

For the purpose of this study this literature review will analyze improving student attendance through building a family connection through parental involvement. If students are in school on time everyday then learning takes place. By building a family connection which highlights the importance of attendance, this will lead to improving student performance on standardized test, Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Systems/Scholastic Reading Inventory (MCAS/SRI).

Decreasing the rate of student truancy and absenteeism has been continues to be the goal of school districts across the nation for over a century. Amazingly, little research focuses on what schools can do to increase and maintain student's daily attendance and even fewer studies explore how families-school-community can build a partnership to work together towards this goal. Corville and Smith, (1995) states that, “Despite the long history of concern over students' attendance the issue has received relatively little attention from educational researchers”. Instead of focusing on student attendance, researchers have mainly focused on students who dropout of high school before receiving their high school diploma. Even though a great deal of research exits on students dropping out of school more so than on truancy, research on students who dropout points to early detection of truancy in their lives before they dropout of school.
"Dropping out of school, although defined by a single event reflects a long process of disengagement and withdrawal from schooling and educational institutions", (Finn, 1989). In order to understand and reduce the problem of students dropping out of school researchers should first investigate the early warning signs in student's behavior before it escalates to students actually leaving school. Studies reveal that the students who are dropout of school show long-term patterns of students who may be having difficulties at home and or in school at a very early age. Research has shown that students who eventually drop out of school are absent more often than other students beginning as early as the first grade. As the student gets older their patterns of being absent from school increases. So efforts to decrease students from dropping out of high school might be better spent on identifying early warning signs of truancy at the elementary and middle school level.

It is a fact that poor attendance predicts dropping out of school; chronic absenteeism can have a negative impact on the student and school. Students who are not in school are not learning and are not being adequately prepared to be successful in school and in life. Research on truancy and absenteeism suggests that “students with better attendance score higher on achievement tests than their more frequently absent peers” (Lamdin, 1998). If schools across the nation are being met with the challenge of making adequate yearly progress, which is a state mandate, then more programs need to be funded in schools to address the issue of truancy.

To deal with the issue of truancy at the James P. Timilty (1991), Middle School students have been identified with five or more absences. The
identified students prior and current standardized test scores will be reviewed. Forty-one six, seventh and eighth grade students were identified with attendance concerns. A conference will be held to inform students of scores and attendance concerns. A contract will be made with the forty-one students and weekly positive rewards will be discussed with students for coming to school everyday on time. The conference will be followed by a phone call/letter to parents to talk about the attendance concerns.

Historically, schools have always held the student accountable for truant behavior. Corville-Smith, (1995) state that “Truant and chronically absent students were considered deviants”. Frequently schools did not contact families until the problem was so severe that the student was failing their courses. Also research shows that the learning environment of an entire school can be affected by an individual student’s attendance problem. Most schools receive funds by the population they have attending school on a regular basis. If districts and school attendance rates are low, educational programs and resources are in jeopardy of being cut. Also, in some locations student attendance is used as an indicator of how well a school is functioning and requirements are set and monitored for rating Maryland State Department of Education, 1996.

Studies investigating family practice have suggested that “not all parental involvement activities are associated with attendance” (Lee, 1994) for example; parent involvement that requires “checking homework and reading with a child is associated with improved report card grades, achievement scores, and subject-specific skills” (Epstein 1991). Other researchers have
reported that "specific family involvement practice such as parental monitoring, parent-child discussions, parent participation at the school PTA membership are linked to student attendance" (Astone. et el, 1991). Research shows that some parent activities are more likely than others to affect attendance. Furthermore studies show that schools who want to increase daily attendance need to reach out and work with parents to encourage parental involvement in specific ways to address this problem (McNeal 1999).

Innovative schools see the need to develop productive school-family community connections to address this growing epidemic of truancy. Kesler-Sklar and Baker (2000) reported that over "90% of the school districts they surveyed had at least one policy supporting parental involvement". Epstein and her colleagues have been working with schools, school districts, and the state department of education to develop programs of school, family and community partnerships.

Examining the reasons why students drop out, Willis (1986) discusses the following correlates of educational risk: family structure and poverty, race and ethnicity, language, residence, economic displacement, and gender. Indicators of educational risk, according to Willis, are student attendance, school continuation rates, academic performance, involvement in school activities, student behavior, attitudes toward school, need for employment, nature of family support, involvement in out-of-school activities, and involvement with the juvenile justice system. This does not mean, however, that dropping out is just a minority or urban problem. Noting that since 1970 the dropout rate for blacks has decreased nationally, whereas that for whites
has edged up steadily, prefers to categorize high risk youth as either alienated "uninterested in or dissatisfied with the values represented by school and work" and lacking in "motivation to succeed in expected ways" (p. 9), disadvantaged and alienated, or simply disadvantaged.

Miller and Imel (1987) offer some reasons for the size of this effect when they discuss the importance of the quality of the vocational education experienced by different students. They point out that casual exploration through vocational courses or work experience that is not related to learning goals is less effective than is major concentration in a vocational program. Thus, they recommend that vocational and career educators desiring to improve student retention develop individualized plans (including educational goals, strategies to reduce barriers to the achievement of goals, and timeliness for monitoring progress on these goals) such as those used with handicapped students. They further recommend small programs with 2-6 teachers serving 25-60 students. They also say that the most successful programs are those in which students are encouraged to be cooperative rather than competitive.

In view of the risk factors, then, the key to reducing the dropout rate is helping youth to overcome their sense of disconnection. Miller and Imel (1987) attest that students with low motivation to attend school have shown improvement in school attendance and retention after participating in career education and those vocational students who have participated in career education are more likely to complete the vocational program they have selected. An analysis performed by Mertens, Seitz, and Cox (1982) on data obtained in 1979 and 1980 interviews with the New Youth Cohort of the National Longitudinal
Surveys of Labor Force Behavior, confirmed that, all else being equal, the more vocational classes students took, the less likely they were to drop out of school. The relationship between vocational education and the choice to stay in school was, however, only statistically significant in grades 10 and 12 (and negative but not significant for grade 11). Furthermore, the effect was quite small in both grades 10 and 12.

The impact of young people leaving high school without graduating presents an urgent issue for educators. In terms of functioning in society, Rumberger (1987) noted that young people who have dropped out, or have been released from school, generally have "serious educational deficiencies that will impair their economic well being throughout their adult lives" (p. 101). Reports from other major studies consistently describe a bleak outlook for individuals with incomplete basic educations. A consideration of this bleak outlook underscores the importance of developing a means to accurately identify students before they leave school as dropouts.

Researchers' have also explored the causes and solutions to the dropout problem. The education discipline has identified a wide range of causal factors, including characteristics related to the school, economic factors, and personal demographics (Rumberger, 1987). For example, self-reported reasons that male students dropped out included 'disliked school' and 'desire to work'; whereas females cited 'disliked school' and 'personal reasons' (pregnancy and marriage). Since research in the education field has focused primarily on school-related factors, such as students' behavior and performance in school, the conventional solution has been an intervention
strategy. This includes counseling, mentoring, tutoring, after-school programs and summer school.

The economics discipline typically views education as an investment in human capital. The dropout decision is then explained by weighing the benefits and costs of receiving an education. However, in examining dropout behavior in the context of compulsory schooling changes in Great Britain and Ireland, Oreopoulos (2005) notes that it is difficult to explain dropouts with the standard human capital model. His research and the research of others show that an extra year of school increases annual earnings as well as non-pecuniary benefits such as improved health and increased satisfaction overall. He cannot account for costs that would exceed the gains from additional schooling in order to justify a dropout decision. While this lends credence to the policy of compulsory schooling, many find it objectionable because compulsory schooling restricts choice and so is inherently suboptimal. He concludes by stating that alternative models with myopic preferences or misguided expectations may better explain dropout behavior.

If at-risk students do not evaluate costs and benefits appropriately, then policies that alter the cost or benefits may be beneficial in reducing the dropout rate. A study by Dearden, et.al. (2005) evaluated an English policy of providing means-tested grants to reduce dropouts. Their analysis found the subsidy substantially reduced dropouts, particularly for those students past age 16 and from lower income families. Interestingly, they found that half of the increase in school participation was from students without employment, that is, those whose foregone earnings were zero. Policies that impact the benefit side may also be successful. A study by Lavy, and Hitomi (2007)
found a link between school quality and grade completion for primary school age children in Egypt. Although extrapolating these results to a developed country and secondary school age children is problematic, it does reinforce the idea that policies altering the benefit/cost calculation may have some merit.

Educational choice may also have an impact on the dropout decision. A study by Ferris and West (2002) considered the impact of school choice on dropouts. Their model suggests that “vouchers work by lowering the cost of education to low-income non-conforming students and so increasing their probability of remaining in school” (p. 791). They argue that a voucher system may increase equity as well as efficiency. Lavy (2005) considers a new program that expanded choice for students in Tel Aviv. His results suggest that the choice program that allowed students to freely choose between schools in or out of the district had significant general equilibrium effects on lowering the dropout rates. In the state of Minnesota, the open enrollment program would be similar to the Tel Aviv program and is hypothesized to have a similar downward effect on the dropout rate. However, this assumes that the competitive pressures of a voucher or open enrollment program generate a supply response that caters to the specific demands of the at-risk student.

The research reveals a lot of important information about student attendance. Identifying students early on who show signs of absenteeism is a predicator of warning signs of students dropping out. Even though truancy is a major issue in middle school and high school, perhaps students should be identified and monitored early on in elementary school. Educators need to continue to find
innovative ways to bridge the gap between home and school to communicate with parents the need for a strong partnership so students can find success. Students need to know that coming to school on time, everyday is important. Educators, when faced with schools that have attendance problems may need to venture out beyond the wall of the school, into the community to involve families and work together.

David Boyle.J, Jordan School of Music, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida, (1994) – Middle/Junior High School Band Directors 'Views Regarding Reasons for Students' Dropouts in Instrumental Music. The study examined middle/junior high school band directors' views regarding reasons for students dropping out of instrumental music. Fifty band directors responded to a survey instrument that was sent to public middle/junior high schools in Broward, Dade, and Palm Beach counties. Some results were consistent with frequently cited "reasons" from previous research; loss of interest, scheduling conflicts, lack of parental support, and competing interests in sports were among the highest rated reasons for student dropout from instrumental music study. However, student "lack of commitment to work" was the most highly rated reason for student dropout.

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to examine reasons for students dropping out of instrumental music. Specifically, band directors' views regarding reasons for student dropouts were solicited, because they have the perspective of working with many students over a number of years.

Duerksen (1972) summarizes several studies on instrumental music dropouts. One study reported that 34 percent of the students surveyed indicated that
they dropped out of the instrumental program because their instrument was too difficult. Fifty-five percent of those surveyed reported loss of interest as the primary reason for students dropping out of their programs. Other reasons included lack of ability (27%), illness (12%), miscellaneous (4%) and financial problems (2%). Duerksen cites three other studies that report lack of interest as a major reason for student dropout. Only one study suggested that scheduling conflicts were a reason for student dropout, and only one study reported that students dropped out because of lack of time.

McCarthy, J.F. (1980) studied individualized instruction, student achievement, and the dropout rate of fifth- and sixth-grade students in an urban school district. Specifically, the study reports the influence of group and individual instruction on music reading and student dropout. Parts of Colwell's *Music Achievement Tests* (MAT) were used as pretest and posttest measures of the individual's ability to read melodic notation accurately. The Watkins-Farnum Performance Scale, Form A, was used to measure sight reading ability. Of the 1,199 students who took the pretests, 23% were identified as dropouts. McCarthy reported that reading grade level, socioeconomic status, and gender were significant factors accounting for most of the dropout variance. Dropout prediction was significantly better for individually taught students with above-average reading achievement scores, although individual instruction had no significant impact on either of the music achievement measures. Gender contributed minimally to student dropout, and differences in teachers had no effect on the music performance measures or dropout rate.
Sandene. B.A. (1994) sought to determine if certain personality variables could predict student dropout in middle school band programs. Subjects for the study included 55 dropout and 55 continuing students in grades six through eight. Subjects were given the Junior-Senior High Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ), the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire, and the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale. Students in the dropout group had a greater external locus of control, but there was no statistically significant difference in the overall personality profiles of the two groups. The influence of such personality attributes as cheerfulness, conformity, boldness, and sensitivity was unclear from the data reported, and Sandene encourages further research relating to those traits.

Solly. B.J. (1986) investigated why students drop out of an instrumental program between grade levels. The purpose of the study was to compare the reasons given by students and parents for dropping out of the program and those given by other students for remaining in the program. Of 225 students who left the program during the summer months, 164 responded to a questionnaire and 100 parents of these individuals provided additional comments. Another 164 randomly selected continuing students comprised the comparison group. Results indicated that 73% of the dropout students and 70% of the continuing students were never contacted or encouraged by the high school teacher to continue in the program. Within the dropout group, 55% reported that they lost interest. Because this study requested data from students over a variety of grade levels (4-12), it was observed that 12% of the students dropped out after being in the program for at least six years. Junior high school parents and teachers indicated that transportation to and from
after school rehearsals was a factor in determining participation in the instrumental program.

Brown (1985) summarized information gathered from a survey of 800 students and parents from throughout the United States. Views from 1,100 band directors who were members of the National Band Masters Association in 1984 and 202 music dealers who were members of the National Association of School Music Dealers, Inc. also were solicited. Brown’s report includes sections about trends in instrumental music programs from 1981 to 1985, benefits of band, beginning band recruiting dropout issues, influence of dropouts on high school band quality, beginning band recruitment, and retention in band. Brown identified 19 reasons in five broad areas why children drop out of band. The reasons included concerns about the program, conflicts, children, expenses, and parents. The most reported reasons for students dropping out of the instrumental program, listed in order of frequency reported, include (a) it’s too time consuming, (b) conflicts with participation in sports, (c) conflicts with other school activities, and (d) fear of failure. Directors reported five reasons why students drop out of their programs: (a) lack of parental support, (b) class schedule conflicts, (c) conflicts with participation in sports, (d) conflicts with after school jobs, and (e) conflicts with other school activities.

2.13 A STUDY ON ACCESS AND RETENTION UNDER DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)

Yash Aggarwal (1998) of National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi and his associates conducted a study on Access
and Retention under District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and presented the report.

The DPEP was initiated in 1994 in seven states covering 42 districts, mostly educationally backward. The programme has expanded over the years and now covers 16 states and nearly 200 districts. The DPEP strategy was drawn in tune with the national objectives of universal access, retention and achievement of minimum levels of educational attainment with a focus on girls and children belonging to socially deprived and economically backward sections of the society.

The programme has since expanded to 16 states covering nearly 200 districts. Over the years, DPEP has developed into a major experiment of its kind in social development in India. While recognising the contextually of the situation, the programme attaches priority to interventions aimed at improving access, retention and achievement especially of the girls, SC and ST students and children with special needs through targeting and special strategies with a focus on participatory processes of planning and management. The comparative analysis of DPEP and non-DPEP districts (Phase I) has shown a rapid increase in enrolment in the DPEP districts as compared to non-DPEP districts. The enrolment increased by about 9.4 percent between 1995/96 and 1996/97 and 6.5 percent between 1996/97 and 1997/98. Moreover, the girls' enrolment has improved considerably in the last few years and the Index of gender equity shows near absence of inequities. The improvements in access are also accompanied by a steep reduction in repeaters rate in various grades. The study shows a greater need to focus on areas with high
concentration of tribal population and backward pockets of otherwise advanced districts. In a short span of three years period covered under the study, the innovative nature of DPEP activities has penetrated deep up to the grassroots with the active involvement of the stakeholders. What is needed is to translate the short-term gains into a sustainable system. This is not a small challenge for the future growth and development of sustainable strategies for universalisation of elementary education in the country.

It is observed that of all the children who enter grade I only 64 percent reach grade V. It is also estimated that the loss is maximum between grade I and grade II. The higher the dropout rate, the greater is the wastage and inefficiency of the system. Therefore, the state governments formulated no-detention policies, whereby the children are not detained, for the first few years of schooling, on grounds of academic performance. Despite, the no-detention policy, the repeaters and dropout rates continue to be high in grades.

The analysis of the data collected from DPEP and non DPEP districts revealed the following observations:

- The analysis of the data for the period 1995-96 to 1997-98 suggests consistent improvement in enrolment and retention including that of girls, SC and ST children and a steady progress towards achievement of DPEP goals in 42 districts covered under DPEP-I.

- The traditional strategy of providing formal school everywhere may not be a cost-effective way of improving access in certain areas. In this
context, there are lessons to be learnt from the DPEP strategy of alternative models of providing access to children who had so far remained outside the reach of educational system. This should not mean that the formal schools will be neglected. As far as the formal schools are concerned, efforts should be continued to improve the resource utilisation, increase the internal efficiency to an optimal level and raise the quality of instruction so that the overall goals of DPEP can be realised.

- The girls’ participation and retention has improved considerably in the DPEP districts and significant progress has been made to reduce inequities in access and retention between boys and girls.

- The study is confined to district level aggregates. It is necessary to undertake disaggregated analysis at the block and cluster level so that the regions with specific problems of enrolment and retention could also be identified. It is necessary that target group oriented and area specific approaches to educational planning should be strengthened.

- The retention is improving in most of the districts but more intensive efforts are required to accelerate the gains in the internal efficiency of educational system as a whole.

2.14 A STUDY ON LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS IN DELHI

Yash Aggarwal (2000) conducted a study on learning achievement for primary schools in Delhi. The study covered all types of primary schools/sections in Delhi and was based on a sample of 169 schools. Besides other aspects, the
achievement levels in language and mathematics were assessed through competency based tests developed by the NCERT. The overall mean score based on standard I competencies was 80.2 percent for Language and 78.2 percent for Mathematics. The mean score for English and Hindi medium schools was statistically different in mathematics. The mean score for the SC children was 8-10 percent points lower than those of the children belonging to general category. The differences in mean achievement scores due to gender were reflected both in language and mathematics. However, the girls scored much lower in mathematics as compared to the boys.

The achievement scores based on standard IV competencies were very low as compared to standard I mean achievement scores. The gap was large in mathematics as compared to language. The mean score in mathematics for Hindi medium schools was 40.46 percent as compared to 56.5 percent for the mean score in language. The gap between mean score in mathematics and language is considerable and statistically significant. In view of the low achievement scores, the underachievers are large in number. About 50 percent of learners in Hindi medium schools failed to obtain more than 40 percent score in mathematics. The corresponding share of learners in language was 23 percent.

The differences in achievement become more pronounced as one examines disaggregated scores for gender, caste, management and related attributes. Children with pre-primary education in Hindi medium schools achieved 8-10 percentage points more than those who did not have pre-primary education. This corroborates the impression that SC children are deficient in learning
outcomes. Significant differences (15-18 percentage points) in the mean achievement score were also observed between different types of management.

The large differences in the achievement score between standard I and standard IV points to a gap in the quality of teaching learning and classroom interaction processes. While standard I achievement score is based on oral test, the standard IV scores were based on the written test. Even within the standard IV tests, the performance was poorest in mathematics as compared to language. It appears that children could understand and express orally but have difficulties in written communication. This has significant bearing on the teaching of language and expression in the form of written text. The achievement levels of children studying in English medium schools were analyzed separately. The mean score was 47.8 percent in mathematics as compared to 49.7 percent for language. About 38 percent of children failed to score more than 40 percent in mathematics and 24 percent failed to cross this threshold in language. Therefore, the general impression that all is well with English medium schools is not correct. While it is true that their performance is far better than the government schools, but the extent of underachievement is also very high. Within the language, the underachievement is more.

This is a clear reflection on the poor quality of classroom teaching learning processes. Based on the detailed analysis, the following issues were identified as far as provision of primary education Yash Aggarwal, (2000), NIEPA, New Delhi is concerned:
• Inadequate/absence of access to a comparable quality of education.
• Overcrowding in the existing government schools.
• Mismatches between demand and supply of schooling facilities.
• Dilapidated condition of class rooms, particularly those running in rented buildings. Repairs on rented buildings can not be undertaken under Rent Control Act.
• Lack of sanitation and water facilities in old school buildings.
• Excessive reliance on centrally sponsored schemes has also created its own problems.
• The states seldom initiate programs of educational development at their own initiatives and wait for central government initiatives.
• The educational planning for UEE in the urban context requires special emphasis.

2.15 STUDIES ON ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN DPEP DISTRICTS

• The large-scale studies for the DPEP project were conducted in 46 districts covering eight states in 1993/94. Some unique features of achievement studies conducted under DPEP were:
  • A common national framework for the design and data collection of baseline and mid-term studies in all districts.
  • Use of nationally developed standardised achievement tests in all the states.
• The period of data collection was same for baseline and mid-term assessment studies for all the 42 districts belonging to phase I of the project.

• Provided inputs for the curriculum revision, preparation of new textbooks, teachers' guides and supplementary teaching learning materials.

• Provided inputs for the restructuring of teacher training curriculum as well as the training methodologies.

The results of the learning assessment studies conducted under DPEP were quite revealing. Letter and word reading are basic skills which require 100 percent mastery for developing further skills. But surprisingly, none of the districts even achieved 80 percent in either of the tests. Like students, teachers also found it difficult to handle mathematics questions. A mathematics test conducted on 42 teachers showed that most of them could not even correctly do a question on LCM while 64 percent could not give a correct title to a paragraph in the language comprehension test (NCERT, 1992). The studies also identified that supervision was the weakest link in educational administration. Two third of teachers reported that they did not receive any type of assistance or help from their head teachers and the same proportion mentioned that there was no supervision by the Block education Officers. In Karnataka study, it was found that a significantly large number of teachers were themselves first generation learners. Many teachers covered under the survey were not even properly qualified and did not attend any in-service programme during the five years preceding the survey.
2.16 TRENDS IN LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT – COMPARATIVE STUDIES

The second round of studies was conducted as a part of the Mid-Term Assessment (MAS) for the 42 phase-I districts. While the MAS used tests different from the one used at the time of Basic Assessment (BAS), an effort was made to compare the results of the 1993/94 and 1997/98 studies. The MAS data covered 66,831 students, 6,221 teachers and 2068 schools spread over 42 districts belonging to phase I of the DPEP. The important findings of MAS were:

- A comparison of learners’ mean score in language (standard I competencies) for the MAS and the re administered test under MAS had revealed a mixed picture. In 28 of 42 districts the gains were positive and ranged between 0-36 percent. However, for the remaining 14 districts, the mean score in language was lower by 0-18 percent. In the case of mathematics, 33 out of 42 districts showed positive gains and the remaining nine districts showed a significant decline in mean scores.

- Similar analysis for standard III competencies showed that 13 districts out of a total of 15 districts showed positive gains in language test. The decline in the remaining two districts was not significant. The mathematics results indicated that mean score for 11 out of 15 districts showed significant gains.

- The analysis of data for standard IV competencies indicated that the mean scores in language for 18 out of 27 districts showed gains, of
them 15 showed statistically significant gains. The decline was more pronounced in some districts of Madhya Pradesh. Similar trends were observed in the case of mean scores for mathematics.

- The analysis also confirms the general trend that the performance of students in standard I both in language and mathematics was better than their counterparts in standards III and IV. This is a matter which has to be seriously examined. This confirms the decline in educational standards as the students move from lower to the higher classes.

- The DPEP goal of reducing the difference in mean achievement score between boys and girls have been accomplished in 40 out of 42 districts in language and 31 out of 42 districts in mathematics. However, similar objectives for the SC/ST population are yet to be achieved.

- The study confirms a moderate effect of teacher training on mean achievement scores. Students' achievement stands positively related to the availability of competency based teaching learning materials.

2.17 SUMMARY OF THE IMPORTANT FINDINGS OF THE LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT STUDIES

The concern for quality of education has been voiced from time to time in India. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and the revised NPE, 1992, again highlighted the urgency to address the quality concerns on
priority basis. Quality can not improve by itself. It requires multi-pronged and strategic reforms in teacher training; improvements in the facilities and infrastructure in schools; teachers' motivation; and a change in the style of teaching to make it attractive to the students. The policy also recommended that a system of continuous and comprehensive evaluation would be established. Besides the state level schemes to improve access and quality of education, a number of centrally sponsored schemes and externally funded projects, undertaken in the recent years, are experimenting with various models of bringing about increased coverage, retention and improvement in quality.

It is demonstrated by many researches that a solid foundation in mathematics and language is necessary for primary school children to navigate the information in technological age. Students with strong grasp in mathematics have an advantage in academics as well as in the job markets.

In the recent years, a number of new approaches have been developed to assess the achievement levels. In India, some of these methods have yet to be tried to establish their applicability. In the simplest of the terms, it may be mentioned that assessment should be viewed as a tool for improving educational standards, provide information to educators to determine which practice has resulted in desired outcomes and to what extent.

**The studies have raised many issues that have serious implication for quality improvement in primary education. Some of these issues are presented below.**
a) There is a clear evidence to suggest that achievement levels tend to decline as the children move along the educational hierarchy. This is true of both the English and Mathematics tests. This shows that schools are not able to cope with the teaching learning load as the pupils' progress through various grades.

b) The temporal comparison of learners' performance has shown some gains in the first few years of DPEP. While this is a welcome outcome and confirms the broader direction of reforms, it also raised many questions about the negative/decline in achievement level in certain other districts. While the contextuality of the district is an important parameter of planning, the implementation processes should also be reviewed to isolate the factors, which have facilitated/impeded the trends in learning outcome.

c) The students from privately managed schools perform better as compared to the students from government and aided schools, although the evidence is limited. It is also clear that despite better performance, even the private schools are far away from achieving the goals set up by the Minimum Levels of Learning.

d) There are no mechanisms for assessing the achievement levels for children studying through non-formal and alternative schools. Since these systems are more of informal and flexible, it is important to establish their credentials through effective monitoring and evaluation.
e) The overall scores of standard V learners based on standard IV competencies are low for both Mathematics and language. The low achievement in Mathematics is indeed a matter of concern. The long term effect of low achievement in Mathematics is revealed by the secondary and senior secondary examination results where most of the children fail in Mathematics and the overall result stays around 50 percent. It is therefore important to evaluate the Mathematics curriculum and related instructional materials.

f) The teachers are at the centre stage of the educational system. There is no system to identify teacher training needs. The teacher training packages do consult the teachers but once finalized, their content is same for all the teachers. This is possible to identify the level of competencies attained by teachers in language and Mathematics so that a proper module on their capacity building is developed.

g) Upgrade curriculum periodically, integrate technology and high quality instructional materials and to help students in learning the applications of Mathematics in real life. Teachers should be encouraged to develop and use locally relevant instructional materials.

h) Underachievement, even if it defined at 40 percent level, is very high in standards III and IV. The extent of underachievement among standard V learners was 66 percent in language and 72 percent in mathematics. Those achieving mastery level
competencies constituted a small fraction of the total students. The prescribed norms are that 80 percent children should be able to learn 80 percent competencies. Thus, there are miles to go before the target of Minimum Level of Learning can be achieved.

i) The standard II tests were oral in nature and standards III and IV were written. The sudden drop in the level of mean achievement scores also points to another phenomenon i.e. the transition from oral to written mode of examination. One can check whether the students well prepared for this transition. Perhaps at no point of time, the students are taught about this transition. This aspects need to be examined by the pedagogists.

j) A national testing agency or a research cell in the national/state institutions should be established to undertake continuous and comprehensive analysis of learners' achievement at primary and upper primary stage. The cell should assists the state governments to meet the challenging mathematics standards at primary stage, work closely with teachers unions and other NGOs for upgrading the skills of teachers on continuous basis. Educational administrators needs assessment information that will help them remove barriers to learning by telling schools to decide on what works well and what does not. Enable teachers to identify students learning needs early, before the problem becomes too big. The school administrators should also ensure that that the dialogue between the schools and children is better.
informed; giving parents a better picture of the progress of their children and the effectiveness of the schools.

k) In the Indian context, there is no mechanism for the training of head teachers of primary and upper primary schools in school leadership. In most countries, such training is a part of the capacity building exercise. Review of the professional development strategies for the teachers and head teachers stressing both subject matter expertise and pedagogical mastery is thus necessary.

As more and more data becomes on students achievement, it needs to be organized systematically so that the researchers and can have access to these database for testing of various types of alternative hypotheses.

It is pertinent to note that the assessment studies undertaken in the recent years have brought to focus many issues which require immediate attention. These efforts will go a long way in developing local specific strategies and help the system to develop an integrated model of Universal Elementary Education (UEE), where the focus is not only on removing supply side constrains by providing more teachers, facilities, instructional materials etc., but also in identifying the critical inputs that optimise the learning outcomes in a given situation.
2.18 STUDIES ON THE CAUSES OF THE ATTAINMENT OF STUDENTS’ ACHIEVEMENT

Shukla (1994) conducted another study on about 66,000 students to find out the level of attainment of primary school children in 25 states/Union Territories. Among other things, the study showed different patterns of educational attainment in different states. Pupil’s achievement was related to the education of the father and the facility for learning and educational environment at home. Considerable research evidence is available on the factors affecting the learning outcomes. While this study showed that 90 percent of variance in students science achievement is explained by school and teacher variables and only a small proportion by home related factors, the study by Kingdon (1998) shows that home background and school influence are both important to students achievement in India.

2.19 DPEP BASELINE LEARNERS’ STUDIES

Jangira (1994), while synthesizing the results of Baseline Assessment Studies of the DPEP states found that student’s performance in reading and arithmetic was low. There was a marked difference in achievement levels among states and between schools. In a study conducted in Karnataka, covering 2,598 class IV learners and 442 teachers, it was observed that the learning achievements are not significantly different between rural and urban schools. However, a significant difference was observed among the schools belonging to different management agencies (Aggarwal, 1995). Similar studies were also conducted in many states as a part of the DPEP baseline learners’ studies. The findings of the study on Kerala covering 3,089 standard IV
learners and 502 teachers suggest that the type of management of the school is not an influencing factor in learning achievement. The study found that the level of school infrastructure and variations in the availability of teaching-learning materials is not clearly related to learning achievement.

2.20 SUMMARY OF THE RELATED RESEARCH STUDIES

Among many research studies on the existing problem of dropout and stagnation, one study conducted by the national council of educational research and training deserves special mention. This project highlights the incidence of dropout at the primary level and also focuses attention on some major causes of this acute educational malady.

It is apparent that the dropout rates vary considerably from state to state, from community to community and even from school to school in the same district. The studies did usually combine data from several of the following sources.

- Opinions of the dropouts themselves
- Teachers on counselors opinion about dropouts
- Comparisons of dropouts with pupils who graduate with respect to sex, age, intelligence, average marks, socio-economic status of the family, number of years of schooling of parents, race, health etc.,
- Examination of evidence in the cumulative record cards of dropouts and
- Personal interviews with the dropouts and their families or answers to mailed questionnaires.
The studies like the Satara study, Poona study, Bombay Municipal Corporation study and those done by the NCERT are the important major studies. The problem has been studied by many eminent persons at Ph.D. and M.Ed., levels. The major findings of these studies show that the responsible factors are:

- The parent's ignorance and family's financial conditions.
- Social customs and attitude of the parents towards girl's educations.
- Distance of the school from the place of residence
- Shift system in crowded towns and cities.
- Mental illness and retardation of some children.
- Caste
- Socio-economic condition.
- Frequent migration of parents from place to place.
- Marriage of girls at an early stage.
- Domestic work and looking after the young ones when both the parents are out for work.
- Doing odd jobs to augment the family income at a young age are some of the causes of dropout education.

The suggestions and recommendations offered by these studies for checking the dropout and stagnation are:

- Arresting the students' indiscipline.
- Continuous evaluation of the academic work to keep the students engaged in studies.
• Effecting improvement in teacher quality.
• Utilizing parent – teacher association.
• Toning up of educational administrations and
• Diluting the stiff examination system.

By means of parent teachers association teachers must make the parents in general to understand and realize about awareness need and importance of education for the young generation for their life and upliftment in order to suit the need of time in future.

The extent of stagnation has been measured, possible causes have been identified and yet this crucial issue has resisting all efforts against the solution. A well planned research is needed in this field of education to restrict dropout and stagnation.

To conclude, in this chapter, the investigator has collected the studies conducted in India and abroad relevant to the present study. The above study revealed the fact that dropout and stagnation are the universal problems and almost all the countries in the world are trying to reduce the problems of dropout and stagnation for sustaining the quality of education in the elementary education. There are some causes which are common to all the countries and some of the causes which are found nation-specific causes. This naturally requires not only repeated studies but also area-specific study on dropout and stagnation.