Education is a unique and great investment in human capital for the present and the future. Education is an important factor for progress and all round development of a country. It plays a vital role in economic and social development and national integration of a country.

Students in ancient India used to receive education far away from their parental influence under the guidance of celebrated teachers called 'Gurus' like Vishvamitra, Vashisht and Dronacharya.

Buddhist monastries later on started educational institutions which were well organised and efficiently managed. Nalanda, Vallabhi, Vikramashila and numerous other Buddhist monastries served in ancient India as famous centres of learning.

Two types of educational institutions were set up by the Muslims i.e., Maktabs (primary schools) and Madrassahs (schools meant for higher learning)—either high schools or colleges. Mostly every mosque had a maktab attached to it and in this way primary education was brought within easy reach of the people because the whole country had mosques. The madrassahs were established in important towns only.
Now we will have a brief survey of modern education in India. In the early nineteenth century, there was prevalence of indigenous system of education. Soon after this, Christian missionaries came to India whose main object was to spread Western culture, English language and literature and also the Christian faith amongst Indians.

The missionaries were joined by the officials of the Government and even a few enlightened individuals. Through the combined efforts of these three workers, the modern system of education in India was developed.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the old indigenous system of education almost completely disappeared and a new system of education developed which spread Western ideas through English medium. Soon, the socio-cultural developments in the world, made the Indian people sceptical about the utility of the wholesale imitation of the west. The Indians, therefore, gave up imitating England in toto and began to create a system of education which was more suited to their needs.

The pace of expansion in education was accelerated soon after 1947 and serious efforts were made for the qualitative improvement of education.
A number of committees and commissions were set up during the post-independence period to report on the Educational problem as a whole. The first was university education commission of 1948-49 under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and this is commonly known as Radha Krishnan Commission. The report has not only guided the University educational developments but also reviewed the position of secondary education and made valuable suggestions.

As regards Secondary Education the Commission observed that our Secondary education remains the weakest link in our educational machinery and needs urgent reform. Subsequently Secondary Education Commission was appointed in 1952 under the chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanswami, Vice-Chancellor of Madras University and so this is also known as Mudaliar Commission of 1952-53. All reforms of Secondary Education in our country have taken place on the basis of the recommendations given by this commission which, therefore occupies a prominent place in the history of post-independent era.

The Secondary Education Commission of 1952 was followed by the Education Commission of 1964-66. Professor D.S. Kothari, Chairman, University Grants Commission, New Delhi was the Chairman of the Commission which is popularly known as Kothari Commission. This Education Commission was appointed by the Government of India by Resolution dated 14 July 1964 to advise the Government on the
national pattern of education on the general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects. It made a comprehensive review of the entire educational system.

In the history of education it is the first commission to make a co-ordinated survey of all the branches of education. The Commission's report was released by Shri M.C.Chagla on 29th June, 1966. It is a voluminous document, containing 692 pages. The Commission called for a drastic reconstruction of Indian education.

The University Grants Commission was set up in 1956 through an Act of Parliament. It is an autonomous body. The funds it receives from the Central Government are utilized for the development of the Universities.

The primary aim of this thesis is to present a study of the growth and progress of Education in Himachal Pradesh during the period 1948-1980. The history of Himachal Pradesh, its geographical features and the political developments that took place in Himachal Pradesh have been discussed in detail. The position of education in the princely states has been discussed. The progress made when statehood was granted to Himachal Pradesh and especially the progress made in the field of education when Himachal Pradesh University came into being on 22nd July, 1971 have been highlighted.
In the first chapter the history of Himachal Pradesh, its location, its administrative set up, its people, their mode of living and their social, economic and religious life have been discussed in addition to position of education prior to 1948. It also deals with the formation of Himachal Pradesh in 1948 by the integration of some 21 princely Hill States of Punjab.

Chapter 2nd, 3rd & 4th deals in detail with school education covering pre-primary, primary, high and higher secondary education in Himachal Pradesh from 1948-1980. Higher education dealing with college education has been dealt' with in chapter fifth for the period 1948-80. Chapter sixth deals with teacher education. Various types of teachers' institutions, the number of teachers in 1948-80, their position and status have been taken into account. Chapter 7th deals with University education. The tremendous progress made by Himachal Pradesh on the opening of the Himachal Pradesh University has been highlighted.

Eighth chapter deals with medical education. Himachal Pradesh made rapid progress in the field of medical education on the opening of the medical college in the year 1966. Ayurvedic education has also been taken into account. The position of Ayurvedic education and the Government Ayurvedic College Faprola has been discussed. Other types of medical education such as
Homoeopathic system of medicine have also been discussed.

Ninth chapter deals with Technical education which highlights the two polytechnics at Sundernagar and Hamirpur, the Junior Technical school Kangra, various I.T.Is and G.I.T.Is of the Pradesh. Tenth chapter deals with Agriculture Education. Agriculture colleges of Solan and Palampur have been discussed in detail. Progress made in the field of agriculture when Himachal Pradesh came to have its own agricultural University in 1978 located at Palampur has been brought out. Eleventh chapter deals with Adult/Social Education. Importance of Adult education, the various social education centres that have been opened in the state, expenditure involved and their administration have been discussed in detail.

The last and the 12th chapter is the concluding chapter. Summary of all the chapters and several suggestions with regard to all stages of education has been given. A detailed bibliography has been given at the end of the chapters. Various tables have been given along with each chapter. Footnotes have been given in each chapter. Various Appendices are also added at the end.

My deep sense of gratitude is to my supervisor, Dr.T.L. Sharma for providing encouragement to do intensive
research in an unexplored field of education in Himachal Pradesh. He has taken keen interest in this work.

I am beholden to Professor L.P. Pandey, Chairman of the Department, Professor S.R. Mehrotra, Professor A.R. Khan, Dr. (Mrs) Eva Mehrotra, Dr. Ahluwalia and other faculty members for their keen interest and help to bring this project to its present shape.

I am also grateful to Dr. K.P. Pandey and the present Director Dr. S.K. Gupta and my other colleagues in the Directorate of Correspondence Courses for their instant cooperation and inspiration in the completion of present research. Dr. B.P. Gupta also deserves my thanks for his help in the completion of this research project.

My thanks are due to my family members who allowed me complete freedom of work and helped me in every way in removing my difficulties.

I am particularly grateful to Mian Goverdhan Singh (librarian of Secretariat Library, retired) for the help and co-operation.

I would be failing in my duties if I do not express my thanks to the librarians and the staff of Himachal Pradesh University, the Library of Directorate of Correspondence Courses Himachal Pradesh University, Himachal Pradesh Secretariat Library and the office of the Directorate of Education, Himachal Pradesh located at Shimla.
I am also thankful to Shri Harbhajan Singh for typing this thesis correctly and neatly.

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