CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, a humble attempt has been made to review the concept of Primary Education, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, District Elementary Education Programme and related studies on Primary Education Pupils’ Achievement.

EDUCATION

A process of teaching, training and learning especially in schools or colleges to improve knowledge and develop skills.

A particular kind of teaching or training health education. The institution or people involved in teaching and training the education department.

The subject of the study that deals with how to teach.

LEVELS OF EDUCATION

Primary / elementary education
Secondary education
Higher secondary education
Higher education
Adult education
Special education

Universal provision

The provision of a school within easy walking distance from the home of every child.

Universal enrolment

The enrolment of every child of the prescribed age into class 1 of a school through propaganda.

Universal retention

The retention of every child enrolled in the school till he reaches the prescribed age or completes the prescribed age. These are the three stages of universalization. Moreover, they emphasize the simultaneous implementation of a programme of qualitative improvement of education because universal enrolment or retention depends very largely on the attracting and holding power of the primary schools.

Primary education is often considered to be the first stage of the entire superstructure of educational set up in India. It is primary stage of education when foundation of child’s physical, mental, emotional, intellectual and social development is laid, spanning the first five years of schooling and
laying the foundation for the personality attitudes, social confidence habits, learning skills and communicating capacities of pupils.

**MEANING OF PRIMARY EDUCATION**

When the new constitution of India came into force on 26th January 1950, Education received added importance and significance, high priority, so that every boy and girl in this country can receive a minimum standard of education. Article 45 of the Indian constitution, therefore directed that the state shall endeavour to provide within a period of 10 years from the commencement of this Constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years.

Beginning of formal education is called primary education. This is the stage when a child gets admission in school and learns regularly according to set curriculum. Kothari Commission (1964-66) occupies a very significant place in the history of educational development of India. Regarding primary education it has divided into span under (i) lower primary stage for the age group of 6-10 (ii) higher primary stage for the age group of 10-13. Kothari Commission (1964-66) propagated the concept of universalization of primary education.
OBJECTIVES OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

To verify


2. If all children complete 5 years of primary schooling by 2007.

3. If all children complete 8 years of elementary schooling by 2010.

4. To examine the focus of an elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.

5. To bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010.


UNIVERSALISATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (UEE)

At the time of Independence, India inherited a system of education which was not only quantitatively small but also characterized by structural
imbalances. Only fourteen per cent of the population was literate and only one child out of three had been enrolled in primary school. The low levels of participation and literacy were aggravated by acute regional and gender disparities. As education is vitally linked with the totality of the development process --- education being "the basic tool for the development of consciousness and reconstitution of society," in the words of Mahatma Gandhi --- the reform and restructuring of the educational system was recognised as an important area of state intervention.

The need for a literate population and universal education for all children in the age group of 6-14 was recognised as a crucial input for nation building and was given due consideration in the Constitution as well as in successive Five Year Plans. This has resulted in a manifold increase of spatial spread, infrastructural facilities, increased coverage of various social groups; but the goal of providing basic education to all could not be achieved.

**ACCESS: GROWTH OF FACILITIES**

There has been a spectacular increase in elementary education during the post-Independence period. The elementary education system of India has expanded into one of the largest in the world. The number of primary
schools increased from 209,671 in 1950-51 to 572,541 in 1992-93; the corresponding increase in upper primary schools was from 13,596 to 153,921. These 726,462 schools together with 2.7 lakhs non-formal education centres enrolled 150 million children as compared to 22.3 million in 1951. Universal provision of education has been substantially achieved at the primary stage. According to the Fifth All India Education Survey (1986), 94.5 per cent of the rural population had schools within a walking distance of 1 km. and 83.98% of the rural population have an upper primary school within a walking distance of 3 km. The survey estimated that there were 31,815 habitations in the country which had a population of 300 or more but did not have a primary school within the walking distance of one kilo metre. Most of these habitations are situated in educationally backward states such as Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

Enrolment

Since Independence, there has been a substantial increase in enrolment at all levels of education. Enrolment at the primary stage increased about five fold from 19.2 million to 105.37 million in 1992-93;
the increase in the upper primary stage is far higher from 3.1 million to 38.7 million.

The gross enrolment ratios of children in the age group 6-11 increased from 42.6 per cent in 1950-51 to 105.7 per cent in 1992-93. Likewise, the gross enrolment of 11-14 age group increased from 12.7 per cent in 1950-51 to 67.5 per cent in 1992-93. An analysis of the enrolment data reveals that the population of children moving up from the primary to upper primary stage has been increasing steadily, from 16.3 per cent in 1950-51 to 36.72 per cent in 1992-93. While the gross enrolment ratios (GER) at the primary stage in the country as a whole and in most of its states exceed 100 per cent, there are quite a few states where the ratio is considerably low. These include Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, and Meghalaya. At the upper primary stage these states and in addition, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Sikkim have GER’s lower than the national average. Most of these states have literacy rates lower than the national average.

The problem gets more complicated as the drop-out rates, though declining, continue to be high. Nearly half the children who entered Class I drop out before reaching Class V, and two-thirds of the children dropout
before reaching Class VIII. Regional disparities also abound in rates of the dropouts.

*Gender Disparities*

As with any educational indicator, gender disparities are conspicuous in regard to enrolment and retention. Girls' enrolment has grown at the primary stage from 5.4 million in 1950-51 to 42.4 million in 1991-92 and at the upper primary stage from 0.5 million to 13 million. The rate of growth of enrolment of girls has been higher than that of boys but disparities still persist - girls still account for only 45.7 per cent of the enrolment at the primary stage and 37.73 per cent at the upper primary stage. The drop-out rates of girls at the primary as well as the upper primary stage are higher than those of boys.

Regional disparities are also conspicuous. High female literacy states (above 50 per cent) have by and large universalised primary enrolments among girls. Even in regard to upper primary enrolments Kerala, Goa, Pondicherry and Lakshadweep fare very well. In states with medium female literacy status (40-50 per cent) enrolment of girls appears to be satisfactory at the primary level. The situation in low female literacy states (20-40 per cent) causes concern. These states have more than half of the country's
population, with just four of them (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan) accounting for 40 per cent of the country's population.

**Reasons for Children Dropping Out of School**

The 42nd round of the National Sample Survey (July 1986-June 1987) provides valuable information on the reasons for non-enrolment and dropout. Nonavailability of schooling facilities seems to account for only about 10 percent of the "never enroled" in rural India and about 8 percent in urban India; the difference between the sexes is very small in rural areas but somewhat larger in the urban sector.

However, nearly 30 percent of the persons surveyed, both in rural and urban India, gave the reason for "never enroled" as being "not interested". The difference between the sexes here is large: a larger proportion of "never enroled" females gave this reason in comparison with the males. The reason for being "not interested" could be considered a demand side constraint to access: some authorities however, consider it a supply side constraint rooted in poor facilities and quality of education.
Domestic Restraints

About 52 percent of urban males and 29 percent of urban females could not avail of the educational services because of participation in household economic activity and other economic reasons. Attending to domestic chores restrained around one percent of the males, both in rural as well as urban India, from ever enrolling as students. Nevertheless, this reason was one of the major demand side constraints on access to education for the females: for 9.9 percent of them in the rural and 10.7 percent of them in the urban sector. Most of the young females are denied access to education because they look after their siblings besides performing a variety of domestic, housekeeping chores. Significantly, the proportion of currently "not enroled" decreases with the increase in per capita household income.

A little over one-fourth of all "drop-outs " in rural as well as urban India gave "not interested in education/further study" as the reason for discontinuance of education - with the proportion among females being somewhat higher - 33.3 percent as against 26.5 percent for males in rural areas and 28.5 percent as against 23.6 percent for males in urban areas. Another 16.3 percent of rural and 20.3 percent of urban "dropouts" cited 'failure' to pass examinations as the reason for discontinuance. Again, it is a
Moot point whether this is a supply side constraint due to the poor quality of education services or a demand constraint, or a combination of both.

**Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes**

According to the 1991 census, the population of Scheduled Castes (SCs) was 138.2 million (16.33 per cent) and that of Scheduled Tribes (STs) 67.8 million (8.01 per cent) of the country's population.

Both SC and ST populations are not homogeneous target groups in all respects. There are wide variations between different SC and ST groups regionally. Thus SC girls in Kerala are likely to be better placed than non-SC boys in some of the more backward states and districts.

Because of the affirmative policies of the government, the enrolment of SCs and STs has increased considerably at the primary stage. The participation of SCs and STs is now more or less in proportion to their share in population at the primary level. Drop-outs, though declining over the years, are significantly large. Gender disparities are very conspicuous among SCs and STs also.
Handicapped Children

Handicapped children are a distinct target group where basic learning needs have to be catered to by special programmes. Handicapped children would include those who are orthopaedically handicapped, those with hearing impairments, visual impairments, the mentally handicapped and others. NPE, 1986 called for integration of "the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence."

The POA, 1992 estimates that about 10.39 million children with disabilities are to be provided education in the school system. Out of these, about half a million require vocational training.

The statistics on participation of these children are not firm. At the end of 1991-92 about 30,000 disabled children were availing of special benefits under the scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC). In addition, about 60,000 children with mild disabilities received resource support without special benefits. A large number of children with disability are also receiving education in 1,035 special schools.
**Learning Achievement**

If the fact that half the children drop out before reaching Class V is shocking, far more shocking is the level of learning achievement of those remaining in school. A sample study of learning achievements of students was conducted in 48 districts as part of the DPEP. In the final year of primary schooling, in none of these districts the maximum average score for reading skills was higher than fifty two per cent; the achievements in arithmetic were worse.

**CHALLENGES AHEAD**

In spite of the substantial accomplishments since Independence, India has the dubious distinction of having the largest number of illiterates and out-of-school children in the world-30 per cent of the world's adult illiterates and 21.87 per cent of out-of-school children. About 19 to 24 million children in the age group 6-14 are out of school of whom about 60 per cent are girls; about 121.3 million are adult illiterates in the age group 15-35 of whom 62 per cent are women. Given the demographic pressure the numbers are likely to increase further.

The benefits of investing in basic education, both for its intrinsic value in enhancing human capabilities, as well for its instrumental worth in
contributing to social development and economic growth, greater efficiency and better functioning of democratic institutions are well established. Of equal significance is the ability of education to empower women and men to acquire greater control over the circumstances that dominate their lives. It is now recognised that fertility regulation cannot be a matter of mere promotion of contraception but has to strongly promote the socio-economic factors which strongly influence fertility behaviour such as female literacy and education. The low level of social indicators such as fertility rates, Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), sex ratio are related to the failure to achieve Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). If the East Asian experience has any relevance the criticality of UEE for the economic reform process cannot be over emphasised.

It is evident from the above that UEE has strong regional and gender dimensions. The Indian experience encompasses the entire Third World experience. At one end we have states such as Kerala which has achieved universal literacy as well as UEE in terms of school participation - though not in terms of learning achievement - with social indicators as good as the best among the Third World, if not the Scandinavian countries. On the other extreme we have states like UP, Bihar, Orissa and MP with indicators as
worse as Sub Saharan Africa. To the extent that gender disparity is pronounced UEE is the problem of the girl child.

Teacher competence, motivation and performance are areas which require greater attention. These are crucial inputs in UEE. Whatever policies may be laid down, in the ultimate analysis, these have to be interpreted and implemented by teachers, as much through their personal example as through teaching-learning process.

Except in a few places where the ethos of Panchayati Raj system has been internalised the school remains rather isolated from the local community.

Experience in India and elsewhere has established that universal participation cannot be delinked from the operations of quality and relevance of education and from learning achievement. The challenge before the nation is to enhance universal participation and universal achievement of certain minimum levels of learning. In terms of numbers alone this is the greatest challenge that human society had ever faced-more so if one were to adhere to the goal set up in the National Policy on Education, 1986 of universalising elementary education before the commencement of the twenty-first century.
LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Several articles on the Constitution of India bring into focus the general principles governing educational development in the country. These articles are rooted in India's struggle for independence. Basic education was one of the important goals of the freedom struggle and Mahatma Gandhi, even while leading the epic struggle against colonial power, evolved an alternative education system. The Directive Principles contained in Article 45 of the Constitution enjoin that "the State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years." The expression "the State" which occurs in this Article is defined in Article 12 to include the Government and Parliament of India, the government and the legislature of each of the states and all local or other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the government of India.

Article 29(1) of the Constitution provides that any section of the citizens, residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same." Article 29(2) lays down that "no citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out
of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them." Article 30(1) enjoins that "all minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice," while Article 30(2) lays down that "the State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language." Article 350-A lays down that "it shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups."

Special care of the economic and educational interests of the underprivileged sections of the population is laid down as an obligation for the State under Article 46. As per this Article, "the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation."
Till the 42nd amendment of the Constitution when it was brought into the Concurrent List, education was in the State List except for certain specified items in the Union List like determination of standards in institutions for higher education or research, establishment and maintenance of central universities as well as specified institutions for scientific or technical education and research. The objective of incorporating education in the Concurrent List was to facilitate evolution of all-India policies in the field of education. Though the parliament was thereby empowered with the authority to legislate on education, the Centre has been relying on a consensual process to promote educational development. The concept of concurrency was given an operational meaning by the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986. This policy envisages concurrency as a "meaningful partnership between the Centre and the States" and placed on the Union Government a larger responsibility in regard to the national and integrative character of education, quality and standards, manpower planning, research and advanced study, and international aspects of education, culture and human resource development.

POLICY PRIORITIES AND GOALS

Policy Priorities
The late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi called for a comprehensive review of the existing educational system and the National Policy of Education (NPE) came into effect in 1986. Within the comprehensive framework enunciated by the NPE (1986), the developments and experiences since then were incorporated into the NPE in 1992 and a revised Programme of Action POA (1992) was formulated. Along with its Programme of Action (POA), the NPE provides a comprehensive framework to guide the development of education. Overall, the NPE is committed to:

- address all aspects of education: equity, efficiency, relevance, quality, content and process, linkages with culture, values, society, polity and economy, resources and management.
- emphasize the organic unit of early childhood education, primary education, non-formal education, adult education and post literacy and life long continuing education.
- tilt the balance away from quantitative expansion of institutions towards quality and equity.
- give unqualified priority to UEE, adult literacy and education for women's equality; this priority is reflected in the budget allocations during the Five Year Plan (1992-97).
Shift the emphasis from enrolment per se to enrolment as well as retention and achievement.

NPE, 1986 also broke away from stereotyped confines of thinking and promoted thoughtful introspection and key strategies such as:

i) the shift from the States to the district as the unit of planning for implementation of elementary education and adult literacy;

ii) social mobilisation to promote basic eduction; and

iii) integration of adult literacy and non-formal programmes with socially relevant themes such as small population norms, health care, environment and nutrition.

**UNIVERSALISATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION:**

Against the background of the demographic implications and the complex ground realities of the Indian scene, the goals of Education for AD (EFA) in India constitute:

1. Expansion of Early Childhood Care and Development Activities especially for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children, through a multi-pronged effort involving families, communities and appropriate institutions.
2. Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) viewed as a composite programme of:

access to elementary education for all children upto 14 years of age; universal participation till they complete the elementary stage through formal or equivalent non-formal education programmes; universal achievement of at least minimum levels of learning.

3. Drastic Reduction in Illiteracy, particularly in the 15-35 age-group, bringing the literacy level in this age group to at least 80 per cent in each gender and for every identified disadvantaged group, besides ensuring that the levels of the three R’s are relevant to the living and working conditions of the people.

4. Provision of opportunities to maintain, use and upgrade education and provision of facilities for development of skills to persons who are functionally literate and those who have received primary education through formal and non-formal channels.

5. Creation of necessary structures, and the setting in motion of processes which could empower women and make education an instrument of women's equality.
6. improving the content and process of education to relate it better to the environment, people's culture and with their living and working conditions, thereby enhancing their ability to learn and cope with the problems of livelihood and environment

**LARGER ROLE FOR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES**

The NPE recognises that Voluntary Agencies or groups of public spirited individuals could provide a useful supportive framework for promoting universalisation of elementary education. After 1986, schemes are in place for enlisting NGOs in elementary education.

Voluntary agencies can contribute significantly to universalise elementary education through a number of measures such as:

- implementing non-formal education programmes and alternative school programmes in more people friendly and innovative ways in terms of pedagogy, instructional materials, training, organisation and management.
- providing resource support to teachers, schools and continuing education.
- training of teachers, local functionaries, Village Education Committee members and others.
MAJOR INTERVENTIONS SINCE 1986

Major interventions in the years since 1986 include:

1. **Operation Blackboard**

   This programme is designed for improvement of primary schools and provision of support services. It envisages conversion of all single teacher schools into double teacher schools ensuring that at least one of the teachers is a woman and provide all such schools at least two reasonably large rooms.

   Under this scheme 1,10,000 teachers (of them 57 per cent were women) have been recruited and 1,36,000 classrooms were constructed. This scheme has been expanded to cover upper primary schools and also provide a third teacher to primary schools with enrolment more than 100.

2. **Non-formal Education (NFE)**

   This has become an important alternative channel for children who cannot attend full time schools. Although the focus of the centrally
sponsored scheme of NFE is still on the ten educationally backward states, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, it covers urban slums, hilly, tribal and desert areas and areas with concentration of working children in the other states as well.

Financial responsibility is shared by the Central and state Governments in the ratio of 50:50 for co-educational centres and 90:10 for girls'NFE centres. Assistance to the extent of 100 per cent is provided to voluntary agencies for running NFE centres for experimental and innovative projects.

The number of NFE centres increased from 126,000 in 1986 to 255,000 by March, 1994 and the enrolment from 3.65 million to 6.4 million. During this period the number of girls centres has increased from 20,500 to 96,766. Over 425 voluntary agencies are participating in this programme. Alongside, around 50 experimental and innovative projects and 22 district resource units are in operation for in-depth work. Though the coverage has expanded, a major challenge is the development and scaling up of effective NFE models that can help the learners to learn at their own pace.
3. Minimum Levels of Learning

The NCERT has developed the National Curricular Framework and within this framework the minimum levels of learning have been laid down for primary level and concerted steps are being taken to achieve these levels.

The strategy to improve learning acquisition in school focuses attention on what is happening in the classroom, and seeks to bring the principles of equity, quality and relevance to bear upon it. The strategy aims to lay down learning outcomes expected from basic education at a realistic, relevant and functional level, prescribes the adoption of measures that would ensure that all children who complete a stage of schooling achieve these outcomes. These outcomes define the Minimum Levels of Learning common to both school and equivalent NFE programme.

The main steps by which MLLs are being introduced in schools are:

(i) an assessment of the existing level of learning achievement;

(ii) a definition of the MLLs for the area and the time-frame within which it will be achieved;
(iii) reorientation of teaching practices to competency based teaching;

(iv) an introduction of continuous comprehensive evaluation of student learning;

(v) review the textbooks and revision, if required;

(vi) the provision of inputs as necessary including provision of physical facilities, teacher training, supervision and evaluation, etc., to improve learning acquisition to the MLLs.

The endeavour is to monitor learning achievement, to direct greater resources where levels of learning are lower, and to consciously accelerate the pace of development in the needy areas, thereby to reduce disparities, equalise standards and govern inputs for quality improvement in the performance of the system.

4. Teacher Training

The NPE perceives teacher education as a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components being inseparable have been incorporated in the new restructured programme of teacher education initiated in 1987. Setting up of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) is a significant institutional mechanism in this direction. Eventually
DIETs are expected to provide academic and resource support to basic education and also to engage in action research and innovation. As of now, DIET’s are being set up in 380 districts out of the 462 districts in the country; in 190 districts DIETs are already conducting training programmes. It is proposed to set up 425 DIETs by the end of the eighth plan (1997-98). Efforts are afoot to strengthen the SCERTs so that they can provide the resource back up.

5. The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE)

NCTE has been setup as a statutory body for determination and maintenance of standards of teacher education. This is expected to improve the quality of pre-service training, and upgrade the syllabi and curricula of teacher training programmes.

RESOURCES

Education is funded largely by the central and state governments. Elementary education is funded almost wholly by the Government. After the inception of planning in 1950-51 spending on education as a proportion of GNP has steadily increased from about 1.2 percent to about 3.5 percent. While the increase is significant, because of financial constraints and competing priorities resource availability was not adequate. Nor was it
possible to fulfil the aspiration articulated time and again from 1966 onwards, that the public expenditure on education should be at least 6 per cent of the GNP.

While public expenditure is below the articulated aspiration, at a macro-level, India's expenditure on education as a proportion of GNP compares favourably with that of the peer group of Asian developing countries. Public expenditure on elementary education has increased significantly during the post-independence period. Expenditure on elementary education increased from 0.46 per cent of GNP in 1950-51 to 1.72 per cent in 1989-90. During the 1980s alone, the public expenditure on elementary education increased 4.5 times from Rs.15,373 million to Rs.68,883 million in 1989-90. The share of elementary education in total public expenditure on education is about 45 to 46 per cent. A significant and welcome feature is the pronounced trend of a higher share of plan expenditure in the total expenditure on elementary education.

In the past, elementary Education in India was largely funded by the state government. NPE, 1986 gave an operational definition to the concurrency of education enshrined in the Constitution. With the launching of centrally sponsored schemes to promote non-formal education and the
quality of elementary education, the central government's share in plan expenditure on elementary education has increased substantially. Education in India has been largely a budget-based system where efficiency is rated by ability to "consume" budget and to demand more. Performance at delivery point has not been an important criterion. The on-going economic reforms and structural adjustments would, therefore, demand a shift from inputs to performance and outcomes. Considerations of cost effectiveness should inform all levels of educational administration and planning.

DECENTRALISATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

With the enactment of the 73rd and 74th Amendment Act (Panchayati Raj Act), 1992, the focus is now on democratically elected bodies at the district, sub-district, Panchayat and municipal levels. These Panchayati Raj bodies, which are to have adequate representation of women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, minorities, representatives of parents, educationists, and appropriate institutions, will have the responsibility of preparing development plans and implementing educational programmes besides dealing with those subjects closely related to education such as health, social welfare and women and child development.
Detailed parameters for a decentralised management of education have been worked out by a CABE committee on Decentralised Management of Education. The committee's recommendations indicate how educational structures should be set up at the district, taluk/mandal and village levels in pursuance of the Constitutional Amendments. The recommendations of the Committee have been endorsed by the CABE in its meeting held on 15 October, 1993.

State governments have initiated the process of establishment of structures for decentralised planning and management and are in the process of drawing up appropriate legislation which provides for Panchayati Raj Committees for Education.

The breadth and scope of the Panchayati Raj Act provides an exceptionally 'enabling' framework for viable strategies and interventions that would play a commanding role in promoting universal elementary education. The responsibilities vested with the district level body, for instance, cover planning, which includes, inter alia, area development, spatial planning, institutional planning, administrative and financial control and personnel management with respect to primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary schools and educational programmes. The district level
body will also implement, supervise and monitor all educational programmes, including non-formal and adult education. Besides, it will draw upon the expertise of DIETs and other institutions for substantive curricular and pedagogic inputs into district level programmes of Elementary Education (EE), Non-formal Education (NFE) and Adult Education (AE). From the district level, the process of decentralisation percolates down to the village level.

The Panchayati Raj Act envisages the formation of Panchayats for a village or a group of villages. These panchayats will have elected representatives. Each panchayat would constitute a Village Education Committee (VEC) which would be responsible for the administration of education programmes at the village level. The major responsibility of the VECs would lie in operationalisation of micro-level planning and school mapping in the village through systematic house to house surveys and periodic discussions with parents. Ensuring participation in primary education of every child in every family would be one of the prime aims of the VECs.

**DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

A major initiative, entitled District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), was started in 1993 in the area of elementary education to replicate
what the Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) have been accomplishing in the field of adult literacy. The DPEP seeks to operationalise the strategy of decentralised planning identified by the POA, 1992 to be the main strategy for achieving UEE.

It builds upon the national experience in the pursuit of UEE as well the experience gained in the implementation of projects like the Mahila Samakhya, a programme of women's empowerment, the Bihar Education Project, the Lok Jumbish and the UP Basic Education project.

Central to DPEP are the following concepts:

(i) UEE is contextual. The contextuality varies widely across the country. Even in States like Kerala where participation is near-universal much requires to be done in respect of quality and achievement. In such States the pursuit of UEE would be mainly in the areas of quality, facilities and achievement. In other States participation and demand aspects need more attention.

(ii) Contextuality entails local area-planning with disaggregated targets and decentralised planning and management. Planning for UEE had hitherto been mainly at the national and state level. Barring some States and Union
Territories, these entities are too large and heterogeneous for effective planning; they cannot provide contextuality. Ideally the planning should be from below, right from the village upwards but given the objective conditions, a beginning has to be made with the district as the unit of planning.

The district plans are to be prepared through an intensive process of interaction with the local bodies, teachers and NGOs so that it is "owned" by all who are to be associated in the implementation and it reflects the ground-level realities.

(iii) Resources are an important but not sufficient condition for achieving UEE. A host of measures both financial and non-financial, both on the supply side and on the demand side, need to complement higher allocation of resources.

(iv) The strategies for UEE have hitherto emphasised mainly access in terms of construction of classrooms and appointment of teachers. This has been inadequate and needs to be augmented by:

(a) a holistic planning and management approach which goes beyond implementation of a disjointed set of individual schemes, perceives the task
of UEE in its totality, integrates all the measures needed for achieving UEE in the specific context of the district;

(b) this holistic planning should incorporate a gender perspective in all aspects of the planning and implementation process and be an integral part of all measures needed to achieve UEE.

(c) addressing the more difficult aspects of access, particularly access to girls, disadvantaged groups and out of school children;

(d) improving school effectiveness;

(e) strengthening the alternatives to schooling, particularly the nonformal education system;

(f) stressing the participative processes whereby the local community facilitates participation, achievement and school effectiveness;

(g) toning up teacher competence, training and motivation;

(h) stressing learning competence and achievement;

(i) emphasizing the need for improved teaching/learning materials; and
(j) overhaul of planning and management in respect of both routine and innovative areas.

(k) Convergence between elementary education and related services such as ECCE and school health.

The programme would be implemented in a mission mode. A National Management Structure is being set up on the lines of NLMA which would oversee the implementation of the programme throughout the country and provide the necessary technical support to states and districts.

Implementation at the State level would be through registered autonomous societies with CMs as ex-officio Presidents of the General Council and Chief Secretary/Education Secretary as the Chairman of the Executive Committee.

NGOs, Teachers, Educationists and Women are represented in these Committees. VECs play a key role in the implementation of the programme at the village level.

The loftiness of the objectives, the nature and intensity of the planning process, the integration of professional inputs, participative planning and
management, and the emphasis on capacity building have together rendered DPEP an exciting idea not only in the country but all over the world.

DPEP has broken new paths in international cooperation, in that it belongs to the new genre of developmental cooperation which emphasises sustainability, equity, local ownership and execution and is supportive of national policies in the education sector.

DPEP is a homegrown idea, in keeping with CABE guidelines, and its distinctiveness lies in that inspite of diversity of sources of funding, it is a national programme intending to achieve UEE in a contextual manner with emphasis on participation and capacity building.

The programme has been developed in 42 districts of the States of Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The objective is to gradually expand the coverage of the programme to all districts which satisfy the twin criteria of

(a) educationally backward districts with female literacy below the national average; and

(b) districts where TLCs have been successfully leading to enhanced demand for elementary education.
Five districts each in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh are in the process of developing their district plans and would be ready for programme appraisal shortly.

The District Primary Education Programme has generated interest amongst several multilateral and bilateral funding agencies. The European Community has already committed approximately Rs.585 crores (150 million ECUs) as programme support for DPEP. Negotiations have been completed with the World Bank/IDA for a credit agreement amounting to US $ 260 million for six States.

The ODA of United Kingdom has pledged support for DPEP in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. In fact, DPEP appears to be emerging as the main vehicle in the development of elementary education in the country and is likely to develop at the national level as an intermediary technical and resource organisation for primary education development in the country on the lines of the IDBI of HDFC.

**TAMIL NADU COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION ACT**

An Act to amend and consolidate the law relating to and to make better provisions for compulsory education in the state of Tamil Nadu.

Under Article 45 of the constitution of India, the state shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of the constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.

A primary decision has been taken by the government of Tamil Nadu to provide compulsory elementary education for all children of school age in this state.

To give effect to that policy decision it is necessary to make elementary education compulsory for all such children. It is also necessary to make it obligatory on the part of every parent or guardian of a child to cause the child to attend to an elementary school.

Be it enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the state of Tamil Nadu in the forty-fifth year of the Republic India

1. **Short title, extent and commencement**

   (a) This act may be called the Tamil Nadu Compulsory Elementary Education Act, 1994.

   (b) It extends to the whole of the State of Tamil Nadu.
(c) It shall come into force on such date as the Government may issue notification, appoint and different dates may be appointed for different provisions of the Act

2. Definitions

In this act, unless the context otherwise requires

a. ‘attendance at an elementary school’ means presence for instruction at an elementary school for such number of days, and on such days in a year, and at such time or times on each day of attendance, as may be prescribed;

b. ‘competent authority’ means the competent authority appointed by the government under section 6;

c. ‘elementary education’ means education in such subjects and upto such standard as may be prescribed;

d. ‘elementary school’ means a school recognized as an elementary school by the competent authority and includes any elementary school in existence on the date of commencement of this act which has been recognized as such by the Director of Elementary Education or by any authority of the Education Department.
e. ‘Government’ means the State Government;

f. ‘guardian’ means the person to whom the care, nature or custody of any child falls by law or by natural right or by recognized usage, or who has accepted or assumed the care, nature or custody of any child or to whom the care, nature or custody of any child has been entrusted by any lawful authority;

g. ‘parent’ means the father or mother of a child and includes adopted father or mother too;

h. ‘school age’ in relation to child means such age as may be prescribed;

i. ‘year’ means the academic year commencing on the 1st day of June

3. Elementary education to be compulsory

   a. Subject to the provisions of this Act, elementary education shall be compulsory for every child of school age.

   b. For giving effect to the provisions of such-section the government shall provide such number of elementary schools in the state with trained teachers, as may be considered necessary.
4. Duty of every parent or guardian of a child of school age

It shall be the duty of every parent or guardian of a child of school age to cause such child to attend an elementary school.

5. Exemptions

a. Omitted by clause (1). of Section 5 by Tamil Nadu Act 49 of 1997

b. If such child is prevented from attending an elementary school by reason of sickness, infirmity or such other cause as may be prescribed;

c. If such child is attending any unrecognized school provided that the education imparted therein is declared to be satisfactory by the competent authority;

d. If such child is imparted education in such other manner as may be declared to be satisfactory by the competent authority;

e. If such child has already been imparted education in an elementary school or otherwise, upto the standard prescribed for elementary education; or

f. If such child is exempt from attendance on any other ground as may be prescribed.
6. Competent authority

a. The government may by notification, appoint any officer of the Education department not below the rank of District Education Officer, to be the competent authority for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this Act and the rules made thereunder and different competent authorities may be appointed for different areas.

b. The competent authority shall exercise such powers and perform such other functions as may be prescribed.

7. Penalty

Every parent or guardian of a child of school age who fails to discharge his duty under section 4 shall be punishable with fine which may extend to one hundred rupees.

8. Cognizance of offence

No court shall take cognizance of an offence punishable under this Act except on a complaint in writing made by an Officer authorized by the Government in this regard by general or special order.
9. Competent authority, etc. to be public servants

The competent authority appointed under section 6 and the officer authorized under section 8 shall be deemed to be public servants with the meaning of section 21 of the Indian Penal Code (Central Act XLV of 1860).

10. Power of Government to give directions

The government may, in the public interest, by order, direct the competent authority to make an enquiry or to take appropriate proceedings under this Act in any case specified in the order, and the competent authority shall report to the Government the result of the enquiry made or the proceedings taken by him within such period as may be prescribed.

11. Protection of action taken in good faith

No suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against the Government or an officer of the Government, for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any rule or order made thereunder.
12. Power to make rules

a. The Government may make rules to carry out all or any of the purpose of this Act.

b. Every rule or order made under this Act shall, as soon as possible, after it is made, be placed on the Table of the Legislative Assembly and if, before the expiry of the session in which it is so placed or the next session, the Assembly makes any modification in any such rule or order, or the Assembly decides that the rule or order should not be made, the rule or order shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be, so, however, that any such modification, or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule or order.

13. Power to remove difficulties

If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Government may, as occasion requires by order published in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette, make such provisions, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, as appear to them to be necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty:
Provided that no order shall be made after the expiry of a period of two years from the date of commencement of this Act.

14. **Repeal and saving**

a. The Tamil Nadu Elementary Education Act, 1920 (Tamil Nadu Act VIII of 1920). except sections 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40 and the rules make thereunder is hereby replaced.

b. The levy, rates, assessment and realization of education tax and Government contribution to the elementary education fund in respect of municipalities shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of sections 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40 of the said Act, as if the said sections shall be deemed to always have been incorporated in this Act.

**THE TAMIL NADU COMPULSORY ELEMENTARY EDUCATION RULES, 1998**

1. **Short title and commencement**

   a. These rules may be called the Tamil Nadu Compulsory Elementary Education Rules, 1998

   b. They shall come into force with effect from 29th June, 1998
2. Definitions

In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires ‘Act’ means the Tamil Nadu Compulsory Elementary Education Act, 1994

3. Attendance at an elementary school

a. The elementary school shall work for five days in a week and shall function for two hundred and twenty days in a year. Each child shall attend not less than seventy five per cent of the total working days.

b. For each working day the elementary school shall function for five hours, namely three hours in the forenoon and two hours in the afternoon. Normally the working hours shall be 9.30 a.m. to 12.40 p.m. with an interval of ten minutes with four periods of forty five minutes each and 2.00 p.m. to 4.10 p.m. with an interval of ten minutes with three periods of forty minutes each.

c. The working hours may be modified suiting the local conditions on getting permission form the District Elementary Educational Officer concerned. If the school is to work on shift system, the total working days in a week shall be six days and four hours in a day with six periods per day. The number of working days
shall be two hundred and forty days. The shift system shall be resorted to only on extraordinary circumstances permitted by the District Elementary Educational Officer concerned.

4. Elementary education

a. Elementary education means education in subjects of Tamil, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Physical and Health education, Life Oriental Education and Art and Value Education upto Standard V.

b. The pattern and duration of courses, curriculum, syllabus, courses of instruction, time table and text books shall be regulated by orders of Government issued from time to time.

5. School age

School age in relation to a child means the period of life of a pupil from the date on which he attains the age of six until he receive elementary education upto standard V in an elementary school or until he attains the age of fourteen.

6. Powers and functions of the competent authority
The competent authority under this Act shall exercise the following powers and functions namely:

a. collection of up to date particulars regarding the number of the schools, pupils and children of school age in his jurisdiction;

b. conducting periodically review and personal verification of the particulars referred to in clause (i) and enumeration of the same from time to time;

c. organizing meeting and cultural programmes, etc., for 100% enrolment and retention;

d. mobilizing local resources for equipping the schools and supplying the required teaching and learning materials;

e. seeking improvement of the infrastructural facilities of the elementary schools with the help of parent-teachers association;

f. looking after the free supply of materials to children as may be sanctioned by the Government; and

g. seeking the inter departmental co-ordination at all levels.

7. **Time for submission of report to Government**
The competent authority, who has been directed by the Government to make an enquiry or to take appropriate proceedings under the Act in any case specified in that order, shall report to the Government, the result of the enquiry made or the proceedings taken by him within thirty days from the date of conclusion of the enquiry or the proceedings.

**SARVA SIKSHA ABHIYAN**

Government of India launched a scheme known as Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) in the year 2001-2001 in partnership with state government and local self-government. It is a response to demand for quality basic educational over the country. It is a response to the comprehensive and integrated flagship programme of government of India to attain universal elementary education covering the entire country in mission mode. The programme aims to provide useful and relevant elementary education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years by 2010. The SSA programme is an attempt to provide an opportunity for improving human capabilities to all children through provision of community.

**Concept of SSA**
1. A programme with a clear time frame for universal elementary education.

2. A response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country.

3. An opportunity for promoting socialization through basic education.

4. An effort at effectively involving the panchayat raj institution, School management committee, village and urban sub level education committees, parent-teacher associations, mother-teacher associations and other grass root level structure in the management of elementary schools.

**Aims of SSA**

The SSA is to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children of 6-14 age group by 2010. There is also another goal to bridge social, regional and gender groups with the active participation of the community in the management of schools, useful and relevant education significance of a quest for an education system that is not alienating and that draws of community solidarity.

SSA realize the importance of early childhood care and education and looks at the 0-14 age as continuous; all effort to support pre-schools
learning in lens centres or special pre-school centres to supplement the efforts being made by the department of women and child development.

**District Elementary Education Plan (DPEP).**

As per the SSA work each district will prepare a district elementary education plan reflecting all the investments being made and acquired in elementary education sector with holistic convergent approach. There will be a perspective plan that will give a framework of activities over a larger time frame to achieve Universal Elementary Education (UEE). There will also be an annual work plan and budget that will list the prioritized activities to be carried out in that year.

**Financial norms under programme**

The assistance under the programme of 85A will be on a 85:15 sharing during the IX plan 75:25 sharing arrangement during X plan and 50:50 sharing thereafter between the central government and state government.

**NEW POLITICAL AMBIENCE**

The updating in 1992 of NPE, 1986 and its POA, the constitution of a National Development Council (NDC) Committee on Literacy which was later considered by NDC in 1993, the EFA Summit of Nine High Population Countries which was hosted by India in December, 1993, the meeting in
February, 1994 of the Chief Ministers exclusively to consider elementary education and adult literacy, the subsequent meeting of the four Chief Ministers of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh in Bhopal in July, 1994 were all important events which helped renew the national commitment to universalisation of elementary education and to outline concrete steps to achieve that goal.

These have created a new political ambience. The Prime Minister stated at the EFA Summit that the country was determined to achieve the goal of allocation of six per cent GNP for education during the Ninth Five Year Plan. This was reiterated by the President in his address to Parliament in February, 1994.

*The Delhi Declaration*

The Delhi Declaration adhered by EFA to call for ensuring a place for every child in a school an appropriate education programme according to his or her capabilities, consolidate efforts towards the education for youth and adult education within the context of an integrated strategy of basic education for all people; to eliminate disparities of access to basic education; to improve the quality and relevance of basic education and in all actions to accord to human development, the highest priority at national and other
levels so that a growing share of national and community resources is
dedicated to basic education and improving the management of existing
resources for education.

In the Chief Minister's Conference there was complete unanimity that
EFA should be placed high on the country's developmental agenda and that
achievement of the constitutional obligation of UEE brooks no further delay.
It is a national challenge which transcends all political differences. The
centre and the states would work together with a renewed sense of
determination to further the national goals in their field. It was suggested in
the CMs meet that the Tenth Finance Commission should take note of the
basic requirements of elementary education and that the exemption under
Income Tax Act for donations to universities and institutions of national
importance should be extended to elementary education.

It was also agreed by the CM’s that along with higher allocation of
resources it was necessary to ensure better utilisation of resources through
effective implementation and monitoring of programmes in their States.
CM’s would periodically review the progress in this area. It was felt that
special efforts are needed in educationally backward states like Bihar, Uttar
Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.
The need to enlist the cooperation of NGOs, teacher's unions and socially conscious individuals came out very clearly in the discussions of the CMs. The shared perception was that without proper decentralisation of educational administration and greater community participation UEE cannot be achieved. The Chief Ministers felt that the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments provide an opportunity to decentralise educational administration within the time span provided by the Amendments. The recommendations of the CABE committee on Decentralisation were endorsed and it was decided to appropriately implement the recommendations while enacting the State legislations to follow the Constitutional Amendments and framing the subordinate legislation in a time bound manner.

The Chief Ministers also agreed that special efforts would be made to promote convergence of primary education and related services like ECCE, ICDS, schools health and nutrition. It was felt that apart from improving efficiency such a convergence would promote enrollment and reduction of dropouts.

Following the CMs Conference a Group of Chief Ministers of low literacy and high population states was constituted for periodic review of
EFA programmes. This group had already held one meeting in Bhopal on 1st July, 1994, reviewed their programmes and re-affirmed their resolve to achieve EFA by the turn of the century.

AN UNFINISHED MISSION: THE ROAD AHEAD

UEE by 2001 AD is a daunting task but it is a mission to which the nation pledged itself when India made its "tryst with destiny" forty-six years ago. It is a legacy of the freedom struggle, a dream cherished by Gopalakrishna Gokhale, Mahatma Gandhi and the Founding Fathers of the Constitution. Ever since planning began, India has been striving towards universalising of elementary education. Though the goal is still full of challenges, to miss what has been accomplished, in terms of spread of institutions, participation and equalisation of educational opportunities, is to "consider not the beam in thine own eye". The nation as a whole must keep on striving to complete the mission and erase what Mahatma Gandhi once called a national shame and curse.

National Will

The elementary education system has to bring into its fold areas and social strata more difficult to reach; what is ahead is a marathon race along a
tortuous path strewn with socioeconomic barriers and impediments. That business as usual would not do is the moral of successful Total Literacy Campaigns. It is not the State apparatus alone but the whole civil society that needs to be mobilised for the cause of UEE.

Perhaps the greatest challenge before the country today as it strives to universalise primary education lies in this area of perceptual change. The common perception that the government alone must bear the sole responsibility for providing education needs to change. While the Union and the State governments have their full share of responsibilities, in the final analysis, it is people's involvement in educational reconstruction which will make the crucial difference in meeting the challenge of universalizing primary education in India. While the task and the challenges that confront India are formidable and daunting, they are achievable. The onus of action now rests both individually and collectively on teachers and educators, NGOs, the industrial sector, other sectors, the media, politicians, panchayat leaders, grassroots workers, on each and everyone. A grand alliance - an interactive combination of local, voluntary and state initiatives coupled with an assortment of productive, result oriented approaches and strategies holds the key to universalisation of primary education in India. That grand alliance needs to be sustained at least for a decade or so, if UEE in its entirely
access, retention and attainment is to be achieved. Herein lies the challenge. As the experience with the Indian economy has shown, an overreaching crisis can provide a fillip to reform. The failure to achieve UEE is no less a crisis - the adverse impacts on demography, productivity and status of women and disadvantaged groups are too well known to bear repetition, but it is a crisis with a difference, a silent crisis lacking the immediacy of a default on international commitments and as such devoid of that momentum to spur action. Therefore the National Will to achieve UEE has to be periodically renewed so that it does not flag and shrivel.

Holistic View Needed

Educational administration has long tended to be too pre-occupied with provision of facilities --- schools, school buildings and appointments of teachers to the neglect of the processes required to make the system work. There is enough empirical evidence on the mismatch between access and enrolment and to cast doubts on the propriety of this institutional pre-occupation.

This is said not to belittle the importance of such facilities to schools but to emphasize that the construction of school buildings and lower pupil teacher ratios are not the be all and end all of UEE. The education system,
the state and the civil society at large should internalise a broader functional view of education, a view which conceives education as a dynamic, cumulative lifelong process, encompassing a wide diversity of learning opportunities, applying to all people, but laying stress on girls, children and youth, particularly those belonging to the disadvantaged groups. Strategies are needed to bring about the perceptional change. Innovation and dissemination are important components of any such strategy. Nothing can bring about the perceptional changes faster than the development and dissemination of viable and scalable models of non-formal education. Regional and international cooperation can facilitate innovation and dissemination.

**Financial Resources**

The importance of financial resources cannot be exaggerated. As the economy is reformed, as state intervention gets re-focused and as public expenditure is restructured more budgetary resources will flow to education, particularly to universalisation of elementary education. To this end educational reform needs to be fitted into the "architecture that our (economic) reforms seek to create". The Prime Minister has already stated at the EFA Summit that the country was determined to achieve the goal of
allocation of six per cent GNP for education during the Ninth Five Year Plan.

Management

While economic liberalization and the consequent financial restructuring can be expected to facilitate greater resource flow to education far more difficult is the management of change. The system, as of now, barely works and hardly discharges even the routine functions effectively. There is hardly any accountability. To transform such a system to one which can take on the unfinished task of UEE with elan and a new mindset is no mean task. There is no better way to ensure accountability than an awakened and "demanding" community, for the creation of which the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments hold great promise.

II PRESENT STATUS

1. Free Education:

All State Governments have abolished tuition fees in Government schools upto upper primary level. Education in schools run by local bodies and private aided institutions is also mostly free. However, unaided Institutions (3.7%) do charge fees. Other costs of education such as
textbooks, uniforms, school bags, transport fee, etc. are not borne by States except in few cases by way of incentives to children of poor families and those belonging to SC/ST categories. The reason being 96% of expenditure on Elementary Education goes in meeting the salaries of teaching and non-teaching staff.

2. Compulsory Education:

The Compulsory Education Acts enacted in 14 States and 4 UTs have remained unenforced due to socioeconomic compulsions that keep the children away from schools. There is no central legislation making education compulsory. The consistent position has been that compulsion contemplated in Article 45 of the Constitution is a compulsion on the State rather than on the parents.

3. Universalisation of Elementary Education:

The thrust in elementary education is on three aspects:

(i) Universal access and enrolment;

(ii) Universal retention of children up to fourteen years of age; and
(iii) to bring about substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning.

The Government policy is to motivate children to attend the school regularly and to improve upon the facilities in the school system, provide training to teachers and upgrade learning acquisition of children; to enforce compulsory education with punitive measures.

4. In spite of our consistent efforts, a quarter of the total school going age population is outside the formal educational system. As of now, the gross enrolment ratio in the country as a whole is 104.5 for classes IN and 91.2 for classes I-VIII. After adjustment is made for average and underage children, the corresponding ratio is 86.7% for classes I-V and 75.7% for classes I-VIII. In terms of numbers it is estimated that around 28 million children are out of school, constituting one of the largest groups of out of school children in the world.

5. Supreme Court Judgement:

(i) In Unnikrishnan Vs. State of Andhra Pradesh (Writ Petition No.607 of 1992), Supreme Court held that citizens of this country have the fundamental right to education and the said right flows from Article 21 of
the Constitution. This right is, however, not an absolute right. Every child/citizen of this country has the right to free education until he completes the age of fourteen years. Thereafter, his right to education is subject to limits of the economic capacity and development of the State.

(ii) In the case of Common cause Vs. Union of India (Writ Petition No.697 to 1993) wherein the petitioner requested the Court to direct Government to provide all facilities for attaining the goal of universal, free and compulsory education for children upto the age of fourteen years, latest by end of 1999, Hon'ble judges after hearing the arguments, declined to grant any relief to the petitioner and advised him to withdraw the petition.

III. THE QUESTION

The question is, how do we move towards UEE at a faster pace? Can a legislation for compulsory education help? If so, how should it be framed? Who should enact it - central government or state government? Should it contain penal provision? If not, would the law have a deterrent effect? If yes, can its misuse by petty bureaucracy be minimised? These are some of the issues which need to be addressed, deliberated upon and a national consensus evolved.
IV. THE PROS: ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF LEGISLATION

1. The desirability of enacting a law for compulsory elementary education and its impact on enrolment has been discussed and debated extensively in recent years.

2. Prof. Myron Weiner of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an ardent protagonist of compulsory primary education has presented a very incisive analysis of the positive impact compulsory schooling can have on eradication of child labour in his book "The child and the State in India". He also made a presentation on "Compulsory Education and Child Labour" at the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for contemporary Studies.

3. He argues that what has been done historically by every developed, and, now, by many developing countries is to declare that all children aged six to twelve or fourteen must attend school. That no matter how needy, will not be permitted to remove their children from school, that school attendance will be enforced by local authority and that government will be obliged to locate a primary school within reasonable distance of all school age children.

4. It is, therefore, a legislation in which the child, the parents, local bodies and the government have specific obligations.
5. Myron Weiner believes that compulsion does not necessarily imply prison sentences or heavy fines. Local officials, teachers, members of local school boards, can visit the houses of parents who have removed their children from school to inform them that school attendance is compulsory. Within a few years of implementation a norm is established in the country that all children must attend school, a norm more enforced by community pressures than by the authorities.

6. In essence what Myron Weiner says is that penal provisions need not be invoked; Law acts as a deterrent and therefore, parents can be better persuaded by VEC's, teachers and others.

7. An argument in favour of legislation is that it is an expression of political will and it would send out a strong signal to International Community that India is serious about eradication of child labour.

LOAD OF SCHOOL BAG (YASHPAL COMMITTEE REPORT)

A curriculum proves heavy for children when (a) it is too lengthy to be completed in time by an average teacher under normal conditions; (b) there is mismatch between the difficulty level of the concepts of course content with the mental level of the pupils; (c) the language used in the
textbooks is incomprehensible and the style of presentation is verbose and rhetorical rather than simple and straightforward; (d) the basic assumptions underlying curriculum development are not fulfilled.

Yash Pal Committee

A National Advisory Committee was set up by the Government in March 1992 under the chairmanship of Prof. Yash Pal, former Chairman of the UGC to suggest ways and means to reduce academic burden on school students. The Committee popularly known as Yash Pal Committee, submitted its report in July 1993 (Annexe I). On receipt of the Committee's report, a Group was set up on 25.8.1993 under the chairmanship of Shri Y.N. Chaturvedi, Additional Secretary, Department of Education to examine the feasibility of implementing the recommendations made in the report of Yash Pal Committee. The Group submitted its report on 5.10.1993 (Annexe II).

After studying the problem of curriculum load in detail, Yash Pal Committee identified the following as manifestation of the existence of the problem:
1. Starting Early

It has been observed during the last few years that admission age to nursery classes has been progressively lowered down to the age of 2 1/2 years at some places. It appears that the perception has taken a deep root that if a child has to succeed in life, he or she must start education early in life.

2. Size of school bag

So far as physical load of the school bag is concerned, the situation has become worse over the past few years. However, the weight of the school bag represents one dimension of the problem, another dimension can be seen in the child's daily routine which includes completion of homework and attendance at tuitions and coaching classes of different kinds.

3. Examination system

The major, well understood defect of the examination system is that it focuses on children's ability to reproduce information to the exclusion of the ability to apply concepts and information on unfamiliar, new problems or simply to think. Both the teachers and the parents constantly reinforce the fear of examination and the need to prepare for it by memorising a whole lot
of information from the textbook and guide books. This sort of perception about the examination makes things difficult for children.

4. Joyless learning

Majority of our school going children view learning at school as a boring, even unpleasant and bitter experience. The limited purpose of preparing for examination is indeed a very important factor for the unpleasantness of learning. The child centred education and activity based teaching learning method are talked about but are seldom practised in our school.

5. Syllabi and textbook

The syllabi and textbooks if not prepared properly lead to the problem of curriculum load. It has been observed that most of the textbooks have high density of concepts and the style of writing is very terse. The language used in the books in some cases is beyond the comprehension of many students.

The Committee concluded that the problem of curriculum load was not an urban phenomenon. In rural areas, where the students have not to carry heavy bags, the problem of non-comprehension makes things extremely difficult for majority of children The feeling of academic burden
arising out of non-comprehension of subject matter included in the syllabus is indeed a serious problem as it is a major hurdle in the achievement of the target of universalisation of elementary education.

After discussing the indicators or manifestations of the problem of curriculum load, the committee identified the following as the roots of the problem:

1. **Knowledge vs. information**

   The committee has questioned the assumption underlying most curriculum renewal exercises that some sort of knowledge explosion has taken place, therefore, there is a valid reason to add more and more to the existing syllabi. By equating information with knowledge, more things are added to the syllabus making it heavier for children.

2. **Experts commissioned to write textbooks for school students are isolated from classroom realities**

   Since they are not familiar with learning process of children, the textbooks prepared by them prove too difficult for majority of children.
3. Centralised character of curriculum

Curriculum development centrally is not relevant to the local needs of different parts of the country. There is need for increasing participation of teachers in the process of curriculum development.

4. Convention of teaching the 'text'

Majority of teachers perceive the content of the textbook as a rigid boundary or a definer of their work in the classroom. Boredom is the inevitable outcome when tersely written textbook is taught in a rigid and mechanical manner.

5. Competition based social ethos

Our social ethos, particularly in urban areas is now fully entrenched in the competitive spirit which is fast becoming our way of life. Rising aspiration of people in all sections of the society and the growing realisation that education is an important instrument to fulfil their aspirations have resulted in a craze for admission to English medium schools which start imparting formal education too early in the child's life
6. Absence of academic ethos

Adequate time, staff, accommodation and its maintenance, funds, pedagogical equipment, playgrounds are essential pre-requisites for effective curriculum transaction but unfortunately, an overwhelming majority of schools do not have even the minimum essential facilities. The methods of teaching used by majority of teachers are devoid of any type of challenge for the students. Children are hardly provided an opportunity to observe and explore natural phenomenon. The concept of library as a readily available source for learning simply does not exist in most schools. Similarly, science laboratories are not equally equipped and are not used for experimentation and discovery. While forwarding the report of the Committee, Prof. Yash Pal, the chairman of the Committee advised that wide-ranging debates on the report are necessary. In the 49th meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) held on 15.10.1993, both the reports of Yash Pal Committee and MHRD Group were discussed and the CABE decided to generate a country-wide debate in composite groups of teachers, parents and other interest groups. In December 1993, the State/UT Governments were urged to conduct workshops on these composite groups.
In the 50th meeting of the CABE held on 2.3.1994, the Education Ministers of a number of States/UTs expressed their broad agreement with the recommendations of Yash Pal Committee, ready with suggestions of MHRD Group and the CABE advised effective dialogue and follow up action with the State/UT Governments in the matter.

Based on the consensus of State/UT views, 2 sets of action-points, one for states/UTs and other for central agencies like NCERT, CBSE, KVS, NVS were circulated in June and July 1994 respectively. The main recommendations of the Committee which have been included in the broad framework suggested to State/UT Governments in June 1994 are,

(i) Greater involvement of teachers in framing curriculum and preparation of textbooks at State/UT level.

(ii) Amendment of School Education Acts or Rules of State/UTs for laying down norms for pre-school.

(iii) Abolition of tests/interviews for admission in preschools and discontinuance of textbooks and homework at preschool stage.

(iv) Abolition of home work and project work at primary stage.
(v) Extensive use of audio-visual material and enforcing teacher-pupil ratio of 1:40.

A monitoring Committee for making periodical review of the pace of the implementation process has been set up in the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The whole question of curriculum load is a complex question and there are no simple solutions. It has to be tackled in a comprehensive way, and not through isolated steps. It may not be possible to enhance overnight the level of competence, motivation and commitment of teachers, provide the facilities required to all the schools, check the growth of commercialisation in education, channelise the parental ambitions and aspirations, and minimise the importance of annual examinations. But this should not mean that we are altogether helpless and can do nothing in this regard. A package of suitable measures, both short term and long term, needs to be initiated urgently to tackle the problem. The measures will naturally include attempts to reform curriculum, raise the level of teachers' competence, motivation and commitment, strengthen the system of supervision to make teachers responsible for nonperformance, provide
minimum essential infrastructural facilities to schools and to regulate the system of homework assignment.

Introduction

Concern regarding academic burden on students and unsatisfactory quality of learning has been voiced time and again in our country during the past two decades. The question has been discussed extensively by several committee and groups. The Ishwarbhai Patel Review Committee (1977), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) Working Group (1984) and National Policy on Education (NPE) Review Committees (1990) made several recommendations to reduce the academic burden on students. The curriculum development agencies are generally in agreement with the recommendations of the committee and assure the public that these would be kept in view at the time of the forthcoming revision of curricula. But the problem, instead of being mitigated, becomes more acute when a new curriculum is introduced. This has happened in the case of new curriculum introduced in the wake of implementation of NPE (1986). With a view to have a fresh look on the problems of education, particularly with regard to the problem of academic burden on students, the Ministry of
Human Resource Development, Government of India, set up a National Advisory Committee in March 1992 with the following terms of reference:

To advise on the ways and means to reduce the load on school students at all levels particularly the young students, while improving quality of learning including capability for lifelong self-learning and skill formulation.

Before starting its work, the Committee decided the parameters of its work and also the methodology for completing the task entrusted to it. With a view to keeping a national perspective in view, the Committee decided not to confine its work to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) or NCERT syllabi and textbooks but to take into account the textbooks used in different states and union territories also. Secondly, the Committee decided to base its recommendations on the data obtained through perception surveys, wide-ranging consultations with teachers and analysis of textbooks and other instructional materials. Thirdly, the Committee decided to look at the work of agencies/organisations doing innovative programmes.

The process of consultation was initiated with a meeting with a few faculty members of NCERT followed by meeting with teachers and principals working in different states at four places in the country, namely
Delhi, Thiruvananthapuram, Pune and Calcutta. The consultation meetings were also held with voluntary organisations engaged in innovative programmes, syllabus and textbook writers, private publishers, and Chairpersons of Boards of Secondary Education. Some members of the Committee organised meetings with parents, teachers and students at Bombay, Nasik, Baroda and Calcutta. Surveys to ascertain the opinions of teachers and parents were conducted with the help of questionnaires at Bombay and Delhi.

To involve the whole country in this exercise of looking at the problems of school education from the perspective of mechanical load of studies on children, views and suggestions were invited from the students, teachers, parents and general public through advertisements in the newspapers and special announcements by All India Radio and Doordarshan. The Committee received more than 600 memoranda, letters and write-ups from students, teachers, parents and professionals interested in children's educations.

The wide-ranging consultations with knowledgeable people, analysis of the existing instructional materials and reactions of the teachers and students
have enabled the Committee to understand the functioning of the present educational system which forms the basis of its recommendations.

In its work, the committee received cooperation from a large number of teachers, principals, syllabus and textbook writers, organisations, associations and departments, and gratefully acknowledged their contribution to their work. Particularly, we are grateful to the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Delhi, where the Committee's office was located, for providing all types of administrative support which tremendously facilitated our work. We are also thankful to NCERT and its Department of Social Sciences and Humanities for providing finances and other facilities for holding meetings of the Committee. The education departments of the states of Kerala, Maharashtra and West Bengal, and the NCERT Field Advisors in these states deserve appreciation for hosting the regional consultation meetings held at Thiruvananthapuram, Pune and Calcutta. Special thanks are due to voluntary organisations, Alla Rippu, Digantar and Eklavya for sharing their experiences with the members of the Committee. We express our sense of gratitude to the authorities of Doordarshan and Akashvani for making special announcement requesting the audience to send their views and suggestions to the Committee. Above all, we are extremely grateful to hundreds of parents, students and teachers
who responded to our invitation and sent their views in writing, many a time after holding meetings/workshops at their places.

**EXAMINATION REFORMS**

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 postulated that the examination system should be recast so as to ensure a method of assessment that is a valid and reliable measure of student development and a powerful instrument for improving teaching and learning. Whether we need the present form of examination or we need some other forms of examination is an issue which calls for an immediate debate.

**PERTINENT ISSUES**

**Memorisation**

The ever increasing practice of asking questions which demand only the recall of information rather than higher mental level operations has resulted in over emphasis on cramming or memorisation. As a consequence there is a noticeable tardiness in the-development of higher mental abilities.

**Scholarship Oriented Nature**

The present system lays emphasis on the growth and development of scholastic aspects while the non-scholastic aspects are almost ignored. This
results in frustrating the efforts of bringing about all round development of
the students.

**Quality of Question Paper**

The question paper is the most vital component of any examination
system. Though considerable improvements have taken place in its design,
blueprint and content coverage, there is still lot more to be done to make this
tool more reliable and valid. The preparation of the scoring key and marking
scheme requires more attention in order to reduce the element of subjectivity
in marking the script.

**Prevalence of Essay Type Questions**

The examination does not remain a valid measure of student
achievement because essay type questions lead to limited sampling of the
course content and prompts the students to do selective study.

**Subjectivity of Marking**

There is a lot of inter-examiner and intra-examiner variability in
marking and as a result of that the reliability of the examination suffers.
Limited Application of Assessment Techniques

The system as such takes recourse to only restricted techniques of assessment thereby leaving no room for the application of multiple techniques of assessment. This affects both the validity and the reliability of the examination.

Validity of Single-stroke Examination

At the secondary and senior secondary stage of school education, the students have put in 10-12 years of studies behind them and appear for the terminal examination where they are subjected to three hour testing based on a limited course content. Not only this, their sustained efforts of so many years are evaluated by the examiners in a short span of a few minutes. This raises a question mark on the entire system of examination because it does not take into cognisance the work done throughout the years in terms of projects, assignments, tests and class work, etc.

Creation of Fear & Tension

The examination create psychological fear and tensions amongst the students. The students resort to all kinds of malpractices to pass the examination.
Mis-management of Examinations

We often come across the startling news about the leakage of question paper, mishandling of answer scripts, mismatch of roll number, errors in marking and totaling, awarding of grace marks, wrong declaration of results and many more. Most of the examining agencies still appear to be "technology-shy" and are hesitant in adopting the latest techniques of computerisation and optical scanning.

Introduction of the Semester System

The greatest advantage of this system is that it reduces the load of the students and inculcates regular study habits in time. Since the academic year is divided into two semesters after school level, it also has the advantage of providing upward mobility, the students can clear the backlog even after moving to the next semester. It also enables the students to learn at their own pace.

Implementation of CCE

The present mode of assessment does not take into account the assessment of cognitive and non-cognitive learning outcomes and this encourages lop-sided personality development. The one shot written
examination is not an effective measure for gauging all the abilities nor does it promote the application of multiple techniques of assessment. The scheme of CCE is inspired by the age-old adage that it is the teacher who knows the pupil best, and it is through this teacher that we would get to know how the learner is progressing with reference to his own earlier achievements, with reference to his peer group as also with reference to the expected levels of attainments set by the teacher.

**Setting up of Question Banks**

In order to improve the quality of the question paper, there is a need to generate quality questions of different types measuring various objectives, of varying difficulty levels. The question banks need to be developed in each curricular areas for all stages of education. The facilities of the question banks should be made accessible to the teachers who can use them for making various tests and to students who can use them for their own drill and practice.

**Inappropriate Interpretation of Raw Scores**

Raw scores do not reflect the true ability of the student, yet they are used for the purposes of classifying them. Moreover, the marks of one
subject are added to the marks of the other subject on the basis of the myth that 60 marks in English and 60 marks in Mathematics are alike. This is not technically true.

**Non-application of Scaling Technique**

The marks secured by candidate in an examination do not truly reflect the acquisition of ability because they suffer from lot of errors some of which are identifiable and many more which are unidentifiable. This does not allow us to ensure the comparison of scores within the subject and across the subject.

**Numerical Marking System Vs. Grading**

The current practice of awarding numerical marks suffers from lot of discrepancies caused because of variety of errors. Besides, spread of scores in different subjects being different further compounds the problem. In view of this numerical marking does not give the right picture as it gives an unrealistic assessment of human potential. This can be overcome if the students are placed in an ability band which represents a range of marks.
**Awarding of Grace Marks**

The awarding of grace marks is not based on any scientific rationale. In almost all the cases they are arbitrary, unscientific, adhoc and comic. The practice currently followed is not to consider the passing probabilities for deciding the award of grace marks.

**Revaluation**

It is the right of every student to be evaluated as accurately as possible. With a view to ensuring objectivity and transparency, most of the Boards prepare and supply the detailed marking scheme for the guidance of the examiners. If the answer scripts are marked conscientiously and the Boards ensure the adherence of the examiners to the marking scheme, the need for re-evaluation should not arise. However, in some cases lapses may occur and the request for re-evaluation of those students should be acceded to not only to provide for natural justice but to make it all the more transparent and tangible. In this, it may be understood that the re-evaluation is not to be confused with re-totaling. It is reassessment of the answer script.
Returning of Marked Answer Script

There has been an appreciable movement in the direction of returning the marked answer script to the examinees in the interest of accountability, credibility and transparency in evaluation process. The greatest dilemma is whether such a scheme would be administratively feasible especially in the Boards which handle and process the results of hundreds of thousands of students. This practical difficulty will be more pronounced for the primary level, if followed.

Examination and its Backwash Effect

When examinations determine a child's advancement through school and his later life's opportunities, parents understandably put pressure on teachers to ensure that their child succeeds. The backwash effect of this public expectation front teachers is that teachers adjust their teaching to what the examination will cover to ensure that their students score the highest marks. This restricts the teaching-learning process to what is taught and learnt in school and thus it does not promote "mastery learning". So efforts are to be directed to usher in the healthy practice of examining what is 'taught rather than teaching what is generally examined.
Implementation of Multiple Sets of Question Paper

In order to combat the menace of mass copying of all the Boards the CBSE introduced multiple sets of question paper in the year 1992. The wisdom of this move has been questioned by a cross-section of the society because it has led to many apprehensions in the minds of the examinees in particular and the society in general. Though the CBSE based its experiment in conformity with the recommendations of the Madan Mohan Committee, it did not carry out any proper study prior to its implementation. Therefore, it is desirable to undertake a study to compare the parallelism of the multiple sets of question papers.

Treating Public Examination Optional

The modus operandi of a terminal examination is a public examination conducted by a Board at class X and class XII stage for the purposes of certification and promotion. However, with all the drawbacks of these examinations, there has been a recession in the credibility. As a consequence, the institutions of higher and professional learning have started conducting their entrance examinations. The ultimate victim is the student, who ever since his entry into schooling, is constantly subjected to an examination galore. He suffers from the examination syndrome all through
his education career. In view of the above, there is a need to debate on the significance of the public examination being made optional.

**Feasibility of a Common National Test**

A student passing class XII is plagued by the trauma of appearing for a number of entrance examinations for admission to institutions of higher and professional learning. This not only results in financial burden on the parents but also turns the student into a nervous wreck. Examinations have no emotions. This prompts us to do some loud thinking for replacing separate entrance examination by a common national test.

**CONCLUSIONS**

If the aforesaid reforms are introduced in isolation, they may fail to produce desired results. Since they are inter linked, they need to be implemented simultaneously. The changes that they are supposed to bring about will be very gradual and imperceptible but in the long run these will help in improving the learners' achievement and thereby promote the development of human resource. Not only all this, they will also go a long way in promoting the teachers' potential and institutions' capabilities and
thus will have a 'far reaching effect on the quality of school education in the country, starting form the primary level.

VALUE EDUCATION: SOME BASIC ISSUES

I. There are certain age old traditions such as preference for the male child, notional advantages of a large family, religion as the sole guiding principle in personal and social life, caste as identity, etc. There is another set of values relating to attitudes and behaviour such as caring and sharing in the family and society, obedience to and respect for elders, respect for argument and reasoning, non-violence and personal hygiene. In contemporary society some of these values may need to be reinterpreted or replaced while some others may require reinforcement. In the context of these concerns, what values will reflect a national ethos?

II. Very often value education and moral education are considered synonymous. In many cases, it has been observed, moral education serves as a gateway to religious instruction and reinforcement of caste models. Will this contradict the social desirability of secularism and removal of social barriers?
III. How should education and school practices be kept apart from myths and beliefs?

IV. How should value education be done? Can it be done through preaching, sermonizing and pontificating or is it reasonable to assume that values education is best imparted through process itself?

V. Should we consider a separate time slot for value education or integrate values in education through teaching learning methods, instructional materials, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities?

VI. Very often there is a basic contradiction between what is school and family as value education and what children actually observe in society and through the media. This contradiction leads to confusion and vagueness and teaching of values is reduced to ritual. How should this question be answered to make value education meaningful and effective?

VALUE EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 envisages a national system of education based on a National Curricular Framework containing a common core along with other components that are flexible. As per para 3.4 of the NPE, the common core includes the history of India's freedom
movement, the constitutional obligations and other content essential to nurture national identity. These elements will cut across subject areas and will be designed to promote values such as India's common cultural heritage, etiquette, egalitarianism, democracy and secularism, equality of the sexes, protection of the environment, removal of social barriers, observance of the small family norm and inculcation of the scientific temper.

**Implementing the above in the school systems under the Central control.**

On the basis of the guidelines given in the National Curricular Framework for Elementary and Secondary Education, brought out by NCERT in 1988 after adoption of NPE, 1986, the NCERT revised the entire school syllabi and brought out revised textbooks for classes I to XII. The main focus of the revised syllabi of the NCERT for different stages of school is on development of knowledge, values and attitudes conducive to actualising the student's potential, for enabling effective participation in the national development endeavour.

Keeping in view the NCERT textbooks and curricular guidelines, the State Governments are expected to undertake measures to revise their school
syllabi/textbooks for introduction in their school system in a phased manner.

**Initiatives from the Planning Commission**

As recommended by the Planning Commission's Core Group on Value Orientation of Education, a Standing Committee was set up for promotion and coordination of value orientation of education at the school and higher education stages. This standing committee further constituted sub-groups, one of them for schools and education, to formulate plans of action to implement various recommendations made in the core group report.

The plan of action of the school sub-group broadly covers the following areas i.e. integration of elements of value education into:

(i) textbooks/textual material

(ii) (a) non-textual educational materials such as audio-visual materials, posters, charts, stories, picture books, etc.

(b) extra-curricular activities.

(iii) In-service and pre-service training of teachers.
Scheme for strengthening of culture and value in education

A central sector scheme, 'Scheme of Assistance for Strengthening Culture and Values in Education' designed for providing assistance to government agencies, educational institutions, Panchayati Raj institutions and NGOs was launched in 1987. This scheme now extends to the non-formal sector also and provides for in-service training to art, craft, music and dance teachers.

Under this scheme, assistance is given to the organisations/agencies for:

(a) Strengthening cultural input in the educational content and process, both formal and non-formal; and

(b) Strengthening of value education in the school and non-formal education system.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Within the broad frame of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE), significant emphasis is being given to issues and problems related to primary education. The efforts are geared towards the improvement of the quality of primary education by developing relevant resource materials,
conducting training and undertaking research studies in important areas of concerns.

**National Documentation Unit (NDU) for MLL and ECE**

Collection of information, its cataloguing and computer feeding is in process in the NDU for the Minimum Levels of Learning (MLLs) and the Early Childhood Education (ECE). An information brochure on the NDU is being developed. A quarterly newsletter Glimpses is being regularly brought out and widely disseminated.

**Documentation of Innovative Programmes in Mathematics Teaching**

The study sponsored by the Commonwealth Secretariat, London was carried out by a specially constituted group consisting of members from national and state level agencies and non-government organisations working in the areas of developing curriculum in Mathematics for school education and curriculum for Teacher Education in Mathematics at the primary level.

**Journals**

The Primary Teacher and Primary Shiksha are brought out quarterly. These journals provide a forum to the practising teachers for sharing of
information on school experiences/ classroom activities and facilitate dissemination of new developments and research findings.

**Evaluation of Primary Level Textbooks of NCERT**

Linguistic and thematic analysis of NCERT's textbooks in English, Mathematics, and Environmental Studies for Class III was completed along with the tools for field work. The project report is being prepared.

**Experimental Programme in the KVS Primary Schools**

The programmes on introduction of activity based teaching in primary grades has been undertaken in three Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) schools in Delhi. These schools located in the campuses of NCERT, JNU and IIT are to be developed as demonstration and experimental schools for research and training activities of the Department of Pre-School and Elementary Education of the NCERT. Monitoring and intervention programmes in these schools continued. These Vidyalayas have now become demonstration schools for providing on-site exposure to this methodology for trainees and delegates in the area of Primary Education.
Seminar on Reviewing and Priorities in Primary Level Curriculum

The seminar was organised at IIE, Pune, in collaboration with the UNICEF. The seminar included panel discussion on three major areas; (i) comprehensive environmental education in which significance of health education and its integration by using active learning approach was discussed; (ii) developing communication skills in children, emphasis on the significance of nurturing both language and arts as modes of expression at the primary stage and its integration into curriculum; and (iii) contextual approach to mathematics curriculum at the primary stage. The seminar highlighted some current concerns in the area of Primary Education, particularly the need for a holistic and multi-level perspective. The seminar recommended that the NCERT should prepare a document on Primary Education which should dispel prevailing misconceptions regarding the MLL approach and provide directions. A core group meeting of experts was organised to discuss and arrive at a consensus regarding the format and major thrust of the document. The meeting was followed by a series of interactions with primary school teachers from the states of Haryana, Bihar and Delhi for seeking their views. Two workshops to identify and list common errors made by children in Language and Mathematics were conducted with a view to identifying problem areas in the curriculum. The
feedback thus received is being used for preparation of a document on Primary Education.

**Diploma Course in Elementary Education for Head Teachers in Primary Schools of Maldives**

The course design including course outlines for the Diploma Course in Elementary Education for Head Teachers working in Primary Schools of Maldives was developed. This 15-month course is being organized by the RIE, Mysore.

**Case Studies as Multi-grade and Multi-level Teaching**

The objectives of this project include: (i) study of salient characteristic features of some innovative programmes in multi-level and multigrade teaching, (ii) evolving lessons for multi-grade as well as for monograde set-ups, and (iii) wider dissemination of experiences. The study was field-based using qualitative approaches through extensive case studies, observations and interview techniques. The salient characteristics of the project along with perceptions of teachers and children have been documented in the form of a report (two volumes).
A Critical Review of Researches in Elementary Education in the Context of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE)

The objectives of the study include: (i) documentation of the researches in the context of UEE during 1996-97, (ii) analysing findings of the study, (iii) identifying factors impeding UEE, and (iv) elaborating emerging trends. The data are being collected through correspondence and personal visits to various sources.

Monitoring of the Implementation of the Yashpal Committee Recommendations

Tools for the monitoring of implementation of the recommendations were developed and sent to the states. The status report has been prepared and is being updated from time to time.

Ujala: An Exhibition in the Context of UPE

An exhibition on Universalisation of Primary Education, called Ujala, was developed to mobilise individual and institutional initiatives. This is in the form of a series of 28 visuals in the size of 20" x 24". The visuals highlight issues related to drop-outs, girl child, role of teachers and joyful
Regional Level Inputs to, Primary Education

The RIE, Ajmer, developed training packages for elementary stage on (i) Modalities of conducting Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) in Hindi, Mathematics and Environmental Studies including non-scholastic areas of primary stage, (ii) Teaching of Social Studies at upper primary stage, (iii) Teaching of Science at upper primary stage, and (iv) Teaching of English at upper primary stage. An evaluation tool on selected MLL based competencies in Environmental Studies I was developed, field-tested and finalised.

The programmes for identification of primary teachers' training needs in Environmental Studies I and II, Hindi (mother tongue), and Mathematics were undertaken for developing training packages and their field-testing.

The RIE, Bhopal is conducting research studies on (i) Experimentation and try-out of Multi-grade Teaching in the primary schools of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, and (ii) Case study of DIETs of Gujarat:
Structural and Functional Analysis and Evaluation. A study on the try-out of MLLs was also conducted.

The RIE, Bhubaneswar developed an MLL competency-based Test Item Pool (TIP) in Environmental Studies I and II for Classes III and IV. Learner-centred activities for First Language (Oriya) to achieve MLLs in Classes I and II have been designed in an implementable and sustainable form. A composite group of teachers and teacher educators was oriented with regard to importance of Physical Education and planning focus and structure of curriculum activities in Physical Education at the primary level.

The RIE, Mysore conducted Action Research Projects in Primary Education in the context of Universalisation of Elementary Education.

ACHIEVEMENT: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Academic achievement: it examined in the relationship between academic achievement and a large number of factors in cognitive, affective and emotional domains. Early research on the subject of academic achievement focused on primarily the intellectual and ability factors which were not sufficient to explain all the variations of academic achievement. Hence the other personality variables like emotional, adjustment and
Achievement. So, other personality variables like emotional, adjustment, achievement motivation, aptitude and attitude were studied afterwards.

Socio-economic status, rural, urban differences, school climates, Environment, situations, teaching methods were concentrated one after another in the effort to arrive at a perfect equation of contribution to those factors for predicating academic performance. Achievement is generally liked upon from three perspectives: moralistic, intellectual and personal and social factors. Of these, the intellectual factors contribute more to education achievement. Academic achievement has always been one of the most important goals for the educational process. It is also a major goal, which the youth are expected to pursue in all culture.

Academic achievement is the marks scored by individual students measured by an achievement test – Achievement test measures what an individual has learnt in school over period of time by formal instruction. Achievement tests are common types of tests administered by teachers on the subjects of school curriculum.

Achievement scores help the teachers to classify the students according to their abilities, promote the students to the next higher standards and to judge his methods of teaching.
Very good academic achievement is a very much desired educational practice. Students of today are the citizens of tomorrow and they are also the most precious resources of the country. Educating them means educating in excellence. Academic achievement of students is not a product of a single factor but of many.

**RELATED STUDIES ON PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS ACHIEVEMENT (FOREIGN STUDIES)**

Konstantopoulos, Spyros; Chung, Vicki (2001)did a study on “Teacher Effects on Minority and Disadvantaged student’s Grade 4 Achievement”.

The authors examined the differential effects of teachers on female, minority, and low-socioeconomic status (SES) students' achievement in Grade 4. They used data from a randomized experiment (Project STAR) and its follow-up study (LBS). Student outcomes included Grade 4 SAT scores in mathematics, reading, and science and student demographics included gender, race, and SES. The authors used multilevel models to determine how teacher effectiveness interacted with student gender, race, and SES. The present study also explored whether teacher effects were more pronounced in schools with high proportions of minority or female students. Results indicated that all students benefited from having effective teachers. The
differential teacher effects on female, minority, and low-SES students' achievement, however, were insignificant. There is some evidence in mathematics that teacher effects are more pronounced in high-minority schools. Finally, teacher effects seem to be consistent within and between schools.

Wilson, Travis; Karimpour, Ramin; Rodkin, Philip C. (2003) did a study on “African American and European American Students' Peer Groups during Early Adolescence: Structure, Status, and Academic Achievement”.

Focusing on a sample of 382 African American (206 female) and 264 European American (132 female) students in diverse fourth and fifth grade classrooms, this study investigated three questions concerning the connections between peer groups and academic achievement during early adolescence: (a) How is group structure (i.e., hierarchy and cohesion) associated with group centrality (i.e., status) in the classroom? (b) Does group structure predict academic achievement? and (c) Do peer-group status systems support or undermine academic achievement? Results were similar for African American and European American students. Group hierarchy was positively associated with group centrality but negatively associated with individual academic achievement. Individual status was positively
associated with academic achievement. Discussion focuses on multifaceted peer-group influences on academic achievement and implications for educational practice.

Rahman (2009) conducted a study on “The Impact of Preprimary School on Primary School Achievement in Bangladesh”.

Evidence was collected regarding changes over 3 years in the quality of a preprimary program in rural Bangladesh and differences in school achievement of children who did and did not attend. The quality of 30 preprimary schools was evaluated using the ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised) and ECERS-E (-Extension). Results indicated that the quality improved overall from 3.50 in 2006 to 5.24 in 2008. Samples of 180 graduates of these schools were annually followed into first and second grades and tested for five competencies: speaking, writing, reading, oral mathematics and written mathematics. Their achievement scores were compared with students in their classrooms and students in neighboring schools who did not have the opportunity to attend preprimary schools. First graders in 2008 performed significantly better than comparisons in all competencies, and better than earlier graduates. Second graders performed significantly better than comparisons on all but Reading. Qualities of the math preprimary program correlated with math achievement
in Grade 1 only. Consequently the quality of the preprimary program improved over time along with higher achievement for its graduates. The findings support efforts to expand high-quality programs in developing countries to help children succeed in the early primary grades.

Lu, Liping; Weber, Heike S.; Spinath, Frank M.; Shi, Jiannong (2010) conducted a study on “Predicting School Achievement from Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Variables in a Chinese Sample of Elementary School Children”.

The study had two aims: First, to investigate the joint and specific roles of working memory (WM) and intelligence as predictors of school achievement. And second, to replicate and extend earlier findings (Spinath, Spinath, Harlaar, & Plomin, 2006) on the incremental validity of non-cognitive over cognitive abilities in the prediction of school achievement. The present sample consisted of N = 179 Chinese primary school children in the fourth grade. All measures including working memory (WM), intelligence and motivational items were assessed in class. Teachers provided test scores for the domains of Chinese and Math. We found that WM was a good predictor of school achievement and comparable in predictive power to intelligence. Together, cognitive ability including both
WM and intelligence explained 17.8% and 36.4% of the variance in children's Chinese and Math scores, respectively. The relative importance of WM and intelligence varied with school domains with greater predictive power of WM for Math while intelligence explained a greater proportion of the variance in Chinese although the magnitude of this difference was only moderate. Domain-specific motivational constructs contributed only marginally to the prediction of school achievement for both Chinese and Math.

Monette, Sebastien; Bigras, Marc; Guay, Marie-Claude (2010) conducted a study on “The Role of the Executive Functions in School Achievement at the End of Grade 1”.

The aim of this study was to determine the role of executive functions (EFs) in early school achievement when a variety of potential confounding factors were controlled. Measures of EF (inhibition, flexibility, and working memory) and school readiness were administered to a sample of 85 kindergartners (39 boys and 46 girls, 5-6 years old). School achievement was then assessed at the end of Grade I. Results show math and reading/writing skills at the end of Grade I to be associated with kindergarten EFs. Only working memory contributed uniquely to the
variance in school achievement after all covariates (preacademic abilities, affective variables, and family variables) were controlled and, even then, only with respect to math skills. On the other hand, working memory and inhibition had an indirect effect on reading/writing skills via anger-aggression. EF implication in school achievement is discussed in terms of task demands and child age.


The disidentification hypothesis predicts that African American boys achieve less in school than African American girls do because boys have less personal investment in doing well academically (i.e., they are disidentified). When do such gender differences emerge? Using self-perception and achievement data from longitudinal studies of children (N = 113) at high risk for academic problems because they come from low-income families, the authors examined whether elementary school-aged and early adolescent African American boys are more prone to low achievement and disidentification than African American girls. Multiple regression analyses indicated no gender differences in reading or mathematics achievement between boys and girls at age 8 or at age 12. At age 12, African
American boys’ self-esteem was predicted by academic performance in ways similar to that of African American girls. Thus, no gender differences emerged in elementary school achievement and no gender-specific disengagement patterns were confirmed among at-risk African American students.

Randel, Bruce; Beesley, Andrea D.; Apthorp, Helen; Clark, Tedra F.; Wang, Xin; Cicchinelli, Louis F.; Williams, Jean M. (2010) did a study on “Classroom Assessment for Student Learning: Impact on Elementary School Mathematics in the Central Region”.

This study was conducted by the Central Region Educational Laboratory (REL Central) administered by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning to provide educators and policymakers with rigorous evidence about the potential of Classroom Assessment for Student Learning (CASL) to improve student achievement. CASL is a widely used professional development program in classroom and formative assessment published by the Assessment Training Institute of Pearson Education. Schools were recruited from across Colorado to participate in the study. Colorado was chosen as the target state primarily because it has one of the largest populations in the Central Region from which to recruit schools and because its statewide achievement test is vertically scaled. This cluster
randomized trial of the CASL professional development program had sufficient statistical power to detect an impact of at least 0.25 standard deviation on student achievement. An intent-to-treat analysis was conducted to estimate the impact of CASL on student achievement; all schools were included in the analysis and were analyzed as randomized regardless of the level of implementation fidelity. Analysis did not reveal a statistically significant impact of CASL on the school-level average mathematics achievement of grade 4 and grade 5 students. Results from sensitivity analyses revealed that the impact estimates on student achievement were robust to decisions regarding the inclusion of covariates, estimation method, and the treatment of missing data. In other words, design and analysis decisions made by the research team did not change whether the impact results would have been statistically significant. Appendices include: (1) Power analysis; (2) Response rates by data collection wave, instrument, and experimental group; (3) Data collection instruments; (4) Development, reliability, and validity of teacher outcomes; (5) Teacher Assessment Work Sample; (6) Impact analysis models; (7) Calculation of effect sizes; (8) Treatment of missing data; (9) Variance components estimates and intraclass correlations; (10) Raw means and standard deviations; and (11) Complete mixed model results.
Bodovski, Katerina; Youn, Min-Jong (2011) did a study on “The Long Term Effects of Early Acquired Skills and Behaviors on Young Children's Achievement in Literacy and Mathematics”.

Using the recently available wave of a large nationally representative sample of American elementary school children (ECLS-K data), this study examined the relationship between 6-7 year old students' behaviors exhibited in the 1st grade (approaches to learning, interpersonal skills, externalizing and internalizing behavior) and their reading and mathematics achievement at the end of the 5th grade (pupils aged 10-11 years), controlling for their achievement in the 1st grade. Findings include the single behavioral dimension that has a substantial association with later achievement in students' approaches to learning. The analysis of the interaction effects showed that students from families of low socioeconomic status, girls (in case of math) and minority students were more likely to have higher test scores given their improved approaches to learning. Further, the results demonstrated that basic skills (math and reading in the 1st grade) are substantial predictors of the 5th-grade approaches to learning. The findings reveal the complexity of the intertwined relationship between cognitive and
behavior outcomes among young students and the long-term effects of early acquired skills and behaviors.

Banerjee, Meeta; Harrell, Zaje A. T.; Johnson, Deborah J. (2011) conducted a study on “Racial/Ethnic Socialization and Parental Involvement in Education as Predictors of Cognitive Ability and Achievement in African American Children”.

Racial/ethnic socialization has not been studied in the context of other parenting behaviors such as parental involvement in education and its relationship to children's cognitive outcomes. The present study tested the impact of racial/ethnic socialization and parental involvement in education on cognitive ability and achievement in a sample of African American youth. Two dimensions of racial/ethnic socialization, cultural exposure (i.e., exposure to diverse cultures) and cultural socialization (i.e., in-group pride), were examined in a sample of 92 African American mother-child dyads, of which 50% were female. Maternal reports of involvement during their child's 5th grade year were examined as a moderator in the relationship between racial/ethnic socialization and cognitive ability and achievement. Hierarchical regression analyses revealed that mothers' reports of cultural exposure messages measured in 4th grade predicted children's scores on 5th
grade assessments of passage comprehension. There was also a significant interaction indicating that greater cultural exposure and more parental involvement in education predicted better reading passage comprehension scores over time. The implications for assessing dimensions relevant to cognitive ability and achievement in African American children are discussed.

Konstantopoulos, Spyros; Chung, Vicki (2011) did a study on “The Persistence of Teacher Effects in Elementary Grades”.

Results from experimental and non-experimental studies have shown that teachers differ in their effectiveness. In addition, evidence from non-experimental studies has indicated that teacher effects last for 3 years in elementary grades. This study uses data from Project STAR and its follow-up study, the Lasting Benefits Study, to examine whether teacher effects from kindergarten to fifth grade can simultaneously affect sixth grade achievement. Teacher effects are defined as teacher-specific residuals adjusted for student background and treatment effects. Findings indicate that the teacher effects persist through sixth grade in mathematics, reading, and science. The findings also suggest that teacher effects are important and that their cumulative effects on student achievement are considerable.
Achievement and Sex


In general, it may be inferred that female students have started achieving higher than that of male, of late.

**Achievement and Subject of Study**

A study by Kuraishy S. (1986) reveals that there is no difference in performance between art and non-art groups.
Studies by Sinha N.C.P. (1967) and Saraswat Anit (1988) reveal that science and art groups are significantly discriminated on academic achievement.

A study by Tiwari, G.N. (1982) reveals that science students have scored higher than the students in other courses.

It may be observed that subject of study and achievement are related to each other.

**Achievement and Medium of Instruction**

A study by Anand C.L. (1973) indicates that medium of instruction is associated with achievement.

A study by Narasimhan G. and Pillai Swaminathan S. (1998) reveals that English medium students have better achievement than Tamil medium students.

It may be observed that medium of instruction and achievement are related to each other.
Achievement and School Locality


In-toto, it may be observed that achievement is associated with school locality.

**Achievement and Residence**

A study by Poulose P.J. (1988) reveals that there is a significant difference in achievement between dayscholars and hostellers.

A study by Kuppuswamy (1986) indicates that hostellers have higher achievement than dayscholars, while the reverse is noticed in the studies by Parthasarathy B. (1996) and Gokulnath Bapu (1996).

It is observed that achievement and residence are related to each other.

**Achievement and School Management**

A study by Rup Prakash (1968) reveals that science achievement of pupils from government schools is better than that of pupils from non-government schools.
A study by Rani K. (1985) reveals that aided school students are significantly superior to government school students in the achievement scores of Mathematics and Tamil.

A study by Sabapathy T. (1986) reveals that students from private schools have scored higher than students from government schools.

It may be observed that achievement and school management are related to each other.

**Achievement and Family Type**

The study by Shukla, C.S. (1984) reveals that family type is not associated with academic achievement.

The conceptual framework and practical approaches presented above enabled the investigator to prepare the design and execute it perfectly. The next chapter deals with the methodology of the present study.