CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 NEED FOR THE STUDY

A profession is defined as an ‘occupation requiring a high degree of knowledge and skill to perform social functions that are most central to the well-being of the society’ (Hoyle 1995). It requires an established base that demands an extensive formal education and often formal requirements. Rightly Cogan (1953) defines a profession as a vocation whose practice is founded upon an understanding of the theoretical structure of some department of learning or science, and upon the abilities accompanying such understanding. Stinnet (1962) defines it as ‘an occupation based upon specialized intellectual study and training’. Apart from insisting on the criteria of knowledge, it also requires customary recognition as stated by Spring (1985): ‘profession is an occupation requiring expert knowledge that justifies a monopoly of services granted by government licensing’.

Professional work involves highly complex sets of skills, intellectual functioning and knowledge that are not easily acquired and not widely held. Teaching is one such profession where educators, as professionals, work together, learning from each other, establishing clear standards, exploring and solving problems, facing ongoing and meaningful reviews of their practice, listening and responding to concerns and continuously improving students’ learning opportunities (Wildy and Wallace 1998). The fundamental objective of any education is the positive outcome of
the students involved which is influenced by a large number of factors. While findings are frequently disputed, research is concluding that educators do make an important difference to student achievement. For example, after a careful and highly critical review of recent value-added research, the RAND Corporation found convincing evidence that individual teachers can have a differential effect on students’ academic progress (McCaffrey et al 2003).

Various dynamics affect student outcome, to name a few, impact of schools (Rivkin et al 2005), teacher characteristics and behavior (McCaffrey et al 2003; Brophy 1986; Love 2003; Snell and Swanson 2000), teacher efficacy (Ross 1994, 1998; Berman et al 1977), student characteristics (Parker 2006) and also differences in school, teacher, student characteristics, financial resources devoted to school system and institutional characteristics (Jurges and Schneider 2004).

The impact made by educators was taken up for the research. Several studies have found that students assigned to highly effective teachers several years in a row have much higher test scores than students assigned to particularly ineffective teachers for consecutive years (Rivers 2000; Mendro et al 1998; Baker and Xu 1995). Research have also shown that professional characteristics of educators influence student achievement either directly or indirectly. (Brophy 1986; Evertson 1979; Moore 1973; Love 2003; Molander 1992; Goldhaber and Brewer 1997; Goldhaber et al 2003; McNamara 1991; Snell and Swanson 2000; Delong and Wideman 1996; Ingram 1997; Talbot 1997; Lavy 2002; Glickman 1990; White 1992; Wyatt 2004). Consistently high levels of correlation have been found between student achievement scores and teaching behaviors or skills (Harris, 1998). This research was commenced based on this premise that the educators’ characteristics have a significant role to play in student achievement. Therefore a new model of
professional characteristics of educators was proposed and an instrument to measure the same was developed and validated.

Apart from the teacher characteristics, another attribute of educators found to play a significant role in student achievement, is teacher efficacy (Guskey and Passaro 1994; Ashton 1984, 1985; Berman et al 1977). It has been defined as the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance (Berman et al 1977). The topology developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) was used for measuring the teacher efficacy construct. An attempt was made to identify the association between professional characteristics and teacher efficacy as well as to identify those characteristics which enhances teacher efficacy.

1.2 PROFESSION

Professions are distinct from other kinds of occupations by the degree of expertise and complexity involved in the work itself. Roscoe Pound argues that profession “refers to a group-pursuing a learned art as a common calling in the spirit of public service- no less a public service, because it may incidentally be a means to livelihood. Pursuit of the learned art in the spirit of public service is the primary purpose. (American Bar Association, 1986:10). According to the Australian Council of Professions (1993:1), professional practitioners as distinct from, ‘more commercially minded occupational associations – must at all time place the responsibility for the welfare, health and safety of the community before their responsibility to the profession, to sectional or private interests, or to other members of the profession. The relationship between profession and a wider community is explained by Longstaff (1996) as: if the idea of a profession is to have any significance, then it must hinge on this notion that professionals make a bargain with society in which they promise conscientiously to serve the public interest –
even if to do so may, at times, be at their own expense. In return society allocates certain privileges like one or more of the following: the right to engage in self regulation; the exclusive right to perform particular functions; special status. He also adds, ‘at all times it should be remembered that what society gives, it can take away. It only accords privileges on the condition that members of the profession work to improve the common good. (Standards for Professional Practice in Australian Classrooms, 2000). Savan (1989) defines the professions more broadly as ‘groups which apply special knowledge in the service of a client’.

Lennertz (1991) remarks, ‘professions are synonymous with public purpose, intellectual tradition and fiduciary relationships’. A further characteristic of a profession is its self-regulation by a code of ethics and its role as a moral community (Camenisch 1983). Because of the specialized knowledge and expertise they possess, members of a profession have influence and power over those for whom they provide service. Not any person can pick up the tools of the lawyer, accountant, engineer, or doctor and sell them in the marketplace; the profession guards its knowledge and controls who has access to it. Consequently, members of the professions are expected to guard this power and act ethically and ‘professionally’ (Lusch and Brien 1997). The mastery and control of a basic body of abstract knowledge and the ideal of service – the client’s welfare above that of the professional—are the core generating traits of professionalism according to the functionalist perspective on professions. These core traits legitimize claims made to professional status by occupational groups. Autonomy is granted by the lay public to those occupational groups which control the work of its members in the interest of their clients (Goode 1969). Such control of individual professional behavior is exercised through the community of the profession. Formal and informal codes of conduct serve to exercise such control as they provide guides for professional behavior. Such social control mechanisms
define appropriate and inappropriate behavior with respect to the larger community, colleagues and clients (Goode 1957).

Professions are occupational communities: they are thus a type of class based status group except that the community is organized explicitly within the realm of work rather than in the sphere of consumption. The strong professions are merely a particular occupation, one that has a distinctive culture and self conscious organization (Collins 1979).

Therefore we see that a profession is generally thought to have certain benchmarks that delineate it from other occupations. These include a specialized body of knowledge, juried entry and a sense of social services. Conventional wisdom in education typically views teachers as professionals (Densmore 1987). This conception of ‘professionalism’ is often used to justify teachers’ relatively high social status and job related privileges. Along with dependability, quality and effectiveness, professionalism is sometimes described as a state of mind that must be earned through integrity, commitment, trust and honest hard work (Clamp 1990).

1.3 TEACHING AS A PROFESSION

Teaching is viewed as a complex task, which can be analyzed in order to examine individual elements of the teaching process. Teaching is intellectually complex, difficult and demanding work at least as complicated as architecture or engineering. Not recognizing this, year after year we set eager dedicated people to work without the equipment for the job and somehow expect them to learn it on their own. The fact is teachers are neither prepared to function at the high standards of a true profession nor do they inhabit workplaces structured so they can acquire that professional knowledge
Teaching needs formal training, to be executed as a profession.

Teaching has evolved as a profession through various phases. Therefore professionalizing teaching becomes a need to maintain its professionalism. The various stages of teaching profession is explained by Hargreaves and Fullan (2000). He outlines four broad historical phases of the changing nature of teacher’s professionalism in his evolutionary model of professionalism. The four phases are (a) the pre-professional age, (b) the age of the autonomous professional, (c) the age of the collegial professional, and (d) the ‘fourth’ professional age. In the pre-professional age, teaching was seen as managerially demanding but technically simple. The most common teaching methods were recitation or lecturing, along with note taking, question and answer, and seat work (Cuban, 1984). Teachers need little training or ongoing professional learning. They learn refinements on the job within the confines of the classroom, which they control. In the age of the autonomous professional, the overriding characteristic of teaching was its individualism. Professional autonomy enhanced the status of teaching as the amount of preparation was lengthened and salaries rose. But pedagogy stagnated as teachers were reluctant or unable to stand out from their colleagues, who had not shared the learning with them.

During the age of the collegial professional, teachers develop common purpose, cope with uncertainty, respond to rapid change, create a climate of risk taking, and develop stronger senses of teacher efficacy such that collegiality was given importance. In the fourth professional age, the world is undergoing profound social, economic, political, and cultural transformations. Roles are becoming less segregated, and borders are becoming increasingly irrelevant. There is more access to networks of professional learning. The content of professional learning needs to become
wider and deeper. It needs to encompass working with parents, becoming assessment literate, keeping up with scientific breakthroughs in the pedagogy of learning, rekindling the purpose and passion of teaching, and working with others to bring about positive reforms in education. All of this is occurring in the midst of intense pressure and contradictory trends of centralization and school-based management. Teachers deal with a diverse clientele and increasing moral uncertainty, where many approaches are possible and more and more groups have an influence.

1.4 PROFESSIONALIZATION AND PROFESSIONALISM

Sockett (1990) makes a distinction between professionalization, which focuses on the process by which an occupation becomes a profession, and professionalism, which describes the quality of practice. Professionalization, as a historical phenomenon, describes a process by which members of an occupation share a common body of knowledge and used agreed upon standards of practice in exercising that knowledge on behalf of a defined clientele (Schrier 1993). According to the American Heritage Dictionary, the term professionalization refers to “the movement of any field towards some standards of educational preparation and competency”. It refers to the process of using education and certification to enhance the quality of performance of those within an occupational field. The term professionalization indicates a direct attempt to 1) use education or training to improve the quality of practice, 2) standardize professional responses, 3) better define a collection of person as representing a field of endeavor and 4) enhance communication within that field (Shanahan 1994).

A normative position to evaluate the professionalization of teachers revolve around two factors 1) the right and responsibility to act from the principles and not simply the technical rationality of rules and 2) the right and
responsibility to systematically investigate the effectiveness of one’s own work (Diessner 1997). If teachers are to be professionals they need to be professionally responsible and accountable. Teacher professionalism starts from the assumption that teachers have authority and responsibility to make decisions in the best interests of their students (Sykes 1991). In this way professional accountability builds on trust. Darling-Hammond (1990) claims that being accountable for professional standards is ‘the only way to stop the educational buck-passing that characterizes bureaucratic organizations’ (Wildy and Wallace 1998).

Reforms to professionalize teaching mean that teachers will increasingly serve as ‘mentors’ to new teachers, take on more responsibilities over time, and exert more leadership through site based decision making. Policy makers seem most willing to support appeals for professionalization when they believe it will sustain a well prepared and a stable workforce and when they have received assurances of local accountability for student outcomes. Also these reforms often expand teachers’ opportunities and rewards in exchange for increased obligations (CPRE Policy Briefs). A profession and membership to it are objectively determined. Professionalism is more personal and subjective. The professionals have autonomy in their job and are permitted to exercise their own judgment. They also have a high level of expertise and an ability to work independently (McDaniel and Gates 2001).

The profession has begun to engage in serious standard setting that reflects a growing knowledge base and a growing consensus about what teachers should know and be able to do to help all students learn according to challenging new standards. Most states have launched efforts to restructure schools and to invest in greater teacher knowledge. Teachers are expected not only to “cover the curriculum” but to create a bridge between the needs of each learner and the attainment of challenging learning goals. These
objectives—a radical departure from education’s mission during the past century—demand that teachers understand learners and their learning as deeply as they comprehend their subjects, and that schools structure themselves to support deeper forms of student and teacher learning than they currently permit. Policy makers increasingly realize that regulations cannot transform schools; only teachers, in collaboration with parents and administrators, can do that. (Darling-Hammond 1996).

Although education reform initiatives offer great promise, researchers suggest that they also pose significant challenges to teachers as individuals and as members of a wider professional community. According to Judith Little (1993), ‘one test of teachers’ professional development, is its capacity to equip teachers individually and collectively to act as shapers, promoters, and well-informed critics of reform’. At the same time, Little cautions against leveling full responsibility for implementing education reforms on teachers. She has identified five areas as being integrally tied to enhanced teaching and therefore essential to professional development: reforms in subject-matter teaching; equity for diverse student populations; changes in the nature, extent, and use of assessment; the social organization of schools; and the professionalization of teaching. Each suggests the need for teachers to gain new knowledge and enhanced skills. (Dilworth 1995). The teaching profession should satisfy the above discussion if it has to be executed effectively.

The system of higher education in India is discussed in the next section. It gives a broad view of the higher education system, major players in the system, academic qualification framework and system of governance. Educator functioning in the Indian education environment is brought out here.
1.5 EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

One of the most significant aspects of literacy data thrown up by the Provisional Population Totals of Census of India, 2001, is that for the first time since independence the absolute number of illiterates have shown a decline. The decline is as large as 31.96 million during 1991-2001. This decline among males was 21.45 million and 10.51 million among females as given by Register General of India, Government of India. This piece of information is a dream come true of the educational India which is supported by a well established education system. However it is undeniable that the system needs to be reformed further to stand against the global standards that emerges. It is increasingly realized that all relevant instruments and agencies contributing to or responsible for the growth process should be integrated to ensure all-round development. In pursuance of this idea, a new Ministry was created under a suggestive name, Ministry of Human Resource Development, on 26 Sep 1985, through 174th amendment to the Government of India, Allocation of Business Rules, 1961. Currently the Ministry has two departments namely, 1) Department of School Education and Literacy and 2) Department of Higher Education (Ministry of HRD, India).

1.5.1 Higher Education

The department of higher education is an imperative segment of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, India. The ministry is headed by the Minister for HRD. He is currently assisted by two Ministers of State. The Minister provides policy and overall leadership to the Ministry. At the executive level, the department of higher education is headed by a secretary, who is assisted by one additional secretary, and several joint secretaries or equivalent officers. Each joint secretary heads a bureau. At present, work of the department is divided into six bureaus as follows:
India has one of the largest 'Higher Education System in the world. As on 31.3.2005, there were 342 Universities including 18 Central Universities, 211 State Universities, 95 deemed Universities and 5 institutions established under State Legislation and 13 Institutes of National Importance. There were 17,625 colleges, of which 5,386 have been recognized by the UGC under Section 2(f) and 12(B) of the UGC Act. In 2004-05, an estimated 104.81 lakh students were enrolled in the institutions of Higher Education as against 99.54 lakh in the previous year and the faculty strength was 4.71 lakh as compared to 4.57 lakh in the previous year. State Governments are responsible for establishment of State Universities and colleges, and provide plan grants for their development and non-plan grants for their maintenance. The coordination and cooperation between the Union and the States is brought about in the field of education through the Central Advisory Board of Education. Special Constitutional responsibility of the Central Government states that Education is on the 'Concurrent list' subject to Entry 66 in the Union List of the Constitution. This gives exclusive Legislative Power to the Central Govt. for co-ordination and determination of standards in Institutions of higher education or research and scientific and technical institutions.
1.5.2 Major Players in the System

Main players in the higher education system in the country are UGC and the Professional councils. University Grants Commission (UGC) is responsible for coordination, determination and maintenance of standards and release of grants.

Professional Councils are responsible for recognition of courses, promotion of professional institutions and providing grants to undergraduate programs and various awards. The statutory professional councils are:

- All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE),
- Distance Education Council (DEC)
- Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR),
- Bar Council of India (BCI),
- National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)
- Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)
- Medical Council of India (MCI),
- Pharmacy Council of India (PCI)
- Indian Nursing Council (INC)
- Dentist Council of India (DCI)
- Central Council of Homeopathy (CCH)
- Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM)

Central Government is responsible for major policy relating to higher education in the country. It provides grants to the UGC and establishes
central universities in the country. The Central Government is also responsible for declaration of Educational Institutions as 'Deemed to be University' on the recommendation of the UGC.

### 1.5.3 Academic Qualification Framework - Degree Structure

There are three principle levels of qualifications within the higher education system in the country. These are Bachelor/ Undergraduate level; Master's/ Post-graduate level and Doctoral/ Pre-doctoral level. Diploma courses are also available at the undergraduate and postgraduate level. Bachelor's degree in arts, commerce and sciences is three years of education (after 12 years of school education). In some places there are honours and special courses available. These are not necessarily longer in duration but indicate greater depth of study.

Bachelor degree in professional field of study in agriculture, dentistry, engineering, pharmacy, technology and veterinary medicine generally take four years, while architecture and medicine, takes five and five and a half years respectively. There are other bachelor degrees in education, journalism and librarian-ship that are second degrees. Bachelor's degree in law can either be taken as an integrated degree lasting five years or three-year course as a second degree. Master's degree is normally of two-year duration. It could be coursework based without thesis or research alone. Admission to postgraduate programs in engineering and technology is done on the basis of Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering or Combined Medical Test respectively.

A pre-doctoral program - Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) is taken after completion of the Master's Degree. This can either be completely research based or can include course work as well. Ph.D. is awarded two year
after the M.Phil. or three years after the Master's degree. Students are expected to write a substantial thesis based on original research.

Vocationalization at the First Degree Level-in conformity with the National Policy on Education, 1986, a scheme to provide career orientation to education at the first degree level was launched in 1994-95. Under the scheme, a university/college could introduce one to three vocational courses in 35 identified subjects.

1.5.4 **System of Governance of Higher Education Institutions**

The Universities are various kinds: with a single faculty, or multi-faculties; teaching or affiliating, or teaching cum affiliating, single campus or multiple campuses. Most of the Universities are affiliating universities, which prescribe to the affiliated colleges the course of study, hold examinations and award degrees, while undergraduate and to some extent post the colleges affiliated to them impart graduate instruction. Many of the universities along with their affiliated colleges have grown rapidly to the extent of becoming unmanageable. Therefore, as per National Policy on Education, 1986, a scheme of autonomous colleges was promoted. In the autonomous colleges, whereas the degree continues to be awarded by the University, the name of the college is also included. The colleges develop and propose new courses of study to the University for Approval. They are also fully responsible for conduct of examination. There are at present 138 autonomous colleges in the country.

Thrust areas of the ninth five year plan are measures for quality improvement and modernization of syllabi, renewal of infrastructure, extra-budgetary resource mobilization and greater attention to issues in governance. Issues of access and relevance would receive attention. Conferment of greater
autonomy to deserving colleges and professional up-gradation of teachers through Academic Staff Colleges would be given priority. Emphasis is being placed on consolidation and optimal utilization of the existing infrastructure through institutional networking, restructuring expansion, so as to only meet the demand of the un-served areas with a focus on women and underprivileged sections. The Open University system, which has been growing in popularity and size, is striving to diversify courses and offerings and gain wider acceptability by upgrading its quality. It would focus more sharply on the educational needs of women and rural society, as well as professional training of in-service employees.

The Government established University Grants Commission (UGC) by an Act of Parliament in 1956. It discharges the Constitutional mandate of coordination, determination, and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in the field of University and Higher Education. UGC serves as a vital link between the Union and State Governments and the institutions of higher learning. It monitors developments in the field of collegiate and university education; disburses grants to the universities and colleges; advises Central and State Governments on the measures necessary for the improvement of university education; and frames regulations such as those on the minimum standards of instruction

The Commission comprises the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and ten other members appointed by the Central Government. The Chairperson is selected from among persons who are not officers of the Central Government or any State Government. Of the ten members, two are from amongst the officers of the Central Government to represent it. Not less than four, selected from among persons who are, at the time they are selected, shall be a teacher in the Universities. Others are selected from among eminent educationists, academics and experts in various fields.
UGC receives both Plan and Non-Plan grants from the Central Government to carry out the responsibilities assigned to it by law. It allocates and disburses full maintenance and development grants to all Central Universities, Colleges affiliated to Delhi and Banaras Hindu Universities and some of the institutions accorded the status of ‘Deemed to be Universities’. State Universities, Colleges and other institutions of higher education, receive support only from the Plan grant for development schemes. Besides, it provides financial assistance to Universities and colleges under various schemes/programs for promoting relevance, quality and excellence as also promoting the role of social change by the Universities.

In general, the objective of the tenth plan with regard to education is to achieve a profound transformation of education in order that it becomes an effective promoter of sustainable human development and, at the same time, improves the relevance with the world and achieves quality in teaching, research and business and community extension functions, including lifelong learning. The plan specifically addresses the higher education and its relevance to accreditation and research and development.

1.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The introduction chapter brought out the need for the study as associating the professional characteristics and teacher efficacy and what generally is a profession. It also dealt with the status quo of the teaching profession and highlighted the need for professionalization. The general education system in India with regard to higher education and the major players in the system were discussed. The next chapter talks about the various researches carried out in the international and Indian context regarding profession and educators’ characteristics.