CHAPTER - I

EMERGENCE OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Education is a potent instrument for social regeneration, economic and cultural development. It is moving progressively towards genuine human value mounted within the framework of our living heritage and contemporary culture. In the words of Swami Vivekananda “Education is man making”. Education is the “manifestation of divinity” already existing in man. Education is “enlivening the soul and externalizing the light within.”

To be literate is an individual aspiration and to make people literate is a social commitment. Literacy increases social opportunities and individual progress. Therefore, every individual wants to be educated and every society provides Opportunities for education. With social development, the educational process became distinct from informal learning associated with production of commodities and services. When countries became independent, mass education became one of the major social concerns and universal primary education became a national commitment in almost all the countries. It was implicitly assumed that access to primary education is a key instrument in nipping illiteracy in the bud. (Hamadache and Martin, 1986).
Education aims to transmit aspects of human experience to the as yet uninitiated, and so involves an introduction to modes of behavior which certainly include modes of thinking and feeling-relevant to our common life. It is a search for the knowledge of the self, of the meaning of life, of the relationship of man to other beings and to the ultimate reality. It is the foundation on which rests the edifice of society and democracy.

Education is the most powerful tool for change and hence it must train the minds of the educated to cope with the change. It played a crucial role in the acquisition of the knowledge base of their people and in the setting up of their exceedingly efficient communications network. Education and socio-economic development are inseparably interlinked through bi-directional consation. They feed, support, sustain and strengthen each other. It has significance in every society. In pluralistic societies like India, it is only education that can synthesize and crystalizes values based on social justice. It plays a significant role in the economic and social growth of both individual status and also prestige. Today education is a process of human development and has appeared as formal examination oriented learning.

Education is a right and all citizens should have access to it.

It is an instrument of liberation and endows the deprived groups with confidence, courage and ability to resist exploitation. Responsibility was assigned to the state to provide free and compulsory education to children upto the age of 14 within a stipulated period of time. The rationale behind the objective was that to transform the educational system from being an exclusive preserve of the elite
into the mass-oriented system which in modern society, is an instrument of the equalization of socio-economic opportunities.

Education occupies an important position in planning for development from poverty to plenty. Education equips manpower for the process of economic growth. It is a life long process. It is the primary instrument for the improvement of quality of life of the human being. It is self perpetuating.

The universal education for both male and female has receive due importance in a country like India for development of society and constituent individuals. If the children of today cannot get the benefit of universal elementary education, we will be adding only to the number of illiterates and the bane of illiteracy will never disappear from our country.

Education is a process of developing the human potential is also consider vital for national development. Hence in planning development of the country investment in education should also receive proper attention.

Thus, it is education, the most powerful instrument known for reducing poverty and inequality and for laying the basis for sustained economic growth. It is fundamental for the construction of democratic societies and dynamic globally competitive economics. For individuals and for nations, education is the key to creating, applying and spreading knowledge. Education can only imbue people with the knowledge, a sense of purpose and the confidence essential for building a dynamic, vibrant and cohesive nation capable of providing its people better, fuller and more purposeful life.
IMPORTANCE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Knowledge is power. To educate the people is to empower them. Empowerment, thus requires education. Education is the entire process of learning that broadens a person’s cognitive process and develops in him/her the skill to choose, evaluate and to add to the existing stock of knowledge. Education does not mean simply dissemination of existing stock of experience and knowledge, but also generation of new knowledge and its utilization for the societal good and enhancement.

The Indian Constitution emphasized the importance of education and enjoined on the state to provide, within a time frame of ten-years, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14. This Directive Principle of State Policy played an important role in the development and management of education in post-independent India. Education was a state subject when the constitution of India came into being and, it was only in 1976 that at the school level, it was brought into ‘Concurrent List’.

The constitution contains several provisions for the promotion and management of educational development in India. They are:

Article 45 enjoins that the state will endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14. The
priority given by the constitution to this provision was clearly evident from the
time frame specified therein.

Under Article 15 (4) reservation of seats for backward classes in educational institutions is provided.

Under Article 46 the state is obliged to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the SCs and STs and protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Article 29(1) provides that any section of citizens residing in the territory of India and 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 to any state-owned or state-aided educational institution on grounds of only 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.

Article 30(2) lays down that the state shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any on grounds of their being managed by a religious or linguistic minority.
Article 350A lays down that, it shall be the endeavour of every state and local authority within the state to provide adequate facilities for children of linguistic minority groups to receive instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education.

In compliance with and continuation of the above provisions, several state Governments and Union Territories introduced new legislations for providing free and compulsory primary education in their respective jurisdiction.

**Elementary Education as a Fundamental Right**

The cabinet of the Government of India, in its meeting held on May 16, 1997, approved the proposal of making right to free and compulsory elementary education as a fundamental right. This step was taken on recommendations of the committee of State Ministers of Education. It involves amending the constitution of India.

The Constitution (86th Amendment) Act: After prolonged delay, the 83rd Amendment Bill was again amended and reintroduced as ‘Constitution (93rd Amendment) Bill 2001’ in Parliament. It was finally passed by the Parliament as the ‘Constitution (86th Amendment) Act, 2002’. With this, a ‘Fundamental Right’ was added to the constitution of India for the first time since its framing. The Constitution now guarantees eight years of free and compulsory education to each and every child in the country.

The 86th Amendment Act incorporated the following changes:
1. Insertion of Article 21A: ‘The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age 6-14 years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine’.

2. Revision of Article 45: ‘The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years.’

3. Amendment of Article 51A bestowing responsibility on parents or guardians: ‘who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or as the case may be, ward between the age of 6-14 year’.

The Constitution(93rd Amendment) Act, 2005: This Amendment has inserted a new Clause (5) (in place of the old one) in Article 15 which states: ‘(5) Nothing in this article or in sub-clause (g) of clause (1) of Article 19 shall prevent the State from making any special provision, by law, for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Schedule Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, in so far as such special provisions relate to their admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions whether aided or unaided by the State, other minority educational institutions referred it in Clause (1) of article 30.’

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009: This Act seeks to give effect to the ‘86th Constitutional Amendment Act’, 2002 and implement the fundamental right to elementary education. It detailed the responsibilities of the centre and the state governments, teachers, parents, and community members in ensuring that all children between the ages of 6-14 receive free and compulsory education. The Act was anchored in the belief that
the values of equality, social justice and democracy and the creation of a just and humane society can be achieved through provision of inclusive elementary education to all. ‘Compulsory Education’ creates an obligation on the state to take all necessary steps to ensure that every child enrolls, participates and completes elementary education.

Since the formulation of the National Policy on Education – NPE (1986) and the Programme of Action – POA (1986), several new schemes for the qualitative as well as quantitative improvement of primary education and reaching the goal of UEE, have been initiated by the Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Department of Education. Some of the major Government initiatives are:

**District Primary Education Programme (DPEP):**

DPEP launched in 1993 is a national initiative to achieve universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) through district level intervention. The overall goal of the programme is the construction of primary education system to operationalize the strategy of UEE as envisaged in NPE 1986 (as updated in 1992) and its programme of Action – POA (1992) through decentralized planning and management, disaggregated target setting, community mobilization and population specific planning. The fundamental principle of DPEP is to evolve strategy at state and district level. It goes beyond the conventional packages such as opening of new schools and appointing new
teachers and addresses the issues of content, process, quality and equity in education.

**Mahila Samakhya (MS):**

Consequent to NPE 1986, a need was felt to redress traditional gender imbalances in educational access and achievement. The Mahila Samakhya programme designed for education and empowerment of women in rural areas (particularly women from socially and economically marginalized groups) was launched as a Dutch-assisted project in 1987-1989. The programme recognized the centrality of education in empowering women to achieve equality. The MS programme did not set any targets as it adopted an innovative approach that emphasized the importance of processes rather than mechanical fulfillment of targets.

The effectiveness of the MS strategy in mobilizing women for education resulted in its being adopted by other basic education projects. The programme revolve round village level women’s collectives, which raised a number of issues relevant to livelihood, education health and other societal concerns. The initial focus was on enabling greater access to and generating a demand for education, building capacities and strengthening women’s abilities in order to get them to effectively participate in the village level processes for educational development.

Mahila Sanghas endeavoured to create an environment for women to learn at their own pace, set their own priorities and, seek knowledge and
information to make informed choices. This involved enabling women to deal with problems of isolation, lack of self-confidence, oppressive social customs, struggle for survival, all of which inhibited their learning. The focus was also on transforming gender-biased social attitudes, beliefs and roles.

**Lok Jumbish :**

An innovative project called “Lok Jumbish – People’s movement for Education of All – with assistance from Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) has been undertaken in Rajasthan. The basic objective of the project is to achieve education for all by the year 2000 through people’s mobilization and their participation.

**Minimum levels of learning :**

With the direction of National Policy on Education, the initiative was taken in India in 1991 to lay down minimum level of learning to be achieved at the primary stage. The concept of Minimum Level of Learning implies well-defined standards of learning by children. This was done on the basis of the recommendations of the committee on minimum levels of learning (1990). All the children irrespective of their background are expected to reach a minimum level of learning before they finish primary education.
National Elementary Education Mission (NEEM) :

The revised National Policy on Education provides for launching of a national mission for the achievement of the goal of UEE. This being an important and immediate task, suitable mechanisms would be worked out to identify the objectives, strategies, functions, structure etc. of the proposed national mission. In this process wide consultations are being held with state governments, voluntary agencies, educational and social institutions, educationists, women activities etc. The proposed mission has the central objectives of mobilizing all the resources, human financial and institutional, necessary for achieving the goal of UEE.

National Programme of Media, Publicity and Advocacy of UEE :

For building up public opinion and mobilizing social support, a national programme of media publicity and advocacy for UEE is proposed to be launched.

The programme has four focal points:

(i) Teachers and all those involved in education of children.
(ii) Students and parents of students, particularly non-literate parents.
(iii) Community opinion builders.
(iv) Policy makers and public representatives.
Non-formal Education (NFE) :

The National Policy on Education (NPE) envisages a large systematic programme of Non- Formal Education for those who cannot attend the full day school. It aims at providing education comparable in quality with formal schooling. The focus is an educationally backward states with special attention to urban slum areas, hilly tribal and desert areas and education of working children.

National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) :

A nation-wide programme of NP-NSPE launched on August 15, 1995 is intended to give a boost to universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously to make an impact on nutritional levels of students in primary school. The ultimate aim under the programme is the provision of wholesome cooked/processed food having a calorific value equivalent to 100gm of wheat/rice per student per school day.

Operation Blackboard :

The scheme of operation blackboard is a centrally sponsored scheme for bringing about improvement in primary education by providing additional facilities to the schools already established. Its goals are clear and well defined
and the government is determined to achieve these goals with the cooperation of the people within a pre-determined time frame.

**Shiksha Karmi Project:**

Shiksha Karmi Project seeks to tackle the problem of teacher absenteeism in remote villages of Rajasthan. The crucial innovation of this project assisted by the Swedish International Development Agency is a substitution of the primary school teacher by a team of voluntary education workers – Shiksha Karmis – who would be selected by the local community and imparted intensive learning. The project has a strong component of training inputs.

Its aims are to cover a phased manner about 1050 remote villages in 70 blocks of Rajasthan by 1994.

**Teacher Education Restructuring and Reorganisation:**

As envisaged in the National Policy Education and Programme of Action (POA), 1996, a Centrally Scheme of Restructuring and Reorganisation of Teachers Education was taken up in 1987 for creating a viable institutional infrastructure of teacher education and building up an academic and technical base for orientation, training and continuous upgrading of
knowledge, competence and pedagogical skills of elementary school teachers in the country.

Efforts have been made to extend the opportunity of elementary education to a large number of children through operation Blackboard, Non Formal Education, Nutrition programme, DPEP etc. But inspite of implementation of all these programmes a large section of children of the country continued to be deprived of the opportunity of Elementary Education. The Supreme Court in 1993 has proclaimed the right of education of children upto the age of 14 years as a fundamental right. To ensure this fundamental right of children, new efforts have been made through decentralized planning process. All the on going programmes for development of elementary education in the district level have been sought to be taken up under one organization / programme named as Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. Through Sarva Siksha Abhiyan the aim of UEE is sought to be attained by need based and decentralized planning, enhanced community participation, and by involving the Panchayat Raj Institution in matters of schools management and supervision. The SSA sought to be implemented through dual cooperation between the central and state governments has accepted the challenge of educating the children of the age group of 6-14 years with practical and quality elementary education within the time frame of 2010 A.D. SSA is an integrated effort to enhance the efficiency of the schooling system, and to ensure building of community ownership for quality elementary education.
Primary education provides a platform for the unity and an investment in the future. It is at the heart of development and plays a pivotal role in giving societies the strength and sense of purpose they need to address the problems confronting them. Building of beautiful society can possible only through education. A modern society cannot achieve its aims of economic growth, technical development and cultural advancement without fully harnessing the talents of its citizens. Education for this, strives to fully develop the intellectual potential of the students and make efforts to see their potentialities are fully realized and channelized for the benefit of the individuals and that of the society.

Illiteracy is one of the strongest predictors of poverty and unequal access to educational opportunities is one of the strongest correlates of income inequality.

When a large share of children do not complete elementary education the productivity of the labour force, the potential for knowledge driven development, and the reservoir of human potential from which society and the economy can draw are all fundamentally constrained.

Elementary education is considered as the base of the educational pyramid-super structure of system. Elementary education develops the capacity to learn, to read and use math, to acquire information, and to think critically about their information. It is the gateway to all higher levels of education.

The fundamental reason behind elementary education were:
(a) Fundamental Right and Social Goal—Universal Elementary Education is a Constitutional directives. In February, 1988, the Supreme Court of India made it the fundamental right. It was embodied as an explicit in the 83rd Constitutional amendment. Our Constitution makes the case for considering elementary education as an essential social goal.

(b) Human Capital/Asset—According to Indian thinking, a human being is a positive asset and a precious national resource which needs to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care. Therefore, any investment made in education is not a waste.

(c) Social Justice—To promote social justice—equality—it will be necessary to provide equal opportunity to all not only in access, but also in the condition for success. The purpose is to remove prejudices and complexes transmitted through social environment and the accident of birth. Therefore, Universal Elementary Education is essential for social justice.

(d) Economic Justice—Education develops different levels of the economy. It is also the substrate on which research and development flourish, being the ultimate guarantee of a nation’s self-reliance.

(e) Unique Investment—Education is a unique investment in the present and the future. This cardinal principle is key to the national policy on education.

(f) Fruits of Democracy—Real fruits of democracy will becomes a mirage as long as a large part of the population remains excluded from the political process. Common causes of exclusion are insecurity, and widespread adult
illiteracy. In general, literacy and education are important tools of effective political participation, whether it takes the form of informal voting or public participation. Adult illiteracy in this country is as high as 40% which is to be removed by proper planning of Basic Education for All.

(g) Good Social Order --- Education is of value not only for the person who acquires it, but also for the society. For instance, when a young person from a deprived community acquires good education, his or her abilities help the whole community. Widespread education helps to resolve social problems and maintain good social order.

Education is the highway to the goal of developing our own system of education, to express and promote its unique socio-cultural identity and meet the challenges of the times.

In India, one of the neglected national problems is the education of masses. Large percentage of the population is still remain high in egalitarian. The writers of the progress of Education in India (1922-27) rightly observed: “An illiterate democracy is a danger not only to itself, but to the world, the higher the degree of literacy that is attained by the people, the greater the possibility of government by the people being conducted on foundations of right, justice and truth. The essential force, therefore, of educational efforts in India, should be directed towards breaking down of the masses.”
The Kothari Commission (1944-66) in its report has quoted that the destiny of India is now being shaped in her classroom. It has also quoted that in the age of science, economic status, social peace and protection factors are primarily dependent upon education.

The Commission has given a concept of seven year primary education to be divided into two sub-stages as:

1. lower primary of four years duration i.e. age group 6-10 and
2. higher primary of three years duration i.e. age group 11-13

In terms of structure of elementary education in the country while in most of the states, the pattern is five years of primary education, followed by three of middle (5+3) and in some states, the pattern is 4+3 or even 4+4.

It is education, fundamental for the construction of democratic societies and dynamic, globally competitive economics. For individuals and for nations, education is the key to creating applying, and spreading knowledge. Education, and particularly primary education also promotes achievement of all of the other Millenium Development Goals, poverty reduction, gender equity, child health, maternal health, lower HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, and environmental sustainability. Education is intrinsically interwined with the development process and constitutes the instrumentality of the modernization of tradition.
We are striving to achieve a world in which peace and harmony reign, a world free of poverty and malnutrition. Education is the path that leads to that world.

The case of universal primary education goes beyond economic argument. Education provides people with what Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen (1999) calls “human capabilities the essential and individual power to reflect, make better choices, seek a voice in society and enjoy a better life.”

Thus, it is recognized that primary education must be at the very heart of any successful education for all strategy. Universal elementary education is the means for drying up the main source of illiteracy. Education can only help man to be aware of his rights and duties and it is the panacea for all social evils. It helps man to improve his thoughts, expression and action, talents and skills. Illiteracy is a malady and it must be eradicated from our country.

**Elementary Education and Human Resource Development**

Man born as a human being. The role of education is to convert the human being into human resources. Education can influence the structured elements of the society and living mode of the individuals. It has also a bearing on the thought and behaviour patterns and the personality structure of an individual. For example, education widens people’s choices. It expands their perceptions and capabilities for leading a better quality of life. Adequate and
good quality food (nutrition), access to safe drinking water, better health care services, relevant and quality education for children and youth constitute the core elements of one’s life. Education provides us with knowledge and information which in turn bring about desirable changes in the way we think feel and act. It also built in us a strong sense of self-esteem, self-confidence. It contributes very effectively to the realization of our potential. Education can therefore be considered as a social instrument for developing human resources and for human capital formation.

In India, Elementary Education is the foundation for the development of every citizen. Elementary Education is also important for the overall improvement and development of human resources. There is overwhelming evidences that education generates important benefit of human development. It is associated with more rapid and more equitable growth, it contributes to reduction in child mortality, and it enhances public health. Many of the gains result from the fact that education empowers people, enabling them to exercise greater choice and to exert more control over the events that shape their lives.

Human Resources Development (HRD) is a framework for the expansion of human capital within an organization. It is a combination of Training and Education that ensures the continual improvement and growth of both the individual and the organization. Adam Smith states, “The capacities of individuals depended on their access to Education.” (Kelly, 2001) Human Resources Development is the medium that derives the process between training and learning. It is not a defined object, but a series of organized processes, “with
a specific learning objectives.” (Nadler, 1984) Human Resources and Development is the structure that allows for individual development, potentially satisfying the organisation’s goals. Human Development, at the level of individuals involves a process of learning and applying what is learned to better the quality of life. With more learning, both individuals and groups are better able to derive sustenance from their environment, to participate effectively in society, to meet challenges, to create new solution and to transform the world in a positive way. Learning is a catalyst for all development processes whereas a lack of learning opportunities constrains the individual and societal ability to produce, or to benefit from development. Human resource is perhaps the most important asset which makes a country or for that matter in any organization great and strong. It is in fact, key to the development. All other material resources can be better utilized by motivating human resources. This can be possible only by imparting elementary education to each and every sector of population of the country. There is ample scientific evidence for the contributions of education to social and economic development. For instance elementary education is known to improve the productivity to workers in the factory and in the field and to provide the necessary skills for self employment and entreprenewship. It can help families earn higher incomes and make better use of their earnings through informed consumption household management.

Every individual is born with a collection of abilities and talent. Education in its many forms, has the potential to develop fulfill and apply them. Education and human resources development are the two facets of a single coin.
In the development and growth of human lies the nations growth and progress. Elementary education empowers entire nations because educated citizens and workers have the skills to make democratic institutions function effectively, to meet the demands for a more sophisticated workforce, to work for a cleaner environment, and to meet their obligations as parents and citizens. Poverty and illiteracy are closely linked and go together everywhere in the world. Both poverty and illiteracy are part of the complex system of deprivation and discrimination. When literacy programmes are linked with schemes aimed at the eradication of poverty, the poor develop a genuine interest in literacy. They are assured of a better life. A large body of research has established a strong correlation between literacy and social development indicators, such as health and nutrition, life expectancy and fertility in developing countries. Widespread elementary education is also a prerequisite for economic growth.

Education and knowledge has been regarded as the highest virtues in the Indian society since the time immemorial. Ancient Sanskrit scriptures considered an uneducated persons more like an animal without a tail. It was believed that a king is honoured in his kingdom only where as a learned person is respected throughout the world. Elementary Education plays a great role in the development of human resources. Opening line of Kothari Commission has rightly remarked “A nation is built in its classroom.” Education draws out the best in a person. It helps him cultured and equips him with the power to contribute his best to the society. Aim of education according to Mahatma Gandhi was to draw out the best in man his body, mind and soul. Rabindranath
Tagore believed that education aimed at realizing the inner principles of unity of knowledge and all activities of our social and spiritual life. Aurobindo Visualized education as an aid in self development of man.

The economic function of schooling in some societies is regarded as minor since the cultivation of the mind and the spirit, curiosity, contemplation and reasoning have more than economic purposes and justification. But in the context, it is the role of education in overcoming poverty - increasing incomes, improving health and nutrition, reducing family size - that receives most attention.

Universal literacy was a political objective in many countries, but money spent on primary schooling was often regarded as diverted from activities that would have contributed more to economic growth. Planners favoured the kinds of secondary and higher education that directly met the “manpower requirements” of the modern sector. People who worked with hands were thought not to have much need of formal education.

Over the past decade, views have changed substantially. Adequate provision of secondary and higher education and training remains an important priority. But the value of general education at the primary level is now more widely recognized.

Role played by Elementary education in the development of human resources of a country interalia leads to its economic development. Close relationship between Elementary education and economic development has been
emphasized even by classical economist like Adam Smith and Alfred Marshall. V.K.R.V Rao pointed out, “He (Marshall) repeatedly emphasized the role of skills in increasing production and specifically identified education not only as a target but also as an instrument of economic development.” We cannot think of making our country self-sufficient in food unless we educate our farmers in a technology based agriculture, mechanical farming and in high yielding cultivation techniques. Jagannath Mohanty has gone even farther when says, Thus, besides economic significance, education has a great cultural importance which cannot be estimated in terms of money or tangible results.

The investment components in human capital are mainly development in formal education, to provide best health and medical facilities, training, guidance, migration of persons, study performance etc. in order to develop them to perfection. Different investment components differ from country to country because of different levels of development, resource –availabilities, future programs etc. But study of education is confined to the most analytical, moral, spiritual and physical development of man. This is the study of human resource development, which draws out man’s latent capacities in order to develop them to national productivity towards all sectors.

Thus a nation is built by the individuals comprising it. When each individual in the society or nation put forth his effort in the direction indicated in the scriptures and reconstitutes his personality, then that society or nation grows dynamically, permeating peace and glory to one and all and that can be possible only through the process of strengthening elementary education and desirable
changes in human resources can bring about socio-economic growth and development.

**RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

Elementary education is the most essential since it constitutes the foundation, the foundation of personality, attitudes, self confidence, habits, learning skills and communication capabilities is laid at this stage. It is education which helps to bridge the chasm of disparities between people, socio-economic groups and regions and thereby reduces disintegrative tensions. It develops human resources, which has a multiplier effort for utilization of all other resources. Thus, it is an investment in development. Elementary education can only strengthens the fabric of democracy. Therefore, fundamental right was added to the Constitution of India. “The constitution now guarantees eight years of free and compulsory education to each and every child in the country”.

The rhetoric continues but the goal remains elusive even after planning. Governments, both at the centres and in the states, irrespective of their ideology, have not pursued their objectives seriously and with vigour. Resources allocated to education have been woefully inadequate and, with higher education absorbing a rising proportion of allocations, elementary education has remained on a semi-starvation diet. The idea of making education legally compulsory for all
children has not evoked much enthusiasm. Some states have enacted the necessary legislation but none has exerted itself to get the law enforced.

Universalisation of elementary education or compulsory primary education implies three aspects (a) Universalisation of provision of schools within the walking distance of the child. (b) Universalisation of enrolment of all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years and (c) Universalisation of education of all children meaning thereby that once a child joins in a primary school continue till he /she complete education upto Class VIII.

The thrust in elementary education emphasizes:

(i) universal enrolment and universal retention of children upto 14 years of age, and (ii) a substantial improvement in the quality of education.

The Government of India adopted a resolution in 1980 to accord high priority to the programme of universalizing elementary education for 6-14 age group children and to take all necessary steps for organizing a massive programme to reach the goal within a period of ten years. The National Committee on Elementary Education which has recently been appointed by the Government in pursuance of the aforesaid resolution will, interalia, guide and oversees the programme particularly in the nine educationally backward states viz. Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orrissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The fourth All India Educational Survey conducted in the country, revealed that nearly seventy five
percent of the non enrolled children of the age group 6-14 were from these nine states.

In Assam first Primary Education Act of Assam was passed in the year 1926 to provide for compulsory primary education in Assam. The second legislative action was taken shortly after Independence in 1947 for making primary education universal, free and compulsory.

The Assam Primary Education Act, 1947 was followed by four other Acts passed by the Legislative Assembly of Assam during the next three decades, viz-

(i) The Assam Basic Education Act, 1954
(ii) The Assam Elementary Education Act, 1962
(iii) The Assam Elementary Education Act, 1968
(iv) The Assam Elementary Education (provincialised) Act, 1974

The goal of achieving the universal elementary education for all children of the age group of 6-14 years has remained unfulfilled much beyond the time frame fixed by the constitution. So there is need for a deep study of the existing elementary education for providing quality education to all without any discrimination. But in-depth study, however of such a vast population is quite not possible, so the researcher delimited her area of study only to Kokrajhar district one of the district of Assam.

Kokrajhar is described as the gateway of the northeastern region of India. Kokrajhar was originally a part of undivided Goalpara district. In 1957
Kokrajhar subdivision was created under Goalpara district and in 1983, the Kokrajhar subdivision was upgraded into Kokrajhar district. After the formation of Bodoland Territorial Area District, Kokrajhar is one of the main district of Bodoland Territorial Council.

Development of any area is closely linked with the nature and quality of education its people receive and therefore, unless all children, who will tomorrow become responsible citizens of the country are given at least the minimum essential education, the quality of life of the people will not improve. The literacy percentage of Kokrajhar district (52.55% : 2001 census) is much lower than other district of Assam. No systematic attempt has so far made to bring qualitative improvement in elementary education through research. It is unfortunate that no research work relating to elementary education has been carried out in Kokrajhar district. A study of Elementary Education in Kokrajhar district would be of great value. It is on the basis of such type of study that appropriate action plan may be undertaken for the improvement of the quality of elementary education.

It is important that education programmes seek to develop skills for understanding and anticipating change and for facing the future with courage and hope. This would involve coming to realize that the future is a human creation, made of our decisions and that in a democratic society people have the right, indeed an obligation, to contribute positively to a sustainable future. This would involve learning how to learn, how to analyse and solve complex
problems, how to think creatively and critically about the future, how to anticipate and make our own histories.

National policy on Education gives utmost priority to universalisation of elementary education. The child-centred approach commended in N.P.E attempts to build the academic programme and school activities around the child. The policy also recognizes that unattractive school environment, unsatisfactory condition of building and insufficiency of instructional material function as demotivating factors for children and their parents. The policy, therefore calls, for a drive for a substantial improvement of primary school and provision of support services. A variety of measures have been proposed for securing participation of girls and of children from the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes families, other educationally backward sections and minorities.

Imparting education means planting the trees of knowledge. This trees, like any other tree, requires to be nursed otherwise it may wither and die. This nursing takes a lot of determination and labour. A suitably oriented system of education can facilitate and promote social change and contribute to economic growth, not only by training skilled manpowers for specific tasks of development but by creating the requisite attitudes and climate. Facilities for universal elementary education are a prerequisite for equality of opportunity.

The resources for the implementation of the curriculum of the primary school, includes teachers, text books and other materials and equipment, physical facilities, teaching aids along with teaching methods and evaluation procedure. The quality of elementary education also depends on the
adequacy of these materials and facilities. But to what extent these materials and facilities are available in the primary schools of Kokrajhar district. The question is of vital importance in determining the quality of primary education in the district.

The present study “A Study of Elementary Education in Kokrajhar District” is an attempt to answer certain question regarding the elementary education in Kokrajhar district. Some of these questions are “What is the condition of elementary education in the district? What is the enrolment position of children in the district? What are the main causes of dropout of children in the lower primary schools of Kokrajhar district? What measures are taken for the dropout students? Whether teacher-student ratio is properly implemented or not? Whether physical facilities are available in the school or not? What type of training facilities is provided to the teachers of the lower primary schools to up to date in his profession? How is the curriculum implemented in the school? What problems do teachers face in implementing them? How do the teachers assess their pupil’s achievement in the school and in the classroom? What are the problems of elementary education in the district? The present study is conducted with a view to answering some of these questions which can be presented in terms of the objectives.

**Title of the Study**

A Study of Elementary Education in Kokrajhar District.
Objectives of the Study

The present study is undertaken with the following objectives –

(1) To study the development of elementary education in Kokrajhar district.

(2) To study the status of elementary education with regard to:

   (a) Enrolment of children

   (b) Dropout

   (c) Teacher – student ratio

   (d) Physical facilities

   (e) Teacher’s qualification, professional training, teaching experience, class load etc.

   (f) Evaluation procedure

   (g) Teaching learning materials

(3) To study the problem of attaining the aims of universalisation of elementary education in the district.

(4) To study the problem involved in implementing the curriculum in the elementary schools of Kokrajhar district.
Operational definitions of the terms

1. Elementary education refers to education which is imparted to the lower primary schools of Assam.

2. Elementary schools for the present study refers to Provincialised lower primary schools i.e. Class I to Class IV.

3. Elementary school teachers – Elementary school teachers includes teacher teaching in Class I to Class IV.

4. Experts – Experts for the present study indicates School Inspector of different circles of Kokrajhar district, Deputy Inspector of schools, Block Elementary Education Officer and experienced official working in Sarva Siksha Abhiyan Mission, Kokrajhar.

Delimitation of the Study

(1) The investigator delimited the present study to five blocks of kokrajhar district.

(2) The investigator delimits her study to class I-IV standard of kokrajhar district.

(3) The study was restricted to 127 provincialised lower primary schools of Kokrajhar district.

(4) The study was restricted to a sample of 323 teachers of the selected primary schools.
References :


Vaidyanatha, Gopinathan Nair, P. R. (2001). *Elementary Education in Rural India*, New Delhi: Published by Sage Publications India Pvt.Ltd.