Chapter 1

Introduction
Introduction

The scholars, educationists, philosophers and psychologists from the beginning of the human civilization have revealed the importance of education in a variety of ways. The reason being that education is the most important factor to bring a change in every aspect of human life. The intellectual and cultural aspects of human life make human beings distinct from other animals. Human beings are capable of learning and of being educated. As such education ensures survival, maintains intellectual and cultural traditions and helps in the development of enlightened civilization. Dumville (1937), states that education, “in its widest sense it includes all the influences, which act upon an individual during his passage from the cradle to the grave.” National father and freedom fighter Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1951), said that, “the education is an-all round development of the best in the child and man-body, mind and spirit.” This concise definition seems to have been elaborated in 1990 at the World Conference of Education for All at Jomtien in Thailand as it comprises both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) required by human beings to survive, to develop their full capacities to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions and to continue learning.

Thus, education in its wider connotation refers to the formal as well as informal education. As such both the types of education are important to bring out the inherent qualities of the child and also to develop physical, mental, emotional self and social-feelings among the individuals to blossom like a flower which spreads and diffuses its fragrance throughout the environment.
All over the world, education is highly acclaimed as the most essential prerequisite for human development. In the history of human-beings, education has formed a basis for the development of human society. Education provides strength and resilience to people to respond to the changing situations. Moreover, education enables the people to facilitate the human cause and contribute to the development of the man and the society. The development in general includes economic development for accelerating the material well-being of the people, and social and political development— for promoting a democratic, egalitarian, and culturally enriched society.

Most countries of the world accepted in principle the idea of ‘welfare state’. A welfare state is one which delivers maximum good to the largest number of the people. The governments in welfare states engineer their activities towards social, political, economic and educational developments. Although these developments are integrated and inter-related, yet educational development occupies strategic significance as it is a pre-requisite of all developments. Therefore, the prosperity of a nation depends mainly on the degree and extent of education of its people. Realizing the magnitude of the need of education, the learned Assembly of the United Nations Organization on 10th December, 1948 adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which incorporates the right to Education (Nayak, 1984). It enunciates—

(i) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, atleast, in the elementary and the fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory.

(ii) Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality, and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom.
Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that should be given to their children.

Thus, it is clear that the welfare and progress of a nation depends on the quality of education prevailing in that country. Particularly in a democratic set up the role of education becomes more important. Democracy can function effectively only if there is an enlightened citizenry which actively participate in finding out the solution of the problems of the nation. As such this participation comes only through education. The framing fathers of the Indian Constitution did not hesitate to incorporate the right to education in the constitution through the Article - 45 and therefore, the nation was committed to provide free and compulsory primary education to all the children of the age group 6-14 with in a stipulated period. The goal is yet to be achieved.

The Kothari Commission (1964-66) has rightly said “that the destiny of India is being shaped in her class room”. Success of democracy depends upon its educated and responsible citizens. Illiteracy is a liability for democracy. An illiterate cannot exercise its valuable franchise. All citizens are to be provided with a minimum level of education to have functional knowledge and skills to perform civic responsibilities as citizens of a democratic country. So education is not to be approached from the view point of the elites, but from the egalitarian’s view. It is not feasible to provide higher education to all. Therefore, every child should be given a minimum threshold of educational attainment, atleast upto the primary level. The document of Challenges of Education (GOI, 1985) remarks aptly as “even for facing the challenges of the world of today, a minimum level of education is essential for the development of individual personality, appreciation of constraints and potentials of environment, internalizing the value system, imbibing an awareness of social responsibility, and acquisition of specific capabilities to deal with the life”.

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Primary Education And its Importance

International Dictionary of Education (Page et. al. 1978) defines the phrase primary education as “that provided by a primary school or elementary school; as those years of study during which no differentiation is introduced either in the form of optional subjects or in the streaming of pupils towards different types of institution or education”. Lexican Universal Encyclopedia (1983), states about the primary education as, “All societies no matter what their stage of development, establish systematic method of teaching young children to perpetuate their society and its traditions, to equip them for survival and to pursue their won interests. In primitive societies children acquire education by observing or assisting adults in life’s basic tasks. As a society becomes more complex, institutions are created to maintain social functions”. Upendranath (1991), said that “education in general, and primary education in particular, are essential inputs in the process of economic and social development of an individual as well as of nation.”

Primary education is the most crucial stage of education as it lays the foundation of the personality (attitude, confidence, habits, learning skills) and communicating capabilities of pupils. The basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetics are acquired at this stage. Values are internalized and environmental consciousness is sharpened. This is the stage when physical growth can be assisted, interest in sports and adventure can be roused and manual dexterity can be developed. If a child is imparted a good education at this stage he never looks back in life (GOI, 1985). It is clear from the description that education has an important role to play in the life of every person in particular and to the nation in general. Primary education is a part of the educational system which is considered as the backbone of a country. No system of education can ever be successful if it does not have a sound primary education system. This level of education lays a deep foundation on
which an edifice of secondary education, senior secondary education and specialized education could be developed. It is with the primary education, the children can adjust himself in the life. At this level the child develops respect for education as well as for school. The child starts interacting people around him and thereby develops the qualities of living in a particular social milieu. In order to develop the personality and create qualities of successful living some sort of compulsory education upto a particular stage should always be there. Realizing the importance of primary education people at the helm of the affair in various countries made a provision of compulsory primary education in the constitution. So, the children would not be denied of the primary education.

Primary education of children has not been emphasized only in India but it is also a cynosure of national and international agencies of the other countries working for right to education and welfare of the children. These agencies have often been organizing conferences of ministers on education to universalize primary education in the world. The UNESCO took concrete measures to achieve the target of universal, free and compulsory primary education in Asia and Africa by 1980 (Nayak, 1984). But the target is yet to be achieved. Initiatives and interests taken by UNESCO in this direction have generated enthusiasm among under developed and developing countries.

Many research studies have revealed that the investment on primary education would yield the higher rate of return and would have positive impact on the productivity as well as in the general well being of the people. The countries which have universalized primary education on priority made progress and others which delayed still lag behind in their progress and development.

The importance of the universalisation of primary education has been recognized as an endeavour of paramount importance in various countries of
the world and India is no exception. Primary education, beyond doubt, does facilitates the cause and also contributes to the national development. It can make the people conscious of their civic rights and responsibilities, develop awareness in nutrition and health, appreciate a sense of small family norms and develop consciousness about the need of the ecological equilibrium. Primary education helps children in learning and acquiring certain essential skills of living and also prepares them to exercise initiative to surmount the future impediments in the life.

Primary education develops the abilities to use available knowledge and information as well as acquire skills in new ways. It increases the capacity for sustained hardship, develops a sense of respect for truthfulness, honesty and also a sense of concern for the interest of others. Moreover, it develops individual's faculties in such a way so as to make him socially, emotionally, culturally and politically more mature. The importance of primary education is immense and the objectives to be achieved by it are vast.

It has been well recognized that the primary education is a pre-requisite for taking the nation at the path of national development. All commissions and committees appointed by the government of India from time to time to examine the education system, to find out the weaknesses and strengths of the system and thereby to suggest measures for the improvement in the system for accelerating the progress and development of the country have invariably suggested for the universalisation of primary education. The Government of India has made constitutional provisions and launched different programmes for the enrichment of the primary education. The emphasis has always been on universal, free and compulsory primary education as it lays the foundation of secondary education on which other levels of education depends as previously mentioned.
Moreover, the universalisation of primary education is positively correlated with the removal of illiteracy, both directly and indirectly. Obviously, illiteracy will continue to exist as long as the primary education is not completely universalized and is not made compulsory for the school going age children. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) has already recommended for both the formal and the non-formal methodologies to be employed and used for the purpose of universalisation of primary education. Further, it recommended that the target of universalisation should be achieved as early as possible. Therefore, the laxity in this regard would have further hazardous consequences in terms of widening the gulf between haves and have-nots.

Moreover, inspite of the provisions in the constitution and best intentions of the people the condition of the primary education has not improved much. It is also a fact that the standard of primary education has been rather quite low and continued to remain low even after independence. Banerjee (2006), rightly stated about the need of the quality of schooling as “it is fine we do need good schools, providing quality education, so that our future generation can hold the Indian flag high in the world.” Undoubtedly, the reason of slow progress of the national economy is directly as well as indirectly due to the illiteracy of the adult masses and also due to a big chunk of children still out of the school.

The experiments conducted on the contribution of education to economic development have shown that illiteracy and poverty are the two sides of the same coin and both are reciprocally related to each other. Therefore, reduction in illiteracy would pave the way far economic development. This could be done with the process of universalisation of primary education and with the enrolment of all the school age going children and their retention in the schools. The education of the children and
consequently the increase in the literacy rate would create consciousness among the people particularly among the masses about the social, cultural, economic and political development of a nation.

**Objectives of Primary Education**

Primary Education is shaped according to the prevailing social and cultural milieu and is regarded as the foundation for the development of the children’s physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual aspects of the personality. Since the middle of the 19th century and onwards, primary education for the children has been recognized as an endeavour of paramount in various countries of the world including India. Therefore, an autonomous body of the Government of India namely; NCERT has followed the objectives of primary education as formulated by educational policies and commissions for the schools. These are quite self explanatory as well as meaningful in terms of the qualities and competencies desired in citizens of our democratic country (Shrivastava and Shourie, 1989). These may be stated in terms of behaviour as follows-

The pupils during the process of primary education will be able to-

(i) develop basic skills of language communication such as listening, speaking, and the symbolic skills like the use of signs, symbols, and drawing, etc.

(ii) acquire the ability of doing fundamental numerical operations and make use of the same in drawing and in reading tables, charts and graphs, etc.

(iii) develop an understanding of terms, symbols, concepts, principles, laws, events and trends, etc in relation to physical and social environment.
(iv) apply the acquired knowledge and skills of a subject in different life situations.

(v) develop observational, manipulative and constitutional skills.

(vi) acquire the knowledge of the basic principles of healthy life, both individual and social and put the same into practice in daily living.

(vii) develop the ability to observe and appreciate the beauty in things and phenomena.

(viii) appreciate the cultural heritage of India.

(ix) develop interest in social and physical environment.

(x) develop qualities of democratic living with reference to school, home and society.

(xi) develop a sense of emotional and national integration, patriotism and universal brotherhood.

(xii) develop scientific attitudes, critical thinking and a desire to acquire knowledge.

(xiii) develop positive attitude, necessary skills and work habits to undertake socially useful productive work.

(xiv) appreciate and act upon universally accepted social, spiritual and moral values.

The present investigator has taken the sample of the study from a few districts of the Uttar Pradesh (UP). Therefore, it is desirable to know about the state to which these districts belong. The following paragraph is about the general feature of the Uttar Pradesh.
**Uttar Pradesh at a Glance**

India is a democratic and republic country of Asia and Uttar Pradesh is one of its state which is truly the heart land of the country. This state is situated in the Northern part of the country. Uttar Pradesh shares its boundaries with states of Haryana and Delhi in the West, Rajasthan in the South West, Madhya Pradesh and a little part of Chattisgarh in the South West, Bihar in the East and Uttranchal in the North along with Indo-Nepal International Border. Uttar Pradesh is the 4th largest state in area of 2.94 million sq. kms (Bhatt & Gopal 2005) and 1st largest state in population of about 166,197,921 including 87,565,369 and 78,632,552 males and females respectively. It is the home of the 16 percent of India's population. The state has been divided into 17 divisions and 70 districts consisting of 300 sub districts, (Census Report, 2001) for the purpose of effective administration. UP has diversity in its physical feature and has a social, cultural, religious, commercial and historical importance.

**Status of the Primary Education in Uttar Pradesh**

The status of the primary education in this state may be adjudged by the literacy of the people. As per the Census Report of India, (2001) the total literacy of UP is 57.36%, which is low as compared to 65.38% literacy of India. Similarly, the male and female literacy is 70.23% and 42.98% respectively, both being low vis-à-vis to the national level as 75.85% and 54.16% respectively (2001). The pattern and the trend in the growth of literacy in UP from 1951 to 2001 has been shown in the Table 1.1.

There are four levels of school education in this state namely; Lower Primary, Upper Primary, Secondary and Senior Secondary. The state follows
the uniform pattern of the National Education System of 12 years of school education including 8 years of free and compulsory primary education.

**Table No. 1.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>12.02</td>
<td>19.17</td>
<td>4.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>20.87</td>
<td>32.08</td>
<td>8.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>23.99</td>
<td>35.01</td>
<td>11.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>32.65</td>
<td>46.65</td>
<td>16.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>40.71</td>
<td>54.82</td>
<td>24.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>57.36</td>
<td>70.23</td>
<td>42.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Census Report, 2001, p.46.)

Uttar Pradesh has made significant strides in providing free and compulsory access to education to school-going age children which is evident from the following data. In 2001, about 141.60 lakh children were enrolled in primary and 49.7 lakh in Upper primary levels as compared to the 121.7 lakh in primary and 42.96 lakh in upper primary level in 1991, registering an increase of 16.34% and 15.68% respectively. During the same period the number of primary level and upper primary level schools continued to grow further and therefore, the number of schools rose to 25.51% at primary and 25.56% at upper primary levels. Consequently, the number of teachers also rose from 20.3% at primary school level and 10.1% at upper primary school level in the same period.

Thus, making the pupil-teacher ratio of 55:1 at the primary schools and 40:1 at the upper primary school as against the national pupil-teacher ratio of 42:1 and 30:1 at the lower primary and at the upper primary levels respectively, in 1991. Moreover, the numbers of female teachers per hundred
male teachers during the same period were 50 and 43 in primary and upper primary levels respectively. The following Table summarises the progress of primary education in Uttar Pradesh during the last 13 years (GOI, 2002-03).

Table No. 1.2

Progress of Primary Education Since 1991-2003 in Uttar Pradesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Primary Schools</th>
<th>No. of Upper Primary Schools</th>
<th>No. of Teachers (In Lakh)</th>
<th>Enrolment Classes (in lakh)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary Schools</td>
<td>Upper Primary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>77995</td>
<td>17616</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>90423</td>
<td>19943</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>96094</td>
<td>21678</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-03</td>
<td>113546</td>
<td>28936</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Selected Educational Statistics 2002-03, p. 205)

The above table shows only the quantitative development of primary education. The qualitative status of primary education is far from the scenario of the primary level education of the world which has been pointed out by Banerjee (2006), as “when the education level of the average person is improved can we talk of having arrived on a world stage.”

Constitutional Provision for the Primary Education

The constitution of India through its Article 45 made the provision of free and compulsory primary education upto the age of 14 years. The words of the Article 45 are as “The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of the constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years.”
Inspite of the constitutional provision under the Article 45, the state of the affair of primary education remained unsatisfactory. Therefore, on the demand of the people and the sincere concern of the legislators and policy makers, the 93rd Constitutional Amendment was brought through the bill placed in both the houses of the parliament for giving all the children the right to education. Further, the primary education is treated under this amendment as compulsory. It means if the parents do not send their children to the schools would be punished. The words of the 93rd constitutional amendment are as “merely making education a fundamental right will not serve its purpose unless efforts are made for improving the performance of school system through a community owned approach and ensuring quality of elementary education”. Thus, it is obvious that the government as well as the people together should strive for the universalisation of primary education and should also let the people realize the importance of it for their children.

Programmes to meet Constitutional Provisions

The following efforts have been made by the government as well as by the various agencies to popularised and spread the primary education among school going age children.

Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE)

Primary education not only gives the foundation for further education but it is also considered as a fundamental to all round development of the individual in terms of material and spiritual aspects. That is why the provision of Universal Elementary Education has always been conceived by the educationists as an integral part of the National System of Education in India. The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986, was made and later on modified in 1992. The Programme of Action (POA) was included in this policy for the achievement of the goals. The POA said, “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 Universalisation of elementary education consists of the following dimensions-

- **Universal Provision**

  Universal provision means that a primary school should be provided in each locality with in one kilometer of child’s home, so that all the children in the age group of 6 to 14 years should get the facility of primary education within a walking distance.

- **Universal Enrolment**

  It means that every child attaining the age of 6 years must be enrolled in class I of a primary school. This means that the enrolment of the children in a primary school in the said age should be compulsory.

- **Universal Retention**

  It means that every child who has been enrolled in class I should be properly guided so that the child must continue his study in the school till he completes class VIII.

- **Attainment**

  The universal provision of enrolment and retention can not claim to have achieved the target of UEE unless the children have acquired the minimum level of learning as envisaged in NPE-1986.

**National Policy on Education (NPE-1986) and Program of Action**

Every country develops its system of education to meet the needs and demands of the people and also to meet the challenges of the time and India is no exception. A variety of challenges as well as social and national needs made the government instrumental to formulate the NPE-1986 for the
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country. This policy after a period of six years of implementation, was examined and consequently, based on a few experiences, modified in 1992 to give more stress on various aspects of education including the stress on minimum levels of learning for each stage of education. In order to give stepwise support to the policy an effort was made in the form of Programme of Action after two months in the same year. The Programme of Action envisaged the following provisions to improve the primary education.

(i) Children of all families in the country will be provided access to elementary education of good quality.

(ii) References has been made else where about the reform of the teacher education system for the improvement of quality of education.

Moreover, the NPE-1986 emphasized that the efforts will be made for a paradigm shift from sheer enrolment to retention and quality of education. Therefore, the NPE-1986 was a significant step in the history of Indian education to give a new direction to an education system, which was inadequate and ineffective for addressing the problems in the present time. The document of NPE-1986 made specific mention of the primary education as, "The new thrust in primary education will emphasise a substantial improvement in the quality of Education". Therefore, the following programmes under the programme of action for primary education have been suggested-

A. **Operation Black Board**

There are two terms in this phrase-the ‘operation’ and the ‘Black Board’. The first term Operation implies that there is urgency of the primary education to all the school going age children and the second term implies for the desirable need of physical facilities in the school. So, the Operation Black
Board together suggests a speedy creation of essential minimum facilities in schools to have the process of teaching and learning adequate, effective and successful both in terms of material as well as of human resources. The origin of the scheme dates back to 1986. It was made functional to help the state to implement it. Orientation courses were arranged for the key persons belonging to the different states to facilitate the implementation and to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the class rooms.

The purpose of Operation Black Board was to improve the enrolment, enhance the rate of retention and to improve the achievement of children by providing minimum essential facilities in primary schools. It has the following three independent components-

- Provision of the building comprising of at least two reasonably large all weather friendly rooms with a deep verandah and separate toilet facilities for both the genders.
- Atleast two teachers for every school and as far as possible one of them should be a female.
- Provision of essential teaching and learning materials including blackboard, maps, charts, toys and other necessary equipments.

B. **District Institute of Education and Training (DIET)**

The establishment of DIET in all districts was an important step which was proposed by the NPE-1986 for the development of Teacher Education at the district level (Chauhan, 2005). The DIET is a centrally sponsored scheme launched in 1988. The DIET provides academic and resource support to primary education teachers as well as to the non-formal instructors in the districts. Therefore, it is a principal, technical and professional resource institution at each district. The DIET has the following activities-

- In-service Teacher’s Training,
• Academic Monitoring and Supervision,
• Action research and Teaching Learning Material preparation; and
• Facilitating the implementation of activities under other functional areas.

C. Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL)

India is one of the few developing countries which took the initiative in 1991 to achieve the minimum levels of learning at the primary stage under the programme of MLL (GOI, 1996-97). This programme was meant to identify the basic competencies in languages, Mathematics and other subjects and also to develop new text books.

D. Micro-Planning (MP)

The NPE-1986 in its document suggested the idea of Micro-Planning. The purpose of the Micro Planning is to ensure that a child of a family attends the school or a non-formal education centre regularly. Every child should complete at last five years of schooling with his own pace of progress. Micro Planning is based on community mobilization specially to enhance the role of Village Education Committee and Block or Town areas Education Committees.

E. District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)

The District Primary Education Programme is an outcome of the spirit of the Programme of Action and is a part of Micro-Planning strategy. Under this programme districts are grouped into the following three categories-

➢ Districts with high literacy rate where the enrolment and access are almost universal.

➢ Districts where total literacy campaign have been successfully leading and there is an enhanced demand for elementary education.
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- Districts where the educational facilities are poor, low literacy rate and low community awareness.

Objective of DPEP

The objective of the DPEP are-

- to provide all children with access to primary education (Class I to V);
- to reduce primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10%;
- to reduce difference in enrolment, dropout rates and learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than 5%;
- to raise the average achievement levels of students by at least 25% in Language and Mathematics and at least 40% achievement levels in other subjects; and
- to strengthen the capacity of national, state and districts institutions and organizations for planning, management and evaluation of primary education.

The DPEP programme was initially launched in 1994 in 42 selected districts spread over seven states i.e., Assam, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Later on this was extended to UP, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Gujrat and Himachal Pradesh. Now this programme covers 56 districts of Uttar Pradesh including Pilibhit and Bareilly (GOI, 1994). The criteria for selection of districts under DPEP programme are as follows-

- Educationally Backward Districts with female literary rate below the national average, and
- Districts where Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) have generated demand for elementary education.
Now the entire DPEP programme caters the need of 60% of the children population of the state.

**F. Education for All (EFA)**

The world conference on ‘Education for All’ was held in Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990. The Jomtien declaration brought to the centre-stage the need for viewing primary education as a fundamental right of every citizen (Sinha, 2004). Education for All is the broader concept of UEE. This programme for universalisation of elementary education deals with all types of qualitative educational programmes including formal and all non-formal programmes to be organized by Government and Non-Governmental organizations. The declaration of Jomtien made the Indian Government instrumental to provide education for all with the following goals (GOI, 1993).

- Expansion of early childhood care and developmental activities especially for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children through concerted efforts of families, communities and appropriate institutions.

- Universalisation of elementary education in terms of universal access to all children up to the age of 14 years, universal participation till completing elementary stage either from formal or non-formal education agencies with universal achievement of minimum levels of learning.

- Drastic reduction in illiteracy, particularly in the age group of 15 to 35 bringing the literary level in this age group to at least 80% in both genders.

- Provision of opportunities for continuing education for those persons who have received primary education through formal and non-formal agencies.
• Special care of women for their empowerment and the disadvantaged groups and make education an instrument of their equality.

• Improving the quality of education by relating it to the environment, culture, living and working conditions of people and thereby enhancing their ability to learn.

G. **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan**

A conference of Education Ministers of the States was held in 1998 to facilitate the process of UEE. They after deliberations decided to have a holistic and cogent approach for achieving the goal of UEE with a missionary zeal in a defined time-frame. In order to pursue the mission, they also recommended the launching of a few major programmes for Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). Consequently, a massive government programme for UEE, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched. The SSA has emphasized universal access to the children and their retention in the education. It aims at providing useful and relevant elementary education to all the children in the 6-14 age group by 2010 (Sinha, 2004). The objectives of Serve Shiksha Abhiyan are as follows—

• All children in School Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School and Back-to-school camp by 2003.

• All children complete 5 years of primary schooling by 2007.

• All children complete 8 years of elementary schooling by 2010.

• Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.

• Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary level by 2010.

• Universal retention by 2010.
Justification of the Study

Education is the source of illumination of every society and nation. Every society and nation endeavors to make its citizens educated in the best possible manner and India is no exception. In India educational development has been phenomenal with respect to quantity as well as quality of education at different levels. However, there has been a plethora of problems, like universalisation of elementary education, vocationalisation of secondary education, education of the girls, education of socially, economically and educationally backward classes, education of illiterate adults and education of differently abled which have been confronting the educational system. The most important aspects of the education system is the primary education of the school going age children. The importance of education on the one hand and the necessity of the primary education on the other hand generated consciousnes among the people. That is why the provision of the compulsory education has been made in the Article 45 of the Indian Constitution. Although the efforts by the Government as well as by the Non Government Organizations (NGOs) have been made to address the problem of universalisation of primary education, yet a large number of school going age children are out of the school and many others perform poorly at their examinations. This raises many questions to be answered. There have been continuous efforts by the researchers to find out the answer of the questions and the factors involved in the problem. The factors affecting the academic achievement and the reasons for the poor performance of the children in the academics have been viewed by the researchers in the several and different contexts. However, a need was felt by the present investigator to investigate whether the academic achievement of primary school children is influenced by the Personal and Social factors in an entirely new and different situation?
There appears to be a general agreement among the researchers that the academic achievement of the children depends to a large extent on their personal and social factors. By nature all children would appear similar but there are some hidden personal and social factors with them which influence their academic achievement to a remarkable extent and they may not be identified without proper investigations. Therefore, a study of the present type would be very useful and of a great practical importance to the educational authorities and educational planners as well as all those who are concerned with the education of the children at the primary level.

In the present study the investigator has tried to investigate the probable reasons of low academic achievements. The problem of low academic achievement is not the problem of only Uttar Pradesh State, but also a problem of the whole Nation. Moreover, this problem is faced at the international level. A common experience of the authorities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in several countries of Asia and Pacific region is that a substantial proportion of children of primary school going age children fail to acquire basic learning skills by the end of the primary level of education. In addition, a large number of children who remain in school also fail to achieve a certain functional level of education at which skills can not be used for further learning (Review meeting Bankok, 1986). The UNESCO regional office for education in Asia and the Pacific arranged a meeting of the educational specialists from Australia, India, Malaysia and Philipines to look into the matter of low academic achievement with in the frame work of Asia and the Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID, 1983). This was an example of the realization and sincere concern to find out the solution of the problem of low academic achievement in primary school children of most of the developing and underdeveloped countries.
India has shown concern for the expansion of primary education and its qualitative improvement since independence. It is proper to cite the view of the Kothari Commission (1964-66). According to this report the “expansion of facilities at the primary stage and the universal enrolment of children and their retention in school till the end of compulsory period is only one aspect of the fulfillment of the constitutional directive. An equally important aspect is qualitative improvement so that the instruction imparted becomes good education and help children to grow into useful and responsible citizens”.

In this regard the provision of POA-1992 in the NPE-1986 provided fresh insights and direction for achieving UEE. It called for an integrated and decentralized approach to the development of primary education with focus on building capacities particularly at the district and sub-district levels. It is at the primary level a solid foundation of education can be laid among the children and special attention can also be given to the children of the backward areas so that the children of the deprived and downtrodden classes should become able to face the challenges of the 21st century with a sense of confidence. The universalisation of primary education and retention of the students in the schools took the central position in the national policy. Therefore, efforts were made for revamping the primary education.

In order to substantiate the resolution of NPE-1986, the government took the initiative in 1991 in the form of Minimum Level of Learning (MLL) to be achieved at primary level (GOI, 1997). The MLL was an important attempt to combine the quality with the equity. It laid down learning outcomes in the form of competencies or the levels of learning for each stage of primary education (Gopalan, 1998). The programmes of MLL have been implemented but the effects of programmes have not been investigated in the form of research studies. Researches in the field of education have been done, but these researches have so far been concentrated mainly on issues and problems
with regard to secondary, senior secondary and higher education neglecting the important issues of education at the primary level.

Moreover, there has been hardly any serious attempt to investigate the effect of the personal and the social factors on the academic achievement of the children at the primary levels especially in the educationally backward districts of the Uttar Pradesh in particular and of the country in general. Therefore, there is an urgent need to attempt to examine and resolve certain basic issues regarding the academic achievement of the primary school children of a few backward districts of Uttar Pradesh with special reference to personal factors (Gender and Intelligence) and social factors (Adjustment and SES) related to it. The quality of secondary education, senior secondary education and consequently, the quality of higher education depends on primary school education. Therefore, the government has been investing a lot of money and continuously making laborious and sincere efforts in the improvement of the status of primary education. Keeping in view the importance of education especially the primary education, not only the government but the society should also come forward and ensure the quality of education as well as the level of academic achievement of the children at the primary school levels.

There is a feeling among the parents that their wards show poor performance and do not reach to the MLL. Moreover, due to the poor academic achievement, the children get frustrated and leave the school. The poor achievement is due to certain factors which directly or indirectly influence the performance of the children in their academic life. There are researches which indicate that the academic achievement is affected by personal and social factors. The evidences in this regard are the studies of Gupta (1981); Zachoriah (1982); Devi (1990); Namrata (1992); Nanda and Pal (1994); Kreitler et. al. (1995); Westermann and La-Luz (1995); Shukla and
Agrawal (1997); Stephen and Bakson (1997); Chaturvedi (1998); Marjoribank and Yammy (1998); Barbora (1999); Cacile and Aline (2000); De-Garmo, et. al., (2000); Ansari (2001); Pomerantz et. al. (2001) and Nwankwo and Kemjika (2002).

However, there is not a single evidence of research to find out the causes of the low academic achievement among the children of primary schools particularly in the backward districts of Uttar Pradesh.

**Statement of the Problem**

The statement of the problem of the present study is as follows.

"Causes of low achievement among primary school children belonging to Educationally Backward Districts-Pilibhit and Bareilly of Uttar Pradesh in relation to personal and social factors-A comparative study"

A few investigators have pointed out that the personal variables (Gender and Intelligence) and social variables (Adjustment and SES) may be responsible for the cause of low academic achievement at various school levels. However, they have not taken all these personal and social variables together in relation to the academic achievement particularly at the primary level of education. Thus, it will be legitimate that the personal as well as the social variables should be studied to have a better understanding of the causes of the low academic achievement at the primary school levels.

Moreover, there is also not a single study which has so far been conducted in the Educationally Backward Districts of Uttar Pradesh with the above mentioned variables to find out whether these variables were in any way responsible for low academic achievement at the primary level. Therefore, the present study is a humble attempt to visualize the meaningful reasons of the poor academic achievement among the children at the primary
school levels in relation to the variables which could be responsible for it in a few districts of Uttar Pradesh by applying more sophisticated statistical techniques for analysis.

**Concepts and Definitions**

The present study has been taken with the following connotations.

(i) **Causes**

According to New Webster Dictionary, (1971) cause means that which produces an effect; that “which brings about a change”. For the present study, the causes mean, to find out the effect of the personal and the social factors namely; Gender, Intelligence, Adjustment and SES on the academic achievement of the primary school children in Educationally Backward Districts of Uttar Pradesh.

(ii) **Low Achievement**

Level of achievement shows strength or goodness of performance in the process of education. The Level of achievement is to assign some value to the performance in any walk of life including education. Most familiar situation in which we use the level of achievement is the classroom, where the teacher represents students’ performance in academics in terms of grades which is based on scores. The level of achievement may be represented symbolically in three different ways namely; by word descriptions, by assigning one of several large quantitative categories or by assigning a numerical score (Brown & Edwin, 1955).

The term Low Achievement comprises of two words “Low” and “Achievement”. In the New Webster’s Dictionary of English language (1971), the word Low has been described as “Less than average” while the word Achievement has been defined as “successful accomplishment or performance in particular subjects, areas or courses, usually by reasons of skills, hard work
and interest, typically summarized in various types of grades, marks, scores or descriptive commentary” (Hawer and Hawes, 1982).

Generally, the term achievement is used for the academic achievement in schools and colleges. According to Beena and Khemchandani (1996), the academic or scholastic achievement means the attained level measured by marks.

According to Singh (1995), if a word ‘good’ is used it shows that the student gets ‘A’ merit. If ‘B’ and ‘C’ are given in offered subjects, then the terms ‘B’ and ‘C’ denote “minimum”, “poor” or “Low” achievements respectively.

Page et. al., (1978), defined the term Low Achievement, “as performance in a test or school subject which is due to either lack of ability or failure to realize potential for achievement.” High and low achievements are demarcated on the basis of an arbitrarily adopted cutting point of the performance falling above it, is considered as a success or a high achievement and the performance falling below it, is considered as a failure or low achievement.

(iii) Educationally Backward Districts

Educationally Backward Districts are those districts of the state which have the rate of literacy below the average as compared to the National Literacy Rate. In the words of Sharma (1994), about 164 districts are educationally backward as the literacy rate in these districts is much below the average rate. Moreover, the reports of GOI (2001), shows that about 56 districts are educationally backward in Uttar Pradesh (Annexure 4).

The investigator has selected only two Educationally Backward Districts from this list namely; Pilibhit and Bareilly. Those districts which
have not been shown in this list are opined as Educationally Advance Districts.

(iv) **Primary School Children**

The existing system of education in India has eight years of primary education or elementary education. This duration has been divided into two groups-

(i) Lower Primary Education and (ii) Upper Primary Education

Lower primary education covers first five years of schooling from Class I to V and Upper primary education covers the rest three years of schooling from Class VI to VIII. In the words of Ali (2001), “the primary stage consists of first five years of schooling from Class I to V whereas the upper primary stage consists of classes VI, VII and VIII.

The present investigator in this study has used the term primary school children for those students who are enrolled in those schools which consist of only Class VI to VIII.

(v) **Personal and Social Factors**

The investigator has used the terms namely; personal and social factors. According to Good (1973), factor means, “a cause or determiner, which may be unique to one variable or common to several variables, that may be used to account for the correlations among a set of variables.” The New Webster Dictionary of English Language (1971), has described it as, “a contributing element in bringing about any given result” and personal as “pertaining to a person as distinct from a thing.” The term social has been described by Good (1973), in the Educational Dictionary of Education as, “in its broader sense, pertaining to the interaction of organisms in groups; in its narrower sense, descriptive of the development of an individual’s ability to get along with others while in the New Webster Dictionary of English
language (1971), as “Relating to man living in society or to the public as on aggregate body”.

The investigator has used the two personal and two social factors in his study to find out their effects on the academic achievement among primary school children in Educationally Backward Districts. The personal factors are namely; Gender and Intelligence whereas the social factors are namely; Adjustment and Socio-Economic Status.

All the four variables of the present study have been discussed separately in the following paragraphs.

A. Gender

The investigator has taken gender in his study as a personal variable. Therefore, the male and the female students of class VII and VIII have been taken as a sample to find out the effect of gender on their academic achievement.

The gender is the state of being male or female with reference to the social or the cultural differences which may be an important cause and may function as hurdle in the better achievement.

Amongst the deprived section of the population of India, 50% are female which are undoubtedly disadvantaged and also suffering from an unequal status in the family in particular and in the society in general. Although facilities for education are equally available for both the genders (male and female) yet there is significantly lower level of utilization of facilities by the female group. Conceivably this leads to low level of academic achievement in education (Jain and Arora, 1995).
B. Intelligence

Almost all the educationists and psychologists have acknowledged the importance of intelligence as an effective factor in the achievement of the children. The term Intelligence has always been a topic of discussion among the educationists and psychologists. The educationists and psychologists have been interpreting the term intelligence in various ways and have had agreement as well as disagreement about the concept of the term. As such, they gave different explanations for the term intelligence. The following are a few definitions given by different educationists and psychologists.

The definitions are in chronological order starting with one of the most renowned psychologist of the 20th century that is none other than Binet.

(i) According to Binet (1916), intelligence is a general intellectual capacity which consists of the abilities (i) to reason well with abstract materials; (ii) to comprehend well; (iii) to have a clear direction of thought; (iv) to relate thinking with the attainment of a desirable end; and (v) to be self critical.

(ii) Spearman (1927), has given two factor concept of intelligence. According to him there are two factors of Intelligence. The first is general factor which is denoted by ‘g’. This involves all mental activities. The second is specific factor which is denoted by ‘s’. This stands for specific abilities.

(iii) Stoddard (1943), gave entirely new concept of intelligence. According to him the intelligence is “the ability to undertake activities that are difficult, complex and abstract and which are adaptive to a goal, and are done quickly and which have social value and which lead to the creation of something new and different.”
(iv) Wechsler (1944), defined the intelligence in the following words
"Intelligence is the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to
act purposefully, to think rationally and to deal effectively with his
environment."

(v) Guilford (1967), proposed a three dimension intellect model of
Intelligence. He classified the intellectual abilities into a three
dimensional systematic box, called the structure of intellect (SI).
These three dimensions are contents, operations and products. Each
of the three aspects are further categorized into four, five and six
sub-groups (4x5x6) respectively. In this way the three dimensional
box contains 120 cells depicting various aspects of intelligence.

(vi) Eysenck (2001), presented a comprehensive view of Intelligence as
the ability to think or reason with fairly novel information of
particular importance to intelligence.

(vii) In the view of Hurlock (2003), “Intelligence provides the person
with the capacity to meet and solve the problems that adjustment to
life requires”.

Thus the intelligence can be defined as the mental ability which enables
the individual to learn, understand and think in a logical way as well as
handle the physical environment and social circumstances successfully.

C. Adjustment

An individual is born neither as an adjusted nor maladjusted person. It
is the mental, emotional, physical and social environment which influence the
individual’s behaviour and life. These influences help to realize the joy and
find the satisfaction or minimize the dissatisfaction among the individuals.
Socially immature young persons even with high IQ level may face difficulty
in adjustment and may also exhibit abnormal behaviours.
In the words of Blair et. al., (1968) whenever a person is restless, hostile, cheeky, uncooperative and showing delinquent behaviour or changing occur in his behaviour according to the condition then that person tries to shift adjustment in his life in such a direction to satisfy personality requirement. Besides, these person there are other educationists and psychologists who have defined the term adjustment in the following ways.

(i) James (1934), in his Dictionary of Terms defined adjustment as “Adaptation one’s self to new situation, to new modes of behaviour.”

(ii) Smith et. al. (1962), in the Educator’s Encyclopedia referred adjustment as “the ability to adapt to a situation.”

(iii) Good (1973), in the dictionary of education explains the adjustment as “the process of finding and adopting modes of behaviour suitable to the environment or to changes in the environment.”

(iv) Wolman (1978), in the dictionary of behavioural science explained the adjustment as “the variations and changes in behaviour that are necessary to satisfy needs and meet demands so that one can establish a harmonious relationship with environment.”

(v) Chopra (2005), defined the adjustment as “the ability of humans to survive in stressful environments by non-genetic means.”

The above definitions clarify the meaning of the term adjustment. It depends not only on any single phase of an individual’s personality but upon the total personality integrated with environment in which individual lives and interacts. In the present study the adjustment of the respondents include social, home, health, school, emotional and personal adjustments.
D. Socio-Economic Status

The students differ from one another in social class even in small rural towns in which almost everyone is the same in ethnicity, religion and basic world outlook. We can safely assume that the children of the town’s bankers, doctors and teachers have a different upbringing and experience from the children of farmers or domestic workers (Slavin, 1994).

The children differ in socio-economic status which includes individual’s occupation, income, social class and prestige in a particular society. All these factors are tended to move together. Thus the socio-economic status of the individual is based on the combination of one’s income and education, while the social class is more than the income and education. It also includes a set of behaviours, expectations and attitudes. For example according to Bloom (1964), the “middle class parents are likely to express high expectations for their children and to reward them for intellectual development.” The investigator has taken SES as a variable in his study. Therefore, it was obligatory for him to find out the explanation of the term with regard to the individuals.

The educationists and social scientists have defined the SES of the individuals as follows-

(i) In the view of Swamy (1962), the socio-economic status of urban people is maintained by the education, occupation and income.

(ii) Page et. al. (1978), in the International Dictionary of Education interpreted the above term as “person’s” position in any given group, society or culture as determined by wealth, occupation, education and social class.”

(iii) Bharadwaj and Chauhan (1989), described the term socio-economic status as a ranking of an individual by the society he lives in terms
of his material belonging and cultural possessions along with the degree of respect, power and influence he wields.”

(iv) In the words of Chopra (2005), the socio-economic status “is a rather arbitrary and is developed by combining the position or score of persons on criteria such as income, amount of education, types of education held, or neighbourhood of residence. The scores can then be arbitrarily divided so as to create divisions such as upper class, middle class and lower class.”

Thus, on the basis of the above definitions the socio-economic status of the respondents in the present study refers to the father’s education, occupation, income, social participation, exposure to mass-media and cultural living or cultural standard.

**Objectives of the Study**

The plan of the study includes objectives. It means there are certain purposes of the study. As such the specific goals or purposes, which the investigator intends to achieve or solve through his research study, are technically termed as objectives. The whole research study is to be manoeuvred through the pre-supposed objectives. Therefore, for the present study, the investigator has envisaged the following objectives. The objectives are to,

1. find out the significant difference in between the Academic Achievement of the children belonging to the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts;

2. find out the significant difference in between the Academic Achievement of the children with respect to the personal and the social factors of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts;
3. find out the contribution of the personal and the social factors in the Academic Achievement of the children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts;

4. find out the significant difference in between the Academic Achievement of the male children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts;

5. find out the contribution of the personal and the social factors in the Academic Achievement of the male children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts;

6. find out the significant difference in between the Academic Achievement of the female children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts;

7. find out the contribution of the personal and the social factors in the Academic Achievement of the female children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts;

8. find out the significant difference in between the Academic Achievement of the male and the female children of the Educationally Backward Districts;

9. find out the contribution of the personal and the social factors in the Academic Achievement of the male and the female children of the Educationally Backward Districts;

10. find out the personal and the social causes of the Low Academic Achievement among the primary school children of the Educationally Backward Districts;

11. find out the personal and the social causes of the Low Academic Achievement among the primary school male children of the Educationally Backward Districts; and
12. find out the personal and the social causes of the Low Academic Achievement among the primary school female children of the Educationally Backward Districts.

Hypotheses

The hypothesis is a powerful tool which provides a direction to the investigator in the process of research. It guides the investigator specifically in which he needs to do to achieve the objectives of the study. It also, forms the basis for the investigations and gives clues to arrive at some conclusions through the study. Thus, in order to give proper direction to the investigation and also to make the research substantive, it is necessary to formulate research hypotheses, which may be tested against the empirical data. Therefore, the investigator keeping in view the objectives of the study formulates the following hypotheses for the present study.

1. There would be no significant difference in between the Academic Achievement of the children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts.

2. There would be no significant difference in between the Academic Achievement with respect to the personal and the social factors of the children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts.

3. The personal and the social factors would not be the significant contributors to the Academic Achievement of the children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts.

4. There would be no significant difference in between the Academic Achievement of the male children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts.
5. The personal and the social factors would not be the significant contributors to the Academic Achievement of the male children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts.

6. There would be no significant difference in between the Academic Achievement of the female children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts.

7. The personal and the social factors would not be the significant contributors to the Academic Achievement of the female children of the Educationally Backward and the Advance Districts.

8. There would be no significant difference in between the Academic Achievement of the male and the female children of the Educationally Backward Districts.

9. The personal and the social factors would not be the significant contributors to the Academic Achievement of the male and the female children of the Educationally Backward Districts.

10. The personal and the social factors would not be responsible for the Low Academic Achievement of the primary school children of the Educationally Backward Districts.

11. The personal and the social factors would not be responsible for the Low Academic Achievement of the primary school male children of the Educationally Backward Districts.

12. The personal and the social factors would not be responsible for the Low Academic Achievement of the primary school female children of the Educationally Backward Districts.
Delimitations of the Study

There are certain factors which become constraints as well as impairment in the conduct of the study in the fields of social sciences. Moreover, it is also not possible for the investigator to study the problem with all the variables which are associated with it due to various genuine reasons. Therefore, it becomes necessary as well as imperative for the investigator to decide and find out only those with which the problem is to be related and studied during the investigation. Thus, like every research study, the present one also encompasses the desired as well as feasible variables and limits it as follows-

1. Only the government and private Hindi medium primary schools have been considered for the present study.

2. Only the urban primary schools have been taken for the present study.

3. The data have been collected only from two Educationally Backward and two Educationally Advance Districts (for comparison) of Uttar Pradesh.

4. Only Gender, Intelligence, Adjustment and Socio-Economic Status have been considered for the identification of causal factors of low academic achievement among primary school children.

5. Only the children of class VII and VIII of primary level schools have been included in the sample.

6. The investigator could not also be able to make comparison among the different Intelligence, Adjustment and Socio-Economic Levels (high, Average and Low) in male and female sub-groups due to the non-availability of the larger sample in these two groups.

The next chapter deals with the review of the related studies.