INTRODUCTION:

Education is an essential tool for the advancement of mankind. It works as a catalyst for the socio-economic changes in society. Encyclopaedia of Britania viewed education as ‘transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of society’. Education is designed to guide the child in learning a culture, moulding his behaviour in the ways of adulthood, and guiding him towards his eventual role in society. It is conscious social function, which began when man started interacting with material reality with the purpose of moulding or changing it to satisfy his needs.

Thus, education embraces a multi-process by which culture and values are transmitted from generation to generation. According to a well known sociologist R.K. Mukherjee, every education, whatever means and methods it uses, aims at fitting the growing individual for his special role and position in society so as to elicit the best out of him, and at the same time socializing him, through development of proper habits, attitudes and values, so that he enriches and strengthens the cultural pattern.

The most fundamental benefit of education not cited often enough, is its intrinsic value to the well being or effective freedom of a person.

While there can be many arguments, in favour of universal education, two are most compelling. The first is that literacy can empower people who have so far been denied this opportunity, politically and economically. The second is that universal basic education will
facilitate economic development by creating an effective workforce and enabling many people to exploit economic opportunity many people to exploit economic opportunities. Both these are stated to be national goals as well as being intrinsically valuable.

In India, Universalization of Basic Education (UBE) has been recognized as crucial input for nation building since independence. The founding fathers of our Constitution had given a prominent place to educational endeavors when they made provision for free and compulsory education for children up to 14 years of age within a period of 10 years in the Directive principles of state policy. However, this goal has proved elusive so far. Though the country has not realized vision of the constitution, the picture is not all-dismal. Impressible expansions in accessing the infrastructure, and enrolment and equality of opportunity have been achieved. The decade 1990 has seen the issue of universal basic education (6-14 years) in India acquire urgency as never before. A near consensus has built up about the need to ensure that all children attend school and become literate. But this agreement across a wide spectrum of opinion rarely includes a comprehensive and pragmatic strategy. Thus there exists a painful gap interms non-enrolment, non-retention (drop-out) wastage and stagnation and gender disparity; and incases to quality and effective schooling.
In this context it may be stressed here that a critical issue for successful and genuine universal basic education is the neglect and inadequate examination of the interaction between socio-economic context and the school and this reflection is brought out forcefully in the review of literature.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The last five decades have witnessed increasing stress on formal education, particularly universalizing basic education. Consequently there has been a spate of literature emerging on various aspects of education contributed by scholars of different disciplines of social sciences. The focus of research has been on various aspects of education like contribution of education and its relationship with social mobility (occupational mobility), equality of opportunity, impact of education, economic growth, economic returns and educational deprivation etc. In the following pages an attempt is made to review these constitutions.

EDUCATION, MOBILITY AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY:

The formal education system has been regarded as vital for occupational mobility. Accordingly, Sociologists of education and others in related filed have over the years examined the nature of the relationship between mobility and education (Acker 1980; K. Ahemed 1979; Beuls 1971; Cosina 1972; K Chanana 1988; Dahrendorf 1959; Davis K and WE Moore 1945; Douglas 1964; Gore, Deasi, Chitnis 1967; Halsey Floud and Anderson 1961; Karlekar 1983; Shukla & Krishna Kumar 1985; and others). Their work proved that the relationship between education and mobility could not be studied in isolation; it was dependent on a range of social economic and factual factors. In recent
years there has been a move to study these factors which affect a child's educability (Karlekar 1998).

In the 1950s, the work of British social scientist (Dahrendorf 1959, Douglas 1964, Floud Malin and Halsey 1963, Jackson & Marsden 1963) indicated that the working class child was disadvantaged in relation to its middle class peers; environmental and socio-economic factors determined the child ability to adjust to a largely middle class school ethos. Their findings were substantial by James Coleman et al (1960) whose Equality of Educational Opportunity survey came to the conclusion that family background differences account for more variation in achievement than do school differences.

**Education & Economic Development:**

Education in India has been recognized, as the key input to development, yet the growth of education has been inadequate and largely centred in and around urban areas. The earlier attempts to study the economic aspects of education have also been confined to urban areas with scanty reference to rural areas and to issues like crude assessment of the stock of human capital and returns to education. Some major studies include Sahota (1962); Nall Goundan (1965); Harberger (1965); Kothari (1967); Husain (1967); Selowsky (1967); Blaug, Layard and Woodhall (1969); Husain (1967); Selowsky (1967); Balug, Layard and Woodhall (1969); Psacharopoulos (1969, 1973, 1975), Paul (1972). Pandit (1972);
Goel (1975); Tilak (1980, 1982, 1984); Venkatasubramanian (1980). Most of these studies are based on secondary data complied for other purposes. For instance Pandit, Nalla Goundan, Goel, Blaug et al used the Urban Income Survey of the National Council of Applied Economic Research. Husain used the data from the Directorate General of Employment and Training Service, Kothari and Panchamukhi used City Survey of Greater Bombay. Most of these studies have been confined to male workers.

In the rural context pioneering work was done by Chaudhri (1968, 1980), but his study was confined to workers only and covered limited aspects of the economics of education, i.e., returns to education and impact of education on agricultural productivity and related attitudinal behaviour. Venkatasubramanian (1980) tried to estimate economic contribution of primary education limiting the analysis to crude aggregates only. Tilak (1980, 1982 & 1984) made a bold attempt on measuring inequality in education by estimating returns to education by sex, caste groups in rural and urban areas. However, his study does not cover other aspects of the economics of education.

As an exercise in expediency most of these studies have been confined to macro aspects in urban setting and unfortunately the crucial micro aspects and rural context have remained neglected. The studies
have often yielded misleading pictures of the intricate inter-relationship between education and economic indicators.

Secondary education has been discussed widely in recent development literature and its potential for furthering economic development and redistribution by empowering deprived communities has been highlighted (G. Drez and Sen 1995, Haq 1997, World Bank 1977a, 1977 b). In this context education has often been viewed as input into the economic development basket like capital and labor, that affects output. Quality of schooling and school effectiveness are only just beginning to find their due place. (Drez and Gazdar 1996 Beshir 1994)

TREND REPORTS:

Educational deprivation in India and its facets has been the major focus of research by various scholars in the last five decades. National council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) and other agencies have been monitoring the progress, constraints and equality of opportunity and the trends of research in India. Their efforts yielded several trend reports and survey of research reports. For instance NCERT has brought out five reports on the survey of research in education and similarly ICSSR has brought out trend reports under the aegis of eminent educationists. M.B. Butch 1974; started the first Survey of Research in Education.
These surveys and trend reports have brought to the light various studies which focussed on various issues related to school education like enrolment trends, equality of opportunity, access to schooling and school infrastructure, trends of non-enrolment, non-retention, dropout, wastage and stagnation, socio-economic status, parents attitudes; school achievement variations quality of schools etc.

**Socio-economic context:** Indian educationists find it difficult to ignore the socio-economic context.

Karuna Chanan (1991) points out that the major concern has been up till now the study of the socio-economic background of the SC/ST and Non SC/ST students and its influence on their access to educational institutions.

She further observes that a shift has taken place from broad general surveys of the earlier period to the study of several specific, social context factors such as cognitive and other psychological dimensions, family size, parental values, aspirations etc. that influence students access to education.

Thus, a vast literature has been built around the relation of social stratification with the educational system and the resulting inequalities of educational opportunities, differential utilization of educational facilities, drop-out rates, aspirations, achievements etc. However, by and large the general focus was mainly on SC, ST; and the girl child; and a scarce
attention towards backward caste community (Non SC, ST). As such there were no mention worthy studies specifically on Backward Caste Communities; and this is particularly true with regard to basic education of Backward Caste Communities in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh.

However, insights can be drawn from the studies, which relate to socio-economic status or social class background variables. Shah (1979) Patel & Sewell; Singh, Pandey (1979); Bisht (1979); Singh & Mitra (1972); and others come to the conclusion that the students educational aspirations depend on the socio-economic status of their families much more than on their academic performance.

Deasi, IP, (1953) reported that lower class (caste) students are more irregular in attending the school than middle and upper class (caste) status. Shah BV & Shah KB (1998) observed that in the Indian context the material deprivation of the family has been the sole determining factor in producing under achievement in case of the lowest of the low class living below the poverty line such as unemployed rural labourers, SC, ST and other backward social groups, slum dwellers.

Similarly, the relationship between social class and education achievement was stressed by writers like Mathurk (1963); Chopra, (1964); Anand (1973); Abraham (1974) and others. They support the view that student educational achievement depends much more on their families socio-economic status than the intellectual ability or lack of it.
They found that the educational achievements of the students coming from families with higher socio-economic status is high whereas that of those coming from the families with lower socio-economic status is lower.

In the Indian context socio-economic factors seem to have a heavy bearing on schooling the child, particularly the girl child. Malavika Karlekar (2000) observed that socio-economic factors such as parental illiteracy, costs of education and the vital role of the girl child within the home overrode considerations of accessibility of school.

Socio-economic factors such as parental illiteracy, costs of education, role of child within home, influence school participation and some times override considerations of accessibility of school (Karlekar: 2000).

Caldwell et al. found in Karnataka that at age 12, 34 percent of girls continue with schooling, while by age 15, only 11 percent are found to be still enrolled in school. (This is against 47 percent and 34 percent for one-fifth of all females are removed from school at puberty, usually to be married as soon as possible. In particular, they note that, “Menarche is still a major reason for the cessation of daughter's education among Muslims, peasant castes and artisan castes. The exceptions are the educationally most advanced groups – Brahmins. Janis and Lingayats-
and the least advanced - the shame aspect of premarital virginity has always been less stressed" (Caldwell et al 1985:41).

Children's lack of interest is also cited as a major reason for the high drop-out rate (Majumdar 1997; Nambissan 1997; Srivastava 1997).

Parents' education emerges as a significant determinant in household education decisions. All the field studies done under the UNDP programme.

Kanbargi and Kulkarni (1991) have pointed out that ownership of productive assists generally increases the demand for child work.

Jabbi and Rajalakshmi (1997) found in Bihar that children of parents employed in service jobs were most likely to be enrolled in school, followed by children of cultivators. Non-agricultural workers children were least likely to be enrolled, although those of agricultural workers had only marginally better enrolment rates.

Jeemol Unni found in Gujarat that “a higher proportion of children from predominantly non-agricultural households attended schools as compared with those from agricultural households (Unni 1996:6). She also found that the “proxy for wealth (value of assets) and composition of household income did not influence boys schooling but had a positive impact on the education of girls” (Unni 1996:15). For children taken
together it does not show a positive relationship at all, implying that poverty by itself does not have a major impact on schooling.

Majumdar's study of Kanyakumari district in Tamil Nadu shows that “almost all the never-enrolled.... Come from households with marginal landholdings.” Among households with land, it notes, “there is a positive, though weak, relationship between land size and educational participation of children” (Majumdar 1997:13).

Several studies support the notion that dropout tends to be heavily concentrated in grades 1 and 2. Seethuraman and Usha Devi (1985) found that 35 percent of children in Karnataka dropped out in grades 1 and 2. Also in Karnataka, Nayan Tara (1985) reports a dropout rate of 31 percent in grade 1.

**SUPPLY & DEMAND FACTOR:** Based on NCAER data (1966) Sudershan RM analyzed the factors for non-enrollment of children (6-14 years) and grouped them into: supply related; demand related; interest factors; and custom factors. Supply related factors include school too far; & school dysfunctional. Demand related factors include financial constraints; attending to domestic work; participation in household economic activity; participation in paid activity outside home. Lack of interest factors include parents did not feel it important, child is unwilling. Customary factors include married off and tradition. Based
on these criteria, demand related factors (73.30 percent) followed by interest factors (59.20) are the major contributing factors for non-enrollment. Sudershan RM further observes that demand related factors appear to be more important than the supply related factors.

**COST OF SCHOOLING:** The role of direct schooling costs as cause of non-enrolment has been emphasized by Mehrotra's study. The author's research in Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala shows that often it is the "inability to meet direct costs (which includes fees, cost of textbooks and other writing materials, etc) which compels parents to withdraw children from school" (Mehrotra 1995:6) almost all the schools in her sample changed fees in some form.

A study conducted by the Nation Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) concluded that the single most important reason for Non-enrollment of children in primary schools is financial compulsions; while much of this is due to family circumstances, the costs of schooling in even the government sector are likely to be additional deterrents (NCAER) 1994; Sharif & Sudershan 1995).

Several other studies also highlight the importance of direct schooling costs. The report by Sinha and Sinha (1995) has information from 17 schools on direct costs of education. In these schools, they found that the annual costs could be anywhere between Rs. 90 and Rs. 380. According to a study by the Madras Institute of Development Studies
(1970-71) private costs (on books, stationery, etc) could add up to 40 percent of institutional costs, more than income foregone by attending school, were stated as a significant factor in schooling decisions.

Tilak using NSSO (1986-87, 42\textsuperscript{nd} Round) data on ‘Participation in Education’ reports the following: (1) “a sizeable number of students do not receive primary education free in contrast to the claims made by the government”. (2) “A large number of students pay tuition fees, exam fees and other fees, even in government primary schools...” (Tilak 1995:5&). Specifically, Tilak claims that 14.4 percent students in rural areas and 49 percent in urban areas pay tuition fees in addition to other fees and non-fee expenses. In conclusion, he states that “households spend large sums of money on acquiring primary education” (Tilak 1995:57).

A study by Panchmukhi (1990) in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Rajasthan also shows that household expenditure on elementary education even in government schools is not negligible. Panchmukhi has found that these expenditures could range from Rs. 385 per student per year in Maharashtra, and Rs. 810 in Rajasthan to nearly Rs. 1,200 in Karnataka. Of this total expenditure the corresponding figures for fees were found to be up to Rs 60, Rs. 244 and Rs. 320, respectively.

The studies done under the UNDP-GOI research programme also provide evidence of the fact that the direct costs of schooling even at the primary level, often add up to substantial amounts imposing a burden on
poor families especially if there is more than one school-going child in the family.

**Quality of schooling & educational deprivation:** Research in developing countries found the variable of “School Quality” far more significant for achievement in school generally this has been attributed to two factors. One, that in developing countries population (i.e. people who follow traditional occupations like agriculture) tend to be less differentiated in terms of socio-economic and educated background, making pupils antecedents less varied and therefore not a deciding factor for success at school. Second there are wider variations in school quality in developing countries. Schools in developing countries lack some minimum basic facilities like blackboard. Therefore may researchists assume that quality of the school rather than socio-economic background of students is centered on learning outcomes (Rashmi Sharma1998).

In an environment that is not particularly conducive to education, quality can play a vital role in parental decisions to enroll or withdraw a child from school.

Consequently there have been many studies about the impact of inputs. The attempt is often to identify the most cost-effective school inputs. (Fuller 1990, World Bank 1990, 1995, Verghese 1995).

Sadly, there is overwhelming evidence that only a small proportion of schools in India meet the very basic requirements.
According to the fifth all-India education survey for instance. (1) Barely half of all primary schools in India have a pucca building, (2) 42 percent have a single classroom (if any), (3) just over half have a usable blackboard, (4) less than half have any drinking water facilities, (5) only 16 percent have urinals, (6) more than 60 percent have only one or two teachers in position (if any), and only 15 percent have more than four teachers.

Teacher motivation and accountability: Dreze and Gazdar’s study describes the problem of chronic teacher absenteeism in Uttar Pradesh. They found in their sample of schools that the teachers were present only 30 percent of the time they were required to. In several instances they found that the school had been closed without prior notice “because the teacher’s had decided to engage in some other activity” (Dreze and Gazdar 1996:67).

The most alarming fact noted by the authors is that according to local perceptions is that according to local perceptions “teaching standards in government schools have significantly deteriorated during the last 2-3 decades. The extent of teacher absenteeism and shirking ah dramatically increased over this period and shows no sign of improvement” (Dreze and Gazda 1996:75).

Jabbi and Rajyalakshmi made similar observations in Bihar. They note that, teacher absenteeism was reported as very high. Group teaching
was resorted to and co-ordination among teachers perpetuated their absenteeism (Jassi and Rajaylakshim 1997:51).

In his study in Andhra Pradesh, Prasad (1987) found that the majority of teachers encountered by him were ‘disinterested’ (i.e. not interested in teaching). Typically they had very irregular attendance; did not identify with the village or its people and showed lack of commitment or initiative in their job.”

On teaching practices, Sinha and Sinha also report that “there are serious grievances regarding teacher absenteeism and lack of devotion and accountability from almost all the districts but less from some of the hill districts of Uttar Pradesh” (Sinha and Sinha 1995:16).

Poverty & Educational Deprivation: Dave (1997) is of the opinion that poverty is the most important issue and without a minimum level of income genuine Universal Elementary Education may remain out reach.

Thus, the most widely held belief regarding India’s poor educational status relates the demand for education with the poor economic status of parents.

However is the relationship between poverty and schooling as simple and unambiguous as claimed? Is poverty the main determinant of parental decisions regarding the schooling of children. What is the relative importance of opportunity costs in schooling decisions. These issues are currently debated.
A look at some basic facts immediately highlights ambiguities in the presumed relationship between poverty and schooling. Several third world countries, for instance, have similar or even worse levels of poverty but much better records of mass literacy than India. Within India itself a comparison of the poverty levels and educational achievements of, say, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh (UP) also defies the claim that it is merely poverty that prevents the poor from sending their children to school. While poverty levels, as measured by the proportion of people below the poverty line, are similar in both states (eg. 44 percent and 45 percent in rural and urban Kerala in 1987-88, respectively, compared with 48 percent and 42 percent in rural and urban UP) educational achievements in the two states are vastly different. Kerala has an average literacy rate (7+ age group) of nearly 90 percent whereas in Uttar Pradesh the same figure is only 40.5 percent. Furthermore, even within Uttar Pradesh, while western UP has seen a greater increase in rural incomes (relative to its resulted in a corresponding increase in literacy and education (Dreze and Gazdar 1996). Thus, poverty is a highly inadequate explanation of regional variations in educational achievements.

There is also fair amount anecdotal evidence that points to the same ambiguities. Kodathuchery, a harijan village in Tamil Nadu is a particularly noteworthy example (Narayan et al 1984). Despite the very poor economic conditions of the population—almost complete
landlessness and practically no other employment opportunities—the village had achieved literacy rates for above 99 percent for males and females in 1980. The experience of ILO’s international programme on elimination of child labour (IPEC) has also shown that, even among the most impoverished families, parents are quite willing to send their children to school provided the schools function adequately (ILO 1994). The MV Foundation in Andhra Pradesh, working with bonded labour has had similar experience (Sinha 1995).

A study in Uttar Pradesh by the Giri Institute of Development Studies (Asraf 1989) also found that dropouts do not bear a clear relationship with per capita income levels of the household.

However, this is not to deny that poverty or low income often play a role in low schooling levels. In general, poorer countries or poorer sections of the population in the same country are more likely to be found with poorer educational records. Against this general proposition, which indicates that poverty can be a potential constraint on the demand for schooling, there are notable exceptions both among countries and within India as already pointed-out. These exceptions point to the fact that the poverty constraint can be alleviated or defeated by appropriate intervention most notably by improving the provision of basic education.

Cultural biases surely do exist and poverty agonizingly does constitute a factor in influencing educational participation, especially of
girls. But it would be very dangerous to limit the analysis of causation to these factors alone (Rekha Wazir).

**HOME & HABITATION ENVIRONMENT:**

**Home Environment:** A few well known earlier studies stress that "Parental attitudes" makes the difference rather than the material deprivation. For instance, Wiseman (1957) reports that "the most important of our findings is the demonstration that the major forces associated with educational attainments are to be found within the home circumstances of the child. The educational deprivation is not merely the effect of poverty. Parental attitude and care is more important than the level of material needs. What matters is the attitude of parents to books and school.

Similarly, the well known *Plowden* report (1957) in England on Children and their Primary Schools finds that "More of the variations in school achievements is specifically accounted by the variation in parental attitudes than by either variation in the material circumstances of parents or by variation in schools; and secondly, the relative importance the child grows older.

Duraiswamy in his study in south India also shows that "mother’s education has a bigger effect on the probability of child enrolment in rural areas" (Duraiswamy 1992:21); while both parents’ education has a bigger effect on daughter’s schooling than on son’s.
A crucial role in determining motivation is played by gender. The difference in educational attainment that is found between educational motivation is highly gender-specific. While economists suggest that differential market returns to educational investment in girls and boys are important determinants of parental decisions regarding schooling, sociologists argue that social considerations such as perceptions of gender roles (implicit in the sexual division of labor) and son preference (biased intra-household allocation of resources) have led to educational discrimination against the female child. The perceived difference in benefits for boys and girls (no doubt a combination of both economic and non-economic factors) has obviously led to an under-valuation of female education.

Evidence of the time use pattern of work among children was done by Shireen Jejeebhoy and Sumati Kulkarni (1989) in rural Maharashtra. They found that "while a large proportion of children do help out, not much time is devoted to these activities" (Jejeebhoy and Kulkarni 1989:110).

In a study of rural Karnataka, Ramesh Kanbargi, and P M Kulkarni found that "working for wages is significant among children in the 12-14 age group" (Kanbargi and Kulkarni 1991:137). While boys in the 5-7 age group could be found working or about two hours per day on various
activities, in the older age group of 12-14 years, they worked for more than five hours a day.

B M Dinesh (1988) who has studied three villages in Karnataka also reports similar result. He found that on average, 6-14 year old children spent 3.2 hours a day on "household activities".

Jeemol Unni based on her study in Gujarat, concludes that "the overall work participation of children is not very high, 8 percent among boys and 9.4 percent among girls" (Unnin 1996:8).

A study by V. Ramachandran in a relatively progressive pocket of Tamil Nadu also supports the hypothesis that children contribute very little time in the household or agricultural economy. He found that while child workers constitute 10 percent of the workforce, the actual work done by them constituted only 2 percent of total labour time deployed in agricultural and non-agricultural activity (Ramachandran 1990:135).

In recent study conducted under the auspices of the UNDP research programme for human development, Srivastava found, in tow districts of Uttar Pradesh (Ballia and Rampur), that "the problem of ...Children's involvement in paid/unpaid work is much more significant for older children (10-14 years) and for girls (generally unpaid domestic work)" (Srivastava 1997:361).

An important part of domestic work that is often cited as effecting enrolment is the burden of dependents, especially younger siblings,
passed on to the children. Using three different variables to measure the burden of dependants, Srivastava has found that in fact they do not show any systematic relationship between total or even female enrolment rates (Srivastava 1997:18).

A similar study by Majumdar in Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, also shows that.. Work participation rate among the children of this category (5-14 years old) is not very high.” In a footnote she states that “interestingly, despite the absence of mandatory schooling laws, the opportunity costs of child's time is not a major factor deterring their school attendance at this age level” (Majumdar 1997:11).

A compilation of field reports (from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan) by Sinha and Sinha (1995) provides insights into the state of the education system in some of the more remote and poorer parts of the country. They found that in several villages despite high levels of poverty there was practically no dependence on child labour. One such village was Kanji in Purnia (Bihar), where even the poorest scheduled caste community, the musahars, were found not to put their children to work. Interestingly, they did not send them to school either. In Salana and Saikot villages of Chamoli district (UP), on the other hand, while no child labour was reported, almost all the children were enrolled. They conclude that the “dependence on child labour varies a great deal
between different villages, even at similar levels of poverty depending on the nature of the local economy” (Sinha and Sinha 1995:91).

HABITATE ENVIRONMENT: Area type, can be seen as a kind of level of economic development or modernization. Easily observable and tangible factors like presence or absence of road connectivity, available printed matter, market (no. Shops etc) presence of government and other institutions characterize area type. Percentage of irrigation, agricultural productivity and may more variables also can be associated additionally to characterise area type. But development or existence of basic rural infrastructure is a major characteristic of area type. The significance of the area type for effective schooling indicates that the rural socio-economic context can not be understood adequality in terms of traditional categories (Rashmi Sharma 1998).

Distance of schools from home is observed to be influencing school participation. Schools within the locality or village would attract greater participation.

Based on the findings a national study conducted in 44 districts with low levels of female education, Usha Nayar concluded that smaller villages were particularly dis-privileged as they lacked minimum educational facilities and infrastructures such as roads, water and electricity which actual as deterrents for education, particularly girl education (Nayar 19940).
The distance factor: Duraisamy (1992) found in his empirical study using NSS (1987-88) data for Tamil Nadu, that an increase in distance to primary school by one kilometer reduces the probability that a daughter will attend school by 2 percent. For boys the reduction in probability of attending is 1 percent.

Dreze and Gazdar (1996) in their study of UP found that parents are reluctant to send girls outside the village to study in middle or secondary schools, or to pay the higher fees of private schools, which typically are middle or secondary schools and often situated outside the village or at least a greater distance.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The review of literatures suggests that the analyses of educational deprivation in India have often used a demand and supply framework to explain the slow progress of basic education. While it is certainly possible to associate most of the appropriate explanatory variables either with supply side (the provision of schooling facilities) or with the demand side (the utilization of these facilities), the analogy with the standard demand – supply framework is somewhat misleading in several respects. For instance, the demand for education has an important social dimension, which can be easily overlooked in the standard demand, supply framework; like wise, educational decisions are often made by parents on behalf of children, these interpersonal issues again are outside the focus of standard demand supply analysis; further education is not a homogeneous product, quality is a crucial consideration.

The brief review cited above clearly brings forth the critical issue for successful and genuine Universalization of Basic Education is the neglect and inadequate examination of the interaction between school and socio-economic context with reference to Habitat & Home Environment and Caste background and the general socio-economic status. To be sure some insights are available but they are inadequate and have not taken into account the emerging rural hierarchy along with the traditional hierarchy. A new hierarchy along the development on modern
dimensions is continuously emerging in the rural countryside in educational research. This hierarchy is neglected in educational research very often. Where studies consider the rural socio-economic status they are satisfied with matching with various categories of castes such as SC & ST and general category etc; and as well as size of landholdings. However, a sample clubbing of children for these categories may be of little use. Because the pattern as well as the rigidity and importance of caste hierarchy among various communities varies from one region to another and within the region too; similarly the returns from the land varies by its soil type and availability / irrigation. Thus particular residential pattern is an important ingredient of the socio-economic status.

Further the opportunity for finding work outside the agriculture sector and schooling also varies by habitat environment, size and its infrastructure.

Thus the changing rural socio-economic context does not lend itself easily to urban biased categories like income in terms of money and professions of parents and is not adequality understood in terms of traditional categories like caste and land-holdings alone either. What is needed is a look at socio-economic contexts and difference as they exist in terms of home – environment and habitat environment in the rural sector. Only then can schooling be understood in relation to the wider context.
While these considerations were addressed by a few studies they are notably confined to the study of Scheduled castes and the Scheduled Tribes; the Constitutionally recognized Weaker sections and recently on gender parity. The other disadvantaged sections like Backward Caste Communities (Vimuktha Jathis, Nomads depressed groups like fisher men earth workers, service castes Artisans and other marginalised groups). I have not received any attention inspite of being numerically very large segment to the total population and are at a disadvantage in term of socio-economic and educational opportunities. Their numerical largeness however, could gain them reservations in educational institutions and Govt. services. But meaningful studies exploring their (Backward castes) socio-economic and educational contexts are scarce, with the exception of two recent unpublished studies. Of these two studies one was a M.Phil Thesis by B. Sivaiah (2001) (the present researcher) and the other was a Social Assessment Survey report submitted to DPEP, Andhra Pradesh by Ch. Umamohan (2002). These studies point out the low enrollment trends on account of their socio-economic status. These studies point out the differential socio-economic status and caste hierarchy among these castes within the broad fold of Backward caste which has a bearing on accessing the basic education in general and particularly on the Vulnerable and depressed communities within the broad category of Backward castes. But these studies have not
taken into account the habitate & home environment factors and were primarily limited to elementary education.

Recognizing the Vulnerability of Backward Castes, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh has opened up welfare hostels to overcome the poverty constraints in accessing basic education. However, there is no literature on the role of these welfare hostel in accessing basic education to different communities of Backward caste category and the wider socio-economic context in relation to Home and Habitate environment of the inmates of welfare hostels. Such an understanding is necessary and would help in surmounting the bottlenose liners to realize the goal of Universalizing Basic Education and the Vision of Education for All.

Hence an attempt in made in the present humble study to address these issues in the context of Rayalaseema, a backward and chronically drought prone region of Andhra Pradesh.
METHOD OF STUDY:

The issues raised in the statement of the problem are pursued in meaningful and scientific study by formulating the following objectives.

Objectives:

Our first objective is to evaluate the status of school education in India during the 20th century (1901-2001) particularly with reference to policy orientations and quantitative and qualitative changes.

Our Second objective is to examine the status of school education in Andhra Pradesh particularly with reference to the provision of infrastructure viz. Institutions and services (eg. No. of school & Teachers); and enrolment trends.

Our Third objective is to profile the status of school education in the study region viz. The chronically backward region namely Rayalaseema.

The Fourth objective of our study is to examine the Socio-economic status of the Backward Caste students who are residents of Backward Class Welfare Hostels. With reference to such background variables like caste, parent’s literacy, levels of income land holdings, parent’s occupation and housing conditions.

The Fifth objective is to analyze the habitat environment factors related to school participation of the resident students of Backward Class Welfare Hostels; and
Our last and Sixth objective is to examine the home-environment factors of the students under reference with reference to home environment related constraints like involvement in domestic chores, decision making, reasons for joining the hostel and the role of welfare hostel as a critical intervention.

**THE UNIVERSE:**

The objectives of present study are pursued in the context of resident students of Backward Class Welfare Hostel in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh.

**The Study Sample:** Keeping in view the time and monetary constraints a manageable and representative sample of resident students from Backward Caste Welfare Hostels in Kurnool & Anantapur were chosen to constitute of our study sample and the total size of our sample is 300 resident students (Hostlers). The details of sampling procedure is described below.

**Sampling:** The study sample was drawn by adopting multistage random sampling technique.

Rayalaseema region comprises four districts viz. Anantapur, Chittoor, Cuddapah, and Kurnool districts. Of these four districts, two districts which have lower literacy rates than the state average literacy rate and as well as lower literacy rates among the districts of Rayalaseema were considered. Since the study is on school participation
and access to basic education, it is assumed that the districts with lower literacy level will reflect the socio-economic factors and constraints in accessing the basic education more realistically.

Accordingly Anantapur and Kurnool districts were chosen to represent the study sample as they have lower literacy rates than the other two districts in Rayalaseema, and as that of well as that of Andhra Pradesh (see table-1.1).

At the second level 12 percent of Backward Class Welfare Hostels run by Social Welfare Department are chosen randomly from each district. Anantapur district comprises 76 Backward Caste Welfare Boys Hostels and Kurnool district has 63 Boys Hostels; from these a total of 18 hostels were selected randomly by adopting lottery method.

At third stage 15 percent of resident students from each hostel were selected by using hostel attendance registers. Thus a total of 300 students were selected from 18 Backward Caste Welfare Hostels representing Anantapur & Kurnool districts; and the study sample was confined to only Boys.

**TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTIONS:**

The primary data was collected with the help of a structured interview schedule. The schedule covers information pertained to Socio-economic status, Home environmental factors like, constraints of schooling, decision making and discouragement; and Habitat
environmental factors like size of habitat, infrastructure of the habitat, distance to school etc; and the role of hostels with reference to need and retention. In addition a few Focus Group Discussions were held with hostel Wardens, teachers and parents to elicit further information.

The secondary data pertained to statistical information concerning school enrolment trends, institutional infrastructure such as number of schools teachers were collected from the published official reports and relevant census reports.

**Analysis:** The collected data were processed in accordance with the stated objectives and are presented in two-way variable tables. The independent variables considered for analysis and presentation are class of study, caste category; and the relevant indexes such as socio-economic status index; habitat environment index. The details of these indexes are explained in the relevant chapters. Simple statistical tools such as percentages, averages were employed to explain the data.

**Limitations:** The major limitation is non-availability of authentic data on population figures of the Backward Castes. The census of India dos not enumeration Backward Castes. As such indicators like Educational Ratios, co-efficient of Equality of opportunity could not be calculated.
**Reporting:** The study is presented in Eight Chapters.

The First chapter FRAME OF REFERENCE gives an introduction and presents a review of literature and statement of the problem of study and method of study.

The Second chapter 20th CENTURY AND SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA presents an evaluation of School Education in India during the 20th Century (1901-2001).

The Third chapter analyses Status of School Education in Andhra Pradesh with reference to enrolment trends, access to basic school education.

The Fourth chapter portrays the Study Setting: Rayalaseema and School Education.

The Fifth chapter SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS examines the socio-economic status characteristics of the resident students of Backward Caste Welfare Hostels.

The Sixth chapter presents HABITATE ENVIRONMENT FACTORS OF THE NATIVE VILLAGES (villages of origin) of the resident students of Backward Caste Welfare Hostels.

The Seventh chapter examines the HOME ENVIRONMENT FACTORS of the hostlers and the role of Backward Caste Welfare Hostels as a critical intervention.
The eighth and Last chapter present FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS of the present study.

The References and the Select Bibliography is appended at the end of the Thesis.
Tabel-1.1

**Literacy Rates in Rayalaseema (2001)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chittoor</td>
<td>75.36</td>
<td>51.88</td>
<td>63.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuddapah</td>
<td>75.02</td>
<td>46.94</td>
<td>61.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantapur</td>
<td>65.13</td>
<td>38.31</td>
<td>52.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurnool</td>
<td>64.72</td>
<td>36.50</td>
<td>50.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>66.13</td>
<td>44.36</td>
<td>55.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>