Chapter - 4

Review of Literature

In India research in elementary education is still in its infancy. Education research itself is also comparatively new in India. Attention to its significance was first drawn by the Government resolution on education policy, 1913 and more particularly by the Calcutta University commission, 1917-19. By 1947, only 5 universities had instituted degrees in educational research and the total number of theses and dissertations approved by them were only 153. Outside the universities and training colleges, only a few individuals carried out some research work on their own, but the total volume of this research is extremely small, partly due to lack of recognition of its significance. Consequently, the development of education research in India is a very recent phenomenon and the bulk of whatever education research has been done so far is in the post-Independence period.

After Independence central and state governments were giving more attention to education for national progress and security of the nation. Moreover, a number of committees and commissions have been constituted to evaluate the performance of education, particularly primary education in the country. Apart from other efforts and strategies, a District Primary Education Programme has also been launched in certain selected states of the country to further strengthen the network of primary education in the country. Keeping in view the above considerations, the present chapter is devoted to review the earlier studies conducted on different aspects of primary education in order to identify the gaps in literature, which would help in formulating the methodology of the present study and further direction of research.

Education Commission (1966) has envisaged that the objective of education in general is to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the people and to make it a major instrument of social change. It should be related to productivity, social justice and cultivation of moral and spiritual values. Although the Commission laid down no specific objectives of primary education, it was expected that it should lay the foundation for a child to grow into a responsible and useful citizen of the country.
Das (1974) suggested that the better provision of physical facilities in schools help in reducing wastage in education and in increasing its educational efficiency.

Sinha (1980) observed that teachers of primary schools complained of increased workload. The community noted improvement in teachers' morale and in teaching but not in the material resources of the school. There was significant improvement in the attendance of the students. The academic climate of the school had improved.

Eswara and Sharma (1982) in their study investigated the position of the provision of educational facilities at various stages of school education in respect of coverage of school going population, the distance to be covered by a child, enrolment of children belonging to weaker sections of society and availability of minimum basic facilities such as buildings, furniture, library, health, sanitation and incentives.

Shah (1983) found incentive scheme, such as the playground, teaching aids and mid-day needs, etc. had a positive impact on the retention power of children even though the dropout rate was much higher at primary as compared to the middle stage. It was also found to be more acute among girls.

Acharyya (1984) found a number of problems in primary schools. Some of the important problems were inadequacy of teaching staff, problems of physical plants, single teacher schools, lack of properly qualified and trained teachers, lack of incentives in schools, weak supervision and administration of primary education; acute problems of dropouts and stagnation. There was no uniformity in respect of the period of schooling at the primary stage.

Mali (1984) found that since working in a single teacher school involved living away from their families or spending a considerable amount of time on commuting each day, teachers were not willing to work in such schools. Despite training, teachers were not adequately equipped to manage such schools efficiently. They were not aware of suitable teaching methods.

Krishnamurthy (1985) in a study found that poverty of parents and their impression that education would not help in meeting the needs of life were important. Measures taken for enrolment of children included visiting the
houses of non-enrolled children, serving mid-day meals, supplying of uniforms, textbooks and cash grants to Scheduled Tribe students.

Singhal (1986) reported that more than half of the primary teachers did not take interest in the UEE programme. Nine out of ten schools meant for tribal children did not even conduct an annual census of children of school going age. A large percentage of schools did not fully utilize various incentives provided for SC/ST girls and backward communities. Supervision and guidance of teachers, student services and extension works were very limited.

NIEPA (1986) concluded that utilization of inputs at an effective level was possible only when the community was duly sensitized and involved in the process of enrolment and retention. Emphasis must be given to integration of theory with practice so that learning can be concretized more meaningfully, with the help of work situations existing in the immediate environment.

The National Policy on Education (1986) gives unqualified priority to universalization of elementary education (UEE). The thrust in elementary education emphasizes (i) universal enrolment and universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and (ii) a substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning. It is further highlighted that DPEP which was started in the country to ensure hundred percent enrolment of children in the age group of 6-14 years.

Verma (1987) in a study on factors affecting literacy programmes in tribal areas of Himachal Pradesh revealed that the government has taken some effective steps for the opening of schools in far flung tribal areas, making provision of mid-day meals, scholarships and free textbooks to the poor students, free stationery and uniforms. While there is a provision for these facilities, they are not provided well in time.

Grover (1988) observed that in 1954-55 there was no school building but in 1961 schools shifted to newly constructed school buildings. Only minor repairs and additions have been undertaken since the school buildings were constructed. The schools were barely provided with any teaching aids, furniture, stationery, play facilities, etc. It was observed that classrooms were rarely used, as they could not accommodate all the five grades. There were no mobile blackboards because classes were generally held in the lawn. The only
furniture items in the school were three chairs, two tables and two stools. All the children sat on jute mats.

Premi (1989) observed that the achievement of universal elementary education largely depends on the extent to which the educational system is able to control and retain children from the disadvantaged sections of society. Universalization of elementary education consists of four components, namely - (a) universal provision of facilities, (b) universal enrolment, (c) universal attendance & retention and (d) universal attainment (academic success).

Raza, et.al. (1990) have concluded that:

i) The accessibility to schools in terms of population coverage and the overall mean distances is characterized by significant inter-district variations.

ii) Even the objective of UEE remains a far cry. It has been observed that the spread of education among women, the SC’s and the ST’s has been very impressive since independence.

iii) Despite this, the female enrolment and literacy rate remains lower than those for the males.

Singh Khalwania (1991) pointed out in his in their study that the pupil-teacher ratio in rural schools is significantly higher than the corresponding ratio in urban schools. There is a positive relation between the pupil-teacher ratio and distance of the school from the urban centre. The ratio is higher in the far flung areas. The Punjab Government has been noted to be more strict in observing the norms especially in respect of rural schools. Rather, additional posts should be sanctioned for the rural schools. They also advocated that monetary incentives in rural schools must be introduced at the primary level.

Chelan (1992) inferred that the failure to achieve universalization of elementary education in Andhra Pradesh is due to lack of enthusiasm among the common masses residing in the rural areas. On the other hand, the rapid development of education and consequent literacy rates in the urban areas are not entirely due to rates of migration, but due to other factors. The contrasting development of primary education between rural and urban areas can be understood in the light of the structure of the whole society, its resources, environment and disposition. It is a fact that existing schemes and
programmes introduced by the Government to promote primary education have failed to deliver the goods. However, a uniform strategy of retaining children beyond the second standard through economic and other incentives appear to be worth trying. He added that there is a need to revise the content of the courses at the fourth and fifth standards incorporating the immediate work environment of the parents of the children. At least the teacher should be oriented to undertake such innovative ideas at the primary level.

As long as the structures, socio-economic and background of the rural and urban population continue to be dual, the strategy for the development of primary education should be dual, multi-dimensional and uninterrupted.

Mohan (1992) found that if education was made compulsory, then all children below 14 years irrespective of sex, class and caste would enroll in schools and receive the many benefit of schooling. It would mean that parents would be compelled to send their children to schools. It would curtail the increase in the number of adult illiterates and there would not arise the need to have adult education programmes. The quality of life of the next generation would be ensured.

Diwan (1992) revealed that in some schools, provision of free text books or mid-day meals have not drawn expected results or have not been utilized at all. He admitted that these programmes have, to a large extent, brought improvement in the general health of children resulting in turn in the decrease of drop outs and thus contributing to the increase in enrolment and retention among children. He further supplemented that concerted efforts are still being made by the government to contribute maximum in cash or kind in order to encourage children to attend the school. A new scheme launched by the Maharashtra government to offer one rupee per day to each child is a major breakthrough in this regard and such kinds of schemes may instill a desire for education through mass media programmes among the people. Moreover, it would certainly bring improvement in the enrolment and retention of children at least in the primary stage of education.

Prakash (1992) observes that universalization of elementary education (UEE) has been one of the top priority programmes of the Government of India for over four decades, and that although the number of primary schools and the
enrolment at the primary level is increasing tremendously, the retention of children still remains a serious problem before us. Another thing, which is important, is laying down a standard of learning (quality), which it must be ensured, is achieved by all the children (equity).

Diwan (1993) in an analytical review of incentives at the primary stage of education revealed that incentives were provided to children in order to universalize education at the primary stage, with progressive trend in three schemes – mid-day meals, free uniform and free textbooks in different states.

Bhat and Yasmean (1994) pointed out that the main causes of stagnation are the illiteracy of parents and heavy courses of study. For drop-outs, the major causes have turned out to be a family's poverty. They added that the wastage rate in Government schools is higher than that in private schools, in spite of the fact that the former type of schools have more qualified and trained teachers as compared to the latter. The stagnation and drop-out rates in case of girls were found to be higher compared to those of boys, which is a usual characteristic of rural society where in the case of the girls, education is still considered to be an optional decision.

Goel et. al. (1994) suggested that introduction of computers at primary school level. The main problem which was experienced at the schools, the undefined syllabus. There is no fixed and approved syllabus for primary classes.

Kumat (1994) inferred that the need of the house is to hand over the school to the community. If one allows the community to manage it, the pyramid will develop. The community will ensure that all go to school, and with a low drop out rate they will achieve higher literacy rates. If we let the community bother for itself, they will take care of themselves in a much better way.

Varghese (1994) advocated that at present the DPEP programme in functional in 42 districts-19 districts of Madhya Pradesh, 5 of Maharashtra, 4 of Assam, Haryana and Karnataka each and 3 districts of Kerala and Tamil Nadu each. The programme has been initiated. It is expected that 110 districts will be covered under this programme by the end of the eighth five-year plan.
Many of the components of the programme are equally applicable to other districts which are currently not covered under this programme. Moreover the lessons learned from planning and implementing this programme can be extended to other districts. The effort is to improve the system level efficiently to manage the educational initiatives. Mobilization, participation and school effectiveness are cardinal elements of the programme. It envisages to revive the initiatives within the school to make it more effective. All activities are oriented to promote this initiative of the schools.

He further added that DPEP is not an exercise in finding unique solutions. The effort, on the other hand, is to experiment with ideas and innovations which may have wider applicability. Its success and sustainability depends on how realistic they are in designing the programme and how careful they are in implementing them. The focus is essentially on the process dimensions. Funds provide only a necessary condition for success. Sufficient conditions are provided by our own capacity to plan and implement programmes. Even though plans are prepared at the district level, in the final analysis they are to be implemented in the school and classrooms. How effectively this linkage is established will determine the success of the programme.

Ediger (1995) pointed out in his study that pupils may work individually as well as in cooperative learning situations. They may experience the separate subject curriculum or achieve objectives which stresses more of an integrated or multidisciplinary curriculum. Gender equality should be valued, in that both boys and girls need to achieve optimally. Multi cultural education needs cooperation because in that pupils from diverse cultural groups are respected and accepted. In order to improve the quality teaching in mathematics staff development of primary teacher is a must. These teachers need to incorporate in their teaching elements, which assist primary grade pupils to secure a valuable foundation for learning. What is learned out of the primary grade level has significant implications for a pupil’s achievement as each one makes continuous progress.

Reddy (1995) observed that both at the national level as well as state level, primary education was given top priority by the governments. But over a
period of time its share in total expenditure on education declined from 46.41 percent in 1974-75 to 43.55 percent in 1986-87 at national level while at the state level it declined from 50.06 percent in 1974-75 to 47.42 percent in 1986-87. He further added that the share of primary education in total expenditure on education in most of the states went down except in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir and Punjab where it went up from 42.71 percent, 48.50 percent, 54.78 percent, 34.02 percent and 29.96 percent respectively in 1986-87. The interesting feature is that, in the same period, in Bihar it went down from 61.19 percent to 56.98 percent, in Madhya Pradesh from 50.50 percent, in Rajasthan from 56.58 percent to 52.94 percent, in Orissa from 44.53 percent to 40.90 percent and in Uttar Pradesh from 55.79 percent to 51.54 percent, in spite of their low levels of literacy. Thereafter, the situation appears to have, more or less, remained unchanged. Varghese (1995) studied school facilities and learning achievement in primary schools. He classified the school factors into three sets: facilities in the school, teacher quality, and teaching learning process. He, while analyzing the impact of school facilities on learner achievement, focused on the availability of instructional material like textbooks and reading material.

Tilak (1996) has critically examined the enrolment of children. According to official statistics nearly every one in the age group 6 – 11 and two of every three in the age group 11 – 14 are enrolled in schools, but according to the statistics of the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) in 1986-87, there were about 60 million in the age group 6 – 14, who were never enrolled in schools. It is further revealed that the level of retention of children in schools is also limited i.e., only 57 out of 100 children enrolled in grade-I, seem to reach grade-V and only 42 reach grade-VIII, according to MHRD estimates (1991-92).

Nautiyal (1996) explained that at the national level there is a need to develop multilingual capability developing educational materials, training/Orientation programmes, seminars and conferences. It should be possible for the participants from different states to back the final reports or proceedings in their respective regional languages. With the existing state of new information technology, the computers and expertise available in the national level educational institutions, it should be possible to make a significant headway in
this area. The experience of conducting DPEP studies, particularly the baseline studies, has clearly shown the potential of the national level apex educational institutions in carrying out basic research in regional/state languages with professional excellence.

Arora and Singh (1997) focused on effective training practices and admitted that in-service training agencies need to incorporate features like association of trainers with the production of training materials. They emphasized on recurrent training instead of 'One Shot' training and also the use of both print and non-print mode. They further advocated that there is an urgent need to build the capacity of teachers in undertaking action research in order to improve the quality of training.

Aggarwal and Rajput (1997) put forward the view that in Chinese culture there is a great emphasis on fine arts. It is reflected in the education system and is also apparent from the art room, music room and demonstration of dramatics. In using the latest technology, the Chinese are well ahead. State run primary schools cannot even think of computers perhaps for many years to come even in metropolitan cities like Delhi. The Chinese primary school is a place not only for learning but also for enjoyment.

Chowdhary (1997) highlighted that the objective of universal primary education in Bangladesh is to provide education of comparable quality to all its citizens, but the system does not seem to be adequately prepared enough to lead the nation towards that goal. So far, achievement in primary education, in Bangladesh, has been largely quantitative, leaving behind doubts about its effectiveness, sustainability and comparability.

He suggested that in order to provide quality education a nation should start with a designed and relevant curriculum taking advantage of the research studies tested in the field. Such curriculum should also be up to date and equivalent with other comparable streams. While some progress has been achieved in improving the primary education curriculum and the text books prepared on the basis of this curriculum in the classroom, there is a need to promote multiple textbooks based on the national curriculum and support its implementation with diversified teaching and learning aid supplementary materials. They need to rethink about the quality of education in terms of
school environment, classroom culture and the teachers' burden of unwanted activities.

Gupta et al. (1997) advocated that the training design, training package and to evaluate the training come through school based and teacher based continuous in service mode and periodic in service by formulated separately for each districts is of paramount importance. These may be tried out before implementations under the guidance of DIETS and Block level teacher centres.

Pradhan (1997) appraised of the fact that the fundamental aspects of management of primary education are to prepare curriculum and related instructional materials which decide the content and process of education, supervisions of schools etc which is controlled by state level agencies.

Singh & Panda (1997) suggested the methodology for training teachers in different areas need not be the same. For helping teachers to fine tune their skills, they should undergo experiences to practice these skills in real/simulated conditions under the supervision of their trainers. Immediate feedback with regard to the practice of these skills is highly essential to help them to refine their skills. For sensitizing teachers to certain areas, self study of training modules followed by discussion would be an appropriate transactional approach. For transactional training modules pertaining to content enrichment, learner-centred and activity based approach may be followed.

Atma Ram (1998) evaluated that there are four stages with regard to teaching sufficient number of competent teachers: they go to schools, they teach there, and do more than teaching. All reforms start at the last stage. In practice, we are not even at the first or second stage in respect of primary education. Consequently, many schools for all practical purposes, remain that with one or two teachers. Almost all those are located in rural and tribal regions.

He further opined that there is a greater awareness of this said phenomenon. Regional political parties are getting greater support from the public. At least some of them are serious about such local issues. Illiterate parents are now increasingly becoming aware of their right for education and will not in future give cluster-votes. Voting trends in 1998 elections pointed out
that majority of the poor clamour for basic education for their children and are not convinced by assurance only. Such awareness on the part of parents and children is perhaps the only remaining feature of modern times which will open the gateway for mass primary education, freedom and justice in the country.

Chakrabarti (1998) found in his exploratory study that the majority of the primary schools did not have a playground and suggested introducing indoor games. He further noted that with the implementation of the operation black board scheme as suggested by NPE – 1986 along with other facilities such as number of teachers' room, learning materials, playgrounds, etc. If accompanied and re-enforced by music and sports then it is expected that the innovative programme will be successful. Through this process wastage in primary education could be minimized.

Paul (1998) stressed that all round development of the children is not possible without providing them primary education of satisfactory quality. They must learn the art of living successfully, solving their problems smoothly and facing the realities of the modern time. He further advocated that they must inculcate and sustain in themselves the human values. While providing primary education to children some of the problems which the Indian society is facing, will automatically disappear.

He further suggested that some reforms with respect to vital aspects of management are planning, supervision, resource mobilization, recruitment of teachers, accountability and a code of professional ethics.

Shukla (1998) admitted that for effective teaching, a teacher must have mastery over the subject matter and wide use of teaching aids are to be adopted to make teaching pleasant and enjoyable. A teacher must encouraged the students for raising questions in the class. We should try to raise problems and encourage the child to think over suitable answers. He further suggested that the teacher should not mind ongoing criticism about the changing roles and responsibilities in the society. Moreover, he should not be attracted to the materialistic world and be loyal, sincere towards this noble profession.

Srivastava (1998) undertook a study of teacher training components and their effectiveness in DPEP districts of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra and admitted that similar studies are required to be taken up in all the DPEP states
of the country. The genuine problems in this area are to be sorted out and serious steps be taken to resolve the. In general, more orientation and practice is required in the training inputs to bring some effective change in teaching-learning process. It was also suggested that one-shot programmes are ineffective and that they should be replaced by recurrent training. It is also suggested that teams of educators/trainers should visit schools from time to time, observe the school activities and then present the expected model of teaching on the spot. Therefore, instead of calling teachers at training centres, the trainers themselves should visit the schools in teams, observe teaching learning process and then suggest improvement in the form of demonstration in teaching. Further it recommended 'periodic on-site school based training'. Likewise, the entire programmes should be made academic oriented and less mechanical in the form of preparing teaching aids, singing and dramatization. More insight into child-psychology and teaching-learning process is required.

Arikewuyo (1999) said that the school administration is an art, like all other arts. It has intricacies which must be learnt and mastered by anyone who wants to make a success of the system. It is advocated that the government should endeavour to sponsor the head teachers to receive professional training in primary school administration in the Universities or institutes of education. He further revealed that the head teacher needs adequate material and human resources to achieve the objectives of primary education. Hence, adequate and professionally trained teachers, as well as instructional materials should be provided for all primary schools.

Bhattacharya (1999) contended that in the case of common primary school system and the targets of such education, some measures required to be taken. Preparation of primary teachers for the common school system should be initiated keeping in view the needs of the system. He advocated that the provisions of incentives be made to attract qualified and creative persons to work in primary schools. Initial and integrated training programmes for the school personnel was necessary to enable them to cater to the needs of the deprived, average, handicapped, mentally retarded and efficient learners at the primary level. It was also required to initiate psychological teaching guidance and follow up programmes, to encourage joyful learning, free tutorials
for weaker and backward learners, learning and culture oriented clubs, community programmes, national meets, cultural enrichment programmes, etc.

He admitted that the common primary school system may work best for the betterment of all but for this what we are in need of is to make the job of a primary teacher most rewarding and prestigious in nature in fact, much more than that of college and University teachers. The existing situation is bleak as a person prefers to be a clerk in a nationalized bank or railways etc., rather than being a primary school teacher.

Barua (1999) focused on the idea that the most common problems being faced by a majority of the rural primary schools in India today include unhygienic school buildings, inadequate accommodation, shortage of teachers lack of basic human amenities, non-availability of furniture in the classroom, short supply of teaching-learning materials, sub-standard quality of mid-day meals, unattractive methods of teaching and delayed supply of text books by the government. These are the portent evidence of deprivations of children reading in these schools for their proper physical, mental, intellectual and social development. He advocated that it will not be possible to achieve the goal of education for all, only by a small mercy of free education and free text books unless certain provisions and steps are taken.

Better mobilization of local resources is required to enrich the physical condition of the primary schools and active involvement of parents and community leaders with the school is necessary. Recruitment of sufficient numbers of teachers is also needed.

Gupta et. al. (1999) who conducted a study on learning achievements of children studying in alternative schools of DPEP districts of Madhya Pradesh noticed that 392 alternative schools were opened in the then 19 DPEP districts in 1995-96 and many more have been opened since then. The late opening of schools and irregularity among teachers had been identified as the causes of poor performance. It was also experienced that the teachers of enthusiastic nature and those friendly who were with the children and regular in school enjoyed a good rapport with the parents and community members. Scattered distances and inadequate quantity of materials had also been noticed as impediments for satisfactory performance of children.
Kumar and Kumar (1999) advocated that DPEP was launched in 1995 and was implemented in 42 districts of 7 states, which were educationally backward. The overall goal of this programme is the reconstruction of primary education in these districts. The fundamental principle of DPEP is the capacity building at all levels to evolve further strategies and it has a well-defined gender focus. They further added that the present system of education lays greater emphasis on narrow individualism, unhealthy competition, verbal fluency and mere acquisition of information while it neglects social objectives, values, cooperation and building up of character. They emphasized that to solve these problems is of paramount importance because a decline in the education system indicates the decline of the nation.

Srivastava et. al. (1999) while studying the impact of DPEP interventions, admitted that more content enrichment and pedagogical training of primary school teachers are inevitable for the success of DPEP. Students need to be provided more individual attention, remedial instruction and conducive learning environment for the required attainment level of achievement. They further emphasized that elementary teacher educators must be better oriented and trained as per requirement of DPEP.

Behari and Nagar (2000) said that education which creates the right climate and environment for the child, helps them to develop into complete human being. This required a re-evaluation of the present system of education. Instead of presenting ready-made knowledge verbally to the child, teacher, and parents need to provide a rich variety of activities to promote exploration and discovery. He advocated his concern that is a need to recognize the fact that children are not merely miniature adults to be schooled into adult ways and knowledge of the world. Their needs and limitations should be respected while planning their education.

Donga (2000) observed that the planning ability is positively related with intelligence. In other students it is found that it is not proved that gifted students are performing best in all tasks as compared to normal or low average children, but they are higher in higher level planning and meta cognitive processes than other. It is noted that girls are higher in planning ability than boys. Children of educated parents are also found to be with high planning ability. It implies that
the children of illiterate parents should be provided instructional programmes enhancing planning ability.

Dutta (2000) found in her study that Drama is a powerful tool at the primary level as it can be an effective tool for language learning. It can also be used for meaningful purposes instead of being just extra curricula. She further suggested that it could be used once a week in the classrooms. The students would also love to perform short skits and mono acts. Dramas can be used in building up a sense of community in the classroom and enhance learning.

Kabir et. al. (2000) studied the primary schools in Bangladesh and noted that the basic skills needed for a productive useful life to children has not been imparted to those who are enrolled. Observing the current situation, they point out that the government’s plan to extend universal primary education by 2002 may be highly optimistic without significant reliance on non-formal education.

The declining trend in total cost of primary education is a result of a declining trend in fertility. Hence, there is a need for strengthening coordinated efforts and inter-sectoral linkages. Over the last decade, the primary education system has succeeded in achieving greater enrollment rate for both boys and girls but still there is need for achieving higher and sustainable completion rate which calls for reviewing the incentive packages, including quality of primary education and the education system as a whole.

Pandey (2000) has studied School effectiveness and scholastic Achievement of Formal Primary School Children in terms of minimum levels of learning and admitted that the performance of the boys was better than that of the girls. No significant difference in the performance of studying girls in rural and urban formal primary schools was observed. He further added that due to underdevelopment of reading and writing skills, the academic achievement of children is adversely affected.

Sodha and Srivastava (2000) admitted that the challenges of universal education can only be met by seeking and ensuring the support of the community and flexibility in the process of learning. They further highlighted that our attempts to meet the twin challenges of universalization and adequate quality in the primary education sector have been inadequate. Innovations in reaching out to the primary school age population, making primary education
relevant and interesting, financing of the school and participation of the community are urgently needed if we do not wish to drift farther from our goals. Preschool education and the teacher education at preschool and primary level also need urgent attention. The task ahead is difficult but the country can hardly afford the luxury of entering the knowledge age with a population having poor or no primary education.

Sharma (2000) observed that English should be introduced as a compulsory subject in pre-service teacher education programme related to primary or elementary education. He further added that most of the teachers who teach English at the primary level do not have oral/written command over the subject. There are only a handful books available in English for the primary level. Most of the teacher teaching English at the primary level are ignorant about skill based language teaching and communicative approach in the language English.

Balasubramaniam (2001) said that computer aided instruction can result in a number of positive benefits when used for developing reading skill among children who are at the primary level with more and more reading software packages. It is quite obvious and the time has come for teachers to move into the educational computing area gracefully and with confidence for the upgradation and updation of knowledge.

Chopra (2001) pointed out that curricular workload of primary school teachers of rural areas was found to be more than that of urban area teachers in terms of number of classes being taught, number of students being taught and teacher pupil ratio. Urban teachers devote more time per week on pupils correction work than their rural counterparts. It further informed that due to large sized classes teachers of rural and urban schools faced a number of problems like inability to pay attention to individual needs of each children, too much noise and indiscipline in the class, inability to revise the syllabus of each subject, less time on remedial work etc. He suggested that there is an urgent need to appoint primary schools to provide quality education to the students.

Desh and Stapathy (2001) observed that both rural and urban teachers were in favour of health education. Health check up was not a regular practice in rural schools whereas in urban schools it was a regular practice. They
further highlighted the fact that female teachers paid attention to pupil health care more than males. The urban teachers were more knowledgeable in health and health education than teachers employed in rural areas. They further admitted rural schools time table for health check-up and even missing the facility of First-Aid. They suggested that the basic facilities such as drinking water, toilet, and first aid etc. should be provided in all rural schools.

Panda (2001) observed that parent involvement in the education of children is a challenge for school teachers. The pre-service and in-service teachers training programmes do not equip them in this direction. On the other hand, most of the parents seek relief from their children. Hence, there is an urgent and immediate need to provide technical support to teachers as well as to parents in this regard. He further advocated that there is a need to have a different approach to teacher education and to establish relationship with parents in positive and diverse ways. He further added that commitment and accountability of teachers and interest of parents in school programmes will enhance the achievement level of learners. Parental involvement at the primary stage will work as an effective tool for quality improvement.

Panda (2001) pinpointed that educational facilities available in the school are very effective in enhancing achievement. Therefore, it is suggested that the government must take the initiative and ensure that the schools are equipped with all kinds of essential educational facilities. He further noticed that teacher quality has no significant effect in enhancing learning achievement except teacher qualification on mathematics achievement in urban, and on language achievement in tribal areas, and trained teacher before joining on mathematics and service achievement in rural areas. He further advocated that five schemes, mid-day meals in rural and tribal areas, free uniform and free text books have been found to be very effective in improving achievement and in retention of pupil and there is a need to further strengthen these schemes.

Ponusamy & Sudarsand (2001) advocated that so far as the joyful learning approach at primary school level is concerned, there exists significant difference between the mean attitude scores of rural and urban school teachers and also between the mean attitude scores of male and female teachers,
teachers with degree and diploma qualifications and government and private school teachers.

Sharma (2001) said that self-learning cards would be useful to students to learn at their own pace in an interesting manner. Teaching would be facilitated to enhance concepts among children. These self-learning cards in the form of audios and visuals can also be recorded on videocassettes and can be disseminated to large groups of students. He suggested that researchers may use self-learning cards for conducting further studies to explore their use for the development concepts and the thinking process of children, and undertake more intensive studies with a wide sample consisting of children from different socio-economic levels and with more concepts at different levels of education.

Saha (2001) highlighted that the role perception of teachers plays a vital role in their career as a teacher. This makes them aware of their attitudes, techniques and position in the area of a school as well as in society. He admitted that the role perception of tribal teachers is better than that in other areas which implies that the status enjoyed by the tribal teaching in their society is higher than that of the non-tribal teachers. He further advocated that if the teachers at primary level understand their role properly, they can do their duty more effectively and efficiently and will find their work to be a worthy one.

From the analysis of the above-mentioned studies, we find that they focused their attempt on the following major aspects.

1. Aims and objectives of primary education.
2. Facilities available to children and teachers at primary school.
4. Special problems of children at schools.
5. Exploration of the causes of poor retention.
6. Management and supervision of primary school.
7. Training components and their effectiveness in DPEP.
8. Strengths and weaknesses of educational system.
9. DPEP interventions.
11. Progress on operation black board.
12. Lack of emphasis on character and value development.
13. In adequacy of teachers' training programme for primary school – pre-service and in-service.
15. Role of DIETs.

Though the existing literature covers certain significant facets of primary education particularly in context of DPEP in certain details, there remains certain pertinent gaps which revolve around the questions such as performance of DPEP in respect of achievement of its basic objectives, impact evaluation of DPEP, attitude of teachers, students and public towards DPEP, and perception of educational administrators towards the functioning of DPEP.

Hypotheses

Based on the survey of literature as reported above, the following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

1. Impact of DPEP has been positive in making primary education more universal in Himachal Pradesh.
2. The disparities of gender, caste, economic status and residence in respect of enrolment of children in primary schools in DPEP districts have decreased.
3. After the launching of DPEP project in the Sirmaur district of H.P., the rate of wastage and stagnation has gone down in primary schools located in the said district.
4. Since the commencing of the said project, the drop out rate among the targeted primary schools has decreased significantly.
5. Under the impact of DPEP, school curriculum now includes components for children's all-round development, namely, mental, physical, emotional and moral development.
6. The quality of teacher training for primary schools has positively improved with the intervention of DPEP.
7. The level of academic achievements including education standard among the primary school children has improved in the district under study.
8. The involvement of education administrators at primary educational level has intensified under the impact of DPEP.

9. The perception of community and parents has become positive towards primary education in Sirmaur district of Himachal Pradesh under District Primary Education Programme.

10. The attitude of teachers and extent of their satisfaction regarding DPEP functioning is positive in the district under study.

11. Teachers working in the schools in DPEP district of Sirmaur have a positive attitude toward the policies and programme of DPEP.

12. All types of respondents namely students, teachers, parents, community leaders and administrators perceive a number of problems pertaining to primary education vis-à-vis DPEP.