INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL PERSPECTIVE

The destiny of a nation is shaped in its classrooms. This shaping, to a great extent, depends upon the kind of a curriculum that a nation constructs and thereafter on the steps it takes for its proper implementation at all stages of education. The foundations of future life especially the immediate future that is the period of formal schooling and adjustments to it are laid during the early years in the life of a child. Though not a period of formal training and curricular instruction, it is an established fact that pre-primary education is a feeder and support program for primary education. Being a necessary and relevant introductory program, it needs to be taken and planned earnestly, keeping in mind the basics of child growth, development and its various aspects.

1.2 IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early childhood education is important both from the point of view of the personality development of the child and for inculcating in children a healthy attitude to school going and to help to increase their retention rate in schools. In a country like ours, where the backbone of our society lives under most helpless conditions of life, any scheme of education, whether it is pre-primary or primary, is bound to be less effective and wasteful if it is not substantially supported by the planned welfare services. Unless pre-primary education is regulated and properly organized, the problem of wastage and stagnation cannot be solved effectively. We must not look at pre school education merely as a school welfare service that needs our sympathy and support but instead it
needs a careful attention. Pre-primary education has become necessity in the fast changing world.

The first reason on the recent focus on importance of a rich and meaningful pre-school education is basically due to emergence of nuclear families and the break up of traditional joint family. This change leads to smaller pauses, lack of space and an environment, impoverished with many aspects of security, care, companionship and creative outlets.

Second reason for the emergence of pre-school education is the increased employment of women. In the past decade, more women have moved into the labor force as a result of economic necessity or desire to pursue a career. According to the census of India in 1971, the total number of rural working women were 2,80,06,061 and urban working women were 33,32,876. In 1981 these numbers increased to 3,96,02,984 and 53,70,183 respectively and is continuously increasing. So this factor too has led to an increase in the number of pre-school children.

Pre-school education, today, has become a necessity with parents in the urban society. Urbanization coupled with large scale migration of people into the metropolitan cities has created a tremendous pressure on the housing situation in our country. There is lack of proper places for the little children to play and enjoy. This resulted in the formation of créches and pre-schools where the child could play freely.

Another reason is the ignorance of the needs of the children of this age by the parents. Children's basic needs are not met due to overcrowding, poverty, dirty surroundings and other socio-economic reasons. Due to increased literacy
rates the literate parents realize that the development of child is as important as his physical development. This knowledge and attitude of the parents resulted in the increase in the enrolment in pre-schools. There are psychological and political factors also which necessitate increased concern for the child and thus more emphasis on pre-school education.

1.3 GROWTH OF PRE SCHOOL EDUCATION

Child's nature is no different today from what it was a thousand years ago. We should allow children freedom to be themselves – a complete belief in the child as a good being. This theory has its roots in the ideas put forth by educationists even 2000 years before.

Comenius (1592-1670) was the first educator to reflect a new scientific spirit in the education of young children. In his book "Great didactic" he criticized the then existing schools and called them slaughter houses of minds. He proposed a series of schools and classified children also on the basis of individual differences. He laid stress on shorter school hours. His text books, curriculum recommendations and methodology contributed a lot. Stages of education as suggested by Plato (428-BC) could be considered as one of his major contributions to pre-school education. Plato's concept of pre-school education is based on the psychological principles of child development and gives importance to the child than to the curriculum, teacher and the method.

Rousseau (1712-1778) emphasized that education should be based on the psychology of the child which is the basic concept of pre-school. "Return to Nature" was his slogan to cure the world of ills and miseries. Rousseau did not suggest any fixed curriculum. It is due to his contributions that the need of sense
training and physical activities in the earlier development of the child have been recognized in the modern system of education.

Pestalozzi (1746-1827) had a hatred for verbalism. All words learned without thinking produce almost hopeless confusion in our minds but how clear our knowledge would be if we could receive the truth without allay. He also wrote a manual for mothers with the title "How Gertrude Teaches Her Children". This book gives a systematic psychological theory of his educational methods. He wished to psychologize education. He advocated that a child should be studied thoroughly and thereafter appropriate methods of instruction should be used.

Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852) the founder of the kindergarten system of education, conceived the school as a garden, the teacher as the gardener and the students as tender plants. He helped to make the society conscious of education for young children. He emphasized the pre-school education and advocated a school as a society in miniature. He stressed the need for the study of the nature of the child, his instincts and impulses. He believed that the play is the highest phase of self development. He was the first educator to make self activity as the basis of education. Froebel introduced "Gifts" for the training of the senses of children. He considered women teachers to be more suited for the task of instruction at pre-school stage.

Maria Montessori (1870-1952) achieved a universal reputation for her unique contribution to the early childhood education. Her book "The Montessori method" gives a basic statement of her views regarding pre-school education. She taught teachers to learn to be humble with children. She observed that child's personality should not be dwarfed with the fear of disciplinary methods. Individualization is the key note of the Montessori method. Motor education,
sense training and social efficiency are her contributions to the pre-school education.

John Dewey (1857-1950) is a source of inspiration to so many educators. He is remembered for his contribution to pre-school education as he emphasized much on the child's activities unfolding his potential and learning by doing and playing. In his philosophy, a pre-school should provide a simple environment to the child and should bring the school life into closer relations with home and surrounding life.

Jean Piaget (1896-1980) is generally recognized as the leading theoretician in child development. He began his study of child development with the careful observation of his own three children. His investigations resulted in the description of four periods in terms of invariant sequential behaviors. Sensorimotor period (birth to 2 years), pre-operational period (2 to 7 or 8 years), period of concrete operations (7 or 8 to about 11-12 years), and period of formal operations (11 and 12 through adolescence). Piaget says there are special sensitivities to stimulation at definite stages of development and the effectiveness of stimulation is contingent upon its match with a given level of development. The child's perception of the world is determined by his stage of cognitive organization and a stimulus is only a stimulus if it can match or be assimilated to already developed schemata. Piaget asserts that learning is a function of development. His theory of cognitive development provides a broad development perspective to the educator for building a curriculum for the pre-school children. Piaget – based curriculum requires that children should not skip any stage. The pre-school child is at the pre-operational level. The educational
program at this stage should provide concrete operations. Most of the of the Piaget type activities require simple equipment and material.

But it seems desirable that teachers in a Piagetian pre-school program have a thorough knowledge of Piaget's developmental theory and that they be able to probe and assess the mental development of the children with respect to various concepts and also to provide an appropriate cognitive task for the child.

1.4 PRESENT POSITION OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA

In India, the history of pre-school education dates back to Abhimanyu learning the art of entering the "Chakarvyuh" during the period of conception of his mother. Swami Dayanand (1825-1883) suggested a non-formal approach to pre-primary education. He said all efforts should be made to create good "Sanskars" in the child. Mother, father and teachers are great tutors.

Rabindernath Tagore (1861-1941) popularly known as Gurudev believed that educating is nothing short of the highest purpose of man, the fullest growth and freedom of soul. He said adults ignore the natural gifts of children and insist that children must learn through the same process as they learnt themselves. This is man's most cruel and most wasteful mistake. Tagore found a fundamental unity between man and nature and wanted that child's education must be organized in natural surroundings. He suggested children are more important than books and teachers.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) was very particular about the pre-school education. He said, "we have adopted western system of pre-school education but we cannot say that these are the best methods for our young children in the villages of India". He said that there was a need for a new system of education
to experiment with Indian children in Indian soil itself. This revolutionary system is called the basic education or Nai-Talim. Pre-basic education is not a separate system as such but is a part of basic education.

The curriculum under this scheme aimed at the total development of the child reflecting the Gandhian philosophy of education which stresses the development of body, mind and soul. The failure of this curriculum to emerge as a national curriculum indicates the magnitude and complexity of the problems involved in changing the established structure of education and posed a challenge to the Indian nation.

The development of pre-school education in India is affected further by the Second Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education (1939). Recommendations of Sargent report (1944) and recommendations made by the education commission (1964-66) on pre-primary education stressed less costly methods of expanding pre-primary education. Committee on child care appointed by Central Social Welfare Board (1961-62) gave a program of activities for pre-school education. The commission also suggested a plan for the establishment of pre-primary education development centers which should initially be at the district level and the state level. They suggested to promote every district with a centre in a phased programme spread over twenty years.

Swaminathan study group on the development of pre-school child (1972) was set up jointly by the ministry of education and the department of social welfare. They prepared a programme of action for the development of the pre-school child through the mobilization of local community resources. National policy for children (1974) served as a pole-star to guide the official and non-
official agencies alike in regard to the direction in which they should move. They say that children’s program should form a prominent place in our national plans for the development of human resources so that our children grow up to become robust citizens, physically fit, mentally alert and morally healthy endowed with the skills and motivation needed by society.

Part 5 of the National Policy on Education deals with the pre-school education. Early childhood care and education will receive high priority and be suitably incorporated with the integrated child development service programs. It says that pre-school education is a feeder and a strengthening factor for primary education and in general for human resource development.

The government of India is implementing more than 120 schemes and programs for the welfare and development of children and women through more than 13 ministries and department. It is a signatory to the world declaration (September 1990) in the survival, protection and development of children and the policy of children. The 13 supportive policies and regulatory framework through 120 schemes are targeting towards their implementation, representing the needs and aspirations of India. The national plan of action for children also lists activities to achieve these goals. To make these goals more need based the government of India has urged all the states and Union territory governments to prepare a “State Plan of Action for Children” for their respective states/union territories taking into account the regional needs (NIPCCD,1997). Accordingly all major states of India are implementing the programs according to their own draft state plan of action, which is monitored by high-powered inter ministerial committees in the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India. At present the following national agencies/organization/departments
are working for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Early intervention programs.

- Department of Women & Child Development (DWCD), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD).
- Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB)
- Department of Welfare (Ministry of Welfare)
- Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW)
- Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)
- Indian Red Cross
- Indian Association for Pre-School Education
- All India Cosmic Education Society

20th century is a century of the child as never before the international and national bodies have given greater recognition to the rights of the children. Although the recent focus on the rights of children and importance of pre-school education is universally recognized yet the status of pre-school education in India is different from western countries.

In foreign countries establishment of children’s bureau in the department of labour (USA, 1912), social security act and other organizations stressed the well being of children and their mothers from rural areas and urban slums.

Whereas in India, pre-schooling is the privilege of the elite group. A large number of illiterate parents have not yet realized the importance of such schools.
It is not very popular with the rural population. Though there is a pre-school in every mohalla in the cities yet in the villages very few Balwadis are functioning.

Another major difference is in the curriculum. Here the parents, teachers and the so-called school authorities have converted the pre-school atmosphere only as learning centers of 3 R’s that is making the school work centre rather than a play centre. On the other hand, in foreign countries the principle of preschooling is “work is play and play is work” Their schools are joyful play centers for children.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

Pre School education should aim at the integrated growth and development of children by providing them the suitable and conducive atmosphere and to satisfy their basic needs. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-1953) has pointed out the following as the objectives of pre-school education.

1. Introducing the child to the joys of learning through companionship and recreational activities.

2. Providing opportunities for developing proper habits of life, cleanliness and healthy modes of living.

3. Cultivation of social habits so necessary for a community life.

Indian Education Commission (1964-66) listed down the following objectives:

1. To develop good health habits and to build up basic skills necessary for personal adjustment such as dressing, toilet habits, eating, washing and cleaning in the child.
2. To develop desirable social attitudes and manners and to encourage healthy group participation making the child sensitive to the rights and privileges of others.

3. To develop emotional maturity by guiding the child to express, understand, accept and control his feelings and emotions.

4. To encourage aesthetic appreciation.

5. To stimulate the beginning of intellectual curiosity concerning the environment and to help him understand the world in which he lives and to foster new interests through opportunities to explore, investigate and experiment.

6. To encourage independence and creativity by providing the child with sufficient opportunities for self-expression.

7. To develop the child’s ability to express his thoughts and feelings in fluent, correct and clear speech.

8. To develop in the child a good physique, adequate muscle co-ordination and basic motor skills.

As India is a country with variations in every aspect, we cannot have a uniform pattern of pre-school education throughout India. Depending on the locality, needs of the people, purpose of the school and the availability of resources, we shall develop curriculum keeping in mind the objectives of the pre-school education. Some of the objectives are:-

- Development of good physique which includes
  a) Development of motor skills.
  b) Development and co-ordination of the muscles.
Training in hygiene and healthy habits such as dressing, toilet habits, eating, washing and cleaning etc.

Learning to share things with others and wait for one's turn.

Learning desirable social manners and etiquettes.

Learning to express, understand and control one's feelings.

Stimulating the child's curiosity about his environment and satisfying it.

Learning concepts relating to numbers.

Expanding knowledge through self activity.

Applying knowledge for the solution of problems.

Understanding physicals phenomenon.

Developing vocabulary.

Developing concepts of right or wrong.

Developing appreciation of beauty in the environment i.e. flowers, birds, butterflies, pictures, music, dance and scenes etc.

Developing school readiness.

Developing self reliance.

Encouraging children to participate in conversational activities.

1.6 REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Although early education has been a subject of intense discussion during the last two decades, the child study unit of the NCERT and Indian Association of pre-school education provided strong support to research in the field but planned, continuous and sequential studies are not taken up on pre-school education in India. Few studies have focussed their attention on curriculum, method of teaching art music and language, age of admissions and parental involvement. Some research studies having relevance to the present study are given below:
Murlidharan. R. (1972) in a study "Continuity between pre-school and primary school" observed that the children in rural areas who enter primary school without pre-school education, had difficulty in coping with primary school's demand and thus dropped out or became repeaters.

Murlidharan. et. al. (1974) in a study "The effects of pre-school education on language and cognitive development of under previledged children" indicated that children with pre-school education were better in language and intellectual development than children of Class I who were without pre-school education. He further recommended that under previledged children having Balwadi experience were better in general behavior and performance in primary grades than children without Balwadi experience.

Shrivastava and Shrivastava (1985) discovered that children attending Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) centers were better in problem solving ability than non ICDS children. The results showed that the time taken for successful completion of task was 4.7 minutes and 6.2 minutes respectively while the level of achievement was 12.2 and 7.2 respectively. The conclusions given were that "The earlier the children begin learning academics the more successful their school and life experiences will be".

Goswami K. (1987) conducted a study "Problems of working mothers and their impact" with reference to the city of Guwahati. He concluded that parents involvement and intervention has a positive impact on the emotional growth and successful school adjustment. Home visit is suggested to educate and support parents in their role as their child's first teacher.

Brien (1988) examined the stress on pre-schoolers and their parents. He
studied that children are experiencing greater stress in their lives because their parents are also feeling a higher level of stress. He further explores that the heavily scheduled, pressure driven, stressed out children are the extensions of their heavily scheduled, pressure driven and stressed out parents.

Lee, M.J. (1988) compared the "Effect of open and directed teaching styles on creativity and mathematical achievement". The subjects were three to four years old children. The findings of the study revealed that the directed teaching style was a better method of teaching than the pen teaching style to foster the originality and mathematical achievement of the nursery school children.

Betty Ann. (1989) did an experimental study towards the development of a comprehensive pre-school physical education curriculum. Three phases of field testing were conducted. The final evaluation phase revealed that of the 150 pre-school children tested, 50% gained one level in form and 20% progressed three levels. 28% of the children showed no improvement in form and the remaining 2% showed a regression in form when observed and analyzed. The curriculum developed could be utilized as a guide for implementing a pre-school physical education program.

Boonyant (1989) conducted a study, the purpose of which was to develop a curriculum guide for nursery school teachers in Thialand. This resource was developed to give teachers guidance for developmentally appropriate activities designed to support art, science, language art and socio dramatic play areas of child development and total learning i.e., motor, social, emotional and cognitive.

Harding J.A. (1989) conducted a study to see if a statistically significant...
relationship existed between the amount of musical experiences, children had in early life and their language achievement. A significant relationship was found between music and three areas of language development. It was recommended that parents, teachers and other care takers of young children should provide environment, rich in musical experience.

Ahmed Halimbin (1990) studied the impact of pre-school intervention on lower economic status children in Malaysia. The study investigates the impact of pre-school intervention on the cognitive achievement, social behaviour and social adjustment of children. The data revealed that there is pre-school differential impact on cognitive and effective achievements between children attending private pre-schools, Govt. pre-schools and those without pre-school experience.

Nilvichien Hansa (1989) conducted a study on the Thai national kindergarten curriculum and teaching practices. The purpose of the study was to critique the curriculum in relationship to guidelines established by national and international association for young children and to determine perceptions of kindergarten teachers. It was observed that Thai national kindergarten curriculum is an uncertain mix of theoretical belief about how young children learn.

Silver and Deal (1990) studied that the physical development status in case of a pre-schooler is directly related to his reactions toward a musical stimulus. A three year old, who enjoys music and musical activities, has the capacity to respond to it by jumping, clapping, hopping and skipping etc. He may also like to express himself with creative body movements as in dramatizations and action poems.
Petrie, Allison, Julia (1991) examined contributions toward a grounded theory of parent pre-school involvement. An observational study for one month was undertaken to evaluate the nature of children's emotional responses to their mother's presence and absence. In addition parents and teachers were interviewed. Findings demonstrated that parents involvement was found to be particularly important in the facilitation of children's trust in the teacher. Implications are drawn from these data for the formulation of a grounded theory of parent involvement in early childhood education.

Yashodhara (1991) in a study "An attitude of parents towards various aspects of pre-school education", revealed parental overall ignorance about the right kind of role to be played in child's life. Parents were found to be more in favour of teaching English than the mother tongue. It was concluded that there is significantly greater percentage of parents who strongly agreed that socialization, developmental stimulation, obedience, training, remediation, preparatory education, verbal expression and management of children's behavior problems need to be the major purpose of pre-school education.

Birgitta Bergisten (1992) conducted a study aimed at understanding how children apprehend what adults say to them. They assumed that child development is a social adaptation process. Samples of thirty five children were interviewed. The study also includes twenty nine interviews with pre-school teachers. While comparing the two child groups, there were significant differences in conceptions of nature and pollutions.

Bullard (1992) keeping in mind the safety of the child conducted a study "Reported injuries of children in child care". The purpose of the study was to look
at the incidence of injuries in child care settings. The conclusions drawn were that high quality programs reported a higher rate of incident occurrences than the lower rated programs, showing teacher’s involvement with children and follow through of reporting when injuries occur.

Mcclellan, Sally Lue (1992) did an exploratory study of parent involvement behaviours of a pre-school home visit programme. This five year longitudinal research study compared the long term academic performance of students who attended full day pre kindergarten (group I) with students who attended half day pre kindergarten (group II). It was found that group I had significantly higher scores on cognitive skills assessment battery. The results of this study also suggest that extended day programs, better meet the needs of the increased number of working parents and there are other variables that need to be considered in program development to meet the needs of the young students.

Lepanto V. Whitener (1992) studied “Parental perceptions of a multicultural pre school setting”. This study was conducted to qualify the nature of concerns of American parents and international parents who have their children in a multicultural pre-school settings. This research focused on what should be taught in a multicultural setting and compared teaching methods.

Scar, S. and McCartney K. (1992) in an experimental evaluation of the mother-childhood program in Bermuda found that on an average, children receiving the home visiting programs in Bermuda scored above US norms cognitive tests and functioned well in the pre-school period. They performed better than the group who did not receive any home visiting programs

Cailord F. (1993) did content analysis of the appropriateness of
kindergarten curriculum and curricular materials for high ability students and found that misunderstanding exists between curriculum guidelines and the activities created to follow these guidelines. Pre assessment is almost non-existent.

Fox, Engle bright, Jill (1993) studied young children's construction of physical knowledge on swings in the outdoor play environment. The children language interactions were also examined. The findings indicate that young children swinging behaviors develop in eight hierarchical stages and the children experiment with the physics principle of balance, gravity, force, resistance and resonance. Children's cognitive processing and language interactions are discussed in the contents of Piagetian and Vygotskian theories of development.

Kaul. V. Ramachandra C and Upadhyay G C (1993) found that the retention of children with pre-school education was better in primary grades than the without pre-school experience. The result also emphasized the role of community in the advocacy of early childhood care and education. The area of advocacy would be development oriented curriculum, misperceptions of parents, role of community, understanding the children and their needs and advocacy for the girl child's participation.

Melisser Ann, Del Hamme (1993) examined the pre-school children with behavior problems in instructional and free play contexts. Forty-two pre-schoolers participated in this study. The findings of this study indicate that observational measures conducted in the instructional school context are a potentially effective method of assessment for behavior problems in pre-school.
Parihar (1993) studied the problems faced by children as well as by parents for admissions in various pre-schools and further discussed the effect of competition. The study showed, how from pre-primary classes, children are given heavy home work, numbers to learn, alphabets to decipher and then how these toddlers are being admitted to formal 3 R’s and then subjected to tests.

Vergas, M (1993) studied the effectiveness of a combined teacher centered and child centered curriculum versus a strictly child centered curriculum on children aged 2-4. The objective was to determine the effect on social, emotional, cognitive and psychomotor development of young children.

Monica (1994) studied perception of parents regarding early childhood education. She stressed that the children in India form a significantly large percent of the population i.e. 13.4% (865.2 million) of the total population and 115.9 millions out of 863.2 millions are below 5 years (1991 Census). Hence children are a major human resource where development and growth would shape the future of India.

Schmidt M.K. (1994) in a casestudy described an early childhood teacher’s curriculum development and class room practices in the area of children’s social development. She began curriculum development in the discovery stage by identifying an initial problem, moved to the design stage where she investigated the problem, adopted a solution and concluded in stage third, which includes implementation evaluation and re-utilization of the curriculum problem.

Dejean, Perrotta B. (1995) examined “Early childhood programs in Arizona public schools”. The study explained the public school system in the
The state of Arizona as a provider of programs for young children. The results provided recommendations for those concerned with quality early childhood public school programs.

Falkarrath Judith Frances (1995) studied speaking of Arts teacher’s conversations with pre-schoolers about art. They advocated that aesthetic education should be an essential component of the pre school curriculum. The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent aesthetic education is occurring in early education programs.

Erik Hakonsson (1996) conducted a study “How pre-school children understand written text”. It was found that positive reading attitudes in young children are developed as a result of positive early reading experiences. The results indicated that it was important to stimulate the children at the kindergarten level. He also analysed the problem of the reading habits of children in his study and gave remedial measures.

Manisha Aneja (1997) conducted a study “Clothing practices of pre school children”. A sample of hundred pre school children was studied and the findings revealed that clothing awareness of mothers and their children is at peak. Not only do the physical defects manifest themselves but also faulty attitudes, anxieties, insecurities, instabilities, and distortion of personality may be produced. In fact clothing can help to make childhood a delightful period.

Zemmons, Jennifer Kathryn (Dec. 1997) studied “The effects of spatial definition on pre school prosocial interaction”. The focus of this research study was to determine how three varying degrees of spatial definition (non-defined, moderately defined, well defined) affected children’s social behaviour in the
classroom. Subjects included a class of two and three-year-old preschoolers attending the child care facility at Taxas. Findings indicated that significant differences in the degree and type of social interaction occurred at each treatment level. Results can be used to enhance children's social development by using elements of interior design.

Behera, A.P. (Oct. 1997) examined "The effect of radio intervention program on the language and cognitive development of pre-school children". In this study, the pre-school children enrolled in the Anganwadi centres were studied. The gains of the experimental groups in cognitive development were not only significant but much higher than the control groups. It was also observed that the children of experimental groups were more active, disciplined, punctual, curious to ask questions, had greater attention span, had better vocabulary and became more articulate as compared to their control group counterparts.

Karen CY and Chu-Ying Chien (1998) conducted a study on project approach and parent involvement in Taiwan for pre-schoolers. They implemented project approach in several early childhood classrooms. As a result the level of parent participation role and communication between parents and their children deepened. It was observed that parents changed their perceptions of children's learning. They increased their involvement in their children's learning and enhanced their communication. The teachers discovered that parents began to discuss and exchange their resources and experiences. They soon became friends and formed a support network.

Salomone, Katherine Mary (Dec. 1999) explored "The unspecified curriculum of values". This case study explored the ritualized routine activities that comprise the beginning of the school day for children entering kindergarten.
The results revealed that the beginning activities in kindergarten are habitual in nature and contained embedded messages. These messages included adaptation to a schedule, organized materials, follow classroom rules, share, finish tasks, and demonstrate manners. The teacher had the authority to convey values and social norms in the classroom according to her beliefs.

Fodor, Annabella (Dec. 1999) worked on fantasy to enhance young children's development and education. The study constituted young children's fantasy. In this study the definitions of fantasy, the uses of fantasy into the educational process and clarifications regarding relationships of fantasy to learning, reality and child psychotherapy were discovered. Results of the study offered a new model of curriculum including story and make-believe play.

Lancaster Rebecca Noah (Oct. 1999) studied the "Relationship between performance assessment of kindergarten students and first grade reading achievement". The purpose of this study was to describe the relationship between the reading readiness performance of kindergarten students (as measured by a performance assessment) and the reading achievement of first grade students. The data showed a positive co-relation. The results make an impact on the development of curriculum for early children education.

Ruth Marie Jamison (Feb. 2000) studied factors affecting participation in an urban school district early children education program. This study examined some possible reasons for low participation rates in urban public pre-school programme. One hundred twenty nine participants were asked questions. There were thirty five respondents to the focus groups, thirty nine to the interviews and fifty five to the questionnaire. Results of the study attributed lack of awareness
as the primary reason. Other reasons included low level of concern by the parents. The need for full day programming and transportation was represented.

Denn Robert Michael. (Feb. 2000) did an exploratory work on kindergarten dads, “Paternal participation in early childhood education”. The purpose of this qualitative study was to learn about the perception that fathers have regarding their role and how their involvement with their children in this capacity makes them feel. Data was collected by observations, interviews, document analysis and a focus group discussion. The data revealed that fathers believe that they play an important and unique role in the education of their young children and their involvement in early childhood education provides many emotional rewards for these kindergarten dads.

Kyle, Irene (Feb., 2000) studied “Rethinking care work in home child care: Providers perspectives in context”. This qualitative study examines how thirty child care providers in Southern Ontario understand their work and considers the meaning care work holds for them in the context of the social discourses. Provider’s accounts demonstrated how their care work was affected by the presence of family members, by their geographic location and the nature of the physical and social resources available. The findings suggest the need for a rethinking of current approaches to home child care and to work towards developing a more agentic service model based on providers experience.

1.7 SUMMARY OF THE RELATED STUDIES

Inspite of the fact that pre-school stage is the most important and sensitive stage of growth and development in the life of an individual but this pre-school education, relevant to the needs and aspirations of the Indian people, has
yet to take, roots in the country. A negligible percentage of studies are conducted at the pre-school stage.

Most of the researches reflect a positive relationship between pre-school education and better reading achievement and academic skills in the later life. Researches found higher instructional understanding and gain in educational growth in children who had been to a pre-school.

Studies also show that the environment in early childhood education centers enhances cognitive development of the pre-schoolers. Some researches have also proved that children who have been given opportunities for appropriate early childhood education stand better adjusted in social adaptation process. Such a child will not only be weaned away from mother and home in a very healthy way but is also better prepared for schooling.

1.8 EMERGENCE OF THE PROBLEM

The pre-school program of learning needs to be planned and conducted in a proper way to make pre-schools as an ideal center. Most of the studies conducted are on academic achievement only. Hardly any studies have been conducted to analyze the present curricula of pre-school and to develop a common curriculum based on play way method. So a need was felt to conduct a study on the all round development and activity centered curriculum. The content of the curriculum for pre-schoolers should be such so as to promote activity. This study is an attempt to develop a curriculum for pre-schoolers according to their physical, cognitive and social development.