INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the models of the study has been presented highlighting the various aspects of curriculum that have been brought under evaluation. The present chapter provides details regarding the approach that has been adopted for carrying out the evaluation with respect to each objectives. It includes such details as documents explored for developing the historical perspective, sources of data, tools constructed, sample selected, and scoring and analytical procedures adopted. Diagram 1 gives a brief picture of the procedure followed with respect to different objectives of the study.

EXPLORATION OF DOCUMENTS

The curriculum that is being evaluated in the present study has already been in use in the primary schools of Tripura for the last ten years. It is, therefore, thought fit to take up a preliminary documentary analysis by exploring the relevant documents which forms the basis for the present primary education curriculum in Tripura. The basic documents that were explored are:

(i) The Constitution of the India,

The First Five Year Plan (1952-1957) of the country,

(iii) Report of the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee (NCERT) (1978), and National Curriculum Framework (2005),

(iv) Report of the Tripura Government on Education,

Procedural Diagram

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(vi) Official Despatches of the Government of Tripura,
An analytical study of these documents helped the investigator to develop an appropriate socio-historical perspective with which to evaluate the curriculum. This also, provided insight into the cultural and political contexts in which the present curriculum was evolved and implemented. It is against this background that the methodology for the whole study was worked out. This is followed by an objective-wise description of the procedure adopted under different heads, namely, evaluation of objectives, study of curricular content, implementation of curriculum, assessment procedures and problems faced by the teachers.

EVALUATION OF OBJECTIVES OF PRIMARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM

It is now a well accepted fact throughout the world that primary education greatly contributes to the all-round development of the children and therefore must be considered as the basic human right rather than as any special facility provided to the citizens of any country. Seen from this perspective, the objectives of primary education inhere in them in element of universality. Evaluation of objectives from this perspective demands a comparative study of the set of objectives adopted in Tripura with those adopted elsewhere in the world. The place of primary education can also be viewed from another perspective. In a state like Tripura where literacy is extended to 73.2 per cent of the population and SSA (Sarva Siksha Abhijan) in vogue, the value of primary
education to the national development is very crucial. Seen from this angle, the foremost considerations in setting up the objectives for primary education should be the extent to which these objectives are derived from or matched with the national goals and aspirations. Evaluation of objectives in this context would require examining whether they are in consonance with the specifications emerging out of such documents as the Constitution of the India, National Plans of Development and so on.

Thus, evaluation of objectives of primary education in Tripura has to be viewed from two distinct perspectives, namely, universal and national. Evaluating from a universal perspective can be considered as external evaluation as the comparison would be with a set of external criteria. On the other hand, evaluation from the national perspective demands of the researcher to examine the suitability of objectives of primary education against an internal set of criteria. A diagrammatic presentation of them is given in Diagram 2.

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Diagram: Evaluation of Objectives

- **Universal**
  - External
    - Objectives set by NCERT and UNESCO

- **National**
  - Internal Criteria
    - Education Commission

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In the present study the external criteria are represented by two sets of objectives of primary education. One of these sets has been taken from a UNESCO document, namely, ‘Planning the Primary School Curriculum in developing countries’. This document itself was the outcome of long run deliberations by experts from all over the world. The second set has been taken from a document of the National Council of Educational Research and Training in India, entitled, ‘Ten year school curriculum - a frame work’. The main rationale for selecting this set of objectives was that India geographical standing among different states but also share several socio-historical characteristics. The main source for setting an internal set of criteria was the report of the National Policy on Education. The Policy focus on the goals, aspirations and directive principles enshrined in the Constitution of the India, and other documents such as the First Five Year Plan of India. Accordingly, the commission specified the objectives of education at two levels - global and specific. It is in accordance with these goals that the objectives of the present curriculum for primary education are supposed to have been developed. The evaluation, therefore, has been carried out to examine how far the present objectives represent the specifications made (a) at global level which represent the overall aims of education in India, and (b) at the specific level in terms of concrete objectives to be achieved through the programme of primary education.

EVALUATION OF CURRICULAR CONTENT AND MATERIALS

Curricular content derives itself from an analysis of the characteristics of the knowledge, skill, attitude, etc. being transmitted and of the characteristics of learning process being adopted for achieving the specified set of objectives. In
other words, curricular content stems from the structure of the discipline and the theories of knowledge which justify the selection of the content and establishes continuity of learning experiences involved in reaching the objectives of the education at a particular stage. Accordingly, having formulated the objectives of primary education in Tripura, the National Policy on Education (1986) recommended the content framework for achieving those objectives. Therefore, the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee of Tripura worked out the details of the content to be prepared which since then, has been in use in the primary schools of Tripura.

In this background, the investigator while evaluating the curricular content had to choose between two alternatives. The first alternative was to evaluate the content in practice against an independent set of criteria. The second alternative was to consider the recommendations of the Tripura Curriculum and Syllabus Committee constitute the major reference for evaluating the content being presently adopted in the primary schools of Tripura. The investigator here has gone in for the second alternative. This was because, it was found more logical as the content specified by the curriculum and syllabus committee had been prepared with the explicit purpose of achieving the specific objectives set by the National Policy on Education through the content-frame recommended herewith.

Again, based on the curricular content specification, the Curriculum and Syllabus Committee further detailed out procedures for presenting the content in the form of instructional materials, namely, textbooks, supplementary readers,
workbooks and teachers' handbooks. Keeping this in view in the present study, evaluation of instructional materials have been done adopting the guidelines given by the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee as the main criteria. Details regarding the procedure adopted for evaluating each of these components such as curricular content, curricular guide/syllabus, teacher's handbooks, textbook, etc. have been given under separate sub-heads.

ANALYSIS OF THE ORGANISATION OF CURRICULAR CONTENT

On going through the curricular content suggested by the Tripura Curriculum and Syllabus Committee had clearly specified the content for each class along with the distribution of time for different areas. The curriculum and syllabus committee had also given details about the content areas to cover and their organisation. Thus, having explored the suggested content in the Tripura Curriculum and Syllabus Committee accepted content as given by the National Curriculum Framework (NCRT), an attempt was made to carry out a comparative analysis of the content and its organisation. The analysis was done mainly in a qualitative fashion.

Analysis of Textbooks

Textual instructional materials prescribed for classes 1 to V consists of subjects areas, namely, Mother-tongue (Bengali), Mathematics, Environmental Studies, English Education. However, in the present study only textbooks in Mother-tongue, Mathematics and Environmental studies have been evaluated. For the purpose of evaluation, an analysis sheet consisting of 22 items was
prepared by the investigator. The main bases for preparing the analysis sheet were the criteria suggested by the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee. The items of the analysis sheet have been divided into five broad areas namely physical aspect, content, illustration, language and exercises.

**Analysis of Teacher's Handbook**

The guidelines provided by the curriculum committee for preparing the teachers' handbook for each subject were considered to constitute the criteria for analysing and evaluating the teachers' handbooks. However, one of these was exclusively on teaching of English and the other was on teaching of environmental studies, physical education, art and craft, music and religious education. Of these two, the first one, the teaching of English has not been brought under evaluation; while from the second handbook, only the section dealing with environmental studies has been taken up for evaluation. For evaluating the selected section of the second one and the other three handbooks a detailed checklist was prepared based on the criteria suggested by the curriculum committee. Each handbook was then examined and assessed with the help of this checklist. Data procured through the checklist was then analysed and interpreted descriptively.

In addition to the efforts made above for evaluating the textbooks and teachers' handbooks, the author developed an unstructured interview schedule for collecting the opinion of curriculum specialists and subject experts regarding the suitability of the curricular materials. With the help of this interview
schedule, the opinions of experts from different institutions in Tripura were collected by the investigator through personal interviews. The data obtained through interview were analysed and interpreted descriptively along with the data obtained through analysis of textbooks and handbooks.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS in the Schools of Tripura

A survey was conducted for obtaining information from primary schools, regarding various aspects of the implementation of curriculum.

Sample

The survey was conducted in North Tripura and West Tripura districts which are one of the four districts in Tripura. 120 schools and all the 354 teachers there were taken as the sample of this study. These one hundred twenty schools were selected from 8 blocks from North Tripura and 15 blocks from West Tripura districts out of a total of 40 Rural Development (R.D.) Blocks in Tripura. 40 schools were randomly selected from 8 blocks and 80 schools were selected from 15 blocks. These schools selections through the stratified random sampling method. Again from each school, Headmaster or In-charge of School and other four teachers were randomly selected as sample. All these 120 numbers schools were selected covering rural, urban, semi-urban areas, etc.

Tools

In order to collect data for the survey from the schools, a Questionnaire, a Problem Checklist for Teachers and a School Information Schedule for Headmasters were used as instruments which had been developed by the
investigator himself. While preparing the Questionnaire and the School Information Schedule, an attempt was made to bring in data related to the following aspects of Curriculum for Primary Education in Tripura:

1. Physical Facilities,
2. Time table,
3. Teachers’ qualifications, professional, training and teaching, experience, class load etc.,
4. Methods of instructions,
5. Materials and Aids.

Thus, a draft questionnaire consisting of 37 items dealing with teachers' qualifications, professional training, experience, class load, techniques of instructions, teaching aid and a school information sheet consisting of 57 items regarding the physical facilities, materials and aids, time table followed in the school were first prepared. The draft tools were further given to a group of experts to judge their adequacy and appropriateness. Two faculty members from the Institute of Advanced Study in Education, Agartala, Tripura, one from National Council of Educational Research and Training, Agartala, and two from Central University, Tripura constituted the group of experts. On the basis of the opinions and views of the experts, the tools were modified and subjected to a pilot study in actual situation.

Pilot Study

Since the study aimed to cover the whole of Tripura state having teachers with different backgrounds, the questionnaire and its language had to be made
understandable to all of them. Further, the teachers of the primary schools are not well aware about educational research and they may not be at home in handling this type of questionnaire in general. So to make the questionnaire understandable and to ensure that the respondents follow the instrument with care, a pilot study was planned and conducted in 10 of the primary schools of Tripura. Subsequent to the analysis of the responses of the pilot study, the tools were modified to make them ready for use. The final questionnaire consisted of 7 sections with 37 items and the school information schedule consisted of 12 sections with 57 items.

**ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE FOLLOWED IN THE SCHOOLS**

The investigator conducted a survey for getting information with regard to the assessment procedure followed in the schools for assessing the students along with the survey conducted for the implementation of the curriculum. The sample for the purpose was the same as stated for the implementation aspect. Seven items regarding assessment procedure were provided in the questionnaire (as a separate section) and twelve items provided in the school information schedule which were developed for surveying the implementation aspect of curriculum. In addition to these, the investigator had collected the question papers for final examinations for class V. The question papers were content analysed to examine their comparability with the expected inputs as intended in the aims and objectives of the corresponding subjects.

**THE PROBLEMS FACED IN IMPLEMENTING THE CURRICULUM**

A survey was conducted for obtaining the information with regard to the problems faced by the teachers in implementing the curriculum. The sample for
studying the problems faced by the teachers was also the same as the one selected for studying the implementation of the curriculum. For collecting the relevant data, a problem check-list was developed by the investigator. It consisted of five sections dealing with the problems of physical facilities, timetable, syllabus, teaching aids, problems of achieving the desired qualities, general problems. The procedure followed for the construction and development of the questionnaire and school information schedule was followed in the case of problem check-list also.

In addition to the above mentioned efforts, the investigator developed an interview schedule for collecting the data from the State Education Officers belonging to the Government of Tripura to supplement the data for studying the implementation of the curriculum, assessment procedure, and the problems faced by the teachers in the schools. The interview schedule was also validated with the help of opinions of experts.

DATA COLLECTION

Having selected the sample and prepared the tools, the next step to be taken was to collect the data from the schools. The researcher personally visited each of the selected schools and gave the questionnaires and checklists to the teachers of the sampled schools. After two days of the distribution of the tools the investigator again went to the school for collecting the materials and at the same time she herself filled up the school information schedule in consultation with the teachers of the sampled schools. She was able to collect the responses from 354 teachers from 120 Primary Schools.
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The data for the implementation aspect of the curriculum for the present study was collected by administering the four tools developed by the investigator for the purpose. The analysis of the school information schedule, the questionnaire, the problem checklist and the interview schedule have been done separately.

There were different types of items in the school information schedule and the questionnaire used for data collection. These were multiple choice, Yes/No, supply of the figures and open end types. The responses to each multiple choice type and Yes/No type were analysed, in terms of the frequency of the respondents' agreement or disagreement with a particular response. The frequency was further converted into percentages. The responses of each item of supply-type were recorded in a table for all the respondents and further analysed suitably. The open end type items were analysed qualitatively. Items in the checklist were of the following type:

I feel the lack of furniture in the school is a problem
Always Sometimes Not at all

Teacher's response to each item of the checklist was scored by giving appropriate weightage as follows:

Always : 2
Sometimes : 1
Not at all : 0
After scoring each item, the summated scores were obtained for each of the six areas of the checklist. It was done to find out the relative position of the six areas in terms of the intensity of problems faced by the teachers.

Again, the data from the interview of Block Development Officers and other associated Education Officers were analysed and interpreted descriptively.