CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The life period of the child from birth to about six years of age is of exceptional importance as far as his growth and learning are concerned. If no advantage is taken of possibilities for learning and growth at this stage, it would be too late in the life of the child to make amends later. The outcome of the interaction of health, nutrition and psychological processes during these years conditions the readiness of the child for school, which in turn influences the child’s success in future. He is better achiever in adult life if he is grown up in a suitable environment at an early age. The early childhood education as an essential prerequisite for a good education policy was identified by the International Commission for Development of Education (1972).

Sound knowledge of the developmental characteristics of children is essential for running the nursery school programme effectively. The objectives and educational values of the programmes can easily be defeated by faulty procedures, mistakes in the presentation of play activities and wrong guidance (Murlidharan and Banerji, 1991). Children who are involved in pre-primary education through Anganwadis under ICDS tend to participate in education to a much greater extent at later stages (Challenge of Education, 1985).

Department of Education, Government of India has recommended that if early
childhood care education is implemented as a strategy it will reduce dropout rates and improve the rate of retention of children in schools. According to the report about 35 per cent of children dropout before reaching class-V and over 50 per cent reach class-VIII. Finally, about 6 per cent reach the degree level.

Early childhood education serves dual purpose of laying healthy foundation for child’s psycho-social development and at the same time preparing the child for primary education (Vasudevan, 1999).

The National Policy for Children was adopted by the Government of India in 1974. This policy declares that children are a "Supremely Important Asset" of the nation and that their "nature and solicitude" are the responsibilities of the nation. It further states that it shall be the policy of the state to provide adequate services for children both before and after birth and during the period of growth to ensure their full physical, mental and social development. Government of India conceptualized the scheme of ECCE and implemented it also in Non-ICDS areas through NGOs and voluntary bodies.

Recognising the holistic nature of child development, viz. nutrition, health, social, mental, physical, normal and emotional development, New Education Policy (1986) emphasized that Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) must receive high priority and be suitably integrated with the child development service programmes wherever possible.

It further emphasized that programmes of ECCE must be child oriented,
focussed around play and the individuality of the child. Formal methods and introduction of the 3R’s must be discouraged at this stage. The local community must be fully involved in these programmes. A full integration of child care and pre-primary education must be brought about, both as feeder and a strengthening factor for primary education and for human resource development in general. In continuation of this stage, the school health programme must be strengthened. Early Childhood Education (ECE) is critical input both for the holistic development of an individual and for its impact on the enrolment and retention of children in the primary grades.

National Programme of Action (1992) and the National Plan of Action for Children (1992) have reinforced the priority to promote early childhood care and education, through approaches of holistic child development. Emphasis has been laid on the use of child centred play way activities to nurture joy, curiosity and creativity in the young child. It is in early childhood that the foundations of physical, psychological and social development are laid. Provision of early childhood services in an integrated manner, especially to Weaker and Vulnerable sections of the community would help prevent or minimize wastage arising from infant mortality and morbidity and would be a positive contribution to the social and economic development of the country through the all round development of the individual (MHRD, 1986).

The concept of infant schools was introduced in India by the British
missionaries in the later part of the 18th century when such schools were set up in the Western and Southern regions of India.

Mahatma Gandhi’s scheme for pre-basic education formulated in the late thirties was the first Indigenous scheme for education of very young children and several educational reformers and social workers endeavoured to put it into action at the field level. Jugatrambhai Dave, Nanabhai Bhatt and Tarabhai Modak were some of the early pioneers of the early childhood education movement in the country. They were all inspired by the down-to-earth, grassroot level approach of Mahatma Gandhi’s Pre Basic Education Scheme.

Gijubhai Badheka and Tarabhai Modak were among the early educators who, inspired by Madam Montessori, adapted her methods to suit Indian conditions. They set up the Nutan Bal Shikshan Sangh in 1925. A training centre at Bhavnagal Dakshinamoorti was started by Gijubhai and, later, one was set up by Tarabhai at Dadar, Bombay. The movement took strong roots in the Saurashtra region of the then province, and also in Madhya Bharat and the Vidarbha region. During the pre-independence period all these efforts were confined to the voluntary sector and received no support from the Government. It was for the first time that, in 1944, a government document, popularly known as the Sargent Committee Report, emphasized the importance of pre-primary education and linked it with child’s educational performance in primary school. The report viewed pre-primary education as a necessary adjunct to primary education.
During the post independence period, the movement for the education of young children drew great support from the private and voluntary sectors. Apart from its educational values, the 'welfare' dimension also gained recognition. The country's five year national plans, while paying lip service to the need and importance of early childhood education suggested no definite plan or policy in this behalf nor did it make substantial allocations for promoting this field. Many committees and commissions were appointed, both in the education and social welfare sectors, but no systematic efforts were made for the implementation of the recommendations of these committees.

Realising the crucial importance of rapid physical and mental growth during early childhood, Government of India started a number of programmes of early childhood care and education (ECCE). Declaration of National Policy for Children (1974) and the Constitution of National Child's Board shows the commitment of government for the development of children.

Moreover a number of expert bodies had been set up from time to time. Some of the important ones are: the Bhore Committee (1943); the Sargent Committee (1944); the Health Survey and Planning Committee (1959); the Child Care Committee (1960); the Committee on Programmes for Child Welfare (1968) and the Study Group on the Pre-School Child (1972).

New Education Policy (1986) has given a great deal of importance to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). It views ECCE as an important input with
strategy of human resource development, as feeder and support programme for primary education and as a support service for working women of the disadvantaged section of society (NPE, 1986, p. 2).

Teacher performance is the most important crucial input in the field of education. Whatever policies may be laid down, in the ultimate analysis these have to be interpreted and implemented by teachers, as much through their personal example as through teaching-learning process (Challenge of Education, 1985).

To work with small children effectively and fulfil the objectives of the Nursery school education, a teacher should have special training in this field.

The most dominant influence that can be felt particularly with reference to early childhood education is that of Madam Maria Montessori who came to India in 1939 as a refugee from fascist regime in Italy. During her stay in India, she trained hundreds of teachers through long and short term courses. Annie Besant, a Theosophist, was powerfully influenced by Madam Montessori and set up a teacher training centre at Adyar, near Madras. Many early childhood educators received their training under Madam Montessori at Adyar and then went out to various parts of the country and spread the movement for early childhood education.

1.1 Pre-Primary Teacher Education

Teacher Education for education of the Pre-School Child ought to synthesize the teaching and working personnels associated with the different courses of early childhood care and development. The course run by different organisations for
training are as follows: (i) vocational training in child care (+2) of CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education), (ii) Nursery Teachers’ Training/Pre-primary Teachers’ Training, (iii) Diploma in Early Childhood Education, (iv) Balsevika Training of Indian Council for Child Welfare, (v) Anganwadi Worker’s Training, (vi) Integrated Pre-Primary and Primary Teachers’ Training.

A desirable and satisfactory network of teacher education for training and preparation of efficient teachers for pre school learners entirely depends on mutual understanding and appreciation of different teaching and allied issues and problems and also a common endeavour at fulfilling the minimum expectations of the learners, parents/guardians, community, state, nation and one world.

The current status of training for early childhood care and education was highlighted by the Department of Pre-School and Elementary Education, National Council of Educational Research and Training in 1990 as:

A major overhauling of the training programmes for pre-school teachers side by side with re-structuring training and orientation of teachers in allied organisations throughout the country is the need of the hour. The low status of workers, teachers, trainees and other associated with pre school education should forthwith be eliminated and new spurt for genuine feeling for devoted personnels should immediately be encouraged. Insensitivity to local needs, ignorance of socio-linguistic and socio-cultural patterns, rigidity and blockage of promotional avenues in the sphere of pre-school teacher education necessitate urgent reformation in right earnest. The emoluments of teachers at the pre-school stage is no merely pitiful but certainly very unfortunate so far as the high cost of living in these hard days are concerned.

The current status of pre-primary training for ECCE can be shown in the
following table.

Table 1.1

Current Status of Training for Early Childhood Care and Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Name and Nature of the Course</th>
<th>Minimum Qualifications</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Anganwadi Workers’ Training (Job training, Para-Professional)</td>
<td>Varies from State to State Class V-VIII</td>
<td>Three Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Nursery Teachers’ Training/Pre-Primary Teachers’ Training</td>
<td>Class-X</td>
<td>One Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Vocational Training in Child Care (+2) of CBSE</td>
<td>Class-X</td>
<td>Two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Montessori Training of Association of Montessori International</td>
<td>Class-X</td>
<td>One Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Integrated Pre-Primary and Primary Teachers’ Training (Delhi)</td>
<td>Class-XII</td>
<td>Two Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Diploma in Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>One Year/ Distance Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Middle Level Supervisors’ Training (Job Training)</td>
<td>Varies Graduate, Postgraduate and promoted</td>
<td>Three Months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Pre-School and Elementary Education, NCERT, 1990

Following table indicates the existing pre-school programmes, status of training programmes available and their organising agencies in India:
Table 1.2
Existing Pre-School Programmes and Types of Training Programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Existing Programmes for Pre-Primary and Primary School Children</th>
<th>Existing Teacher Training Programmes</th>
<th>Organising Agencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Nursery and Kindergarten</td>
<td>Unrecognised Nursery Teacher Training</td>
<td>Private (voluntary) organisations such as, Convents and Christian Missions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Montessori Schools</td>
<td>Montessori Teacher Training</td>
<td>The Association Montessori International Voluntary Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Pre-Basic and Primary basic Schools</td>
<td>Pre-Basic and Basic Teacher Training</td>
<td>Kasturba National Memorial Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Balwadis in Rural and Tribal Areas</td>
<td>b) Balsevika Training Programmes for Rural and Tribal Areas</td>
<td>b) Central Social Welfare Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Government/Municipal Corporation Pre-School/Nurseries</td>
<td>Government Pre-Primary Teacher Training Institutes</td>
<td>State Departments of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Laboratory Nursery Schools</td>
<td>Postgraduate/Graduate Diploma in Child Development</td>
<td>State Institutes for Education and Colleges of Home Economics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The vast majority of teachers in the private sector are either untrained or inappropriately trained (they do not have ECE training). Also there are very few institutions which offer ECE training, little recognition or support for it, and no fixed salaries or grades for ECE teachers. ICDS workers are still treated as "Volunteers"
while most private schools pay very low remuneration (Swaminathan, 1998).

According to Swaminathan (1998), the following table provides a broad picture of the kind of training courses available today for ECCE.

Table 1.3
Type and Levels of ECE Training Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type of Training</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>ICDS</td>
<td>Pre/In Service</td>
<td>3 Month</td>
<td>Class VIII-XII</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Pre-Primary</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>Class-XII</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Pre-Primary</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>2 Years</td>
<td>Class-XII</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Integrated (Primary &amp; Pre-Primary)</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>2 Years</td>
<td>Class-XII</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Pre-Primary</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>1/2 Year</td>
<td>Class-X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>2 Years</td>
<td>Class-X</td>
<td>Not in Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Balsevika</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>11 Months</td>
<td>Class-X</td>
<td>Yes, To be discontinued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Balpalika</td>
<td>In Service</td>
<td>1-2 Years</td>
<td>Class-X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>18 Months</td>
<td>Class-XII</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>B.Ed.(ECE)</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Not in Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>B.Ed.(Optional)</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Supervisors</td>
<td>In Service</td>
<td>4 Months</td>
<td>Graduate/W.E.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>MSW (Optional)</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>2 Year</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>M.Sc.(Child Development)</td>
<td>Pre-Service</td>
<td>2 Year</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A major re-shuffling of relationship among pre school teachers/workers and members of the local community, panchayats, mahilla mandals, organisations etc.
carry forth the vision of quality education for the pre-school child. The role of ECCE should, therefore, be geared towards refinement of sensibilities amongst one and all related to better teaching-learning atmosphere for the pre school child.

Since independence the nation has invested a large slice of its resources in education. It, therefore, has a right to expect the efficient functioning of educational institutions. Teachers have a special responsibility in every society and the day it is discharged, sets the tone for the education of the young. Their commitment to give it their best in moulding the tender minds entrusted to them must be seen to be beyond question. Only then will it be possible for teachers to inspire students to take full advantage of the educational facilities and imbibe the values which would make them good citizens and good human beings (Challenge of Education, 1985).

The committee under the Chairpersonship of Kaul, emphasized the importance of training and recommended that a cadre of adequately trained child welfare workers should be prepared. This recommendation resulted in the beginning of Child Welfare Workers' Training Programme by the Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW) in 1961.

The Education Commission (1964-66) recommended that the government should take up the responsibility for supervision, guidance, setting up of model schools, training, research etc.

The child care programmes with inadequate coverage and very limited inputs could not make much dent on the problems of children. None of the health,
nutrition, education and other social welfare measures adopted in the past has been as effective as the situation demanded. Resource constraints and a basically sectoral and fragmentary approach to the needs of children had prevented the development of a coordinated strategy. The organization of comprehensive and integrated early childhood services was regarded as an investment in the future economic and social progress of the country. Accordingly, eight inter-ministerial teams were constituted by the Planning Commission in 1972 who studied the field situation in depth and proposed a scheme for integrated child care services for pre-school children covering supplementary nutrition feeding, immunization, health care including referral services, nutrition education of mothers, pre-school education and recreation, family planning and provision of safe drinking water.

In pursuance of the National Policy for children which laid emphasis on the integrated delivery of early childhood services for expectant and nursing women, and based on the recommendations of Inter-Ministerial Study Teams set up by the Planning Commission, the scheme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) was evolved to make a coordinated effort for an integrated programme of delivery of a package of such services in 1975 (NIPCCD, 1984).

The Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), was launched in 1975 with 33 pilot projects. The ICDS is broadly conceived as an integrated intervention strategy for the holistic development of the young child in the wider context of the family and the longer social group in which child learns.
A holistic model has, therefore been proposed in which, with the help of anganwadis under the ICDS programme, pre-primary education would be provided for three years, in continuation and conjunction, at the location, primary education would be organised (Challenge of Education, 1985).

Non-formal pre-school education is a very crucial component of the package of services envisaged under ICDS scheme as it seeks to lay the foundation for proper physical, psychological, cognitive and social development of the child. It is to be imparted to the children in the age group 3 to 5+ at the Anganwadi (NIPCCD, 1984).

The integrated package of services is delivered through the Anganwadi by an Anganwadi worker who is responsible for organising pre-school activities for about 40 children in the age group 3 to 5+ at the Anganwadi. The Anganwadi worker is expected to be a woman in the age group 21-45 years and is to be selected from within the village/local community.

The NPE is silent on the entire subject of training for ECCE and on the status of the child care worker.

Dass and Garg (1985) reported that the childhood education had a salutory effect in reducing the dropout rate, wastage and stagnation etc. Pre-school education institution is one of the remedies to deal with the problems of the wastage and stagnation.

The POA (1986) however, does recognise the links between motivation, wages
and job satisfaction and unequivocally accept both the long term goal of bringing full
time child care workers at par with primary school teachers and short term goal of
raising their emoluments above the minimum wages earned by unskilled workers.

Programme of Action (POA) (1986) stressed that in all models of ECCE
programmes the component of training will be strengthened and it will be a strong
component of field placement under supervision. Following important parameters for
meeting the training requirements were suggested: (i) Initiating a two-year vocational
course in ECCE at +2 level with the objectives to create basic skills which can later
be adopted through job training for specific situations; (ii) strengthening the
educational content of ICDS functionaries, training by providing appropriate training
inputs, resources, materials etc. and extending it, where possible, to include a
component of day care management; (iii) taking steps for setting up a higher course
in ECCE for senior level functionaries of ICDS, trainers in the various training
institutions and the supervisory personnel; (iv) creating a system of accreditation of
training institutions dealing with ECCE and review of the existing training
programmes; and (v) working out appropriate, task specific, flexible models for day
care training at field level in rural areas. Media support is necessary for the training
of personnel of ECCE.

Programme of Action (1992) laid emphasis on the strengthening of pre school
education components of ICDS by taking the following steps: (i) each Anganwadi
Workers’ Training Centre must be given the responsibility of developing at least 25
Anganwadi Centres so as to provide the trainees with adequate field practices; (ii) placing trainees for a minimum of one month in the Anganwadis for practical training; (iii) Development of instructional materials for use of trainers and the trainees; (iv) Providing materials for children - picture books, picture posters, minimum essential play materials to all Anganwadis and replenishing them periodically; (v) the trainees, supervisors and CDPOs must be oriented through refresher courses in pre school education component and given field training so that it is strengthened both at pre service and inservice levels; (vi) the CDPO’s office must be developed into a resource centre and be well equipped with training materials.

In the case of teachers training, the problem is not of equity or access but relatively low standard of candidates. Considering the role assigned to education and crucial position of teachers in it, it is necessary that the recruitment to teachers’ training institutions should be regulated through stringent aptitude and attainment tests, giving special considerations to science students, sportsmen and people with manual dexterity and wider interests (Challenge of Education, 1985).

In connection with personnel and training in Early Childhood Care and Education the Review Committee (1990) for the review of National Policy on Education - 1986 stated as:

i) Recognising the skilled nature of work in ECCE and links between programme quality on the one hand and wages, job satisfactions, social status and motivation on the other, the policy for remuneration of ECCE workers
spelt out in POA must be implemented with immediate effect.

ii) The overall responsibility for teacher education and personnel training for ECCE at all levels must be accepted by the Departments of Education both at Centre and the States/UTs in close co-ordination with the Department of Women and Child Development at the Centre and their counterparts in States.

iii) DIETs should assume responsibility for training in ECCE and establish a field based networking relationship with ECCE programmes. For this purpose, DIETs should build up their own training capability.

iv) Building up on the basis of available training pattern a network of modular training programmes for ECCE must be developed at all levels.

v) A system of accreditation of training programmes must be developed.

vi) Action should be taken soon to develop Vocational Education of ECCE at the +2 level in all States/UTs. The feasibility of organising ECCE training following class VIII should be examined on a priority basis with a view to widening the social base and availability of ECCE workers.

vii) Resources should be initiated to restructure the training programmes of elementary school teachers all over the country to integrate and emphasise the child-centred and non-formal approaches of early childhood education in the primary schools.

The ECE scheme does not have a component of nutrition, neither does it have any provision for the training of the teachers. It, therefore, suggested to take the
measure of provision for training the personnel with immediate effect (POA, 1992).

Swaminathen study group (1998) suggested that 10 per cent of children of age group 3-5+ should be in pre primary schools, thus programme would mean involving maximum participation by community of having right type of women workers in addition to tapping other human resources. For this, three categories of women had to be trained: field workers, local women workers and pre-primary teachers to co-operate in the health, nutrition, education and social welfare services at the field level for the total development of the pre-primary school child.

According to Muralidharan (1972) the term 'teacher' has to be extended to all types of workers so far as pre-schoolers are concerned including a nursery school teacher, a balsevika or a rural mother with a minimum of training. It will also include the higher level of workers such as the teacher educators, supervisors etc. Swaminathan group (1970) recommended: (i) Alternation of the primary teacher training curriculum so as to bring primary and pre-school education closer together, (ii) modification of the pre-primary training course so as to bring it in line with the course of Balsevikas, (iii) provision of new training course for all categories of workers, including sandwitch type courses and vocation and orientation courses; (iv) orientation towards urban, rural and tribal environments; and (v) integration of extension, training and research in all training units.

A two year course in pre school and primary teachers education was started by NCERT in 1976 which intended to train teachers for the age groups of 3-8, that
is roughly the pre-school or nursery stage and the first years of primary schools. The broad objectives of the course were:

1. To provide theoretical knowledge and understanding of the principles of early childhood education based on child development,

2. To enable the trainees to acquire the attitude, skills, insights and techniques necessary to carry out the following: (i) to work with children in the classroom, (ii) to organise, plan and administer the school programme, (iii) to work with parents and community, (iv) to provide the basic knowledge and understanding for teaching and working within the framework of Indian conditions and adapted to local situations, resources and needs.

NIPCCD (1997-98) has undertaken several new initiatives and covered some new subjects in making its training programmes more interesting and effective by laying more emphasis on participatory methods of training. These are: (i) Strengthen participatory training methods, (ii) Introduction of more skill based and field based training and practicals, (iii) Emphasis on innovative methods of training such as group discussion, case presentation, mock sessions etc., (iv) Greater use of audio-visual aids in training sessions, (v) Preparing and supply of relevant training material for the participants, (vi) Rights of disabled child, (vii) Prevention and early detection of childhood disabilities, (viii) Crimes against women, (ix) Management of child development under child development programmes, (x) Issues concerning street children, (xi) Organisation of self help groups, (xii) Preparation of adolescent girls
for safe motherhood, (xiii) Child mental health services, (xiv) Preschool education, (xv) Nutrition and health of the young children and women, (xvi) Symposium for institutional members of the institute on emerging perspective on women and child development, (xvii) Training on women and child development for elected women members of panchayats, (xviii) Training in monitoring and evaluation of women and child development programme for voluntary organisations, (xix) Training to faculty of the institute on application of computers knowledge and technique in research, (xx) Grant in aid to voluntary organisations, and (xxi) Problems of children in need.

National Institute of Public Co-Operation and Child Development (1996) conducted National Consultation on Innovative approaches to ICDS training. The objectives of the consultation were thus set - (i) to facilitate the sharing of innovative state specific training approaches, (ii) to sensitise the ICDS training partners to innovative training strategies in order to respond to the demands of universalisation, (iii) to enhance the capacity of the training partners for participatory training approaches and techniques such as participatory learning and action (PLA) through field demonstration and application, (vi) to develop a common operational framework for the formulation of state specific ICDS training plans, to support emerging programme strategies and goals.

The recommendations of a seminar organised by Department of Pre-school and Elementary Education (1997) state that:

1. Government should permit, encourage and promote training institutions to
undertake appropriate training for ECE with or without financial aid.

2. Admission procedures should be made less demanding and child friendly and test/interview should be abolished.

3. Sensitising programmes for government official/media persons, toy manufacturers, and publishers should be organised. Similar awareness programme should be organised for managements along with teacher training for adoption of child friendly curriculum and admission procedures.

4. Professional organisations like Indian Association for Pre-School Education and Other Schools should be supported and strengthened to achieve greater networking and addressing issues at regional levels.

Department of Women and Child Development (1997) reported that the training component of the ICDS programme, which has now been recognised as the most important factor for achieving the aims and objectives of ICDS with emphasis, now being on quality improvement and enrichment of the human resource available, training, or capacity building, assuming tremendous significance. The ultimate aim of this process is the moulding of the training programme, its content and curriculum, methodologies and strategies. ICDS National Task Force will be formed at the Government of India level. The basic functions of these task forces will be to integrate and coordinate all aspects of ICDS training at all levels and to recommend changes in the curriculum, strategies and methodologies. The ultimate goal is to reorient and revitalise training to turn it into a dynamic, responsive, human resource
National Council of Teacher Education got the studies conducted on current status, issues and future projections of teacher education in different states of India.

In the state study of Kerala (2000), it has been reported that there were 30 recognised Pre-Primary Teacher Training Institutions in the State. The number of non-recognised institutions of this type was not available. Teacher Training Certificate (TTC) course is of two years and admission is given only to candidates who have passed the SSLC examination and are selected by the Public Service Commission, or by managements of training schools on the basis of formula evolved by the Government. There is also a one year Pre-Primary Teacher Training Course (PPTTC) for pre-school teachers.

A few pre-primary teacher education institutions were found to exist with government support in Vepery and Adayar (Madras) by Tamilnadu Study Group (2000). A short term courses for working teachers are offered by a few reputed institutions like Padmasheshadri School. Bharathidasan University offers a certificate course in pre-primary teaching to candidates who have passed standard XII. Annamalai University offers a Post-graduate Diploma in Pre-primary education through correspondence to the graduates of any discipline.

No institution existed in the states of Nagaland, Bihar and Tripura (1999) imparting pre-primary teacher education as reported in the respective state studies (1999).
The pre-primary teacher education is of one year duration in the state of Karnataka (NCTE - 2000). The admission to the course is made by a selected committee comprising the head of the institution or representative of management and a nominee of the department.

At Delhi, a number of 12 private institutions offer Diploma course for nursery teachers. Basic eligibility is +2 examination with 45 per cent marks. The admission to the course is made on the basis of entrance test and interview conducted by different institutions at their own.

1-2 Significance of the Study

Himachal Pradesh is a hilly and mountainous state. The state has an area of 55,673 square kilometres and is divided into 12 districts namely Bilaspur, Chamba, Hamirpur, Kangra, Kinnaur, Kullu, Lahaul and Spiti, Mandi, Shimla, Sirmour, Solan and Una with a population of 51,11,079 persons according to 1991 Census. About 91 per cent of population is living in villages in Himachal Pradesh.

The ICDS was first time launched in the state at Pooh in 1975. Since its inception, there are about of 7123 Anganwadi Centres with the same number of Anganwadi Workers imparting education to the children of age group 3-6 years and majority of children, which is living in the villages is covered under ICDS.

An Anganwadi is the focal point for delivery of the package of services to children and mothers right in their village or ward in urban slum areas. The Anganwadi is run by the Anganwadi Worker. The Anganwadi Worker is a women
selected from within the local community. This selection is made by committee at project level, the age limit for Anganwadi Worker is about 18-44 years and preference is given to local women (Chaudhary, 1992). The minimum qualifications of the candidates specified for urban projects is matriculation whereas it is matriculation or middle pass in the rural/tribal projects.

Immediately after the appointment, she works in Anganwadi. After due course of time she is sent for three months training.

The Anganwadi Worker is a crucial functionary for implementing ICDS scheme. Her training is, therefore, of special significance. As such, it is necessary that as soon as the selection of the Anganwadi Workers is complete, they must be sent for their job training course to the training centre identified by the State Government/Union Territory Administration in consultation with Ministry of Social Welfare.

Himachal Pradesh Council for Child Welfare is running four Anganwadi Workers Training Centres situated at Theog (Shimla), Suni (Shimla), Rasmai (Mandi) and Gagal (Kangra).

In addition to the above Anganwadi Worker Training centres in Himachal Pradesh, the following institutions are also imparting teacher training in pre school education:

2. DAV Institute of Correspondence Education, New Delhi,

3. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU),

4. Himachal Shiksha Samiti.

A Survey by NCERT (1972) revealed the shocking fact that only one third of the staff in pre-primary teachers' training institutions have any kind of training in pre-primary education. Even principals and Heads of Department, though they have advanced degrees in Education, have not had any specialized training in pre-school education. The salaries offered to pre-school educators are so meagre that qualified personnel would not be attracted to the institutions.

NIPCCD (1996) presented training achievements regarding a status updated which gives the number of AWWs trained during the period 1992-93 to 1995-96. Against an annual capacity of 38,340 for 1995-96, only 27,656 AWWs could be trained, which work out to 72.1 per cent utilization of the available capacity. The capacity utilization in 1994-95, 1993-94 and 1992-93 was 58.7 per cent, 75.7 per cent and 47.6 per cent respectively. The overall training pattern has therefore been disturbing.

The reasons shown for this are: (i) Difficulties faced by State Governments in the recruitment of functionaries; (ii) Non-deputation of a sufficient number of trainees by State Governments; (iii) Non-reporting of trainees deputed by State Governments for training at the AWTCs; (iv) AWTCs not holding courses as per their capacity; (v) Non-release of funds by State Governments to the training centre
on time; (vi) Uneven distribution of AWTCs in the States; (vii) Training centres being closed/opened without the approval of the Central Government; (viii) Ineffective monitoring of training centres by State Governments; (ix) High turnover of staff in training centres.

These factors have led to considerable non-utilization of the training capacity on one hand, and training backlog on the other.

Vasudevan (1999) has found that in the absence of any prescribed training for ECCE, about 52 per cent workers had no formal training while the others (48%) were oriented at the time of monthly meetings/visits of supervisors to ECCE centres. The workers were found of lacking the concept of "what ECCE programme was about". Many of them perceived the centre as a place to promote positive, stimulating environment for overall growth and development of children. Lack of skill training for workers was also found affecting the programme planning in ECCE.

The children need enriched environment, intellectual stimulation and plenty of opportunity to mix with children of the same age group from a very early age. Furthermore, there are some economic and social factors which are also compelling parents to put their children in schools from a very early age. The fact that children coming from economically and culturally deprived homes need some readiness programmes to put a stop to huge wastage and stagnation in first few grades of primary education, has been realised by the planners of free and universal primary education.
All these factors have created a large demand for pre school education in the state and the number of nursery schools and enrolment of children in nursery schools is increasing considerably.

The success and failure of a nursery school depends on the teacher who is the backbone of the nursery school. The teacher plans programmes for all round development of the child by taking care of his health, nutritional and other needs for which she has to work in close collaboration with the parents and community and make full use of resources of other social welfare agencies. Therefore an adequate and extensive teachers’ training programme is very important for the proper development and expansion of pre school education programme in the State.

It has already been stated that majority of the population of young children taking pre-school education is being covered under ICDS.

To cater to the needs of the pre-school institutions, the workers are recruited and sent for training in the particular training centre. It is in the training centre that she is trained to perform various activities in the training centres. It is the institution, i.e. the human and non-human resources in the institution, which has great impact on the trainees.

The state study on teacher education (1998) is totally silent on pre-primary teacher education in Himachal Pradesh. Only a mention has been made in the report that there was one Teacher Training Centre at St. Bedes’ College Shimla for pre-primary school teachers.
The review of the studies (in the next chapter) reveals that no study has been undertaken in Himachal Pradesh to evaluate pre-primary teacher education. It was therefore thought worthwhile to undertake the present problem for investigation as the findings of the present study will help in the improvement of this programme.

1-3 Statement of the Problem

PRE-PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH: AN EVALUATIVE STUDY

1-4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are stated as under:

1. To study the growth and development of pre-primary teacher education in Himachal Pradesh,
2. To study the organisational structure of Himachal Pradesh Council for Child Welfare which is imparting anganwadi workers training,
3. To study human resources in the training centres,
4. To study non-Human resources in the training centres,
5. To study the curriculum and its transactions and evaluation practices in the training centres.

1-5 Delimitations of the Study

The present study was delimited to:

- The Anganwadi Workers Training Centres in Himachal Pradesh only.
- The participants taking pre-primary teacher education in the institutions during the batch October to December 1999 after joining the jobs.