CHAPTER - II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Review of literature is a critical discussion and outline of the previous research done that is significant to the study to be undertaken in one or more ways. It not only acquaints with the researches already done in the related field of study but also highlights the areas that are either unexplored or need further elaboration. Also, it forms the basis of the justification of the research problem. In present study, review of literature marks the journey of educational development in India since independence to post-2015 agenda. To highlight the shift in focus regarding education in India, the review is divided into following time-period.

i. Before National Policy on Education- 1986
ii. From 1986 to Education for All (EFA)- 2001
iii. From 2001 to Right to Education (RTE) Act- 2009
iv. From 2009 to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)- 2015

These time periods mark the course of education in India from pre-NPE 1986 era to the post- Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and introduction of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015.

2.1 BEFORE NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION- 1986

Shah (1951) made a comparative study of the problems of educational administration in India and Australia. The information was collected from books on history and administration of education, government reports on progress of education etc. It was reported the resultant advantages of centralised administration in Australia and the opposite results in India. The disastrous results of the centralised approach in India led to the failure in the formation of national system of education. Instead it led to intolerance of criticism and demoralisation of teachers.

Bhouraskar (1964) analysed the policies and practices of educational administration and assessed their democratic nature of functioning at different levels with reference to the state of Madhya Pradesh. Questionnaire and interviews were carried out to have a clear picture of the philosophy of educational administration and to know how administrators interpreted the policies and established conventions for the development of democratic setup. Findings revealed that the majority of the administrators were dissatisfied as they were not involved in decision-making.
Administrators believed that the institution runs smoothly if they were endowed with more powers. All were favourable towards the democratic decentralisation of the power structure. They believed that mutual discussions and sharing of opinions on certain matters was good for efficient administration. Administrators, in many respects, had not yet adopted the democratic way of approach to the problems.

Rao (1964) studied the relation between education and economic development and explained that since education is considered an investment leading to economic growth, this is very good for getting more funds for education. Many educationists, therefore, started talking of education and economic development to justify their demands of money for education.

Sharma (1964) aimed at analysing the practices in educational administration in the state of Madhya Pradesh by interviewing educational directorate, educational officers at the district level inspectors of schools, Heads of the institutions, lecturers and teachers. Investigation revealed existence of centralisation of authority, which caused delay in decision-making process. Lack of coordination was observed between the Head of the department and secretariat. And uneven size of districts caused disparity in the work of the divisional officers.

Adams and Bjork (1969) made an effort to quantify the relation of education to economic, political and other aspects of development. The major finding of the study was that unless the formal education is related to life of the masses of people, none could eradicate the problems of the backward and scheduled castes especially, the poor people in the underdeveloped countries.

Govindaraj (1970) conducted a study to examine administrative procedure followed in the DEO's office in Bangalore City, with the main objective of identifying administrative problems. Questionnaire and interviews were used as tools to collect data from the offices and officials. The study revealed some of the administrative problems such as slow movements of the papers in the office, heavy work load, lack of power to take action, lack of quick two-way communication, and non-availability of trained officials.

Kothari (1970) studied education in relation to science and national development and explained that education has never been more important in the life of the nation than it is today. One cannot afford to be hesitant or go slow in educational improvement and to make it science based. On it, more than anything else depends national development, welfare and security industrial growth and educational
development are closely coupled together. They act as catalysts to accelerate each other.

Joshi (1973) has studied problems of administration and finance in primary education with special reference to the role of Panchayat Raj bodies in southern Gujarat. The main objective of the study was to find out the extent to which democratic decentralised administration of primary education has been realised since the operation of Panchayat Act 1961. The major findings of the study indicated lack of proper training for Panchayat leaders to involve the local community to participate in educational activities. The administration of primary education had not improved to any significant extent. Village leadership was based on consideration of caste and/or political affiliation and the administration of primary education was becoming increasingly complex.

Narain et al. (1974) conducted a study on management of primary schools under Panchayat Raj administration in five districts of Rajasthan. The study focused on aspects related to direction of change in terms of improvement or deterioration of teaching standards and functioning of schools. The promotional role of Panchayat Raj functionaries helped in specific areas like provision of school buildings and other facilities, and overcoming the reluctance of the rural people in sending their children to primary schools and the extent of politicization of management of primary schools. Apart from this, study records, general conditions of school buildings, cleanliness, attendance etc. Results of the study showed that, under the management of Panchayat Raj leaders quantitative aspects such as school building, students going to school and regular functioning of the schools improved. Qualitative aspects like discipline morale of teachers and teaching methods failed to improve.

Trivedi (1974) studied the dynamics of pressures on certain practices in educational administration in Banswara and Udaipur districts of Rajasthan. Findings of the study revealed that transfers, postings, deputations, appointments and selection of personnel, opening of schools, introducing new subjects, examinations and tests were affected by pressures. The top level officers of the administrative hierarchy and top leaders of political party in power also got involved in pressurising vulnerable sections of administrative machinery and schools.

Joseph (1975) reviewed India's postcolonial attempts at modernizing its educational process through successive five-year plans of development. It was found that the progress of education in the post independence period has not been adequate
from the point of view of national aspirations. Moreover, the main defects of the national system of education that were already noticeable during the colonial regime continued to dominate the system. The then system of education did not contribute effectively to the economic needs of the nation. The growing menace of educated unemployment does not bode well for the future of the nation.

Gupta (1976) examined the existing educational administration with a view to mirroring aspects such as administrative roles, functions, rigidities, individual idiosyncrasies, hold-ups, which tend to slow down, deteriorate or in any way adversely affect the process of education. The study also tried to dig out the factors that underline the naiveties of existing educational administration. It was found that educational administration was not distinct from the general administration. The study further observed that the educational administration was bureaucratic nature and communication was from top to bottom. There was no communication from teacher to the administration. Normal process of educational administration hampered by political influence and the administration failed to serve the emerging social order.

Sinha (1976) conducted descriptive-cum-critical study of education system in three districts of Andhra Pradesh. The objectives of the study were to describe and identify the strengths of the existing educational administration as well as the critical areas of concern at state, district and Panchayat levels. According to the results of the study, more time was spent in the Directorate on issues of personnel administration. Very little attention was paid to planning, budgeting, financial control and academic administration. Districts and block level offices faced problems at the time of planning and budgeting due to lack of pertinent information from the field level. The deputy secretaries in Zilla Parishad and the extension officers in Panchayat Samitis had not been able to identify themselves with the local bodies. The local bodies also viewed them as just another level for doing a routine work. Inspection as a controlling device faced a major setback when the administrative powers were transferred to local bodies.

Tilak (1979) in his work evaluated the inter-state disparities in educational development is India. By constructing a weighted composite index he showed glaring inequalities in educational development among Indian states. He concluded that the states like Kerala and Himachal Pradesh are very forward in educational development where as states like Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh is very backward. He also emphasized that the causes for these disparities are different among the states.
Dube and Misra (1981) have examined the relationship between education and regional development. They pointed out that the level of development of any area might be gauged through the socio-economic characteristics of the people. The regional pattern of level of development of Madhya Pradesh was analyzed in terms of input-output element of education and development. It was suggested that there is close relationship between education on one hand and development on the other. The ranking correlation co-efficient between education and development for different districts of the state came out as 0.835, which confirms the incidence of higher relationship between the level of education and development of a region.

Panchamuki (1981) identified the problems of equality in educational opportunities in primary and secondary schools of Dharwad city. He found that, participation in education was severely constrained by socio-economic environment of students. Parents' income had a significant positive influence on the performance of students. The investigation pointed out that the access and participation in education was a function of several socio-economic factors. Hence extension of educational facilities did not necessarily ensure distributive justices with respect to educational facilities.

Chopra (1982) conducted in depth analysis of Kerela’s socio-economic development and concluded that Kerela’s development as reflected by its consistently high literacy rates also includes high population growth and high levels of unemployment. However for states to reach to the level of development achieved by Kerela, it is important to continuously implement the policies of social welfare with emphasis on equality of opportunity for all and equal distribution of means of developing the opportunities.

Sarkar (1984) studied the inter-state and gender-wise educational disparities in terms of enrolment, literacy and primary education among various social groups in rural West Bengal as well as in Bihar. Primary education force among males was highest in Himachal Pradesh during 1961-71. Among females, primary education force was highest in Punjab. Although educational levels of males are higher than females in all the Indian states and all the social groups in rural Bengal around the 1980s, the forces of education were significantly higher among males than females in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. Education wastage/dropout before the primary stage was highest in Rajasthan for both sexes in 1971. It was more common in rural areas around Calcutta among scheduled caste Hindu, other Hindu
and Muslim males in the age group of 20-24 years than in rural areas away from Calcutta. Bihar, Jammu Kashmir and Madhya Pradesh showed comparable female literacy by all measures considered.

Kundu and Rao (1985) conducted a study to measure the disparities in educational development using literacy as an indicator on a regional dimension. The researchers modified Sopher’s index and disparities were studied across population sectors like male/female, rural/urban, SCs and non-SCs etc. They found that the disparities in literacy rates between SCs and non-SCs were higher in urban than in rural areas. The under-privileged sections of the society, such as female, the rural and SC/ST population in the backward regions were having relatively greater deprivation as compared to those in the advanced regions.

Redy (1985) had analysed the inter-state disparities in the levels of educational development in India. He ranked that states in terms of educational facilities available per lakh of population and concluded that northeastern states occupied the first three ranks, while Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu occupied the bottom three positions. He also emphasized that overall the rural females, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are lagging behind in educational attainment.

Padmanabhan (1986) explained the inter- and intra-state disparities in educational development in selected states of India. It was found that the financial mechanism is responsible, to a significant extent, in creating and perpetuating these disparities. Further it was concluded that no rational criteria is followed in financing education in different regions of the country and argues that certain criteria like costs of educational development of the region and fiscal capacity of the region etc., should guide the formulation of financial policies. He recommends that a critical minimum level should be identified for per student expenditure. This expenditure, in no region, should be allowed to fall. Padmanabhan pointed out that so far in educational planning, concern was given to macro data and the micro level data was neglected. And the result is huge backlogs in critical inputs for good quality education like buildings, classrooms and equipment. The problems related to education at the bottom level i.e. at the district level have not come into purview of national planners. This was due to major weakness of planning process, which were top heavy.

Rao (1986) studied educational disparities across regions. She analyzed inter-taluk disparities with the help of educational development indicator based on the educational development. Taluks were grouped in different categories ranging from
extreme backward to exceptionally highly developed taluks. It was concluded that educational opportunities to the children are lesser in educationally backward regions. Hence there is a need to promote educational development of backward areas.

Singh (1986) has laid emphasis on the education as key factor in the national development. He observed that education has its much involvement in widening socio-economic gap between the rich and the poor and also between urban and rural population. He blamed that the objectives of the present formal system of education is basically geared to urban and elitist needs. It was further concluded that the then education system proved to be incapable for checking the dropout of about 80 per cent children at school level. The concept of ‘life long education’, ‘adult education’ and the ‘learning society’ had relevance and in this regard he suggested the role of voluntary agencies might be of great importance.

Zaidi (1986) focusing on inter-state disparities in educational development observed that economically backward states are also backward with respect to educational development. Therefore it was argued that inadequacy for finances forms an important constraint In the development of educational levels of the people. Moreover educational planners both at national and state levels have not made efforts to reduce regional disparities. Thus, backward regions had not received proper attention for educational development and remained backward even with the economic planning in the country.

2.2 FROM 1986 TO EDUCATION FOR ALL- 2001

Bhola (1988) conducted policy analysis of adult literacy education in India with reference to National Policy on Education of 1968 and 1986. It was concluded that there have been few significant changes in educational policy regarding the provision of adult literacy education in India over the past two decades. The changes that have taken place in India's adult literacy programs have occurred in the realm of technology rather than ideology, thereby supporting continuity in the then existing distributions of economic, social, and political gods within the nation. India's cultural and political climate have resulted in an educational policy that was functionalist in the sense of being geared to provide the labour force necessary to keep the system going and populist in the sense of being geared toward gaining the votes necessary to win elections. This in turn translated into greater investments in higher education and proportionally less in constitutionally mandated universalization of elementary
education. The most important official confirmation of the need for expanding adult education services in India came in the form of the National Policy Resolution of 1968. The first important initiative in adult education, the National Adult Education Program (NAEP), was not established until 1978. The main thrust of the new National Program of Adult Education (established in 1986), like its predecessors, was efficiency rather than equity and its general mode was technocratic.

Singh (1988) analysed the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 after two years of its formulation. The author concluded that since the policy recommended common education system, which was also proposed by NPE 1968, indicated the failure of previous policy in implementing its recommendations. Also, the whole exercise of designing a new policy was bound to fail as it was done in isolation with the overall planning process. The NPE 1986 was structured when the Seventh Five-Year Plan was already finalised, leaving a gap between the theory and practice of educational planning.

Bhuiyan and Banarjee (1991) have analyzed the regional disparities of education (up to higher secondary level) in Bangladesh. They concluded that educational disparities are directly related to developmental disparities of the region i.e. developed areas have higher literacy percentages than the backward rural areas. He also emphasized that education is highly concentrated in urban locations and at places with better connectivity and supplemented by other facilities.

Birdi (1991) studied the growth and development of primary education in Punjab from 1947 to 1987 and concluded that there was a marked increase in enrolment rate from 5.54 lakhs in 1947-48 to 19.03 lakhs in 1987-88. The number of primary schools also increased from 3819 in 1947-48 to 12312 in 1987-88. But the goal of universal literacy could not be achieved. Though the number of schools was satisfactory in Punjab, the other infrastructural facilities were present in only 40 per cent of the schools. The most important reason highlighted was paucity of funds. Almost 98 per cent of the budgetary allocation was spent on teachers’ salaries and practically nothing was left to make arrangements for requisite facilities in the schools.

Bordia and Kaul (1992) highlighted literacy efforts in India over the past few decades and stated that the complex socio-economic issues add to the failure to universalize primary education, which in turn have had serious implications for planning universal literacy. The initiatives and programmes and their delivery rested
with the official hierarchy and included limited participation from the general population. Where such participation did occur, the programs failed due to insufficient learning levels or insufficient facilities for continuing education. Through use of new strategies, such as micro-planning and minimum levels of learning, India is attempting to universalize access, participation, and achievement at the primary level. Simultaneously, the National Literacy Mission is adopting a systematically planned campaign approach to literacy through mass mobilization and innovative learning techniques that emphasizes predetermined learning levels. The value of literacy can be truly harnessed only if literacy skills are retained and if literacy contributes to social change.

Chand and Mathew (1993) assessed the performance of the Total Literacy Campaign in district Panipat in Haryana. The study highlighted the widespread misconception, creating a strong prejudice against TLC, that the funds flowing for TLC are diverted from primary education. The inability to see teachers and adult educators as partners; literacy programmes and UEE efforts as complementary to and not as competing with one another caused the TLCs to be under a terrible handicap. One of the critical allies and partners- the school education system- continued to be indifferent and cynical despite painstaking efforts made, as in Panipat. It was also pointed out that the limitations of the literacy campaign were also due to the highly lopsided economic system where the majority of the literacy-learners are in an unenviable position to make any change in the balance of the economic order.

Das (1993) studied the Regional Inequalities in Educational Development in Orissa to assess the growth of education in Orissa and also examined the inequalities among different districts in the state of Orissa. It was pointed out that earlier education was considered as an investment in human capital contributing to higher productivity and income. But later the productive role of education has been being questioned and it was one of the most important factor related with the inequality. The empirical evidence of the study indicated that these exists inter-district inequalities in educational development.

Mahajan (1994) studied educational administration in Karnataka to understand the present status of educational administration in terms structures, systems and processes at various levels to identify the major issues and future tasks of educational planning and management. It was found that the decentralised system of planning in
the state is working well and there is scope for involving the grassroots level functionaries like Head Masters in the planning process.

Bhalla (1995) studied the development of Haryana in relation to poverty and policy initiatives. It was concluded that rural education in Haryana was involved in a catching up process and movement of rural children into high school and college education had gained momentum. Excellent rural-rural and rural-urban transport, both landless labour public and private, has been playing an enabling role by improving access to higher education, which in turn is lead to a major change in the level and character of work participation by young rural women.

Chathley (1995) examined the educational attainment of different sections of population living in diverse socio-economic and cultural conditions and explored its relationship with various attributes of human resource development. The analysis of educational development of Northwest region of India showed that the region is lagging behind the rest of India in terms of literacy rate of total population as well as gender-wise population from 1971-1991. Moreover the disparity between the region under study and rest of India has increased during the period of study. The relatively low rates of literacy in Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir have pulled the literacy rate down. The study suggested that the problems of the northwest region could be solved through regional level development strategy, which would take into account the comparative advantage of each state in the region.

World Bank (1995) in a study of 44 countries, including India, computed the rates of return to investment in education. The study revealed that the rates of return to investment at any level of education in developing countries are far above 10 per cent. The rate of return to investment in primary education is higher relative to investment in other levels and returns to education declines as the educational level increases. The private returns to education are generally higher than the social rate of return.

Dutt (1996) reviewed the educational progress in India from 1951 to 1993-94. He pointed out that although during the process of growth, area-wise, sex-wise and caste-wise inequalities were reduced to some extent; still many more inequalities persisted in education sector. While presenting regional scenario of variations in overall literacy experienced in different states in India, he identified seven states namely, Meghalaya, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar and recommended to make more determined efforts for removing
inequalities in literacy in these states. Reviewing the literacy rates of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, he highlighted wide variations amongst the states and pinpointed the states of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh where adequate attention to improve literacy among SCs and STs has not been paid. Through regression analysis he concluded that literacy was negatively related to drop-out rate. He further reported that percentage of budgetary allocation to education to net state domestic product has a significant positive relationship with literacy along with the fact that urbanisation has a positive relationship with literacy.

Dyer (1996) examined teachers’ responses to the teaching-learning aid component of Operation Blackboard, a scheme to upgrade primary school facilities; and the implications for policy innovation aimed at improving the quality of primary schooling. Provision of teaching-learning aids posed a challenge to the long-established teacher-centred, textbook culture of schools, which the National Policy on Education, 1986, sought to change. On the basis of the case study, the paper argues that policy innovation can only be successful if teachers’ capacities are accurately assessed, which may involve a reduction in policy aspirations and a slower, but more realistic, pace of change. At the national policy level, when conceiving any innovation, the capacity of teachers to respond to the proposed change should be realistically assessed, in terms both of teachers’ professional competence and educational levels of the communities in locations where they are likely to be posted.

Kingdon (1996) in a study on private schooling in India concludes that the demand for schooling by SC and ST families has not been matched by supply of quality education. On the contrary, the quality of education and environment in government schools has declined over the years. The shift towards private schools as compared to government is seen not only in rich but also middle income households; and in both metropolitan and smaller towns.

Majumdar (1996) examined the nature and intensity of educational impoverishment in India from a social exclusion perspective. More concretely, it analysed how and why certain groups fail to have access to, or benefit from, the educational services offered by the society. The finding of the study revealed that there exist wide inter-state variations in the degree of educational impairment of various groups. Clearly, the state has a critical role to play in action against exclusion, by preventing discrimination and by enhancing education and skill of the poor and disadvantaged sections of the society. Historically dispossessed groups in some parts
of the country have been successful in eliciting policies than their counterparts in other regions.

Ramachandran et al. (1997) attempted to provide state-wise estimates of the magnitude of resources that need to be mobilised to achieve the goal of universal primary education. It was found that the costs of getting every child in India into school in the next five years are large and vary across states, depending on current achievements. Also resources alone cannot transform conditions without appropriate socio-political changes and commitments from governments, teachers and parents. At the same time, to make the policy of universal primary schooling meaningful, a financial commitment was estimated to be around three per cent. In terms of the total investment on primary education as a percentage of SDP the commitment required was less than 4 per cent of SDP in the states of Delhi, Punjab, Kerala, Maharashtra, Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat. Next came states that needed to commit between 4 and 5 per cent of SDP. These included Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Not surprisingly, these states were to make huge investment efforts (more than 5 per cent of SDP) to establish the basic infrastructural requirements for universal primary schooling.

Roy (1998) in the paper on education situation in a hill village of West Bengal, found the reasons behind the higher literacy rate and poor educational standards in a hill village of West Bengal and various constraints on education that prevails in the village. The author pointed that the picture of overall educational development especially at the post primary level is not so encouraging mainly due to poor economic condition associated with the ecological, psychological and religious factors.

Filmer and Pritchett (1999) estimated the determinants of child (6-14 years of age) enrolment and educational attainment of a cohort (aged 15-19) in India by using the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) data collected in 1992-1993. The major results that came into light were that there is enormous gap between the enrolment and attainment of children from rich and poor household. While 82 per cent of children from the richest 20 per cent complete grade 8, only 20 per cent from the poorest 40 per cent of households do. This wealth gap varies widely across the states of India and is made even worse by gender differences. The physical presence or absence of school facilities in the rural villages explains only a very small part of enrolment differences. There are huge gaps in the enrolment rates of equivalent
households across states, especially among poor. An attempt to study the link between income and enrolment to justify above differences was also made. It included credit constraints, differing investment opportunities, and education as consumption good. It was concluded that in order to make universal education possible in India, efforts should be made to improve quality of education as well as reduce social exclusion (poor and females).

Indira (1999) examined the development of educational sector in Karnataka during the past five decades (1951-1991). The position in Karnataka was compared with other three southern states, namely, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. The review of fifty years of educational development presented a discouraging picture with uneven growth in literacy levels. Among the states under study Karnataka stood in the third position in adult and female literacy. Drop out rate at primary levels was highest in Karnataka. Also it had the lowest rank in infrastructure. Intra-state disparities also existed which suggests that region-specific studies need to be initiated in order to understand the causes for lower literacy levels.

Jalan and Glinskaya (1999) evaluated the I Phase of the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), which according to the researchers has been the most intensive primary school education intervention by the central government both in terms of resources and planning. In particular, the study tried to examine whether primary school attendance rates have increased since the inception of the project among all 6-13 years old and for specific populations (female, SCs and STs; whether more children complete the primary school cycle now (1999-2000) than earlier (1993-1994); and whether the programme has encouraged students to remain in the schooling system beyond primary school. Programme districts show a “small” improvement in outcome indicators. However, most of the benefits accrued to male children and primarily in the state of Madhya Pradesh where concurrent to the DPEP two substantial state level primary school programmes were also initiated. Impacts on the scheduled caste group were also noticeable. Finally, contrary to the programme’s goals, there has been virtually no impact on girl’s primary school education or on children belonging to the scheduled tribe.

Naidu (1999) discussed the education of SC and ST girls that was a serious issue as girls were often doubly disadvantaged. Age of girls is an important factor in their drop out. In many states, early marriage and the economic utility of children
leads to large-scale drop out in the 5-10 year old and 16-20 year old age groups, interrupting the completion of girls’ education.

Chakrabarti and Banerjea (2000) highlighted the success story of a tribal district in Himachal Pradesh- Kinnaur. There has been a remarkable progress in status primary education and literacy in Kinnaur. The female literacy rate during the period 1981-1991 has doubled from 20.71 per cent to 42.04 per cent. A comparison with Punjab shows that in terms of literacy, both Kinnaur and Himachal Pradesh have done much better than Punjab. Therefore, increase in literacy not only depends upon better economic conditions but also certain other socio-cultural factors.

Joshi (2000) conducted the spatio-temporal analysis of educational development in India to examine the changes in relative status of states/UTs in educational development through Education Development Index (EDI). It was found that 14 States/UTs registered improvement in both EDI and their rank, while remaining 18 States/UTs has although improved their EDI but their ranks decreased. The growth pattern of EDI, it is observed the states/UTs having low EDI in 1997 showed higher growth rate than other, because of law base. On the other side, the states/UTs having high EDI in 1997, had lower growth rate viz, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry, Kerala, Chandigarh etc.

Reddy (2000) studied the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and inferred that due to insufficient and irregular supply of incentives, some parents spent their small incomes on children’s books, stationery and fees. So in spite of the government spending a huge amount on incentives, the intended target group often does not receive the benefit of it. This is partly due to the lack of awareness among ST parents about the nature, quality, quantity and mechanisms involved in the distribution of incentives. As a result, poor enrolment, absenteeism, wastage, and a lack of quality of education continue to be serious concerns in ST communities.

Rustagi (2000) identified gender backward districts among 15 major Indian states based upon 13 gender sensitive indicators and found that out of total districts, 43 districts were listed in 5 or more backward district list. It consists of 24 districts from Uttar Pradesh, 12 from Madhya Pradesh, four from Rajasthan and one each from Bihar, Orissa and Haryana. It further stated that no state or district exhibits a uniform pattern of either being backward or better off in terms of all the gender sensitive indicators. This reinforces two points: first is the importance of disaggregated
analysis; and second is the significance of looking at different aspects of gender development.

Shariff and Ghosh (2000) examined the public expenditure on education in India and concluded that substantial scope exists for channeling to elementary education of the levels part existing high of household expenditure on education. It was also observed that about 75 per cent of household expenditure goes towards examination fees, other fees, books and stationery and transport even in government schools. Government schools are supposed to collect no fees from the students. But since the books seldom reached the students before the middle of the year, most parents were constrained to purchase books at the beginning of the year. Since more than half of lowest income group have no resources to spend on education at the given price of education. This was the main reason for non-enrolment.

Ramachandran (2001) in a study on DPEP concluded that in almost all states poor parents from marginalised sections make choices in favour of their sons while deciding on their children’s education. Retention of both boys and girls in school remains an area of concern despite recent improvements in enrolments.

2.3 FROM 2001 TO RIGHT TO EDUCATION (RTE) ACT- 2009

Upender and Aruna (2001) examined an important issue- Is education becoming costlier? Based on data for the period of twelve years i.e. 1986-1997, it was calculated that the elasticity of per capita consumption expenditure on education is not less than unity. Hence education, which is a crucial investment in human development, is becoming more expensive. Therefore, there is a need to eliminate education from the list of elitist items so as to keep it within the reach of all segments of the people.

Deaton and Dreze (2002) presented a new set of integrated poverty and inequality estimates for India and Indian states for 1987-88, 1993-94 and 1999-2000. It was revealed that the poverty estimates are broadly consistent with independent evidence on per capita expenditure, state domestic product and real agricultural wages. They showed that poverty decline in the 1990s preceded more or less in line with earlier trends. Regional disparities increased in the 1990s, with the southern and western regions doing much better than the northern and eastern regions. Economic inequality also increased within states, especially within urban areas, and between urban and rural areas. They also examined other development indicators, relating to
health and education. Most indicators have continued to improve in the nineties through public intervention with or without rapid economic growth. But social progress has followed very diverse patterns, ranging from accelerated progress in some fields to slow down and even regression in others. No support has been found for sweeping claims that the nineties have been a period of ‘unprecedented improvement’ or ‘widespread impoverishment’. Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are two states where there have been interesting initiatives in the field of elementary education by both government and non-government institutions in contrast to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh where schooling matters continue to be highly neglected though they started at similar education level in 1991 (BIMARU states).

Duraisamy (2002) provided estimates of the returns to education in India by gender, age cohort and location (by rural-urban) for the period 1993-1994, and also evaluated the changes in returns over a period of time from 1983-94 using a large national level household survey data. The major findings of this study are that it is found that the private rate of return per year of education increases as the level of education increases up to the secondary level. The returns to primary education were rather low but are highest at secondary level. A fragment of higher returns to higher levels might be considered to be the benefits gained only upon completion of primary level of schooling. The wage premium for technical diploma is notably high; male-female comparison of returns reveal that the returns to women's education exceed that to men's at the middle, secondary and higher secondary levels; at the secondary level, the returns to additional schooling of women are over twice as large as the corresponding returns for men; the younger age cohorts (15-29 and 30-44) received higher returns to additional year of education at the primary, middle and secondary levels, while those in the 45-85 age cohort received higher returns to college education than the younger age groups; the variation in returns by rural-urban residence is the higher returns to education in rural than in urban areas for primary and secondary levels and also for technical diploma. The rewards for higher secondary and college education are higher for the urban compared to the rural residents; and there is evidence of considerable change in the reward for education, especially for women, between 1983 and 1994.

Grover and Bharadwaj (2002) highlighted the situation of gender disparity at district level of Haryana state by analysing the total, male and female literacy rates of rural, urban and all areas in 2001. Rank correlation between different literacy rates
and between literacy rates and gender disparity were calculated for population aged 6 years. The findings of the study suggested that the male literacy rates in rural, urban and all areas are higher than corresponding female literacy rates; the gender disparity was more acute in rural areas as compared to urban areas; the number of districts with their male literacy rate above the state literacy rate was more than the number of districts with their female literacy rates above the state literacy rate; the rank order correlation revealed that the present literacy situation is moving in favour of females.

Mehta (2002) analysed the 2001 Census data to assess the contribution of formal education system to total literates produced between the period 1991 to 2001. In addition indicators, such as, male/female differential in literacy rate, literate per lakh population, sex ratio among literate population and number of decades required to achieve universal literacy have also been analysed. It was concluded that whatever progress is reflected in literacy rates (7 & above), is because of the ongoing educational programmes under the formal education system. NLM influenced parents through its literacy campaigns to send children to schools. Definitely it has created a positive environment for the primary education to expand. This is largely because of the aggressive campaigns initiated by it during 1990’s, which generated demand for the primary education. By and large, the states of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka have done comparatively better in the literacy phase where all most all the districts were covered with the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) projects. Primary education in these states has largely contributed to literates produced between 1991 and 2001. Of the total 31.96 million decline in number of illiterates during 1991-2001 the maximum contribution comes from Andhra Pradesh (16.79 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (14.09 per cent), Maharashtra (12.48 per cent), Madhya Pradesh (11.43 per cent), Tamil Nadu (10.66 per cent) and Rajasthan (11.46 per cent). During 1991-2001, Rajasthan recorded the highest gain in literacy rate (22.48 per cent), however the male-female differential is still very high (32.12 per cent) which does not suggest that the goal of universal literacy can be achieved in near future.

Ramachandran and Saihjee (2002) based their study on finding from the desk review of DPEP and qualitative micro studies in six DPEP states namely Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In depth underlying motivations, feelings, values, attitudes and perceptions of ordinary parents, teachers, children as well as the community regarding primary schooling and
impact of DPEP in transforming them were explored. The results showed that there has been a significant increase in overall literacy rates across the country. The very low female literacy districts have shown the maximum gains in literacy levels, from 43.8 per cent in 1995-96 to 46.70 per cent in 1998-99- especially in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan. Moreover with the exception of Chhattisgarh, almost universal enrolment in primary schools is a reality.

Shilpi and Sanwal (2002) examined the gender discrimination in home and school resulting in dropout at primary level by exploring social, educational and financial factors which are linked to discontinuation of their education. The results indicate that educational motivation is gender specific and majority of the parents agreed that education is more important for their children. However, only 23 per cent viewed education more important for daughters than sons. Regarding the incentives provided by government in primary school, parents were not satisfied due to its irregularity, uneven distribution and poor quality of food.

Srivastav and Dubey (2002) examined the issue of Universalisation of elementary education among the northeastern states of India using household level data from the 1993-94 NSS surveys, particularly in respect of the status of school enrolment of children in the age group of 5-14 years among these states and relationship between poverty and non-enrolment in the schools. The findings suggested that poverty has no effect on school enrolment and no evidence of gender bias. The traditional hypotheses about lack of schooling and lower school enrolment among the socially deprived groups, STs and SCs are not supported by the data for these states.

Thorat (2002) compared data on untouchability in several states in 1971 and 1996. He finds that the practice of untouchability is much less severe and the practice of making SC children sit separately had practically disappeared. However in mid-1990s there was lack of friendship between SC and non-SC students and difference in their treatment by the teachers.

Tilak (2002) analysed the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) survey data and stated that there is nothing like ‘free’ education in India. He reported that household expenditure on education is sizeable; households from poor socio-economic backgrounds (that is SCs and STs) often spend considerable amounts of income on education, including elementary education. This trend was seen in states like Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Northeastern region.
Varshney (2002) reviewed in trends in literacy rates and inter-state gender disparity from Census 2001 data. Compared to male literacy there has been a significant improvement in female literacy. This has helped in reducing the gender disparity. Making a further analysis at state level, it is noteworthy that Chattisgarh and Rajasthan have shown remarkable progress in their female literacy. Among other states/UTs, in this respect, are, Kerala, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, A&N Islands, Chandigarh, Delhi and Lakshadweep, which have achieved more than 85 per cent equality in terms of male-female literacy. Hence, it is evident that disparity is inversely correlated to literacy rates.

In an earlier review of progress in Universalization of Elementary Education, Bolashetty and Girija (2004) answered the million-dollar question of why not has much success been achieved in universalization of elementary education, despite excellent intentions? The description of origin, growth and present status of fundamental human right to elementary education in India, presents a mixed picture of success as well as failure. It suggested that if India is to stand as a completely educated nation in the comity of nations, it has to meaningfully translate the fundamental right to education into a reality. To realize the goal of universal free elementary education by at least 2010 the 'Indian State' as a whole must meaningfully invest the required amount of resources.

Dyer et al. (2004) examined the in-service training in DIETs and the way these DIETs responded to teacher development challenges. It was found that formal teacher education continued to have poor fit between the content and processes of teacher education and the contexts in which teachers serve. The study highlighted the issues regarding recruitment and proficiency of DIET staff, and in their attitudes towards elementary teachers, that constrain engagement with local contexts. The paper considered several aspects of elementary teachers’ local knowledge which underline the need for a review of the dominant ‘skills and knowledge’ approach to teacher development pursued by DIETs. It argued that training must shift its focus from skills to an engagement with the pressing question of teachers’ will to adopt training messages in current contexts. The paper also discussed how teachers’ professional agency can be promoted, and further considerations of how teacher education can be strengthened in pursuit of quality in a context of decentralisation.

Joseph (2004) attempted to understand the various facets of underperformance of the northern states in comparison with other regions and to suggest the possible
ways by which these states could improve their future economic and social performance. It was observed that the average per capita income of northern states fell below that of the southern region by the end of the 1990s. A major contributory factor in this regard was the high population growth in the northern region, the only region where the rate of population growth did not fall in the last decade. The demographic exceptions in the region are Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, where the annual population growth had been low and declining.

According to Kothari (2004), India is far from attaining universal enrolment of children of 6-14 years age, though many Asian countries in similar positions have already done so. He explained the scenario—though the use of variety of data sources such as the census, the NSS, NCERT and NFHS in terms of gender, age, rural-urban location, expenditure groups, village amenities, supply and health and disability status of children. It was found that the shortfall is not confined to low expenditure groups. Also low enrolment is found among 6-9 age groups, when the opportunity cost cannot be important. To conclude, it emphasized that we are far from attaining the goal of universal enrolment of children of 6-14 years of age.

Raghavendra and Narayana (2004) presented an overview of the progress made in the field of elementary education and literacy in India and the problems being faced in achieving universalisation of elementary education (UEE). They reviewed the policy, institutional and programme efforts initiated thus far, and highlighted the persisting rural-urban disparities, gender differentials, inter and intra-state variations with respect to SCs/STs and general population in the literacy achievements. To realise the goal of UEE they emphasised a more proactive and effective role of the state; a budgetary allocation of at least six per cent of the GDP; free access to socially and economically disadvantaged sections, even in the private schools; penal action against parents not sending their children to schools and incentives to attract children to schools.

Ramachandran (2004) concluded that though the availability and distribution of elementary education has shown an improvement in recent years as a result of certain initiatives by the government, yet it remained out of reach of vast sections of the population such as the poor, girls in the rural areas, tribes and some among the scheduled castes. Further the gaps between the states with respect to enrolments, out-of-school children and dropout rates were quite glaring. Furthermore, the lowering of the quality of education due to inadequate infrastructural facilities, non-detention
policies, lack of adequate teachers, absenteeism among teachers etc. was a cause of major concern. She suggested that the government of India should review the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme and should modify its working guidelines in order to meet its region and context specific needs.

Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) Committee (2005) in its report regarding free and compulsory education Bill and other issues related to elementary education states that, right to education must be seen not merely as a right for its own or the individual child's sake, but also as an instrument of promoting other constitutional objectives, e.g. equality, justice, democracy, secularism, social cohesion etc. According to the report, the major reason why it has not been possible to universalise elementary education all these years is the dysfunctionality of the delivery system. The committee has, therefore, attempted to formulate a number of provisions for the proposed legislation, essentially aimed at greater decentralisation and accountability, so that the delivery system is able to rise to the challenge.

Mukherjee (2005) analysed the trends, patterns and interacting factors affecting the quantitative and qualitative aspects of school education system in India taking 1985, 1990, 1995 and 2000 as reference years. It is observed that though the enrolments in the schools have improved substantially in recent years but the retention rates are poor and completion of middle and secondary levels are still lower. Substantial gender bias is a major cause of concern. Factors like poverty, presence of a wide child-labour market, absence of assured employment after schooling and infrastructural problems are identified as responsible for the ills plaguing the elementary education system in India. To improve the scenario he suggested some measures like providing incentives for attending schools, making the schooling process attractive to the children, streamlining the middle and high school curriculum to make it more vocational and job-oriented and providing better infrastructure for the schools.

Subrahmanian (2005) studied exclusion in 12 schools in two districts of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and found that primary school teachers freely expressed opinion about the in-educability of SC and ST children. Middle and secondary school teachers in the same districts expressed such biased views.

Asaoka (2006) studied whether the pay-offs to education change in any systematic fashion as countries develop economically and invest more in their educational systems. The findings suggested that different Indian states should
probably focus on different levels of schooling, depending on their relative economic development status. Although the universal emphasis on primary education was necessary and justified at the time of independence, a similar emphasis across all states is perhaps unnecessary at this point, except that states need to invest in primary education first in order to advance people into secondary higher education.

Kainth (2006) evaluated the performance of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in achieving the goal of universal elementary education and opined that the implementation of this programme has made significant achievements in the field of education. He highlighted that as a result of improvement in the existing infrastructural facilities in the schools and adoption of alternate strategies for mainstreaming children who were left out of the schooling process, the number of out-of-school children declined from 320 lakh in 2001 to 95 lakh as on October 2005. During 2005-06 SSA recorded remarkable progress in terms of number of schools, additional classrooms and additional teachers. Likewise in order to improve the quality of education, grants were given to all teachers for developing teaching learning materials, arrangements were made for regular in-service training of teachers and provisions were made for distribution of free textbooks to all girls and children of SC/ST origin. But he noticed that despite these efforts the performance of SSA has varied across states and the objective of ensuring gender parity remained elusive, especially for the more backward states. He suggested that SSA should actually take the form of people movement with do or die spirit in order to achieve the target of universalising primary schooling by 2007.

Mehrotra (2006) examined the feasibility of the central government’s goals to ensure all children complete 5 years of school by 2007, and 8 years by 2010. It was argued that for universalization of elementary education it is important to improve the level, equity and efficiency of public spending. However, even with these reforms, improving teacher accountability will still remain key to the achievement of the goals. Rao and Gupta (2006) attempted to classify factors contributing to low female literacy in the Mahabubnager district of Andhra Pradesh. It was concluded that the major factors that hindered the progress of female literacy were migration for work in seasonal periods, social customs, social taboos, caring of younger ones at home, gender disparity at home, in society and earlier marriages in this region, unfavourable home and school environment, apathy of government officials, Lack of educational facilities, economic factors and health related factors. Further it was suggested that
migration is one of the causes as per the observation of the investigators. The government and voluntary agencies can plan to create alternative residences for girl students while their parents migrate during work seasons. Also, the literacy centre had to be run in convenient times for the women with their consultation and mahila mandals need to broaden their role in improving female literacy.

Chadha (2007) argued that the Indian workers' human capability index, most expressly reflected by their educational attainments, has undoubtedly been improving over time yet a vast majority of workers, especially those in the rural area, are still illiterate or semi-educated. The educational deficiencies of the Indian workforce stand thoroughly exposed when compared to the educational status of workers in many other developing economies, let alone the developed world. According to the study, the depressing pattern of attendance of educational institutions and extremely low per capita expenditure on education by low-income households are clear pointers of their helplessness; public expenditure on education too throws up a depressing scenario. At the end, it forcefully pleads for (i) a through change in the approach towards education, learning from the experience of many other developing economics. (ii) special attention for education in rural area (iii) a positive policy bias for female education (iv) specific regional policy outfits, and (v) training/retraining of the existing workforce.

Chand (2007) analysed the variation and impact of the efforts made in the areas of primary education, adult literacy and change in population, on the literacy situation of India. According to him, the combined effort of the primary education and the literacy campaigns being organised by Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan and National Literacy Mission is creating its impact on the literacy situation of the country. It was also estimated that India will achieve the target of having a sustainable literacy level of 75 per cent by the end of tenth five year plan in 2007.

Jha (2007) assessed the contemporary policies/programmes and financial commitments of the Indian state in providing elementary education to its children. It stated that there has been serious neglect in provision of this need, and the schooling system in India is nowhere near ready to provide a decent quality of education to all to its children. Inadequate, spending as well as the malfunctioning to schools and other relevant institutions have been the obvious bottlenecks constraining India's progress. According to the study, the various schemes such as Operation Blackboard, the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Mid-Day-Meal scheme and Sarva
Shiksha Abhiyan have contributed to the expansion of the schooling infrastructure as well as enrolment since the late 1980's. Still the policy initiatives of the government in the last few years do not generate much optimism with respect to addressing the huge deficits in the education sector and even appear to be retrogressive in a number of ways. Moreover, it is concluded that it is important to scale up the expenditure by the government at different levels, without any further delay if the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) is not to remain a mirage.

Kingdon (2007) provided an overview of school education in India. Firstly, it placed India's educational achievements in international perspective, especially against countries with which it is now increasingly compared such as BRIC economies in general and China in particular. India does well relative to Pakistan and Bangladesh but lags seriously behind China and the other BRIC countries, especially in secondary school participation and youth literacy rates. Secondly, the paper examined schooling access in terms of enrolment and school attendance rates, and schooling quality in terms of literacy rates, learning achievement levels, school resources and teacher inputs. The substantial silver lining in the cloud of Indian education is that its primary enrolment rates are now close to universal. However, despite progress, attendance and retention rates are not close to universal, secondary enrolment rates are low, learning achievement levels are seriously low and teacher absenteeism is high, signaling poor quality of schooling. Thirdly, it examined the role of private schooling in India. While more modest in rural areas, the recent growth of private schooling in urban areas has been nothing short of massive, raising questions about growing inequality in educational opportunity. It revealed that private schools are both more effective in imparting learning and do so at a fraction of the unit cost of government schools. Lastly, it discussed some major public education initiatives such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, mid-day meal and para-teacher schemes. The impacts of these massive interventions (and their sub-components) on children's schooling outcomes need to be rigorously evaluated to learn about the cost-effectiveness of alternative interventions for better future policy making. However, the existence of some of these initiatives and the introduction of the 2 per cent education cess to fund them suggests increased public commitment to school education and, together with increased NGO education activity, gives grounds for optimism about the future, even though many challenges remain.
Pal and Ghosh (2007) studied the nature and causes of the patterns of inequality and poverty in India. In India, the literacy rate has been increasing steadily, but still too slowly over the last few decades. The Census of India has calculated the country’s overall literacy rate at 65 per cent in 2001, up from about 43 per cent in 1981 and 52 per cent in 1991. The male-female gap in literacy improved from 26.6 per cent in 1981 to 21.6 per cent in 2001, but remains large. There are significant inter-state inequalities in literacy rates. Even in 2001, Bihar, the state with lowest literacy rate below 50 per cent, was about 18 percentage points below the national average. For female literacy, the gap was even wider at about 21 per cent. By contrast, Kerala, the state with the highest literacy in India, had an average literacy rate of 90.92 per cent, with more than 86 per cent female literacy. Though the differences in literacy rates between the top and the bottom states narrowed in recent years, it remains significant. Along with inter-state differences, there exist large disparities between the rural and urban sectors of the country. The literacy rate is still shockingly low among rural women, with less than half classed as literate, even with a restricted dentition of literacy.

Wu et al. (2007) reviewed girls’ enrolment, achievement and key factors contributing to gender and social gaps in India. It asks several questions regarding the barriers to girls’ education; factors contributing in narrowing gender and social gaps in enrolment and achievement in primary education; extent of gender and social disparities in access to secondary education; factors determining achievement in secondary education. It was concluded that India must complete the task of bringing primary education to all and must deal with the most marginalized and hard to reach. Targeted demand-side interventions addressing the needs of each sub group are needed to bring all children into the school system—and keep them there. Also, India must raise student achievement in primary schools. To achieve gender and social parity in secondary education, India must improve its public schools. Since parents are hesitant to send their daughters to private schools because of the costs involved, improving government schools would give girls particularly from poor or disadvantaged section provide a better chance to succeed.

Bhalotra and Bernanda (2008) in a recent study described growth in school enrolment and completion rates for boys and girls in India and the extent to which enrolment and completion rates have grown over time. It suggested that the number of elementary schools has a positive effect in attendance but no effect on completion.
The ratio of female to male teachers in primary schools encourages attendance though, unexpectedly, this effect is not larger for girls than for boys. The overall conclusion of the study is that attaining the Millennium Development Goals for education is extremely unlikely in the poor states and as a result India as a whole.

Bhasin (2008) while analysing India's position in terms of attaining the Millennium Development Goals concluded that India has done remarkably well in improving access to primary education, especially for girls. The big thrust to primary education, through Sarv Siksha Abhiyan and mid-day-meal scheme is paying off as primary school enrolment reached 94 per cent in 2006, from only 72 per cent in 1991. In India, from 77 girls for every 100 boys enrolled in 1991, it has risen to 96 girls in 2006.

Desai and Kulkarni (2008) examined the changes in educational attainment between various social groups for a period of nearly 20 years (1983-2000) to see whether educational inequalities have declined over time. The questions that were addressed are have educational differences between dalit, adivasi, and other groups declined over time?; if there is a decline in educational differences is it consistent across different educational levels or is it disproportionately concentrated at certain educational stages?; is the decline in educational differences concentrated in groups that are subject to affirmative action, the dalits and adivasis, or is it shared by other disadvantaged groups, such as Muslims?; do the benefits of affirmative action, if any, percolate to lower-income groups, or are they limited to the “creamy layers” of the dalit and adivasi populations? The data from a large national sample survey of over 100,000 households for each of the four survey years—1983, 1987–1988, 1993–1994, and 1999–2000 was used with a focus on the educational attainment of children and young adults aged 6–29. The results showed a declining gap between dalits, adivasis, and others in the odds of completing primary school. Such improvement was not seen for Muslims, a minority group that does not benefit from affirmative action. A little improvement is seen in inequality at the college level. Further, no evidence was found that upper-income groups, the so-called creamy layer of dalits and adivasis, disproportionately benefit from the affirmative action programmes at the expense of their lower-income counterparts.

Dholakia and Iyenger (2008) on the basis of the perusal of data from the household survey conducted by Planning Commission of below poverty line families in five states of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and
Karnataka, and their survey of primary schools for the same five states, concluded that there was a problem of access of the poor people living below poverty line to the primary education services in rural areas of these states. They found that the primary enrolment ratios among the children of poor households were considerably lower than the respective state averages and also the aggregate enrolment ratio of the country. They further highlighted that though the incentives, such as mid-day meals, free textbooks and cash subsidies given by the government schools to the poor children did reach them, yet the problem of insufficiently effective access of the poor to primary education still persisted. In this context there is a need to rethink at the policy level.

Sood (2008) has identified to inter-related issues that are significant in the context of defining appropriate entry age for primary education. The first one refers to the need for stabilization of school entry age at primary stage in the country in accordance with Article 21A on right to education that assumes class I age as 6 years. The second issue pertains to the State's, responsibility for provision of Early Child Care Education (ECCE) in the country. Using District Information System of Education (DISE) data, paper discussed the said issues for planning of primary and pre-primary education in the country. It is argued to have a standard primary entry age in the country which will not only give rise to homogeneous age cohorts and facilitate evolving of age-grade correspondence at primary and beyond that is also likely to boost planning of ECCE by fixing the exit age.

Zaidi (2008) analysed DISE data pertaining to basic facilities in primary and upper primary schools such as availability of buildings, number of classrooms, teachers, basic facilities etc. The analysis revealed that about 4 per cent primary schools and 12 per cent upper primary schools do not have buildings. There are 17.5 per cent primary schools and 7.7 per cent upper primary schools that have only one teacher. About 9-10 per cent primary and upper primary schools do not even have black boards. Moreover there are high inter-state variations in the provision of these facilities.

Asadullah et al. (2009) in their study analysed the size and nature of “boy-girl” and “Hindu-Muslim” gaps in children’s school participation and attainments in India. Individual-level data from two successive rounds of the National Sample Survey (i.e. 1983 and 2004) suggested that considerable progress has been made in decreasing the Hindu-Muslim gap. The gender gap is smaller within Muslim communities. While
differences in gender and other socio-economic covariates have important effect in Hindu-Muslim gap, those differences altogether explain only 25 per cent to 45 per cent of the observed schooling gap.

Chauhan (2009) analysed and assessed the progress of education for all (EFA) in India from 1985/1986 to 2005/2006. During this period, glaring disparities in schooling facilities based on rural–urban habitation, region, caste and gender existed despite substantial improvement in overall education scenario. About half of all the rural schools lacked physical facilities and suffered from shortage of teachers. While enrolment had apparently increased, three-fourths of enrolled children left school without completing elementary education. The progress of literacy was also not satisfactory with the literacy rate having increased marginally from 16 per cent in 1951 to an estimated 38 per cent in 1986. The literacy rates also exhibited disparities based on gender, caste, region and rural–urban location. After launching of the National Policy on Education 1986, the Government of India has made concerted efforts to achieve the goal of EFA by launching several new schemes, including expansion of non-formal education for out-of-school children, improvement of physical facilities in schools, implementation of a micro-planning strategy, the launch of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and the passage of a Bill in Parliament to make elementary education a ‘fundamental right’ of every child. Launching an ambitious new programme called the National Literacy Mission attacked the problem of illiteracy. However, the reports show that there are about 59 million out-of-school children; enrolment of girls is low; the dropout rate up to Class VIII is still high; school-age children work for wages; rural children have no easy access to schools; many schools still lack physical facilities; and there is a shortage of teachers and headmasters. The author suggested that India must revise its target date for achieving the goal of EFA at least once again and that the Government should carefully monitor the implementation of policies, and at the same time, enhance expenditure on education from the present 3.5 per cent to 6 per cent of the Gross National Product (GNP) as early as possible, so as to deal with the situation more effectively.

Chugh (2009) compared the progress of elementary education in high literacy states, viz. Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Mizoram and critically examines the current status using District Information System for Education (DISE); identified the factors that have been instrumental in bringing educational improvement in these states; tried to measure progress in terms of the literacy rates and other school performance
indicators like enrolment ratio, dropout rates, transition rates, examination results etc; and highlighted the contributing factors and circumstances responsible for the educational growth of these three states. Kerala has achieved almost the goal of universalisation of elementary education and the States of Himachal Pradesh and Mizoram have traversed a great path in this direction. In quantitative terms all the states have made a resounding success, which is evident from the figures on literacy rates, enrolment ratio, transition rates, etc. Active role of Christian missionaries, affirmative actions of the State as well as the community support have been the fuelling force for this significant mileage. In Kerala the contribution of missionaries, activists, reform movements especially among the backward classes, working class and the peasantry mobilisation have led to the rise in literacy level and enrolment of children. In Mizoram, too the activities of the Christian missionaries and the state initiative have been instrumental in improving the literacy level, schooling facilities and enrolments. Contrary to this, in Himachal Pradesh the State commitment towards education for all with a focus on disadvantaged groups and backward areas has brought the schooling revolution. It also argued that parental awareness; community involvement and greater investment in education have facilitated the more equitable educational growth in the state. It was concluded that the pathways to achieve UEE differ significantly from state to state and no single pathway can be considered to produce results. The pathways and strategies may have to be evolved in tandem with local conditions.

Kaur (2009) tried to explore the measures to enhance quality in teacher education programme. She recognized that quality of teacher education programme depended on the quality of teaching. For this there is an urgent need for a comprehensive review of the curriculum, teachers training in community health, guidance and counselling, research strategies, professional development and student support services. Every teacher educator should be trained and made competent in the use of ICT, internet, media and appropriate institutional technologies. She further pointed out that quality of teacher education programme also depended on the quality of teaching practice. But it is being neglected in the system as more emphasis is on the theory. Duration of the teaching practice is too short to provide sufficient experience and opportunity to the pupil teachers to understand all the aspects of the school programme.
Ram et al. (2009) analysed data from various sources such as census of India, NFHS, NSSO and AIES to assess the progress of the country and states of India in 13 indicators of MDGs using the data of recent past; forecast the trends of infant and child mortality based on past trends, and; understand the casual linkage of infant and child mortality on various factors, including the programmatic factors. The progress towards the universal primary education, measured by the Age Specific School Attendance Rate in the age group 6-10 years is encouraging. Except Bihar all states has performed better in improving the school attendance. Many of the states, which have shown lower rate of annual progress, have already had higher level in 1990s and so the marginal variation does not necessarily mean that the progress is slow. Most of the states except Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Assam, Gujarat and Punjab are lagging in the retention of children in primary school. The school enrolment in primary level is high but the primary school retention rate is low in many of the states. Gender inequality remains higher for the states where the level is low. However the youth literacy rate has not increased much during this period. It is due to emphasis on universal primary education in recent years. It is further noted that the states where the level of school enrolment is low, the extent of gender inequality is high.

Singh (2009) analysed the progress made by Uttar Pradesh in literacy. In the year 1991 the total percentage of literacy in the state was 40.71 per cent out of which 54.82 per cent was males and 45.78 per cent was females whereas as the same has risen to 56.27 per cent as per Census 2001 with male literacy rate at 68.82 per cent and female literacy rate 42.22 per cent. District-wise analysis brings out that the lowest literacy rate in the year 1991 was in Bahraich district (22.67%) whereas the highest literacy rate was Kanpur Nagar (63.95%), may be because Kanpur Nagar has been the industrial nerve of the state of Uttar Pradesh providing far larger employment opportunities to people, preferably to those who have been educated. As far the literacy percentage of males in 1991 the highest level was in Kanpur Nagar (72.92 per cent), which rose to 80.25 per cent in 2001. Likewise, the lowest percentage of literacy among males in 1991 was in Bahraich district (32.27 per cent) which in 2001 rose to 45.58 per cent. As for the male literacy rates, particularly in terms of decadal percentage increase during 1991-2001, the highest increase was again in Chitrakoot district. Likewise the minimum decadal percentage increase was Shravasti district.
Das (2007) carried out a supply-side analysis of the elementary education scenario in India. It was observed that the male literacy rates by gender followed almost the same pattern as the aggregate literacy rate, female literacy rates all over India presented a grim picture. Only a few states like Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Punjab have achieved a female literacy rate of more than 60 per cent; Kerala scored the highest percentage of 87.7 per cent followed by Maharashtra with 67 per cent, Tamil Nadu 64.4 per cent and Punjab 63.4 per cent. Also, the progress was not satisfactory enough to achieve the target of universal retention by 2010. A better teaching-learning atmosphere in the school and an increase in the quality of education would definitely attract more students to schools and also increase the retention rates. For this purpose, governments needed to augment their budgetary allocations for education and improve their level of efficiency in utilisation through innovative policy interventions.

2.4 FROM 2009 TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)-2015

Asadullah and Yalonetzky (2010) documented the extent of inequality of educational opportunity in India spanning the period 1983-2004 using National Sample Survey (NSS) data. Building on recent developments in the literature that has operationalised concepts in the inequality of opportunity theory (including Roemer’s) and by constructing two indices of inequality of educational opportunity using data on an adult sample it was concluded that the state of Kerala stands out as the least unequal in terms of educational opportunities. However, even after excluding Kerala, significant inter-state divergence remains amongst the remaining states. Transition matrix analysis confirmed substantial inter-temporal mobility in inequality of opportunity across India states. Rajasthan and Gujarat in the West and Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in the Centre experienced large-scale fall in the ranking of inequality of opportunities. However, despite being poor, Eastern states of West Bengal and Orissa made significant progress in reducing inequality of opportunity. At a region level, Southern, Northeastern and Eastern regions on average experienced upward mobility in terms of decline in inequality of opportunity whilst Central region experienced downward mobility.

Pandey and Singh (2010) studied the impact of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan on elementary education in Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh. It was observed that due to
access of primary school facilities under SSA, enrolment at primary level had increased to 73.96 per cent. Enrolment of girls was 77.8 per cent, which was 7 per cent more than the enrolment of boys. This was due to free uniforms given to all girl children enrolled in primary schools. Enhancement in Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) has also been seen. Moreover, enrolment of boys and girls increased a lot due to access of upper primary school facility to all habitations within the radius of 3 km under SSA. However, the percentage of enrolment of girls was more than boys because of the incentives given to girl students. Also growth in all the educational indicators clearly reflects that functionaries of SSA in Sagar district have done a remarkable job in achieving the same under universalisation of elementary education.

To understand the inertia of prevalent discrimination, Ray and Majumder (2010) examined the extent of intergenerational mobility in both educational and occupational attainments for different ethnic groups in India. The results indicated strong intergenerational stickiness in both educational achievement and occupational division among schedule castes and schedule tribes. The study suggested that occupational mobility is lower than educational mobility, indicating a mismatch between enhanced educational achievements and lack of improved occupational opportunities. This calls for targeted action to improve educational situation among excluded classes. Encouraging occupational diversification is also an important policy suggestion.

Kumar (2010) reviewed the broad human development trends in South Asian region over the last twenty years (1990-2009) and identified the changing patterns, the region’s persisting sluggish performance on human development indicators in general as well as country-specific intra-country variations, along with explanations towards the same. The paper also looked into different models of development that the countries within the region have followed; their fall-outs and their respective attempts to overcome challenges through various social protection policies. What comes across as a specific characteristic of the region is the phenomena of continuing socio-economic exclusion of a certain set of people on the basis of caste, ethnicity, religion and gender. Indian state is a good example. It argued that while a direct attack on poverty through social protection is necessary, it is in the overall paradigm of development that the inclusion of the poor is extremely urgent. In this sense, what needs to be done is both at the level of state to create grounds for social, political and economic transformations and at the level of the civil society, to destabilize the
informal networks of caste and other identities which continue to sustain an exclusionary hierarchical structure.

Siddique and Hussain (2010) analysed educational attainment by sex and religion based on primary data generated through stratified random sampling with the selection of 80 villages at five per cent from rural areas and seven mohallas from the urban areas of Malda district during January to June 2009. A total of 10 per cent households (2,390 rural and 200 urban) were surveyed. The educational attainment in Malda district at the block level is analysed with special emphasis on females (literacy rate, educational attainment and enrolment). The study revealed that Hindu women have a better educational status as compared to Muslim women at the household level while the situation was the reverse in gender gap. Inter-block disparity is rampant in the district. Blocks such as Bamongola and Gazol, in spite of having good educational facilities, have not been able to transform the development efforts to bridge the gender gap in education. Blocks with high literacy rates have a low male-female literacy gap in both religions. The higher the literacy, the higher was the female work participation rate. The female enrolment rate was below the male rate in spite of universalisation of primary education and provision of mid-day meal schemes. It concluded that socio-religious norms and educational facilities hinder women’s education in particular and empowerment in general. Progress in women’s education has been achieved through government programmes and NGOs’ efforts.

Sinha and Reddy (2010) studied the problem of dropouts and understand factors responsible for children being pushed out of school. The states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh are still amongst the states that have the largest percentage of children not attending schools in 1991 and 2001. States like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh have improved their rankings. However, Haryana, Gujarat, Karnataka and Mizoram have maintained approximately the same rank. Rajasthan is one of the two states that have seen highest jump in attendance ratio. The study suggests that schools should be given autonomy to absorb older students, cater to the needs of migrant students, girl children, SC and ST students.

Bandyopadhyay and Subrahmanian (2011) reviewed the trends and factors in gender equity in education during six years between National Family and Health Survey (NFHS)-1 (1992-1993) and NFHS-2 (1998-1999). The study revealed that though there has been significant improvement in literacy levels and particularly in
the reduction of female illiteracy during the decade 1991-2001. In spite of improvements in general literacy rates, the gender gap still persists. Along with literacy, significant improvement has been recorded in primary and elementary enrolments. The school enrolment of girls takes a varied form across the states. There has been a significant increase in girls’ enrolment in Rajasthan, U.P., M.P., Andhra Pradesh and Bihar that had initial low level of enrolments. States such as Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab, Kerala and Tamil Nadu had high level of enrolments initially and continue to increase during 1993-1999. However these states are still far from realising the goal of Universal Primary Education.

An analysis of Census of India (2011) shows that amongst the Northwest states selected for the study, Haryana (76.64 per cent), Himachal Pradesh (83.78 per cent) and Punjab (76.68 per cent) had literacy rates more than the national average (74.04 per cent). Himachal Pradesh is among the high achieving states whereas Haryana and Punjab are among the average achievers. The remaining two states- Jammu & Kashmir (68.74 per cent) and Rajasthan (67.06 per cent) are among the low achieving states. It is the scenario for male and female literacy rates as well. Himachal Pradesh is the only state among the selected five to maintain the rank in literacy rate since 2001 whereas Punjab is the only state out of all the 35, which has shown a decline of five points in literacy ranking from 16 in 2001 to 21 in 2011. This suggests that large variations in literacy exist even between contiguous states. While there are a few states at the top and bottom, most states are just above or below the national average. Moreover, it is observed that Rajasthan with highest population (6,86,21,012) among the selected states have lowest literacy rate and Himachal Pradesh with least population (68,56,509) has highest literacy rate. Punjab and Haryana on the other hand having moderate population (2,77,04,236 and 2,53,53,081 respectively) also show moderate literacy rate as compared to national average. Jammu & Kashmir, though having population almost half of Haryana (1,25,48,926), is showing low achievement in terms of literacy. The male-female sex ratio in India is 940, which means there are 940 females per 1000 males. Among the selected states, Himachal Pradesh has highest sex ratio (974) followed by Rajasthan (926) and Punjab (893). Least sex ratio has been recorded in Haryana (877), which is also the lowest sex ratio among all the Indian states.

Hill and Chalaux (2011) opined that though the rights of all children to free and compulsory education will improve enrolment, bringing closer the governments
goal of universal elementary education, but high drop-out rates and low attendance is still a concern at primary levels and enrolment at upper primary levels remained modest by international standards. They further pointed out that poor learning outcomes amongst school students called for more effective governance and funding mechanism.

Hussain (2011) analysed the geographical variations in gender disparities in completing school education in India. It was found that gender disparities are higher in northern states in rural areas. In rural areas of Northern India, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh have low levels of gender disparity comparable to that of even Southern states. This contrast with substantial levels was observed in Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh. In urban areas, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Chandigarh have low gender disparities. On the other hand Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh exhibit high levels of disparity along with eastern states. The divergence in regional pattern of gender disparity from patterns observed for demographic and health indicators shows that gender discrimination is a complex multi-layered phenomenon and the interaction between these layers may assume unexpected forms.

Jayakumar (2011) critically analysed the contractual employment of teachers in Delhi government schools by looking at contract teacher performance and their impact on student learning. It was found that contract teachers perform just as well as regular teachers and deliver similar results in terms of learning outcomes. The paper highlighted that despite their reasonable performance and the low cost involved in employing them, the solution is not hiring more and more teachers on contractual basis, as has become the norm in many fiscally constrained states. Tenure and financial incentives play a major role in teacher motivation and in the long run, are very important to elicit superior performance from teachers.

Maulick (2011) studied the literacy trends in India over the span of fifty years i.e. from 1951 to 2001 and further compares the progress made by different states from 2001 to 2011. The analyses revealed that India’s literacy rate has shot up during the last decade, from 64.8 per cent in 2001 to 74.04 per cent in 2011. Now except Bihar (63.82 per cent) all other states lie above the 2001 national average of 64.8 per cent. Role of different programmes initiated by the government for promotion of literacy was also examined and it was concluded that despite of massive efforts by the government, India is still lagging behind the world literacy rate of 84 per cent. But the
2011 census showed that with the active role of stakeholders towards the promotion of literacy, India is sure to stride towards the path of complete literacy.

Naik (2011) analysed the first set of provisional results of India's census 2011 and concluded that the overall literacy rate in the country has climbed from 64.83 per cent in 2001 to 74.04 per cent. While literacy among males rose from 75.26 per cent to 82.14 per cent (an increase of 6.9 points), among females, it rose from 53.67 per cent to 65.46 per cent (an increase of 11.8 points). The significant improvement in the overall literacy rate is no doubt the most encouraging news. The nearly 12 per cent jump in female literacy is all the more laudable. During the last 10 years, roughly 21 crore literates were added to the country’s population. There is reason to believe that the ambitious scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) introduced by the government in 2001 to ensure that all children between six and 14 age attended school along with the mid-day meal scheme for the children has made a difference. The SSA had aimed at achieving universal primary education by 2007 and universal elementary education by 2010. While the improved literacy rate over the past decade is laudable, it may be pointed out that there has been some slippage in achieving the targets. For instance, the rise in the literacy rate during the decade is still short of the target set by the Planning Commission to raise the total literacy rate in the country to 85 per cent by 2011-12. Now thanks to the introduction of the Right to Education Act, the Union HRD Minister Mr. Kapil Sibal has exuded confidence that India will be able to attain total literacy over the next 10 years.

Sedwal and Kamat (2011) examined issues concerning school access and equity for SC and ST groups and also highlight their unique problems, which may require divergent policy responses. Analysis of official data revealed that the educational progress of SC and ST population has been remarkable but only when one remains focused on the quantitative data and particularly enrolment. The literacy gap between the general population and the SC and ST population groups has reduced. However, there continues a huge gap in terms of rural and urban literacy rates for two groups. The overall low average literacy level of country and especially among SC and ST groups continues to aggravate the situation. One important aspect of these inequalities is the vast difference between states. Among other states, Himachal Pradesh has recorded lowest dropout rates for SC/ST students and Haryana for SC students. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and EFA have given attention
to gender issues but have not acknowledged the problem of casteism in a similar manner. Hence, teacher education programmes, in-service teacher training, and teacher recruitment policies need to be the centre of research policy and agenda.

Singh (2011) explored the gender issues in elementary education in Punjab. Enrolment and achievement level of the students across gender was also studied in the sampled students in the primary and upper primary schools in urban as well as rural areas of the state. During the survey, a general belief prevailed among the most households that privately run schools are better than the government schools and, therefore, most of these parents preferred private schools for male children while government schools for the female children. The data on enrolment also revealed that there is gender discrimination in enrolling children to schools. There is clear-cut gap in the rate of the enrolment of girls than that of boys. However, it was refreshing to note that the academic performance of girls, by and large, was better than the boys both at the primary as well as at the upper primary levels.

Tandon (2012) reported that in Punjab close to 50,000 children are out of school and more than one lakh disabled in need of inclusive education. In all, there are 122 habitations with no primary or upper primary school in the neighbourhood to enable children to access free and compulsory education mandated by the Right to Education (RTE) Act. Although the overall gross enrolment ratio (GER) is impressive for primary schools where 94.23 per cent of the targeted population is enrolled (95.32 per cent being boys and 92.90 per cent being girls), the GER for upper primary is low at 76.79 per cent (79.99 per cent for boys and 73.05 per cent for girls). A significant pointer is the dropout ratio which shows more boys than girls are dropping out at the last level of both primary and upper primary schools. Total dropout rate at primary level (class V) is 2.01 per cent (2.13 per cent for boys and 1.88 per cent for girls). Total dropout rate for upper primary (at level VIII) is 1.51 (1.85 per cent for boys and 1.18 per cent for girls).

Abraham and Dubey (2013) critically analysed the literacy efforts in India since independence. It was concluded that a combination of ambitious goals, insufficient and parallel efforts, inadequate resources, flop strategies, and continued underestimation of the magnitude and complexity of the task are the reasons for the unmet goal of universal literacy. Lessons learnt over previous decades, show that
achieving the goal of universal literacy needs not only more effective and collective efforts but also a refreshed political will to implement the strategies differently but efficiently catering the local, national and international needs. The need for a mass movement for universal literacy and education was highlighted if the goal of universal literacy were to be met.

Govinda and Mathew (2013) traced the trajectory of the non-formal education (NFE) programme in India. It was noted that non-formal education in India in the 1970s, was a product of two problems that were encountered in the journey to Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) as the Constitutional mandate- one of drop out and other of non-enrolment of children in the formal education system. It was further asserted that the supersession of NFE by EGS as well as the closure of all AIE initiatives closed the option and opportunity for education for the out of school children at their convenience. Though at the policy level, the scheme offered, flexibility, adjustability and suitability to the target groups’ life situation and needs; endowing the NFE centres with modern technological tools like solar panels and lights, AV aids, radio- cassette players; selection of local youth with idealism, and investing in them best training for learner-friendly pedagogy. But, in actual practice, most centres did not have anything other than a small black board; the entire onus of surveying, motivating and mobilizing the learners, finding a location for Centre, with or without community help and involvement and running it, fell on the Instructor, who was under trained, under paid and never really enjoyed any respectful image within the system or in the society. Both before 2000 when it enjoyed a distinct identity as well as after 2000 when EGS & AIE were brought under its rubric, NFE did not enjoy even one-forth of the resources given to formal primary education, despite repeated pleas for parity in resource allocation for the scheme and remuneration of its instructors and Supervisors.

Tandon (2015) in the article analysed the status of education development across Indian states in context of Right to Education (RTE) 2009. It was observed that 3.45 crore students remain out of school, school infrastructure targets were far from being met, 5 lakh teacher vacancies still existed and contract hiring of teachers continued. Though enrolment in schools had improved to 1,990 lakh (of the total 2,330 lakh six to 14 year olds), the RTE remained more a right to school than to
quality education especially when there is huge shortage of teachers and presence of untrained teachers. Out of the total schools 80.20 per cent were government schools. Primary level pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) was unacceptably high in Bihar, Delhi and Jharkhand, where over 40 per cent schools were non-compliant with the PTR requirement of 1:30. At upper primary level, the PTR was 1:35, but 15.35 per cent schools across India remained non-complaint. This percentage was 27.46 in 2013. Moreover, while the dropout rates at primary level fell from 5.6 per cent in 2013 to 4.7 per cent in 2014, the corresponding rates for upper primary classes VI to VIII rose from 2.65 to 3.13. All schools had to be recognized as over 21,000 still unrecognized; all schools had to set up management panels with parents only 96 per cent have; and elementary education had to be free; many schools charging tuition fee, etc.

United Nations (2015) accessed India’s performance on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) till 2015 that forms a basis for its progress towards achieving sustainable development for all. It concluded that India has made notable progress towards reaching the MDGs but achievement across the goals varies. Though India has already achieved gender parity in primary school enrolment (Goal 3) and is likely to reach parity in secondary and tertiary education also by December 2015. It is lagging behind on targets for achieving universal primary school enrolment and completion and achieving universal youth literacy by 2015. The report further noted that achieving universal primary education will require scaling up efforts to reach the most excluded groups such as Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), among other vulnerable segments of populations, particularly in states that have fallen behind; provide instruction in the mother tongue of students; ensure that children are enrolled at the official age of entry to primary school; encourage early childhood education; improve accountability of teachers, and accord priority to improving learning outcomes. Also, interventions needed are stepping up resources to basic education, which remains low by international norms; supporting states with funds; and improving efficiency in use of public resources. More attention is also needed on regular assessment of teachers’ performance and providing them incentives linked to improvement in students’ learning. States must increase the teacher-pupil ratio, particularly in remote and disadvantaged areas. Finally, efforts to encourage participation of non-public players, such as civil society and the private sector, parents
and communities must be prioritized.

Summing up the above research studies, some conclusions regarding different facets of educational development in India to meet the constitutional obligation of universal elementary education and for this planned stress on adult education for evolving literate and egalitarian society are briefly stated as under and thematically presented in table 2.1.

- Literacy campaigns and other initiatives for educational development have created awareness among the masses and have also contributed towards the educational development of all (Mehta, 2002; Prem Chand, 2004; Jha, 2007; Bhasin, 2008; Maulick, 2011; Naik, 2011; Abraham & Dubey, 2013).
- Inspite of different programmes and interventions at national and state level Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) is a distant dream (Kothari, 2004) and presents a mixed picture of success and failure (Bolashetty and Girija, 2004; Jha, 2007; Kingdon, 2007; United Nations, 2015).
- Gaps in educational attainment do exist in terms of gender and location (Dutt, 1996; Filmer and Pritchett, 1999; Grover and Bharadwaj, 2002; Raghavendra and Narayana, 2004; Mukherjee, 2005; Siddiqui and Hussain, 2010; Singh, 2011). Moreover gender parity is a distant prospect for India (Kainth, 2006; Bhalotra and Bernanda, 2008).
- Considerable inter- and intra-state variations exist in India in terms of income and educational development (Dutt, 1996; Filmer and Pritchett, 1999; Deaton and Dreze, 2002, Kainth, 2006; Ramachandran, 2004; Sedwal and Kamat, 2008; Sinha and Reddy, 2011; Tandon, 2015).
- There is need for region-specific policies in education, as a common policy idea will not serve the purpose and will not lead towards the attainment of desired goals (Sarkar, 1984; Indira, 1999; Chathley, 1995; Chadha, 2007; Chugh, 2009; Asadullah and Yalonetzky, 2010).
- Large variations in literacy exist even between contiguous states (Chathley, 1995 and Census of India, 2011).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Key Concerns/Focus Areas</th>
<th>Programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987-2001</td>
<td>Universal schooling, Adult Education, Disparities, Commercialisation of Education</td>
<td>National Literacy Mission; DPEP; SSA; MDM; MLL; Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2015</td>
<td>Inclusive Growth, Quality of Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>MDGs; SDGs; Skill Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>