Chapter - 8

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis of the statistical data and the interpretations discussed in the foregoing chapters enable us to draw certain conclusions which can be further generalised in the light of samples and the methodology employed for the purpose. The main findings which have come out from analysis of District Primary Education Programme in Haryana have wide ranging implications both for the researchers in the field of primary education and for the administrators and policy implementers of the DPEP. On the basis of these conclusions, further implications of the study pointing out the gaps can be suggested which may require further studies. However, it would not be possible for the Researcher to take upon this additional task and only future researches can throw light on those issues. Hence this chapter would deal with the main findings, their implications and recommendations in the relevant areas as well as improving upon the implementation of the District Primary Education Programme. The exercise of analysis would be incomplete unless some relevant suggestions are given in addition to recommendations made on all important issues. Accordingly, the main findings of the study on the basis of analysis done and some recommendations/suggestions emanating from the study are listed below:

Organisational setup

There is no gainsaying that an efficient and effective organisational framework is the key to the success of DPEP activities. The study reveals that the organisational structure at the state level was evolved keeping in view the pitfalls of a traditional Govt. Deptt./agency
saddled with bureaucratic ethos & hassles. It was based on a Mission approach having all the essential ingredients of a Matrix organisation, viz. flexibility, autonomy, non-permanence and innovativeness. The top policy-making organ viz. the General Council, comprising functionaries of Union/State Govt., political executives, eminent educationists etc. which was to meet at least once in a year to give policy directions, the study depicts, was not, however, constituted ever since the Programme launched in the state in the year 1994 until the year 2000 when it was almost at the fag-end of its first phase. In the absence of any specific Guidelines, the Executive Council - an inner body of the General Council, failed to effectively monitor, oversee and review the progress of the Programme largely due to lack of enough enthusiasm and firm commitment of the members. As a result, the ultimate responsibility for operationalizing DPEP activities remained confined to the State Project Director - a Govt. functionary from All India Services. Here again, the successive postings/transfers of SPDs were all at the full discretion of the state Govt. without taking into account their educational profile, work experience and taste in the field of Educational Administration. More so, inspite of functional differentiation, the organisational design remained static.

However, the silver lining in organisational framework was with regard to decentralization of powers up to the village level structures, non-interference of state Finance Deptt. in financial matters, micro-level planning at grass-roots and efforts in trying to achieve the desired goals and objectives. In the light of above findings, the study suggests that the existing organisational structure inspite of having inherent strengths of a Matrix Form, was not conducive enough to undertake speedy growth and success of the challenging task of Primary Education and hence, the
hypothesis - “The existing organisational structure without adequate delegation to field functionaries is not conducive to the growth of DPEP”, stands proved. It is suggested that in future, there must not be any time-lag in constituting the General Council. The criteria for non-official membership nomination should be based on their proven experience, exposure and interest in furthering the cause of Primary Education. The Council ought to meet frequently to undertake policy issues and also initiate mid-term appraisals for constant monitoring and rectifications. As regards, the Chief Executive, i.e., S.P.D., he must be appointed for a fixed tenure of at least 2-3 years for ensuring continuity in administrative activities. The incumbent not necessarily from All India Services, must have the aptitude and exposure to Educational Administration. He may be given a free hand to chose his team of trusted, devoted and dedicated functionaries and made accountable for the results (both quantitative and qualitative). He must establish vertical and horizontal linkages both within and outside his organisation to achieve optimum results. The control over field administration should also be streamlined through computer-aided MIS network. Finally, the State Govt. would be doubly benefited as the existing staff would be matrixed-out to their respective departments on the completion of time-bound Project being converted as on-going activity of the Education Deptt. and consequently, the State would be saved from the recurring liability for the manpower especially in view of the gravity of financial crunch being faced on almost all fronts. The experiment of Mission approach/Matrix organisation may also be replicated not only in Non-DPEP Districts, but also in other Govt. Departments.
Personnel Training

Training is a crucial input in the success of any programme and the study reveals that DPEP strategy provided for regular and structured training programmes for its personnel. The training mode of DPEP personnel included assessment of training needs and training practices for various categories. There was satisfactory networking amongst National and State training institutions regarding training inputs, training strategies, training packages and tools adopted.

In the case of teachers, who are central to the Programme, the strategy adopted was two tier cascade model for training so that transmission losses were minimized and this has worked well at the field level. Master Trainers had been trained by State Resource Group(SRG) so that there was uniformity in their training and the quality ensured. Apparently, uniformity prevailed in all the DPEP districts.

It is further revealed that Training Modules were developed for conducting training in a workshop mode with flexibility and participation. The noticeable achievement in this regard has been that the training programmes have been found to be linked to classroom transaction processes and lay emphasis on activity-based, child-centred and joyful teaching learning methods. Another achievement of DPEP strategy has been creation and usage of low cost teaching learning material which has been made integrated component of training techniques. This innovative exercise has been quite popular with the teachers and it has helped in utilising talent of teachers in creative manner. Since children with mild and moderate disabilities were targeted to be brought in the main stream by enrolling them in normal schools, a separate package was developed and 19,000 teachers at Block and cluster
levels were trained for detection of their disabilities and use of aid for such children.

The ongoing in-service training programme has been further supplemented by Distance Education learning inputs. The programme is being implemented by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) as the lead agency in collaboration with NCERT which has provided expertise in training inputs. DPEP has thus provided training through teleconferencing mode to teachers, CRCs, BRCs and VEC members. This has in fact provided a new dimension to the training programme and with development of print, audio and video material for training, vast opportunities have been ensured for future interventions.

The sub-district level structures like BRCs and CRCs, which are nearest to the teachers in providing on the spot support in solving their teaching problems have already been operationalized but their full potentials need to be further exploited. BRCs had been organizing regular in-service training programmes in their respective blocks and the coverage of teachers had been almost full. But the Cluster level activation where individual interaction with teachers is possible for solving hard spots, need to be further activated.

In the area of training for non-academic personnel and community members there have been satisfactory efforts under DPEP to provide them necessary skills through structured training for handling DPEP inputs. Civil Engineers, Managerial staff and M.I.S. personnel were given useful training through state level and national level workshops. The community members representing Panchyats, VECs and PTAs have also been provided with training inputs at SCERT, DIETs and BRCs so that they could effectively participate in school management, oversee civil works and perform their role as per DPEP guidelines.
The DPEP training strategy which included the activity of strengthening of existing capacities of training institutions has helped in capacity building of state and district level training institutions. SCERT and DIETs have been helped with both financial and academic inputs. Latest training equipments, books and other training facilities have been supplemented at these institutions along with trained Faculty and manpower to handle training needs effectively. Similarly, State Institute of Educational Management and Training has been set up under DPEP for providing training programmes in planning and management techniques for educational administrators. SIEMT has developed modules and conducted training programmes for middle level educational planners and administrators. However, the infrastructure of SIEMT in the shape of equipments and books is presently not adequate and needs to be upgraded and supplemented. The capacity of SIEMT needs to be further utilized in developing modules and organizing more training courses. In the light of above findings, the study reveals that DPEP personnel inspite of scope for further activation, evinced did not lack zeal in training themselves to achieve the goal of primary education and also lot of interest to orient themselves with the latest educational techniques and strategies through regular training and resultantly the latest learning techniques in DPEP districts have led to improvement in learning atmosphere and attainment of competencies. In fact in the DPEP basket, which has a mix of successes and failures, Personnel Training is a success story. On this basis, the hypotheses No.3 & 4 have been negated.

It is suggested that to make the Training programme more effective at field level i.e. BRCs & CRCs, both these sub-district structures need to be further strengthened through various inputs especially print material, as these bodies are closest to the teachers and they have
maximum role in solving problems of teachers in their day to day matters. To have optimum results from training programmes, it is suggested that DPEP functionaries at each level should be given training at regular intervals so that they show sufficient initiative and capacity to shoulder responsibilities and tackle local issues at their own level. Besides, the future components of training programmes may include more emphasis on modern pedagogy like teleconferencing, audio and video script writing, orientation of functionaries towards the potential benefits of Distance Education technique to supplement traditional class room practices. In addition there is need to have an effective and constant monitoring mechanism at the Headquarter by strengthening the Training Wing in the office of S.P.D. The Training Wing must keep on updating the training needs by feedback mechanism and networking with state level and renowned national level training institutions. Based on this information, a long lasting comprehensive training policy needs to be evolved for future components of training programme.

Further, in order to ensure that DPEP training strategy is not a one time exercise and the gains are not only retained but multiplied on a sustainable basis, the capacity of State training institutions which has been strengthened through DPEP inputs should be done on a permanent basis.

**DPEP Financing**

Despite recognition of education as a crucial investment for all round development and distribution of benefits in all important spheres of life, the pattern of resource allocation in Haryana has been far from satisfactory. Haryana having a growing economy at par with all India trend still depends on Central Government for finances. However, Union Govt. transfers as usual are not sufficient leading to revenue
expenditure deficit. Haryana spends lowest revenue expenditure of about 16-17% on education and where under non-plan expenditure constitutes around 90% thereby leaves hardly 10% share on plan activities. Even out of this expenditure, the major portion is on secondary and higher education unlike high performing States like Kerala, where emphasis is on primary/elementary education. It was solely to bridge this gap that the state has been covered under DPEP financing for 7 districts in two phases.

The financial performance even under DPEP has, not been very satisfactory. The study reveals that although there were frequent delays in release of Union Govt. share (85%), the State Govt. (15% share) was to be equally blamed for such delays. Surprisingly the allotted funds were never utilised in entirety in the given financial year and were carried over to next year (violating Rule of Lapse Principle). As a result, project period had to be extended repeatedly. In Phase-I, if the expenditure incurred up to 2000-01 was about 70% of approved outlay and 98.8% of available grants, in Phase-II, instead of showing better performance on the basis of experience gained during Phase-I, the expenditure was 65% of the approved outlay and 93.24% of available grants. Undoubtedly, the performance instead of improving has further gone down on financial front, and thus arrangement of external funding has not brought about any optimum results and hence Hypothesis No. 7 has been proved on this basis.

On further analysing the expenditure pattern, it was shocking to found that expenditure on civil works (24% allocation) in Phase-I was to the tune of 95% as against 70% of the allocated amount in Phase-II. The only silver-lining was involvement of community evinced keen interest. Its share on civil works expenditure shot up from 25% in Phase-I to 65% in Phase-II in works like construction of school buildings
and other amenities. The village community besides putting finances supervised the construction works, brought about economy and quality as well.

The expenditure on management (establishment) to be restricted upto 6% of total allocations too exceeded to around 10.15% in Phase-I but slowly came-down under control to 6.66% in Phase-II. In other words, there was hardly any monitoring mechanism to keep a check on this unproductive expenditure to be spent for the essential inputs. Component-wise analysis is a testimony that no serious efforts were made to fully utilize the allocated amount on pedagogical activities - the mainstay of DPEP Programme. Failure to achieve the desired targets under sub components of Pedagogical Activities, has been one of the stumbling blocks for DPEP to ensure its steady performance. Another important finding of the study is that disparities have cropped up between DPEP and non-DPEP districts for obvious reasons such as additional quantum of DPEP funds for civil works, local capacity building of community, timely provision for pedagogical activities etc. which were hitherto-fore not available in non-DPEP districts and on this basis Hypothesis No.6 has also been proved. The study however affirms that even if DPEP is wound up, a recurring expenditure of Rs.8.30 crores per annum from State exchequer can ensure sustainability of the primary education to disseminate the gains of DPEP teaching learning techniques in Non-DPEP districts.

It is suggested that Haryana State ought to allocate increased percentage of its SDP towards education on the analogy of progressive States like Kerala. Again the stress must be towards primary/elementary education by adjusting intra-sectoral priorities so as to achieve the goal of Universal Primary/ Elementary Education at the latest. At the same time,
both the Union and State Governments must be prevailed upon to release funds in time so that project works do not suffer for want of money. Further, the management expenditure must be kept within the prescribed ceiling to ensure economy on non-productive expenditure and avoiding any cuts into assigned allocations for developmental activities. In order to tap more resources, Panchayats and community members may also be motivated to contribute liberally for school activities. In urban areas, community structures especially, Municipal Bodies, NGOs and other such institutions be involved for this noble cause of achieving Universalization of Elementary/Primary Education. Lastly, there is an urgent need to keep an eagle eye on the propriety of the expenditure incurred on each activity by strengthening internal audit system at DPEP headquarters.

**DPEP Activities**

DPEP major activities revolve around four major components viz. Infrastructure development, equity for disadvantaged groups, quality improvement and institutional development. Its efforts have culminated in creation of extra accommodation for students enrolment, conducive environment for attracting and retaining children, enhancing students learning levels through quality education and institutional networking. To be more specific, existing school buildings have not only been renovated, but additional school rooms have also been constructed. Boundary walls, safe drinking water facilities, separate toilets for girls etc. - an essential requirement to make school atmosphere safe and comfortable, have been provided. Parents no more feel reluctant to send their wards especially girls to schools. Besides, almost hundred percent utilization of school grants has improved the school environment. Child friendly elements in construction have also added a new dimension to the friendly school atmosphere. Hitherto, disabled, uninterested and
non-serious students who used to stay away from schools are lured by soothing and innovative ecology. Hypothesis No. 2 has, therefore, been rejected on this basis.

Introduction of latest learning techniques and incentive schemes have further helped in better retention, less dropout and raising the competency levels of the students especially the girls and disadvantaged groups like SC/ST and disabled children. These efforts have further been supplemented by revision of curriculum based on MLL, and development of teaching learning material (including textbooks and workbooks) based on new approaches. However, despite these inputs, the traditional lecture mode has yet to be fully replaced by participatory approach. In the area of institutional development, capacity at all levels has been strengthened with trained faculty and modern training equipments. As a result, local level capacity building (at BRCs, CRCs and VECs) is quite visible having more knowledge and vision to take up any odd responsibilities. Accordingly, Hypothesis No. 5 has not been proved on this basis.

The study suggests that there is still a vast scope to bridge gap between demand & supply front so far as school accommodation is concerned. This calls for augmentation of strenuous efforts both by the community in general and DPEP in particular to procure necessary funds and land and undertake construction activity on war-footing. The school surroundings can further be improved by providing modern facilities like dual desks, reading rooms, T.V. rooms, playing equipments etc. Similarly, disabled children, and students from socially disadvantaged groups be brought in the mainstream by further increasing IED (Integrated Education for Disabled) centres in DPEP districts.
Further more, the process of curriculum updating, development of books, learning techniques and technology would have to be made more broad based and need based to take the on-slaughters of fast changing technology as also to capture interests of the beneficiaries. Above all, DPEP may initiate measures for a greater interface and networking with reputed academic/research institutions to keep itself abreast of the latest developments on primary education.

**Community Participation**

Community mobilization and participation is one of the hallmarks of DPEP in Haryana. The study shows high level of community participation through members of Gram Panchayats, VECs, parents and Village Community. The Village Community has played an assertive and supervisory role in managing civil works, community mobilization, and motivating parents to send their children to schools. However, voluntary contributions for construction of school buildings and other activities, have not been very significant. Community mobilisation made a headway by literacy campaigns and forums like Kala Jathas, folk and cultural groups as well as through rallies, workshops, meetings, Maa-Beti Melas and camps. Print media, audio-visuals, Radio, Television and News letters have further supplemented efforts for mass mobilization. VECs and its sub-committees – VCCs were constituted by nominating members out of a cross-section of the Village Community to supervise construction activities. A notable achievement in this direction has been the publication of a booklet giving details of specifications for different constructional activities, details of materials, designs etc. for their guidance. The VECs comprising 50% women and most of them being educated have emerged as vibrant institutions at village level. These have been found to be taking keen interest in school improvement activities through utilization of
school grants and arranging necessary infrastructure. In fact capacity building of VECs has taken place successfully through training programmes and their practical involvement with various educational needs at the local level. Presently the village community appears to be in a healthy position in planning exercise and executing schemes for advancement of primary education.

PTAs have also been extensively formed to participate in school activities and suggest improvements. However, very few PTAs were found to be active. In comparison to PTAs, most of the MTAs have yet to be formed or exist only on paper i.e. almost non-functional. Overall, the hypothesis that community in general has not evinced interest in achieving primary education targets, stands rejected.

It is, however, suggested that sustained efforts in community mobilization in addition to strengthening of VECs need to be developed effectively between community and DPEP functionaries. The empowerment of women out of illiterate and semi-literate categories has also to be brought under VEC umbrella. VEC members would have to be trained through structured training on micro-planning, school mapping and maintenance of accounts, to bring more transparency in construction works. Finally, PTAs and MTAs having pro-active members would have to be rejuvenated for taking active interest in school activities.

Case Study

Case Study on prominent educational indicators viz. access, retention and dropout etc. of a DPEP versus Non-DPEP District provides startling revelations. Despite DPEP inputs, educational improvements in DPEP district compared to Non-DPEP district, were not visible. More so, within the DPEP district, on comparing the performance before and after the introduction of DPEP, the access and retention figures substantially
declined as compared to Rohtak as well as pre-DPEP period of Hisar (with exceptions of girls and SC children).

It is revealed that growth rate of enrolment of SC girls has been exceptionally high and SCs overall is also higher in DPEP district compared to non-DPEP district. Similar position holds good within Hisar district during its post and pre-DPEP periods. But growth rate of enrolment of girls and overall students is lesser in post as compared to pre-DPEP period. As regards retention rate, DPEP district Hisar has reported lesser retention rate among SCs when compared to non-DPEP district Rohtak and even during pre-DPEP period of Hisar.

The study, therefore, suggests that DPEP strategies have brought only marginal improvements in enrolment growth (especially SCs and girls in particular). But its holding power was not sufficient enough to retain the students resulting in lesser retention and hence more dropouts. The argument that students had been shifting to private schools was also not found tenable. Overall DPEP inputs failed to increase enrolment growth for all categories, improve retention rate and consequently reduce dropouts as envisaged, while launching the programme. In fact, DPEP functionaries not only miserably failed to consolidate early gains of gross enrolment, but allowed these to fritter away as the programme advanced and thus the hypothesis - ‘DPEP efforts have not changed the educational status of the project period’ stands proved.

As such, enrolment growth and retention of students need to be stepped up to complete the unfinished agenda of bringing ‘out of school children’ to the main stream. This is particularly essential in the case of girls whose dropout rate is invariably high. The emphasis ought to shift from enrolment to retention by creating a conducive and friendly school environment. The study however suggests a grey area for the
potential researchers to take up their Doctoral Studies on a grey area affecting educational administration viz. examining in depth the causes for decrease in enrolment of boys and retention of girls amongst socially disadvantaged groups at the District/Taluka level. Finally, DPEP inputs be replicated throughout the State in the direction of achieving goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education.