CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION
1.1 EDUCATION: MEANING AND IMPORTANCE

In the words of Dr. Radha Krishnan, education is "the process by which we conceive valuable elements in our culture and discard the wasteful. It is both a stabilizing influence and an agent for change. By means of it we help the young to become good citizens of the country. What in simpler societies was done by the family, the religious, social and political institutions has to be done by educational institutions today. They have to create a change in men's minds and hearts."

Education is a wider term than teaching. Teaching is the imparting of knowledge and skill. It does not include the personal influence of the teacher. Whereas, education is both the imparting of knowledge and skill and also the exerting of one's personal influence. Thus, education is a conscious and deliberate process in which one personality acts upon another, with the purpose of modifying the development of the other by means of the direct application of educator's personality and use of knowledge and skill. Thus education does not merely mean the acquisition of knowledge or experience but it means the development of habits, attitudes and skills which help the man to lead a full and worthwhile life.

Education includes development from infancy to maturity. It displays the influence of one's vocation, home life, friendship and everything which influences human personality. Thus, education is for life and through life. The ways of people, their laws, their form of government, arts, achievements,
influences help to give a definite shape to education. There has been a wide divergence of views about the definition of education down the ages. Aristotle called it "creation of a sound mind in a sound body," Pestalozzi termed education as a "natural, harmonious, and progressive development of man's innate powers." Gandhi thought education to be the "drawing out the best in child and man, body, mind and spirit", Dewey thought education to be a "development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his environment, fulfill his possibilities".

The term 'education' has been interpreted differently by different philosophers. But the importance of education has always been realised by all people at all times.

Proper education is a process which broadens a person's horizons, makes him socially more active, extends his opportunities of participating in management and administration, helps him to choose the right career and develop a creative attitude to work. It is also a process of full realization of human potential, a process of proper modification of human behaviour and a process of character building and mutual understanding. In other words, education produces bright young men and women, buoyant in body and alert in mind, that is, youth with self-confidence and optimism, who have initiative and resourcefulness to create opportunity and employment for themselves, rather than be passive and dependent individuals. Education also trains students
to grow into fine young people with responsibility and integrity, and with devotion to duty.

It is through education that people can understand the shortcomings of their society and get the necessary skills to overcome them.

The fate of democracy - the path which Indians have chosen for the achievement of their goal i.e. the establishment of a welfare state, depends upon the education of the people of this country because democracy and illiteracy can never go together.

There is a positive correlation between a nation's education and its development. The nations that have better and broadbased system of education, have been economically more advanced. To achieve the target of better and more widespread system of education, primary education is the first step.

Realization of this fact by the authors of the Indian Constitution made them to incorporate Article-45 in the Directive Principles of the State Policy, according to which 'the state shall endeavour to provide, within the period of ten years from the commencement of the constitution, the free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.'

1.2 PRIMARY EDUCATION : MEANING AND OBJECTIVES

"Well begun is half done" is a well known maxim. The entire superstructure of the educational set up of a nation rests upon primary education. At this level of education the entire growth, development and
environment of mental as well as physical potentialities of the child depends. If the child is well looked after at the primary stage, the secondary education automatically gets a fillip.

Primary education, thus, is the training or preparation for future life whereby the child gets benefitted physically, intellectually, socially, morally and psychologically. It prepares the child for future life.

The concept and nomenclature of primary education have a long historical past throughout the world and have remained a debatable issue of educational research at different times, and in different countries. However, the general objectives of primary education which are common for all nations, as stated in the World Survey of Education, are, 'to provide for the physical, intellectual, moral and emotional development of children in the early ages when they acquire instruction in such basic skills as reading, writing, arithmetic, rudiments of science, and develop their attitudes and adapt themselves to their social environment. It is the first formal education of the child and the basis of all further education, whether general or vocational.'

With the passage of time, the aims and objectives of elementary education have been widening and its boundaries have been expanding, and this is clearly illustrated in the following lines given in 'Encyclopedia of Modern Education' -

"Traditionally limited to mastery of the three R's i.e., reading, writing and arithmetic, the aims of elementary education have been broadened in recent times. Now, the focus is on holistic development with an emphasis on critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. Primary education aims to prepare students not only for the next level of education but also to be productive citizens of society."
years to comprise the furtherance of all aspects of wholesome growth and development of children. There has been a gradual increasing acceptance of responsibility for the development of physical education and mental health, worthwhile leisure interests, social adjustment, emotional balance, the higher intellectual abilities, and the habits and attitudes that promote democratic living.

In the educational reconstruction of a developing country, primary education occupies a significant place. It is the elementary stage of formal educational set up, i.e., primary education is a stage when a child starts formal instruction in some institution.

The strength and progress of a country rests on the educational foundations of her people as success is a natural consequence of the foundation laid. In the words of J.P. Naik, "The progress of primary education is an index of the general, social and economic progress of the country as a whole."

K.G. Saiyadian in 'Compulsory Education in India', has summed up the importance of primary education in these words. "It (Primary Education) is not concerned with any particular classes or groups, but has to deal with the entire population of the country; it touches life at every point, and it has to do more with the formation of national ideology and character than any other single activity- social, political or educational. Those of us who are concerned with the great work of Primary Education should therefore visualise its problems
and objectives, not in the context of the dark dingy buildings, but against the background of its ultimate ends and purposes."

1.3 HISTORY OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN INDIA

At the beginning of the 19th century when the British administrators first began to organise a modern system of education for India, the country had a fairly wide network of indigenous schools which had been evolved through centuries. These could be broadly divided into two groups: schools of higher learning and elementary schools. The former were predominantly religious institutions and were created with the principal object of preserving the ancient culture. They produced the learned men, priests, doctors and lawyers which the society of the day required, but were too few in numbers and too selective in character to be regarded as instruments of mass education.

1.3.1 DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION UNDER BRITISH RULE

The development of the modern system of education may be said to have begun in 1813, with the Charter Act of 1813, under which the British Parliament directed the East India Company to accept responsibility for the education of the Indian people and to spend a sum of not less than a lakh of rupees a year for this purpose. But even this meagre amount was not fully utilised for the next ten years. However in 1831, financial help was given to nine vernacular schools in the rural areas of Saugar and this may be considered the first step taken by the Company towards primary education. In Madras, 70
primary schools were opened through the efforts of Thomas Munro in 1830. These schools were neglected because the Directors of the Company asked the Government of Madras, to direct its attention to the spread of English education rather than concentrate on the education of the masses. Macaulay's famous Minute of 1835 gave a death-blow to indigenous education in the country as English was declared the medium of instruction. In 1844 vernacular schools were opened in Bengal, but only 30 schools existed in 1852. The Native Education Society opened 15 primary schools in Bombay with the aim of imparting Western knowledge through the medium of the mother tongue. Wood's Dispatch 1854 too emphasized "imparting correct elementary knowledge to the great mass of the people." It recommended the adoption of the grant-in-aid system to spread elementary education. But grant-in-aid was confined only to higher education and nothing substantial was done for primary education. As such the development was slow and halting.

Stanley's Dispatch of 1859 admitted that it was apparently impossible to provide funds for a system of direct instruction and that it was necessary to levy a compulsory Cess for meeting the cost of primary education. As a result, recourse was taken to local taxation. From 1864, Local Cess Acts were passed by different provinces and as such primary education made great strides forward during 1870-71 to 1881-82. During 1854 to 1882 primary education did progress, but it was slow, because the Government paid very little attention.
to primary education; funds were quite inadequate and the money raised through cess was diverted to different channels.

The resolution appointing the Indian Education Commission of 1882-83 said that its principal object should be to enquire into "the present state of elementary education throughout the Empire, and the means by which this can everywhere be extended and improved." The Commission, therefore, paid special attention to primary education and made important recommendations on nearly all aspects of primary education, such as Government policy towards primary education, administration, curriculum, finance and training of primary teachers, etc. In accordance with the recommendations of the Commission, the control of primary and indigenous schools was handed over to local Boards constituted by Lord Ripon. This new arrangement did help in the progress of primary education to some extent but it accelerated the decay of indigenous schools, with the result that they ceased to exist by the end of the 19th century. This means that government paid attention to the recommendations of the Commission. As a result of this, the progress was made in the spread of primary education.

The Government of India's Resolution of 1904 incorporated Lord Curzon's liberal ideas about primary education. He wanted improvement as well as expansion of primary education. Hence, he adopted the following measures in this respect: (i) new system of grant-in-aid; (ii) reforms in curriculum; (iii) training of primary teachers; etc. Expansion of primary
education was encouraged by a liberal offer of recurring and non-recurring grants. Curzon allotted Rs.35 lakh for the quantitative as well as qualitative improvement of primary education. Some improvements regarding school buildings, equipment, instruction and text-books did take place, but taking into consideration the magnitude of the task of educating the entire population, the improvement was not appreciable.

The provision of universal elementary education has always been conceived as an integral part of the national system of education in India. But the first effective statement for it was made by the late Shri Dadabhai Naroji, the grand old man of India, in his evidence before the Indian Education Commission (1882). The cause was again taken up by Gokhale. In 1910, Gokhale, moved a resolution in the Council urging the Government to make primary education free and compulsory. This was the first and definite demand on the part of an Indian. In spite of the support of eminent persons like Madan Mohan Malviya and Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the bill was defeated. No doubt Gokhale failed in his mission, but his efforts did not go unrewarded. In 1911, the Under Secretary of State for India admitted the need for paying greater attention to education. As a result, the official machinery of education began to work a bit faster.

In 1913, a resolution was passed by the Government for the "widest possible extension of primary education on voluntary basis." Provincial Governments were given authority to make primary education free for the
backward and the poor. This resolution was immediately carried out, and by 1917, almost all the primary education in Bombay, the Punjab, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces, the North-West Frontier Province, and Assam was monopolized by board schools. In 1918, the Bombay Government passed the Bombay Primary Education Act, which was moved by Vithalbhai Patel. It authorised the municipalities to start compulsory primary education for boys of ages 6-11 years. It was the first legislation to accept the principle of compulsory primary education. By 1919, the Governments of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa brought into force the Primary Education Acts. In 1920, Madras and Central Provinces too followed suit and passed similar acts. In 1921, two years after the Government of India Act 1919 was passed, the control of elementary education was transferred to Indian Ministers and the goal of compulsory education was accepted.

Regarding primary education, the Abbot and Wood's Commission Report 1937 recommended that "the education of children in primary schools should be based more upon the natural interests and activities of young children and less upon book learning." But, the recommendation of the Commission could not be implemented because of the outbreak of the Second World War two years later.

The Zakir Hussain Commission Report 1937, also called the Wardha Scheme, recommended the introduction of basic-craft, mother tongue, mathematics, social-studies, general science- nature study, botany, zoology.
physiology, hygiene, physical culture, chemistry, knowledge of stars and stories, drawing, music and Hindustani, in the curricula of primary schools. The Commission attempted to draft an activity curriculum which implied that school must be places of work, experimentation and discovery, not of a passive absorption of information imparted. In 1937, Mahatama Gandhi moved the resolution on basic education at Wardha, constituting the national policy of free and compulsory primary education for all in the age group 6-14.

In 1944, the Central Advisory Board of Education submitted a plan for post war education development. The plan is known as Sargent Plan. It recommended universal, free and compulsory education for all boys and girls between 6-11 years of age on Basic Education lines. But Sargent Plan was still under consideration when came the partition of India and the Indian Independence Act of 1947.

1.3.2 DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION AFTER INDEPENDENCE

After the achievement of Independence in 1947, there were two basic issues, in the field of primary education, before the country. First was the introduction of free and compulsory universal primary education for all children upto fourteen years and second was the conversion of all primary schools to the basic education pattern.
Article 45 of the constitution enjoins the State to endeavour to provide free, compulsory and universal education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.

Ever since, efforts are being made to implement this directive through successive five year plans.

In Five Year Plans, priorities were fixed and specific targets were laid down to solve various problems concerning primary education and its development in the country.

The First Five Year Plan, 1951-56 contained recommendations for improving the existing system of primary education and expanding basic education. High priority was given to Elementary Education. Compulsory education, which had been introduced in 396 urban areas before the Plan, was in force in 1082 urban areas in 1955-56.

The main three achievements in the field of primary education during the first three Five Year Plans (1951-56), (1956-61) and (1961-66) were:-

1. Expansion of primary Education -

There had been a tremendous increase in the number of primary schools. In 1950-51, there were 210,000 schools, the number rose to 2,78,000 in 1955-56, at the end of First Five Year Plan. At the end of Second Five Year Plan, there were 3, 30,000 primary schools. In 1965-66, the number of primary schools rose to 4, 00,000.
2. Increase in Expenditure -

The total expenditure on primary education (classes I-V) in 1950-51 was Rs.36 crores. At the end of First Five Year Plan i.e., in 1955-56, the expenditure had risen to Rs.54 crores. It increased to Rs.73 crores at the end of Second Plan i.e., in 1960-61 and to Rs.122 crores in 1965-66 (end of the Third Plan).

3. Enrolment of Students -

In 1950-51, there were 192 lakh children attending the primary classes (classes I-V). In 1955-56 towards the end of First Five Year Plan, the enrolment was 251 lakh and in 1960-61 i.e., the ending year of the Second Plan, the enrolment increased to 350 lakh and in the year 1965-66 the enrolment was 505 lakh.

The finalisation of the Fourth Plan was delayed due to the situation created by the Indo-Pakistan conflict, two successive years of severe draught, devaluation of the currency, rise in prices and erosion of resources available for plan purposes. However, three annual plans between 1966 and 1968 were formulated.

During the Fourth Plan (1969-74) Rs.239 crores had been earmarked for the expansion of elementary education. The number of students in elementary schools were to rise from 51.50 million to 69.50 million in 1970-71. Thus, about 90.2% children in the age group 6-11 years were expected to attend the
As regards the children of age group 11-14 years, enrolment was likely to rise from 11 million to 19 million. Thus, about 47.4% of children of the age group were expected to be enrolled by the primary schools, resulting in an additional requirement of about 8,00,000 teachers for primary schools. Kothari Commission recommended that the target of 100% compulsory primary education for the children of the age group 6-11 years shall be achieved by the end of Fourth Five Year Plan and in case of children of the age group 11-14 years, the targets were to be accomplished by the year 1986.

In the Fifth Five Year Plan, Elementary Education was given high priority and the outlays for it were stepped up from Rs. 239 crores in the Fourth Plan to Rs. 743 crores in the Fifth Five Year Plan. Besides Rs. 112 crores were provided for school feeding programmes under nutrition scheme. The total outlay of Rs. 855 crores, thus arrived at, for elementary education constituted forty seven percent of the total outlays on education in the Fifth Plan as against thirty percent in the Fourth Plan. As regards expansion, full time facilities were expected to be provided for ninety seven percent of the children in the age group 6-11 years and forty one percent in age group 11-14 years by the end of Fifth Plan. In addition about 78 lakh children of the age group 11-14 were to be provided part-time education.

The Fifth Plan proposed to lay much greater emphasis on improving the quality of instruction, particularly with a view to enhancing the efficiency and productivity of the schools. Curricular reorientation, adoption of appropriate
methodologies of teaching, upgrading of teacher's competence through pre-service and in-service training programmes, intensive development of key institutions, such as the State Institutes of Education, improvement of basic physical facilities and strengthening of the educational administration at the district level, providing science kits, radio sets and community T.V. sets to schools, close co-operation between the Education Department of the State and the All India Radio to work out an effective programme of educational broadcasting and telecasting, were some of the programmes taken up for the purpose.

The Fifth Plan was ended one year ahead with the close of the annual plan (1977-78) and work was initiated for a new plan for the next five years with new priorities and programmes. The new concept of continuous long term plan called 'rolling programme' was formulated but this had to be given up and the original pattern of five year plan was restored.

The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) proposed :-

- to accelerate the pace of extension and to fulfil Article 45 of the Constitution in about 10 years.
- to lay down 'average attendance' in addition to 'enrolment' as a more legitimate basis for the assessment of progress.

The approach to universalisation of elementary education covered :
1. Intensified use of existing facilities including the adjustment of school hours, which were not to be more than 3 hours a day;

2. Provision of new facilities which would be economically viable and educationally relevant;

3. Promotion of a non-formal system of learning.

It was proposed to make special efforts to enroll girls, children of scheduled castes and tribes and children of other weaker sections like landless agricultural labourers and also that State Governments should make efforts to introduce measures with a view to eliminate wastage and reduce drop-outs in elementary education.

During the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90), the top most priority was given to universal elementary education for children in the age group 6-14 years. The programme of non-formal education was recommended so as to provide basic literacy to all children upto fourteen years of age. Steps were initiated for launching a scheme of central assistance for strengthening the facilities for pre-service and in-service training of elementary school teachers, non-formal education instructors and instructors for pre-school education. Similarly a scheme for strengthening arrangement for teaching of science and environment education was proposed to be started in 1985-86. These schemes were expected to significantly improve the quality of elementary education.
The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97), in the normal course, should have begun on April 1990 but due to some unavoidable circumstances including the changes in party in power at the Centre, the Plan document could not be finalised. The duration of Eighth Plan was thus from (1992-97).

The Eighth Plan outlay for education (Centre and State) was 19,600 crore which was higher than the Seventh Plan expenditure of Rs. 7,633 crore by 2.6 times. Primary education was given an over-riding priority in order to realise the goal of Universal Elementary Education during Seventh and Eighth Five Year Plans. Despite this, the backlog continued in enrolment and the dropout rate remained high. The two major initiatives taken during the Eighth Plan were District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and Nutrition support to Primary Education (Mid-day Meals) with a view to addressing the problem of equity, access, relation, and quality at the primary stage.

The three sub-schemes were proposed under Operation Blackboard during the Eighth Plan in order to operationalise the revised policy of the Government, which was to ensure free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality to all children upto fourteen years of age before we enter the 21st century. Following are the three sub-schemes:

(i) continuation of the ongoing scheme to cover all the remaining schools identified as on 30 September 1986,

(ii) expanding the scope of the scheme to provide three rooms and three teachers in primary schools with enrolment exceeding 100 with
provisions for about fifty per cent women teachers in primary schools as mandatory for all states/UTs; and

(iii) extending the scope of the scheme to upper primary schools. The expanded schemes were started in 1993-94.

In the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) apart from carrying out the directions given by National Policy of Education (NPE, 1992), and keeping in view the declaration of education as a fundamental right, making the nation fully literate by the year 2005 is the committed goal. Around 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will be earmarked for the education sector by the year 2000 and 50% of the outlay would be spent on primary education. The Mid-day Meal Scheme will be implemented in all the States to ensure regular attendance and retention in primary and middle schools. The girl child will be a special focus of attention as a measure to promote the spread of education.

The unfinished task of UEE will be completed with special focus on the backward States/districts, the girl child and other disadvantaged population groups, emphasising decentralised and disaggregated planning. This will involve the participation of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), the Corporate Sector and various other groups. Quality in UEE will be achieved through better pedagogical and management practices. Performance of teachers will be improved through better content and facilities for training programmes and community participation in supervision. Strategies will be developed for mobilising financial support through community efforts. |8|
1.4 PROBLEMS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

The development of compulsory primary education in the advanced countries of the world shows that for the success of this programme, three conditions are necessary:

- the provision of a school within walking distance from the home of every child,
- the enrolment of every child of the prescribed age into class I of a school through propaganda, persuasion and even penal action, if necessary, and
- the retention of every enrolled child in school till he reaches the prescribed age or completes the prescribed course.

The progress of Universal Education in India, according to Education Commission Report 1964-66, can also be expected to follow this broad general pattern of universal provision, universal enrolment and universal retention. They are not mutually exclusive and generally overlap and run into one another. In India the desire for compulsory education was expressed in the writings and speeches of our leaders since 1840. But only after independence it became possible to insert Article 45 in the Indian Constitution stating, "the State shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of fourteen years within ten years from the date on which the constitution comes into force."
According to Kothari Commission, due to various reasons such as, lack of resources, tremendous increase in population, resistance to the education of girls, large number of children of the backward classes, general poverty of the people and the illiteracy and apathy of parents, it was not possible to make adequate progress in primary education and the Constitutional Directive has remained unfulfilled.

1.4.1 WASTAGE AND STAGNATION

At the primary stage, there is a lot of wastage and stagnation which requires effective solution to achieve the goal of free, compulsory and universal education. This is a serious problem of Indian Primary Education.

Kothari Commission has mentioned various causes of wastage and stagnation-

- The heterogeneity of the age composition of students in the first class
- The practice of making fresh admission throughout the year
- Irregularity of attendance
- Lack of educational equipment in the school as well as with the children
- Over-crowded classes
- Unsuitable curricula
- Inadequately trained teachers
- A wrong system of education
A fairly large-scale survey at the national level in wastage had been conducted by the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) for the period from 1949-50 to 1961-62 at the elementary level, which shows that wastage is very large at the lower primary stage—about fifty six percent for boys and sixty two percent for girls. About two-third of this wastage occurs in class I. Moreover, it has remained fairly constant in the case of boys while showing a slight improvement in the case of girls. At the higher primary stage, wastage is much less—about twenty four percent for boys and thirty four percent for girls, and it is decreasing constantly, although at a low rate.

R.C. Sharma and C.L. Sapra (1969) studied wastage and stagnation in primary and middle schools in India. Survey was undertaken to study the problem of wastage and stagnation and to analyse its causes. R.C. Das (1970) made a study to investigate the problem of wastage and stagnation at the primary level of education in Sibsagar district of Assam. It was found that poverty and economic backwardness claimed the first place among forty causes that were found to be responsible for wastage at the primary stage. Backward society and non-stimulating social environment, illiterate parents and guardians and untrained teachers claimed the 5th, 14th and 32nd place, respectively. In general, socio-economic causes were more responsible for stagnation. M. Hussain (1982) studied wastage and stagnation in primary schools of rural areas of Bhilwara district, Rajasthan. Eswara Prasad and R. Sharma (1982) studied wastage and stagnation in Andhra Pradesh. R.C. Sharma (1982) studied
wastage and stagnation in Rajasthan. U.D. Dhongade (1986) studied wastage and stagnation in Aurangabad and many more studies have been conducted to find out the causes of wastage and stagnation.

It was found in most of these studies that wastage and stagnation was higher among girls, it was higher in low class people and there was a decline in wastage and stagnation from grades I to V. Economic condition of parents, caste, parental education level, lack of basic facilities in schools, untrained teachers were some of the factors of wastage and stagnation at the primary level.

Along with other problems of primary education, the problem of wastage and stagnation will also have to be remedied in order to achieve the goal of universalisation of primary education.

1.5 LITERACY IN PUNJAB

In Punjab educational structure and system are based on the national pattern, which has twelve years of schooling. These twelve years include eight years of compulsory elementary (I-VIII), two years of secondary (IX-X) and two years of senior secondary (XI-XII) education. Apart from this, there are three years of pre-primary education. The eight years of compulsory elementary education are divided into five years of primary education for the age group 6-11 years and three years of middle level education for the age group 11-14 years.
The Punjab Primary Education Act, 1960 lays down imperatives to accelerate the provisions of free and compulsory primary education for children and empowers the State Government to declare specific areas where primary education should be made compulsory. Its Article-22 gives powers to the State Government to form rules for carrying out the objectives of the Act. The Punjab Primary Education Rules 1961 were finalised under the provision of Section 22 of Primary Education Act, 1960. The compulsion was introduced on April 1, 1961 for the age group 6-7 and was phased as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age-Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961-62</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>7-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8-9</td>
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<td>1964-65</td>
<td>9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>10-11</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The programme was disrupted on account of the re-organisation of the State in 1966.

The State of Punjab since its inception has experienced many vicissitudes which have changed its body, shape and economy. These changes have affected every sphere of the life of the people of Punjab and in fact, the word 'Punjab' - the land of five rivers has also lost its meaning as two of its rivers, the Chenab and the Jhelum have been lost to Pakistan at the time of the country's partition in 1947. The reorganisation of Punjab took place on November 1, 1966.
Earlier to the 1966 reorganisation, the territory of Punjab was divided into two linguistic regions, the Punjabi-speaking and the Hindi speaking. This division was done for political and administrative reasons. The Punjabi-speaking region was comparatively a smaller part (51,751 sq. kms.) but had a larger population (1,15,21,439 persons). The literacy percentage (27.1) was higher than the corresponding percentage (20.1) for the Hindi-speaking region. The total for Punjab was 24.2 percent, it was taken as a percentage of the total population of the state.

In 1966, Punjab was actually divided into two independent states of Punjab and Haryana on the basis of language and thus Punjab in its present shape came into existence on November 1, 1966, which is now surrounded by J and K in the north, HP in the north-east, the Union Territory of Chandigarh in the east, Rajasthan in the south west, Haryana in the south and south east and Pakistan to its west.

Punjab's share of India's population in 1981 and in 1991 was 2.44 percent and 2.39 percent respectively. According to 1991 census, Punjab's population rank was 14 among Indian states. It is one of the relatively densely populated states of India.

1.5.1 LITERACY RATES

There has been significant increase in the proportion of literates in the state since 1971. Growth of literacy from 1971-1991 is given in the table below:

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\begin{array}{|c|c|}
\hline
& \text{Literacy Rate} \\
\hline
1971 & 24 \\
\hline
1991 & 27.1 \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]
### Table – 1.1

**Literacy Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th></th>
<th>All India</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>46.22</td>
<td>29.21</td>
<td>34.45</td>
<td>45.95</td>
<td>21.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>48.12</td>
<td>55.52</td>
<td>39.64</td>
<td>43.56</td>
<td>56.37</td>
<td>29.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>58.51</td>
<td>65.66</td>
<td>50.41</td>
<td>52.21</td>
<td>64.13</td>
<td>39.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Literacy rates for 1971 relate to the population aged 5 and above. The rates for the years 1981 and 1991 relate to the population aged 7 and above.*

*Source: 1. Census of India 1971 and 1981, Director of census operations, Punjab*


The literacy rates in respect of all persons in Punjab were higher as compared to the national average during this period. But literacy rates of males were below the national average in 1981 while literacy rates of females remained higher in all the three census years.

Literacy rate by sex, area and districts in Punjab during 1991 is given in the table 1.2 and a comparative district-wise progress of literacy, during the period 1981 and 1991, is shown in the figure 1. It is evident from the figure that the districts of Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar, Rupnagar, Kapurthala and Gurdaspur were above the State average and the districts of Faridkot, Ferozpur, Sangrur and Bathinda were below the State average of literacy in 1981. In 1991 also these districts remained below the state average of literacy. Amritsar district was above the State average during 1981 but went below it in 1991. Patiala district reached above the State average in 1991 although it was below it in 1981.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>35.12</td>
<td>50.10</td>
<td>45.82</td>
<td>61.54</td>
<td>58.46</td>
<td>72.69</td>
<td>68.14</td>
<td>59.08</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>50.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathinda</td>
<td>63.34</td>
<td>65.80</td>
<td>67.86</td>
<td>85.79</td>
<td>68.83</td>
<td>72.73</td>
<td>80.22</td>
<td>74.94</td>
<td>74.94</td>
<td>80.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faridkot</td>
<td>41.88</td>
<td>47.13</td>
<td>44.51</td>
<td>65.45</td>
<td>50.55</td>
<td>65.45</td>
<td>49.97</td>
<td>54.25</td>
<td>53.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatehgarh Sahib</td>
<td>48.94</td>
<td>64.64</td>
<td>57.27</td>
<td>75.21</td>
<td>49.16</td>
<td>75.21</td>
<td>68.14</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferozepur</td>
<td>37.05</td>
<td>54.25</td>
<td>46.18</td>
<td>66.34</td>
<td>40.10</td>
<td>66.34</td>
<td>49.18</td>
<td>54.25</td>
<td>53.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firozepur</td>
<td>38.50</td>
<td>44.81</td>
<td>41.21</td>
<td>63.52</td>
<td>40.10</td>
<td>63.52</td>
<td>49.18</td>
<td>54.25</td>
<td>53.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurdaspur</td>
<td>54.55</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td>64.42</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>54.55</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td>64.42</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jalandhar</td>
<td>28.50</td>
<td>44.81</td>
<td>37.21</td>
<td>63.52</td>
<td>40.10</td>
<td>63.52</td>
<td>49.18</td>
<td>54.25</td>
<td>53.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapurthala</td>
<td>50.10</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>58.08</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludhiana</td>
<td>37.67</td>
<td>56.21</td>
<td>45.97</td>
<td>66.34</td>
<td>40.10</td>
<td>66.34</td>
<td>49.18</td>
<td>54.25</td>
<td>53.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moga</td>
<td>54.55</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td>64.42</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muktsar</td>
<td>54.55</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td>64.42</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>84.49</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathankot</td>
<td>41.25</td>
<td>58.90</td>
<td>49.55</td>
<td>67.69</td>
<td>50.41</td>
<td>67.69</td>
<td>50.41</td>
<td>67.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patiala</td>
<td>45.81</td>
<td>67.90</td>
<td>52.76</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td>62.43</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td>62.43</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>45.81</td>
<td>67.90</td>
<td>52.76</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td>62.43</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td>62.43</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahib</td>
<td>45.81</td>
<td>67.90</td>
<td>52.76</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td>62.43</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td>62.43</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Literacy has been worked out after excluded age group 0-6 population.

**Source:** 1. Director, Census Operations, Punjab,
2. Economic and Statistical Organisation.
Figure 1.
PUNJAB
1.5.2 SCHOOLS AND ENROLMENT

The number of primary schools between 1975 and 1990 increased from 9,600 to 12,372 and the number of middle schools decreased from 1,531 to 1,425. This is shown in the table 1.3.

Table 1.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Primary Schools</th>
<th>Middle Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>9600</td>
<td>1531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>12383</td>
<td>1436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>12331</td>
<td>1498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989-90</td>
<td>12372</td>
<td>1425</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Enrolment at the middle level from 1975 to 1990 showed a rapid increase. Per annum growth rates were higher at this stage as compared to the primary level. At both levels, girls enrolment registered a higher growth rate per annum. This is evident from the data given in the table 1.4.
Table 1.4
Sex-wise Enrolment at Elementary Stage
(in Lakhs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Primary (I-V)</th>
<th>Middle (VI–VIII)</th>
<th>Elementary (I-VIII)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>10.93</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>19.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>11.39</td>
<td>9.32</td>
<td>20.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>11.12</td>
<td>9.26</td>
<td>20.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989-90</td>
<td>11.08</td>
<td>9.47</td>
<td>20.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual rate of Growth (In per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1975-80</th>
<th>1980-85</th>
<th>1985-90</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary (I-V)</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle (VI–VIII)</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary (I-VIII)</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


On September 30, 1995 the total number of students, in classes I-V i.e. at the primary level, in the state was 20,78,524, out of this 10,96,256 were boys and 9,82,268 were girls. District-wise number of students at primary level as on 30th September, 1995 is shown in table 1.5.
Table 1.5
Number of Students in Schools of Punjab as on 30th Sept.1995
(District wise)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Number of Students in classes I-V)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurdaspur</td>
<td>1,103,88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>1,36,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapurthala</td>
<td>29,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jalandhar</td>
<td>98,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>70,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rupnagar</td>
<td>46,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludhiana</td>
<td>1,08,586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firozpur</td>
<td>94,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faridkot</td>
<td>1,12,557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathinda</td>
<td>65,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansa</td>
<td>35,411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sangrur</td>
<td>84,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patiala</td>
<td>79,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FatehgarhSahib</td>
<td>24,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10,96,256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like other states, Punjab is also guided by the national policies on education, in its educational development. It gives priority, among other policies and programmes, to universalisation of elementary education.

There are various programmes and schemes for the development of elementary education and these include provision of furniture, science...
equipment, lavatory and drinking water, science laboratory, buildings, etc. for the institutions.

Operation Blackboard is one of such programmes under Centrally Sponsored Schemes which aims at providing basic facilities and equipment to primary schools. The Operation Blackboard Scheme has three components, viz,

(i) Provision of at least two all weather rooms;

(ii) Provision of at least two teachers, one of them preferably a woman, in every single teacher primary school; and

(iii) Provision of essential teaching and learning material including blackboards, maps, charts, a small library, toys, games, sports material and some equipment for work experience.

It was proposed to implement the scheme of Operation Blackboard in a phased manner covering all the primary schools by the end of the year 1990.

In 1989-90, under this scheme in Punjab 2,585 Government primary schools were covered in 30 development blocks. Buildings were provided to 131 schools which were without buildings and 114 single teacher schools were converted into double teacher schools. An amount of Rs. 203.24 lakhs was spent on these facilities.

In Punjab a primary school is now available in every inhabited village, except those villages where the number of school going children is less than twelve and no student has to walk even a kilometer to reach it. Though every
village has a primary school, many schools are still without buildings and without adequate infrastructure. Out of 12,838 primary schools 892 schools were reported to be without buildings in 1986. As many as forty one percent of the total primary schools were single teacher schools where one teacher was expected to teach a number of classes together in a single period which has an adverse effect on the expected efficiency.

Despite natural and demographic handicaps, there has been economic development in Punjab and the state is also considered as a prosperous state of the country. But in the rate of literacy its rank was 18 in 1991 census, the first being Kerala with highest literacy rate of ninety percent. Punjab had literacy rate of fifty eight percent against the national average of fifty two percent in 1991 census. Though Punjab has made an encouraging progress in primary education because of various programmes and schemes made both by the Centre and the State, the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education is still to be achieved.

The establishment of an elementary school in a given locality, according to 'Encyclopaedia of Rural Education in India', creates only an opportunity for the parent to send the child to school. Whether the opportunity would be availed of and the child sent to school depends, to a considerable extent, on parental attitude towards education and on their economic condition. The universality of school provision is thus a necessary first step in a programme of universal enrolment. But it is not generally enough, and in developing
countries, special efforts are needed to see that every child is enrolled in the school at the right time.

In order to attract more children to the schools, the co-operation of the parents is most essential. Although the targets regarding the number of students expected to join in the various schools, under the scheme of Free and Compulsory Primary Education have been exceeding, yet there are cases when the parents have resisted in sending their children to schools. The reason could be that children help their parents in the field or it may be because of their poverty or it could be because of their illiteracy or may be due to their indifferent attitude towards education.

1.6 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem under investigation in this study may be stated as:

"PROBLEMS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION AS PERCEIVED BY PARENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS PRIMARY EDUCATION."

1.7 NEED OF THE STUDY

"Of all the work that is done or can be done for our country, the greatest is that of educating the body, the mind and above all the character, giving spiritual and moral training to those who in a few years are themselves to decide the destinies of the nation."

- Theodre Roosevelt

33
Children occupy a prominent place in shaping the destiny of their nations and of the world as a whole. They are citizens of tomorrow and their present conditions shape the future of their adulthood which has a great significance for their society. So, proper attention and care need to be bestowed upon them to promote their development through proper education for better future.

At the time of independence, India inherited a system of education which was quantitatively small and also much below the practical needs of the country. The literacy rate was fourteen percent. However, the leaders of our country at that time, realised the importance of education and literacy, as is evident by the following statement of Mahatma Gandhi - "Education is the basic tool for the development and reconstruction of society".

In the Constitution also, it was provided that free and compulsory education would be provided to all children up to the age of fourteen within ten years of the commencement of the Constitution. But after fifty years of independence, India still has the largest number of illiterates in the world.

Rajendra Nath expressed his views in Tribune (19 June 1997), regarding our failure in this regard, "Primary education is the basis and foundation of all education. If it had been really made compulsory for the children of India, to go in for at least primary education, today there would hardly be any illiterates left in the country. But India has miserably failed in providing the primary education to all the children."
Inspite of all the awareness and efforts of the leaders, we are far behind the goal of universalisation of primary education. This shows that education is a low priority area in our development strategy whereas the emphasis is more on agriculture and industry than on human development.

In advanced countries the importance of education of the children, especially universal free compulsory education was realised long time back. In the words of S. Gopinathan (1977), "Studies in Washington show that, even more important than investment, the major factor for expansion in the United States since 1925 has been the education and training of men and women."

In developing countries also, the governments and people have launched out into a vast fight to overcome their illiteracy and raise their educational level. In 1960, the Governments of Asia adopted the "Karachi Plan" which foresaw seven years of compulsory primary schooling for all children by 1980. In 1961, African Ministers for Education agreed to an ambitious programme in which six years compulsory education for all African children was emphasised by 1980. In 1962, the countries of Latin America followed suit with their own plan to provide six years of primary schooling for all children throughout the continent by 1980.

All the countries which are doing well economically had given first priority to literacy, for eg., the East Asian countries like South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong-Kong, Malaysia, even Thailand and China.
India has also been committing itself at the international level to pursue goals like "education for all." The past performance in realising the set goals and objectives, particularly in the field of universal, elementary education, is unsatisfactory. Education for all has remained a dream for the past fifty years.

P.O. Shukla in 'Education for All' has analysed the various factors responsible for the tardy progress in the spread of education. The problem relating to the enrolment of rural and slum children, particularly girls, and the high drop-out rate has made the educational scene quite dismal. With poor progress in the sphere of universal primary education, the adoption of the "education of all" policy has only an ornamental value.

On paper, education has been given as a Fundamental Right to every child of the country and there are more than 5,72,923 primary schools in India and nearly 94% of the rural population has schools within a walking distance of 1 km., yet the children are not going to school. The number of primary and even high and higher secondary schools has been fast multiplying and these have been set up in remote areas but most of them are started without adequate infrastructure.

A large percentage of these schools do not have proper buildings, no libraries, no blackboards, no drinking water facilities and quite often they do not have teachers, and, even if teachers are there they do not teach. Another serious hurdle in achieving the educational targets is the demographic factor that adds one Australia every year to India in terms of population.
Along with this, the government agencies have also failed to motivate the parents to send their children to schools. The responsibility of sending the child to school lies on the parents and that was possible only when the parents themselves understood the importance of education. Parents hesitated to send their children to school because they were not quite sure whether this system of education would turn their children into better helping hands in agriculture and equip them to face day to day problems in a better way.

Thus, one of the dominant factors which prevent the enrolment of all children in schools appears to be the apathy of the parents, their indifferent and, at times, even hostile attitude towards education and their failure to see the 'good' of sending their children to school. This is reinforced by certain social customs such as the traditional unwillingness to education of girls. In a large number of cases, the economic factors, the educational background of the parents, their attitude towards education and the traditional cultures in which the children grow up came into play.

Mengesha, Tadesse (1974) studied primary school drop-out in Rural Ethiopia. The study revealed the extent to which parental background influenced the educational decision of the youth and concluded that performance in schools was dependent on parental characteristic factors.

Sahota, Chander Kanta (1977) studied the ecology and educability of children: A Three Country Study. She concluded that among different socio-economic classes within each country, i.e., Brazil, India and United States, the
influence of Parents' education comes out to be more important in low-
education areas than in high education areas. Regarding the income variable, it
was concluded that income remains a potent determinant of educability in all
countries and communities but is less important than parents' education.

Seetharamu and Ushadevi (1985) studied the problems of schooling in
general and school drop-out phenomenon in particular in the context of
integrated rural development. They found that the drop-outs were mostly from
illiterate families, and eighty percent of drop-outs came from chronically poor
families. They also classified the factors of pressure on primary education in
two groups. One, internal to the school system and the other external to it.
Those that are internal to the system include the quality of the learning process
that goes in the school, the teacher characteristics such as age, sex, experience,
training and qualifications, the position of the school with regard to building,
play ground, library, interaction of school with surrounding community, the
rigour of enforcement of incentive scheme for children, etc. The factors
external to the school system included, the family in particular and the socio-
economic environment in general. They may include such factors as the level
of education, occupation and income of parents, their caste-status implying
their life-style, the fertility behaviour and family organisation within the family
system, parental awareness and utilisation of school facilities and incentives,
etc.
Regarding primary education, not much work has been done to find out what problems and difficulties the parents face which hamper the cent percent enrolments in schools. Therefore, in order to find out the problems faced by parents of primary school children and also their attitude towards primary education, the present study was planned and executed.

1.8 PERCEPTION

"Every one of us every minute of our walking lives is constantly and continuously perceiving, with the possible exception of brief moments of intense concentration. Whatever else we may be doing—whether thinking or talking, reading or writing, going to the movies or taking a walk, working or playing we are also perceiving. We are constantly perceiving simply because it is an inseparable and necessary part of everything we do", (Itleson and Cantrill).

"Perception concerns awareness of the objects, depends to a large extent upon the impressions these objects make upon our senses and involves to some degree meaning of these objects". (Allport 1955).

According to Good, C.V. (1959) the meaning of perception in the limited sense is, "awareness of external objects, conditions, relationships, etc., as a result of sensory stimulation; and more broadly it means awareness of whatever sort however brought about."
"Perception is usually an immediate act of awareness of environmental objects plus some apprehensions of the meaning of the objects," (Allport 1955).

"The awareness side of a sensation is called the perception" as given in the Dictionary of Psychology.

"Perceiving is that part of the process of living by which each one of us, from his own particular point of view, creates for himself the world within which he has his life's experiences and through which he strives to gain his satisfactions", (Itleson).

Perception depends to a large extent on the impression the objects made on our senses and conclude to some degree a meaning of these objects. "Perception of any object is determined partly by the objective characteristics of the objects and subjective characteristics of the person perceiving" (New Combs 1959).

An individual begins perceiving the objects with certain individual structure and the function of the sensory equipment is to provide information about the environment; when he sees, hears, touches or smells. The individual reacts with sensory organs to environmental stimulations.

Differences in the sensitivity of the sensory organs to environmental stimulation and differences in the sensory equipment are responsible for the difference in the responses of different individuals to the same stimuli. But the way one sees really is contingent not only on the capacity of one's given
physical structure for detecting stimulus configuration but is also a product of many psychological conditions such as motivations (Levine, Chein and Murphy, 1942); needs (Burner and Godman, 1947 and Agnes, 1965); mental set (Muray, 1933); moods and attitude (Leuba and Lucas, 1945); attitude and values (Burner et al., 1951); memory; past experiences as the frame of reference (Sherif, 1935; Wever and Zener, 1928; MC Garvey, 1943 and Helson, 1947) and other factors such as cause and effects (Duncker, 1945; Heider, 1944); rewards and punishment (Schafer and Murphy, 1943) all of which act in a selective manner to modify the reaction of the physical structure (Allport 1955; Krech and Crutchfield, 1948).

The term perception in this study was in context of the term 'as perceived.' 'A mode of response to something, based on the individual's experience and background, which may reflect in determining the stimuli'. According to Ittleson and Cantrill, perceiving refers to 'the process by which a particular person, from his particular behavioural centre, attributes significance to his immediate environmental situation. And the significance which he attributes are those which he has discovered from past experiences and have furthered his purposes'.

The subjects of the study were to give their responses depending upon their past experiences along with other factors such as their attitudes, their needs, mental set, their educational levels, socio-economic factors, etc,
1.9 ATTITUDE

Attitudes are powerful sources of motivation and are capable of arousing and sustaining concentrated efforts. They determine our pattern of life as well as our success and happiness. Not only they determine the conclusions one derives from the facts but also influence the very facts one is willing to accept.

Because of its complex nature, the concept of attitude has become a subject of discussion among the psychologists. The definitions of attitude vary from one to another.

Sorenson defines attitude as "a particular feeling about something. It therefore involves a tendency to behave in a certain way in situations which involve that something, whether person, idea or object. It is partially rational and partially emotional and is acquired, not inherent, in an individual."

Whittaker defines attitude as a "predisposition or readiness to respond in a predetermined manner to relevant stimuli."

According to Travers, "an attitude is a readiness to respond in such a way that behaviour is given a certain direction."

Attitudes can broadly be defined within two conceptual frameworks depending upon the degree of emphasis. In the first theoretical approach, emphasis is on 'Set to respond.' Good (1959) defines attitude as "a readiness to reaction towards or against some situation, person or thing in a particular manner eg. love or hate." According to Newcomb (1948) "attitude is not a
response but a more or less persistent set to respond in a given way to an object or situation." It is organised and consistent manner of thinking, feeling and reaction with regard to one's environment. Likewise, Drever (1961) conceives of attitude as "a more or less stable set of disposition of a certain kind of experience or readiness with wider sense of tendency to appreciate or produce artistic result or social duties or social opinions". Here the environment plays a great role of framing one's attitude.

Within the second conceptual framework, attitude refers to a subjective or mental state of preparation for action, thus containing cognitive, affective and behavioural components. Allport (1935) defines attitude "as a mental or neutral state of readiness organised through experience, exerting a directive and dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related." Similarly, Kartz and Stotland (1959) view attitude as an individual tendency or predisposition to evaluate an object or symbol of that object in a certain way, as having affective cognitive and behavioural components, that is, as involving feeling and emotions, beliefs and actions.

Attitudes also vary in quality and intensity on a continuum from positive through neutral to negative as reported by Kretch et al. (1962) and Mc. Donald (1965) who regard attitude "as a predisposition of an act in a positive and negative way towards persons, objects, ideas and events" Worchell and Copper (1976) state, "An attitude is an expression of the intensity and direction of effects towards a psychological object" Sampson (1976) is of the opinion, "An
attitude is an underlying positive or negative evaluation of some object." The person with a particular attitude towards an object is assumed to be disposed to behave favourably or unfavourably towards that object.

In his recent work on attitude, Landy (1987) viewed attitude as a combination of feelings and beliefs about an object, person or event. According to him, attitudes are made up of three distinct elements:

- behavioural
- emotional and
- belief

When we put the three elements together, we have all the ingredients necessary for complex pattern of behaviour. Lambert and Lambert (1964) consider thoughts, beliefs, feelings, emotions and tendencies to react as essential components of an attitude.

The relationship between attitudes and behaviour remains an active area of research in psychology. Studies have found a strong relationship between attitude and behaviour especially under certain conditions. To Landy (1987) behaviour will generally follow from attitude when people are aware of or have been thinking about their attitudes.

An attitude thus may be described as an enduring organisation of beliefs and a learned tendency to react favourably or unfavourably, varying in degree to certain class of objects which determine the actual and potential responses of an individual. As the individual grows, his cognition, feelings and actions-
tendencies with respect to various objects in his psychological world become organised into an enduring system called attitudes.

Thus, attitudes are, to a great extent, responsible for the particular behaviour of a person about an object, idea or person, i.e., it makes the individual respond in a particular way to the particular stimuli. Development of desirable attitudes or reshaping of undesirable attitudes is a gigantic task. It needs co-operation of all the forces of environment. The conclusions we derive from facts are influenced by attitudes. To find out the causes of low literacy rate and non-enrolment, it is necessary to study the attitude of parents towards education.

1.10 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted with the following objectives in view:

1. To find out the differences in the perception of parents, of Public and Government primary school children, with regard to the problems of primary school education of their children.

2. To find out the differences in the perception of parents having children of different sexes in the primary school, with regard to the problems of primary school education of their children.

3. To find out the differences in the perception of parents with different levels of income, with regard to the problems of primary school education of their children.
4. To find out the differences in the perception of parents with different educational level, with regard to the problems of primary school education of their children.

5. To find out the attitude of the parents towards education with regard to the type of school their children are attending (i.e. Public/Government), sex of their wards, their income and educational level.

6. To find out the relationship between parents' attitude towards education and their perception of problems of primary school education.

1.11 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The hypotheses of the study were as follows:

1. Parents of Public and Government primary school children will perceive the problems of primary school education differently.

2. Parents having children of different sexes in the primary school will perceive the problems of primary school education differently.

3. Parents with different levels of income will perceive the problems of primary school education differently.

4. Parents with different educational level will perceive the problems of primary school education differently.

5. Parents of Public and Government primary school children, parents having children of different sexes in the primary schools, parents with...
different income and educational levels, will differ in their attitude towards education.

6. There will be a positive significant relationship between the parents' attitude towards education and their perception of the problems of primary school education.

1.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study has the following limitations.

1. The study is confined to Mohali and its peripheral areas situated in Ropar district of Panjab.

2. The study is delimited to only eight schools i.e., four affiliated Public schools and four Government primary schools.

3. The study is delimited to a sample of 400 parents of primary school children.