

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTON

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

‘Education for human development’ has been recognized as a fundamental objective of the educational process. This process mainly disseminates knowledge, develops values and skills which are useful for the socio-cultural and economical development of the nation. The development of India, today, hinges on its capacity to acquire, adopt and to advance knowledge. This capacity depends largely upon the extent to which the country’s population has attained literacy, numeracy, communication and problem solving skills (Lockheed, M. 1990). Providing education for all, is thus a challenge for all the developing countries like ours. Education is a life long process in which individuals encounter with the external environment and gain the experiences through the process of living in the society. The narrow perspective of education is the process of schooling in which formal institutions are established to transmit the accumulated knowledge, values, attitude and skills from one generation to the other through the formal teaching learning process. This process of education, being a continuum of different stages, from primary education to university education, each stage covers a specific age group of learners and provides a fixed level of learning experiences. Primary Education stage, which is the first five years (I-V) of learning, lays foundation for the personality, attitude, social confidence, habit formation, learning skills and communicating capabilities among children.

This stage of schooling process concentrates on three R's (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) and also the physical growth. Further education rests on this solid foundation which is essentially the product of primary education system. Realising the benefits of Primary Education, several efforts had put in as early as 1893 by the Maharaja of Baroda at Amreli in Gujarat by providing Free Primary Education. Mahatma Gandhi and Gopala Krishna Gokhle etc., were the reformers in proclaiming the Free Primary Education in India. After independence, deliberate efforts were put in the system to popularise the necessity of Primary education for the sustainable development of the country. Several innovative steps have been taken in the post-independent era and India could achieve in establishing a mission-oriented approach in providing Primary Education to all the children in the country.

1.1 Historical Developments of Universalisation of Elementary Education in India

The vision of Education for India is contained in the Article-45 of the constitution, "the state shall endeavor to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years within the period of ten years", which was adopted in 1950. Primary Education has been one of the focus areas in the successive five-year plans. Working groups of the Planning Commission targeted the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) and the targets were revised successively during 1960's and

1970's The Kothari Commission (1964-66) proposed to achieve the target not later than 1986 In 1979-80, the Department of Education, Govt of India established Non-Formal Education centres as a strategy to achieve UEE and to reach the places where primary schools were un-reached and to reach all the children particularly millions of girls and working children whose participation in the school system is thwarted by socio-economic conditions This programme enabled the learners to learn at their pace The National Policy on Education (NPE-1986) set the platform for the Central Government to play a key role in achieving Universalisation of Elementary Education Para 5.12 of NPE resolves that free and compulsory education of a satisfactory quality to all children upto 14 years of age before the commencement of the 21st century needs to be achieved The NPE also highlighted in its Para 5.5 that UEE has three aspects

- (i) Universal access and enrollment
- (ii) Universal retention of children upto 14 years of age and
- (iii) A substantial improvement in quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning

The Policy explicitly highlighted the need for concerted effort and gave priority to reduce the disparities among gender and socio-economic groups To carry out the policy recommendations, the Department of Education under Ministry of Human Resource Development initiated a series of grant programmes to assist and support states to strengthen the Primary Education

System. The following are the centrally sponsored programmes on the guidelines of NPE-1986 for achieving UEE

(a) Operation Black Board (OBB-1987)

The Department of Education established a programme symbolically called “ Operation Black Board” to encounter conditions realised as hurdles and de-motivating factors for enrolment, retention and substantial improvement in the quality of primary education. The scheme was started in the year 1987-88 to bring all existing primary schools in the country upto a minimum standard by way of providing physical facilities such as,

1. At least two reasonably large ‘all weather rooms’ along with the separate toilet facilities for boys and girls
2. At least two teachers as far as possible, one of them a woman, and
3. Essential teaching and learning material including blackboards, maps, charts, a small library, toys , games and some equipment for work experience

The scheme was extended in 1993-94 to provide third teacher and classroom to primary schools wherever enrolment exceeds 100 and to cover upper primary schools through provision of additional teachers and teaching learning equipment

(b) District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET's –1987)

The centrally sponsored programme of reconstructing and re-organisation of teacher education taken up in 1987 envisages setting up District Institute of Education and Training (DIET's) in each district to provide academic and resource support to Elementary Education teachers and Non-formal and Adult Education instructors. Up-gradation of selected secondary teacher education institutes into Colleges of Teacher Education (CTE) and Institute of Advanced Study in Education (IASE) to provide similar support and training for secondary school teachers and also strengthening State Council of Educational Research and training and the University Departments of Education were taken place for carrying out quality teacher education programmes. Under this scheme 451 DIET's, 76 CTE's and 34 IASE's have been established so far in the country (DPEP Calling, Nov 2000). These institutes have been conducting in-service and pre-service competency based teacher education programmes. Special Orientation for Primary Teachers (SOPT) has been the popular programme since 1993 to provide orientation to primary teachers in the use of teaching-learning materials supplied under Operation Black Board Scheme. A significant innovation in reaching out to teachers in remote areas through satellite based interactive technology has been tried successfully in collaboration with IGNOU and UNESCO.

(c) Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL-1989)

India is one of the few developing countries, which took the initiative to lay down Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) to be achieved at Primary stage. This new approach integrates various components of curriculum, classroom transaction, and evaluation and teacher orientation. Laying down of MLL is a part of the larger curriculum reform endeavor to achieve greater relevance and functionality in Primary Education. Curriculum revision, re-writing of text books to make them competency based, enhancing their pedagogical value and training of teachers in class room processes are the major activities being undertaken in almost all states in the country.

(d) Education for All (EFA-1990)

The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) held in March 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, adopted a declaration calling upon all member states and international agencies to take effective steps for achieving EFA by the year 2000. The major objective was to meet the basic learning needs of all children, youth and adults such as essential learning tool—literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving, basic learning content such as knowledge, skills and values and attitudes. Responding to the call of EFA, the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), which is the highest education policy making body in the country, endorsed the declaration and called for further strengthening of the processes initiated for UEE through the

increased financial inputs from internal sources as well as international agencies. Their goals were pursued through the successive Five year Plans and incorporated into the National Plan Framework. The approach adopted for implementing EFA programs is characterized by holistic view in which greater linkages and integration between pre-school, primary education, non-formal education and adult education are sought. Decentralisation is one of the major strategies for designing different programmes in which district as a unit of planning for programmes, increasing community involvement and participation of local self-government bodies are given emphasis.

In 1992, Indian Parliament approved an updated National Policy on Education and proposed programmes for action. This policy highlighted the integrated and decentralised approach for developing primary education system, with a focus on building the capacity of districts to plan and manage primary education. Para 7.4.6 of Programme of Action (POA- 1992) reads, “ further efforts would be to develop district specific projects, with specific activities, clearly defined responsibilities, define time schedule and specific targets. Each district project will be prepared within the major strategy framework and will be tailored to the specific needs and possibilities in the district.” The POA also realised and stated (Para 23.1.4) , “ Absence of effective decentralisation, failure to evolve priorities and pursue objective – oriented programmes , personal management system and ineffective intra-departmental and inter-departmental co-ordination mechanism have adversely affected the performance of the education of education system”.

The National Policy on Education (1986) and POA (1992) highlighted the need of revamping management system of education by adopting decentralisation principles to make the system work and accountable

So, right from independence, India has been pursuing the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education. Though the progress is substantial, the goal still remains elusive. Tremendous progress has been achieved in the quantitative expansion of primary education and there has been phenomenal increase in the number of schools and enrolment. The number of schools in the country increased by four fold, enrolment in primary schools jumped by about six times and the enrolment of girls recorded a high rise of 32 times from 1950-51 to 199-2000. As a result of such expansion 94% of the rural population has access to primary schools with the walking distance of 1 k m (MHRD-2000)

National experiences with the pursuit of UEE established the following characteristics and attributes as per the report of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (1995),

- (i) UEE is contextual. The contextuality varies widely across the country. Even in states like Kerala where participation is near universal much is required to be done in respect of quality and achievement. In such states the pursuit of UEE would be mainly in the areas of quality, facilities and achievement. In

other states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa participation and demand aspects need more attention

- (ii) Contextuality entails local area planning with dis-aggregated targets and decentralised planning and management Planning for UEE had been mainly at national and state level Barring some states and Union Territories, these entities are too large and heterogeneous for effective planning and they can't provide contextuality Ideally the planning should be from below, right from the village upwards but given the objective conditions, a beginning has to be made with district as the unit of planning The district plans are to be prepared through an intensive process of interaction with the local bodies, teachers and NGOs so that it is owned by all that are to be associated in implementation and it reflects the ground level realities
- (iii) Resources are an important but not sufficient condition for achieving UEE A host of measures both financial and non-financial, both on the supply side and on the demand side, need to complement higher allocation of resources
- (iv) The strategies for UEE has hitherto emphasised, mainly access in terms of construction of classrooms and appointment of teachers This has been inadequate and needs to be augmented by
 - (a) A holistic planning and management approach which goes beyond implementation of a disjointed set of individual schemes, perceives the task

of UEE in its totality, integrates all the measures needed to achieving UEE in the specific context of the district

- (b) This holistic planning should incorporate a gender perspective in all aspects of planning and implementation process and be an integral part of all measures needed to achieve UEE
- (c) Addressing the more difficult aspects of access, particularly access to girls, disadvantaged groups and out of school children
- (d) Improving school effectiveness
- (e) Strengthening the alternatives to schooling, particularly the non-formal education
- (f) Stressing the participating processes whereby the local community facilitates participation, achievement and school effectiveness
- (g) Toning up teacher competence, training and motivation
- (h) Stressing learning competence and achievement
- (i) Stressing need for improved teaching/learning materials
- (j) Streamlining of planning and management in respect of both routine and innovative areas and
- (k) Convergence between elementary education and related services like ECCE and school health

The recommendations no doubt, indicate the commitment of the nation to the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education. But it could not be achieved due to various factors such as inter-state disparities in the expansion of facilities, insufficient allocation of financial resources, poor community

mobilisation and involvement, lack of rationalisation of teacher deployment, inadequate academic support structures, inappropriate Management System and compartmentalisation of education (DPEP Report 1998) Considering all these hurdles, an holistic Model of working for UEE has been adopted in the name of DPEP by the Central Government with close collaboration with the States and local governments The details of the DPEP are described in the next section.

1.2 District Primary Education Programme: Origin and Development

Imbibing the spirit of the policy provisions, the District Primary Education Program (DPEP) emerged in 1994 as a response to various challenges in the primary education sector DPEP adopts a holistic approach and has the essential ingredients required to universalize access, retention and improve the learning achievement and reduces disparities among social groups Adopting an area specific approach with district as the unit of planning, the key strategies of the program have been to retain the contextuality and sensitivity to local conditions and ensuring full participation of the community The emphasis on participatory planning and management and capacity building are clearly articulated The programme is structured to provide additional inputs over and above the provision made by the state governments for expenditure on elementary education The programme components include construction of classrooms and new schools,

setting up the Block Resource Centres/Cluster Resource Centres, teacher training, development of teaching learning materials, research based interventions and decentralised management. The criteria for selection of districts are

- Backward districts with female literacy below the national average
- Districts where Total Literacy Campaigns have generated a demand for elementary education

DPEP is centrally sponsored scheme, whereby 85 percent of the project cost is shared by Govt of India and 15 percent by the state governments. Both central and state shares are passed on to the state implementation societies directly as grant. The Govt of India's share is resourced by international funding agencies like World Bank, European Community, Government of Netherlands, ODA etc. The District Primary Education Programme supports replicable, sustainable and cost effective programme development and implementation in order to

- reduce differences in enrolment, drop out and learning achievement between gender and social groups to less than 5 percent
- reduce overall primary drop out rates for all students to less than 10 per cent
- raise average achievement levels by atleast 25 percent over measured base line levels and ensuring achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum 40 percent achievement levels in other competencies by all primary school children
- provide access for all children to primary school wherever possible, or its equivalent non-formal education (DPEP Guidelines 1995)

Since its initiation in 1994, DPEP covered 42 districts in 7 states; its reach has spread to 149 districts in 14 states and another 33 districts are under pipeline and thus a total number of 189 districts. (DPEP Assessment Report 1998) In Gujarat State, three districts namely, Panchmahal, Banaskantha and Dangs were identified as DPEP districts in the second phase

Table: 1.1 District wise Distribution of DPEP in India

Source: Three Years of DPEP Assessment and Challenge, MHRD 1998

Majority of the DPEP districts - with high share of tribals and socially disadvantaged population - are among the most educationally backward districts in the country with low female literacy States and districts covered under DPEP are -	
States	Districts
1. Assam [9]	Darrang, Dhubri, Karbi Anglong, Mongaon Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Goalpara, Barpeta, Sonitpur
2. Haryana [7]	Hissar, Jind, Kaithal, Sirsa, Gurgaon, Bhiwani, Mahendragarh
3. Karnataka [11]	Belgaum, Kolar, Mandya, Raichur, Bellary, Bidar, Gulbarga, Mysore, Bijapur, Bangalore (Rural), Dharwad
4. Kerala [6]	Kasaragode, Malapuram, Wayanad, Thiruvananthapuram, Iddukki, Palakkad
5. Madhya Pradesh [34]	Betul, Bilaspur, Chhatarpur, Dhar, Guna, Mandsaur, Panna, Raigarh, Raisen, Rajgarh, Rajnandgaon, Ratlam, Rewa, Surguja, Satna, Sehore, Shahdol, Sidhi, Tikamgarh, Mandla, Seoni, Shivpuri, Bhind, Morena, Bastar, Vidisha, Jhabua, Datia, Khargone, Dewas, Shajapur, Raipur, Khandwa, Damoh
6. Maharashtra [9]	Aurangabad, Latur, Nanded, Osmanabad, Parbhani, Bid, Dhule, Gadchiroli, Jalna
7. Tamil Nadu [6]	Dharmapuri, South Arcot, Thiruvannamalai, Pudukottai, Ramanathapuram, Perambalur, Thiruvalluvar
8. Andhra Pradesh [19]	Karimnagar, Kumool, Nellore, Warangal, Vizianagaram, Adilabad, Ananthapur, Chittoor, Cuddapah, Guntur, Khammam, Mahaboobnagar, Medak, Nalgonda, Nizamabad, Prakasham, Ranga Reddy, Srikakulam, Visakapatnam.
9. Gujarat [3]	Banaskantha, Dang, Panchmahal
10. Himachal Pradesh [4]	Chamba, Kullu, Lahaul & Spiti, Sirmour
11. Orissa [8]	Bolangir, Dhenkanal, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Gajapati, Baragarh, Sambalpur, Keonjhar
12. West Bengal [5]	Bankura, Birbhum, Cooch Behar, Murshidabad, South Paraganas
13. Uttar Pradesh [18]	Maharajanji, Siddharthnagar, Gonda, Badaun, Kheri, Lalitpur, Pillibhit, Basti, Moradabad, Shahjahanpur, Sonbhadra, Deoria, Hardoi, Bareilly, Firozabad, Rampur, Bahraich, Barabanki
14. Bihar [27]	Muzaffarpur, West Champaran, Ranchi, Chatra, Sitamarhi, Rohtas, East Singhbhum (Jamshedpur), Vaishali, Darbhanga, Gaya, Dumka, West Singhbhum (Chaibassa), Purnea, Bhojpur, Munger, Bhagalpur, Hazaribagh.
15. Rajasthan [10]	Sri Ganganagar, Alwar, Nagaur, Sirohi, Jhalawar, Jhunjhunu, Sikar, Tonk, Kota, Bhilwara.

The salient features of District Primary Education Program are

- Operationalises NPE's strategy for decentralized planning and desegregated target setting
- Implementation in project model in districts The project period varying between 5-7 years
- Makes a holistic approach, from the schematic to the integrated, with due emphasis on convergence of existing programs and resources
- Focus on sustainability and equity central to the program
- Emphasis on intensive community participation
- Predominance of quality aspects supported by feedback from research and evaluation
- A process based program
- Responsibility of implementation vested with state level registered society empowered to make financial and administrative decisions, with national level co-ordination and support
- A Centrally sponsored scheme with 85 percent of the project cost being made available to the states by Government of India and states contributing the balance 15 percent The Govt of India funds are sourced from international funding agencies
- Approximately Rs 30-40 crores funding earmarked for a district for the entire project period
- Financing is done on the condition that the states continue to maintain at least their pre-DPEP allocations for primary education

- Special supervision mechanism-bi-annual joint supervision mission with representatives of Ministry and the International funding agencies

Consistent with the philosophy of decentralisation, plans are prepared at the districts through participatory processes involving district and sub-district functionaries, teachers, parents and community members. The perspective plans thus developed for the project duration of 5-7 years are subjected to rigorous appraisal. Insights obtained through research such as the baseline assessment studies and social assessment studies, feed into the planning process. Within the overall framework of the perspective plan, annual work plans and budgets are prepared on an year to year basis which are experiences supported by regular research inputs and feedback of monitoring and supervision processes. The planning process and project formulation under DPEP is of great significance, it constitutes nine pillars,

- (i) Mobilisation of UEE by activating Village Education Committees, teachers, parents and linking up with efforts under the Total Literacy Campaigns
- (ii) Planning for primary education and not merely primary schooling. Thus Alternative Schooling Methods have significant importance
- (iii) Cover all qualitative aspects such as school effectiveness, text books teacher training and improvement in simple reading and learning skills
- (iv) Convergence of services, such as primary education, primary health and ECCE to provide synergistic development
- (v) Provision for training to teacher motivation and class room transactions, and also in management of education

- (vi) Openness to innovations , which throws up new solutions to the problems
 - (vii) A marked gender focus to provide for improvement in access, retention and achievement levels of girls education and also to permeate gender sensitivity through all aspects of DPEP planning
 - (viii) The canvas of DPEP is systematic, where the issue is that of the management of change and improvement of the system
 - (ix) Evaluation, monitoring and research are interactive and supportive of DPEP
- The funding procedure for DPEP is also crucial to study The Project is centrally monitored and externally funded project The funding details are given in table no 1 2 This table focuses on the mode of funding by different external international agencies for different DPEP States

The DPEP has been operationalised on the principle of decentralisation of management and specific management structures have been evolved to reach out to the community The below DPEP Model describes the programme management structure The positions under different levels of management structure are equipped with certain responsibilities with power and authority to take decisions and initiate the programme The funding procedure is also an important component of the whole DPEP programme

Table: 1.2 The Position of External Funding tied up for DPEP:

Funding Upto a maximum amount of Rs. 40 crore is provided for implementation of the Programme in each district. Out of the total project cost, about 70% of funds is spent on improving quality of education. Expenditure on civil works is limited to 24% and management cost to 6%. The project is a Centrally sponsored scheme with 85 per cent of the project cost shared by the Government of India and the remaining 15 per cent by the State Government concerned. Both the Central share and State share are passed on to the State Implementation Societies directly as grant.			
<u>Position of external assistance tied up for DPEP</u>			
Funding Agency	Amount	Period	States and No. of Districts Covered
World Bank (IDA) (Soft loan)	US\$ 260.3 million (Rs. 806 crores)	1994-95 to 2001-02	DPEP Phase I Assam, (4) Haryana (4) Karnataka (4) Kerala (3) Maharashtra (5) Tamil Nadu (3)
European Community (EC) (Grant)	ECU 150 Million (Rs. 585 crores)	1994- to 1999	DPEP – Madhya Pradesh (19)
World Bank (Soft loan) + Co-financing by Govt. of Netherlands (Grant)	US\$ 425.2 million (Rs. 1480 crores) US\$ 25.8 million (Rs. 90 crores)	1996-97 to 2001-02	DPEP Phase II Gujarat (3) Dutch funded Himachal Pradesh (4) Orissa (5) Expansion in DPEP states already covered (43) U P (15)
DFID (U.K.) (Grant)	£ 42.5 million (Rs. 220 crores) £ 37.71 million (Rs. 207 crores)	1996 to 2003	DPEP Phase II Andhra Pradesh (5) West Bengal (5)
World Bank (Soft loan) + UNICEF (Grant)	US\$ 152.4 million (Rs. 530 crores) + US \$ 10 million (Rs. 36 crores)	1997-98 to 2001-2002	DPEP Phase – III 27 districts of Bihar
IDA (Soft loan)	US \$ 220 million (in pipeline)	1998-99 to 2002-2003	Rajasthan (19 districts)
Government of Netherland (Grant) Through IDA	US \$ 25 million (in pipeline)	1998-99 to 2000-2003	Uttar Pradesh (3 districts)

Source: Internet Source from MHRD Website Govt. of India.

1.3 Decentralised Management in Education: Meaning and Rationale

The concept of decentralization in Educational Management has become a matter of debate. This concept is in operation in most of the developed countries. In fact, the central control versus local autonomy, power concentration versus power diffusion and bureaucracy versus democracy are not new to the field of public administration. The recent re-emergence of the debate on this issue is marked by a relative unanimity among educational policy-makers in favour of decentralization. Yet, the actual manifestation of the process of “decentralization” in terms of the rationale put forth as well as the operational features adopted varies very widely across different countries. As a result, the concept has remained vague and highly ambiguous, even though used extensively by policy-makers as well as intellectuals (Govinda R 1997). The term “decentralisation” could be understood in simple terms as “not-centralisation”. It is a management strategy of the political and decision making view, wherein the powers and responsibilities are diffused to the functionaries to plan and perform the tasks. It is considered to be a revolution in the bureaucratic system of management. As the system of education is political in nature, the concept of decentralisation gained prominence in Education field also.

Decentralisation of Educational Management could be well justified in a large country like India by understanding the complexity of managing

the modern education system from a single location. Another explanation seems to lie on the equity, equality and quality measures in education that emphasises on ensuring the access of educational facilities to all the citizens of the country. There is a popular demand for freedom to choose schools according to varying perceptions of quality of education by the general public, the uniform strait jacket programmes of schooling which are centrally determined and prescribed do not meet this demand. Therefore the best alternative is to decentralise the management system of education.

1.3.1 Concept of Decentralisation: A frame work for Analysis

Decentralisation is a reform strategy to alter the political status quo by transferring the authority from one level of government and one set of actors to other. In this case, the power losers are officials and bureaucrats at the centre, while the power gainers are their counterparts at the regional, district, or local levels as well as, one would hope parents, students, teachers and community at large. Bray (1984) provides a working definition of decentralisation as “the process in which subordinate levels of hierarchy are authorized by higher body to take decisions about the use of the organisations’ resources

Decentralization lexically implies ‘moving away from the centre’. This need not imply less government control, it may only mean spreading the central control points across the territory towards the peripheral units. On

the other hand, one can also take a point of view that decentralization should necessarily mean a weakening of the central government control and as a corollary imply empowerment of local units of management (Govinda 1997)

Traditional literature on decentralisation refers to a variety of management phenomena and these include three easily distinguishable trends (Adamolekun et al, 1990, Rondinelli et al, 1984, Weiler, 1989, Lauglo, 1990) The first trend is 'deconcentration' wherein, an addition of decentralised, either at the local level alone or at two or three levels (districts, departments, and so forth) takes place to the existing structure The implication of this process is to move the administrative setup nearer to the action setting but by increasing the weight of the bureaucracy This deconcentration approach is a means to increase the role of the state in decision-making, though locally placed civil servants (Lauglo, 1990)

A second trend is 'delegation' which is commonly referred as an approach in which the state apparently transfers some of the powers of decision-making to the bodies like NGOs'/Voluntary Organisations which are outside the government bureaucracy However in practice, such 'delegation' of authority generally involves para-statal bodies, created by the state itself to handle special areas of public concern Even though such delegated bodies would enjoy some amount of autonomy from state control, they are easily dispensable as their creation is effected mainly through executive orders of the state and not through promulgating of law

Establishment of Textbook Development Corporations in different states of India is a good example of such an approach. Some authors consider a much broader interpretation of 'delegation' which includes vesting of decision-making powers with members of the bureaucracy within the government hierarchy down the line and away from the centre (Govinda 1997)

The third trend is 'Devolution', in which, the specified powers are transferred to sub-national units through appropriate legal reform processes. Generally these units consist of local self governments constituted through democratic means. In this case, decentralization is presented as a "Choice of Society". Decentralization therefore becomes an ideological choice, an equation in which participatory democracy is directly proportional to decentralization" (Adamolekun et al, 1990)

In analysing the concept of decentralisation apart from the above perspectives, the conventional wisdom makes two sorts of distinction. They are Political and Administrative decentralisations. Political or democratic decentralisation involves assigning power to make decisions about education to citizens or to their representatives at lower levels of government. Administrative or bureaucratic decentralisation on the other hand is essentially a management strategy. Political power remains with the officials at the top of the organisation, but the responsibility and authority for planning, management, finance and other activities are assigned to local governments (Williams 1993). Some authors have conceptualized

decentralisation as a process of 'privatization' wherein the responsibilities are transferred to the private organisations. A critical examination of these concepts in the field of educational management is necessary.

Decentralization in educational management is never an all or none phenomenon. Some functions, such as decisions on the nature and methods of classroom teaching, by their very nature have to be left to the persons performing that function (Govinda 1997). Decision making in educational management could be seen at three distinct levels and are (i) policy making level (ii) programme formulation level and (iii) programme implementation level. It is common to find that decisions at the policy making level are invariably made in all the countries by the central authorities. However, the situation with respect to the other two levels vary considerably. Another consideration for examining the nature of decentralization measures adopted is with respect to the size of the sub-units. Again, in large countries decentralizing the planning and managing functions to the state or provincial level may not represent real decentralization if the states themselves are very large in terms of geographical boundary and population (Govinda 1997).

On the other hand, decentralization in small states raises a unique set of questions very different from the ones that come up in large size states (Bacchus, 1993).

The Second factor is the socio-political philosophy of the country. The fundamental component of decentralisation is power sharing and greater autonomy to the functionaries, which is a political and administrative concern. Therefore, it becomes essential that the decentralized units of educational management are as far as possible in synchrony with the divisions made for political and administrative purposes. Further, sub-national units such as states, provinces, districts in a country are not necessarily carved out with the explicit consideration of efficient governance. They evolve historically into natural zones based on a variety of socio-cultural factors, such as ethnicity and language which are of crucial importance in creating decentralized units for educational planning and management. Finally, if efficiency in educational management is one of the bases for decentralization, it becomes imperative that the size and jurisdiction of the decentralized units are decided on the basis of size of the educational enterprise itself, in terms of number of institutions to be managed, or the number of teachers employed and so on (Govinda-1997).

Another significant question that evolves at the functional levels is that 'who at the decentralized level will exercise the powers and authorities?' Whether all kinds of decentralization would lead to increased participation by the people? As Webster (1992) observes on the situation in one of the states in India, decentralization need not always result in the empowerment of the people and reduction in state control. "Far from it, the extension of the state outward and downwards can just as well serve the objective of consolidating

the power of the central state as it can serve the objective of devolving power away from the centre. It can extend the state's control over the people just as it can aid the people's control over the state and its activities. Decentralization is very much a double-edged sword" (Webster, 1992: 129-130). Within the decentralization approach adopted in a country, several alternatives may emerge with their implications for the way power for decision making is shared among the different actors. The Panchayatiraj Act in India suggests that the powers could be vested in the hands of democratically elected representatives at the local levels and the decision taken could be administered through the members of the civil service.

Whatever be the approach of management, the most important task is to provide quality education and maintain sustainable development of the country. The best formula that suits to the present system for the distribution of functions across different levels is the decentralized approach. Many may lay considerable emphasis on central coordination as a means of maintaining the identity of a national system of education. Some others would insist on this for the sake of ensuring efficient functioning of the education system. It is often argued that some fixed model of school structure, teacher training, timetable, and syllabuses in the schools, and mode of examination is necessary in order to ensure uniformity in the system. However, the policy initiatives have been rooted in the system of education and striving for the community involvement in the management of education in India.

Decentralised Management approach in the field of education has been in functional level in many of the developed countries. A critical view on these experiences would provide the issues and perspectives at the functional level. Therefore, a detailed review on the developmental reforms based on the principles of decentralisation in the developed countries is presented in the next section.

1.3.2 Decentralisation of Educational Management: International Perspective

Decentralization can be viewed either as a fundamental value to be internalized into the system of educational management, or as a technocratic solution for the problems that are encountered by any educational system. Thus, the actual practice of decentralized management will significantly vary from one country to another. And even within a country, debates and disagreements on appropriate forms of decentralization are likely to continue among policy makers and practitioners. This is quite evident from the state of almost perpetual change in which educational management has remained even in well developed educational systems functioning in relatively stable politico-administrative environments of the developed world. Therefore, understanding the educational management system in any country will demand a framework of analysis which attempts to view the management system from different vantage points in terms of the decentralized processes involved. There is a trend in the management reforms in education system throughout the world in the direction of decentralisation. The basic

assumption is that the increased autonomy for teachers and fewer bureaucratic controls have invariably lead to school effectiveness. Efforts to increase the autonomy of schools have been made in a number of countries for a variety of reasons. The developed countries have been practicing this approach and experiencing the fruitful results.

(a) Britan and Wales:

The conservative manifesto for the 1987 national election in UK contained proposals for four major reforms each of which has implications for the management of schools and a shift in the centralisation-decentralisation continuum towards self-managing schools,

- A national core curriculum
- Control over school budgets to be given to governing bodies and head teachers of all secondary school and many primary schools within five years
- Increasing parental choice by fostering diversity and increasing access
- Allowing state schools to opt out of Local Education Authority (LEA) control, with grants from national government being made directly to the school

These proposals reflect each of the fundamental values of education—the values of Equity, Efficiency, Liberty and Choice and addressed the intents to decentralise control of budgets, increase access, foster diversity and allow

state schools to be independent of LEA Control. It was the chairman of the Borough's Education Committee who took initiative in comparing the procedure of running a school with a small business. Experiments were carried out and the outcomes were- willingness on the part of a school to use their power of expenditure, a more responsive approach to school maintenance, schools now able to set their own priorities, greater awareness among teachers of the financial parameters, and steady improvement in the quality of education. Plans have been made to improve the financial information system, and for in-service training of teachers and officers of the school authority (Humphrey and Thomas 1985).

(b) United States of America:

Public Education is a state responsibility in the United States. However, a substantial level of community control has been achieved with the creation and empowerment under state law of locally-elected school boards having responsibility for schools in a district, subject to state laws and regulations. The three waves of reform in USA have been primarily driven by the perceived need to improve economic competitiveness. The first wave initiated by "A Nation at Risk" (1983) and resulted in longer school days and years, increased graduation requirements, increased teachers' salaries etc. The second wave, associated with a document "Tomorrow's Teachers" (1986) recognised the importance of the reconstruction of schools in terms of teacher preparation, roles and responsibilities and site-based management. The third wave, after 1990, is a drive for systematic

reform , for state and national curriculum frameworks and standards and creased parental choice Integral to this approach to reform is the argument that it is the responsibility of schools to educate thoughtful, competent and responsible citizens and the state to define what this means(Smith and O'Day 1991) The important feature of the restructuring of school system in the states is the inclusion of reforms alternatively referred to as school-based management, shared decision-making and decentralised management Kentucky Bill (1990) reaffirmed the school reforms through the decentralisation of educational management that include increased responsibility for budgeting, curriculum and staffing to principals, parents and community In considering the direction of change, what emerges here is an emphasis on decentralisation, notably with respect to resource choices and much less so on the curriculum The decentralisation is more like financial delegation rather than a pupil-as-voucher market economy, although funding levels are largely based on pupil members The School-Based Management in the USA enhanced the role of the principal and, in this sense, professional autonomy has been enhanced (Hywel thomas 1997)

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Developments in Australia in terms of distribution of responsibilities among different levels of governance brought drastic changes in school management Education is a state responsibility in Australia for more than one hundred years until 1970 After this period, the federal government

became involved in a very significant way through the Australian Schools commission which is now called Commonwealth Schools Commission. A comprehensive grants scheme administered by the commission for both government and non-government schools was designed to achieve greater equity among schools and equality of opportunity for students. An administrative decentralisation of education departments through the formation of regional units in several states was adopted. The reforms in Australia suggest that professional autonomy still exists in terms of the ability to develop curriculum to suit needs, albeit limited by state wide policy. In terms of the devolution of control over operating and related costs, much of this is to the principal. (Hywel Thomas 1997)

(d) New Zealand

The Picot Report (1988) recommended radical devolution of power, resources and responsibilities to schools and their communities. Here the role of the state government has become one of the regulators, funder, owner and purchaser, it reviews and audits the school system. Responsibility for curriculum and assessment lies with the centre and the school. The centre is responsible for setting the framework, approving school charters, monitoring performance and establishing the school charter. Approaches to pedagogy are determined by the principal and teachers. The direction of change resembles that occurring in England and Wales: movement towards the 'market' is indicated by open enrolment and towards command by a national curriculum and examination framework. Gamage(1996) noted that the School Based

Management was initiated by the Government whereby every school is to establish a board of trustees comprising of the principal and representatives of parents, teachers and community

From the above descriptions it is clear that several attempts have been made in the field of education across the world, to bring a management reform on the guidelines of decentralisation of management. 'School Based Management' is an emerging approach which fully contained the principles of decentralisation. The international experiences on management reforms at school level highlighted the following parameters;

- Policy and practices of school governance
- Need based programmes focussing on learners and context
- Curriculum reconstruction
- Resource management and budgeting
- Networking and role playing
- Community involvement and partnership
- Autonomy and Accountability
- Institutional Capacity Building
- Local initiation for planning and execution

The above parameters provides a framework for the decentralised approach in the system of education. The decentralised approach has been in operation in the developed countries and the experience shows a positive impact on the quality education. The DPEP is one of the intervention programme in India to accomplish the goal of Universalisation of Elementary

Education The programme is basically build upon the principles of the decentralisation Since it is a new programme, it is essential to know the programme parameters and the components that support the decentralised approach

1.3.3 Evolution of Policy framework for Decentralised Management of Education: Indian Context

The concept of decentralisation has a long historical perspective in the Indian society Caste Panchayats and Nyaya Panchyats in the Indian traditions used to settle the disputes without going to the Police or to the courts Even the primitive societies like the tribes have very well organized Panchayat systems

In the area of Education, initiatives on Decentralised Management goes back to the Hunter Commission Report (1882), where the Local Self Government Act of 1883 transferred education to the municipalities in the urban areas and to the district boards in rural areas The State Education Department was expected to look after the administration and the technical management, while the education board set up education committees to supervise the educational facilities in the schools

The State Legislation's like United Provinces local self-government (1916) and U P Primary Education Act (1919) are the manifestations of

decentralization process. As early as 1920s a District Board Act provided for establishment of middle schools for boys, primary schools including Urdu medium schools, Maktabas and middle schools under the control of the District Boards. The freedom movement provides several instances of mass awakening and social mobilization. Mahatma Gandhi used this 'strength' of mass awareness and mobilization for the freedom movement of the country. In a comparative sense it could be said that the freedom movement provided a genuine and true form of community participation than any preceding or subsequent movements/mass programs in the post-independent India (Ambast 1999).

The B K Kher Committee (1953) emphasized the need for decentralization of management to attract community involvement at the grassroot levels. It recommended that involvement of all types of local bodies to promote and manage education in the interest of mass education. Subsequently the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957) recommended that primary education should become the responsibility of the Panchayats. While the question of standards remained with the Department of Education, financial and administrative aspects of management were transferred to Panchayati Raj bodies. Some significant gains were noted as a result of such a move. Decentralization in matters of administration and supervision of education received support from this report. However, decentralization of curriculum development was not delegated to these bodies on grounds of

insufficient expertise. Therefore, local relevance of the curriculum remained a dream.

For example, the Sidique Ali Committee (1964) noted improvement in the working of primary schools in the areas of enrolment of students, attendance of teachers and students in the schools, and effective supervision. School buildings and equipment received support from local communities. However, the Bhandari Committee (1969) noted some deficiencies on account of non-availability of competent teachers and general apathy among the parents.

The strongest support for community involvement in education came from the review of primary education in Maharashtra. The Dongerkar Committee (1971) viewed education as an instrument of social change and stated that education cannot function in isolation with the social forces. The village schools have an important role to play in creating a proper environment in rural areas in their individual capacities. Therefore, the local people must be associated with the working of these institutions so that they could exercise a wholesome beneficial influence. This Committee recommended transfer of more functions to Panchayati Raj bodies including transfer of teachers, academic administration and supervision of the school. The Ashok Mehta Committee (1978) advocated transfer of substantial power and responsibilities in education to the Zilla Parishad. These powers and responsibilities included transfer of teachers, monthly transfer of salary

funds from State and composition of a Board of Education for maintenance of quality and standard of education

Community participation has been acknowledged as one of the effective strategies of achieving goal of education in any given community or society. Such recognition has been noticed in the work of various Commissions/Committees on education for over a century now. But community participation has been interpreted as community's contribution rather than community's involvement in planning and management. This phrase is still to be interpreted as the community coming forward in an organized manner to 'own' a development effort.

In the Constitutional context Article 40 of the Constitution enjoins States to "Take steps to organize Village Panchayats and endow with such powers and authorities as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government." This provision, read with other articles forming part of the Directive Principles and Article 243, enunciates a Constitutional vision of Gram Swaraj with power to the people.

The 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution have envisioned the concept of people's self-rule. The Eleventh Schedule has stated mandatory areas for such self-government. The 73rd Amendment to the Constitution has facilitated a revitalized role for Panchayati Raj Institutions, they are expected to undertake responsibilities of local self-governance through a Gram Sabha,

establishments of panchayats at village, intermediate and district levels through elections and through reservations of SC/ST in proportion to their population and women to the extent of one-third of the seats in the Panchayati Raj bodies. This amendment supports transfer to planning and management of education of Panchayati Raj bodies. It over-rules earlier hesitations with regard to estimated lack of local capacities, maintain standard in education, recruitment of teachers and formulation of curricula responsive to nationally cherished values and locally relevant curriculum. Inclusion of health, education and family services among the list of twenty-nine assigned functions to the Panchayati Raj bodies has made it possible to achieve convergence of such services at the village level. It may be worthwhile to recall that low universalisation of educational opportunities have been stated to be the result of lack of convergence of such service.

It may be noted that there has been a perceptible change from the pre-independent experience of spontaneous participation to 'organization' and 'participation' of the people in decentralized planning and implementation. It assumes a structural entity operating on stable basis. In the past such structural entity as Parent Teachers' Association, School Development Committee and even the Village Planning Committee have lacked the statutory recognition and mandatory charter of powers and responsibilities.

The Legislation at the State Levels have conspicuously avoided self governance and have emphasized on efficient development management

which includes an enlarged people participation in the implementation of rural development programs including education. However, the persisting Indian colonial tendencies in development management have restricted it to mean an orchestrated execution by the captains of bureaucracy. The Haryana Act empowers the Director Panchayats to cancel any decision of the Panchayat in public interest. In case of Bihar although the legislation has fully incorporated the act stated as “to enable them to function as vibrant institutions of local self-government with people’s greater participation in managing and conducting their own affairs besides imparting certainty, continuity and democratic content and dignity aiming, among other things, at the realization of economic and social justice”, yet it is another matter that Bihar has not even held Panchayat elections so far. In Karnataka, the intent of Panchayati Raj Act is stated as “for greater participation of the people and more effective implementation of rural development programs”. Maharashtra states them as under “establishment in rural areas of Zilla Parishad’s and to assign to them local government functions extend execution of certain scheme. Provide for decentralization of powers and functions securing a greater measure of participation by the people.”

‘Community participation’ is considered as one of the facilitating conditions contributing to the quality of education. Lockheed and Levin (1991) clubbed community participation with school based professionalism, principal’s initiative, teacher collegiality, organizational flexibility, pedagogical flexibility and accountability as facilitating conditions. They

have recognized, for example, that the “criteria” for monitoring and evaluation of school performance needs to be expanded to include accountability to its local clientele, if the cycle of dis-empowerment of marginal communities is to be broken. Also, Henevel (1994) has included the community support as one of the 16 primary indicators in his model of school effectiveness.

School education is the responsibility of the Education Department in most of the states in India which also regulate non-governmental institutions, and, of Tribal Welfare Department in some tribal areas. A number of development departments support education programs through provision of services including supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check up, health and nutrition education, referral services, and early childhood care & education. School education has also been viewed as “socialization” within the framework of the dominant value system of the nation or at best the State.

The policy documents in education (NPE 1986, POA 1992, CAME Committee report (1992)) have been emphatically highlighting the incorporation of decentralisation of management in the education system for greater outcomes. The DPEP is a centrally sponsored programme evolved out of the considerations of the decentralised management. The next section deals with the principles and procedures of DPEP.

1.3.4 Decentralised Management of District Primary Education Programme

The CAGE Committee Report (1992) stated that the country has placed trust in the educational management and focussed that “ no centrally sponsored schemes should be initiated unless it is for the purpose of securing decentralisation of educational management at grass root levels” The district Primary Education programme had evolved on the same principles of decentralisation as a centrally sponsored scheme to achieve the Universalisation of Elementary Education The DPEP Guidelines (1992) focussed the programme criteria and evidence as,

Table:1. 3 DPEP Programme Criteria and Evidence

Criteria	Evidence
1 Equity focus	Focus on district with low female literacy rates Baseline beneficiary studies Specific strategies for girls, SC/ST students
2 Decentralisation	Action plans and budgets developed at the district level and investment in district level institutional capacity
3 Participatory Planning	Village leadership, NGOs, District, Block and School level personnel involved in programme Planning
4 Technical Feasibility	Strategies are based on empirical evidences and experiences
5 Managerial Feasibility	Implementation by registered society empowered to make financial, staffing and project decisions

The above parameters of DPEP created Management structures at Centre, State, District and Village levels. At the national level a General Council is established which is headed by the Union Minister of Education and looks after the centre-state co-ordination and promote debate on the issues with policy implementations for Primary Education. Thus the General Council provides policy directions to the DPEP. A Project Board for DPEP is established which is an integral wing of the ministry to look after the full financial and administrative aspects of the programme under the guidance of Union Education Secretary. DPEP Bureau is another dedicated cell in the Ministry of Education under the Joint-Secretary which looks after release of funds to states, technical support to the states, appraisal, supervision, monitoring, research, evaluation and procurement. At the state level, the registered society has setup by the State Project Office with the Chief-Minister as a chair-person at General Council and the Chief Secretary, as a chair-person at the Executive committee. This is to provide operational flexibility, ensured larger participation of stakeholders at every level and encouraged decentralised planning and decision making.

District and sub-district level programme planning and management are done in consultation with the District Project Implementation Committee headed by the District collector, with representatives from the departments of education, Women and Child development, District Panchayat, NGOs and educational institutions. Even the districts were classified further into Blocks, Clusters, and Villages, where the BRCs and CRCs act like resource

centres for academic support and at the village level, Village Education Committee, Mother Teacher Association, Parents Teacher Association participate in the school based planning

DPEP has evolved a management structure from the Centre right upto the village level with substantial autonomy, high degree of flexibility, and above all, space to experiment with different methods and models of teaching. The Programme is working towards institutionalization of an appropriate management culture across the primary education system in the country. The management structure of the Programme has several levels-national, state, district, block, cluster and village. Details of these structures are given below

National Level: The role of National Level Structure (NLS) of DPEP is in facilitation, capacity building, appraisal, co-ordination and overall direction of the programme. Till adequate capacity is built in states, it would also assist in planning and implementation. The NLS includes Mission General Council (GC) headed by the Union Minister of Human Resource Development provides policy direction to DPEP and reviews the progress. It also facilitates centre – state co-ordination and promotes debate on issues with policy implications for primary education development. GC meets annually and is adequately represented by NGOs, educationists, public men and representatives of state and central government. Project Board (PB) headed by, the Union Education

Secretary, is the empowered executive body with full financial and administrative powers to implement the Programme. It recommends to the Government policies on DPEP, considers Annual Work Plan, promotes convergence, approves norms and reviews DPEP quarterly. PB meets at least once every quarter. Joint Secretary of DPEP will be the Member Secretary of both GC and PB.

DPEP Bureau in the Ministry is a dedicated cell to implement the programme. Much of the background work relating to policy, servicing of PB, release of finances to states, overall review of the programme is done by this Bureau. It also provides for appraisal, supervision, monitoring, research and evaluation, reimbursement, procurement and technical support. The Bureau is accountable to the General Council and the Project Board for implementation of the Programme. The Technical Support Group (TSG) of the Educational Consultants India Limited (EdCIL) provides professional and technical support. The National Resource Centres - National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) and Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), also provide support, apart from Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs).

State Level: At the state level, the Programme is implemented in a mission mode through a registered autonomous society, which has two

organs General Council (GC) with Chief Minister as ex-officio president and Executive Committee (EC) headed by the Chief Secretary/Education Secretary of the State. The Project is implemented by the State Project Office (SPO) and the executive responsibility rests with the State Project Director (SPD) being the Member Secretary of the GC and EC. Government of India is represented in the GC and EC. As the plans are formulated and implemented with the association of the community, NGOs, teachers, universities, national apex institutions and educationists, they are given adequate representation and voice in management of the project at all levels – state, district, block and village.

Management Structure of DPEP have many common features across the states. These include small staff size, linkages with the State Department of Education and other related departments and consultancies for accessing expertise in key functional areas. The state project management structure is supported by State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT), State Resource Groups (SRGs), Textbook Corporations and other Institutes.

District Level: District and sub-district level programme planning and management are carried out by the District Project Committee headed by the District Collector or the Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad. The Committee reviews the progress of DPEP in the district and works towards widening the network of supportive agencies. The committee has

representation of NGOs, panchayats, educational institutions, Village Education Committees and functional specialists apart from government departments. Besides, there is a District Implementation Committee which functions as the executive body at the district level. District Project Office (DPO), headed usually by the District Primary Education Officer, has been established as a separate structure in all the districts. Day-to-day implementation is managed by a full-time District Project Co-ordinator (DPC) assisted by Assistant Project Co-ordinators. Staff of the Department of Education posted in the district including supervisory officials and functional specialists work closely with the district DPEP units. District level structure is also supported by District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), District Resource Groups (DRGs), NGOs and other institutes.

Sub-District Level : Some of the Project districts also have Block Project Implementation Committees. Block Resource Centre lends academic support, so also Cluster Resource Centre at cluster level (group of villages).

Village Level: At village level, there are Village Education Committee (VEC), Mother – Teacher Association (MTA) and Parent - Teacher Association (PTA) to oversee implementation of the Project. The Programme is structured to provide additional inputs over and above the provisions made by the State Governments for expenditure on elementary education. DPEP fills in the existing gaps in the development of primary

education and seeks to revitalise the existing system. The following table represents the Management structure of DPEP and the personnel associated with it.

Table: 1.4 DPEP Management Structure.

National General Council Project Board

- Chairperson (HRM) –
- Chairperson (Education Secretary)
- Member Secretary (JS, DPEP) – Member Secretary (JS, DPEP)

DPEP Bureau

- National Resource Centres
- Technical Support Group, (NCERT, NIEPA, LBSNNA) Ed CIL

State General Council State Implementation Executive Committee

- Chairperson Society – Chairperson (Chief Secretary/(Chief Minister) Education Secretary)–
- Member Secretary (State Project Director)

District Project District Project Implementation

- Office Committee–Chairperson(District Collector)
- Block (Academic Support) Block Resource Centre
- Cluster (Academic Support) Cluster Resource Centre
- Village VEC / MTA / PTA

Source: Internet source from MHRD Website

The Programme components include community mobilisation, creation of community based structure, construction of classrooms and new schools, opening of non-formal and Alternative Schooling centres, appointment of new teachers, setting up of Cluster Resource Centres

(CRCs), and Block Resource Centres (BRCs), teacher training, development of Teaching Learning Material, distance education and special intervention for education of girls, the disabled children and Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Children

Community participation is an inbuilt intervention in DPEP. The Programme elicits the involvement of the community including minorities, women and the socially deprived groups, making them stakeholders in the primary education system. This is the first large scale attempt to involve community participation for achieving universal primary education. Given the social, economic and cultural diversity in India, community participation is an enormous challenge.

A wide range of communication and media options are adopted for community mobilisation in the programme. DPEP has drawn upon the experiences of Kala Jathas (cultural troupes) mode of the Total Literacy Mission (TLM) for community mobilisation. Kala Jathas have been extensively organised using folk forms, puppet shows, traditional media, street plays, films and songs to create awareness. Rallies, workshops, meetings, house to house campaigns and camps are also held to motivate parents to send their children to school. Opportunities such as weekly market, Melas (fairs), and religious gatherings have also been used, apart from the media channels of radio, television and print media.

Special melas take Mahila (women), Ma-beti (mother-daughter), Bap-beti (father-daughter) and Sishu (child) are organised to sensitise the

community on needs of primary education Posters, banners, hoardings, pamphlets, folders and brochures also create an environment of a campaign The states implementing the programme, today, have rich repository of print and audio-visual material Studies have shown that these campaigns have generated interest and enthusiasm resulting in increased enrolment Before DPEP, the community perceived the existence of the school as its only area of concern Recent developments show that the community is increasingly participating in issues related to the school environment, pedagogical renewal and the learning achievement levels of children The increasing involvement of parent and wider community is also having a salutary effect on the teaching-learning process. DPEP's experience has shown that when interventions are designed by the community and are tailored to a village's distinctive characteristics, then the best results follow In fact from Gujarat to Assam and from Himachal Pradesh to Kerala, instances of community members volunteering their time, energy and resources can be related.

DPEP has set up community structure commonly known as Village Education Committee (VEC) in all villages to function as an interface between the community and the primary education system This generates community's interest and involvement leading to community ownership of the programme Studies have shown that VECs have played an important role in mobilising the community, motivating parents to send their children to school and even managing Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Alternative Schooling (AS) centres In some

places VECs are supervising construction of schools and classrooms. These committees have assisted in enrolment, retention and reduction of drop-out rate, besides strengthening and maintaining the physical infrastructure of the school. In some places, they raise contributions for schools, prepare village educational plans, appoint para teachers and conduct house-to-house surveys and micro planning.

The tenure of VECs range from 3 to 5 years. VECs meet once in a month, and review functioning of the school. They also discuss about enrolment and drop-out position, progress of civil works and effectiveness of mobilisation campaigns. These committees are adequately represented by women, disadvantaged groups, parents, social workers and prominent persons. In some states, women comprise half of the total members. The head-teacher of the village school and member of the Village Panchayat (local body) are ex-officio members of the committee. DPEP provides school grant of Rs. 2000 per annum to each VEC for improving school facilities, furniture, health check up etc.

The Programme has undertaken to orient and train VEC members to equip them for supervision, school improvement and also for bringing about attitudinal changes among parents and the community. Studies have revealed that active participation of women resulted in better functioning of VEC as also of school. Wherever women headed VECs, widespread information sharing and consultation with larger community has been witnessed. Village Education Committee has been set up in all villages of

the project area Besides VECs, there are other community based structures like Mother Teacher Association (MTA), Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and Mahila Samakhya Sanghs (Womens clubs formed under the scheme for women's empowerment) which also assist the Programme The interface between Panchayat Raj (local self government) Institutions and VECs needs to be strengthened and harmonised for wider participation of the community in education

In Gujarat, three districts were identified under DPEP second Phase namely, Panchmahal, Dangs and Banaskanta Panchmahal district has 11 talukas consisting of 1915 villages with the population of about 30,000 (1991 Census) Among them 42% belongs to SC/ST communities The literacy rate of the district is 37% The profile of Gujarat and Panchmahal district is presented in the chapter III

1.4 Rationale of the Study

In order to elicit the best results by enabling the DPEP to evolve and regain its dynamic character, interventions to improve management practices, decentralised planning, research, monitoring, evaluation and supervision must go hand in hand with the programme Any reform in education can not take place, unless and until the prime functionaries digest the principles, objectives, roles and responsibilities and put them into practice The structural changes in DPEP on the lines of decentralisation, provided broad spectrum of

participation of local community in planning and decision making process. In the context of DPEP, the critical issue that needs to be answered is that, a smooth transition from the project mode to the programme mode depends on the way the connected policies, rules and regulations are re-oriented to accommodate the new initiatives. One of the common tensions that arise in this regard is with respect to project personnel and their integration into the system. The DPEP project has become operational with a relatively new sets of policy guidelines only in some selected districts while the existing rules and regulations will continue to be in force in the remaining. How to overcome this problem of dual sets of rules and regulations and ensure smooth integration of the project with the regular programme? Since the DPEP is time bound project with lot of financial input, it requires a critical study on the programme implementation level. In this perspective the present study is designed to probe into the following research questions that are vital and implicit in the DPEP model.

- 1 Is Decentralization of Management existing in its real terms at all levels with proper autonomy, accountability, participation and professionalism in decision making and implementation?

- 2 What are the management structures, its objectives, composition, processes, functions and its co-ordination with the existing management system working in the field of primary education?



- 3 To the functionaries at the grass-root levels practice on the principles
of decentralized Management?
- 4 To what extent has the decentralized system of management achieved
its pre-defined objectives and has contributed to the attainment of the
Universalisation of Elementary Education?
- 5 What are the functional difficulties and challenges in the DPEP
district as a unit operating on the basis of this system of management ?

DPEP programme has been built upon the experiences gained by the Bihar Education Project, Lokjumbish, Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Programme and Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project. The society mode of implementation of the DPEP got roots from these experiences. The fundamental justification for society model as mentioned in the DPEP proposals is that this model seems to resolve the dilemma by creating a para-statal organisations embedded in the department but functioning autonomously, not exactly separated, but separated by a permeable membrane, which facilitates osmosis of the good practices and thereby transformation of the department itself. Similar kind of dialectical interplay could be seen in the state as well as the district levels. As it is the first generation project in Gujarat through the experimentation with the society mode, it is necessary to study the dynamic interplay of the different management structures under the DPEP programme.

Decentralisation, or the shifting of powers and responsibilities to the district level is another main feature of the project. Community based structures were created to integrate with the planning and decision making process at the local level. Here the question of people's awareness and participation is the concern. The researcher is interested to know as to how the community structures are involved in the planning and decision making processes at the local levels.

Research studies conducted in the area of DPEP at various states revealed that the structures at local level were created in almost all the districts of DPEP (Ed CIL 1997), however these community based structures were yet to be integrated and matured. The structures, especially at the district level and below, were yet to internalise the process like planning, co-ordination, supervision etc., which were essential for decentralised project implementation (Sharma and Abjeet, 1997). The studies also revealed that there was a minor increase in the enrolment and the scholastic achievement in students in DPEP districts (Kamala Kanta, 1997), whereas Saikia (1999) found that there was an increase of 27% in the enrolment rate in the DPEP districts. The research studies reveal the fact that the success of the DPEP is based on contextual interventions and therefore, the researcher has selected Panchmahal district, one of the DPEP districts in Gujarat, for the present study by probing into the aspects which have divergent findings and the components which really require better scope for the attainment of the DPEP through decentralised approach.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

A STUDY ON THE DECENTRLISED MANAGEMENT OF DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME

1.6 Objectives of the study

- 1 To study the nature of Decentralized Management of DPEP in the Panchmahal District in terms of academic and administrative dimensions
- 2 To study the management structures and processes of DPEP in Panchmahal District
- 3 To study the impact of Decentralized Management of DPEP on enrolment, retention and achievement
- 4 To study the perception of the Teachers, Village Education Committee and Local Community on the District Primary Education Programs
- 5 To Find out the major difficulties faced by the functionaries at the Panchmahal district

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The present study focuses on the DPEP programmes in Panchmahal district in Gujarat only. The study is limited to the Management structures and their academic and administrative functions of DPEP in the selected Blocks of Panchmahal district with specific reference to the Decentralised Management.

1.8 Organisation of the Chapters

The research study has been presented in five and each chapter has deliberated thoroughly the concept, context, methodology and findings. Since the study is of qualitative nature, the researcher has described the events that occurred during the field visits and thus arrived at some conclusions. For the logical and systematic presentation of the thesis, the study is organised in the following manner:

Chapter-I, highlights the historical development of the Universalisation of Elementary Education as it is one of the main focus of the study. A detailed progressive map in this regard has been presented by focussing the interventions that were introduced to attain the objectives of UEE. This chapter also gives clear conceptual frame for the Decentralisation of Management and the District Primary Education Programme as they are the

main focus in the research problem. A detailed status report of the decentralised management initiatives at the international level were also presented in this chapter. The policy recommendations, committee and commissions reports of India on Education were analysed and presented in this chapter. The chapter also dealt with the sound rationale for the study and was followed by the clearly outlined objectives and the limitations of the study.

Chapter-II, presents the review of the related research done in the area of DPEP, especially focussing on the Planning and management dimension. These studies were conducted by the various organisations under the Technical Support Group of DPEP, Ed CIL, Govt. of India. This chapter also highlights the national scenario of the management structures and functions of DPEP. The researcher reviewed the studies conducted at the international level on the decentralised reforms in school management. At the end of the chapter, the research trends and implications for the present study were derived and discussed.

Chapter III, describes in detail the procedure used by the researcher for collection of the data, the sample selected for the study, research tools and the scheme of analysis. The significant aspect of this chapter is that it describes the profile of Gujarat state and the profile of Panchmahal district, as this is the context of the study. The researcher has purposefully presented the

profiles in this chapter, because it helps the reader to understand the context in which the research is focussed

Chapter IV, highlights the detailed procedure of analysis and the interpretation of the data according to the objectives of the present study. As the nature of the study is qualitative in nature, the data has been interpreted qualitatively. However, certain quantitative indicators such as enrolment, retention and achievement ratios over a period of time after the implementation of the DPEP programme in the Halol and Kalol blocks of Panchmahal district of Gujarat are analysed and presented in tables and graphical representation. The major findings of the study are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter V, focuses the Summary of the research study, discussion and conclusion. Here a detailed discussion is presented on the basis of the major findings. It also focuses on the needed research areas for further study.

This chapter is followed by the detailed list of the Bibliography. And in the appendix, the tools used for the study, the photographs of the field visits focussing the discussion and interviews with teachers, Village Education Committee and the co-ordinators of BRC and CRC's at Halol and Kalol Blocks are enclosed in the appendix. Thus the thesis is a detailed report of the Decentralised Management of District Primary Education Programme with specific reference to Panchmahal District of Gujarat State.