

PREFACE

Human resource development has been the fundamental pre-requisite for the fullest realisation of overall development of the civil societies. Indeed, education ignites and encourages the human resource development comprising better awareness, health and nutrition, improved socio-economic condition with congenial natural environment as well as sound ecological balance. As a matter of fact, India has been committed to erect the foundation of overall human resource development. Evidently, education especially Universalisation of Elementary Education has been the principal concern of both policy makers and scholars of the field. Realisation of such avowed commitment calls for an attentive presence of a responsive and responsible mechanism of Public Administration. It has been widely recognised that elementary or primary education has been one of the fundamental corner stones of democratic edifice. Admittedly, education has been the principal parameter for determining the pace of development of a nation which enables human kind to develop an attitude towards life and without such attitude, no one can be integrated with overall development process. Thus, liquidation of illiteracy and expansion of primary and elementary education have been the principal thrust of a nation committed to development and certainly, India is no exception. This expansive role of Indian political system for overall human resource development warrants the urgency of a sound public administrative structure committed to social welfare and development. This research study has been a maiden attempt to understand the different aspect of social welfare administration oriented public administrative structure for effectuating District Primary Education Programme as a concerted action programme for realising the national objective of universalising elementary education. Such a study is important to understand the efficacy of existing and newly created organisational structure for primary education at the district level. An in-depth study would help in understanding multidimensional issues operating at the micro-level to relate those issues to the macro perspective of Indian body polity. Throughout this study attempt has been made to find out answers to the fundamental question whether the present administrative arrangement at the level of the District is adequate enough to grapple with the problems towards achieving the objectives of universalization of primary education of the district of Cooch Behar. Such a district level study on administering District Primary Education Programme has been first of its kind ever attended by any scholar of the field.

The state of West Bengal has been brought under DPEP during 1995-96. The district of Cooch Behar is one of the five DPEP districts of West Bengal and also one of the farthest^{east} districts of West Bengal bordering with Assam on one side and Bangladesh on the other. This is the only district in West Bengal which has majority Scheduled Caste population as per Census 2001. Almost the entire economy of the district, barring a few, is dependent on agriculture. The mode of agriculture production has not undergone any significant change in the district. Industries are scarce in the district. A sizable section of the rural population in every block is still living below poverty line. Thus, the study of administering DPEP in Cooch Behar is a novel one, not merely it probes into varied aspects of DPEP administration in the district of Cooch Behar but also examines society, economy, politics of the district. The study, being largely prescriptive in nature, may help in building up desired DPEP district administrative structure in different DPEP districts.

There are as many as eight chapters in this study includ^{ing} bibliography with annexures as well. In the introductory chapter, concept, essence, indicator of developments and existing theories of primary education administration have been thoroughly examined. Introduction starts with a brief sketch of primary education and includes objectives of the studies, study methodology and literature review. All these may be perceived as attempts in presenting the principal issue of the study at the outset. Chapter I deals with dimension of primary education and educational administration both at international, national and state level. Studies on primary education undertaken by different eminent scholars and educationists have been thoroughly examined. The second chapter illustrates a post-colonial experience of elementary education in India. A quick search of historical antecedents on the status of elementary education in India under British rule and also post-colonial rule, reports and recommendations of different education Commissions and Committees are discussed in this chapter. Chapter III relates with the second generation experience of universalisation of elementary education. In this chapter an overview of elementary education in India, concept, meaning and present position of universalisation of elementary education are dealt with. Chapter IV covers the status of primary education in West Bengal. Growth of primary education and status of DPEP in West Bengal. The fifth chapter contains lessons on administering District Primary Education Programme in Cooch Behar. In this chapter historical perspective of primary education of the district, exist-

ing organisational structure of primary education and organisational structure of DPEP at the district level have been the central focus. Operationalisation of DPEP and the field experience are taken up in sixth chapter. This chapter attempts to analyse through micro level data, the factors and forces, issues and events associated with social welfare programme implementation process. The concluding chapter seeks to present certain concrete suggestions for arresting the problems at the grass root level and lays stress on redesigning the existing administrative structure of primary education to reach near the objectives of universalisation of elementary education.

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