

CHAPTER V

METHODOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the conceptual framework of the study has been presented highlighting the various aspects of curriculum that have been brought under evaluation. The present chapter provides details regarding the methodology that has been adopted for carrying out the evaluation with respect to each objective. It includes such details as documents explored for developing the historical perspective, sources of data, tools constructed, sample selected, and scoring and analytical procedures adopted. Diagram I gives a brief picture of the procedure followed with respect to different objectives of the study.

2. EXPLORATION OF DOCUMENTS

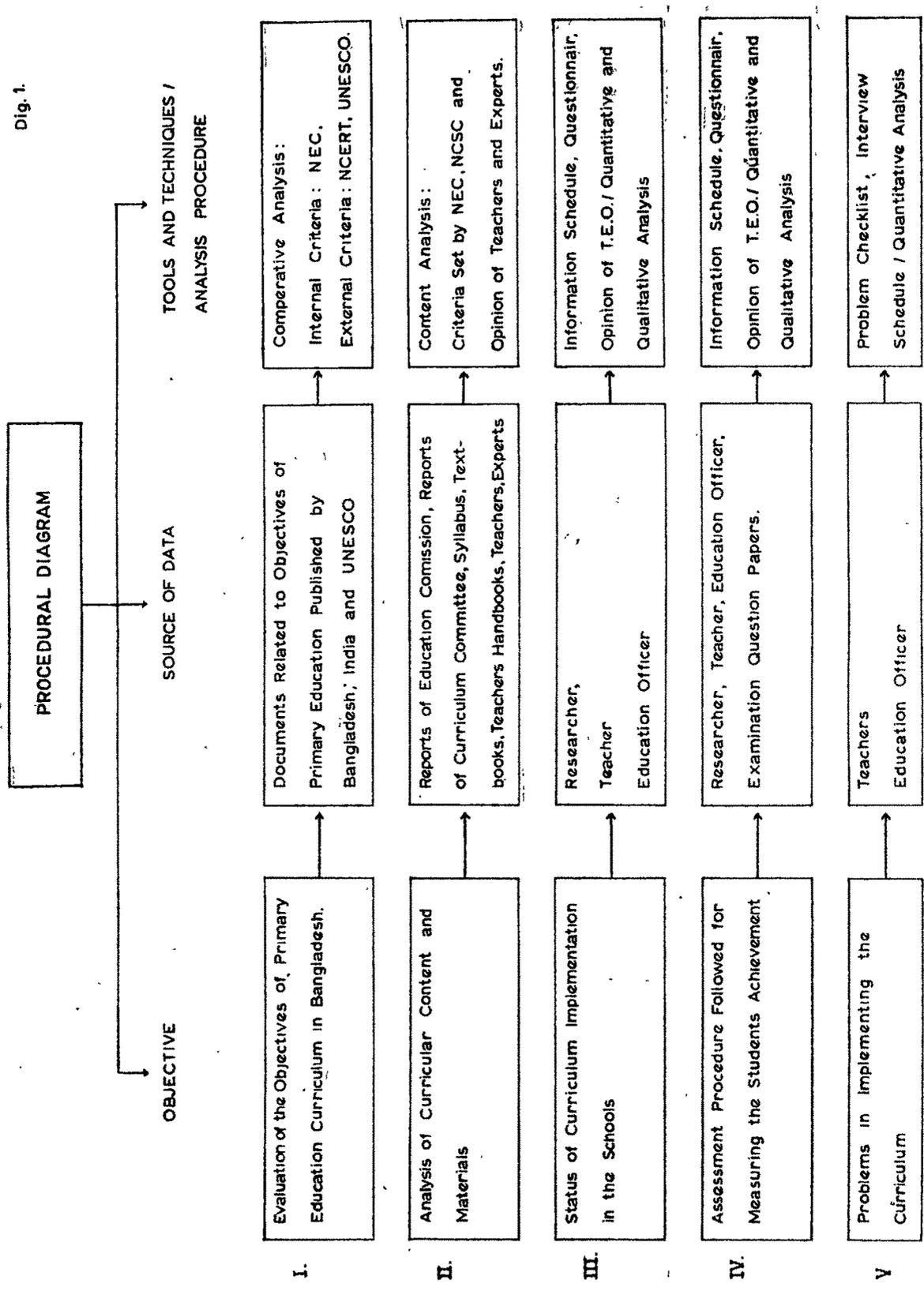
The curriculum that is being evaluated in the present study has already been in use in the primary schools of Bangladesh for the last four years. It was, therefore, thought fit to take up a preliminary documentary analysis by exploring the relevant documents which form the basis for the present primary education curriculum in Bangladesh. The basic documents that were explored are:

- i) The Constitution of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh,

- ii) The First Five Year Plan (1973-1978) of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh,
- iii) Report of the Bangladesh National Education Commission (1974),
- iv) Report of the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee (December, 1976) of Bangladesh,
- v) Report of the Bangladesh National Educational Advisory Council (February, 1979),
- vi) Official Despatches of the Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh,
- vii) Statistical Profile of Education in Bangladesh (April, 1978),
- viii) Second Five Year Plan of Bangladesh (Draft) 1980-85, and
- ix) Statistical Yearbook of Bangladesh (1980).

An analytical study of these documents helped the investigator to develop an appropriate socio-historical perspective with which to evaluate the curriculum. This also, provided insight into the cultural and political contexts in which the present curriculum was evolved and implemented. It is against this background that the methodology for the whole study was worked out. As has been mentioned earlier, specifications of the procedure adopted in the study have been given in Diagram I. This is followed by an objectivewise description of the procedure adopted under different heads, namely, evaluation of objectives,

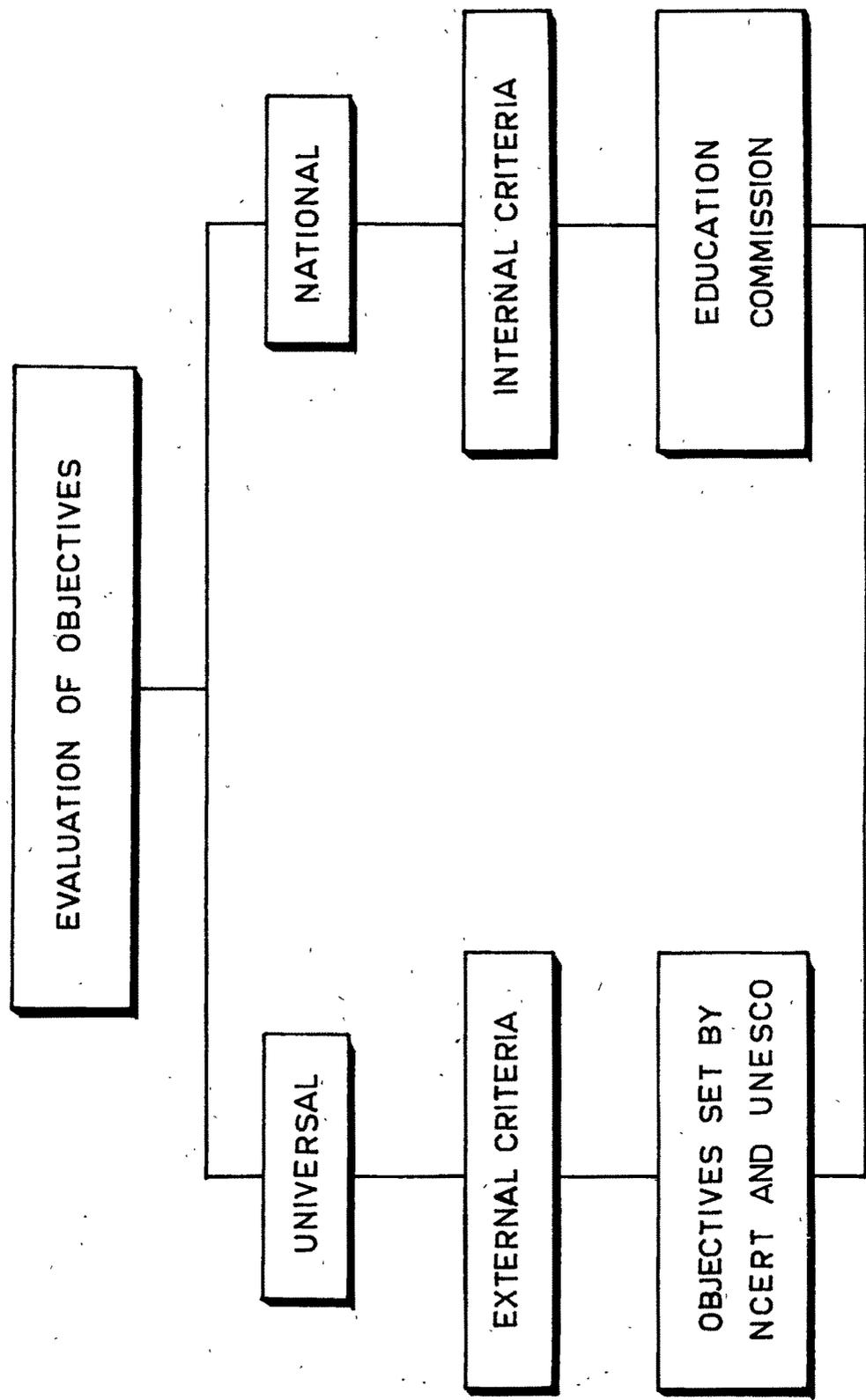
Fig. 1.



study of curricular content, implementation of curriculum, assessment procedures and problems faced by the teachers.

3. EVALUATION OF OBJECTIVES OF PRIMARY EDUCATION
CURRICULUM

It is now a well accepted fact throughout the world that primary education greatly contributes to the all round development of the children and therefore must be considered as the basic human right rather than as any special facility provided to the citizens of any country. Seen from this perspective, the objectives of primary education inhere in them in element of universality. Evaluation of objectives from this perspective demands a comparative study of the set of objectives adopted in Bangladesh with those adopted elsewhere in the world. The place of primary education can also be viewed from other perspective. In a country like Bangladesh where literacy is confined to only 22 per cent of the population and even four to five years of formal education is completed by only one third of the school going children, value of primary education to the national development is very crucial. Seen from this angle, the foremost considerations in setting up the objectives for primary education should be the extent to which these objectives are derived from or matched with the national goals and aspirations. Evaluation of objectives in this context would require examining whether they are in consonance with



the specifications emerging out of such documents as the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, National Plans of Development and so on.

Thus, evaluation of objectives of primary education in Bangladesh has to be viewed from two distinct perspectives, namely, universal and national. Evaluating from a universal perspective can be considered as external evaluation as the comparison would be with a set of external criteria. On the other hand, evaluation from the national perspective demands of the researcher to examine the suitability of objectives of primary education against an internal set of criteria. A diagrammatic presentation of them ^{is} given in Diagram 2.

In the present study the external criteria are represented by two sets of objectives of primary education. One of these sets has been taken from a UNESCO document, namely 'Planning the Primary School Curriculum in developing countries'. This document itself was the outcome of long run deliberations by experts from all over the world. The second set has been taken from a document of the National Council of Educational Research and Training in India, entitled 'Ten year school curriculum - a framework'. The main rationale for selecting this set of objectives was that India and Bangladesh are not only geographically adjacent but also share several socio-historical characteristics. The main source for setting an internal set of criteria was

the report of the National Education Commission of Bangladesh. The Commission in its report kept its focus on the goals, aspirations and directive principles enshrined in the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and other documents such as the First Five Year Plan of Bangladesh. Accordingly, the commission specified the objectives of education at two levels - global and specific. It is in accordance with these goals that the objectives of the present curriculum for primary education are supposed to have been developed. The evaluation, therefore, has been carried out to examine how far the present objectives represent the specifications made (a) at global level which represents the overall aims of education in Bangladesh, and (b) at the specific level, in terms of concrete objectives to be achieved through the programme of primary education.

4. EVALUATION OF CURRICULAR CONTENT AND MATERIALS

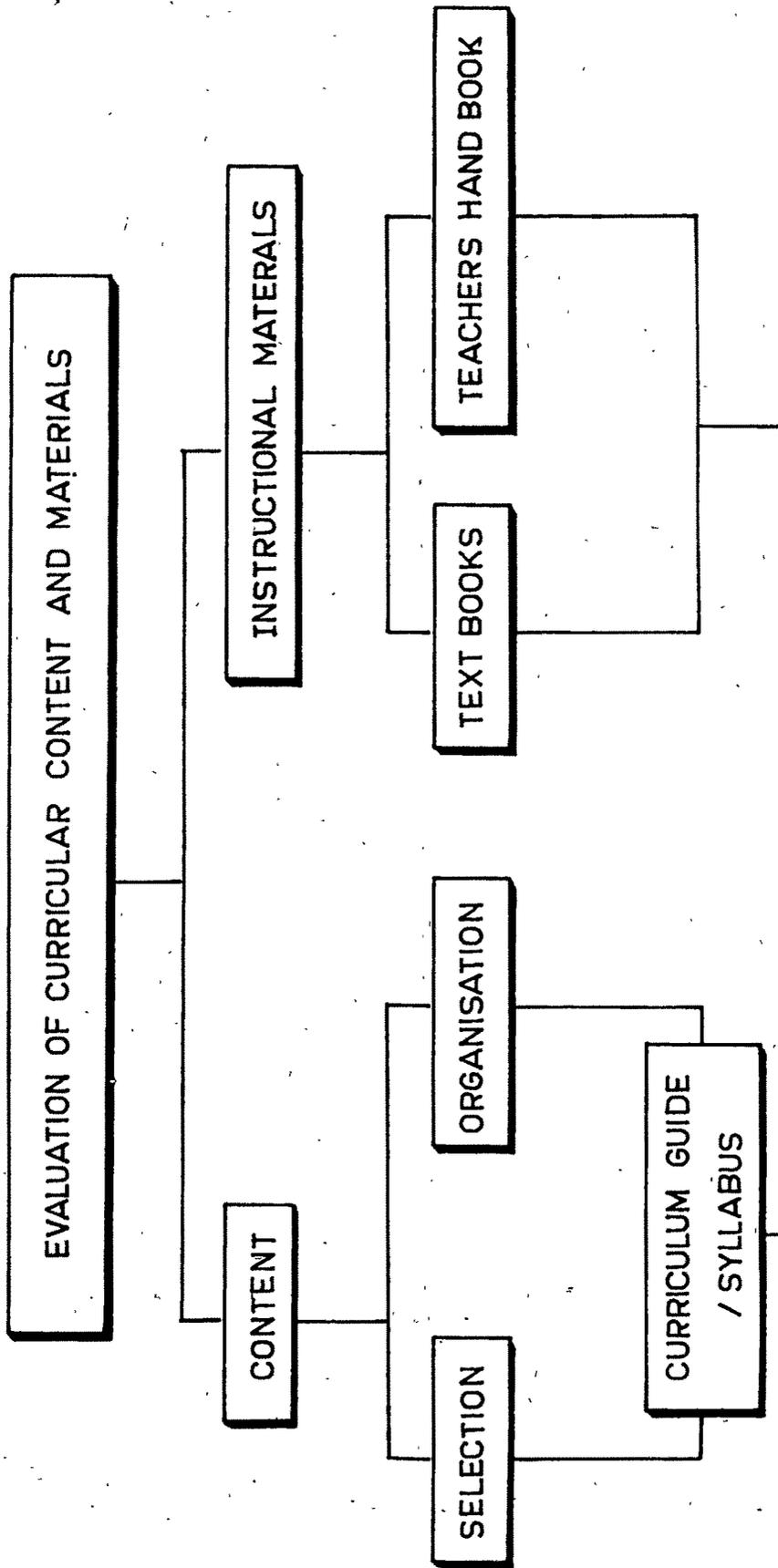
Curricular content derives itself from an analysis of the characteristics of the knowledge, skill, attitude etcetra being transmitted and of the characteristics of learning process being adopted for achieving the specified set of objectives. In other words, curricular content stems from the structure of the discipline and the theories of knowledge which justify the selection of the content and establishes continuity of learning experiences involved in reaching the objectives of the education at a particular stage. Accordingly, having formulated the objectives of

primary education in Bangladesh, the National Education Commission recommended the content framework for achieving those objectives. Therefore, the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee of Bangladesh worked out the details of the content to be prepared which since then, has been in use in the primary schools of Bangladesh.

In this background the investigator while evaluating the curricular content had to choose between two alternatives. The first alternative was to evaluate the content in practice against an independent set of criteria. The second alternative was to consider the recommendations of the Bangladesh National Education Commission to constitute the major reference for evaluating the content being presently adopted in the primary schools of Bangladesh. The investigator here has gone in for the second alternative. This was because, it was found more logical as the content specified by the curriculum and syllabus committee had been prepared with the explicit purpose of achieving the specific objectives set by the National Education Commission through the content-frame recommended herewith.

Again, based on the curricular content specification, the Curriculum and Syllabus Committee further detailed out procedures for presenting the content in the form of instructional materials, namely, textbooks, supplementary readers, workbooks and teachers' handbooks. Keeping this in view in the present study, evaluation of instructional

Fig. 3.



materials have been done adopting the guidelines given by the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee as the main criteria. A general frame work in the form of a diagram is given in Diagram 3. Details regarding the procedure adopted for evaluating each of these components such as curricular content, curricular guide/syllabus, teachers handbooks, textbook, etc. have been given under separate sub-heads.

(A) Analysis of the Organisation of Curricular Content:

On going through the curricular content suggested by the National Education Commission it was found that the commission had clearly specified the content for each class along with the distribution of time for different areas. The curriculum and syllabus committee had also given details about the content areas to cover and their organisation. Thus, having explored the suggested content in the National Education Commission report and the accepted content as given by the Curriculum Committee, an attempt was made to carry out a comparative analysis of the content and its organisation. The analysis was done mainly in a qualitative fashion.

(B) Analysis of the Curriculum guide/Syllabus:

The Curriculum and Syllabus Committee had in their report clearly specified instructional objectives of each subject along with the content to be covered. Evaluation,

therefore, mainly involved an analysis of the content specified in the context of the objectives to be realised. This was done by preparing a number of flow charts with respect to different areas. The flow charts were prepared in terms of spelt-out objectives and the corresponding content with a view to assessing the prescribed syllabus and to examine whether they represented a meaningful structure. Attempt was also made to examine the adequacy of the time allocation with respect to different areas and topics of study.

(C) Analysis of Textbooks:

Textual instructional materials prescribed for classes I to V consists of subject areas, namely, Mother-tongue (Bengali), Mathematics, Environmental Studies, English and Religious Education. However, in the present study only textbooks in Mother-tongue, Mathematics and Environmental Studies have been evaluated. For the purpose of evaluation, an analysis sheet consisting of 22 items was prepared by the investigator. The main bases for preparing the analysis sheet were the criteria suggested by the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee. A copy of the analysis sheet can be found in Appendix . The items of the analysis sheet have been divided into five broad areas namely physical aspect, content, illustration, language and exercises.

(D) Analysis of Teachers' Handbook:

The guidelines provided by the curriculum committee for preparing the teachers' handbook for each subject were considered to constitute the criteria for analysing and evaluating the teachers' handbooks. It may be noted that five teachers' handbooks had been prepared by National Curriculum Development Centre covering the various subjects and Standards I to V of the primary level. However, one of these was exclusively on teaching of English and the other was on teaching of environmental studies, physical education, art and craft, music, and religious education. Of these two, the first one, the teaching of English has not been brought under evaluation; while, from the second handbook, only the section dealing with environmental studies has been taken up for evaluation. For evaluating the selected section of the second one and the other three handbooks a detailed checklist was prepared based on the criteria suggested by the curriculum committee. Each handbook was then examined and assessed with the help of this checklist. Data procured through the checklist was then analysed and interpreted descriptively.

In addition to the efforts made above for evaluating the textbooks and teachers' handbooks, the researcher developed an unstructured interview schedule for collecting the opinion of curriculum specialists and subject experts regarding the suitability of the curricular materials. A

copy of the interview schedule has been given in the Appendix. With the help of this interview schedule, the opinions of 15 experts from different institutions in Bangladesh were collected by the investigator through personal interviews. The data obtained through interview were analysed and interpreted descriptively along with the data obtained through analysis of textbooks and handbooks.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN THE SCHOOLS OF BANGLADESH

A survey was conducted for obtaining from primary schools, information regarding various aspects of the implementation of curriculum.

(A) Sample :

The survey was conducted in Dhaka Division which is one of the four divisions in Bangladesh. One hundred schools and all the 478 teachers there were taken as the sample of this survey. These one hundred schools were selected in the following way:

First of all, the researcher had listed all the Thanas (now Upazila) of each of the five districts in Dhaka Division. It was found that Dhaka, Mymensing, Faridpur, Jamalpur and Tangail districts consist of 48, 34, 26, 12 and 10 Thanas respectively. Among all these Thanas 3 from Dhaka, 3 from Mymensing, 2 from Faridpur, 1 from Jamalpur and 1 from Tangail were selected randomly. Having selected

the Thanas, the investigator obtained permission from the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for conducting the survey in the respective Thanas. Thereafter, lists of all the primary schools of selected Thanas were prepared with the help of the T.E.O. Then, ten schools were randomly selected from each of the ten lists.

(B) Tools :

In order to collect data for the survey in the schools, a Questionnaire and a School Information Schedule were used as instruments which had been developed by the investigator himself. While preparing the Questionnaire and the school Information Schedule an attempt was made to bring in data related to the following aspects of Curriculum for Primary Education in Bangladesh:

1. Physical Facilities,
2. Time table,
3. Teachers' qualifications, professional training and teaching experience, classload etcetra.
4. Methods of instruction,
5. Materials and Aids.

Thus, a draft questionnaire consisting of 50 items dealing with teachers' qualifications, professional training, experience, class load, techniques of instructions, teaching aid and a school information sheet consisting of 40 items

regarding the physical facilities, materials and aids, time table followed in the school were first prepared. The draft tools were further given to a group of experts to judge their adequacy and appropriateness. Two faculty members from the Centre of Advanced Study in Education, M.S. University of Baroda, one from National Council of Educational Research and Training, Delhi, and two from Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka constituted the group of experts. The list of the experts who examined the above mentioned tools is given in Appendix. On the basis of the opinions and views of the experts, the tools were modified and subjected to a pilot study in actual situation.

(C) Pilot Study :

Since the study aimed to cover the whole of Dhaka Division having teachers with different backgrounds, the questionnaire and its language had to be made understandable to all of them. Further, the teachers of the primary schools are not well aware about educational research and they may not be at home in handling this type of questionnaire in general. So to make the questionnaire understandable and to ensure that the respondents follow the instrument with care, a pilot study was planned and conducted in 10 of the primary schools of Bangladesh. Subsequent to the analysis of the responses of the pilot study, the tools were modified to make them ready for use. The final questionnaire consisted of 4 sections with 35 items and the school informa-

tion schedule consisted of 5 sections with 38 items. One copy of each of the tools have been attached in the appendix.

6. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE FOLLOWED IN THE SCHOOLS

The investigator conducted a survey for getting information with regard to the assessment procedure followed in the schools for assessing the students along with the survey conducted for the implementation of the curriculum. The sample for the purpose was the same as stated for the implementation aspect. Eight items regarding assessment procedure were provided in the questionnaire (as a separate section) and seven items provided in the school information schedule which were developed for surveying the implementation aspect of curriculum. In addition to these, the investigator had collected the question papers for final examinations for class V. The question papers were content analysed to examine their comparability with the expected inputs as intended in the aims and objectives of the corresponding subjects.

7. THE PROBLEMS FACED IN IMPLEMENTING THE CURRICULUM

A survey was conducted for obtaining the information with regard to the problems faced by the teachers in implementing the curriculum. The sample for studying the problems faced by the teachers was also the same as the one selected for studying the implementation of the curriculum. For collecting the relevant data, a problem check-list was

developed by the investigator. It consisted of six sections dealing with the problems of physical facilities, timetable, syllabus, teaching aids, problems of achieving the desired qualities, general problems. The procedure followed for the construction and development of the questionnaire and school information schedule was followed in the case of problem check-list also. One copy of problem-checklist has been given in the Appendix.

In addition to the above mentioned efforts, the investigator developed an interview schedule for collecting the data from the Thana Education Officers belonging to the sampled Thanas to supplement the data for studying the implementation of the curriculum, assessment procedure, and the problems faced by the teachers in the schools. The interview schedule was also validated with the help of opinions of experts.

8. DATA COLLECTION

Having selected the sample and prepared the tools, the next step to be taken was to collect the data from the schools. The researcher personally visited each of the selected schools and gave the questionnaires and checklists to the teachers of the sampled schools. After two days of the distribution of the tools the investigator again went to the school for collecting the materials and at the same time he himself filled up the school information schedule in consultation with the teachers of the sampled schools.

9. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The data for the implementation aspect of the curriculum for the present study was collected by administering the four tools developed by the investigator for the purpose. The analysis of the school information schedule, the questionnaire, the problem checklist and the interview schedule have been done separately.

There were different types of items in the school information schedule and the questionnaire used for data collection. These were multiple choice, yes/No, supply of the figures and open end types. The responses to each multiple choice type and Yes/No type were analysed in terms of the frequency of the respondents' agreement or disagreement, with a particular response. The frequency was further converted into percentages. The responses of each item of supply-type were recorded in a table for all the respondents and further analysed suitably. The open end type items were analysed qualitatively. Items in the checklist were of the following type:

	Always	Sometimes	Not at all
3. I feel, the lack of furniture in the school is a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Again, the data from the interview of Thana Education Officers and Assistant Thana Education Officers were analysed and interpreted descriptively.