

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCHES

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the present chapter is to survey and review the research studies carried out on curriculum for primary education. Such a review should help in formulating the research problem, specifying the objectives, developing a conceptual framework, selecting appropriate tools and methodology and also in drawing meaningful conclusions. However, it should be remembered that, unlike many other types of research studies, curriculum evaluation is mainly a context specific activity. In other words, the main focus of any curriculum evaluation study is on specific concepts and practices that are in vogue in a particular region and at a particular time. Thus, it is quite evident that it is only those studies which have been conducted in Bangladesh that can be of direct import and assistance for the present investigation. This is not to mean that studies carried out in other countries will bear no relevance to the present study. Rather it implies that the relevance becomes more and more remote and indirect as one moves away from the context in which the present study is to be carried out.

The major focus of the review of research in the present study should have been exclusively on studies on the

primary education curriculum in Bangladesh. However, it should be noted at the outset that educational research in general and curriculum studies in particular have not made much headway in Bangladesh. Thus, a researcher is compelled to take lead from the researches conducted in the western countries and other developing countries. It is in this context that an attempt has been made to present in this chapter a general review of studies on primary education curriculum conducted in various countries including Bangladesh. The review has been presented in the form of brief abstracts of the studies highlighting their objectives, content, facilities for implementation and evaluation. These have been classified and presented under three sections as studies in other countries (except India), studies in India, and studies in Bangladesh. The rationale for the classification does not, perhaps, need elaboration. It is easy to recognise the special position in which India is placed geographically and socio-economically in relation to Bangladesh which has prompted the researcher to present studies conducted in India in a separate section. Before, presenting the actual abstracts, it should be mentioned that the review of studies conducted in countries other than Bangladesh is far from being exhaustive. They should be taken only as indicative of the trend with regard to curriculum evaluation in these countries. Further, in the section on studies in other countries, the number as well as details of studies from developed countries has deliberately been kept at the minimum with a view to highlighting

the trends prevalent in developing countries. However, the review of studies in Bangladesh, which are very few in number, has been made in a comprehensive manner. This section of review containing abstracts of researches done in different countries is followed by an overview of the researches reviewed and their implications for the present study.

2. STUDIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Curriculum research is a vast field and has drawn the attention of research workers tremendously in advanced countries of the world. Hundreds of studies have been undertaken in different aspects of curriculum. Here an attempt has been made to present brief abstracts of only those researches which have direct bearing on the present study. In order to do so, a thorough search has been made to trace the related literature from all the available sources. The abstracts have been presented here under three subheads, namely, studies conducted on goals, aims, and objectives; studies on curricular content; and studies on curriculum implementation.

(i) Studies on goals, aims and objectives:

Wright (1973) conducted an investigation with a view to identifying educational needs in a selected Alabama school system. Though the study did not deal specially with the objectives of education, while analysing the needs, the overall

goals and objectives were discussed in detail. He made an analysis on the basis of the perception of educators, students and laymen as they related to the role of the school, the effectiveness of the school in achieving this role, and the areas of greatest need for improvement in the school system. From an analysis of the data, recommendations were provided for the school system concerning the identified educational needs on a priority basis. Gaḍra (1974) carried out a document survey highlighting the specific legislative prescriptions relating to the elementary school curriculum as embodied in the constitution and complied laws of the 50 states of the U.S.A. The data acquired from the law library of the George Washington University were classified into eight general categories such as nationalism, health and prohibition, fundamental subjects, religious ethical subjects, practical and cultural subjects, conservation of life and property, humanness and miscellaneous subjects. The study finally showed that there was no scope or freedom for the teacher to plan the programme. Thus the majority of prescriptions were mandatory and indicating types. Rambo (1982) also made an extensive search of the literature in the field of curriculum with a view to finding out the sources, formulation and functions of educational objectives in the U.S.A. during 1900-1979. The methodology adopted was the analysis of the key-concept and key-word that dealt with objectives as stated and recommended by the various authors, committees and commissions in different times. Frequently

cited historical statements of general objectives were listed and were classified on the basis of similarities and differences among the various recommendations. Sengova (1982) carried out an illuminative examination of primary school curriculum policies and implementation practices in Sierra Leone. The investigator tried to explain how national policies were translated into the formal school curriculum and subsequently realized in actual class-room practice. The findings of the study revealed that the national policies were generally influenced by the policies advocated at the international level. The implementation of the formal curriculum within the specific classroom context was determined not so much by national policies but by the availability of certain material needs at the local level.

Mallum (1975) conducted a study on "Primary Education System in Nigeria and its relationship to national goals". The purpose of the study was to examine the system of primary education in Nigeria, its foundation, development, objectives, contribution to the acquisition of national goals, its organisation and control and the source of support for the primary school system. The study revealed that the Nigerian system of education as it existed that day was a system of education that was inherited from the British. The findings of the investigation indicated that the stated educational goals for the Nigerian Primary School system were more implied than actual. The primary schools were not effectively educating the majority of the Nigerian primary schools age children. The

existing set of curriculum, examination and tuition practices reduced the effectiveness of the Nigerian primary school system in meeting the needs of Nigerians as implied by the goals of the system. Also, the existing number of classrooms, teachers and finance available were inadequate to meet the implied goals of the system.

Eden (1975) carried out an important study with a view to translating the general aims of education in Israel into operational objectives in curriculum. The study was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, a series of interviews were made with a group of 23 prominent scholars and leaders in the field of philosophy, sociology, psychology, history, education, political science, economics and law, and with leaders of political parties. Each of them gave interpretations of the meaning of each general aim. On the basis of these statements, educational objectives were formulated. In the second stage of the study, a questionnaire containing 120 objectives was sent to 222 persons who represented teachers, educational administrators, experts in various fields and parents. The respondents indicated (on a 1-3 scale) the importance they attached to each objective. On the basis of the responses, five categories of objectives were identified and the highest priority in writing curriculum materials was given to objectives in the first category.

(ii) Studies on Curricular Contents

The Department of Research and Evaluation under the Ministry of Education in Iran (1966) examined the first grade textbook of language for the primary schools in Iran. A textbook containing 161 words was used as the basis for evaluation. The study revealed that the first grade textbook was valid for the level of first grade pupils' intelligence and understanding. It also showed that there was a need to draw up plans for evaluating teaching methods and teachers' characteristics. Wacira (1973) evaluated the relevance of the new primary school syllabus of Kenya. The study was designed to finding out the extent to which the syllabuses were suitable to the rural primary school children and how far it was in line with the development of the rural economy in New Kenya. After a brief discussion of the pre- and post-independence elementary education and its impact on society as a whole, comparison of the 1967 syllabuses with those of 1962 was made by the researcher. The study revealed that the new syllabus, rather than revising and reordering the priorities of elementary education, was in large part, an exact copy of the earlier syllabus. It also showed that the implementation of English as a medium of instruction and the science curriculum completely devoid of rural application would, in the long run, tend to socialize the children into an alien culture and to further dissociate them from their rural environment.

Piper (1974) analysed the content of selected public elementary school curriculum guides in American schools with a view to determining the extent of the content reflected in the printed guide and the extent of using the guides as basic references. Four subject areas namely, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies from 38 curriculum guides, one from each city district, were surveyed by the investigator. He found that there were many divergent practices with respect to organisational structures of the curriculum guide from one district to another.

He also showed that neither science nor social studies areas included any content which dealt with the contemporary problems. The study was concluded by stating that curriculum guides, despite their prevalence, were not a completely reliable guide to actual content. Esterly (1974) made an effort for assessing the "Impact of the Afghanistan Ministry of Education Curriculum, and Textbook Project on primary school student learning". He analysed the historical development of the project within the educational environment of Afghanistan between 1966-1973. He also tried to assess the relationship between the primary school instructional materials produced by the project and the associated pupil learning gains. The study revealed that the textbooks and the teachers' guides produced by the project were contributing positively to Afghan primary school pupil learning.

Sentell (1974) analysed twenty selected social studies textbooks for elementary level of Latin American schools with the objective of knowing the extent to which certain basic ideas about the country were presented in them. This was done by means of content analysis techniques. The finding indicated that the books contained less than sixty per cent of the specified ideas about the country.

(iii) Studies on Curriculum Implementation:

The Bangkok Institute of Child Study (1963) carried out a systematic research on "Primary School Curriculum in Thailand". The main purpose of the study was to investigate the practicability of the curricula in the schools. It was found that the foundation of the educational programme was not sound in many respects. The contents were not in consonance with the aims; the amount of content prescribed for instruction in a single year was in excess; and the syllabus for various courses was not adapted to local conditions and needs. The findings of the study also indicated that there was lack of teaching materials and qualified teachers.

Taipei Normal Junior College (1966) conducted an investigation of the primary school curriculum in Taiwan. The main aspects of the study involved were the examination of the course load, method of teaching in the class-room, instructional materials etc. The study revealed that the curriculum was overloaded and contained too many abstract

concepts which were overlapping. The necessity and importance of audiovisual aids as means of instruction should be emphasized. There was a necessity to create a governmental organ in order to improve school curricula. The findings of the study also indicated that the teachers should be provided with guide books and teaching aids in the various subjects. The method of instruction was not adjusted to the nature of the topic taught. The influence of the examination system on the workload of the pupils was too strong.

Phelps (1975) conducted a survey of middle schools in Georgia with a view to investigating the status of schools with regard to the facility, the community, the staff and the curriculum. The investigator developed a questionnaire and surveyed all schools in Georgia. The study showed that the student teacher ratio was 18:1 and seventy one per cent teachers were female and two third of the staff held a bachelor degree. The study also revealed that the organisation for instruction was largely departmentalized with six or seven periods a day. A better facility in terms of space was needed.

Barley (1975) carried out an important research on "Time in school, and learning". The study was designed with a view to describing the length of formal instruction in selected subjects as reported by all school districts in New York state. The data were provided by the State Education

Department of the University of New York. Findings of the study revealed that the majority of students spent between 16 per cent and 20 per cent of their waking lives in the school in any given school year. The majority of elementary school students spent about 2.6 per cent of their waking lives on language arts other than reading, 1.8 per cent on social studies, 1.4 per cent on science, 3 per cent on mathematics, 0.9 per cent on arts and crafts, 0.7 per cent on health education, 1.2 per cent on physical education and recreation, 0.7 per cent on other subject areas, and 0.7 per cent on other activities. Ferguson (1978) made an exploratory investigation of actual and allotted instructional time in the elementary classroom of Urbana in Illinois. The data collected through observation led the researcher to accept the following statements. The daily average instructional time was less than the daily average amount of time allotted for instruction. In most cases, more than the allotted amount of time was spent on non-instructional activities such as lunch, recess, and break; transition and organisation, support activities, etc. Discrepancies between allotted and actual time for instruction were found to exist in all areas of the curriculum. The greatest discrepancies were in the area of language arts. The major portion of the school day was spent on instruction in the language arts and arithmetic.

3. STUDIES CONDUCTED IN INDIA

In India, research in the field of curriculum began in a systematic way only after the attainment of Independence. To begin with, evaluation and research studies were taken up by scholars for their M.Ed. or Ph.D. dissertations. Later on, after the establishment of NCERT, CIEFL and CIIL, institutional research in the field of curriculum came into being. The number of studies at the doctoral level gradually increased during the sixties and the seventies. The third Indian year book of education (Adaval, 1968) reported a total of 31 studies on curriculum. But these studies were mostly M.Ed. dissertations and a very few were at the doctoral level. The Survey of Research in Education (Buch, 1974) reported 69 doctoral studies and an equal number of institutional studies in the field of curriculum, methods and text books. The Second Survey of Research in Education (Buch, 1979) reported 54 Ph.D. studies and 54 institutional studies in the area. Thus, it is evident that the pace of curriculum research has picked up during the last two decades in India. The investigator of the present research has reviewed the studies conducted so far as they are related to the present study. The studies conducted can be classified in a variety of ways though there is always a possibility of overlapping. Here they have been classified under three broad categories.

- i) Curriculum studies related to objectives;
- ii) Studies on curricular content and materials;
- iii) Studies on curriculum implementation.

(i) Studies related to Objectives:

Gothivererker (1947) evaluated the school curriculum in Bombay highlighting the objectives of education as laid down during the British period. He reported that the aims of education in the British regime were narrow and the curriculum did not fulfil the aim of developing an individual's body, mind, and spirit in consonance with his ability, aptitude and interest. Physical education was completely neglected and such useful subjects as drawing, art, craft, music and moral education did not find place in the curriculum. Gupta (1973) also critically analysed the elementary curriculum in NEFA of Arunachal. His main aim was to examine the extent to which the curriculum was suited to the socio-economic and cultural needs of the children. He observed that the curriculum suffered from overemphasis on the three 'R's. It was subject-centred, dominated by examination and isolated from the real life and environment of the children.

(ii) Studies on Curricular Content:

Rukmani (1960) assessed the Hindi vocabulary used in the nationalised textbooks of the second grade children of seven plus in the schools of Rajasthan. The study revealed that the number of words in the consolidated list of the spoken vocabulary was 1232, whereas it was 821 in the nationalised textbooks. The difference indicated that the collective vocabulary output of the children was much more

than the words included in the textbook. NCERT (1963) analysed the syllabuses of Social Studies and Mathematics in the elementary stage in India through a document survey. The main findings of the study revealed the dissimilarities and differences amongst the syllabuses. It also pointed out the inadequacy of the syllabus from the organisational point of view. Pillai (1968) investigated into the changes in the content and scope of the curriculum in Kerala with a view to ascertaining how far the changes had been helpful to the raising of the standard. The study was carried out through document analysis and opinion survey. It appeared that in the light of aims and outcomes listed, the syllabus fulfilled the basic requirements as far as its content was concerned. The question papers set in the examinations showed the extent of the content tested every year. But there was scope for improvement of the textbook. Walavalkar (1971) critically evaluated the mathematics textbooks for standards II, III and IV in Maharashtra adopting the technique of content analysis with a view to finding out errors and examining the suitability of these textbooks for the level of understanding of the pupils. His findings indicated that the text books were, in general, suited to the capacity of the pupils. There were a number of minor faults in the textbooks which needed to be rectified. It was necessary to provide an answer key for all the exercises given in the textbooks. Joshi (1972) also followed the same procedure for analysing the science textbook for Std. IV in Maharashtra focussing on the suitability of the content,

illustrations, language and vocabulary provided in the textbook. He observed that the contents of the textbook except in the case of one lesson were suitable to the age of the pupils. The sequence of presentation of information was quite proper. The content was free from errors. There was need to increase the coloured pictures in the textbook, some of the pictorial illustrations were not accompanied by definite description and instructions regarding what to look for. Karandikar (1973) examined the syllabus and the textbooks of Mathematics for classes II to VII in Maharashtra and arrived at similar findings as Walavalkar (1971). However, the focus of the study was mainly on the representation of mathematical concepts in syllabus and textbooks. Findings arrived at through content analysis technique were supplemented by teachers' opinion, obtained through a questionnaire. The study revealed that all mathematical concepts in the syllabi, except those of time and space were properly represented in the textbook and were in consonance with the intellectual maturity of the pupils.

Pattabhiram (1973) evaluated the nationalised textbook of social studies in Andhra Pradesh. The design and layout, content and objectives to be attained by the pupils through these textbooks were the interest of the evaluation. He prepared an analysis sheet on the basis of criteria developed by NCERT and alongwith it, the opinions of teachers, students and experts were collected. Findings of the study indicated that all the textbooks were satisfactory with regard to the

physical characteristics but there was room for improvement of design, stitching and wrapping. The presentation of content and the illustrations were rated below average in these nationalised textbooks. Assignments and exercises were considered inadequate and needed restructuring on the basis of objectives of the course.

Rastogi and Others (1975) carried out a comparative study of textbooks of mother-tongue of primary classes in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Telugu and Urdu. The main focus of this study was on lessons, exercises, illustrations, ancilliary materials, physical aspects, content of textbooks and weightage given to the different components of the content and instructional objectives.

SIE, Orissa (1975) evaluated the effectiveness of the experimental textbooks "Science is doing" for class III, prepared by NCERT for the student of Orissa. The study revealed that the physical aspects of the textbooks under study were judged to be good except the overall get-up. Some portions of the textbook were suggested to be eliminated by the respondents as they were found unsuitable for the pupils of the age group 7+. A change in the order of arrangement of chapters was advocated by the majority of the respondents. Some experiments set in the books were considered difficult for class III. More illustrations were required to be given in the book. The pictures given in the book were found to be useful. Extra classroom work under the caption, "Things to do"

at home, were not found to be satisfactory by the respondents.

Chowdhury (1976) evaluated the nationalised Hindi textbook of Classes I through VIII in terms of strengths and weaknesses, values, needs and themes, with the help of opinions of teachers, students and experts. The exercises given at the end of the chapters were also analysed. The main conclusion of this study was that there was no agreement between the values presented in the textbooks of classes I to VIII and the values recommended by the experts. The questions given in the exercises of the textbooks were predominantly at a low cognitive level.

(iii) Studies on Curriculum Implementation:

Bose (1972) conducted a survey of the primary and junior schools in West Bengal with a view to finding out the facilities for study and work available in the schools. The data were collected from 535 schools in West Bengal through questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that nearly ninety per cent of the schools had their own buildings. About thirty six per cent had only one room where all the classes were held. Forty per cent of the schools in rural areas had no facility for drinking water within the school premises. A large majority of rural schools had no teaching aids. The maximum weekly teaching time of most of the schools varied between twentytwo and twentysix hours. Rajagopalan (1972) also carried out a survey to find out the audiovisual aids available, methods

of instruction followed, textbooks used, evaluation procedures adopted and the problems faced in implementing the curriculum in the primary and secondary schools of Madras. One hundred and four primary and upper primary and one hundred secondary schools were randomly selected for the study. He used questionnaire and interview schedule as the tools of his survey. He reported that poor method of instruction and poor supply of teaching aids were the most important factors in deteriorating the learning situation.

The Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research (1974) conducted a survey of the use of textbooks by pupils of schools in Maharashtra. The main objectives of the study were to find out the percentage of pupils who had textbooks, and to find out the percentage of them who had secondhand textbooks. An information schedule was used as the tool for data collection. The survey was conducted in 275 schools, which covered in all 772000 children in classes I to VII. The study revealed that the percentage of pupils who were without their Marathi language textbooks was only 4.6 in class VII but it was 43.8 in class I. The percentage of pupils using secondhand mathematics textbooks varied from 32.1 in class II to 65.9 in class VII. Some pupils were without books either because the book was torn or the parents could not afford to buy or the book was not available or they shared the book with brothers or sisters.

Sali (1978) also surveyed the Kolhapur district of Maharashtra with a view to finding out the difficulties in implementing the new curriculum of the secondary schools. Questionnaire, interview, record survey, discussion and observation techniques were used for the conduct of the study. He reported that it was difficult to implement the new curriculum in schools with inadequate physical facilities like buildings, laboratories, libraries etc. Non-availability of adequate number of teachers from the education departments, teachers' lack of understanding of the objectives of the curriculum, inept management of inservice training, lack of proper guidance by parents and their poor economic background were the main barriers for the effective implementation of the new curriculum.

Banerjee (1981) undertook an investigation relating to the implementation of the primary school curriculum in Tripura. The data were collected from 30 government primary schools of Tripura. He found that only 20 per cent of the schools had pucca buildings, while the other 20 per cent were of mixed type. The rest 60 per cent were Kutcha constructions which were no better than thatched schools. Classroom accommodation was inadequate in about 63 per cent of the schools. Maps, Charts, globes, were inadequate in all the schools. Nearly twentyfour per cent schools had no drinking water provision inside the schools. Sixtynine per cent of the students

were provided midday tiffin and 20 per cent of students received free books. Of the teachers working in the schools, 21 per cent were graduates, 66 per cent were matriculates and 80 per cent of the teachers were trained. Also 85 per cent of the teachers had more than 5 years of teaching experience.

Bharadwaj (1981) carried out a research with regard to the availability and use of teaching aids in schools. He surveyed in all two hundred pre-primary, primary, junior high and higher secondary schools in KAVAI with a view to finding out the position of audio-visual teaching aids. The data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. He showed that appropriate audio-visual teaching aids were not available easily.

4. RESEARCHES IN BANGLADESH

Research activities in the area of education in Bangladesh are scanty in comparison with those in some other countries like the U.S.A., U.K., or India. The area of curriculum in particular has received very little attention from the researchers of the country. Whatever researches have been done in the past, relating to primary education curriculum in Bangladesh, have been reviewed below.

IER (1977) conducted a survey of primary schools and made an evaluation of primary school agriculture programme in Bangladesh. The major objectives of the survey were to find out the physical and educational facilities in the primary schools and to examine the extent to which the agriculture

programme was being operated there. The study was carried out on the basis of document survey and the data collected through questionnaire. Findings of the study indicated that 96 per cent of the primary schools in Bangladesh were in rural areas. The average enrolment per school was 189 students and a large proportion of them were boys. As many as 95 per cent of the total teachers of the primary schools were males. Also out of the total number of teachers, 55 per cent were trained. Out of the 55 per cent trained teachers, 10 per cent had educational qualification below S.S.C. level. The majority of the primary schools were operating on double shift basis. The average length of working hours in a primary school was 5.8 hours per day. Most of the primary schools did not have drinking water facilities, facilities for seating and for running the schools properly. The National Foundation for Research on Human Resource Development in Bangladesh (1979) carried out a study on the same implementation aspect of the curriculum highlighting the physical facilities and qualifications of the teachers through document analysis only. The study revealed that only 26 per cent of primary schools had a pucca building, 44 per cent of the schools were katcha with mud-bamboo-thatch house. A good number of schools lacked minimum facilities such as teaching aids, sports material, drinking water and lavatory. The average number of teachers per school was estimated to be 4.3, while the government set norm was 5 teachers and 200 students. Seventytwo per cent primary school

teachers were trained. The study concluded that quality education cannot be expected from the existing stock of teachers. Quadir (1980) conducted a study adopting the same procedure and choosing the same aspects but adding one more component namely curricular content. The findings of the study indicated that primary schools were physically unable to cope with the number of students who enrolled. Curriculum reform was spasmodic and hasty, textbooks contained errors of type and content. The study conducted by the Ministry of Education in Bangladesh (1980) found out the same state of affairs prevalent in the primary schools regarding physical facilities. In addition to it, the study showed that there was insufficient space for office room and storage of school equipment. It was also found that 50 per cent of the teachers were not adequately trained to cope with the modern concept of curriculum and teaching.

Akter (1981) conducted a survey on environmental studies in Class IV in 20 selected primary schools in Bangladesh with the help of questionnaire with a view to finding out the "Curriculum gap between theory and practice". She reported that sixty per cent of the teachers who taught environmental studies (social science) were not at all acquainted with different aspects of the social science curriculum. Only twentyfive per cent of the teachers were partially acquainted with the curriculum. She showed that there existed a wide gap between the curriculum theory (found

in the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee Report) and the curriculum practised by the teachers and students in actual classroom situations. Satter (1982) observed that a majority of the schools did not have separate classrooms. Usually, if there were at least two proper rooms, two classes would meet in each room. Seating accommodation consisted of low banches, 5 or 6 children squeezing together on it. The overcrowded, noisy, dirty conditions were disheartening to the young children. No wonder that 50 per cent of them dropped out by the end of the first year. She showed that the time allotted for class I and II in each lesson was 30 minutes, and 35 minutes in the higher classes. In most primary schools, the children did not have a music lesson or do anything like the arts and the crafts; physical education was rare. The textbooks were gray and attractive but the quality of print and illustrations inside was affected by the paper. The type was poor, there were some errors. Illustrations were often dark. No Colour printing was used inside the books except for the class I level. Despite these constraints of quality, the books were informative and generally interesting.

5. AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STUDIES REVIEWED

Of the works which have thus far been reviewed in the preceding sections of this chapter, sixteen had been conducted in other countries. Among these 16 studies, only six were related to aims and objectives. The Mallumi (1975) study bears some relation to the context of the primary education curriculum

formulated by the State Government in Nigeria. In the same way, Eden's (1975) study also has some relation to the goals or aims of primary education in the context of national goals. It should be noted that these countries were also under colonial rule for a long time as was the case with Bangladesh. On the other hand, all other studies related to objectives were only on policy making and framing procedure, not on the evaluation or analysis of the objectives directly. Only two studies relating to objectives have been done in India. It is surprising to note that not a single study has been done in Bangladesh in this main aspect of curriculum.

In all, 40 studies reviewed here, are on evaluation of curricular content and materials. But an important aspect like curriculum guide and syllabuses received little attention from these investigators except Pifer (1974) and Wacira (1973). They showed that the utilization of curriculum guides by the teachers was very limited. But these studies did not take care of the organisation and presentation of content materials in the guides. The content and syllabuses of the curriculum in several foreign countries are decided by the institutors as they enjoy greater autonomy and curriculum building is quite decentralised. The other studies with respect to syllabuses are mostly in specific areas. As for instance the NCERT (1963) focussed on social studies and mathematics syllabuses in India. Karandikar, (1973) on the other hand, investigated the mathematics syllabus in relation to textbooks.

The areas of preparation, selection, organisation and distribution of curriculum guides and syllabus in primary schools could have been among other topics of interest for detailed investigation. These aspects of curricular content have not been explored properly in any of the studies. Pillai's (1968) study was a kind of compilation of historical facts about the development of syllabuses of primary and secondary schools in Kerala and that study was mainly related to the standard of the curriculum. He mostly followed the document analysis procedure.

The researches reviewed in the area of textbooks were not comprehensive and exhaustive in nature, except for the study of Pattabhiram (1973) and Joshi (1972). They investigated in depth into almost all the aspects of social studies and science textbooks in Andhra and Maharashtra respectively. Other investigators in most cases, highlighted only one or two aspects of textbooks such as physical aspects, illustrations, context, language style, exercises etc.

Research on curriculum in general viz. development of curriculum through evaluation or the implementation of the curriculum as a whole has not been encouraging. The small number of studies which come under this category are either studies of historical development of curriculum in a particular state or region or status studies concerning one or two aspects of implementation of the curriculum. Thus

research concerning fundamental work for curriculum development and implementation is woefully lacking.

In most cases, questionnaires in either structured or unstructured form were used as tools for data collection by the investigators. Some investigators took resort to interview and check-list as supplementary devices for their data collection, depending on the nature and objectives of their study. Of course, document analysis procedures were also followed by some researchers. Surprisingly, it may be observed, no single study has been done entirely in the area of curriculum of primary education in Bangladesh. After a thorough search into the literature in Bangladesh, it has been found that only Akter (1981) and Haque (1977) carried out investigation on curriculum for primary education. But Akter's (1981), focus was only on the environmental studies in class IV and also only very few aspects of the social science curriculum. On the other hand, all other studies were conducted on physical and educational facilities of primary schools in Bangladesh. Thus, through the findings of these studies, one is not able to come in full view of the total picture of the curriculum for primary education in Bangladesh.

6. CONCLUSION

It should be observed, at the outset, that the researches reviewed, here, have largely been conducted outside Bangladesh. The findings of these studies have a very restricted significance for the Bangladesh situation. Further,

a large number of works reviewed, were conducted a long time ago, and in the meantime they perhaps have lost their validity even in the countries, where they have been conducted. Therefore, a gap in respect of data about the curriculum in the primary level of education in Bangladesh can easily be perceived from the review of research. The present study is expected to fill this gap at least partially. An evaluative study of curriculum for primary education in Bangladesh is in fact especially important in the present watershed when the Government of the country is giving high importance and priority to universalization of primary education. The researches reviewed in the foregoing sections have enlightened the investigator to single out the appropriate aspects of primary education curriculum which should be thoroughly investigated into. Again, the review of researches has provided an idea to the investigator about the methodology to be adopted in terms of sources of data, procedure for data collection and analysis and interpretation of data. Keeping these points in view, the investigator has developed a theoretical framework for the present investigation, which has been discussed in the next chapter.

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