

**The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory  
Education Act (RTE) in India**

**An Exploration of its Child-Centred Policy**

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**Thesis**

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I, Meera Nath Sarin, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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## **Abstract**

The Thesis constitutes a case study that explored the child-centred education policy incorporated within the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), which was enacted in India in August 2009 and came into force in April 2010. RTE provides for 'free and compulsory education' for all children aged six to fourteen at primary and upper primary levels in state schools in India. The Legislation spearheads the provision of 'free and compulsory education' through India's programme to universalise elementary education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, which translates as 'Education for All Movement' and has been operational since 2000. The research investigated how child-centred education is conceptualised within RTE and how the policy is functioning through documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews with Indian teachers working at schools in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. The documentary analysis showed that child-centred education is conceptualised as a means of accomplishing the policy objectives of achieving the universalisation of elementary education and of strengthening democracy in India. The findings from the interviews with the teachers indicated that the functioning of seven of the eight child-centred provisions of RTE was problematic, as was the functioning of the new ascribed role of the Indian teacher as a 'facilitator' within the child-centred schema. Through its findings the Thesis makes an original contribution to the emerging literature on the implementation of one of the child-centred education provisions of RTE, that of 'Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation'. It also extends this literature by addressing the entire child-centred education policy. The research also addresses a gap in the literature on the policy aspect of the provision for child-centred education through its in-depth exploration of how child-centred education is conceptualised in the policy.

## **Impact Statement**

The Thesis investigates the child-centred education policy incorporated within the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), which was enacted in India in August 2009 and came into force in April 2010. RTE provides for 'free and compulsory education' for all children aged six to fourteen at primary and upper primary levels in state schools in India as part of India's 'education for all' programme. The research is situated within the field of international education and benefits academia through its original contributions to knowledge. It contributes to the emerging literature on the implementation of one of the child-centred education provisions of RTE, that of 'Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation'. It also extends this literature by addressing the entire child-centred education policy. The research also addresses a gap in the literature on the policy aspect of the provision for child-centred education through its in-depth exploration of how child-centred education is conceptualised in the policy. The research is anticipated to be of particular interest to teachers, schools and policy makers in India as well as to local and international academic communities. It will have an impact within the academic field of international education through being disseminated by means of scholarly journals, conferences and various online media.

Outside academia the research is directly relevant and beneficial for the work of international, non-governmental and other organisations and actors working on different aspects of education in international contexts. It is particularly relevant for informing the work of these organisations in the formulation, implementation and assessment of child-centred and learner-centred education pedagogies in relation to government policy in developing country contexts. The research is also particularly relevant for developing the professional practice of teachers in the form of teacher education and training for these pedagogies in the country contexts where they are being implemented. It is anticipated that the research will have a direct impact on the delivery of education in developing country contexts through its relevance and application in both these as well as in other areas. It is also anticipated that the research will have a broader impact, for example, through engagement with public policy makers and public service delivery practitioners working in these and in other areas of international education and development.

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## Introduction

The Thesis constitutes the final component of the Doctor of Education degree that I have undertaken to facilitate a career transition from working as a consultant specialising in cross-cultural training in the international corporate sector to working as a consultant in the education sector in international development. The professional aim of the Thesis was to deepen my knowledge of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) and of education policy in India to facilitate this career transition.

The Thesis comprises a case study that explores the functioning of the child-centred education policy incorporated within RTE that was enacted in India in August 2009 and which came into force in April 2010. RTE provides for 'free and compulsory education' at primary and upper primary levels in state schools in India. Its overall provision is as follows:

*Every child of the age of six to fourteen years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school till completion of elementary education*

(Government of India, 2009, p. 1).

The Legislation spearheads the provision of 'free and compulsory education' through India's most recent programme to universalise elementary education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which translates as 'Education for All Movement' and has been operational since 2000.

As a child-centred approach, current Indian education policy as represented by RTE aligns itself with a philosophy of education that has its antecedents in the Enlightenment of 18<sup>th</sup> century Western Europe. It has as an overall objective the replacement of the teacher-centred, rote-learning approach to education with one that has as its starting point the educational and developmental needs of the student. The child-centred approach to education constitutes the focus of the research and also constitutes the theoretical underpinning of the empirical work of the Thesis.

The Thesis was conceptualised as an 'intrinsic case study' (Stake, 1995) as the most appropriate approach to fulfil the aim of the research, which was to gain an in-depth understanding of the child-centred policy of RTE. Gaining in-depth knowledge was

facilitated by examining the literature, historical and policy contexts of the child-centred education policy of RTE as well as through the empirical research that was conducted.

The main research questions of the Study were as follows:

1. *How is child-centred education conceptualised within RTE?*
2. *How is the child-centred education policy of RTE functioning?*

I adopted documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews with Indian teachers as research methods. The findings of the research indicated that child-centred education is conceptualised both as a means of assisting with the fulfilment of the policy objective of achieving the universalisation of elementary education (UEE) and as a means of strengthening democracy in India. They also indicated that the functioning of seven of the eight child-centred provisions of RTE was problematic, as was the functioning of the new ascribed role of the Indian teacher as a 'facilitator' within the child-centred schema.

In conducting this research I am addressing a need in the literature both for studies that focus on the functioning of the child-centred education policy of RTE and for those that focus on the policy aspect of the child-centred legislation. I establish that there is as yet an emergent literature on the former, which constitutes studies on the implementation of one of the RTE child-centred provisions, that of 'Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation' (CCE). I establish that I have identified no literature on the policy aspect.

The Thesis makes an original contribution to the literature on the implementation of CCE as a component of the child-centred education policy of RTE in several ways. Firstly, it builds on the existing literature by presenting similar findings and by presenting additional insights into the functioning of CCE. Secondly, it extends the existing literature through its focus on the entire child-centred education policy within RTE and through its objectives of investigating the functioning of all of the child-centred provisions of RTE and the new role of the Indian teacher as 'facilitator'. My research presents insights into seven of the eight child-centred provisions of RTE as well as into the functioning of the teacher's role.

My research also extends the existing literature by introducing a theoretical dimension to it. I have formulated a child-centred theoretical framework, which facilitates understandings and interpretations of both the child-centred education policy and its functioning. In addition, through this framework I provide conceptual insights into the

child-centred policy in terms of its relationship to the theoretical concepts of 'Democracy', 'Experiential Learning', and 'Teacher as Facilitator' of the framework and show that the child-centred policy is theoretically supported.

The Thesis also makes an original contribution by addressing the gap in the literature on the policy aspect of the provision for child-centred education through its in-depth exploration of the education objectives and policy features and of how child-centred education is conceptualised in the policy.

The Thesis makes an original contribution to the literature on insider-outsider research as a study of the functioning of national education policy in India through research methods which incorporate an 'insider' researcher perspective.

The international dimension of the Thesis relates to the international policy context of Learner-Centred Education (LCE) within which I situated the Indian child-centred education policy. I explored aspects of the interrelationship between the international policy context and the Indian policy. This enabled me to gain significant understandings of the latter.

The Thesis is structured as follows: Chapter One establishes the methodological foundation of the Thesis. It provides the rationale for employing the case study approach and sets out how the research was designed, how it was conducted and how the data were analysed and interpreted. Chapter Two presents a brief overview of the origins of the child-centred approach to education, provides the theoretical framework of the Thesis and explains how the framework is employed to interpret the results of the research. Chapters Three to Seven constitute the report of the case study. Chapters Three to Five set out the literature, historical and policy contexts respectively of the child-centred education policy of RTE. Chapter Three reviews the emergent Indian literature and situates the research of the Thesis within this literature. Chapter Four traces the trajectory of 'free and compulsory education' in India and establishes the genesis of RTE. Chapter Five examines the national policy context of the RTE child-centred provisions as well as their international policy context of LCE. Chapters Six and Seven present the findings from the empirical research that was conducted, the former on the documentary analysis and the latter on the findings from the interviews with Indian teachers. In Chapter Eight I draw conclusions about the child-centred education policy of RTE and explain in detail how the Thesis contributes to the literature in the field. I also identify how research conducted for the Thesis has assisted me to fulfil my professional

development objectives. The next chapter explains how the Thesis has been conceptualised as a case study.

## **Chapter 1: Methodology**

This chapter sets out details of how I have conceptualised the Thesis as a qualitative case study. The timeframe of the research was autumn 2014 to the summer of 2018, during which period the research objectives and methodology underwent a process of revision before, during and after the fieldwork. I begin this chapter with an explanation of how the research has evolved into its current form. I then set out the rationale for taking a case study approach and explain how the case study has been conceptualised. I follow this with an account of the empirical research that was conducted and how the data were collected. I then draw some conclusions about the research process. I conclude by describing how the case study report is structured.

### **EVOLUTION OF THE THESIS**

In this section I present a reflective account of the difficulties I encountered with different elements of the research and how I addressed them. I address the different phases of research chronologically to provide clarity on how the research developed.

#### **The initial research**

My initial research proposal constituted a study of Indian teachers' perspectives on how discrimination on the basis of caste takes place at school and their views on 'teacher sensitisation' training they have attended. I adopted an ethnographic approach as the most appropriate way to obtain their perspectives. The thesis proposal review panel strongly advised, however, against this methodological approach. I therefore revised it to constitute a generally qualitative approach that incorporated an Interpretivist perspective to investigate how discrimination on the basis of caste takes place in practice in the context of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) and to highlight aspects that could inform the development and delivery of 'teacher sensitisation' training. However, the situation in the field necessitated a further revision of the research objectives after it became apparent that the teachers being interviewed had received no training on caste discrimination. This research was therefore not conducted and no data were collected.

## **Revised research objectives**

After reflecting upon what was possible in the field, I revised the focus of research to an investigation of Indian teachers' perspectives on the child-centred education policy of RTE, and continued with the focus on training. These foci formed the basis of the two main research questions. I had developed an interest in RTE through research conducted for the Institution-Focused Study (IFS) for the Degree, which had focused jointly on RTE and on Indian teachers' views on it. I continued with the qualitative approach informed by an Interpretivist perspective and employed documentary analysis and interviews with Indian teachers as the corresponding research methods.

I conducted the fieldwork in India from July to September 2015. I initially asked teachers being interviewed some exploratory questions about caste discrimination at school and training to verify that the previous research should be discontinued. The data obtained from this were minimal and were discarded. This discarding did not affect the Thesis or any further data collection. I was subsequently able to answer the main research question pertaining to the challenges teachers experienced when teaching in accordance with the child-centred policy. I obtained insufficient data, however, to be able to adequately answer the main research question related to training. When writing up the results I therefore discarded this data and concentrated on the challenges the teachers experienced. This process did not affect the Thesis.

## **Progression of the research**

After conducting the fieldwork I worked on the historical context of RTE, the documentary analysis and the theoretical framework of the Thesis. This shaped the research in important ways. I began to develop in-depth understandings about the education policy as well as the policy objectives. I also developed a theoretical framework for the research. I subsequently developed a joint focus on gaining in-depth knowledge about the policy and on gaining the perspectives and insights of Indian teachers, particularly on its child-centred features. Thereafter the research objective evolved to become an investigation of the functioning of the child-centred education policy of RTE from the perspectives of Indian teachers. This positioned the Study as a policy evaluation.

The joint focus on Indian teachers' perspectives on RTE and on the functioning of the child-centred education policy resulted in being problematic for the further development of the research. The main difficulty was that I was unable to interpret the data obtained

from the teachers as their perspectives. I also became concerned about whether the small-scale scope of the study would enable me to draw valid conclusions about the functioning of the policy. To resolve the tension caused by the joint focus of research I determined that my primary area of interest was RTE. This redirection of focus enabled me to develop the Thesis further.

### **Final research objectives and methodology**

I reformulated the research questions in order to focus on the functioning of the child-centred education provisions of RTE and revised the methodology to that of a qualitative case study as the most appropriate way of proceeding. This change enabled me to reposition the role of teachers in the research to that of “..... *informants through whom the case can be known.....*” (Stake, 2005, p. 447). Once the teachers were no longer a main subject of research, I was able to appropriately interpret the data obtained from the interviews with them.

As I understood more about the nature of case study research I gained more clarity about the research I was conducting. This led me to understand that a sharper focus was required on the child-centred policy of RTE in order to gain the in-depth understanding I sought. I revised the overall aim of the research accordingly to that of gaining an in-depth understanding of the child-centred policy of RTE. This aim corresponded with my professional objectives of gaining such knowledge of the policy in order to inform my professional practice. To facilitate the achievement of this research aim I finalised the main research questions as follows:

1. *How is child-centred education conceptualised within RTE?*
2. *How is the child-centred education policy of RTE functioning?*

I now had a clear and appropriate aim and direction and could complete the research.

### **RATIONALE FOR A CASE STUDY APPROACH**

In this section I set out how I understand the concept of ‘case study’ for the Thesis and then present my rationale for employing the case study approach. Case study research is a vast field with a long and complex history rooted in a variety of traditions and epistemologies. This account is therefore limited to those aspects that are the most relevant for justifying my research approach.



## **The concept of case study**

I am not attempting to define the concept of 'case study' since this has been described as being difficult and problematic (Elman, Gerring & Mahoney, 2016, VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2015, Simons, 2009) and has been the subject of considerable debate over the last thirty years or more (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). In the same timeframe there have been more than twenty-five different definitions of case study each with its own particular emphasis and direction for research (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2015).

The following may compound the problem of defining case study: it is a difficult and confusing field (Swanborn, 2010) with various theoretical and practical aspects (Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993) and no particular disciplinary orientations (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2015). The term originates from many traditions and comprises many different types of case study research (Swanborn, 2010); the latter point has also been made by Simons (2009) and Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier (2013). It has different meanings in different disciplines (Simons, 2009) and is employed in many academic fields (Elman, Gerring & Mahoney, 2016, Swanborn, 2010). The term is not, however, used in a standard way and its use is not restricted to the research context (Hammersley & Gomm, 2009). It is employed in many different ways (Ragin, 1992) and for many purposes, with several different labels that sometimes address the same subject but are at other times used differently (Swanborn, 2010).

There are also considerable difficulties to do with the characterisation of case study research. It is referred to as a method, strategy and approach, and not always consistently (Simons, 2009). Debate is on going about whether case study can be characterised in these terms; the use of these terms is also contested (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Hammersley & Gomm (2013), Gillham (2000) and Crotty (1998) define case study as a method, while others as an approach (Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993, Simons, 2009). It has also been described as a genre (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013), a methodology or research design (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2015), a distinct research paradigm (Hammersley & Gomm, 2009, 2013) and a choice of what is to be researched (Simons, 2009, Stake, 2005).

However, there are understandings of case study research that are relatively uncontested; these include purpose, data sources, fieldwork and role of the researcher (Tobin, 2012). A central purpose of case study research is to maintain a singular focus on a particular subject. The defining characteristic has been described as the

concentration on a particular case, or small set of cases (Robson, 2002, Hammersley & Gomm, 2009) and the singularity of the phenomenon being studied (Stake, 1995). Case study has also been referred to as involving the study of a single case (Kenny & Gvotelineschen, 2015, Swanborn, 2010, Bassegy, 1999, Gerring 2007, Elman, Gerring & Mahoney, 2016).

In-depth study is therefore important for case study research. It is by definition the in-depth study of a particular case (Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993) and has been described as involving in-depth investigation (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013, Orum, Feagin, & Sjoberg, 1991, Bassegy, 1999, Gerring, 2007, Simons, 2009) as well as the development of detailed, intensive knowledge about the case (Robson, 2002). Particularisation is the obligation and important aim of case study research, not generalisation (Stake, 1995). Contexts are also important for case study research, which pays close attention to the influence of its social, political, and other contexts (Stake, 1995) and investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its important, real-life contextual conditions (Yin, 2009).

Fieldwork is integral to case study research. Case study research can only be understood in context (Gillham, 2000) or its natural context (Bassegy, 1999, Swanborn, 2010) and involves the use of field studies (Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993). It requires spending time within the world of those being researched (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013) and to be conducted in natural settings (Bassegy, 1999, Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) and in a 'real life' context (Simons, 2009).

Case study research involves the use of several sources of data (Orum, Feagin & Sjoberg, 1991, Yin, 2009, Robson, 2002, Stake, 1995, Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993, Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013, Gillham, 2000, Swanborn, 2010) and two or more different perspectives to provide depth (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Multiple sources of and different kinds of evidence, involving strengths and weaknesses, is a key characteristic of case study research (Gillham, 2000).

The main sources of data are documents, interviews with informants and participatory observation, in this order (Swanborn, 2010, Robson, 2002). Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, (1993) and Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier (2013) also refer to the use of interviews and observations. Documentary analysis has been described as a major method employed by qualitative researchers (Silverman, 2006), which includes policy documents as the main type of evidence (Gillham, 2000). The researcher is considered to be the main

instrument of data gathering (Simons, 2009) and a human research instrument, a participant observer who acknowledges the researcher's role in the discovery (Gillham, 2000).

The potential limitations of case study research include the subjectivity of the researcher (Simons, 2009) and the problem of representativeness because the approach includes, by definition, only a small number of cases of some more general phenomenon (Gerring, 2007). Case study research has often been criticised on the grounds that its findings are not generalisable (Gomm, Hammersley & Foster, 2009) and methodological issues to do with generalisability have been the subjects of considerable debate (Hammersley & Gomm, 2013).

### **Why case study is the most appropriate approach**

My understanding, drawn from the case study literature, is that case study research constitutes a singular focus on a particular subject of research and studying this subject in depth. This was congruent with my research aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of the child-centred education policy of RTE for informing my professional practice and constituted a main reason for my adopting a case study approach. I did not have the aim of generalising beyond the study. Another reason is that I was able to utilise the data I had already obtained since case study research is not defined by methodology (Simons, 2009, Stake, 1995, Yin, 2009) and does not require a particular approach to the analysis of qualitative data it produces (Robson, 2002).

There were other ways in which the case study approach was the most appropriate for my research objective and topic: firstly, I was investigating 'how' the policy was functioning and case study is both preferred in this circumstance (Yin, 2009) and powerful (Timmons & Cairns, 2012). Secondly, I was able to advantageously situate the work I had completed on the contextual background of the Thesis since contexts are important for case study research. Thirdly, this approach helped me to appropriately situate teachers in my study as the source of empirical knowledge because case study focuses on experiential knowledge of the case (Stake, 2005). Fourthly, I was able to incorporate the theoretical framework I had developed as an analytical tool for the Thesis since theoretical frameworks play an integral role in the research design of case studies (Yin, 2009).

## **THE THESIS AS A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY**

In this section I set out how I re-conceptualised the research as a qualitative case study and the definition of case study I employed for the Thesis in order to achieve my research objectives. As stated above, the aim of the research was to gain an in-depth understanding of the child-centred policy of RTE. The main research questions were as follows:

1. *How is child-centred education conceptualised within RTE?*
2. *How is the child-centred education policy of RTE functioning?*

The revisions I have made to my research instituted a change from a generally qualitative approach informed by an Interpretivist perspective to a qualitative case study informed by an Interpretivist perspective. This involved a narrowing down of the qualitative approach to the employment of case study within it. Since it involved no change of methodology, it was not a methodological change. I am therefore characterising case study as an 'approach' for the Thesis.

### **The interpretive framing of the research**

My research is located in a broadly social science tradition. It is not located within any specific disciplinary tradition or theoretical orientation. A qualitative research approach was chosen since my research involved the study of a social phenomenon. As researcher I was therefore locating myself within a socially oriented approach that emphasises the socially constructed nature of reality, relies mainly on human perception and understanding and involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). I was also locating myself within a tradition in which a social researcher explores and understands the social world through the participants' and their own perspectives, with the aim of providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). I was also grounding my research in people's experience as required in all educational research (Morrison, 2007) and looking at everyday activity as an important component (O'Donoghue, 2007).

I maintained my original Interpretivist perspective within the qualitative approach. Interpretivism is integral to the qualitative research tradition (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The term 'Interpretivism' encompasses a number of philosophical traditions and is related to qualitative research generally in the over-arching view that all human life is experienced

and constructed from a subjective perspective (Morrison, 2007). Case study can be congruent with the Interpretivist paradigm that assumes that reality is a social construct that emerges from the way people interact with each other and experience the world (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2015).

The Interpretivist paradigm is constructivism and assumes a relativist ontology that denotes multiple realities; there is a subjectivist epistemology within which the knower and respondent co-create understandings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). An Interpretivist researcher advances knowledge by describing and interpreting phenomena in order to try to obtain shared meanings with others (Bassegy, 1999). Reality is not an objective phenomenon but is defined by individuals within any given situation (O'Donoghue, 2007). It is not 'out there' waiting to be uncovered as 'facts' but is a construct in which people understand reality in different ways; there cannot be an objective reality that exists irrespective of the meaning people bring to it (Morrison, 2007).

The core task of Interpretivism is to view research participants as subjects and to explore the 'meanings' of events and phenomena from the subjects' perspectives; researchers are to recognise that they are part of the research topics being investigated and that their work has an impact upon research participants and vice versa (Morrison, 2007). They are to present an honest portrayal of how the informants experienced and understood their functions and the concerns that arose for them (O'Donoghue, 2007).

I consequently understood my role as involving the carrying out of research in the real life, everyday context of teachers' experiences in educational settings in India. I viewed myself as the 'main instrument' of data gathering and saw myself as providing an in-depth, interpreted understanding of the child-centred education policy of RTE through documentary analysis and with Indian teachers. I was exploring the functioning of the policy and creating understandings through the perspectives and experiences of the teachers and of my own, and I was interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people ascribed to them.

### **The research as an 'intrinsic' case study**

I have elaborated above on the various reasons why I adopted a qualitative case study approach and how this approach is appropriate for and congruent with my research objective of gaining an in-depth understanding of the child-centred education policy of RTE. I have also drawn attention above to the complexities involved in characterising

and defining the case study approach and to the existence of various types of case study. These complexities notwithstanding, I have identified that the central reasons for adopting a qualitative case study approach was that it constitutes a singular focus on a particular subject of research, studying this subject in depth and placing an importance on contexts. I have taken the case study approach fully on board in relation to all of its relatively uncontested understandings as cited above – purpose, data sources, the need for fieldwork and the role of the researcher (Tobin, 2012) and these elements have also underpinned the research.

Within the general case study approach I identified a particular form of case study - that of 'intrinsic' case study (Stake, 1995, 2005) – as being particularly appropriate for achieving my research objective of understanding the child-centred education policy of RTE because of its congruency with this objective as my sole aim. I now set out the definition of 'intrinsic' case study that was employed for the research. The only objective of an 'intrinsic' case study is to gain a better understanding of the particular case. An 'intrinsic' case has as its most important feature and aim a thorough understanding of the case (Stake, 1995). "..... *this case itself is of interest*" (Stake, 2005, p. 445). The aim is not to understand other cases, a particular problem, an abstract construct, generic phenomenon, theory building, provide insight into an issue, redraw a generalisation, or facilitate our understanding of something else (Stake, 2005). The epistemological question consists of what can be learned about the single case (Stake, 2005). "*Intrinsic designs aim to develop what is perceived to be the case's own issues, contexts, and interpretations, its "thick description"*" (Stake, 2005, p. 450). A second important benefit of conducting this form of case study was that it enabled me to optimise the work I had already conducted on the contexts of the education policy. The more it is an intrinsic case study, the more the contexts of the case need to be paid attention to (Stake, 1995) and the development of what is perceived to be the case's own issues, contexts and interpretations is an important feature (Stake, 2005). I therefore defined my research as an 'intrinsic' case study according to Stake (1995, 2005) and re-conceptualised my research accordingly.

A case is a bounded unit (Gerring, 2007) or a bounded system (Stake, 2005), which has a boundary and working parts (Stake, 1995). I defined the 'case' as the child-centred education policy of RTE and drew the boundary around the child-centred education policy of RTE, which consists of the child-centred education provisions of the Legislation and the role ascribed to teachers, as well as of the sources of empirical data in the form of documentary analysis and interviews conducted with teachers working in state

schools. I am interested in the state school sector, which is populated by children from the poorest sections of society, because of my professional interest in promoting educational opportunities for disadvantaged children in India. In drawing the boundary of the case I was conceptualising it as an object being studied (Stake, 2005). The child-centred policy of RTE, represent 'the working parts of the case'. The case is presented below:

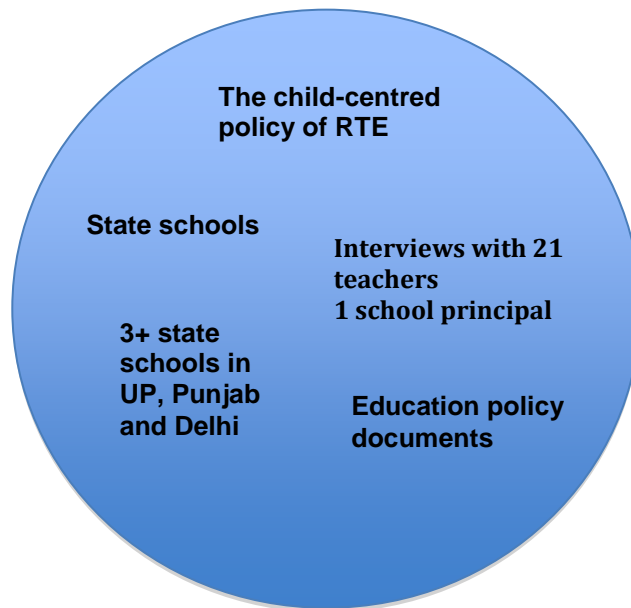


Figure 1: The case – in accordance with Stake (1995, 2005).

## **DATA COLLECTION**

I employed documentary analysis and interviews with Indian teachers as the methods of data collection. As stated above, documents and interviews with informants constitute main sources of data for qualitative case study research. Both research methods were related in the research in that the documentary analysis provided data on the context within which the teachers as research participants operated (Bowen, 2009) as well as a formal framework to which I was relating an informal reality (Gillham, 2000) in the form of the teachers' experiences of teaching according to RTE. Also, the interview questions were drawn directly from the child-centred education policy. However, I placed equal weighting of importance for the research on each method and while data from the documentary analysis informed the data collection of the interviews, analytically I treated the methods as entirely separate entities. This meant that I analysed the data from the documentary analysis and interviews separately in order to answer the particular research question that related to each research method. I begin by identifying which documents I analysed and then explain how documentary was understood as a research method for the Study. I then provide details of how data were collected in relation to the interviews with Indian teachers. How the data were analysed and interpreted for both the documentary analysis and the interviews with teachers is explained in Chapters Six and Seven respectively.

### **Documentary analysis**

I analysed the following documents, all of which are in the public domain:

1. The Right to Education Act of 2009 (RTE), issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice
2. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Framework for Implementation issued by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development in 2011 (SSA Framework)
3. The National Curriculum Framework of 2005 (Curriculum 2005), issued by the National Council of Educational Research and Training

These documents were chosen for analysis because they incorporate the education policy being investigated. In this sense they were all 'pre-selected'. As described in the Introduction, RTE provides for 'free and compulsory education' at primary and upper primary level in all state schools in India. Its child-centred education provisions are contained in Section V.29, as identified in SSA Framework, which is the policy document



that supports the implementation of RTE. It provides details about how the provisions of RTE and the role of teachers within the child-centred education policy are conceptualised as well as details of the entire education policy represented by RTE. The relevant sections for the documentary analysis were Chapters One to Four. While Curriculum 2005 predates RTE, it is incorporated within the current education framework and SSA Framework draws on Curriculum 2005 in its articulation of education policy.

The purpose of the documents – to establish the education policy and set out its requirements - forms part of the policy context. Purpose forming part of the context is important for understanding and interpreting the results of the analysis (Robson, 2002). As a document, SSA Framework is “*intended to demonstrate the harmonization of SSA with the RTE Act*” (Government of India, 2011, p. 7), ‘SSA’ being the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme aimed at universalising elementary education in India. SSA Framework also constitutes an implementation document for the Indian states: it “*...provides a broad outline of approaches and implementation strategies, within which States can frame more detailed guidelines keeping in view their specific social, economic and institutional contexts*” (Government of India, 2011, p. 7). Thus the purpose of the document is to unite RTE and SSA, with RTE as the driver, and to provide guidelines for the Indian states to implement RTE. These purposive aspects informed the development of understandings of the content of the documents and the argument of the Thesis.

I addressed the contexts of the education policy as an integral part of the case study approach undertaken. This approach incorporates within it recognition of the view that the context in which the documents were generated should be understood by the researcher (Fitzgerald, 2012). Chapter Four provides details on the historical context of RTE as legislation as well as its child-centred education provisions. Chapter Five elaborates on the policy contexts of the child-centred education provisions of RTE. These understandings likewise informed the development of understandings of the content of the documents and the argument of the Thesis.

The analytical aim of conducting the documentary analysis was to gain understandings of the nature of the child-centred education policy of RTE. Documentary analysis was deemed to be particularly appropriate for achieving this aim because, as a form of qualitative analysis, it constitutes an entry point into what could be called a policy discourse (Prior, 2011) and because it is “*..... a process of evaluating documents in such a way that empirical knowledge is produced and understanding is developed*” (Bowen, 2009, p. 33-34).

Documentary analysis was understood for the Thesis to be “..... *a form of qualitative analysis that requires researchers to locate, interpret, analyse and draw conclusions about the evidence presented*” (Fitzgerald, 2012, p. 300) and one that also requires that “.....*data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge*” (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). The method was understood to be a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents (Bowen, 2009), a procedure that was understood to involve the following: understanding the information provided, the underlying values and assumptions of the author, and any arguments developed (McCulloch, 2011); “..... *finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of) and synthesising data contained in documents*” (Bowen, 2009, p. 28); and “..... *the systematic identification of underlying themes in materials, analysing these themes and providing an interpretation that augments a theoretical argument*” (Fitzgerald, 2012, p. 305).

### **Interviews with Indian teachers**

In this section I set out information about the respondents and how they had been recruited. I then address the ethical aspects of conducting the empirical research. I follow this with details of how the interviews were conducted and clarify my contributions as researcher to the gathering and handling of data.

I interviewed twenty-two respondents – eighteen female teachers, three male teachers and one male principal - between July and September 2015 who worked at different schools in New Delhi and Noida, Uttar Pradesh (approximately sixteen miles southeast of New Delhi) as well as at two schools in Amritsar in Punjab. They taught a range of subjects, mostly the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. A list of the teachers interviewed is provided in Appendix One.

#### *The recruitment of teachers*

My experience conducting research for the Institution-Focused Study (IFS) was that gaining official access to enter schools and interview teachers was very difficult. I therefore enlisted the help of a cousin, who was a teacher, to recruit research participants. I employed this same method, ‘opportunity sampling’ to recruit teachers to interview for the Thesis. ‘Opportunity sampling’ involves using the knowledge and attributes of the researcher, for example the researcher’s past experiences, to identify participants or gatekeepers to contact; it is also often used when the groups of people

under study are hard to access (Brady, 2006). The method has also been described as 'seizing an opportunity' in relation to whom or what is available (Brown & Dowling, 1998, p. 29). The sampling technique must match with the epistemological starting point of the research (Brady, 2006). The epistemological starting point for the research was the question 'what can be learned about the case?', which therefore matched with opportunity sampling because any participant who was identified and then interviewed - as a teacher - could potentially contribute to gaining this knowledge.

Since the scope of the Thesis was larger than that of the IFS, I enlisted the assistance of three cousins to recruit teachers. All participants were recruited on the basis of whether they were available and willing. One cousin taught at a state school in Noida, and contacted colleagues, ex-colleagues and friends who taught either at her school or at other state secondary schools in Noida or New Delhi. She provided them with preliminary information about the research and then arranged meetings with those who were interested in taking part. The interviews took place either at her home or in theirs. Another cousin taught at a state school in Amritsar and obtained permission from her principal for me to visit the school and interview teachers. She approached those who had a free period to find out if they would talk to me after providing them with some initial information about the research. I then met with teachers who were interested in a free classroom or office. All these interviews took place at the school. The third cousin was the principal of a private school in Amritsar. She arranged for me to visit and interview teachers at a state school there. She contacted a senior teacher she knew who then introduced me to the principal and also facilitated the interviews. I first interviewed the principal and one of the teachers sitting with him. The senior teacher then took me to a seating area where staff gathered before and after classes and during free periods. She introduced me to teachers and gave them brief information about my research. I then interviewed teachers who had time and agreed to be interviewed.

### *Ethical considerations*

Ethical considerations link to a broad field of literature and are many and varied. In particular, "..... *the ethical conduct of qualitative research is complex, evolving, and contingent across the course of a study and is a matter of continuing debate in the qualitative research community of practice*" (Preissle, 2012, p. 17). I set out here the approach I took to ensure that the research was conducted ethically and how I handled a potential ethical issue that arose.

I conducted the fieldwork with the approval of the (UCL-IOE) Research Ethics Committee and have retained all case records to provide an adequate trail of evidence from the research in case of possible scrutiny. My approach incorporated the following ethical objectives: obtaining the voluntary informed consent of participants at the start of the study; informing them they can withdraw for any or no reason at any time; ensuring participants understand what is involved as well as they can; informing them about how the data will be kept, shared and of any possible secondary uses it may be put to; and ensuring that participants are not harmed by the research by placing them at ease, not placing excessive demands on them and minimising and managing any distress or discomfort that may arise (BERA, 2011).

I consider that I conducted the research ethically in relation to all the BERA principles set out above, amongst which that of voluntary informed consent is central. It is based mainly on the following principles: individual autonomy followed by beneficence (Marzano, 2014), respecting the autonomy of participants (Hammersley & Traianou, 2015), and respect for individuals (Israel, 2015).

I had intended to obtain the voluntary informed consent of teachers by providing them with an information booklet setting out details of the research and by requiring them to sign a consent form. However, once in India my cousin in Noida advised against this because the interviews were not being conducted at school and because the teachers might view a requirement to sign consent as being overly 'official' and therefore feel uncomfortable. I therefore, at the beginning of each interview, verbally gave the teacher the information I would have provided in the booklet and obtained his or her verbal consent to participate. I told participants what the aims of the research were and why I was conducting it; I clarified that the research was being conducted for the purposes of doctoral research; I explained that they would be asked questions about the child-centred education policy of RTE and I provided them with some examples of these, drawn from the full list of research questions. The latter is provided in Appendix Two.

By gaining the teachers' consent I considered that I was fulfilling an obligation to provide them with detailed information about the research (Marzano, 2014) and that they were giving me their explicit agreement to participate (Sieber & Tolich, 2015) as well as the right to access and record the data and to use it for research purposes (Hammersley & Traianou, 2015). I also viewed that I had obtained their full consent from the beginning (Griffiths, 1998) since the interviews constituted their only involvement.

I understood the consent each teacher gave to be informed for the following reasons: firstly, I had provided them with information on the subject of the study and what they would have to do - as requirements for gaining informed consent (Sieber & Tolich, 2015). Secondly, I believed that the teachers were clear about what they were consenting to and where participation started and ended (Miller & Bell, 2011). Thirdly, I believed that they understood the research and their role within it and had agreed to it voluntarily on the basis of a fully informed and voluntary decision (Israel, 2015).

The use of opportunity sampling to identify and recruit teachers for the interviews through my cousins posed a potential ethical issue. I had identified this role as such on my ethics application form, where I had anticipated that teachers might view me as a representative of the school or the education authorities and therefore be concerned about their statements being shared with other teachers or being reported to the principal or authorities. I expressed the hope that any concerns of this nature would be mitigated by assuring the teachers that they would remain anonymous throughout by my changing all names of schools and participants and by my assurances that the data would be confidential since only I would have access to it and would not be sharing it with anyone. I made all these assurances to teachers once in the field and the teachers did not exhibit any concerns about anonymity or confidentiality. They all exhibited trust in me, they were not guarded in their responses and they participated fully in the interviews and the conversations flowed well. The content of the interviews, as represented in the transcripts, was coherent.

Other potential ethical issues arising from opportunity sampling were that the teachers might have felt implicit pressure to participate because of the relationship between my cousins and me or between my cousins and themselves and that the validity of the answers might have been affected. The requirement for voluntary consent originates directly from the principle of autonomy (Hammersley & Traianou, 2015) and a concern is that there should be no coercion (Miller & Bell, 2011). There are difficulties to do with determining whether consent gained has been voluntary. For example, it is not clear what constitutes pressure and making decisions that are not affected by any kind of causal process is difficult (Hammersley & Traianou, 2015); the potentially complex power dynamics that may operate regarding access and consent raise the question of apparent or tacit coercion invalidating our notions of informed consent (Miller & Bell, 2011). In this research I did not know the exact nature of the relationships between my cousins and the teachers they approached and it is likely that the teachers agreed to participate because of their relationship with my cousins. I was reasonably satisfied, however, that

the consent each teacher gave to participate in the research was voluntary. There was no evidence during any of the interviews that the participants felt uncomfortable, that they were under pressure to participate or that the validity of their contributions had been negatively affected. My approach, as detailed above, was to make the participants feel as comfortable as possible during the interviews and, as also stated above, the teachers all appeared to have participated freely and fully.

### *The interviews*

I conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers with the analytical aim of gaining insights into the functioning of the child-centred education policy of RTE. The interviews were informed by documentary analysis that I had carried out and by understandings that I had gained through my work for the IFS. The interview questions were detailed and were aimed at eliciting responses from the teachers in a manner broad enough to refer clearly to 'challenges' and to 'RTE' without influencing or steering their responses towards any particular policy features. The questions were drawn directly from the RTE child-centred provisions and SSA Framework and are presented in Appendix Two. I conducted the interviews in Hindi and English with the teachers in New Delhi and Uttar Pradesh and in Punjabi and English with the teachers in Punjab. Each interview typically lasted one to one and a half hours.

### **My position as researcher**

My professional position was that of transitioning from being a cross-cultural training consultant to working in the education sector in international development, an aim related to academic development in terms of future professional activities. The aim of the research was to deepen my knowledge of RTE and of education policy in India to facilitate this transition. The Statement below provides details of how work for the Degree has so far contributed to my professional development.

My personal position in relation to the research was that of a female researcher who was born in India, raised and educated in the UK and who subsequently lived in various countries, whilst keeping strong ties with India through family, professional and research involvement. I have particularly strong connections with Punjab and New Delhi and speak Hindi and some Punjabi. I positioned myself as an 'insider researcher' in relation to the field research context because of this personal biography. The term 'insider' is part of a dichotomy portrayed in the literature of 'insider-outsider' research, one that relates to

the perspective adopted in the research role and corresponds to the 'external' view of an observer to an 'internal' view from the position of one or more participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Early discussions assumed that the researcher was either an insider or an outsider and that these statuses carried certain advantages and disadvantages, while more recent discussions have revealed that these roles are inherently complex and that the boundaries between the two are not clearly delineated (Merriam et al., 2001). No researcher is completely either one or the other and the categories themselves are heterogeneous (Griffiths, 1998).

The current literature provides various perspectives on what constitutes 'insider' researcher identity. Researchers have insider or semi-insider status according to their indigenous, native or bicultural status, whereas being an outsider is often equated with being a stranger or foreigner (Ergun & Erdemir, 2010). An insider is a member of the group she is studying (Cui, 2015) or of the community or identity groups with whom she is conducting research (Kanuha, cited in Hanson, 2013, p. 440) and investigates herself, people similar to her and her family or community (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013). She shares similar characteristics, roles and/or experiences with those being studied (Dwyer & Buckle, cited in Couture, Zaidi & Maticka-Tyndale, 2012, p. 89) and has knowledge of the participants or the research area under study (Cui, 2015).

I defined myself as an 'insider' researcher whilst recognising that the dichotomy of 'insider-outsider' research is contested. The distinction between 'insider and 'outsider' is problematic (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) and has been referred to as a continuum (Dhillon & Thomas, 2018, Nakata, 2015). The current literature also refers to a range of other positionings, such as multiple selves, multiple positionalities, blurred boundaries of insider-outsider, and insider-outsider on a continuum (Dhillon & Thomas, 2018) as well as the 'inbetween' researcher (Dhillon & Thomas, 2018, Milligan, 2016). Problem areas include the following: these statuses are based on our various inherently complex intersecting identities (Couture, Zaidi & Maticka-Tyndale, 2012); people are insiders in some respects and outsiders in others and researchers may have multiple positionings (Dhillon & Thomas, 2018); methodological processes may contribute to shifting positionings of the researcher's identity (Milligan, 2016); and being an insider or outsider is neither a binary nor a static status but is constantly changing and negotiated depending on who is being interviewed (Couture, Zaidi & Maticka-Tyndale, 2012).

I defined my researcher position as 'insider' for two reasons. Firstly, I considered myself to be a member of the identity groups with whom I was conducting research (Kanuha,

cited in Hanson, 2013, p. 440). Indeed my family contacts had enabled me to recruit teachers to interview. The perspective I adopted as insider researcher was that my close familiarity with the country context was an advantage for the research. Particular examples of this are the following: I did not need to keep field diaries or conduct additional research to understand the situations inherent in the research. I felt I was able to form a more personal relationship with the participants and that this was enhanced by my ability to conduct the interviews in their languages. Whilst the teachers spoke English, their answers were usually a mixture of English and Hindi or English and Punjabi. I also considered that I was able to capture linguistic and contextual nuances in the process of transcription of the interviews because I was able to translate the recordings myself. The second reason for adopting this identity was my existing knowledge of the participants as well as the research area under study (Cui, 2015), drawn from my prior experience conducting research for the IFS from which I had gained understandings of the participants' teaching contexts and some of the related issues.

My research positioning as 'insider' links my work to the literature on 'insider-outsider' research. Part of this are eighteen studies I located published between 2001 and 2018 on conducting 'insider-outsider' research as well as reports of 'insider-outsider' research that had been conducted in various country contexts. The following are examples of the former: methodological issues and dilemmas in cross-cultural interpretation for researchers who are positioned at different points of the insider-outsider spectrum (Dhillon & Thomas, 2018); research perspectives on the 'insider-outsider' continuum (Nakata, 2015); how intersecting identities resulting in 'insider-outsider status may have influenced data collection (Couture, Zaidi & Maticka-Tyndale, 2012); dilemmas of being an insider or outsider researcher (Gill, 2013); best practices in research studies involving more than one language when the researchers are either insiders or outsiders (Irvine, Roberts & Bradbury-Jones, 2008); and issues of power and positionality when conducting research within one's own culture and across cultural boundaries (Merriam et al., 2001).

The literature reviewed on 'insider-outsider' research in different country contexts includes the following: the insider-outsider role of a Chinese researcher conducting fieldwork in China (Cui, 2015); challenges of conducting insider research in a riot-affected city in Gujarat, India (Dhattiwala, 2017); an outsider gaining insider perspectives in research with secondary school students in a rural community in Western Kenya (Milligan, 2016); methodological issues faced by a 'returning native' in an English secondary school (Perryman, 2011); advantages and disadvantages of the researcher's



insider role at a school for the handicapped in Turkey (Unluer, 2012); and negotiating insider-outsider identities in the field in Azerbaijan and Turkey (Ergun & Erdemir, 2010). The Thesis contributes to this literature as a study of the functioning of national education policy in India through research methods which incorporate an 'insider' researcher perspective.

### **Conclusions about the research**

I was unable to complete the research as I had conceived it when conducting the fieldwork because the joint focus of research was hindering progress. Adopting an 'intrinsic' case study approach enabled me to maintain a specific and sharp focus on the child-centred education policy of RTE and I was able to complete the research. No limitations or complications arose as a result because there was congruence between my research aims, methods, and data collected and those of the approach. All the work previously done therefore transferred smoothly to the research as it was re-conceptualised. The essential difference was that whereas I had previously adopted a generally qualitative approach informed by an Interpretivist perspective, I now took a specifically qualitative approach in the form of a case study informed by an Interpretivist perspective.

Case study refers to both the process of inquiry and the product of that inquiry (Stake 2005, Tobin, 2012) and employs common or non-technical language (Kenny & Gvotelneschen, 2015). The purpose of the report is to represent the case (Stake, 2005). This chapter and the next constitute part of the process of the inquiry. The remainder of the Thesis represents the case, the child-centred education policy of RTE. The next chapter sets out the theoretical framework that I formulated for the Study.

## **Chapter 2: The theoretical framework of the Thesis**

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the Thesis. The provisions for child-centred education contained within RTE constitute an approach to educating children that is philosophically and historically situated in what has come to be known as 'child-centred' education, an approach that originated in Europe in the eighteenth century. The nature of the literature related to it necessitated my developing a theoretical framework to interpret the results of the empirical research of the Study. From the literature that spans three centuries with an extensive international reach – the nature of which I elaborate upon below - I chose concepts from the original work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Dewey as the basis for the theoretical framework. I provide my rationale for doing so in this chapter, as well as an overview of the development of the field from its origins to the early twentieth century. I also present some more current developments and perspectives.

I first present the background to the development of the theoretical framework, which consists of an overview of the development of the child-centred approach to education from its beginnings in the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau to its international dissemination in the early twentieth century and its development in North America in the work of John Dewey and its spread to India. I then set out ideas drawn from the work of both Rousseau and Dewey to establish the basis of the theoretical framework. I conclude by explaining its conceptual structure and clarifying how it is employed in the Thesis.

### **BACKGROUND TO THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Child-centred education, or its historical term 'progressive education' (Darling, 1994), has its origins in the philosophical thought of the Enlightenment in Europe and an ideological reach that has spanned internationally since then in various forms. The scope of its philosophy and consequent literature is therefore vast, as is its history of implementation in educational settings. The approach itself is also indeterminate in nature and philosophically heterogeneous. Darling (1994) clarifies that although no definitive account can be given, child-centred education can be referred to as a philosophy because it encompasses a set of ideas about the nature of children, the nature of knowledge and the nature of life itself, which underpins the writings of its proponents. However, as Howlett (2014) points out, there are no common traits or characteristics that

are easily identifiable or recognizable at any point across time, and nor do its proponents all fit into a pre-delineated tradition or share a set of assumptions and beliefs.

Given these complexities of the philosophy of child-centred education, I elected to draw on the work of Rousseau and Dewey – as two major thinkers and proponents of the field - to develop and construct the theoretical framework for the Thesis. I based it on the work of Rousseau because he had advanced the earliest fully developed version of child-centred theory (Darling, 1994) and had been highly influential in the early development of the approach. I based it on the work of Dewey for two reasons: firstly, Dewey had been a significant influence on the development of child-centred education in the early twentieth century. Secondly, as the research progressed it appeared that Dewey's ideas for achieving a democratic form of education had influenced and informed the ideas of Indian policymakers in their formulation of education objectives and policy and I therefore deemed them to be relevant for the Thesis.

Although child-centred education had spread to India in the early twentieth century, I determined that an understanding of child-centred education concepts as they were originally and consequently formulated would provide a more solid foundation from which to develop understandings and evaluate the Indian child-centred policy than would drawing upon the ideas of its Indian proponents, whose work was based on the ideas of the earlier thinkers.

As well as the study of key texts of Rousseau and Dewey, I also conducted extensive reading of other child-centred education literature that relates both to their work as well as to the historical development of the field of child-centred education. In the following section I draw on some of the latter in order to provide an overview of the early origins of the child-centred approach to education as background for my review of the work of Rousseau and Dewey for the theoretical framework.

### **Overview of the early development of the child-centred approach to education**

The child-centred approach has to be understood as stemming from radical dissatisfaction with traditional education practice (Darling, 1994). Its proponents, from the English philosopher John Locke onwards, sought to problematize education and challenge assumptions about learning that were taken for granted (Howlett, 2014). One aspect that had informed 'traditional' education practice was a prevailing view of religious puritans about the nature of children, described by Silver (1965) in the statement that

children were born with a corrupt nature and evil dispositions and that the most important work of an educator was to counteract the innate corruption of the child. The classical-Christian approach to education propounded by orthodox educationalists in England incorporated as main propositions that children are evil by nature and that childhood is a preparation for adult life; Evangelicals such as John Wesley and Hannah More played a leading role in popularising the dogma of the innate depravity of the child, with Wesley expounding that the will of children had to be broken in order to save their souls and More that the whole purpose of education was to counteract their innate depravity (Stewart & McCann, 1967).

The work of early advocates of the child-centred approach presented different ideas and assumptions about the nature of children (Silver, 1965). The earliest fully developed version of child-centred theory was advanced in France by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Darling, 1994). Prior to this, Locke had stressed the need for more humane and effective methods of teaching that did not involve physical punishment and force and had developed an approach to learning as a form of play and recreation in 1752 (Silver, 1965). Rousseau developed some of Locke's many suggestions for enlightened teaching into a complete system and presented it dramatically in an imaginative package (Darling, 1994). This package was *Emile*, published in France in 1762. Darling (1994) describes *Emile* as developing a general picture of the nature of the child, which Rousseau considered to be incompatible with traditional education practice. Stewart and McCann (1967) put forward that Rousseau regarded children as human beings, restored a belief in their essential goodness and directed attention to the necessity of closely examining their nature and adapting education accordingly; the key idea of the book was the possibility of preserving the original perfect nature of the child by means of the careful control of his education and environment based upon an analysis of the different physical and psychological stages through which he passed from birth to maturity.

Rousseau's work had a tremendous impact in Europe. Within a year of its publication in France in 1762, two different English translations were published in London (McEachern, 1984). Stewart and McCann (1967) describe its striking effect: few books have had greater immediate effect on English education. *Emile* was destined to change the thinking of whole generations of teachers and to affect education practice throughout Western Europe. The ideas it contained fused with those of prevalent radical and scientific thinkers to create new insights into the nature of children, methods of teaching and the scope of the education process. Its originality lay in the fact that it was the first comprehensive attempt to describe a system of education according to nature. Darling

(1994) informs us that Rousseau's approach to education was taken forward by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi [1746-1827] and Friedrich Froebel [1782–1852] in Europe; Robert Owen [1771–1858] in the UK; and John Dewey [1859–1952] and William Kilpatrick (1871-1965) in the United States and that there was a line of succession through which Rousseau's message passed, with each thinker reworking the ideas of those who had written earlier; each writer knew of the work of his or her predecessors and developed or revised, sometimes quite critically, what had already been said.

Pestalozzi worked on some of the central themes in Rousseau's exposition of learning and teaching for over forty-five years, and made explicit the need for the subject matter and the capacity of the learner to be matched (Darling, 1994). Although diffuse and uneven, his influence played a major part in transformation of classroom teaching from the 1820s to the 1850s in Britain and his methods for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic were employed in classrooms in Europe (Stewart and McCann, 1967). Froebel stressed the importance of an education environment that involved practical work and the handling of materials and became associated with the education of young children; play had a critical function and he devised a series of simple toys that would meet the needs of the developing child and to which children should be introduced at appropriate stages of their development (Darling, 1994).

Owen's work was important and significant as 'Rousseauism' applied to working class children, which constituted a decisive break with the old philanthropic attitude towards educating the poor; he initiated a completely new direction in British education by introducing education methods that were in accordance with the nature of the working class child (Stewart and McCann, 1967).

Dewey was the most influential exponent and advocate of child-centred education in the United States, where he helped to legitimise the theory (Darling, 1994). His work was central to American progressive education, which differed to that of Europe in that it had emerged from the 19<sup>th</sup> century backdrop of mass industrialisation in the United States and was influenced by the philosophy of pragmatism, defined as the worth of an idea lying in whether or not it contributes to the public good in a social sense (Howlett, 2014). Kilpatrick continued the work of Dewey as a professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, for twenty years (Darling, 1994).

There was considerable development in the philosophy of child-centred education in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, during which period it also spread internationally. Darling (1994) suggests that a crucial part in this development was played by the New Education Fellowship (NEF) between 1918 and 1939, which through its central proselytizing strategy of holding local and international conferences, brought together all those critical of traditional education methods and championed child-centred approaches to education. The organisation established a very high international reputation (Stewart, 1968) and was internationally organised and promoted good world citizenship (Darling, 1994). It connected lay enthusiasts for education reform with major figures in the developing disciplines of psychology and education, such as Jung, Piaget and Dewey (Brehony, 2004). Well known people in the field, including A.S. Neill and Maria Montessori, spoke at NEF conferences and the organisation promoted the 'new education', a term widely used by Dewey and others to refer to educational progressivism and the child-centred approach (Darling, 1994).

### **Twentieth century theoretical developments**

Although the research employs concepts as they were originally formulated in the work of Rousseau and Dewey, it is also important to acknowledge how the work of these theorists has continued to be influential in research. Dewey's ideas have been developed over time with more specificity and complexity and now form part of an extensive multi-disciplinary body of literature (Beard, 2018). I provide examples of the twentieth century development of Dewey's ideas as presented in the work of Kurt Lewin, Donald Schön, and David Kolb in the context of adult learning and professional development. I also refer briefly to the work of theorists in the context of international pro-democracy movements.

Examples of Dewey's influence on the work of Lewin are provided here in relation to action research, group dynamics and democracy. Lewin first mentioned the term 'action research' in 1944 (Hase, 2014) and was the first to formulate it and specify its major components (Bargal, 2014). Action research provides a structured framework to guide reflective practice and links thinking with action whereby reflection is purposeful, conscious and part of a problem-solving activity (Hase, 2014). Bargal (2006) cites the process involved of data collection to determine goals, action to implement goals and assessment of the results of the intervention as representing Dewey's problem solving process. Krainz (2015) points to parallels between the theories of Dewey and Lewin in group dynamics and describes both theorists as pioneers of an application-oriented social science. Allport (2015, p. 7) identifies similarities in their work with regard to

democracy and describes Dewey as “..... *the outstanding philosophical exponent of democracy and Lewin its outstanding psychological exponent*”.

Schön developed key concepts in the area of action research that have substantially shaped its field (Overmeer, 2014) and conceived and developed the term ‘reflective practice’, which has been closely associated with lifelong learning and professional development (Hase, 2014). Dewey and Schön understood reflective practice as the thoughtful consideration of one’s previous experience while connecting theory to practice; Schön drew on Dewey’s theory of inquiry throughout his career (Hase, 2014). His 1983 ‘reflection in action’ model for intuitive decision-making at the moment of action to make improvements (Hase, 2014) are direct successors of Lewin’s paradigm of action research (Bargal, 2006).

Practitioners and scholars of experiential learning have acknowledged Dewey’s contributions to contemporary ideas in this field (Beard, 2018). Kolb’s work provides the most popular account of the experiential learning process (Reardon & Saija, 2014). Drawing on the work of Dewey (Beard, 2018) and, inspired by both Dewey and Lewin, Kolb incorporated the concept of reflection into his experiential learning model (Hase, 2014). He also developed an instrument for determining individual learning styles (Reardon & Saija, 2014). Kolb referred to Dewey, Lewin and Piaget as the founders of the experiential learning approach (Miettinen, 2018). His 1984 four-stage model, in which he employs the Lewinian tradition of action research and the work of John Dewey to substantiate it, presents an important example of the experiential learning approach in the tradition of adult education theory (Miettinen, 2018). Kolb’s model of experiential learning has also been considered to be a modern version of Rousseau’s learning model (Salavastru, 2012).

Experiential learning emerged within the context of prodemocracy movements internationally in the early 1960s, for example in the work of Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire in South America, and Myles Horton in the United States: these theorists critiqued traditional pedagogy - the ‘banking’ model of education - and experiential learning emerged as a powerful new pedagogy for the oppressed to recognise and challenge the status quo and pursue individual emancipation through social change (Reardon & Saija, 2014).

By the end of the twentieth century the field of experiential learning had significantly broadened to include aspects such as alternative education, special education,

leadership development and corporate training (Beard, 2018). Rousseau's contribution continues to be acknowledged: Sierra-Arizmendiarieta & Perez-Ferra (2015) describe some of his philosophical concepts as very similar to certain changes required by present competency based teaching. The following definition of experiential learning seems appropriate: experiential learning, as a constructed term that continues to evolve, should be understood as "..... *the meanings of all those who have contributed to the literature*" (Beard, 2018, p. 30).

The concepts of experiential learning and democracy, which have been referred to above, form part of the theoretical framework of the Thesis. How this framework has been constructed in relation to these concepts, as well as the additional child-centred concept of 'teacher as facilitator', is explained below.

### **The child-centred approach to education in India**

Child-centred education became popular in India as it spread internationally, thereby representing an aspect of "*international mobilities in the flow of ideas*" (Cowen, 2009, p. 318) and an example of 'transfer', "... *the movement of an educational idea or practice in supra-national or transnational or inter-national space...*" (Cowen, 2009, p. 323). One route through which the influence of child-centred ideas in India is likely to have spread is through the NEF. Darling (1994) informs us that India had a national membership and sent delegates to its international conferences, and that the NEF had its origins in the Theosophical Educational Trust, which had a branch in India run by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan as well as Rabindranath Tagore (Darling, 1994), both eminent contemporary figures.

Child-centred education developed as a pedagogical approach in India through the work of its advocates there from the early twentieth century. This group included Tagore, referred to above, as well as Gandhi, who were amongst those who established schools championing the approach. Gandhi's school was in Wardha, Maharashtra and that of Tagore in Santiniketan, Bengal. Tagore's educational ideas have been identified as clearly belonged to the European tradition that started with Rousseau and Gandhi's pre-Independence proposal for educational reconstruction has been described as following in the tradition of Pestalozzi, Owen, Tolstoy and Dewey (Kumar, 2005). Thus while child-centred education has been advocated and practiced in India since the early twentieth century, the philosophical roots of the approach lay in the eighteenth century and in Europe and North America.



## THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I constructed the theoretical framework according to the three concepts of 'Democracy', 'Experiential Learning' and 'Teacher as Facilitator'. This was for the following reasons: RTE provides for experiential learning through one of its child-centred education provisions. While the provision is not directly identified as 'experiential learning', it sets the requirement of learning through experience. 'Teacher as Facilitator' relates to the new ascribed role for the Indian teacher within the child-centred education policy. 'Democracy' is a central theme of the policy and of its objectives. The following chapters of the Thesis provide details of these aspects.

I drew on two key texts - Rousseau's *Emile*, published in France in 1762 and Dewey's *Democracy and Education*, published in the United States in 1916 - to develop the concepts of 'Democracy', 'Experiential Learning' and 'Teacher as Facilitator' for the theoretical framework. In *Emile* Rousseau established 'experiential learning' as the foundation of child-centred curriculum and pedagogy and advocated the role of the teacher within this schema as that of a 'guide'. While Rousseau did not explicitly develop the concept of 'democracy' in this educational work, I argue that in *Emile* he promoted a form of education that incorporated democratic principles. In *Democracy and Education* Dewey promoted an explicitly democratic form of education. The text has been described as emphasising education as a form of democracy (Howlett, 2014). Dewey expounded his conceptualisation of 'experiential learning' and the corresponding role of the teacher in other texts.

In the following section I first present my interpretation of the concepts of 'Democracy', 'Experiential Learning', and 'Teacher as Facilitator' in relation to ideas presented in *Emile* in translation. I then present Dewey's ideas in relation to the concepts of 'Experiential Learning' and 'Teacher as Facilitator' based on some of the literature I have reviewed, and follow this with my interpretation of Dewey's conceptualisation of democracy in relation to education as set out in *Democracy and Education*.

### **Jean-Jacques Rousseau: *Emile*, 1762**

*Emile* is a treatise on how a private tutor should educate correctly. Emile is the name of the tutee. Rousseau was mainly concerned with the education of the economically independent male rather than with the problems of mass education (Silver, 1965). Advice on how Emile should be tutored constituted the literary device through which Rousseau

set out his educational philosophy. Rousseau's objective for education was to teach Emile how to become a man.

Rousseau's concern was that adults educate children wrongly because they know nothing about children and he maintained that false education could lead to false knowledge and thereby cause harm to students. He saw education as originating from three sources which all need to be in harmony with each other for a student to be well educated: "*from nature, from men, or from things*" (Rousseau, 1762, p. 9). Education from nature comprised the inner growth of our organs and faculties; education from people constituted the use we learn to make of this growth; education from objects constituted the elements we gain from our experience of our surroundings.

Rousseau's epistemology was based on the source of knowledge as being that of sensory experience gained by means of our feet, hands and eyes. This sensory experience provides the foundation of the '*reason of the intelligence*' (Rousseau, 1762, p. 85). He articulated his epistemology in relation to four independent stages of child development, each of which "*has a perfection and ripeness of its own*" (Rousseau, 1762, p. 113). The new-born only moves and cries from reflex, without knowledge or will and only applies himself to what affects his senses. From the age of two to twelve the 'sleep of reason' prevails during which period children learn through sensory experience. "*All their knowledge is on the sensation-level, nothing has penetrated to their understanding*" (Rousseau, 1762, p. 69). 'Reason' is the last to develop, although children can only reason about things that affect them, and from the age of twelve to thirteen onwards the child has reason and teaching a child how to learn can begin.

In *Emile* Rousseau provided a framework and principles for an approach to education that was based on cooperation with nature and which promoted the autonomy of the child. He referred to the advice he provided in *Emile* as 'principles' and not 'precepts' because his philosophy of education was based on accommodation to the child's needs and was not prescriptive. The following sets out my articulation of these principles, in an order provided by me:

Firstly, nature is always right

Secondly, we must give nature time to work or we will interfere.

Thirdly, we must make motivation learning relevant for the child in the here and now in order to foster her motivation for learning

Fourthly, we should give the child freedom to develop in her own time and way and never thwart nature.

Fifthly, the child should have complete autonomy in her learning, and should do nothing against her will.

These principles essentially identify the pedagogical approach that was to be taken by cooperating with nature. Cooperation with nature also required matching a child's learning to her stage of development, which Rousseau designated as his fundamental educational principle, which he expressed as follows:

*A child knows he must become a man .....  
but he should remain in complete ignorance of  
those ideas which are beyond his grasp. My whole  
book is one continued argument in support of  
this fundamental principle of education*

(Rousseau, 1762, p. 130).

Therefore we should only teach a child what she can understand at her particular stage of development, and what she can understand depends on her particular stage of development. This necessitated a curriculum based on experiential learning. Rousseau elaborated upon the required curriculum for the developmental stages he set out. Until the age of twelve the curriculum should consist of the physical world around the child. We should teach by doing and fall back on words only if necessary. He considered reading to be 'the curse of childhood' and that substituting sensory experience for this would lead to little or false knowledge. He maintained that the student must learn nothing from books that can be learned from experience.

Rousseau advocated that the role of the tutor was to harmonise his teaching according to nature and to guide rather than to instruct. Since nature does everything, the tutor does not need to do anything and the "..... *pupil needs no guide but himself* (Rousseau, 1762, p. 20). The tutor ".....*must not give precepts, he must let the scholar find out for*

*himself*" (Rousseau, 1762, p. 21) and his task is "..... the *art of controlling without precepts, and doing everything without doing anything at all*" (Rousseau, 1762, p. 80).

Rousseau did not explicitly refer to his educational approach as being 'democratic' in *Emile*. I maintain, however, that a democratic approach to education and to teaching was implied in his schema. Rousseau's approach to pedagogy and curriculum based on cooperation with nature incorporated within it a democratic approach to educating the individual child through its requirements that the child should have the freedom to develop in her own time and way, complete autonomy in her learning and do nothing against her will. I am characterising this approach as 'democratic' because underlying it is a radically different attitude than previously prevailed towards children and to childhood, one that promoted the ethical treatment of the child through reverence, acceptance and the avoidance of causing a child suffering, unhappiness or harm through the process of education. This is illustrated in the following statements:

*Hold childhood in reverence, and do not be in any hurry to judge it for good or ill*

(Rousseau, 1762, p. 68).

Ostensibly to the advocates of 'traditional' education Rousseau states:

*Now is the time, you say, to correct his evil tendencies; we must increase suffering in childhood, when it is less keenly felt, to lessen it in manhood..... How do you know that you can spare him anything by the vexations you heap upon him now? Why inflict on him more ills than befit his present condition unless you are quite sure that these present ills will save him future ill? ..... What a poor sort of foresight, to make a child wretched in the present with the more or less doubtful hope of making him happy at some future day*

(Rousseau, 1762, p. 43).

In the mid-eighteenth century only fifty per cent of infants reached the age of fifteen (Darling, 1994), which lends a particular poignancy and urgency to this statement. The results of this kind of education for the child is that

*He has reached the perfection of childhood; he has lived the life of a child; his progress has not been bought at the price of his happiness, he has gained both. While he has acquired all the wisdom of a child,*

*he has been as free and happy as his health permits. If the Reaper Death should cut him off and rob us of our hopes, we need not bewail alike his life and death, we shall not have the added grief of knowing that we caused him pain; we will say, "His childhood, at least, was happy; we have robbed him of nothing that nature gave him*

(Ibid., p. 116).

Thus the inherent nature of the child as a child has remained intact and she has progressed while simultaneously being as happy and free as possible. The form of education Rousseau promoted may be also described as promoting values that accord well with democratic citizenship:

*The result of the kind of education Emile receives is that he has a 'peaceful spirit', is unselfish, is actively kind towards others and promotes happiness. He suffers when he sees others suffering and tries to counteract suffering and remove oppression. So Emile loves peace*

(Ibid., p. 193).

### **John Dewey: *Democracy and Education*, 1916**

*Democracy and Education* ranks alongside *Emile* as one of the most important texts of child-centred education and has been described as the most celebrated and well known of Dewey's works, one that embodies the American liberal education tradition (Howlett, 2014). In this section I first present aspects of Dewey's conception of experiential learning by drawing on the work of other authors. I then draw on *Democracy and Education* to articulate Dewey's conception of the relationship between democracy and education and the form of education a democratic society should have as well as his conception of the role of the teacher within this schema.

Dewey's philosophy is rooted in the concept and logic of experience; he explicitly grounded education in a theory of human experience with experience as the starting point of thought: knowledge acquisition must be rooted directly in human experience since it is the ground from which knowledge emerges and is that upon which knowledge ultimately bears (Fairfield, 2009). While Rousseau saw the child as interacting with the natural environment, Dewey saw the child as essentially social, learning through interaction with a social environment as well as through the senses (Darling, 1994). For

Dewey the root of the problem with traditional education was its neglect of the experiential dimensions of life (Fairfield, 2009). Dewey himself stated that the main obstruction to learning was the isolation of the subject matter from a social context (Dewey, 1916).

Dewey was against the endemic situation in schools where the curriculum was pre-defined, learning was rendered passive and everyone was treated as though they were the same (Darling, 1994). For Dewey the question for education was how to ensure that the learning process was rooted in experience and he stressed the necessity of a curriculum that connected with the experiential, that arose directly from the activities and situations of real life, which he encapsulated in the term experience, a concept that he would try to elucidate over the course of several decades (Fairfield, 2009). Dewey's goal was to bring about a revolution of Copernican proportions, whereby the student's experience would constitute a new centre of gravity in education, which would require a radical transformation in both theory and practice (Darling, 1994).

In this schema the teacher plays a supportive role. Part of Dewey's conceptualisation of this role is contained in the following statement:

*The educator's part in the enterprise of education is to furnish the environment which stimulates responses and directs the learner's course. In last analysis, all the educator can do is modify stimuli so that response will as surely as is possible result in the formation of desirable intellectual and emotional dispositions*

(Dewey, 1916, p. 460-461).

Dewey advocated that the teacher should also focus on the subject matter in relation to the student's present needs and capacities; know both subject matter and the needs and capacities of the student; and see his task as assisting the student to gain knowledge in relation to his activities as a developing member of society.

In *Democracy and Education* Dewey set out a conceptualisation of the relationship between democracy and education in relation to society. The term democracy was central to Dewey's thought; he believed that many of the world's problems came from a basic lack of it (Howlett, 2014) and that society had to evolve to become more 'worthy, lovely and harmonious' (Dewey, cited in Howlett, 2014, p. 28). Howlett (2014) further informs us that Dewey saw the school as a representation of life itself and advocated

that the school should be a manifestation of democratic ideals and have the purpose of improving the existing external world; the school was to be at the very catalytic heart of the state's activity through leading by example and constantly innovating in its practices, rather than just being a function of the state.

I present aspects of the text that are relevant for the formulation of the theoretical framework below. My starting point for interpreting Dewey's conceptualisation of democracy and education is that he was advocating the promotion of democracy. For Dewey a democratic society was one

*which makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic*

(Ibid., p. 210).

Dewey maintained that if democracy is desired, we must have a type of education that fosters democratic citizenship. A society that is 'mobile', which has many possibilities for change must "see to it that its members are educated to personal initiative and adaptability" (Dewey, 1916, p. 83). A democratic society

*must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder*

(Dewey, 1916, p. 210).

Education has the ability to foster democratic citizenship because education has a vitally necessary and sustaining role in society, and society depends on education for its existence:

*..... life is a self-renewing process. What nutrition and reproduction are to physiological life, education is to social life"*

(Ibid., p. 32).

Education can also foster democratic citizenship because Dewey saw education as

*..... as a freeing of individual capacity in a progressive growth directed to social aims”*

(Ibid., p. 208).

Dewey linked the school and the provision of education to community life. This may be attributed to his conceptualisation of democracy as a form of social life. He stated that

*A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience*

(Ibid., p. 185).

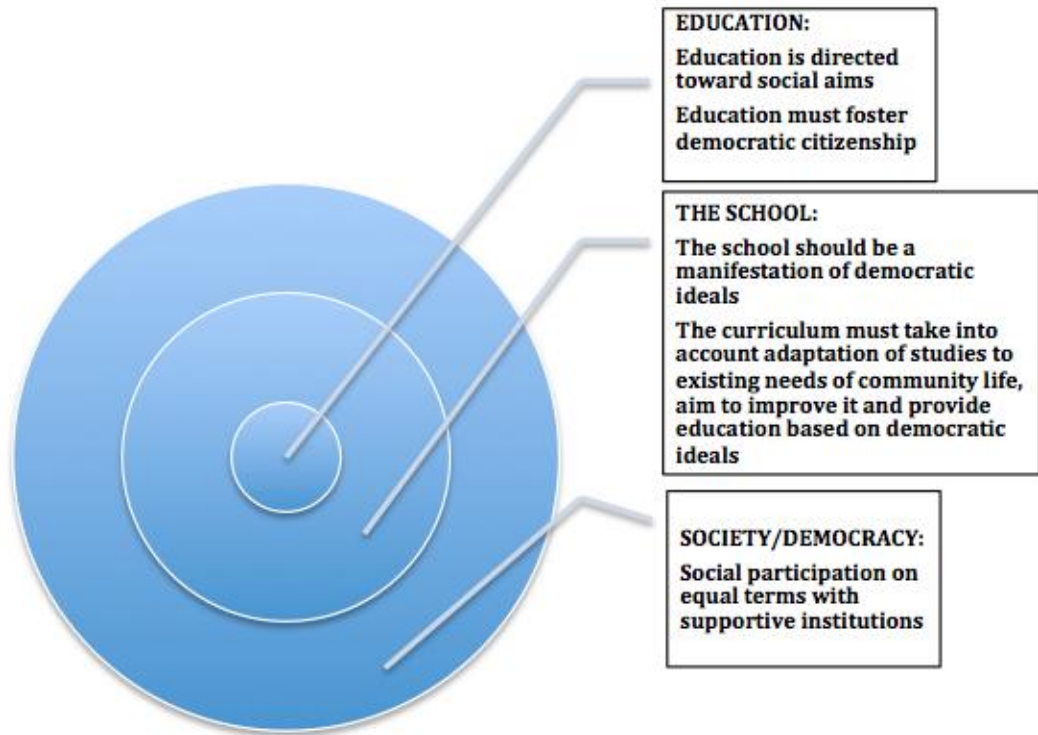
Within this conception of democracy as a form of social life Dewey advocated that the curriculum must connect to community life and be a means of improving it:

*With the wide range of possible material to select from, it is important that education ..... should use a criterion of social worth. ....The scheme of a curriculum must take account of the adaptation of studies to the needs of the existing community life; it must select with the intention of improving the life we live in common so that the future shall be better than the past .....*

(Dewey, 1916, p. 402).

Dewey advocated that the curriculum must be based on democratic ideals and that maintaining democratic society was dependent upon the use of criteria which are 'broadly human' in forming a course of study and that democracy could not flourish if education was differentiated according to what was suitable for the masses and what was suitable for the privileged few. Dewey's conception of the form of education that a democracy requires is presented in the diagram below:





**Education is essential for social life**

**Figure 2 - John Dewey: The form of education a democratic society requires**

## **THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HOW IT IS EMPLOYED IN THE THESIS**

As stated above, the three concepts of ‘Democracy’, ‘Experiential Learning’ and ‘Teacher as Facilitator’ form the basis of the theoretical framework. In this section I present definitions of these concepts for the theoretical framework in relation to how they have been articulated within the work of Rousseau and Dewey as presented above. I present a diagram of it below.

In *Emile* Rousseau addressed the concept of ‘Democracy’ on the level of the individual student. This concept orients the provision and activity of teaching and learning. The student should be revered; she should not be judged, either positively or negatively, and she should not be made to suffer or be made unhappy. Rousseau’s other principles for a democratic approach to education presented above - ‘we should give the child freedom to develop in her own time and way and never thwart nature’ and ‘the child should have complete autonomy in her learning and should do nothing against her will’ – are not

included in the theoretical framework because they are unrealistic in the school settings in which this research is situated. The concept 'experiential learning' requires learning to be matched to the student's stage of development and to do this both curriculum and pedagogy must be based on learning through experience. The concept of 'Teacher as Facilitator' defines the teacher's role as that of guiding learning and letting the student find out for herself, rather than by instructing and giving precepts.

In *Democracy and Education* Dewey addressed the concept of 'Democracy' on school and societal levels. A democratic society requires the following: firstly, it should be directed towards social aims; secondly, it should foster democratic citizenship; thirdly, the school should be a manifestation of democratic ideals; and fourthly, the curriculum must take into account adaptation of studies to the existing needs of community life, must aim to improve it and must provide education that is based on democratic ideals. 'Experiential Learning' requires that the learning process be rooted in experience and that the curriculum arise from the activities and situations of real life. 'Teacher as Facilitator' requires the teacher to provide the right environment for learning, one that stimulates the response and directs the learner's course. He should focus on the subject matter in relation to the student's present needs and capacities, know both subject matter and the needs and capacities of the student, and see his task as assisting the student to gain knowledge in relation to her activities as a developing member of society. I employed the theoretical framework to interpret the data obtained from the empirical research, in particular to determine from the results of the documentary analysis, whether or not the conceptualisation of child-centred education within RTE is theoretically supported. I also employed it as a benchmark for the delivery of child-centred education to interpret the data obtained from the interviews with Indian teachers in order to answer the main research question '*How is the child-centred education policy of RTE functioning?*'. The results of these interpretations are set out in Chapters Six and Seven. The next chapter presents the literature context of the Thesis.

<b>THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS</b>		
<b>CONCEPTS</b>	<b>ROUSSEAU</b>	<b>DEWEY</b>
<p><b>Democracy</b></p> <p><i>A concept that orients the provision and activity of teaching and learning</i></p>	<p>The student should be revered</p> <p>The student should not be judged, either positively or negatively</p> <p>The student should not be made to suffer or be made unhappy</p>	<p>A democratic society requires the following form of education:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) One that is directed towards social aims</li> <li>(2) One that fosters democratic citizenship</li> <li>(3) The school should be a manifestation of democratic ideals</li> <li>(4) The curriculum must take into account adaptation of studies to the existing needs of community life, must aim to improve it and must provide education that is based on democratic ideals</li> </ol>
<p><b>Experiential Learning</b></p> <p><i>Relates to both curriculum and pedagogy</i></p>	<p>Learning must be matched to the student's stage of development</p> <p>To do this both curriculum and pedagogy must be based on learning through experience</p>	<p>The learning process must be rooted in experience and the curriculum must arise from the activities and situations of real life</p>
<p><b>Teacher as Facilitator</b></p> <p><i>The role of the teacher</i></p>	<p>The teacher's role is to guide learning and let the student find out for herself, rather than instructing and giving precepts</p>	<p>The teacher's role is to provide the right environment for learning, one that stimulates the response and directs the learner's course. The teacher should</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Focus on the subject matter in relation to the student's present needs and capacities</li> <li>(2) Know both subject matter and the needs and capacities of the student</li> <li>(3) See his task as assisting the student to gain knowledge in relation to her activities as a developing member of society</li> </ol>

## **Chapter 3: The literature context**

The overall research aim of the study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the child-centred education policy of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE). As an intrinsic case study, the methodological aim related to this was to optimise what can be learned about the policy. An important way of achieving this was to examine the literature, historical and policy contexts of the child-centred education provisions of RTE in order to optimise understanding of them. This understanding then informed the report of the empirical research that was conducted. In this chapter I present the results of my examination of the literature context of the policy. The historical and policy contexts are then addressed in Chapters Four and Five respectively.

The examination of the literature context of the child-centred education provisions of RTE took the form of a review of the literature on the implementation of RTE as it relates to state schools in India. I first establish the literature context of the Study and then present a critical account of the literature that constitutes it. I then clarify how the literature advances knowledge of the child-centred education policy of RTE by identifying the understandings that it facilitates. I conclude by identifying the contributions my research makes to the existing literature as well as its contribution to the development of a new body of literature.

### **THE LITERATURE CONTEXT OF THE THESIS**

The literature context of the Thesis consists of an emerging literature on one of the child-centred education provisions of RTE, that of 'continuous and comprehensive evaluation' (CCE). I finalised an extensive literature search in March 2017 in order to complete my identification of literature on RTE from the perspectives of Indian teachers, details of which are provided in Appendix Three.

The search resulted in the identification of fifteen articles published in Indian journals between 2012 and 2016 on the subject of empirical research that had been conducted on CCE. This literature remained relevant for my research after I made the change to a joint focus on Indian teachers' perspectives on RTE and on the working of RTE. It also remained relevant after the subsequent change to a sole focus on RTE because it presented findings on implementation issues to do with CCE and one of my research

objectives was to gain insights into the functioning of the child-centred provisions of the legislation.

I excluded five studies, for the following reasons: one related only to private schools; two studied were unclear whether or not they included state schools; one involved research on both government and private schools but its findings were not separated according to the type of school; and one was about whether teachers in state and private schools had favourable attitudes towards CCE; its findings did not provide any insights into CCE as a system of assessment. Two other studies did not specify the type of school involved. However there was a strong indication from their findings that they related to state schools and I therefore included them in the review.

I conducted an additional literature search in June 2018 in order to both identify any literature on CCE or on the other child-centred provisions of RTE that may have been published in the preceding year as well as to identify literature that focuses specifically on RTE as a child-centred education policy. Details of this search are presented in Appendix Three. As a result, I located two additional empirical studies about CCE that related to state schools published in 2015 and 2017 and have included them in this account. The review therefore consists of twelve studies related to CCE that have been conducted in relation to state schools at elementary, primary, upper primary and secondary levels across the country in the following states: Haryana, West Bengal, Kerala, Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and the Union Territory of Delhi. The studies collectively had several aims and incorporated quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods research methodology and accompanying research methods. These included surveys, questionnaires, observations and interviews. Respondents collectively included teachers, head teachers, students and parents. The results of all these studies included findings on issues to do with the implementation of CCE. As a body of work the literature did not explicitly state that CCE was part of the child-centred education policy of RTE.

In the following section I first present a critical review of the literature on CCE in relation to the manner in which the articles framed the reporting of their research. I then present their findings on the implementation of CCE in state schools in India, followed by clarification of the understandings that have been gained.

## **The framing of the literature on CCE**

The way in which all of the articles reported their research and findings did not provide any framing upon which I could base my own research. None of the reports included any theoretical aspects. No reports were situated within any debates or expressed viewpoints or statements about the position that their research originated from. The methodology employed was clearly articulated in seven of the twelve studies. Four studies only provided partial information about the research methods employed. One study provided details about how data was collected but did not state clearly which methods of data collection were used. Only two studies clarified the approach taken to analyse their data, although without providing much information about this. The existing literature therefore did not provide me with any perspectives within which to frame my own study and neither did it provide me with any debates or methodological approaches within which to locate my research. It therefore did not provide me with any perspectives that I could consider in relation to my own study or that would inform the analysis of my research questions or assist me to develop an argument that would assist me to frame my own research. Neither did it refer to any debates that I could situate my research in.

All twelve articles that constitute this review clearly stated the aims and scope of their research. These collectively incorporated the following:

*Perceptions of teachers, students and parents on CCE*

*Effect of CCE on instruction*

*Acceptance of CCE by teachers, students and parents*

*Awareness levels of teachers and parents about CCE and  
their attitudes towards it*

*To study views of students about issues to do with implementation of CCE*

*The present status of CCE in schools*

*Problems teachers face while implementing CCE*

*Processes of continuous assessment*

*Problems with the implementation of CCE*

*Obtain teachers' suggestions for making CCE effective*

*How teachers implement CCE in class*

*Strategies teachers adopted to implement CCE*

The scope of the research was clearly set out in relation to the number of schools and respondents, except for two studies. These specified only that teachers, students and

parents had been involved over a three-month period and that one residential school had been involved over a three-month period. Otherwise, the studies specified their scope of research as follows:

*20 schools (800 students, 100 teachers, 100 parents)*

*20 schools (30 teachers, 50 parents, focus groups with 8-10 people)*

*48 schools (48 head teachers, 247 teachers, 245 parents and community members, 510 students, 24 district-level officers)*

*38 schools (38 head teachers, 20 teachers)*

*100 teachers*

*10 schools (50 teachers, 100 students)*

*30 teachers*

*50 teachers*

*10 schools (75 teachers)*

*120 in-service teachers*

As stated above, the results of all of the studies included findings on issues to do with the implementation of CCE. However, the issue of lack of clarity within the literature on its research perspective and position as well as methodology, data collection and analysis of data led to a corresponding lack of clarity on the nature of the findings and their origins.

### **The findings on CCE**

While I address the features of CCE in detail in Chapter Six, I present some aspects here to facilitate understanding of the research findings. The aim of the assessment is to address the inherent competitiveness and stress of the Indian examination system by assessing students continuously throughout the year through assignments and classroom activities rather than through the prevailing end-of-year examinations. CCE also has the objective of enabling teachers to pay individual attention to students' learning and performance. Assessment criteria have been broadened to include developmental aspects as well as academic aspects. These include the student's health, physical fitness, self-image, sensibilities, social skills and abilities in arts and crafts. Teachers are to provide progress reports to children and parents in the form of 'report cards' that make qualitative statements about the student's progress in academic and developmental areas. The report cards are also intended to provide learners with feedback and to set standards for them to strive towards.

The findings of the studies of the literature collectively incorporated the views of teachers, head teachers, students and parents. Those included in this review relate to the views of the teachers. The findings indicated that while teachers found some aspects of the new evaluation system to be positive, they found it to be far more problematic than beneficial. Teachers thought that continuous assessment was better than term or year-end examinations because of the wider range of assessment criteria and its benefit to slow learners; the shift from rote learning to understanding and applying concepts was also considered to be a good feature (Saluja, 2016). Teachers also thought that continuous evaluation was helpful because it enhances the mental ability of students to create a competitive attitude and provides a picture of student development, which in turn helps teachers to develop plans for providing personal attention to students and assists students to ascertain their strengths and weaknesses (Mishra & Mallik, 2014).

In the studies reviewed, however, the teachers raised the following issues: lack of or inadequate training for CCE; assessing students according to the requirements of CCE; maintaining student record cards; lack of student motivation to learn; the high teacher-pupil ratio; and increased work load. The findings are presented below in this order.

*Lack of or inadequate training for CCE:*

Lack of or inadequate training was a major problem the teachers experienced (Saluja, 2016, Kothari & Thomas, 2012, Kumar & Kumar, 2015, Ashita, 2013, Singhal, 2012, Pazhanimurugan, Sivakumar & Benjamin, 2015, and Thakur, 2016). Saluja (2016) identified training as the weakest point and elaborated as follows: the majority of teachers received no orientation and training and even when training was provided, only a few of the permanent teachers were allowed to attend and were tasked with briefing teachers in their schools; supply or contractual teachers received no training. Many of the school's teachers consequently lacked proper instructions on how to apply CCE as an assessment method. Thirty per cent of teachers interviewed wanted training at regular intervals so that they could employ the latest methods for teaching and learning. They also wanted training to be extended to all non-permanent teachers.

In addition, the teachers reported that the guidelines and manuals they were provided with were unhelpful (Kothari & Thomas, 2012, Ashita, 2013, Saluja, 2016). They lacked the necessary and relevant materials that would provide clarity on how to properly implement CCE (Kothari & Thomas, 2012). Ashita (2013) provides details, stating that the training programmes, circulated materials and directives provided by the authorities



all added to the teachers' confusion because they provided teachers with different assessment techniques but with no accompanying explanation on how to use them, when to use them and what to look for. Another problem was maintaining a record of student progress as required. One teacher reported that because they had not been provided with directions on how to fill in the report cards, which contained more than ten pages for each child, she had simply pasted a photograph of the student in it. Teachers also found that going through the instruction material was time consuming and did not improve the situation. Saluja (2016) found that fifty-five per of teachers thought they had not been given proper guidelines on how to assess students, how to use different methods of assessment and how these methods could help enhance student learning. Ashita (2013) reported similar findings: teachers were provided with different techniques of assessment with very little advice on how to use them, when to use them and what to actually look for while assessing in accordance with CCE. The teachers of this study were also only provided with student record booklets with almost no instructions on how to fill them in properly.

#### *Assessing according to CCE:*

Assessing students according to CCE presented various difficulties for the teachers. These difficulties related to four main areas: firstly, although CCE was supposed to reduce their burden, teachers reported the opposite because they found it to be a difficult and time-consuming task and one that set unrealistic expectations (Sethi & Muddgal, 2017). Secondly, teachers were unclear on how to actually assess students (Kothari & Thomas, 2012, Ashita, 2013) and this included not being sure how to assess for individual differences in ability and talent (Kothari & Thomas, 2012). One teacher reported that although she had been conducting CCE according to the requirements and had given her students many projects, such as models to make and writing assignments, she was not sure how she should evaluate this work and what she should report. This teacher also thought that these activities were not related to the subject matter and did not enhance student learning (Ashita, 2013). Another issue was that evaluation could be subjective, which sometimes raised questions about the validity of the grades assigned to the students (Saluja, 2016). Thirdly, as reported by Saluja (2016), teachers found it very difficult to evaluate the various practical projects that students are required to conduct and thought this was the major limitation of the training they received. Teachers would assign grades to students based on certain skills, but they subsequently sometimes found it difficult to explain the reasons for assigning those particular grades. Fourthly, teachers found it difficult to assess the non-academic criteria (Mishra & Mallik,

2014, Thakur, 2016). Ninety-three per cent of teachers said they evaluated students' cleanliness, behaviour, character and level of responsibility. However, one teacher said that the evaluation of socio-personal qualities was very difficult because teachers are biased by their previous observations and their personal relationship with the student, and because students sometimes behave differently to their individual norm (Mishra & Mallik, 2014, Thakur, 2016). Teachers reported they could not properly evaluate either curricular activities or the socio-personal qualities of learners due to lack of training, shortage of teachers, inadequate supporting infrastructure, paucity of time and heavy workload (Mishra & Mallik, 2014, Thakur, 2016).

*Maintaining student record cards:*

As stated above, maintaining records of student progress in the form of report cards as required presented teachers with difficulties because of lack of training. Teachers also reported other issues with the report cards. Firstly, filling in and maintaining the record cards was problematic. Teachers found them to be very time consuming to fill in and maintain (Ashita, 2013, Kumar & Kumar, 2015, Saluja, 2016, Thakur, 2016). They might also have to first maintain the student records on the class registers and then copy them to the record cards, which took a great deal of time and effort (Saluja, 2016). Mishra & Mallik (2014) reported that teachers thought they wasted a lot of time in maintaining the student records. Other issues were that teachers would receive the record cards in the middle of the term, which made it difficult to evaluate students; the student records were also not properly maintained by the school administration (Saluja, 2016).

The second problem was the loss of teaching time because of having to maintain the assessment records during class time (Ashita, 2013, Sethi & Muddgal, 2017). Time taken away from learning had various consequences: daily classroom assessment and other duties teachers had to perform were neglected (Ashita, 2013). Saluja (2016) reported that teachers spent considerable time converting the students' marks into grades in accordance with the CCE formats rather than teaching and only fifteen per cent of teachers in their study admitted that they maintained records of student performance on a daily basis. Another problem was that teachers could seldom teach remedially in accordance with the continuous assessment results or provide the required descriptive feedback (Saluja, 2016). Thirdly, a different issue the teachers reported was that they thought that CCE increased unhealthy competition among children (Sethi & Muddgal, 2017).

*Lack of student motivation to learn:*

Lack of student motivation to learn was another factor that caused difficulty for teachers when assessing in accordance with CCE (Singhal, 2012, Ashita, 2013, Kumar & Kumar, 2015, Saluja, 2016, Thakur, 2016). Lack of seriousness about studying on the part of students was a serious concern for the teachers (Singhal, 2012, Kumar & Kumar, 2015, Pazhanimurugan, Sivakumar & Benjamin, 2015). Approximately forty per cent of teachers were in favour of re-introducing the examination system because they thought students would then take their studies seriously and learn better whereas now they had no fear of examinations or of failing (Saluja, 2016). Teachers thought that students viewed the work for CCE as simply a way of getting marks or grades; they purchase material from the market or download it from the Internet without even reading it (Ashita, 2013). They also thought students did not take the evaluation seriously since they know they will pass without making an effort (Thakur, 2016). Student absenteeism was also problematic for implementing CCE (Ashita, 2013, Saluja, 2016), as well irregularity in school attendance (Panda, 2014, Sethi & Muddgal, 2017).

*Lack of infrastructure and resources:*

Teachers reported that lack of infrastructure and resources added to the difficulties of implementing CCE (Singhal, 2012, Ashita, 2013, Kumar & Kumar, 2015, Mishra & Mallik, 2014, Pazhanimurugan, Sivakumar & Benjamin, 2015, Thakur, 2016). The teachers stated that the high teacher-pupil ratio typical of state schools in India, which can range from 50-90 students per class, made it significantly difficult for them to assess students as required (Kothari & Thomas, 2012, Singhal, 2012, Ashita, 2013, Kumar & Kumar, 2015, Mishra & Mallik, 2014, Panda, 2014, Pazhanimurugan, Sivakumar & Benjamin, 2015, Thakur, 2016, Saluja, 2016, Sethi & Muddgal, 2017). Behaviour management became a problem, which caused disturbance to nearby classes. Teachers thought this was mainly due to the high number of students in the class and that having fewer students would solve the problem (Kothari & Thomas, 2012). Teachers also found it difficult to pay individual attention to each student and to give proper remediation to the weak students. In addition, approximately twenty-five per cent of teachers reported that they were involved in multi-grade teaching and that it was almost impossible to effectively assess all the students of two or more classes simultaneously (Saluja, 2016).

### *Increased workload and paperwork:*

The teachers reported that CCE has increased their workload: (Singhal, 2012, Kumar & Kumar, 2015, Panda, 2014, Mishra & Mallik, 2014, Pazhanimurugan, Sivakumar & Benjamin, 2015, Saluja, 2016, Thakur, 2016) and that their paperwork has increased (Basu & Debnath, 2016). This results in three issues: firstly, time is taken away from learning. Srinivasan (2015) reported that the considerable amount of class time teachers are required to spend on related administrative tasks had a major impact in terms of the loss of valuable teaching time. Secondly, teachers reported that the increased volume of work has affected their teaching (Thakur, 2016). They provided various details: they had insufficient time to conduct all the activities recommended under CCE and to evaluate all the students on all aspects simultaneously (Saluja, 2016). They found it difficult to complete the syllabus on time (Kothari & Thomas, 2012, Saluja, 2016, Sethi & Muddgal, 2017) and had to hurry to do this and felt they were at times unable to do proper justice to CCE (Saluja, 2016, Kothari & Thomas, 2012). They also reported that they were unable to assess all students (Sethi & Muddgal, 2017). In practice teachers could not give importance to oral and other methods of evaluation, or to the evaluation of student participation in games, sports and literacy activities or to the non-subject related assessment criteria because they were under pressure to organise the various types of examinations (Mishra & Mallik, 2014). They did not get time to explain conceptual issues or to provide remedial assistance to students (Srinivasan, 2015). Thirdly, teachers reported that the increased volume of work hindered them from implementing CCE properly (Pazhanimurugan, Sivakumar & Benjamin, 2015, Singhal, 2012).

### **Understandings gained about the child-centred education policy of RTE**

The findings from the twelve studies provided a straightforward account of ways in which teachers found the functioning of CCE to be problematic. As shown above, the teachers reported six main issues with CCE as a form of assessment: they had been provided with no or inadequate training and with unhelpful support materials; they found it difficult to assess according to CCE requirements; filling in and maintaining the record cards was problematic for them; lack of student motivation to learn caused difficulty when assessing in accordance with CCE; lack of infrastructure and resources, including a high teacher-pupil ratio, added to the difficulties of implementing CCE; and increased teacher workload resulted in time being taken away from learning. The literature therefore indicated that there were problems with the functioning of CCE in relation to these issues.

## **THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE THESIS TO THE LITERATURE**

The literature reviewed is on the implementation of CCE, one of the child-centred provisions of RTE. My research is situated within this literature because its findings included issues to do with the functioning of CCE. However, the objective of my research was broader in that the aim was to investigate the entire child-centred education policy. My research therefore presented findings on how all of the child-centred education elements were functioning. My research also had the aim of gaining in-depth understandings of the child-centred education policy of RTE and therefore presented findings on how child-centred education is conceptualised within RTE.

In this section I first situate the Thesis in the literature reviewed and then identify the ways my research contributes to it. I then identify a gap in the existing literature on RTE as a child-centred education policy and specify how the Thesis addresses the need for literature in this field.

### **The contribution of the Thesis to the existing literature on CCE**

The Thesis builds on the existing literature on the implementation of CCE by presenting similar findings on its functioning. It also presents additional insights into the functioning of CCE. My research also expands the literature by presenting findings in relation to seven out of eight of the child-centred education provisions of RTE as well as in relation to the new ascribed role of the teacher as 'facilitator'. I also extend the literature by providing theoretical insights into the child-centred policy and its functioning. I provide details of these insights in Chapters Six and Seven and explain how my research contributes to the literature in Chapter Eight.

I have already contributed to the existing literature on CCE through research I conducted for the Institution-Focused Study (IFS) as part of this Degree. The IFS was a case study that examined how reforms related to RTE were being implemented at a government, girls' secondary school in New Delhi in 2012, two years after RTE was enacted. The objective of the study was to gain insights into how education objectives were being implemented at the school and how its teachers approached the implementation of the child-centred curriculum. The focus of the IFS was on CCE, teacher professionalism and inadequacies in infrastructure. The main sources of data were interviews with teachers over a two-week period. Findings of the research indicated that lack of infrastructure was the largest and most significant issue the teachers interviewed experienced, of which the

high teacher-pupil ratio presented the greatest challenges. The teachers were concerned about being able to manage the class effectively, giving students individual attention, checking each student's work, meeting the needs of weak students, and maintaining safety standards in the science classes.

The teachers interviewed generally adopted the 'lecture method' as a strategy of coping with the high number of students in their classes, and this encouraged them to remain in a teacher-dominated pedagogy rather than teach according to child-centred principles. When the teachers lectured, it could have the result of making them out of compliance with the Delhi Department of Education's requirement to conduct 'subject activities' as part of the child-centred approach. One of the conclusions of the study was that the high teacher-pupil ratio could present situations which prevented teachers from conducting the classroom activities required by CCE which could then result in their teaching an incomplete curriculum, lack of compliance with the Delhi Department of Education's requirements and affect the integrity of the CCE and examination procedures. The end result could be a negative impact on the performance and effectiveness of the teachers as well as on the quality of teaching and learning (Sarin, 2015).

The objective of the IFS was to gain insights into how education objectives were being implemented at the school and how its teachers approached the implementation of the child-centred curriculum, and partly focused on CCE. The Thesis takes the IFS further through its focus on gaining insights into the functioning of the child-centred education policy of RTE in its entirety.

### **The contribution of the Thesis to addressing the gap in the literature**

After the change of overall research aim to that of gaining an in-depth understanding of the child-centred policy of RTE in early 2018 and the corresponding re-formulation of research objectives to those of understanding the nature of the child-centred provisions of RTE and to gain insights into their functioning, I conducted an additional search in June 2018 - as stated above - to identify literature that focuses specifically on RTE as a child-centred policy. Details of this are provided in Appendix Three.

I consequently identified two additional empirical studies on CCE in relation to state schools published in 2015 and 2017. The findings of this literature have been included in the above review. No literature was identified that focuses on the policy aspect of the child-centred education provisions of RTE. This represents a gap in the literature that my

research addresses through its overall aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of the child-centred policy of RTE and through its research objective of understanding the nature of the child-centred education provisions.

In this chapter I have set out the literature context of my research and have presented findings from it based on the views of Indian teachers about how CCE, as one of the child-centred education provisions of RTE, is functioning. Understandings of the child-centred education provisions of RTE are increased through this knowledge, namely that the functioning of CCE as a child-centred form of assessment in particular is problematic because of issues to do with training; assessing according to CCE; maintaining student record cards; lack of student motivation to learn; infrastructural deficiencies; and an increased teacher workload. I have also identified that the Thesis contributes to the existing literature on CCE and that it addresses a gap in the literature on the policy aspect of RTE's child-centred education provisions. The next chapter presents the historical context of the Thesis.

## Chapter 4: The historical context

As previously stated the overall research aim of the study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the child-centred education policy of RTE. As an intrinsic case study, the methodological aim related to this was to optimise what can be learned about the policy. An important way of achieving this was to examine the literature, historical and policy contexts of the child-centred education provisions of RTE in order to optimise understanding of them. This understanding then informed the report of the empirical research that was conducted. In this chapter I present the results of my examination of the historical context of the child-centred policy of RTE.

This examination took the form of a review of relevant historical and contemporary education policy documents related to both the colonial and postcolonial periods in India in order to trace the trajectory of 'free and compulsory education' as a provision of education and establish the genesis of RTE. I found that implicit in the use of the terms 'free' and 'compulsory' with regard to education in both historical contexts was the assumption or implication that they referred to, or are part of the evolution of, universal elementary education in India.

The overall provision of RTE is for the following:

*Every child of the age of six to fourteen years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school till completion of elementary education*

(Government of India, 2009, p.1).

I examined the following documents:

### *Colonial India:*

Report of the Indian Education Commission 1883  
Central Advisory Board of Education documents 1939, 1947

### *Postcolonial India:*

The Kher Committee Report 1950  
The Khotari Commission Report 1966  
The National Policy on Education 1968  
The National Policy on Education 1986 as amended in 1992



The Indian Constitution, 2007  
The Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009  
The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Framework for Implementation, 2011  
(SSA Framework)

I begin the report of this examination by setting out the attempts to achieve 'free and compulsory education', and its precursor 'compulsory education', in the colonial period from 1882 to 1947. I then set out the steps taken to implement 'free and compulsory education' from Independence in 1947 to the enactment of RTE in 2009. I follow this by drawing conclusions from the tracing of the trajectory of 'free and compulsory education' to establish the genesis of RTE and identify the understandings of the child-centred education policy of RTE gained from this examination. I provide quotations from the literature and policy documents examined where relevant. A chart depicting the timeline for the provision of 'free and compulsory education' in India is provided in Appendix Four.

### **'FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION' IN COLONIAL INDIA: 1882-1947**

The first Indian efforts towards universalising elementary education in India began in the colonial period with a demand for 'universal elementary education' being put forward by Indian social activists before the Indian Education Commission of 1882, popularly known as the 'Hunter Commission' after its chairman (Naik, 1966). The government's stated aim was for the different levels of education to "... *if possible, move forward together, and with more equal step than hitherto*" (Government of India, 1883, p. 2). One of the Indian activists who put forward the demand for 'universal elementary education' was Jyotirao Phule, an eminent contemporary social reformer, whose memorandum to the Commission was substantially concerned with how the British government's funding of education tended to benefit "*Brahmins and the higher classes*" while leaving "*the masses wallowing in ignorance and poverty*" (Sadgopal, 2010, p. 17).

### **Legislation for 'compulsory education' in British India**

Legislation for compulsory education in India began in the 'princely states', monarchies that co-existed alongside the physical area of India under colonial rule. Several of these introduced legislation to make education compulsory (Saiyidain, cited in Juneja, 2003, p. 16). Efforts to enact such legislation in British India began in a similar timeframe. Another eminent contemporary social reformer - Gopal Gokhale - made three attempts between 1906 and 1911 beginning with a plea before the Imperial Legislative Council to introduce compulsory and free education in 1906 (Juneja, 2003). All were unsuccessful. The Indian

Councils Act of 1909 made it possible for Indians to promote legislative reforms (Dreze & Sen, 2003) and in 1910 Gokhale moved a Resolution for compulsory education in the Imperial Legislative Council (Naik, 1966, Kaur, 2013) and followed this by proposing an Elementary Education Bill to establish compulsory education as a state responsibility in 1911 (Little, 2010, Kaur, 2013).

The thrust of the Bill was that the British government's low expenditure on education was the cause of India's poor literacy and part of his argument was that only 1.9% of India's total population was attending elementary schools (Kumar, 2005). The Bill was debated for two days in the Imperial Legislative Council and then rejected (Dutta, 2008). It had aimed to establish compulsory education as a state responsibility (Kumar, 2005, Little, 2010) and would have enabled local authorities to introduce compulsory education (Dreze & Sen, 2003). It included provisions for banning the child labour of boys, for enforcing school attendance and for removing fees for parents with a low income (Kumar, 2005).

Opposition came from the Government and from Indians. Gokhale's Resolution of 1910 had to be withdrawn and his proposed Bill of 1911 was defeated because the Government felt that the concept of compulsory education was ruled out by "*administrative and financial considerations of decisive weight*" (Naik, 1966, p. 2). The proposed Bill faced stiff resistance from privileged classes, maharajahs and other rulers and landlords (Sadgopal, 2009). Although unsuccessful, its provision of compulsory primary education as a state responsibility gradually became part of the 'etatiste' discourse of education (Kumar, 2005).

Similar bills to the one proposed by Gokhale in 1911 were passed in several British Indian provinces following the Montague-Chelmsford reforms (Kumar, 2005), which had led to the Government of India Act of 1919 whereby control over some aspects of provincial government, including education, were passed to Indian ministers responsible to an Indian electorate (Naik, 1963). The first was passed in 1917, popularly known as the Patel Act after the political leader who moved the bill in the Bombay Legislative Council to introduce compulsory education in the municipal areas of the state (Kochhar, 2005). The bill became law in 1918 and was the first legislation to accept the principle of compulsory education; it evoked immense interest and attempts were immediately made in other states to enact similar legislation (Kochhar, 2005).

Between 1918-1930 compulsory education laws were subsequently passed in the legislatures of all the British Indian provinces (Juneja, 2003, Kochhar, 2005, Naik, 1966), their number estimated at being twenty-two (Juneja, 2003). These laws placed control of primary education in the hands of local authorities (Little, 2010). The concept of compulsory elementary education came to be accepted in theory and was incorporated into laws, especially after the Government of India Act (Naik, 1966).

### **The beginning of 'free and compulsory education' in British India**

The introduction of 'free' education in India originated from a meeting of the Post-War Plan for Educational Development Committee in 1944, popularly known as the Sargent Committee, after its chairman. The ensuing report, 'Post-War Educational Development in India' of the Central Advisory Board of Education stated that

*a system of universal, compulsory and free education for all boys and girls between the ages of six and fourteen should be introduced as speedily as possible though in view of the practical difficulty of recruiting the requisite supply of trained teachers it may not be possible to complete it in less than forty years*

(Bureau of Education, 1947, p. 13).

Its chapter on primary and middle education was based on formulations that had been developed about the age group and stages of education a national system of state education should comprise (Juneja, 2015). The first national education conference, the Wardha Scheme for Basic Education Committee, had been held in 1937, presided over by Gandhi. The Committee's report had recommended free and compulsory education for children aged 7-14.

Thus by 1944 'free' as well as 'compulsory' education were part of the discourse of education in the latter stage of colonial rule. Legislation for compulsory education existed in all the British Indian Provinces and there was a national plan for the provision of free and universal education in the form of the 'Sargent Plan', which formed a bridge between pre-Independence and post-Independence efforts to achieve 'free and compulsory education'. The Post-War Educational Development in India report referred to above stated there was no organised system of trained attendance officers to make sure children attended school and courts did not enforce the law (Bureau of Education, 1947).

This seems to indicate an assumption that compulsory education involved the enforcement of school attendance.

## **‘FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION’ IN INDEPENDENT INDIA: 1947-2009**

### **Steps taken immediately after Independence**

The Indian Independence Act established India’s independence from Britain with effect from 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947. The Sargent Plan, with its vague deadline, was in place for implementing free and compulsory education. Two events occurred at Independence and shortly thereafter which, while appearing to speed up the Sargent Plan and move free and compulsory education forward, in fact undermined its provisions and reduced its priority. The first was the inclusion of Article 45 in India’s Constitution, promulgated in 1950, which established the principle of ‘free and compulsory education within the constitutional framework of the new nation state. The second was the Kher Committee Report of 1950, which is addressed below.

The manner in which Article 45 was effected and its resultant provisions for ‘free and compulsory education’ are problematic. Juneja (2015) informs us of the events that took place. The formulation of the Indian Constitution began on the basis of a Cabinet Mission Statement dated 16<sup>th</sup> May 1946. A Constituent Assembly was set up and started work in December that year, forming different committees to develop the Constitution. The Subcommittee on Fundamental Rights had the task of preparing the list of fundamental rights that would be included. Its first meeting took place on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1947 and a date was set for the sitting of the Subcommittee from the 24<sup>th</sup> March. The Subcommittee placed free and compulsory education on the list of Fundamental Rights as follows:

*Clause 23: Every citizen is entitled as of right to free primary education and it shall be the duty of the State to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years*

(Juneja, 2003, p. 17).

In April the Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly rejected ‘free and compulsory’ education as a fundamental right and sent the clause to the list of “non-justiciable fundamental rights” (which were later called ‘Directive Principles of State

Policy'). In November 1949 – two years after Independence - as the result of a debate in the Constituent Assembly the first line of the clause (now Article 36), “*Every citizen is entitled as of right to free primary education and it shall be the duty of the State to.....*” was removed and replaced with “*The State shall endeavour to.....*” (Juneja, 2003).

The clause was incorporated into the Constitution, as Article 45, as follows:

*The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years*

(Juneja, 2003, p. 17).

The deadline for achieving free and compulsory education in ten years, hence by 1960, had been retained from the original Clause 23, as had the upper age limit for the provision of such education. The deadline of ten years was shorter than the upper limit of forty years prescribed by the Sargent Report of 1944. No lower age limit was provided, either originally or in Article 45 and what was meant by ‘free’ and ‘compulsory’ was not clarified.

The removal of free and compulsory education as a Fundamental Right of the Constitution meant that the provision was not legally enforceable. The removal of the first line of Clause 23 meant ‘each citizen’ did not have the right to free and compulsory education and that it was no longer the duty of the ‘State’ to provide such education. These three factors weaken the principle of free and compulsory education as a basis for achieving universal elementary education. The role and responsibility of the ‘State’ was also rendered unclear. The capitalisation of the word ‘state’ implies that it was the central government that was being referred to, in which case the inference was that it was no longer the duty of the central government to provide ‘free and compulsory education’. This raises the question of whose duty it was. Since education was the responsibility of the individual states at this time (it became the joint responsibility of the central government and state governments in 1976), this raises the question of whether the provision of free and compulsory education was a state duty. The language of the revised clause reflected the nature of the changes that had been made. The word ‘endeavour’ reflected that it was no longer the duty of the central State to provide free and compulsory education and simultaneously undermined the stated deadline of 1960. The change that was made to Clause 23 resulted in an unclear, tentative and weak

foundation for moving forward with universal elementary education in the new nation state.

### **The Kher Committee Report 1950**

The Committee on the Ways and Means of Financing Educational Development in India appointed by the Indian government in 1948, popularly known as the Kher Committee after its chairman, also undermined the Sargent Plan. The Committee examined the Sargent Plan from the 'national' point of view (Naik, 1966) and its report stated that it desired to modify the former after experience that had been gained in the country. The Report referred to the putting forward of the Sargent Report deadline which had been proposed at a meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) and the All-India Education Conference held in January 1948 and recommended that

*The Provinces should aim at introducing Universal Compulsory Education for children in the 6-11 age group within a period of 10 years but if financial conditions compel, the programme may be extended over a larger period but in no circumstances should it be given up*

(Government of India, 1950).

In this single statement the upper age limit set out in Article 45 of 14 years was now capped at age 11, thereby setting the provision for five years. The term 'free and compulsory education' was changed to 'universal compulsory education', rendering it unclear whether the proposed education would be 'free' or not. The tentative deadline of 1960 in Article 45 was rendered even more tentative by the implication that it may be extended if needed and by introducing the possibility that 'universal compulsory education' might be abandoned. The Report also reduced the priority of primary education in its recommendation that basic education for everyone must be provided without detriment to facilities for secondary and higher education (Government of India, 1950). The overall effect of both recommendations was to undermine Article 45 as the basis for providing universal elementary education.

### **The Kothari Commission Report 1966**

The Education Commission of 1964, popularly known as the Kothari Commission after its chairman, is important for being both the first comprehensive review of all aspects and

stages of education in Independent India as well as the first review of elementary education. Two previous investigations had been conducted for university development and secondary education in 1948, which had not included primary education.

While the rhetoric of the Report emphasized Article 45 and 'free and compulsory education' as the top priority, recommended the abolition of school tuition fees as early as possible and provided deadlines for the achievement of 'compulsory' education, 'free and compulsory education' was not its main focus. Article 45 was prioritized as an educational objective in a statement that was framed as an 'equalization of educational opportunities':

*The constitutional directive of providing free and compulsory education for every child up to the age of 14 years is an educational objective of the highest priority and should be fulfilled in all part of the country...."*

(Government of India, 1966, p. 632).

The Report recommended the abolition of tuition fees in line with Article 45 as soon as possible and reiterated this later on where this abolition was framed as 'moving towards the equalization of educational Opportunities'. With regard to the 'compulsory' part of Article 45, the Report provided deadlines that clarified the vague reference to it taking 'about 20 years for realization', as presented above, through its following recommendation:

*(1) Providing five years of effective education to all children by 1975-76 and seven years of such education by 1985-86*

This recommendation, as well as others for promoting literacy, was framed as 'raising the educational level of the average citizen'. The report advocated that these programmes were essential on the grounds of social justice, for making democracy viable and for improving the productivity of the average worker in agriculture and industry, and that they should be given the highest priority over the next two decades. The document emphasized the role of Article 45 as "*The most crucial of these programmes .....*" (Government of India, 1966, p. 90).

The document explained the failure to achieve the objective of achieving 'free and compulsory education' by 1960 as directed by Article 45 as being due to 'immense

difficulties' such as lack of resources, population increase, resistance to the education of girls and minorities and the illiteracy and apathy of parents.

While the Report reiterated that Article 45 and 'free and compulsory education' were of 'the highest priority', recommended the abolition of school tuition fees 'as early as possible; and provided deadlines for achieving 'compulsory education', as stated above, 'free and compulsory education' was not its main focus. This was indicated in the introductory letter of Professor Kothari, located at the front of the 713-page report, which provided a list of the '*main points that immediately come to [his] mind*' (p. vi) of the Commission's recommendations for the urgent reconstruction of the education system. Neither 'free and compulsory education' nor 'universal elementary education' was included in this list.

The main focus of the Report appeared to be that of national development. The word '*..... modernisation summarises the document; modernization meant nation-building through development and education was the main instrument for this in the discourse of the 1960s which the Report is part of .....*' (Kumar, 2005). The Report identified self-sufficiency in food as a condition for survival and referred to the current and predicted future supplies of food as being insufficient. Its second state priority was that of economic growth and full employment due to India's contemporaneous condition as one of the world's least economically developed countries.

The role ascribed to education in the Report was that of '*the main instrument of change*' (p. 4). A complete transformation in education would bring about the desired social change:

*The expansion of educational facilities broadly on the basis of manpower needs and with an accent on equalization of educational opportunities*

(Government of India, 1966, p. xiv).

This clarifies the focus of Professor Kothari in his introductory letter in which he stated that the Commission's Report provided a framework for taking first steps towards bringing about "*what may be called an educational revolution in the country*" (Government of India, 1966, p. vi). Education, as 'the main instrument of change' was meant to bring about a social transformation in society through itself being transformed.



The role of 'free and compulsory education' through Article 45 now becomes clearer. As stated above, it was the highest priority educational objective 'for raising the competence of the average worker and for increasing national productivity' and the main concern of the Report was to 'identify the major programmes that can bring about this educational revolution'. The expansion of educational facilities on the basis of 'manpower' needs would be achieved by 'raising the educational level of the average citizen' and eliminating illiteracy, and the objectives for free and compulsory education related to this. The equalization of educational opportunities would be brought about by the abolition of tuition fees. Thus 'free and compulsory education' was not viewed as the means of bringing about the educational 'revolution', just one of the ways. The role of 'free and compulsory education' through Article 45 was therefore not the basis of education as 'the main instrument of social change', but only part of completely transforming education. In this sense, the Report's recommendations did not provide a sound basis for the implementation of Article 45.

### **National education policy documents 1968-1992**

There were two national education policy documents, in 1968 and 1986. The latter was amended in 1992 following a Programme of Action document of 1992. The documents were available electronically in the form of one document comprising the National Policy on Education 1968 (NPE 1968) and the National Policy on Education 1986 as modified in 1992 (NPE 1986/92). The Programme of Action document of 1992 is available electronically as a separate document. NPE 1968 stated only the following with regard to fulfilling the Constitutional Directive:

*Strenuous efforts should be made for the early fulfilment of the Directive principle under Article 45 of the Constitution seeking to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14*

(Government of India, 1998, p. 39).

The document did not refer to the fact that the 1960 deadline had passed unfulfilled. Neither did it refer to the deadlines of 1974 or 1976 stated in the Kothari Commission Report.

NPE 1986/92 made an apparent promise to institute free and compulsory education while at the same time introducing a quality dimension:

*It shall be ensured that free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality is provided to all children up to 14 years of age before we enter the twenty-first century. A national mission will be launched for the achievement of this goal*

(Ibid., p. 15).

No previous deadlines were referred to and no cognizance was taken of the fact that there had been a failure to fulfil the Constitutional Directive of 1950. While a new deadline was provided, it was vague. The document provided no details about the 'national mission' referred to. In the following statement it presented two main priorities and thereby weakened 'free and compulsory education' as its above-stated priority:

*The main task is to strengthen the base of the pyramid, which might come close to a billion people at the turn of the century. Equally, it is important to ensure that those at the top of the pyramid are among the best in the world*

(Government of India, 1998, p. 37).

The 1992 Programme of Action document made the following statement about free and compulsory education:

*Provision of free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of 14 years is a Directive Principle of the Constitution. Since 1950 determined efforts have been made towards the achievement of this goal. Over the years there has been a very impressive increase in the number and spread of institutions as well as enrolment*

(Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1992, p. 34).

The document stated that the NPE of 1986 and the Programme of Action had given 'unqualified priority to UEE' (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1992, p. 34.). Free and compulsory education was now referred to as the Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). The Report acknowledged the failure to implement this and that insufficient progress had been made to achieve free and compulsory education, which was described as being: "... *in its totality is still an elusive goal and much ground is yet to be covered*" (Ibid., p. 34). The failure to universalise elementary education and literacy was attributed to systemic deficiencies as well as lack of resources (Ibid., 1992). The document reiterated the timeframe of the 1986 document, including its quality dimension. It also provided a more specific deadline, that of achieving UEE by 2000.

## Steps taken from 2002 to 2009

*Article 21A – 2002:*

The 1949 decision to reject Article 45 as a 'fundamental right' and make it a 'directive principle of state policy' was reversed in December 2002 by the Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act which resulted in the insertion of Article 21A in the Indian Constitution. The Article was inserted as a 'Fundamental Right' in the section entitled 'Right to Freedom' and is defined as a 'Right to education'. It reads as follows:

*The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.*

The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act simultaneously substituted the original Article 45 in the section "Directive Principles of State Policy" with the following as a 'Provision for early childhood care and education to children below the age of six years', which reads as follows:

*The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years.*

The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act also simultaneously amended Article 51A of the Constitution by the insertion of an additional clause in its section "Fundamental Duties", which reads:

*[It shall be the duty of every citizen of India] who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years.*

Article 21A restored the right of children to education as a Fundamental Right in the Constitution of India, which makes this right legally enforceable. Elementary education had previously been made a fundamental right in strict legal terms in 1993 when a Supreme Court Judgment had affirmed the fundamental right to education of Indian citizens. (Dreze & Sen, 2003). In its placement in the Constitution of India the Article forms part of the nation's framework of democratic values.

Article 21A provides a lower age limit for the provision of free and compulsory education, which was not provided in Article 45 of 1950. It does not, however, provide a deadline. The new Article 45 makes a provision for early childhood education, although the lower age limit is not specified and the Article remains a 'directive principle of state policy' and is therefore not legally enforceable. In this sense the provision of early childhood education takes the place of 'free and compulsory education' for children up to the age of fourteen. Article 51A makes it the responsibility of parents to send their children to school.

*RTE - 2009:*

RTE represents the manner in which Article 21A is being implemented (Government of India, 2011). To recapitulate, its central provision is as follows:

*Every child of the age of six to fourteen years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school till completion of elementary education.*

The legislation does not provide a deadline for the achievement of universal elementary education in India.

'Free' education is defined in RTE as follows:

*.... No child shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing the elementary education*

(Government of India, 2009, II.3.(2)).

'Compulsory' education is defined in RTE as the obligation of the appropriate state government to

- (i) provide free elementary education to every child of the age of six to fourteen years; and*
- (ii) ensure compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by every child of the age of six to fourteen years*

(Ibid., III.8.(a)).

## Conclusions

The conclusion drawn from tracing the trajectory of 'free and compulsory education' to establish the genesis of RTE is that RTE has its origins in the discourse of 'free and compulsory education'. The tracing of the trajectory opened up the policy space and revealed that the term 'free and compulsory education' constitutes a discourse for the provision, either implicitly or explicitly, of UEE in India. This clarified my beginning recognition that the terms 'free' and 'compulsory' were connected to the provision of UEE. The discourse of 'free and compulsory education' has been connected to efforts to provide UEE in India since 1906, thereby constituting a one-hundred-and-three year timeframe. The discourse began in 1906 with Gokhale's plea before the Imperial Legislative Council for the introduction of 'free and compulsory education' and continued as such after Independence as an integral part of the three national education policy documents of 1968, and 1986 as amended in 1992, and now continues with Article 21A of 2002 and RTE of 2009. RTE constitutes a continuation of efforts to achieve UEE in India within this discourse. Since the child-centred education provisions are incorporated within RTE, the child-centred education policy of RTE therefore has its origins in the discourse of 'free and compulsory education' as a provision for UEE in India, and the provision for UEE is rooted in this discourse.

The tracing of the trajectory of 'free and compulsory education' revealed that education policies aimed at universalising elementary education in India since Independence in 1947 have been inherently weak. The Patel Act introduced 'compulsory education' in areas of the state of Bombay in 1918. This analysis has presented excerpts from education policies which demonstrate that, the rhetoric notwithstanding, the history of 'free and compulsory education' in India since 1947 has been one of lack of prioritisation and ignored and missed deadlines. Article 45 provided a weak foundation for taking the Sargent Plan forward and the recommendations of the Kher Committee Report further undermined the Article's weak foundations. The Kothari Commission recommendations did not prioritise 'free and compulsory education' through Article 45. The three national education policy documents that followed in 1968, 1986 and 1992 did not move free and compulsory education forward.

The significance of RTE is, as the tracing of the trajectory of 'free and compulsory education' in India shows, that it comprises the first national legislation for education in India since Independence in 1947 and as such, is the first national legislation in the country aimed at achieving UEE. It also comprises the first national legislation for the

provision of child-centred education. The compulsory education laws that were passed in all the British Indian provinces between 1918-1930 were on the state level. RTE has in common with these that its implementation is also on the state level.

The tracing of the trajectory of 'free and compulsory education' in India revealed that RTE is also inherently weak because the discourse of 'free and compulsory education', within which the legislation continues the efforts to achieve UEE, is problematic. As clarified above, 'free' education is defined in the Legislation as the absence of all expenses related to the provision of education. However, 'compulsory' education is defined in RTE as the obligation of the appropriate state government to provide 'free and compulsory education', specifically to '*ensure compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by every child of the age of six to fourteen years*' (RTE III.8.(a)). Article 51A of 2002 establishes it as the duty of parents or guardians to ensure that their children attend school. Therefore the definition of the term 'compulsory education' is that state governments of India are obliged to provide education to all six to fourteen year olds and it is the duty of the parents of these children to send them to school. However, this discourse in terms of 'obligation' and 'duty' is problematic because school attendance is not ensured. RTE therefore cannot achieve UEE in India without a redefinition of the term 'compulsory education' within the discourse and the legal enforcement of school attendance on the national level. To achieve UEE in India the definition of 'compulsory education' must incorporate a requirement that children attend school.

Previous interpretations of the term 'compulsory education' appear to have accounted for the need to enforce school attendance to achieve UEE. Gokhale's unsuccessful Elementary Education Bill of 1911 included provisions for enforcing school attendance, banning the labour of boys and the removal of fees for the lowest-income families. RTE now fulfils Gokhale's efforts by establishing 'compulsory education' as a state responsibility and takes his bill further through its provision of entirely 'free' education. However, RTE does not provide for the enforcement of school attendance at either the state or national level and nor is it linked to any legislation banning child labour. The compulsory education laws that were passed in all British Indian provinces between 1918 and 1930, seemed to have incorporated the assumption that 'compulsory education' involved the enforcement of school attendance.

The problematic nature of the term 'compulsory education' within the discourse of 'free and compulsory education' within which RTE is rooted by extension affects the ability of

RTE to achieve the universal provision of child-centred education in India, assuming that is its aim as national legislation. The universal provision of the child-centred education policy of RTE requires the universal provision of education, UEE. To achieve UEE a definition of the term 'compulsory education' that means the child must attend school as well as the legal enforcement of school on the national level are required. The assertion that the universal provision of the child-centred education policy of RTE requires a definition of the term 'compulsory' that means the child must attend school, as well as the legal enforcement of school attendance on the national level, forms a starting point for the reporting of the documentary analysis in Chapter Six. The next chapter presents the policy context of the child-centred education provisions of RTE.

## **Chapter 5: The policy context**

As previously stated the overall research aim of the study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the child-centred education policy of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE). As an intrinsic case study, the methodological aim related to this was to optimise what can be learned about the policy. An important way of achieving this was to examine the literature, historical and policy contexts of the child-centred education provisions of RTE in order to optimise understanding of them. This understanding then informed the report of the empirical research that was conducted. In this chapter I present the results of my examination of the policy contexts of the child-centred provisions of RTE.

The examination took the form of a review of literature and education policy documents pertaining to the Indian context of the provision of child-centred education in India since 1947. This enabled me to establish the state and national contexts of the child-centred policy of RTE. I reviewed aspects of the comparative education literature in order to incorporate an international dimension to the Thesis. Through this I was able to identify the international policy context of the Indian child-centred education policy and to identify a particular issue and two concepts from the literature that assisted me to develop understandings of the child-centred education policy of RTE.

I begin by establishing the Indian policy context of the child-centred education provisions by presenting a brief overview of more recent programmes in India that have formed part of the universalisation of elementary education in the country. I then present a review of programmes for child-centred education that have been implemented at the state level, after which I examine the national policy context of RTE's child-centred policy. I lastly identify the international policy context and examine it in order to increase understandings of the Indian policy.

### **THE INDIAN POLICY CONTEXT**

The provision of elementary education in India since 1947 has been a highly complex picture incorporating national, state, international and non-governmental organisation (NGO) actors. There was a growth of central direction as well as of international support and participation in Indian education in the 1990s (Little, 2010). Since the early part of



that decade the idea of revitalising Indian schools and transforming classrooms has received unprecedented attention (Ramachandran & Jandhyala, 2007, Singal et al. in press). Attempts to energise the government school system have been undertaken by a wide range of NGOs, which have incorporated various Education For All (EFA) projects such as the Bihar Education Project, Lok Jumbish, the UP Basic Education Project and the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) (Ramachandran & Jandhyala, 2007). The DPEP was launched in 1994 in forty-two of the most educationally disadvantaged districts in seven states, with support from a range of foreign donors; this represented a shift from removing supply side constraints to a greater focus on quality improvement (Little, 2010). The Indian government's current programme for universalising elementary education in India is Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which was instituted in 2000. It has been instrumental in bringing about many important reforms and improvements in Indian education system through new initiatives (Hariharan, 2011) and has generated a very wide range of initiatives for the promotion of access and quality in elementary education (Little, 2010).

The central government-state government relationship in relation to education provision has also presented its own complex dynamic. Until 1976 education policies and their implementation were the legal responsibility of the Indian states. Since that date education in India was made a 'concurrent subject', that is, the central and state governments share responsibility for the funding and administration of education. The central government is expected to provide leadership, guidance and financial resources for education programmes (Little, 2010) and policies and specific initiatives are often determined by the central government (Sriprakash, 2012).

### **The provision of child-centred education at the state level**

Child-centred education policies have been delivered on the state level in various part of India, some of which are on going. Child-centred pedagogy and efforts to transform attending school into a joyful experience through pedagogic renewal programmes and making the classroom child friendly have formed part of most universalisation of elementary education (UEE) programmes (Ramachandran & Jandhyala, 2007). There have been various programmes for child-centred education at the state level that have been implemented in various locations across the country since the early 1980s. The Rishi Valley Rural Education Centre in Andhra Pradesh was set up in the early part of that decade to cater to the needs of the rural countryside (Jagannathan, 2001). This presents an example of how an innovation that started by responding to local specific

needs and the resultant experience of working in thirteen schools in Rishi Valley helped to develop a mechanism for multi-grade and multi-level learning (Ramachandran & Jandhyala, 2007). Other programmes include the Bodh Shiksha Samiti, which promoted a flexible and joyful process of teaching and learning in slums of Jaipur, Rajasthan as well as Eklavya in Madhya Pradesh, which aimed at re-modelling science education in middle schools through learning by discovery and activities, the predecessors of which date back to 1972 (Jagannathan, 2001).

Child-centred education in Indian state primary schools gained momentum in the 1990s through government and internationally sponsored programmes and NGO initiatives for pedagogic reform (Sriprakash, 2012). This includes the Nali Kali programme - which translates approximately to “learning with joy” in the Kannada language - in the Mysore district of Karnataka in 1992, which was inspired by the Rishi Valley programme (Ramachandran & Jandhyala, 2007). Conceived of to address deeply entrenched social issues such as gender and caste discrimination in schools and the isolation of the school from the local community (Govinda, 2017), the objective was to change the teacher-centred, traditional pedagogy to one that was activity based and child-centred (Sriprakash, 2012). It is one of Karnataka’s most successful and innovative reform programmes and has since been mainstreamed from being an NGO innovation to a state government initiative for pedagogical renewal implemented in four thousand primary schools in the state (Sriprakash, 2012).

Other programmes since then include the Activities Based Learning programme (ABL) and the Learner-Centred Initiative (LC) implemented in government schools in Karnataka in 2005. ABL has its origins in a multi-grade, multi-level methodology created by the Rishi Valley programme (Hariharan, 2011). It was adopted in areas of Karnataka on an experimental basis and across Tamil Nadu; supported by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the programme has been widely implemented in government primary schools in various states across India (UNICEF, 2015). These include Karnataka, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh; the programme has also had a rapid growth and international outreach with efforts to promote it in other parts of the developing world, including Ghana, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Mozambique (Singal et al. in press). The LC programme was developed by a Karnataka-based NGO with the aim of establishing an alternative pedagogy in rural schools in the state as a response to concerns about the existing system of primary education which stressed teacher-centred instruction and memorisation of facts; it was piloted in twenty-three rural primary schools

in 2005 through in-service teacher training and then implemented in two hundred and seventy four primary schools in 2008 (Sriprakash, 2012).

### **The provision of child-centred education at the national level**

The significance of RTE is that it is the first national legislation for child-centred education in India. I reviewed the education policy documents that have been formulated pertaining to school level education in India since Independence in order to ascertain whether child-centred education had formed part of previous national education policies. These documents consist of the Kothari Commission Report of 1966, the National Policy for Education of 1968 as well as the National Policy for Education of 1986 as modified in 1992.

The review showed that these documents all contained elements of child-centred education provision, some of which are precursors to those contained within RTE. The child-centred education policy of RTE is therefore a continuation of national policy objectives for the provision of child-centred education. This confirms the statement in SSA Framework, the policy document that supports the implementation of RTE, that the principles of child-centred education 'spelt out' in the National Policy on Education 1986/92 (NPE 1986/92) are now part of educational legislation (Government of India, 2011). As stated in the previous chapter, all these policy documents referred to above articulate the discourse of 'free and compulsory education'. However, RTE is the first education policy document that links this discourse with child-centred education and NPE 1986/92 is the first document that explicitly articulates its child-centred education objectives as being 'child-centred'.

In the next section I set out the child-centred education provisions of RTE that have antecedents in previous education policy. These are in bold font. I then trace these elements to their articulation in the previous education policy documents to establish their origins in those documents.

#### **RTE V. 29.(1) – for child-centred curriculum and evaluation**

The curriculum and the evaluation procedure for elementary education shall be laid down by an academic authority to be specified by the appropriate Government, by notification.

The academic authority, while laying down the curriculum and the evaluation procedure under sub-section (1) shall take into consideration the following, namely:-

- a) Conformity with the values enshrined in the constitution
- b) All-round development of the child
- c) Building up the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent
- d) Development of physical and mental abilities to the fullest extent
- e) Learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child-friendly and child-centred manner**
- f) Medium of instruction in mother tongue as far as possible**
- g) Making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety and helping the child to express views freely**
- h) Comprehensive and continuous evaluation of child's understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same**

'Curriculum' refers to all aspects of education (Government of India, 2011).

*e) Learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child-friendly and child-centred manner*

The Kothari Commission Report of 1966 recommended the adoption of 'play-way techniques' in the first year of primary school in order to provide the student with a pleasant introduction to school life. This was to assist with school drop out, lack of academic progress and quality issues. It recommended that the 'activity method' should be an integral part of all teaching at Lower Primary level and that that the curriculum should include more practical activities and as a way to counteract the emphasis on textbooks, examinations and rote learning. NPE 1986/92 recommended the adoption of 'child-centred' and 'activity-based' learning at primary level.

*f) Medium of instruction in mother tongue as far as possible*

NPE 1986/92 emphasised the need to develop curricula and instructional materials in tribal languages for the initial stages of education and to then change to the regional language as part of equalizing the provision of education for students from tribal communities.

*g) Making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety and helping the child to express views freely*

The Kothari Commission Report recommended that each school should pay sufficient attention to individual children, linking this to reducing 'wastage'. NPE 1986/92 expressed this attention as an approach where all are concerned about the needs of the child and advocated being 'warm, welcoming and encouraging' as the best way of

motivating students to attend school and to learn. It also recommended the abolition of corporal punishment.

*h) Comprehensive and continuous evaluation of child's understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same*

The Kothari Commission Report put forward a new approach to evaluation by recommending the improvement of written examinations to make them a better measure of educational achievement and the development of forms of assessment that would assess aspects of the student's growth. It called for the following: the inclusion of oral tests at the Higher Primary stage as part of school assessment; diagnostic testing through simple tests created by the teacher and simple record cards to indicate students' growth and development in a phased manner; and the treatment of grades I – IV as an ungraded unit to enable students to advance at their own pace as far as possible.

NPE 1968 called for the reform of examinations to improve their reliability and validity and '*..... to make evaluation a continuous process aimed at helping the student to improve his level of achievement rather than at 'certifying' the quality of his performance at a given moment of time*' (Government of India, 1998, p. 42). NPE 1986/92 called for assessment to be an integral part of the process of learning and teaching in the form of "*Continuous and comprehensive evaluation that incorporates both scholastic and non-scholastic aspects of education, spread over the total span of instructional time .....*" (Ibid., p. 31). The document also called for a policy of non-detention at the primary stage and linked this to evaluation in order to make it as 'disaggregated' as possible.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT**

I conducted a literature search in order to identify work relevant for developing understandings of the child-centred education policy of RTE. I identified relevant literature through extensive searches of the British Education Index, ERIC, and JSTOR databases which were all accessible at the Institute of Education, as well as Google Scholar. The following search terms were employed: 'child-centred education', 'child centred education', 'learner-centred education', 'learner centred education', 'constructivist education', 'constructivist learning', 'Progressivist education', and 'Progressivist learning'. Only articles or books in English were considered.

My review of this literature enabled me to situate the Indian child-centred policy in the

international policy context of learner-centred education (LCE). This in turn enabled me to identify the nature of its relationship with LCE and to identify how the pedagogical approaches of both intersect. I additionally drew on specific aspects from my reading of the comparative education literature which I identified as relevant for optimising understanding of the child-centred education policy of RTE, those of the issue of 'definition' and the concepts of 'travelling policy' and 'policy borrowing'. I begin by situating the Indian child-centred policy within its international policy context and I then address the issue of 'definition' and these core concepts.

### **The policy context of Learner-Centred Education**

I have situated the Indian child-centred policy within LCE for two reasons: firstly, LCE forms part of The Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action adopted in 2015 to achieve education for all by 2030 through its 'Sustainable Development Goal 4', which states that education requires "*learner-centred, active and collaborative pedagogical approaches*" as part of its focus on quality and learning to achieve this goal (UNESCO, 2016, p. 33). India is signatory to this Declaration and was also involved with the Framework for Action's steering committee and drafting group. This international initiative supersedes the Millennium Development Goal Two for the achievement of universal primary education by 2015. The second reason is that there is a pedagogical intersection between LCE and child-centred education. The latter has been defined as a specific tradition within LCE and both approaches share many similarities in their concern for learner initiative and freedom and learning through discovery (Schweisfurth, 2013).

Since both approaches intersect pedagogically, efforts to define either or both approaches will have shared commonalities. While it is not the aim of the Thesis to attempt to provide definitions of either approach, an understanding of their main features assists with understanding the child-centred provisions of RTE. Schweisfurth (2013) describes LCE as "*..... a shape shifting concept across time and space .....*" (p. 19) that comprises many continua rather than absolutes, which include epistemological, technique, and relational dimensions. She provides a definition of LCE as "*..... a continuum from less learner-centred to more learner-centred.....*" (Schweisfurth, 2013, p. 11) where the 'more learner-centred' end of the continuum is "*..... a pedagogical approach which gives learners and demands from them, a relatively high level of active control over the content and process of learning. What is learnt, and how, are therefore shaped by learners' needs, capacities and interests* [author's italics] (Schweisfurth, 2013,

p. 20). The 'less learner-centred' end of the continuum relates to a form of education that typically involves learning a rigid content-based curriculum, lecturing and whole-class drilling, the teacher being in control and the centre of attention for most of the time, and the learner being intrinsically motivated and believed to be so by their teachers (Schweisfurth, 2013).

The starting point of the child-centred approach can be represented by the 'less learner-centred' end of this continuum. As presented in Chapter Three, child-centred philosophy developed as a way of reforming the 'traditional' approach to education. This approach incorporated the same aspects of the 'less learner-centred' end of the continuum as LCE, such as rote learning, knowledge as a fixed entity, and the authority and control of the teacher as paramount. The 'more child-centred' end of the continuum can be represented by Dewey's description of the philosophy of education implicit in the child-centred approach:

*To imposition from above is opposed expression and cultivation of individuality; to external discipline is opposed free activity; to learning from texts and teachers, learning through experience; to acquisition of isolated skills and techniques by drill is opposed acquisition of them as a means of attaining ends which make direct vital appeal; to preparation for a more or less remote future is opposed*

*making the most of all opportunities of present life; to static aims and materials is opposed acquaintance with a changing world*

(Dewey, 1938, p. 223).

Schweisfurth's definition of LCE as a continuum from more to less learner-centred pedagogical approaches provides a helpful way of allowing for different understandings and views of the nature of LCE as well as of the practical realities of implementing these approaches. It presents a similarly useful way to describe child-centred education, from 'less child-centred' to 'more child-centred'.

The definition of LCE has, however, been identified as a main critique that has emerged from the comparative education literature Schweisfurth (2015). Issues to do with definition include the following: learner-centred education and its associated terms are often used loosely and embrace an extensive range of concepts and practices that can be employed to explain policy or practice and the related discourse is hard to determine

(Schweisfurth, 2015). LCE incorporates numerous other terms such as ‘constructivism’ (Schweisfurth, 2013), activity based learning and Outcomes-Based Education in South Africa (Schweisfurth, 2015). LCE has been called a ‘hooray’ term, one that covers a wide range of positive applications while meaning very little (Harber and Davies, cited in Schweisfurth, 2015, p. 262). The challenge is reconciling the different manifestations of the term without rendering it too all-inclusive (Schweisfurth, 2015).

These problems of definition raise the question of whether the Indian child-centred policy of RTE is vulnerable to the same areas of critique. However, these issues of definition do not apply to the Indian policy for two reasons. Firstly, it can be separated from LCE as its international policy context because it has historical roots in India, as demonstrated in the previous chapter. Secondly, the indeterminacy of the discourse to do with LCE does not apply to the Indian policy because the latter is rooted in its own discourse - that of ‘free and compulsory education’ - as also demonstrated in the previous chapter.

### **‘Travelling policy’ and ‘policy borrowing’**

I identified the concepts of ‘travelling policy’ and ‘policy borrowing’ within the comparative education literature as relevant for gaining an in-depth understanding of the child-centred policy of RTE within its international policy context. LCE has been called a ‘travelling idea’ and a ‘travelling policy’ (Schweisfurth, 2013) and as a policy discourse has been described as a globally travelling prescription for improvements to teaching and learning (Schweisfurth, 2015). Travelling policy refers to “..... *supra and transnational agency activity and common agendas* .....” (Alexiadou & Jones, cited in Ozga & Jones, 2006, p. 2). This definition links LCE to a global agenda for education, against which backdrop LCE might be characterised as a ‘global policy paradigm’ or a ‘policyscape’ (Ball, 1999). Tabulawa (2003) has associated the interest in learner-centred pedagogy with the rise of neo-liberalism in the 1980s and the resultant enshrining of neo-liberalism in the policies of bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, which view learner-centred pedagogy as appropriate for the development and dissemination of social relations in developing country schools. Ozga & Jones (2006) have identified an emergent global agenda for education policy as well as an emergent coherent set of policy themes and processes at the international level through which policy makers are reshaping structures and systems at national, international and transnational levels. LCE has been endorsed by international agencies, national governments and local actors and has powerful global and cross-national manifestations with global organisations playing a role in defining a supporting context for LCE, and governments trying to resolve a range of national



concerns find LCE attractive (Schweisfurth, 2013). Some individual aid agencies and non-governmental organisations endorse LCE and international organisations promote LCE within a rights framework or make it part of their definition of quality education; LCE is one vision of best practice in the context of quality education and is explicitly promoted by influential international organisations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UNICEF (Schweisfurth, 2015).

The concept of 'policy borrowing' is related to that of 'travelling policy' in its connection to contemporary policy making. 'Policy borrowing' can occur at institutional, local, regional or national levels (Phillips & Ochs, 2004) and has been described as a common feature of contemporary policy making and one which is becoming increasingly common as neo-liberal globalisation continues to impact the development of policy (Winstanley, 2012). The debate about whether anything can be learned, lent or borrowed from education reform policies or education systems from other countries is one of the oldest and most controversial theory traditions in comparative education (Zymek & Zymek, 2004). The concept of 'policy borrowing' as a term is firmly established within the tradition of comparative research in education and is a complex issue (Phillips & Ochs, 2004). The term is a more recent manifestation of the concept of 'transfer', a crucial and central topic in comparative education, which is itself part of a broader theme within comparative education, that of recognizing and studying the significance of 'mobilities' (Cowen, 2009). The term 'transfer' has been defined as follows:

*..... transfer is the movement of an educational idea or practice in supra-national or transnational or inter-national space: the 'space-gate moment, with its politics of attraction and so on.....*

(Cowen, 2009, p. 323).

While acknowledging that it is difficult to determine the parameters of the concept of borrowing, the term 'policy borrowing' has been described as the '*..... conscious adoption in one context of policy observed in another .....*' (Phillips & Ochs, 2004, p. 774). 'Policy borrowing'

*ought to refer to a clearly enunciated intention to adopt a way of doing things observed elsewhere, and not to a less well-defined susceptibility to influence through the general recognition of the importance shown to particular practices elsewhere and a less conscious reflection of those practices in policy 'at home'*

(Phillips & Ochs, 2004, p. 776).

The concepts of 'travelling policy' and 'policy borrowing' enabled me to clarify the relationship between the child-centred education policy of RTE and its international policy context of LCE. The child-centred education policy of RTE is not a 'travelling policy' and hence not a local manifestation of LCE as a 'global policy paradigm' because it has historical roots in Indian national education policy that can be traced back to 1966. Likewise, the Indian child-centred policy is not a 'borrowed policy' according to the above definition as the '*conscious adoption in one context of policy observed in another*' because it has historical roots in Indian national education policy since 1966. For these two reasons, the Indian policy can be defined as a locally originating policy.

In addition, the issues to do with the definition of LCE and the indeterminate nature of its related discourse raise the question of whether the Indian child-centred policy is similarly vulnerable to these issues, and by extension whether this is a feature that needs to be taken into account when examining it. Because the Indian policy has historical roots in India it can be disentangled from its international policy context of LCE. Therefore the issues to do with definition do not arise with regard to the term 'child-centred education' as employed in RTE's child-centred policy. Therefore any analysis of it does not require taking into account its international policy context of LCE.

To conclude, the examination of the international policy context of the child-centred education policy of RTE has revealed that while it is related to its international policy context of LCE through the pedagogical commonalities between LCE and child-centred education as educational approaches, the Indian policy can be separated from its international policy context because it has historical roots in India. The assertion that any investigation of the RTE child-centred education policy can be undertaken independently of its international policy context of LCE will form the starting point for the reporting of the empirical research conducted, which is presented in Chapters Six and Seven. The next chapter presents the results of the documentary analysis that was conducted.

## **Chapter 6: How child-centred education is conceptualised within RTE**

This chapter presents the results of the documentary analysis that was conducted as part of the empirical research for the Thesis. It aimed at answering the research question related to the child-centred education policy within The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), “*How is child-centred education conceptualised within RTE?*” An additional research question - “*What are the policy objectives?*” - was formulated to facilitate answering this question. The examination of the literature, historical and policy contexts of the child-centred education policy of RTE resulted in particular understandings that formed starting points for the reporting of the empirical research of the Study. Conclusions drawn from Chapters Four and Five form starting points for this chapter. Firstly, from Chapter Five, an investigation of the child-centred policy of RTE does not need to take into account its international policy context of Learner Centred Education (LCE) because it is a locally originating policy. Secondly, from Chapter Four, the universal provision of the child-centred education policy of RTE requires a definition of the term ‘compulsory education’ that means the child must attend school as well as the legal enforcement of school attendance on the national level.

I first provide details about how the documents were analysed and interpreted and then present the findings to identify the policy objectives and answer the research question “*What are the policy objectives?*” I then present the findings to answer the research question “*How is child-centred education conceptualised within RTE?*”

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA**

In this section I describe how I analysed and interpreted the data obtained from the documentary analysis, while recognising that analysis and interpretation are not separate processes but each may be present in varying degrees at different stages and are interactive and iterative throughout the research (Simons, 2009).

As stated previously, I analysed the following documents, all of which are in the public domain:

1. The Right to Education Act of 2009 (RTE), issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice

2. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Framework for Implementation issued by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development in 2011 (SSA Framework)
3. The National Curriculum Framework of 2005 (Curriculum 2005), issued by the National Council of Educational Research and Training

There are many ways in which documents can be analysed (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011). My approach was based on the view that documentary materials constitute data in their own right (Atkinson and Coffey, 2011) and can be treated as synonymous with text (Prior, 2011). I therefore treated the three policy documents referred to above as both textual data and data that have resulted without the intervention of a researcher (Silverman, 2013). My focus was entirely on the contents of the documents. I analysed all three both separately and in relation to each other. Documentary analysis involves an iterative process (Bowen, 2009, Fitzgerald, 2012) and I found the process of analysis to be iterative in all its elements. I set out the analytic procedure I employed below, firstly in summary and then in detail:

1. Formulation of a supplementary research question to guide the documentary analysis
2. Reading to gain an overview of the document contents
3. Interrogation of the documents in relation to the supplementary research question
4. Coding of the data
5. Creation of a conceptual model of the empirical findings
6. Interpretation of the policy documents and findings in relation to a main research question of the Thesis

1. *Formulation of a supplementary research question to guide the documentary analysis*

The Study was designed to answer one of its main research questions - "How is child-centred education conceptualised within RTE?" - through the documentary analysis. Documentary analysis requires the researcher to generate a research question (Fitzgerald, 2012). I formulated an additional question - "What are the policy objectives?" - to guide the documentary analysis. Answering this question then facilitated the answering of the main research question.

## 2. *Reading to gain an overview of the document contents*

I read through all three documents - RTE, SSA Framework and Curriculum 2005 to gain an overview of their contents. This process has been referred to as 'skimming' or a 'superficial examination' (Bowen, 2009, p. 32) and 'literal' or 'surface reading' (Fitzgerald, 2012, p. 304). I conducted this several times for each document and from this I gained an understanding of the aims and content of the education policy.

## 3. *Interrogation of the documents in relation to the supplementary research question*

I then interrogated all three documents in relation to the supplementary research question I had formulated. This process has been described as conceptualising data by 'scrutinising' it "*..... in an attempt to understand the essence of what is being expressed*" (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 3) and as reading involving a thorough examination (Bowen, 2009) for 'embedded meanings' (Fitzgerald, 2012, p. 304). From my interrogation of SSA Framework and Curriculum 2005 I was able to identify phrases, concepts, ideas and themes that were contained in the documents (Prior, 2011). This iterative process involved scrutinising both documents separately as well as in relation to each other.

## 4. *Coding of the data*

I also conceptualized the data by coding it. Coding requires employing a few words that best describe conceptually what is believed to be indicated by the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2012). It involves "*Extracting concepts from raw data and developing them in terms of their properties and dimensions*" (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 2) and formulating a 'conceptual name' to describe what is being understood in the data, as a 'researcher-denoted concept' (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 3). Concepts are "*Words that stand for ideas contained in data. Concepts are interpretations, the products of analysis*" (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 2). The conceptual names I formulated related to the phrases, concepts, ideas and themes that I identified from both documents. They were designated inductively, that is, they originated from the data itself (Forman & Damschroder, 2007). The conceptual names were as follows:

- 'Overall Policy Objectives' (from SSA Framework and Curriculum 2005)
- 'Core Policy Concepts' (from SSA Framework)

- ‘Policy Argument’ (from SSA Framework and Curriculum 2005)
- ‘Policy Premise’ (from SSA Framework and Curriculum 2005)
- ‘Vision of Education Rooted in Democratic Principles’ (Curriculum 2005)

Since the analysis of text leads to empirical findings (Fitzgerald, 2012), these conceptual names represent the empirical findings from the texts-as-data that were analysed.

##### 5. *Creation of a conceptual model of the empirical findings*

I then created a conceptual model of the policy objectives, based on the conceptual names as set out above, as a continuation of answering the supplementary research question “What are the policy objectives?” This constituted a synthesis of the data contained in the documents (Bowen, 2009), as represented by the conceptual names I had formulated. The conceptual model was created in stages. In the first stage I mapped out the ‘Overall Policy Objectives’. The second stage involved the following forms of particular analysis: I interrogated Section V.29 of RTE, which contained the child-centred policy objectives, and SSA Framework in relation to each other. I then ascertained the child-centred objectives of the education policy, which are clearly enunciated in Section V.29 of RTE. I then interrogated this section of RTE in relation to the overall policy objectives set out in SSA Framework and was able to determine the existence of a relationship between them. I then incorporated the child-centred education objectives within the conceptual model (Thesis, p. 103). The conceptual model then served as a structure that provided conceptual clarity and facilitated analysis and interpretation of the policy objectives.

##### 5. *Interpretation of the policy documents and findings in relation to a main research question of the Thesis*

The final stage of documentary analysis was interpretation (Bowen, 2009, Fitzgerald, 2012). It is acknowledged that while there is no clear demarcation between data analysis and interpretation, by the interpretation phase the groundwork has been laid to produce a finished product that communicates the meaning of the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994, cited in Forman & Damschroder, 2007, p. 56). This phase of analysis answered the main research question of the Thesis, “How is child-centred education conceptualised within RTE?” After determining the relationship between the RTE provisions for child-centred education and the overall policy objectives enunciated in SSA Framework, I was able to determine how child-centred education was conceptualised within RTE and SSA

Framework. I determined this by interrogating both documents individually and in relation to each other. I then scrutinised RTE and SSA Framework in relation to the research question to identify how child-centred education was being conceptualised. I then employed the theoretical framework of the Thesis to ascertain whether this policy conceptualisation of the child-centred education provisions of RTE could be supported by child-centred education theory. This involved analysing the empirical findings as represented by the 'Core Policy Concepts' and the 'Policy Premise', as well as the text-as-data of the child-centred education provisions of RTE and the role of teacher as 'facilitator' as prescribed by the policy. The conceptualisation through the policy model enabled me to draw conclusions about the policy objectives and to identify a lacuna in the 'Policy Argument'.

## **THE POLICY OBJECTIVES**

In this section I draw on Curriculum 2005 and SSA Framework to build a detailed, step-by-step picture of the broad policy objectives as well as those specifically related to the child-centred education policy of RTE. I did this by identifying the following aspects: the overall policy objectives; the core concepts of the policy and the argument being made for how they will be achieved; and how the role of education within the nation state is conceived as well as the vision of education in the policy that embodies this. I then present a conceptual model of the policy objectives and identify and clarify the relationship between them and the child-centred education policy of RTE. Finally, I draw conclusions about the child-centred education objectives within RTE.

### **The Overall Policy Objectives**

I identified the overall policy objective as being the achievement of the universalisation of elementary education in India (UEE) within an overarching concern of education as that of strengthening democracy. I identified the policy objective of achieving UEE from SSA Framework and the overarching objective from Curriculum 2005. The latter document states that

*The greatest national challenge for education is to strengthen our participatory democracy and the values enshrined in the Constitution*

(Government of India, 2005, p. 9).

and that a paramount guiding principle for curriculum development is

*nurturing an over-riding identity informed by caring concerns  
within the democratic polity of the country*

(Ibid., p. 5).

These statements are being interpreted for the Thesis as meaning that *the overarching concern of universalising elementary education is to strengthen democracy*. The articulation of a relationship between education and democracy in education policy can be traced back to the Kothari Commission Report of 1966. The national priorities articulated in the Report, nineteen years after Independence, were self-sufficiency in food production and economic growth; education was identified as ‘..... a powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation .....’ (Government of India, 1966, p. 6).

### **The Core Policy Concepts**

Through my detailed interrogation of SSA Framework I was able to identify that the following concepts are central to the policy: ‘equity’, ‘access’, ‘quality’, ‘equitable access’, ‘equitable quality’ and ‘universal access’ because they form an integral part of the policy objectives in the four chapters of the document that relate to these. I set out below how I identified these as the core policy concepts.

In Chapter One the concepts of ‘equity’ and ‘access’ are defined as principles that guide the implementation of RTE and the ‘revamp’ of the SSA Programme. In Chapter Two, which is entirely about implementing access to school, ‘access’ is defined more closely as ‘universal access’ and is described as being an essential component of UEE. The concepts of ‘equitable access’ and ‘equitable quality’ are now introduced and detailed interventions are set out for how ‘universal access’ will be achieved. Chapter Three addresses ‘equity issues’ in elementary education and identifies these issues are in relation to exclusion. It also provides details of how these issues will be addressed. The definitions of ‘equity’ and ‘access’ that were provided in Chapter One are now stated as being the perspectives that inform the approach to implementing RTE to address gender and social equity. Equity is defined more closely as addressing exclusion and is linked with the issues of ‘quality and ‘equity’. Chapter Four defines RTE as requiring an emphasis on ‘equitable quality’ and sets out concerns relating to quality in elementary education. It articulates its conceptions of ‘equitable quality’ and ‘quality’ and sets out the



'core components' and 'enabling components' of quality education as well as the policy conception of 'equitable quality'.

The definitions of these concepts as provided in SSA Framework are as follows:

*'Equity':*

SSA Framework defines 'equity' as follows:

*In SSA, equity means equal opportunity for all children to complete elementary education irrespective of their gender, religion, caste, socio-economic, cultural, or linguistic background and geographical location. It cuts across the components of access, enrolment, retention, participation and quality*

(Government of India, 2011, p. 51).

*Equity will mean not only equal opportunity, but also creation of conditions in which the disadvantaged sections of the society – children of SC, ST, Muslim minority, landless agricultural workers and children with special needs, etc. can avail of the opportunity*

(Ibid., p. 24).

In the document 'equality' is presented as a requirement. The concept of 'equal opportunities for all' that was expressed in previous policy documents has now been refined to include the concept of 'equity'. The document clarifies that equity in SSA means addressing exclusion (Government of India, 2011).

*'Access':*

The definition of access is comprehensive:

*Access does not constitute mere physical availability of school; it implies facilitating full, free and joyful participation of children in learning. Any barrier to children's learning means that access has been denied fully or in part. Access comprises children's participation in learning by addressing social, economical and linguistic barriers in addition to barriers arising out of physical distance, topography and infrastructure etc. Interventions for universalising access therefore cannot be limited to school infrastructure, residential facility or transportation, but must encompass curriculum, including*

*'hidden' curriculum, pedagogy and assessment*

(Government of India, 2011, p. 22).

The document clarifies that this definition of 'access' incorporates social access, by means of addressing all exclusionary practices at school, as well as physical access. It also implies an understanding of the educational needs and 'predicament' of children from Scheduled Castes and Tribes and other disadvantaged groups, Muslim families, girls and children with special needs. Barriers to participation in learning that need to be addressed are identified as including those arising from physical distance, topography, infrastructure, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. 'Curriculum' includes 'hidden curriculum', which is defined as the operation of inequalities at the level of everyday classroom practices.

*'Quality':*

The concept is not defined in SSA Framework. The following statements assisted me to arrive at a policy conception of it: Curriculum 2005 states that 'quality' is not only a measure of efficiency but incorporates a value dimension. The document links the concept of 'quality' with those of 'equality' and 'social justice':

*Any attempt to improve the quality of education will succeed only if it goes hand in hand with steps to promote equality and social justice*

(Government of India, 2005, p. 102).

SSA Framework reiterates this same point and goes further to state:

*This can only be achieved [improving the quality of education] when the knowledge and experience of children from all backgrounds and particularly those from disadvantaged groups are fore-fronted in school learning with primacy to their socio-cultural context*

(Government of India, 2005, p. 58-59).

The document also states that the quality of education is dependent upon how far it ensures equity. Curriculum 2005 clarifies that the vision of participatory democracy held demands that the education available to all children in different regions and sections of society has a comparable quality.

SSA Framework has therefore presented 'quality' as being linked to the concepts of 'equality' and 'social justice' and has linked improving the quality of education with a concurrent attempt to promote equality and social justice. 'Equity' means addressing exclusion. Improving quality therefore means ensuring equity and the quality of education provided depends on how far it ensures 'equality' and 'social justice'.

Through the identification and definition of these concepts, I was able to identify the two following statements in SSA Framework as important for understanding the policy:

Statement One:        *Universal access is an essential component of UEE*  
(Government of India, 2011, p. 22).

Statement Two:        *Equitable access must amalgamate with equitable quality*  
*to institutionalise and sustain universal access* (Ibid).

Through identifying the definitions provided of the concepts of 'equity', 'access', and 'quality' as presented above I was able to employ these definitions to formulate definitions of the concepts of 'equitable access', 'equitable quality' and 'universal access' contained within the above statements. Through this process I was able to gain a better understanding of the policy objectives. My definitions are presented below:

*'Equitable Access':*

The essential principle of the concept is that all barriers to learning should be removed. As stated above, the conception of 'equity' means that all children in India should have equal opportunity to complete elementary education as well as the creation of conditions in which the children from disadvantaged families can avail themselves of this opportunity. The conception of 'access' is associated with the participation of children in learning: there should be no barriers to learning and the 'full, free and joyful' participation of children in learning should be facilitated. Therefore 'equitable access' is being interpreted to mean that education should contain no barriers to learning whatsoever, all children are to be treated equally at school, their participation in learning is to be ensured and the educational needs and predicament of traditionally excluded children will be understood.

### *'Equitable Quality':*

The essence of this concept is that disadvantaged students need to be given additional academic assistance. What is meant by 'equitable quality' is illuminated by the statements contained in SSA Framework that "..... *the RTE Act requires an emphasis on 'equitable' quality*" (p. 56) and that

*Children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds need greater attention and the best academic support from a system that promotes 'equitable quality', not differential quality, through which they are relegated to impoverished schools and thus further disadvantaged*

(Government of India, 2011, p. 57).

The term is therefore being interpreted to mean that children from disadvantaged backgrounds should be provided with additional support so that they can achieve the same academic level as other students.

### *'Universal Access':*

The essence of this concept is that 'universal access' encompasses all aspects of education. The concept is contained within the policy definition of 'access' presented above and is therefore essentially the same:

*Interventions for universalising access therefore cannot be limited to school infrastructure, residential facility or transportation, but must encompass curriculum, including 'hidden' curriculum, pedagogy and assessment*

(Government of India, 2011, p. 22).

The term for the policy is therefore being interpreted to mean that access to education incorporates curriculum, pedagogy and assessment as well as physical access to school.

### **The Policy Argument**

Through my interrogation of the concepts of 'equitable access', 'equitable quality' and 'universal access' I was able to establish that not only are these three concepts central to the manner in which the achievement of UEE has been articulated in its central policy

document, but that they are foundational concepts upon which the achievement of UEE is based. From this I was able to determine that the two statements presented above form the argument being made in the policy. From this point these statements, repeated here, are being presented as the 'Policy Argument':

*Universal Access is an essential component of UEE.....  
Equitable Access must amalgamate with Equitable  
Quality to institutionalise and sustain Universal Access*

(Ibid.).

Through the increased understandings of the policy objectives gained by my interrogation of SSA Framework and Curriculum 2005 I was able to identify the premise that this argument is based on within the following statement:

*The role of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) for  
strengthening the social fabric of democracy through  
provision of equal opportunities to all has been accepted  
since the inception of our Republic*

(Government of India, 2011, p. 1).

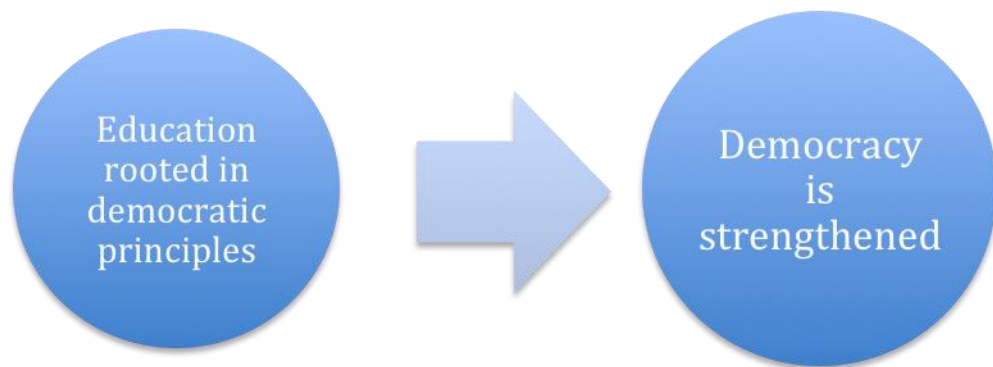
This statement is being understood to mean that universal elementary education, by providing equal opportunities to all, will strengthen democracy. This statement will be called the 'Policy Premise' from this point and is being articulated for the Thesis as '*Education rooted in democratic principles will strengthen democracy*'.

This attribution of an instrumental role to education can be traced back to the Kothari Commission Report of 1966 in which, as presented in the previous chapter, education was articulated as '*the main instrument of change*' (Report, 1966, p. 4). This instrumental role for education is currently being articulated as follows:

*Education should function as an instrument of social  
transformation and an egalitarian social order*

(Government of India, 2005, p. 7).

The Policy Premise is represented as follows:



**Figure 3 - The Policy Premise: *Education rooted in democratic principles will strengthen democracy.***

**Education as an instrument of social transformation and an egalitarian social order**

SSA Framework explains that education has the ability to function as an instrument of social transformation because it helps to develop the citizenry of a democracy through its inherent ability to promote the individual qualities of good democratic citizenship. Quoting the National Policy on Education 1986/92, the document states

*In our national perception, education is essentially for all ..... Education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit – thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution*

(Government of India, 2011, p. 1).

Within this conception of education as an instrument of social transformation because of its ability to develop the individual qualities of good democratic citizenry, the development of these individual qualities of good citizenship becomes the aim of education. This statement is expressed in SSA Framework as a reiteration of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, a philosopher renowned in India and President from 1962 to 1967:

*The aim of education is not the acquisition of information, although important, or acquisition of technical skills, though essential in modern society, but the development of that bent of mind, that attitude of reason, that spirit of democracy which will make us responsible citizens”*

(Ibid., p. 59).

The qualities the ideal citizen of a democracy should possess were previously expressed in the Secondary Education Commission Report of 1952 and this statement is now reiterated in Curriculum 2005 as follows:

*Citizenship in a democracy involves many intellectual, social and moral qualities... a democratic citizen should have the understanding and the intellectual integrity to sift truth from falsehood, facts from propaganda and to reject the dangerous appeal of fanaticism and prejudice ..... should neither reject the old because it is old nor accept the new because it is new, but dispassionately examine both and courageously reject what arrests the forces of justice and progress .....*

(Government of India, 2005, p. 7).

Therefore the role of education is to transform society and the aim of education becomes the development of democratic citizenry. Education can transform society because it has an inherent ability to promote the individual qualities of good democratic citizenship.

### **The vision of education rooted in democratic principles**

As I have shown above, the role of education in Indian education policy has historically been attributed as being instrumental for the amelioration of social conditions. It is asserted in Curriculum 2005 that education should function as 'an instrument of social transformation and an egalitarian social order'. Education is conceived of as being able to function in this manner because of its inherent ability to promote the individual qualities of good democratic citizenship. The policy conceptualisation of the relationship between education and democracy is articulated in Curriculum 2005, which articulates how education should function as a tool of social transformation in the school context. The school as an institution must be a representation of democratic life; it must represent democratic values and must also institutionalise these values:

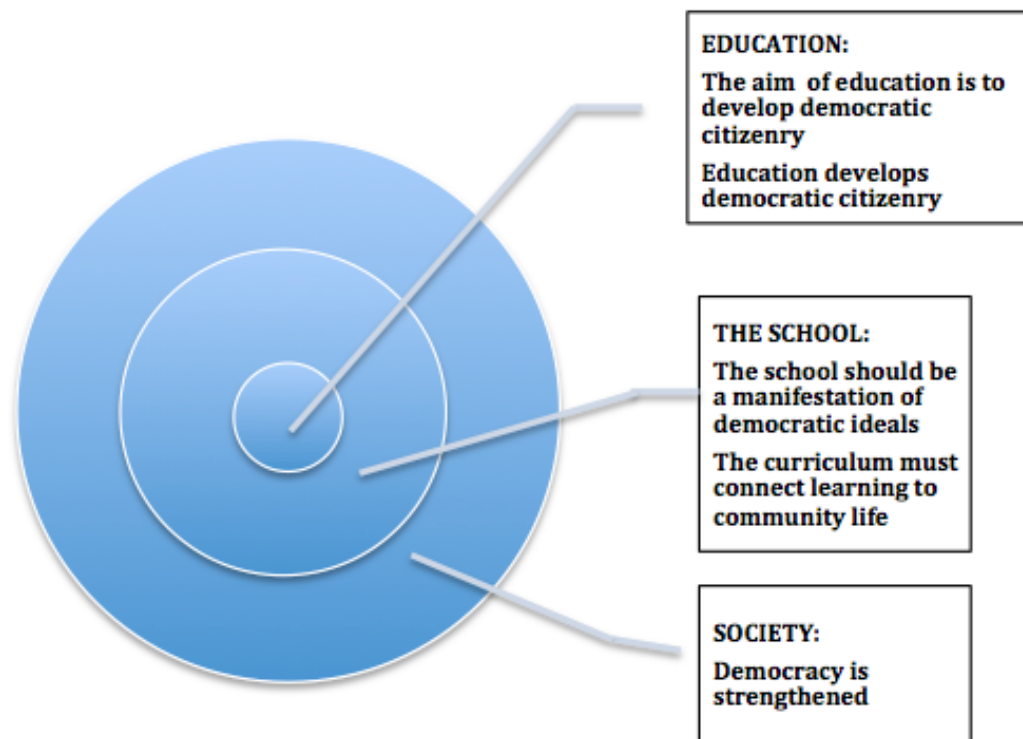
*As public spaces, schools must be marked by the values of equality, social justice and respect for diversity, as well as of the dignity and rights of children. These values must be consciously made part of the perspective of the school and form the foundation of school practice*

(Ibid., p. 81-82).

The document establishes a link between the school and the broader society outside it through the notion that children must participate in democratic life in a positive manner

as represented by the school, both as an institution itself and as a means of preparation for participation in democratic life in broader society. Central to the participation of children in democratic life through the functioning of the school environment is the enabling of children to relate to other children in a democratic manner. The document also articulates that this vision of the school as a representation of democratic life requires that learning be connected to broader society through the curriculum, as a matter of priority.

The conception in the policy of education as ‘an instrument of social transformation and an egalitarian social order’ is represented below:



**Education has an inherent ability to promote the individual qualities of good democratic citizenship**

**Figure 4 - The Policy: Education as an instrument of social transformation and an egalitarian social order (Curriculum 2005)**



## **Conceptual model of the policy objectives**

My identification of the core policy concepts, the premise of the policy based on the conception of the role of education as an instrument of social transformation, and the argument being made for achieving the broad policy objectives evolved into a conceptual model of the policy that serves as a depiction of the policy objectives. I first mapped out the policy's core concepts in relation to the Policy Premise and the Policy Argument in order to obtain a visualisation of the policy and its elements. Since the concepts forming the argument came from within the policy itself, the argument being made also incorporates how the policy can be operationalized. It then became clear that the Policy Argument sets out the vision of how UEE can be achieved. Once created, the model then served as a structure that provided conceptual clarity and facilitated analysis of the policy. This was possible because all components of the model have a consistency and coherency across the policy documents and six-year time frame involved which makes them stable. This conceptual model is presented on the next page. The 'plus sign' denotes 'amalgamation with' and the 'single arrow signs' denote 'sustain'.

## THE OVERALL POLICY OBJECTIVES

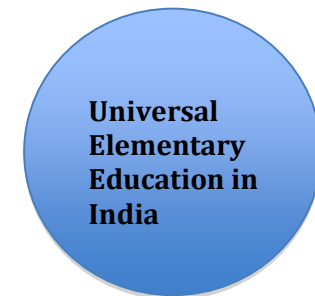


**Policy Premise:**  
Education rooted in democratic principles  
will strengthen democracy

**UEE will strengthen  
democracy by  
providing equal  
opportunities to all**



**'Universal Access'  
is an essential  
component of UEE'**



**'Equitable access must amalgamate with equitable  
quality to institutionalise and sustain universal access'**

## **The relationship between the RTE child-centred provisions and the policy objectives**

The child-centred education provisions of RTE constitute their policy objectives, and are presented below:

### *RTE V. 29.(1) – for child-centred curriculum and evaluation*

The curriculum and the evaluation procedure for elementary education shall be laid down by an academic authority to be specified by the appropriate Government, by notification.

The academic authority, while laying down the curriculum and the evaluation procedure under sub-section (1) shall take into consideration the following, namely:-

- a) Conformity with the values enshrined in the constitution
- b) All-round development of the child
- c) Building up the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent
- d) Development of physical and mental abilities to the fullest extent
- e) Learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child-friendly and child-centred manner
- f) Medium of instruction in mother tongue as far as possible
- g) Making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety and helping the child to express views freely
- h) Comprehensive and continuous evaluation of child's understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same

'Curriculum' refers to all aspects of education (Government of India, 2011).

A relationship can be established between the RTE provisions and the overall policy objectives through the Policy Premise and the Policy Argument. Firstly, the RTE provisions correspond with the democratic principles of the policy, as shown in the table below:

<b>Policy Concept</b>	<b>RTE Mandate</b>
<p><i>Equitable Access</i></p> <p>‘Equitable Access’ is interpreted to mean that education should contain no barriers to learning whatsoever, all children are to be treated equally at school, their participation in learning is to be ensured and the educational needs and predicament of traditionally excluded children will be understood</p>	(a) to (h)
<p><i>‘Equitable Quality’:</i></p> <p>Equitable Quality is being interpreted to mean that children from disadvantaged backgrounds should be provided with additional support to bring them up to par with other students.</p>	(h)
<p><i>‘Universal Access’:</i></p> <p>Universal Access is being interpreted to mean that access to education incorporates curriculum, pedagogy and assessment as well as access to school on the physical level.</p>	(a) to (h)

Since the RTE provisions correspond with the democratic principles of the policy, they form part of the Policy Premise - ‘Education rooted in democratic principles will strengthen democracy’ – as constituting the kind of education that ‘will strengthen democracy’. The Policy Premise can now be read as ‘The RTE child-centred education provisions are rooted in democratic principles and will strengthen democracy’. Therefore the Policy Argument is no longer based on the assumption that education has the inherent ability to promote the individual qualities of good democratic citizenship. The RTE provisions can therefore also be attributed the role of assisting with the achievement of the overall policy objectives: they will assist with achieving UEE and will strengthen democracy. The positioning of these provisions within the Policy Argument is presented in the diagram below:

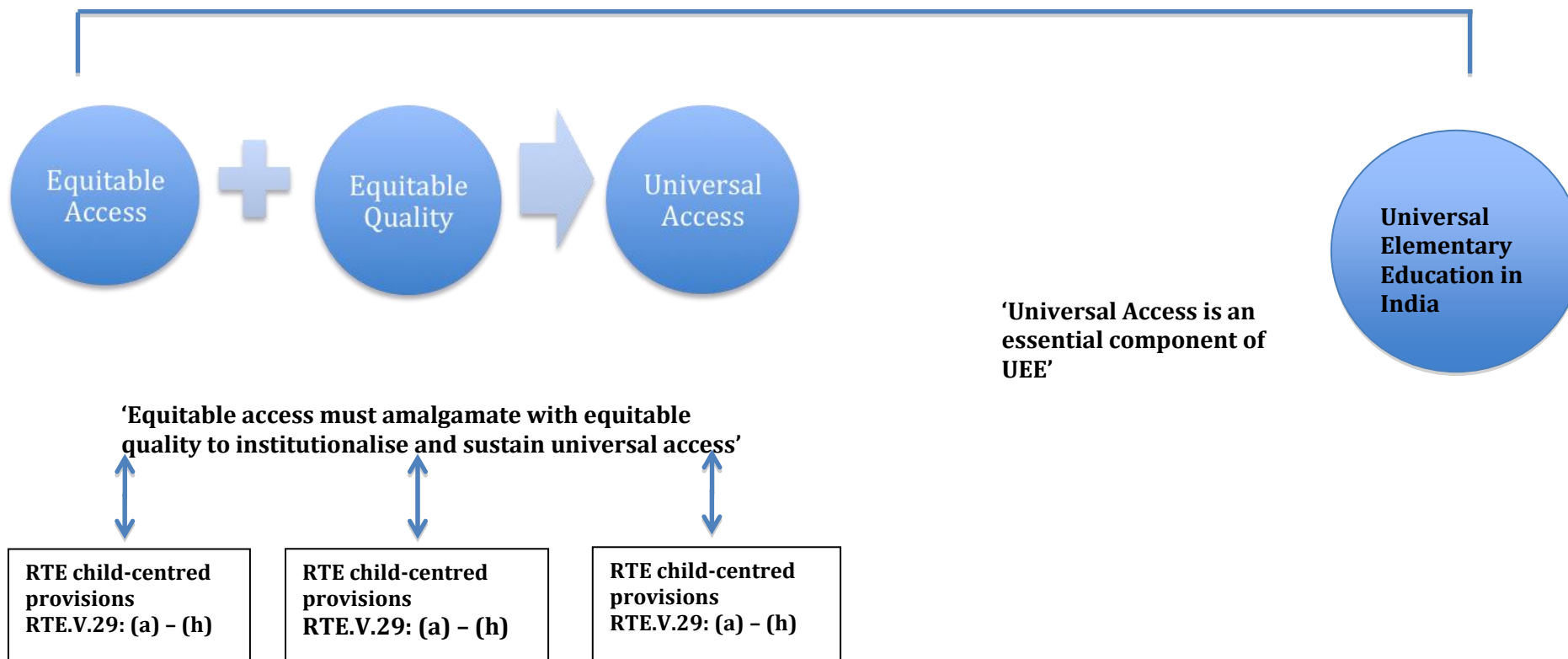
# THE OVERALL POLICY OBJECTIVES INCORPORATING CHILD-CENTRED EDUCATION

## Policy Premise:

The RTE child-centred education provisions are rooted in democratic principles and will strengthen democracy



UEE will strengthen democracy by providing equal opportunities to all



## **Conclusions about the child-centred education objectives of RTE**

Child-centred education is conceived in the policy as a means of achieving the overall policy objectives of achieving UEE and of strengthening democracy in India. This is because it is considered to constitute the kind of education that is rooted in democratic principles and that will strengthen democracy. The child-centred education provisions of RTE are attributed with the ability to achieve this because the Policy Premise is that they are rooted in the democratic principles set out in the policy and will therefore strengthen democracy.

However, the ability of the child-centred education policy of RTE to assist with the achievement of the policy objectives is on a weak footing. As the starting point from Chapter Four shows, the universal provision of the child-centred policy of RTE requires the universal provision of education, UEE. To achieve UEE a definition of the term 'compulsory education' that means the child must attend school as well as the legal enforcement of school on the national level are required.

This requirement can now be identified as a lacuna in the Policy Argument. Achieving UEE is based on the Policy Argument that 'Universal Access is an essential component of UEE..... Equitable Access must amalgamate with Equitable Quality to institutionalise and sustain Universal Access'. These two parts of the argument being made for achieving UEE do not connect. While 'Universal Access' is stated as being an essential component of UEE, there is no provision for how it will actually lead to UEE. This lacuna is represented as a red arrow in the diagram below:

# LACUNA IN THE POLICY ARGUMENT

**Policy Premise:**  
The RTE child-centred education provisions are rooted in democratic principles and will strengthen democracy



UEE will strengthen democracy by providing equal opportunities to all



'Equitable access must amalgamate with equitable quality to institutionalise and sustain universal access'

'Universal Access is an essential component of UEE'

RTE child-centred provisions  
RTE.V.29: (a) - (h)

RTE child-centred provisions  
RTE.V.29: (a) - (h)

RTE child-centred provisions  
RTE.V.29: (a) - (h)

**PROBLEM:**  
**HOW WILL WE GET FROM UA TO UEE WITHOUT THE LEGAL ENFORCEMENT OF 'COMPULSORY EDUCATION?'**

## HOW CHILD-CENTRED EDUCATION IS CONCEPTUALISED

In this section I draw from RTE and SSA Framework to answer the research question “*How is child-centred education conceptualised within RTE?*” I start by setting out how the child-centred education policy of RTE is conceptualised in SSA Framework. I then employ the theoretical framework of the Thesis to ascertain whether this conceptualisation is theoretically supported and draw conclusions about the child-centred education policy of RTE.

SSA Framework makes the occasional reference to terms employed in child-centred education. However, it provides no explanation at all for provisions (a) to (d) and no theoretical rationale for the child-centred education provisions of RTE. Its explanation of the child-centred policy is limited to RTE provisions (e), (f), (g) and (h) and the new role ascribed to the Indian teacher, which is conceptualised with reference to democratic aims and ideals. RTE provision (h) is the only one that a comprehensive rationale is provided for, which is formulated in terms of providing a democratic form of assessment and learning.

### The child-centred education provisions of RTE

SSA Framework frames provision (e) as a ‘core component of quality learning’ and states the undesirability of teacher-dominated pedagogy while citing Curriculum 2005’s call for employing ‘critical pedagogy’ as part of a constructivist approach to teaching and learning so that learners can understand the world around them and because it “..... foregrounds questions of inequality and justice and enables learners to undertake transformative action” (Government of India, 2011, p. 64). Provision (f) is defined as an ‘equity issue’ because “*The biggest problem faced by tribal children is that of language. .... inclusion of tribal children hinges crucially on the language issue*” (Ibid., p. 35). While referring to an instructional benefit, the document clarifies the issue as the historical exclusion of tribal children from education and their likelihood to drop out of school because of language differences between school and home (Government of India, 2011). The document frames provision (g) as an ‘essential component of quality education’ and specifies it as working in conjunction with the democratic aims of provision IV.17(1), which prohibits corporal punishment or mental harassment with the aim of providing “..... a democratic ‘learning environment’ in the form of a nurturing school, and not a ‘correctional centre’ (Government of India, 2011, p. 80-81).



The rationale provided for provision (h) as a form of assessment is contained in the following two statements:

*The RTE Act calls for setting up of such continuous and comprehensive system of evaluation that releases the child from the fear and trauma of failure, but enables the teacher to pay individual attention to children's learning and performance*

(Government of India, 2011, p. 81).

and

*Research shows that the more competitive a test the more it actually selects social advantage, whereas collaborative and non-threatening assessment of children's progress leads to better learning of all. This is why the RTE Act (Section 13) has banned any kind of screening procedure for children and parents at the time of admission, has barred detention or expulsion of a child, and even disallowed the conduct of Board Examinations till a child completes elementary schooling (class VIII). This is to give the child adequate time to develop her learning and understanding fully through an enabling educational environment, and through a system of continuous and comprehensive assessment which enhances learning*

(Ibid., p. 57).

The other RTE provisions referred to in this paragraph are set out below:

*IV.13.(1) No school or person shall, while admitting a child, collect any capitation fee and subject the child or his or her parents or guardian to any screening procedure*

*IV.16. No child admitted in a school shall be held back in any class or expelled from school till the completion of elementary education*

*30.(1) No child shall be required to pass any Board examination till completion of elementary education*

Provision IV.16 is referred to as the 'no detention policy' (NDP), and is directly linked to CCE in its statement that 'no detention' "... implies putting in place a continuous and comprehensive procedure of child assessment and records" (Government of India, 2011, p. 81). The aim of NDP is stated as being to prohibit treating evaluation as a means of 'judging and passing a verdict', which was typical of the previous system of examination

in which students who failed either repeated the grade without necessarily being given additional assistance or they would drop out of school.

These democratic objectives of CCE as a form of assessment are presented in the table below:

<b>THE DEMOCRATIC OBJECTIVES OF CCE</b> (Government of India, 2011, p. 57, p. 81)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaborative and non-threatening assessment of children's progress because it leads to the better learning of all students</li> <li>2. To give the child adequate time to develop her learning and understanding fully</li> <li>3. To release the child from the fear and trauma of failure</li> <li>4. To enable the teacher to pay individual attention to children's learning and performance</li> </ol>

SSA Framework sets out the assessment objectives of CCE and the requirements of teachers in relation to it. These are set out in table form below:

<b>COMPREHENSIVE AND CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT</b>
<b>The objectives of CCE assessment</b> (Government of India, 2011, p. 66)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To give learners and teachers a sense of what is being learnt and how, in order to improve learning and teaching practices</li> <li>2. To show what progress the child has made with respect to her own performance over time and not compare one child with another</li> <li>3. Must enhance the student's motivation, which is crucial for any learning</li> <li>4. Treat assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, through observations of children and maintaining records of their work done in a portfolio, rather than as a judgement</li> </ol>
<b>Teachers are required to do the following for 'comprehensive evaluation':</b> (Ibid., p. 68)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. View the child from a holistic perspective rather than just a learner of different school subjects: to perceive aspects such as the child's health, self image, and sensibilities in the context of development and growth</li> <li>2. Make every effort, through interaction and engagement, to observe and understand the child's own nature. It is important that the teacher does not judge the child's nature, but should notice the inherent potential of the child in the context of his/her own nature</li> </ol>
<b>Teachers are required to do the following for 'continuous evaluation':</b> (Ibid.)
The teacher's work should be continuously guided by the child's response and participation in classroom activities, so evaluation should be seen as a process whereby the teacher can learn about the child in order to teach better.

## **The role of the teacher**

The role of teacher as a 'facilitator' is conceptualised as promoting a democratic form of education. In accordance with the child-centred approach, a teacher now has the role of 'facilitator', a transformation from the traditional role which is described as being a 'shift in the understanding of teaching and learning' and representing a move from 'teacher-directed' to 'learner-centric' learning (Government of India, 2011, p. 75). SSA Framework defines the role of the teacher within the child-centred policy as follows:

*SSA visualises teachers as a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own knowledge. The teacher should be aware about progressive pedagogy and must know the nature and experiences of children from various social and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, RTE requires that teachers should be committed to equity and social justice, aware about child entitlements and convinced that all children can learn well if provided education of equitable quality*

(Government of India, 2011, p. 69-70).

## **THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF CHILD-CENTRED EDUCATION**

I employed the theoretical framework of the Thesis to ascertain whether the conceptualisation of the child-centred provisions of RTE could be supported by child-centred education theory. The data obtained related to the Core Policy Concepts, the Policy Premise and the child-centred education provisions of RTE, and the new role of the teacher as a 'facilitator'. The theoretical framework is provided as Appendix Five for ease of reference.

The results indicated that the Core Policy Concepts, the Policy Premise and the RTE child-centred education provisions are all theoretically supported by the theoretical framework of the Thesis. All the RTE provisions, except for that of (e) for experiential learning, are theoretically supported in relation to the concept of 'Democracy' in the theoretical framework. Provision (e) is theoretically supported through the concept of 'Experiential Learning'. The role of teacher as 'a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own knowledge' is theoretically supported through the concept of 'Teacher as Facilitator'. Details of these results are set out below:

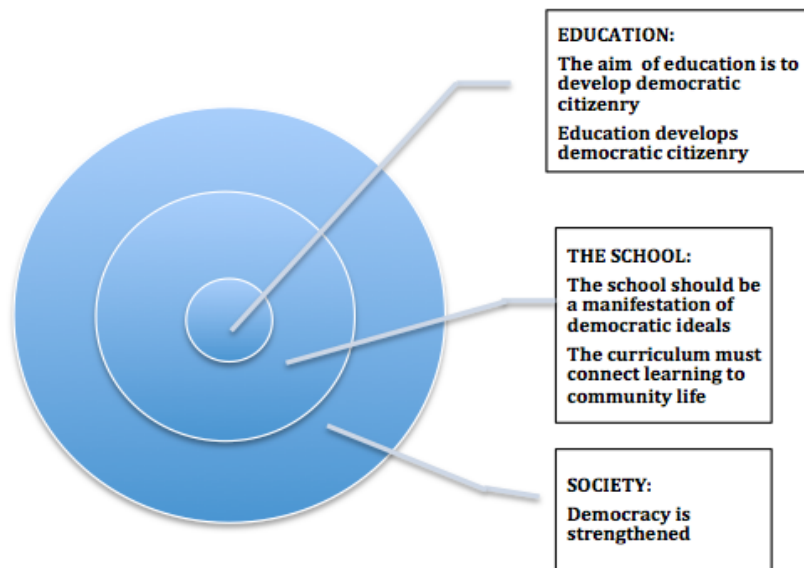
## **The core policy concepts**

The core policy concepts of *'Equitable Access'*, *'Equitable Quality'* and *'Universal Access'* are all supported by Rousseau's conception of a democratic approach in that the absence of any barriers to learning means that the student as an individual student would be revered, would not be judged either positively or negatively, and would not be made to suffer or be unhappy. They are all supported by Dewey's conception of a democratic approach in that the absence of all barriers would provide a form of education that a democratic society requires at school, namely, one that is directed towards social aims, fosters democratic citizenship, and one in which the school is manifesting democratic ideals.

## **The Policy Premise**

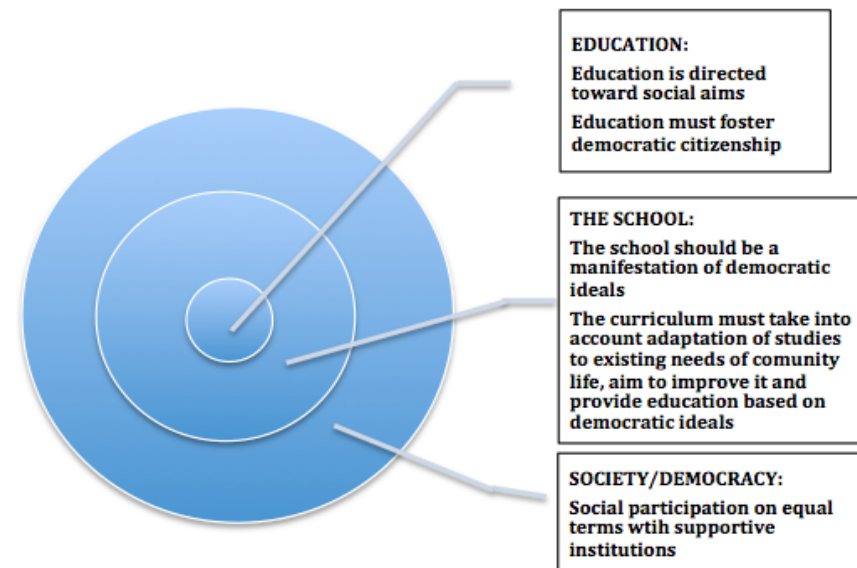
The Policy Premise – *'Education rooted in democratic principles will strengthen democracy'* – is itself based on the premise that education is an 'instrument of social transformation and an egalitarian social order' because education is deemed to have an inherent ability to promote the individual qualities of good democratic citizenship. Therefore the Policy Premise is based on an assumption about the inherent abilities of education. The conceptualisation in the policy of the relationship between democracy and the form of education that should be provided by a school, which reflects education being rooted in democratic principles and thereby strengthening democracy, was presented in Figure 2 above.

After interpreting this conceptualisation through the theoretical framework in relation to the concept of 'Democracy' and then mapping it alongside that of the Indian one presented earlier in the chapter, it was seen that the conceptualisation of the form of education a school should provide of the Indian policy and that of Dewey are almost identical. The difference is that the Indian conception is based on the assumption that 'education has an inherent ability to promote the individual qualities of good democratic citizenship' and in Dewey's conception education is viewed as 'essential for social life'. While Dewey's work is not explicitly referred to in either SSA Framework or Curriculum 2005, it appears to have informed the thinking of Indian policy makers. The similarity between the two conceptualisations of the form of education a democratic society should provide are presented in the diagram below:



**Education has an inherent ability to promote the individual qualities of good democratic citizenship**

**The Policy: Education as an instrument of social transformation and an egalitarian social order (Curriculum 2005)**



**Education is essential for social life**

**John Dewey: The form of education a democratic society requires**

**Figure 5 - The Policy Premise and Dewey compared**

## **The child-centred education provisions of RTE**

The RTE provisions constitute the elements that the individual Indian state education authorities are required to incorporate in their curriculum and evaluation procedures. In relation to the students as individuals, provisions (a), (b), (c), (d), (f), (g) and (h) can all be supported theoretically through the concept of 'Democracy' in the framework in relation to Rousseau in that they fulfil the requirement that students as individuals should be revered; they should not be judged either positively or negatively; and they should not be made to suffer. Provision (a) relates to the democratic values enshrined in the Indian Constitution. Provisions (b), (c), (d), and (g) all relate to the sound and positive development of the individual child. Provision (f) is particularly aimed at the sound and positive development of children from the historically disadvantaged communities in India. Provision (h) provides for a democratic form of assessment and learning.

These provisions can also all be supported theoretically in relation to curriculum and evaluation procedures through concept of 'Democracy' in the framework in relation to Dewey. Provision (a) fosters democratic citizenship and the school would be a site where democratic ideals would be manifested. Provisions (b), (c) and (d) can be supported if developing these aspects for the student is interpreted as being directed towards social aims, fostering democratic citizenship, and the school manifesting democratic ideals. Provision (f) is directed towards social aims, fosters democratic citizenship and the school would be manifesting democratic ideals. The curriculum would also be taking into account the adaptation of studies to the existing needs of community life, be aiming to improve it and be providing education based on democratic ideals. Provision (g) would constitute the school fostering democratic citizenship and manifesting democratic ideals. Provision (h) would constitute the school fostering democratic citizenship and manifesting democratic ideals.

Provision (e) can be theoretically supported by Rousseau's conception of experiential learning, in which learning must be matched to the child's stage of development and to do this both curriculum and pedagogy must be based on learning through experience. It can be theoretically supported by Dewey's conception of experiential learning if the terms 'child-friendly' and 'child-centred' are interpreted to mean that the learning process is rooted in experience and that the curriculum stems from the activities and situations of real life.

### **‘Teacher as Facilitator’**

The Indian conception of the teacher as ‘a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own knowledge’ can be theoretically supported through the concept of ‘Teacher as Facilitator’ in the framework in relation to Rousseau because the new role involves guiding learning and letting the student find out for herself, rather than instructing and giving precepts. The role can also be supported in relation to Dewey’s conception of the role of the teacher because it involves providing the right environment for learning, one that stimulates the response and directs the learner’s course.

### **Conclusions about the child-centred education policy of RTE**

The documentary analysis shows that the child-centred education policy of RTE is conceptualised as a means of assisting with the accomplishment of the overall policy objective of achieving UEE and as a means of strengthening democracy in India. However, the documentary analysis also shows that the ability of child-centred education to fulfil this role is on a weak footing. To assist with the achievement of UEE, child-centred education needs to be provided universally in India, and this universal provision of child-centred education requires the existence of UEE. This is a circular argument. The second objective, for child-centred education to strengthen democracy in India, also requires child-centred education to be provided universally in India, and this universal provision of child-centred education requires the existence of UEE. Hence the argument is circular on two fronts. This analysis has shown that what is required for the achievement of UEE is the legal enforcement of school attendance on the national level as well as a redefinition of the term ‘compulsory education’ to mean that children must attend school.

On the theoretical front, no theoretical rationale has been provided for the child-centred education provisions of RTE in the policy documents. The limited policy rationale provided conceptualises the child-centred provisions of RTE as comprising democratic aims and ideals and a democratic form of assessment and learning. The conceptualisation of the child-centred policy, which consists of the child-centred education provisions of RTE and the new ascribed role of the teacher as ‘facilitator’, is supported by the theoretical framework of the Study. The policy is therefore considered to be a sound one. This assertion provides a starting point for the analysis of the functioning of the policy, the subject of the next chapter.

## **Chapter 7: How the child-centred education policy is functioning**

This chapter presents the results of the research that was conducted by interviewing Indian teachers in order to answer the research question related to the child-centred education policy of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), *'How is the child-centred education policy of RTE functioning?' An additional research question – 'What do teachers think are the main challenges of achieving RTE in their own practice?' - was formulated to guide and facilitate the interviews with the teachers in order to answer the main research question.*

The examination of the literature, historical and policy contexts of the child-centred education policy of RTE conducted in previous chapters resulted in particular contextual understandings of the child-centred education policy of RTE. Firstly, it is a locally originating policy and therefore its analysis does not require taking into account its international policy context of Learner Centred Education (LCE). Secondly, the conceptualisation of child-centred education within RTE is theoretically supported and it is therefore understood to be a sound child-centred education policy. Thirdly, findings from the literature reviewed showed that the functioning of one of the child-centred provisions of RTE is problematic because of particular issues the teachers identified.

I first explain how the data were analysed and interpreted and set out how the research findings are organised. I then present the conclusions drawn from the research and follow this by elaborating upon the findings related to the functioning of the policy in detail. I end by drawing conclusions about the child-centred education policy of RTE.

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA**

In this section I describe how I analysed and interpreted the data obtained from the interviews with Indian teachers, while recognising that analysis and interpretation are not separate processes but each may be present in varying degrees at different stages and are interactive and iterative throughout the research (Simons, 2009).

#### **Description of the data**

The data obtained were in the form of interview recordings. I transcribed all the interviews, simultaneously translating from Hindi and Punjabi into English where needed,



while I conducted the field research. I began analysing the data when I was back in London during the period from October to December 2015. I first reviewed the interview transcripts as computer-based documents. During this process I changed some of the 'Indian' English of the transcripts into 'British' English so that the language would be familiar to my audience. I then printed out the interview transcripts in order to become familiar with the teachers' responses as written representations of the teachers' views. I had asked the teachers the interview questions in essentially the same order and the printed transcripts reflected this. Reading through all the transcripts to familiarise myself with their content was therefore straightforward. I had already become quite close to the data through the process of transcribing all of the interview recordings myself.

The data constituted 'representations' of the teachers' since "*Interviews do not tell us directly about people's 'experiences' but instead offer indirect 'representations' of those experiences*" (Silverman, 2006, p. 117). The questions I asked the teachers during the interviews were drawn either specifically or broadly from the policy in relation to their daily practice. Basing the interview questions on the policy constitutes the 'connective thread between the experiences of the teachers' (Seidman, 2006), across a minimum of four schools based in two states and the Union Territory of New Delhi. The implications of this for the status of the data were that firstly, they originated from the interview questions and secondly, they consequently consisted of the responses of teachers about the challenges they experienced with the policy in their day-to-day teaching practice.

### **Preparation of the data for analysis**

I conducted a thematic analysis in order to identify common themes through a systematic interrogation of the data. Thematic analysis constitutes a systematic approach to analysing qualitative data that is used across many fields and disciplines and involves identifying themes or patterns of cultural meaning; coding and classifying data according to themes; and interpreting the resulting thematic structures by seeking commonalities, relationships, overarching patterns, theoretical constructs, or explanatory principles (Lapadat, 2012). It involves distinct stages that include developing themes and a code, or a thematic code, by inductive means from the raw data (Boyatzis, 1998).

I first coded the data to identify themes from the teachers' stated challenges. I coded these according to the structure of the research question orienting the fieldwork with teachers: *'What do teachers think are the key challenges of achieving RTE in their own practice?'* Coding, that is, sorting the data according to topics, themes and issues

important to the study, can be structured by the research question (Stake, 2010). I did this according to the topics that emerged, which mostly concerned the aspects the teachers found to be challenging. I manually sorted the data because of my individual preference for maintaining control of it and because the scope of data collected was manageable in this way. I organised the data on the transcript page according to questions and their corresponding answers. I edited the pages to ensure there was sufficient space to separate each of the questions from the corresponding answers and to separate out each answer into paragraphs if needed, each paragraph corresponding to a different topic within the response. I then cut out each response of the teachers according to the question asked. Where there were several paragraphs in response, I cut out each paragraph separately, labelling it in relation to the question asked and according to the teacher who was asked the question to make sure that I could identify it. At this point I introduced pseudonyms for the teachers. I then manually sorted out these strips of paper containing the teachers' responses into categories according to the elements the teachers found to be challenging. The following topics emerged: the RTE mandates of 'no-detention policy'; 'comprehensive and continuous evaluation'; 'RTE'; 'academic level of students'; 'home environment of students'; 'reservation policy'; 'caste discrimination'; 'student attitude and behaviour'; 'language of instruction'; 'student learning'; 'predicament of students'; 'quality'; 'teaching'; 'infrastructure deficiencies'; 'non-teaching duties'; 'corruption'; 'corporal punishment'; and 'politics'.

I then did a second phase of coding to look at these themes in more depth. These were the aspects the teachers found to be the most challenging and therefore helped me to identify their key challenges, which had been the aim of the main interview question. I then identified the themes that the teachers experienced as the most challenging, based on the volume of data and on what the majority of teachers interviewed said. The various points the teachers made could then serve as examples of each issue. I then manually sorted the slips of paper with the teachers' responses on them into their separate categories of response. I initially kept the responses separate according to the location the teacher was based in. Because the findings were similar across the three locations, I made the decision not to differentiate them according to the location. The findings therefore represent the elements the teachers experienced as the most challenging in their daily practice as a single group. The themes of 'comprehensive and continuous evaluation', 'no-detention policy', 'infrastructure deficiencies' and 'non-teaching duties' were the themes the teachers interviewed were most concerned about and found to be most challenging. They were therefore selected for analysis. I then reviewed the data again to identify key issues that arose from these themes and to identify the data I

wanted to incorporate in the report. This led to the identification of the issues to do with how the policy was functioning. These issues were in relation to the themes 'comprehensive and continuous evaluation', 'no-detention policy', 'infrastructure deficiencies' and 'non-teaching duties'.

Consideration of the outcome of these issues enabled me to identify as a first step whether or not the child-centred objectives of the policy were being met. I then interpreted these results in relation to the concepts of 'Democracy' and 'Experiential Learning' of the theoretical framework in order to determine how the policy was functioning in relation to the child-centred benchmark the framework provided. The issues the teachers raised also highlighted ways in which their ability to fulfil their new role within the child-centred schema was impacted. I interpreted this result in relation to the concept of 'Teacher as Facilitator' of the theoretical framework as a child-centred benchmark. The criterion for the assessment of how both the child-centred provisions and the role of teachers were functioning was that the benchmark needed to be fully met for either the RTE provisions or the role of teacher to be considered as having satisfied it.

## **THE FINDINGS**

As stated above, the findings represent the elements the teachers experienced as the most challenging in their daily practice as a single group and were not differentiated according to location. The findings represent the general view of the group, that is, the views of the vast majority of the teachers interviewed. While a few teachers had some positive comments to make – for example, 'comprehensive and continuous evaluation' reduced pressure on students and child-centred education was in general good for learning, the teachers primarily viewed the new policy as problematic. The quotations presented represent this general position and were chosen because they were considered to best illustrate the nature of the issues they relate to.

The research findings are organised according to the three main themes I identified and the main issues that the teachers interviewed identified as being the most challenging in their daily teaching practice. These are presented below, in no particular order:

1. *Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)/No-Detention Policy (NDP)*

- a. Actual learning was not taking place
- b. It was very difficult to teach the students who are academically behind
- c. CCE and NDP demotivated students from studying
- d. Teachers felt disempowered by NDP to motivate students to study

2. The burden of clerical work

3. Infrastructural deficiencies

I first considered the outcome of these issues in order to identify as a first step whether or not the child-centred objectives of the policy were being met. The issues the teachers raised also highlighted ways in which their ability to fulfil their new role within the child-centred schema was impacted. I interpreted all these results in relation to the theoretical framework of the Thesis in order to determine how the policy was functioning in relation to the benchmark it provided. I provide a table below that categorises the objectives of the RTE provisions according to their relationship to the three child-centred concepts of the theoretical framework to accompany the research findings.

<b>The provisions for child-centred education: RTE V.29</b>	<b>PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Conformity with the values enshrined in the constitution</li> <li>(b) All-round development of the child</li> <li>(c) Building up the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent</li> <li>(d) Development of physical and mental abilities to the fullest extent</li> <li>(f) Medium of instruction in mother tongue as far as possible</li> <li>(g) Making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety and helping the child to express views freely</li> <li>(h) Comprehensive and continuous evaluation of child's understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same</li> </ul>	<b>Democracy</b>
(e) Learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child-friendly and child-centred manner	<b>Experiential Learning</b>
Teacher as 'a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own learning'	<b>Teacher as Facilitator</b>

## CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE RESEARCH

The research presents insights into the functioning of seven of the eight child-centred education provisions of RTE as well as into the functioning of the new ascribed role of the Indian teacher as 'facilitator'. The delivery of six of the seven child-centred education provisions of RTE for a democratic form of education - provisions (a), (b), (c), (d), (g) and (h) - either fell short of the benchmark or was vulnerable to falling short of it. This was because either the objective or objectives of the provisions were not met or because teachers were not delivering the objectives of the provisions or their ability to deliver these might have been negatively impacted. This in turn caused provision (a) to either fall short of the benchmark or to be vulnerable to falling short of it. Therefore the functioning of all six provisions is problematic. The teachers did not provide any insights into the functioning of provision (f). The delivery of provision (e) for experiential learning either fell short of the benchmark or was vulnerable to falling short of it. The results in relation to the benchmark for the role of 'Teacher as Facilitator' relate to the teachers who were interviewed because they are the ones who experienced the issues they reported. The teachers fell short of this benchmark or were vulnerable to falling short of it, either because they were not being 'a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own knowledge' or because their ability to do so might be negatively impacted. These conclusions are set out in the table below:

**THE CHILD-CENTRED EDUCATION BENCHMARKS FROM THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS**

THE ISSUES THE TEACHERS REPORTED	BENCHMARK FOR A DEMOCRATIC FORM OF EDUCATION		BENCHMARK FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING		BENCHMARK FOR TEACHER AS FACILITATOR	
	RTE PROVISION NOT MET	RTE PROVISION VULNERABLE	RTE PROVISION NOT MET	RTE PROVISION VULNERABLE	NOT MET	VULNERABLE
<b>NDP/CCE ISSUES</b>						
<i>1: Actual learning was not taking place</i>	(a) (h) (b) (c) (d)					
<i>2: It was very difficult to teach the students who are academically behind</i>	(a) (b) (c) (d) (g) (h)		(e)			
<i>3: Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) and the No-Detention Policy (NDP) demotivated students from studying</i>	(a) (h)	(b) (c) (d)		(e)		
<i>4: Teachers felt disempowered by NDP to motivate students to study</i>		(a) (b) (c) (d) (h)		(e)		
<b>THE BURDEN OF CLERICAL WORK</b>		(a) (b) (c) (d) (g) (h)		(e)		
<b>INFRASTRUCTURAL DEFICIENCIES</b>		(a) (b) (c) (d) (g) (h)		(e)		

## THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Theme 1: CCE/NDP

The literature review conducted in Chapter Three indicated ways in which the functioning of CCE as a child-centred form of assessment is problematic. The teachers I interviewed identified various issues to do with the functioning of CCE as well as with the No-Detention Policy (NDP). The latter is linked to CCE as shown in the previous chapter. These issues are set out below.

#### *Issue 1: Actual learning was not taking place*

Nearly all the teachers thought that actual learning was not taking place as a result of CCE and NDP, with the result that a significant proportion of their students were academically behind. They referred to this situation as 'the academic base being low' and maintained that this was because actual learning was not taking place. One teacher estimated the proportion of students who were academically behind at eight per cent while another teacher estimated it at approximately fifty per cent. As one teacher commented:

*The children don't know anything. They don't know anything, A, B, C, D they don't know. What can you do?*

Yogeshwar, Hindi teacher, Punjab.

The students who were academically behind were reported as having little or no academic knowledge or skills and as being unable to read, spell or write properly or do basic mathematics. Some teachers reported they had students who could not write or do mathematics at all. One teacher recalled the following student:

*There is a child in 7<sup>th</sup> class and he writes literally a chain, he draws only chain, a very symmetrical chain, a nice one. Not a single word can he write, but he is in 7<sup>th</sup> class and we can't fail him for it. He will get the 8<sup>th</sup> pass certificate, he will get it*

Amarjeet, Commerce teacher, Amritsar.

The teachers were more concerned about NDP than about CCE as a contributing factor to the poor learning outcome. As one teacher commented:

*The no-detention policy that the government has introduced is becoming a big problem for teachers. Because you can't fail a child in the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> classes, by the time a child reaches 9<sup>th</sup> class, if he's not getting that required percentage he's failing. So the percentage of students passing becomes very low in 9<sup>th</sup> class .....*

Sonia, Economics Teacher, Delhi/UP.

Two of the overall objectives of CCE and NDP for the assessment of learning are 'to give the student adequate time to develop her learning and understanding fully' and 'to release the student from the fear and trauma of failure'. These provisions are in place through provisions (e) and (g) respectively. Provision (e) for experiential learning is supported by NDP, which matches learning to the child's stage of development over the yearly and school academic cycles by prohibiting detaining the child in the same academic year. The two remaining overall objectives of CCE and NDP are to provide 'collaborative and non-threatening assessment of children's progress because it leads to the better learning of all students' and 'to enable the teacher to pay individual attention to children's learning and performance'. Consequently, although assessment is 'collaborative and non-threatening', the second part of this objective – the 'better learning of all students' – has not taken place because of the learning outcome that a significant proportion of students were academically behind. One teacher said of this segment of students:

*When they reach the upper level they don't know the basic things. So you can't start from A, B, C, D and go to the highest level. I have been seeing this over the last four/five years, since CCE started*

Rajwant, English teacher, Punjab.

A significant proportion of students being academically behind resulted in the learning objective of CCE and NDP of achieving the 'better learning of all students' not being met. Hence the 'better learning' of all students has not taken place, and neither has the 'better learning' of the students who were academically behind. Therefore, although a democratic form of assessment is in place through CCE and NDP, the objective of provision (h) in relation to its specific objectives for a democratic form of assessment has consequently not been met. Provision (h) does not meet the benchmark for a democratic form of education because while it provides for students as individuals to be revered, not be judged either positively or negatively and not to suffer or be made unhappy, the schools concerned were not providing a form of education that fosters democratic



citizenship and were not manifesting democratic ideals. Therefore at the school level the objective of RTE provision (a) of conformity with two of the values enshrined in the constitution - those of 'social justice' and 'equality of opportunity' - was not met. This was because the school was not being a 'manifestation of democratic ideals' as required by the benchmark for the delivery of a democratic form of education. Provision (a) therefore also does not meet the benchmark for a democratic form of education.

The learning outcome that a significant proportion of students were academically behind with the consequence that the objective of CCE and NDP of achieving the 'better learning of all students' has not been met implies that the teacher has not been 'enabled' to pay individual attention to children's learning and performance. The teachers interviewed therefore did not meet the benchmark for the role of 'Teacher as Facilitator' because they were not motivating children 'to construct their own knowledge' and were consequently not fulfilling their role of guiding learning and letting the student find out for herself. They were also not providing the right environment for learning with regard to this segment of students.

*Issue 2: It was very difficult to teach the students who are academically behind*

Several teachers commented that students reach the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades with little or no knowledge and are therefore not at the right academic level or have disparate academic levels. The teachers reported students as being unable to understand and learn, and being unable to understand examination questions, let alone being able to answer them. They also reported that a significant proportion of students fail in the higher classes. A teacher from Delhi estimated fifty per cent of her students fail in the 11<sup>th</sup> Class, whereas they would have previously passed.

The teachers interviewed mainly taught the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades and so were concerned about their students passing the Board Examinations at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. They were also under pressure to achieve a hundred per cent pass rate. The teachers essentially taught remedially for the segment of students who were academically behind in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades to help them to catch up and pass these external examinations. They reported that they found it very difficult to do this and described this as presenting a significant problem for them.

*This is the greatest challenge we are facing for the last*

*two years, because of CCE, no detention policy until 8<sup>th</sup> class. This is the biggest challenge for the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> classes because the children are completely raw. .... If they don't have the basic knowledge of the course, how can they clear the 11<sup>th</sup> class?*

Sudesh, 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade teacher, Delhi.

Teachers might have to go as far back as the 6<sup>th</sup> grade in order to prepare students for the 'Boards'. An English teacher commented that a child who does not know how to write the alphabet and frame words and sentences cannot catch up even if she tries. The Principal of one of the schools in Amritsar described the students as follows:

*They don't have the level to study. They don't understand even if you repeat something ten times, they can't learn. The next time they are blank. The teachers put their best efforts but they don't get any output*

Mr. Sethi, Principal, School A, Amritsar.

The teachers reported that they had to constantly work hard to assist students to catch up. As one teacher said:

*These CCE children they are lacking the basic knowledge. When they come to us in 11<sup>th</sup>, we have to work hard, more, you know. Yes, we have to start from the basics. Their vocabulary has become so much less. They cannot make a sentence right. Due to CCE all this has started*

Sapna, Home Science teacher, Delhi/UP.

The teachers employed various strategies to assist students to catch up and obtain good examination results, which essentially meant that they were orienting their teaching towards passing the Board Examinations. These strategies included the following: starting with the basics; trying to teach in an interesting way to make the subject interesting for students; giving extra time to the students who were behind without disadvantaging the students who were doing well; translating the examination papers, which are in English, word for word; moving students who were not able to study in English to the Punjabi medium stream to make learning easier for them; providing notes on the textbook and class discussions to simplify the language; first teaching the students who were behind how to read and then giving them extra work sheets, checking on student's work every day and giving them additional work; and going through past examination papers in class line by line.

Because the teachers were orienting their teaching of the students who were academically behind towards catching up in order to pass the Board Examinations, the objectives of all the RTE provisions that relate to a democratic form of education - (b), (c), (d), (g) and (h) - were not met in relation to this segment of students. The teachers were not 'focusing on their all-round development'; they were not 'building up their knowledge, potentiality and talent'; and they were not 'developing their physical and mental abilities to the fullest'. The priority being given towards passing the Board Examinations may have placed pressure on students and may have resulted in 'fear of failure' on the part of the student rather than make her 'free of fear, trauma and anxiety and able to express her views freely'.

Provision (h) for comprehensive and continuous evaluation was impacted in the same manner because one of its democratic aims is to 'release the child from the fear and trauma of failure'. The ability to meet other objectives of provisions (h) may also be affected: questions are raised as to whether students were being given 'adequate time to develop their learning and understanding fully'; whether their motivation for learning, which is considered to be crucial, was being 'enhanced'; and whether the 'better learning of all' was taking place, both in relation to this segment of students and to the students as a whole.

The teacher's work was also affected in the following ways with regard to provision (h): she was not being 'enabled' to pay individual attention to children's learning and performance; she was not treating assessment as 'an integral part of teaching and learning, through observations of children and maintaining records of their work done in a portfolio, rather than as a judgement'; she was not viewing the child 'from a holistic perspective rather than just a learner of different school subjects'; her ability to 'observe and understand the child's own nature' and not 'judge' it and see the inherent potential of the child in the context of her 'own nature' may be negatively impacted; and she was not being 'continuously guided by the student's response and participation in classroom activities', and so was not seeing evaluation as a process whereby he or she could learn about the child in order to teach better. The objectives of provisions (b), (c), (d), (g) and (h) were consequently not met.

Therefore the delivery of these five RTE provisions did not meet the benchmark for a democratic form of education. Therefore at the school level the objective of RTE provision (a), conformity with two of the values enshrined in the constitution - those of 'social justice' and 'equality of opportunity' - was not met. This was because the school

was not being a 'manifestation of democratic ideals' as required by the benchmark for the delivery of a democratic form of education. Provision (a) therefore also did not meet the benchmark for a democratic form of education.

The result of teachers teaching remedially and orienting their teaching towards passing the Board Examinations for the students who were academically behind, which constituted a significant proportion of students, meant that the delivery of provisions (b), (c), (d), (g) and (h) did not meet the benchmark for a democratic form of education. Although these provide for students as individuals to be revered, not be judged either positively or negatively and not to suffer or be made unhappy, the school was not providing a form of education that fosters democratic citizenship and it was not manifesting democratic ideals.

The objective of provision (e) for experiential learning was not met because the teachers were not teaching the students who were academically behind 'through activities, discovery and exploration in a child-friendly and child-centred manner'. Therefore experiential learning was not taking place and this provision did not meet the benchmark for experiential learning for these students. The curriculum and pedagogy were not based on learning through experience, the learning process was not rooted in experience, and the curriculum was not arising from the activities and situations of real life.

Since the teachers were orienting their teaching towards passing the Board Examinations, they were not fulfilling their role as 'a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own knowledge' with regard to this segment of students. Therefore the teachers did not meet the benchmark for 'Teacher as Facilitator' because they were not fulfilling their role of guiding learning and letting the student find out for herself and they were not providing the right environment for learning in relation to the students who were academically behind. However, in relation to Dewey's conception of the role of the teacher, the teacher could be said to have been focusing on the subject matter in relation to the student's present needs and capacities. This indicates that the role of facilitator incorporates remedial teaching within it. However, the teachers were still not being 'a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own knowledge'.

*Issue 3: CCE and NDP demotivated students from studying*

All the teachers interviewed attributed the lack of learning and lack of academic knowledge and skills to students not being motivated to study. Teachers attributed this lack of motivation to study to both CCE and to NDP.

One teacher commented that the proportion of students who do not study was twenty to thirty per cent.

*Students are not serious about their studies. They are just not taking an interest. They don't give in assignments sometimes. They just don't care ..... so that's the bad thing, I feel, that the students don't take an interest and they just get promoted to 9<sup>th</sup> class*

Indira, Art teacher, Delhi/UP.

Another teacher commented that students used to be motivated to study by themselves before:

*Now we have to take the initiative, you study, study, study. All 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standard teachers stress to students: you have to make your future, you have not studied anything earlier. Now teachers are putting pressure*

Sudesh, 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Delhi/UP.

The teachers commented that actual learning was not taking place. As one teacher said:

*..... I am not happy with some of the things, and the CCE. As a teacher, I feel that we are actually betraying with CCE. Yes, because they automatically pass ..... this year so many students have passed. Next year this lakhs of students [hundreds and thousands of students] will have passed ..... but where is the actual education? It is not there*

Nirmal, English teacher, Delhi/UP.

The new assessment system incorporates a cumulative point system and a lowered pass mark of thirty-three per cent because there are other criteria to measure the performance of students. Teachers thought that this lower pass mark and the cumulative point system make it easy for students to pass without studying. One teacher commented:

*They know that if they do some homework, they get a few grades. They cross that barrier of 33 marks out of 100 [the pass mark], and they are in Class 11. .... I want children to be educated in a true sense, which is not there*

*..... they type from Google, they get a lesson plan done, they know the novel is this, the writer is this, the crux of the novel is this, they present it to you. We mark it, we give them marks. But actually that novel reading, that procedure is not there*

Nirmal, English teacher, Delhi/UP.

Other teachers commented that the cumulative point system encourages students to copy other students' work. One teacher thought that the current emphasis on activities with CCE hinders learning because students are just doing one activity or the other and 'decorating' and so are not developing concepts or the necessary foundation. She also commented that some projects, particularly the Internet based ones, are not always age appropriate for the younger students, with the result that children learn little. Some teachers commented that students were not afraid or concerned about being promoted to the next class. As one teacher said:

*The system has deteriorated after RTE because every class is up to 8<sup>th</sup>. No one gets failed. Even the parent says to his child, you got to work, you don't need to go to school, you will get the pass*

Narinder, Science teacher, Punjab.

Some teachers also thought that students would work harder before the 9<sup>th</sup> grade if they knew they would be detained in the same year. As one teacher commented:

*..... because the policy is giving them the freedom you know, because they are physically present but they are not listening to what the teacher is saying*

Sonia, Economics teacher, Delhi.

A democratic form of assessment is in place through the four overall objectives of CCE and NDP for the assessment of learning, which are as follows: the 'collaborative and non-threatening assessment of children's progress because it leads to the better learning of all students'; 'to give the student adequate time to develop her learning and understanding fully'; 'to release the student from the fear and trauma of failure'; and 'to enable the teacher to pay individual attention to children's learning and performance'. In addition, one of the objectives of CCE as a form of assessment is that it 'must enhance the student's motivation, which is crucial for any learning'. However, the learning outcome was that students were demotivated from studying and hence this latter objective was not met. Consequently the objective of provision (h) was not met.

Therefore its delivery did not meet the benchmark for a democratic form of education because although these provisions provide for students as individuals to be revered, not be judged either positively or negatively and not to suffer or be made unhappy, the school was not providing a form of education that fosters democratic citizenship and it was not manifesting democratic ideals.

Therefore at the school level the objective of RTE provision (a), conformity with two of the values enshrined in the constitution - those of 'social justice' and 'equality of opportunity' - was not met. This was because the school was not being a 'manifestation of democratic ideals' as required by the benchmark for the delivery of a democratic form of education. Provision (a) therefore also did not meet the benchmark for a democratic form of education.

In addition, the ability of teachers to fulfil the requirements expected of them for CCE as a form of assessment may also be negatively impacted as a result of students not being motivated to learn. Teachers may not be able to have their work 'continuously guided by the child's response and participation in classroom activities so that evaluation can be seen as a process whereby the teacher can learn about the child in order to teach better'. Therefore the ability of teachers to deliver the objectives of provision (h) may be negatively impacted.

Students not being motivated to learn may also negatively impact the ability of teachers to deliver the objectives of the other provisions that relate to the democratic form of education, provisions (b), (c) and (d). Students were potentially impacting the ability of teachers to do the following for them: 'focus on their all-round development'; 'build up their knowledge, potentiality and talent'; and 'develop their physical and mental abilities'. This may render the delivery of a democratic form of education vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark.

The delivery of provision (e) for 'experiential learning' may be negatively impacted. The provision of education may have been based on experiential learning, however, if students are not motivated to learn the ability of teachers to deliver experiential learning in the form of curriculum and pedagogy based on learning from experience and to root the learning process in experience may be negatively impacted. This renders the delivery of provision (e) vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark for experiential learning. Students not being motivated to learn may also negatively impact the ability of teachers to be 'a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own

knowledge'. Therefore teachers may not be fulfilling their role of guiding learning and letting the student find out for himself or be providing the right environment for learning for the students who are not motivated to learn. Therefore the teachers were vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark for 'Teacher as Facilitator'.

*Issue 4: Teachers felt disempowered by NDP to motivate students to study*

The teachers commonly expressed a feeling of being disempowered by NDP to motivate students to learn. One teacher commented that students sometimes take advantage of the authority of teachers being undermined because they know that teachers have limitations and cannot scold or rebuke them. He thought this would apply to 10-15 students out of 50. As another teacher commented:

*The no-detention policy is a big problem in the education system now. No student is going to fail, even if that student gets 0%, 1% or 2%. The student is supposed to pass. The student knows this, so how much pressure can a teacher apply to the student, how can a teacher motivate that student to pass?*

Suneeta, English teacher, Delhi.

Teachers also said that they could not now be strict with students. Another said that the only sanction they now have is to tell students who do not work that they would not be allowed to sit a test, whereas previously students would have been afraid of failing it.

One teacher thought that discipline was necessary and that a little strictness was for the benefit of the child. Teachers also commented that they felt under a lot of pressure, particularly during the examination period. One teacher said that students do not listen or pay attention to teachers or respect them because they know that teachers have to pass the students. A different teacher expressed this as follows:

*6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> we don't have that [fear of failing the exams], it's their choice. If they study it's okay, if they don't study it's okay. We are helpless. We just have to give D grade or E grade, B grade, A grade .....*

Yogeshwar, Hindi teacher, Amritsar.

A democratic form of assessment is in place through the four overall objectives of CCE and NDP for the assessment of learning, which are as follows: the 'collaborative and non-threatening assessment of children's progress because it leads to the better learning



of all students'; 'to give the student adequate time to develop her learning and understanding fully'; 'to release the student from the fear and trauma of failure'; and 'to enable the teacher to pay individual attention to children's learning and performance'. In addition, one of the objectives of CCE as a form of assessment is that it 'must enhance the student's motivation, which is crucial for any learning'.

However, the view of all the teachers was that the new system of assessment was not working. As one teacher expressed it:

*The biggest wrong decision taken by our administration is the policy they have made not to fail any student up to 8<sup>th</sup> standard ..... because the teachers are pressurised ..... teachers are much pressurised, we are not allowed to say any wrong word. The students know whether we come to school, whether we do our homework, whether we attend, the teacher will have to pass them. They don't have any fear in mind that if we don't go to school, if we don't study we will fail*

Rajwant, English teacher, Amritsar.

If teachers felt disempowered to motivate students to learn, their ability to meet the objective of CCE to enhance student motivation as crucial for learning to take place may be negatively impacted. This makes the delivery of provision (h) vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark for a democratic form of assessment. In addition, the ability of teachers to fulfil the requirements expected of them for CCE as a form of assessment may also be negatively impacted as a result of students not being motivated to learn. Teachers may not be able to have their work 'continuously guided by the child's response and participation in classroom activities so that evaluation can be seen as a process whereby the teacher can learn about the child in order to teach better'. Therefore the ability of teachers to deliver the objectives of provision (h) may also be negatively impacted.

Teachers feeling disempowered to motivate students to learn may also negatively impact their ability to deliver the objectives of the other that relate to the democratic form of education, provisions (b), (c) and (d). Teachers may not be able to do the following for students: 'focus on their all-round development'; 'build up their knowledge, potentiality and talent'; and 'develop their physical and mental abilities'. This renders the delivery of all these mandates, (b), (c), (d), and (h) vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark for a democratic form of education. This latter aspects results in the school being vulnerable to not meeting the objective of RTE provision (a) in relation to conformity with two of the

values enshrined in the constitution, those of 'social justice' and 'equality of opportunity'. This is because the school was not being a 'manifestation of democratic ideals' as required by the benchmark for the delivery of a democratic form of education. Provision (a) is therefore also vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark for a democratic form of education.

The delivery of provision (e) for 'experiential learning' may be negatively impacted. If students are not motivated to learn the ability of teachers to deliver experiential learning in the form of curriculum and pedagogy that is based on learning from experience and to root the learning process in experience may be negatively impacted. This renders the delivery of provision (e) vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark for experiential learning.

Students not being motivated to learn may also negatively impact the ability of teachers to be a 'capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own knowledge'. Therefore teachers may not be fulfilling their role of guiding learning and letting the student find out for himself and or be providing the right environment for learning for the students who are not motivated to learn. Consequently the ability of teachers to fulfil their role of 'Teacher as Facilitator' may be negatively impacted and they were vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark.

## **Theme 2: The burden of clerical work**

The teachers interviewed reported that their paperwork and clerical duties have increased. As one teacher commented:

*We are not educating only, we are not teaching, means we are not teaching only. We are doing their registration, their online work, their computer work, data, actually we have become the data entry operator to be very frank*

Kulwinder, Maths teacher, Amritsar.

The teachers reported they have to do the following: make lists of students, fill out scholarship paperwork and administer scholarships, hand out free textbooks for qualifying students, enter marks in the computer system, make report cards, and do extra clerical work. They reported that they felt overburdened, paperwork was being given more importance than teaching, there was very little time for actual teaching, the

quality of their teaching was being negatively affected and they found it stressful to have to manage their classes whilst undertaking the various non-teaching tasks.

The teachers said that they mostly do this clerical work in their free periods and at home, often late at night. Not all teachers were proficient at using the computer, which added to their difficulties. Some of this work had to be done in class time, however, and with class sizes of eighty students or more, these activities can take up substantial class time. The result of teachers being burdened with clerical duties is that time was taken away from learning. The ability of teachers to focus on the objectives of all the mandates that relate to the democratic form of education – provisions (b), (c), (d), (g) and (h) - and therefore their ability to meet the objectives, was negatively impacted. Teachers may not be able to focus on the following: 'the all-round development of the child'; 'building up the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent'; 'developing the physical and mental abilities of students to the fullest'; 'making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety and helping the child to express views freely'; and the 'continuous and comprehensive evaluation of child's understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same'. The latter relates to provision (h), which has as one of its assessment objectives to 'pay individual attention to children's learning and performance'. The ability of the teacher to deliver this objective may also be impacted. This consequently renders the delivery of all five provisions vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark for a democratic form of education.

Therefore at the school level the objective of RTE provision (a) in relation to conformity with two of the values enshrined in the constitution, those of 'social justice' and 'equality of opportunity', was not met. This is because the school was not being a 'manifestation of democratic ideals' as required by the benchmark for the delivery of a democratic form of education. Provision (a) therefore also did not meet the benchmark for a democratic form of education.

The time available for teachers to deliver curriculum and pedagogy based on learning through experience was reduced if class time was reduced. Therefore the ability of teachers to deliver experiential learning, and hence their ability to meet this objective, may be negatively impacted. The provision of education may be based on experiential learning. However, if students were not motivated to learn the ability of teachers to deliver experiential learning in the form of curriculum and pedagogy that is based on learning from experience and to root the learning process in experience may be

negatively impacted. This renders the delivery of provision (e) vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark for experiential learning.

Because time was taken away from learning, the ability for teachers to be 'a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own knowledge' may be negatively impacted. Therefore teachers may not be fulfilling their role of guiding learning and letting the student find out for herself and providing the right environment for learning for the students who are not motivated to learn. Consequently the ability of teachers to fulfil their role of 'Teacher as Facilitator' may be negatively impacted and they were vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark.

### **Theme 3: Infrastructural deficiencies**

The teachers reported a general lack of facilities, a need for teaching aids and that the teacher-pupil ratio was too high. Weather conditions presented particular difficulties in summer because of the excessive heat. Students miss school and teachers have to cope with children fainting or suffering from heatstroke. Time is therefore taken away from learning due to student absenteeism. Time is also taken away from learning because of lack of facilities. One teacher commented that in classrooms that do not have enough furniture, half the class time is wasted getting dhurries (rugs) for the students to sit on, which have to be then folded up and returned to the storage room.

The teachers also reported various difficulties to do with the high teacher-pupil ratio, which at the schools the teachers interviewed worked at ranged from 60-80 students or above, although the Science streams typically had far fewer students. One difficulty was that teachers could not give the required individual attention to students. As one teacher commented:

*..... there are so many students in the class, like 80 students, so one teacher cannot thoroughly check the notebooks, or personally see where the child is lacking, what the child is not understanding. So personal attention is not given, because of the number of students*

Indira, Art teacher, Delhi/UP.

The teachers also reported the following difficulties as the result of the high teacher-pupil ratio: it was difficult to evaluate students' work in accordance with CCE; it was difficult to check a student's work thoroughly to see where she needed assistance; the projectors

and teaching aids were insufficient; there was lack of space to move around the classroom; teachers had to shout because of the noise; and behaviour management became difficult.

The teachers also reported that various kinds of teaching facilities were lacking. Since learning and assessment are linked in CCE, lack of these facilities could also impact the teachers' ability to assess according to CCE. One teacher commented as follows:

*It [CCE] is activity based, you know, and we don't have enough facilities for carrying out that, so all the marks and all those things, they are you can say fake*

Sapna, Home Science teacher, Delhi/UP.

The teachers reported the following needs: more visual aids and audio-visual media; a proper, soundproofed laboratory in which to conduct language testing; science laboratories; projectors for conducting science activities; and a proper art classroom. One teacher commented that she felt that justice was not being done for the students because the teachers lacked time, infrastructure and resources. She was also concerned about the effect of this on her teaching.

The result of infrastructural deficiencies for teachers is that time was taken away from learning, they were unable to pay individual attention to students and obstacles were presented for smooth teaching and assessment. The ability of teachers to focus on the objectives of all the provisions that relate to the democratic form of education – provisions (b), (c), (d), (g) and (h) - and therefore their ability to meet the objectives, may be negatively impacted. Teachers may not be able to focus on the following: 'the all-round development of the child'; 'building up the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent'; 'developing the physical and mental abilities of students to the fullest'; 'making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety and helping the child to express views freely'; and the 'continuous and comprehensive evaluation of the child's understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same'. The latter relates to provision (h), which has the following as its overall democratic objectives: the 'collaborative and non-threatening assessment of children's progress because it leads to the better learning of all students'; 'to give the student adequate time to develop her learning and understanding fully'; 'to release the student from the fear and trauma of failure'; and 'to enable the teacher to pay individual attention to children's learning and performance'. The ability of teachers to fulfil the requirements for assessment may be negatively

impacted. All this consequently rendered the delivery of these five RTE provisions, (b), (c), (d), (g) and (h), vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark for a democratic form of education.

Therefore at the school level the objective of RTE provision (a), in relation to conformity with two of the values enshrined in the constitution, those of 'social justice' and 'equality of opportunity', was not met. This is because the school was not being a 'manifestation of democratic ideals' as required by the benchmark for the delivery of a democratic form of education. Provision (a) therefore also did not meet the benchmark for a democratic form of education.

All the infrastructural issues may negatively impact the ability of the teacher to deliver experiential learning, and therefore their ability to meet this objective may be negatively impacted. This rendered the delivery of provision (e) vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark. These infrastructural issues also may negatively impact the ability of teachers to be 'a capable facilitator, who motivates children to construct their own knowledge'. Therefore teachers may not be fulfilling their role of guiding learning and letting the student find out for himself and providing the right environment for learning for the students who are not motivated to learn. Consequently the ability of teachers to fulfil their role of 'Teacher as Facilitator' may be negatively impacted and they were vulnerable to falling short of the benchmark.

### **Conclusions about the child-centred education policy of RTE**

The answer to the research question 'How is the child-centred education policy of RTE functioning?' is that although the child-centred education policy of RTE is theoretically supported by the theoretical framework of the Thesis, and is therefore considered to be a sound child-centred education policy, the functioning of almost all of its provisions is problematic. This is because the delivery of six of the seven provisions for a democratic form of education either did not meet the benchmark for child-centred education or was vulnerable to not meeting it. There was no data with regard to the democratic provision for the medium of instruction to be in the mother tongue as far as possible. The delivery of the provision for experiential learning either did not meet the benchmark or was vulnerable to not meeting it. The teachers interviewed either did not meet the benchmark for their role as 'facilitator' or were vulnerable to not meeting it.

In the next chapter I draw conclusions from the empirical research about the child-centred education policy of RTE. I also explain how this Study has contributed to the literature on the implementation of RTE and how it addresses the need for literature on RTE as a policy. I also identify how work for the Thesis has contributed towards my professional development.

## **Chapter 8: Conclusions**

In this final chapter I bring the Thesis to a close by addressing its three main elements: the research that has been conducted on the child-centred education policy of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), the contribution this research makes to the academic literature and the contribution the Thesis makes to my professional development. I begin by drawing together the conclusions made from the empirical research and making recommendations for policy. I then identify the original contributions of the Thesis to the academic literature. I conclude by identifying how work for the Thesis has contributed to my professional development.

### **CONCLUSIONS FROM THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH**

As an 'intrinsic case study', the aim of the research was to focus solely on the child-centred education policy of RTE and to maximise understandings of it. There was no aim to generalise. In this section I summarise what has been learnt, firstly from the documentary analysis and secondly, from the interviews with Indian teachers. The central theme of 'democracy' emerged from the former. This, as well as the themes of 'experiential learning', 'teacher as facilitator', 'Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation' (CCE), 'the burden of clerical work' and 'infrastructural deficiencies' emerged from the latter. Both research methods revealed areas in which the policy is problematic.

#### **The documentary analysis**

The child-centred education policy is viewed as a means of achieving the objectives of universalising elementary education (UEE) in India and of strengthening democracy in the country. The argument made for achieving these is based on the premise that the RTE child-centred education provisions are rooted in democratic principles and will therefore strengthen democracy. However, the documentary analysis has shown that child-centred education, as an entity in itself, cannot achieve these objectives. This is because of the way in which child-centred education is conceptualised as a means of accomplishing the policy objectives. To clarify, the argument made for achieving them is based on the premise that child-centred education is rooted in democratic principles and will therefore strengthen democracy. The analysis showed that child-centred education is rooted in democratic principles, both in relation to the core concepts of the policy as well as through the theoretical framework of the Thesis. However, it also showed that the



ability of child-centred education to fulfil both these objectives is based on a circular argument. To achieve both UEE and strengthen democracy in India, child-centred education needs to be provided universally, and this universal provision of child-centred education requires the existence of UEE. The analysis showed that achieving UEE in India requires the legal enforcement of school attendance on the national level as well as a redefinition of the term 'compulsory education' to mean that that children must attend school.

The documentary analysis also showed that, although the policy conceptualisation of child-centred education as comprising democratic aims and ideals and a democratic form of assessment and learning is supported by the theoretical framework of the Study, the policy itself provides no theoretical foundation for its child-centred policy.

### **The interviews with Indian teachers**

The central finding from the interviews with Indian teachers was that the functioning of almost all of the child-centred policy requirements is problematic. The delivery of six of the seven provisions for a democratic form of education either did not meet the benchmark for child-centred education or was vulnerable to not meeting it. There was no data with regard to the democratic provision for the medium of instruction to be in the mother tongue as far as possible. The delivery of the provision for experiential learning either did not meet the benchmark or was vulnerable to not meeting it. The teachers interviewed either did not meet the benchmark for their role as 'facilitator' or were vulnerable to not meeting it.

The research findings indicated that the functioning of the RTE child-centred provisions, as well as the newly ascribed role of the Indian teacher as 'facilitator', was affected by problems in three areas. Firstly, there were several issues to do with the provision for CCE: actual learning was not taking place; teachers found it very difficult to teach the students who were academically behind; CCE and its joint component the No-Detention Policy (NDP) demotivated students from studying; and teachers felt disempowered by NDP to motivate students to learn. Secondly, teachers felt overburdened by having to perform clerical work as well as teach. Thirdly, infrastructural deficiencies presented obstacles to teaching. All these issues impacted teaching and learning. These findings suggest that the policy requires a conceptualisation of child-centred education that would promote teaching and learning in the Indian context. They also suggest that the child-

centred aspects of the policy require a theoretical foundation, which - as the documentary analysis has shown - is lacking.

I drew the overall conclusion that the child-centred education policy of RTE continues the tradition of inherently weak education policies aimed at achieving UEE in India since Independence because of a fundamental misconception in the way that child-centred education is conceived. It is devised as a means of universalising education and strengthening democracy in India. However, the documentary analysis has shown that child-centred education in itself cannot achieve these objectives. It has also shown that no theoretical rationale has been provided for the child-centred policy. I understood the child-centred education provisions of RTE as constituting the policy objectives of RTE for the Thesis. However, the interviews with teachers showed that the delivery of almost all of these objectives is problematic.

### **Recommendations for policy**

The implications of the research for achieving the policy objectives and for the successful delivery of the child-centred education objectives lead to several recommendations. These take the form of stating what is required to achieve the objectives in the areas of policy discourse, legal framework and conceptualisation of the child-centred education policy.

Firstly, the policy discourse requires a definition of the term 'compulsory education' within RTE to mean that all six to fourteen year olds in state schools in India must attend school each school day. A definition of the term UEE is also required within the policy and its discourse. The definition of 'compulsory education' in RTE currently places the element of compulsion on the Indian states to provide 'compulsory education' and there is no mechanism for ensuring that children attend school each school day. Therefore a second recommendation is the legal requirement and enforcement of school attendance, both on the national level. Neither of these recommendations is limited by the boundary placed on the research as an intrinsic case study because they pertain to national education policy and therefore apply to the provision of child-centred education in all state schools in India.

The third recommendation is the re-conceptualisation of child-centred education specifically to promote teaching and learning in the Indian context, based on a theoretical rationale, in order to address the issues to do with the functioning of the child-centred

education provisions and the ascribed role of the Indian teacher as 'facilitator' identified in the research. These related to the following three themes: the provision for CCE; the burden of clerical work; and infrastructural deficiencies. The specific issues to do with CCE that need to be addressed are the following: actual learning not taking place; teachers finding it very difficult to teach the students who were academically behind; students being demotivated from studying by CCE and its joint component NDP; and teachers feeling disempowered by NDP to motivate students to learn. All of these issues impacted teaching and learning.

The components of CCE and NDP have been under review by a Ministry of Human Resource Development sub-committee, which was appointed in June 2012 to assess the implementation of CCE in the context of NDP. As a result, as of March 2017 twenty-three Indian states have so far suggested modification to NDP. Another sub-committee has been formed which has recommended the re-introduction of various examinations up to Grade Eight, the timeframe covered by CCE. It is not clear, however, how this approach to re-introduce examinations will resolve the above issues that have been identified in the research.

Fourthly, teachers must only teach in order for them to be successful in their role as 'facilitator'. The role of 'facilitator' ascribed to teachers in the policy involves only teaching. In addition, RTE limits non-teaching duties of teachers to very specific activities: "*No teacher shall be deployed for any non-educational purpose other than the decennial population census, disaster relief duties or duties relating to election to the local authority or the State Legislatures or Parliament...*" (RTE IV.27.). It is therefore recommended that interpretation of this provision needs to include all the administrative duties of teachers, including those to do with CCE as a form of assessment, as 'non-educational purposes' and that RTE be adhered to.

Fifthly, infrastructural deficiencies need to be resolved in order for the delivery of child-centred education and the functioning of the role of the teacher as 'facilitator' to be successful. RTE legislates a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:30 for grades 1-5 and 1:35 for grades 6-8. It does not, however, legislate a required teacher-pupil ratio for higher grades. Compliance with RTE and addressing this omission are therefore recommended as a first step towards addressing this particular infrastructural issue.

The finding that the child-centred education policy needs to be re-conceptualised and include a theoretical foundation is limited by the boundary of the research as an intrinsic

case study. While there was no aim to render the research results applicable to any other state school in India, they could be applicable more broadly. The value of the results from the interviews with Indian teachers is that they present indications of the kinds of implementation issues that might occur in other situations.

### **Reflections on the research conducted**

My interpretation that the functioning of almost all of the child-centred provisions was problematic was based on all of the child-centred education objectives needing to have been met for the RTE provision to meet the child-centred criteria of the benchmark. I established this criterion because it was easier to apply. A more subtle and nuanced way to evaluate the functioning of the child-centred elements may have achieved different results and a different interpretation. If the findings had indicated more positive outcomes, then the issues to do with the functioning of the child-centred elements might be interpreted as an indication that the issues represented areas that require adjustment, rather than the policy not functioning. The omissions and inconsistencies in the application of the policy would, however, still prevail.

As an intrinsic case study the research focused solely on gaining understandings about the case being researched. It was also a relatively small-scale study: what has been learned relates to the experiences of twenty-one teachers in a few schools in three locations, and presents a snapshot of a particular point in time with particular respondents. While it has not been my aim to generalise or to view these findings more broadly, I acknowledge that some of the evidence and interpretations in relation to the interviews with Indian teachers are limited to this particular case. Additional and further understandings of the child-centred education policy of RTE would be advanced through other small-scale studies as well as large-scale studies and the employment of different research methodologies. Evaluation studies may be particularly useful. I have drawn conclusions about the nature of the policy and its objectives from a child-centred education perspective. Knowledge of the policy may be advanced through its study from other perspectives.

### **THE ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE THESIS**

The Thesis makes original contributions in three areas: the literature on the implementation of CCE; education policy in India; and the literature on insider-outsider research. The literature on the implementation of CCE constitutes the literature context

of the Study, which has been elaborated upon in Chapter Three. The theme of CCE emerged as one of the key themes drawn from the research findings. The other such themes were the burden of clerical work and infrastructural deficiencies, and these are present in various findings of the literature on CCE. I set out details of these contributions below, in the same order.

The Thesis makes an original contribution to the literature on the implementation of CCE in several ways: it builds on, extends and provides additional insights to it. It also makes an original contribution by addressing an existing need for literature on the policy aspect of the child-centred education provisions within RTE.

The Thesis builds on the existing literature by presenting similar findings into the functioning of CCE. It indicated that there were issues to do with the functioning of CCE in relation to lack of or inadequate training; assessing according to CCE requirements; maintaining the required student record cards; and CCE engendering the demotivation of students to learn. In addition, infrastructural deficiencies and lack of resources as well as the burden of paperwork on teachers negatively impacted the functioning of the assessment. The literature provides considerable detail about the nature of these issues, which have been presented in Chapter Three. While my research did not lead to any findings on the issues of training for CCE or maintaining student record cards, its findings likewise indicated that CCE engendered the demotivation of students from learning and that infrastructural and resource deficiencies, as well as the burden of paperwork on teachers, had a negative impact on the functioning of CCE.

The Thesis also presents additional insights on the functioning of CCE to those presented in the literature. My research resulted in findings that related to NDP as well as to CCE and, since both are linked in the policy, I also provide insights into an additional dimension of CCE. There are various additional findings: firstly, actual learning was not taking place as a result of both CCE and NDP. Secondly, teachers found it very difficult to teach the students who were academically behind. Thirdly, the findings attributed the demotivation of students to both NDP and CCE. Fourthly, they showed that teachers felt disempowered by NDP to motivate students to study. Fifthly, the literature highlights various ways in which infrastructural deficiencies affected the functioning of CCE. In common with the literature, my research showed that the high teacher-pupil ratio made it difficult to evaluate according to the requirements of CCE. It additionally highlights that the high teacher-pupil ratio made it difficult to give individual attention to students as required by CCE and that infrastructural deficiencies resulted in time being

taken away from learning. The literature shows that the burden on teachers resulting from an increase in paperwork and clerical duties resulted in time being taken away from learning. My research additionally shows that the burden of paperwork has a negative impact on the ability of the teachers to meet the objective of all of the RTE provisions that relate to a democratic form of education as well as on their ability to meet the objective of delivering experiential learning and fulfilling the role of 'facilitator'.

The Thesis extends the existing literature through its focus on the entire child-centred education policy within RTE. The objective of my research was to investigate the functioning of all of the child-centred provisions of RTE as well as that of the new role of teacher as 'facilitator'. In so doing it makes explicit that the focus of the existing literature was on the child-centred aspect of RTE. The findings present insights into seven of the eight child-centred provisions of RTE and also shows that all these elements of the child-centred education policy are interrelated in their functioning. There were no findings in relation to provision (f) for the medium of instruction being to be in the mother tongue as far as possible.

I have also extended the literature by introducing a theoretical dimension to it. Firstly, I have formulated a child-centred theoretical framework, which facilitates understandings and interpretations of both the child-centred education policy and its functioning. Secondly, through this framework I have provided conceptual insights into the child-centred policy in terms of its relationship to the framework concepts of 'Democracy', 'Experiential Learning', and 'Teacher as Facilitator' and have shown that the child-centred policy is theoretically supported.

I was unable to identify any literature that focuses on the provision of child-centred education in India as a policy, as opposed to its functioning, as referred to in Chapter Three. The Thesis addresses this gap in the literature through its in-depth exploration of the education objectives and policy features and of how child-centred education is conceptualised in the policy. I show that there is a fundamental misconception in the way that child-centred education is conceived because it is devised as a means of universalising education and strengthening democracy in India and that in itself, however, child-centred education cannot achieve these objectives. I also show that no theoretical rationale has been provided for the child-centred policy.

Finally, the Thesis makes an original contribution to the literature on insider-outsider research as a study of the functioning of national education policy in India through research methods which incorporate an 'insider' researcher perspective.

## **THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE THESIS TO MY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

I began the Thesis by stating that I undertook the Doctor of Education degree to assist me to facilitate a career transition from working as a consultant specialising in cross-cultural training in the international corporate sector to working as a consultant in the education sector in international development. The professional aim of the Thesis was to deepen my knowledge of RTE and of education policy in India to facilitate this career transition.

I end the Thesis by stating how the research I have conducted for it has assisted me to fulfil these specific learning objectives. The investigation of the Indian child-centred policy has resulted in my being able to identify the specific area of my future work as that of child-centred and learner-centred education. My research with Indian teachers has also enabled me to identify the area of teacher education and training as other areas of work to become involved in, which fits well with and extends my professional knowledge and experience in training. Research conducted for the Thesis has resulted in achieving the knowledge base required for my future professional activities as well as the identification of very specific ways in which I can incorporate this learning to further my professional development and achieve my career objectives. I have also developed research skills through my study, as well as new understandings of research epistemologies, methodologies and methods and in-depth experience of conducting research. I have developed a particular interest in documentary analysis, which I plan to pursue further. I intend to continue to disseminate the results of my research, which may be of particular interest to teachers and schools in India as well as to local and international academic communities. The knowledge and skills gained from research conducted for the Thesis will also inform and enhance my teaching practice. The professional aim of deepening my knowledge of RTE and of education policy in India to facilitate my career transition has been achieved.

## Statement

When I began the EdD degree there were two aspects to my professional practice. I ran my own company specialising in cross-cultural training for India and taught part time at a San Francisco based university. I was becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the cross-cultural training aspect and wanted to make the change from cross-cultural training consultancy to international education. The profession objective for undertaking the Degree was to facilitate this transition. I defined my long-term career objective in the statement I wrote for my application to the EdD. programme as being “..... *to make a specific, measurable and sustainable contribution to international development through education, starting by working on societal challenges in India*”. An aim was “*To utilize, build on and leverage my personal and professional experience by extending it to the international context*”.

In the Statement I summarise the areas I have covered in the assignments for the course-based elements of the programme and relate these to my professional objectives for the Degree. The former consist of ‘Foundations of Professionalism’, ‘Methods of Enquiry 1’, ‘Methods of Enquiry 2’, and ‘International Education’. The research-based elements are the ‘Institution-Focused Study’ and ‘Thesis’.

### **‘Foundations of Professionalism’**

In this first assignment I explored my professional identity with the objective of examining both sides of my work within the complexities of their competing discourses in order to assess my current professional practice and assist me to identify how I could develop it. The title of the essay was “*Defining My Identity as an Educator of Adults*”. The objectives referred to above formed the starting point for the essay. As a result of the essay, it became clearer to me that my professional identity was that of educator and not trainer and I consequently made changes to my consultancy work by taking on a managerial position and employing trainers, thereby making both sides of my professional work compatible with my values. I defined the long-term task ahead of me as one of validating my professional goals and then developing ideas on how to achieve them. The immediate task was to determine how studying for and achieving the Doctorate would assist me.



### **'Methods of Enquiry 1 (MOE1)'**

In the research project for this course my aim was to contribute to the qualitative work in this field by investigating why children in a particular state school in New Delhi left school before completing their education. I articulated this work and field as being important for my personal-professional development objectives of extending my expertise to the area of international education and playing a role in enhancing educational opportunities for Indian children. The research question was "*Why do Children Stop Attending the Ankur School?*" The proposed study took an ethnographic approach and participant observation and unstructured interviews constituted the research methods. I chose an ethnographic approach because it was the most appropriate methodology and because of my personal and professional interests, which were linked to my consultancy work specialising in cross-cultural training and my interest in education in India.

### **Methods of Enquiry 2 (MOE2)**

Since it was not feasible for me to travel to India to conduct the research for MOE1, I had to adjust the research project so that I could conduct it in Northern California where I lived. I articulated the hope that broadening my understandings of dropout to a different country and cultural context could enhance understandings of the empirical field both in India and in other countries and thereby assist me to attain my professional objectives. I articulated this for the study as being that of making a contribution to enhancing educational opportunities for children in India and then later on internationally.

The research conducted was a qualitative case study with the aim of investigating causal factors related to why a particular student left high school before graduating. An interview with 'Andy', his mother and educational practitioners in Sacramento, as well as the findings of literature on empirical research in this field formed the basis of the study. The objective was to isolate factors that were likely to have contributed towards why 'Andy' had dropped out. I took an 'intrinsic case study' (Stake, 1995) approach and employed semi-structured interviews as the research method. The results present factors that appear to have contributed towards 'Andy' leaving school prematurely: the effects of his parents' divorce, his not fitting into the school environment, the possibility that he had undiagnosed ADD/ADHD and the fact that he was academically engaged through home schooling.

## **International Education**

### *Essay*

In my essay for the 'International Education' course I drew on aspects of Amartya Sen's work on identity and education and two postcolonial theory perspectives to interpret the meaning of curricular changes that had been made by the Bharata Janata Party (BJP) to the National Curriculum in India in 2000. I argued that a secular education policy was imperative for India's chances of both meeting its objectives of providing education for all children as a 'Fundamental Right' and for the Indian Education for All programme, as well as for the further economic development of the country. I articulated that understandings gained from engagement with this subject were important for my professional life as an educator who planned to be involved in promoting educational opportunities for Indian children.

### *A Strategic Reflection on the 'world view' implicit in "Classroom Challenge"*

I conducted my reflection on this learning game as an educator who was changing professional course by preparing academically to change from teaching at university level in the United States to working on increasing and improving educational opportunities for children in India and in other countries. I investigated the nature of Classroom Challenge from the standpoint of relevancy of curriculum. From playing the game I learned that no country can make progress towards achieving Education for All (EFA) without assistance from another and that the goal of achieving EFA can be challenging to the point of being elusive. As a university instructor who was designing her own curriculum, I also gained a better understanding from the reading and reflection undertaken of ways to improve my professional practice.

### **The Institution-Focused Study (IFS)**

The IFS constituted an 'intrinsic' case study (Stake, 1995) which was conducted at a Hindi-medium state secondary school located in a low-income area in New Delhi, India, in March 2012. The objective of the Study was to investigate the functioning of the school in order to gain insights into how education objectives and curriculum were being implemented and how its teachers approached the implementation of the curriculum following the coming into force of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) in April 2010. The main sources of data were interviews with

teachers over a two-week period. Findings presented insights into the effects that infrastructural problems, particularly a high teacher-pupil ratio, can have on educational outcomes and how these can affect the professionalism of teachers.

I articulated the professional objective of the IFS as being to assist me to achieve my professional objective of working in a capacity that would enable me to make a professional contribution to education and development in India. I anticipated that the specific knowledge about the educational landscape in the country and current education policy and reform gained from this project would assist me to move forward with this.

### **Thesis**

The Thesis extended work conducted for the IFS in that it constituted an analysis of the functioning of the child-centred education provisions of RTE. The overall aim of research was to gain an in-depth understanding of its child-centred policy. The two main research objectives were to understand its nature and to gain insights into its functioning. The research was an 'intrinsic case study' (Stake, 1995) and I employed documentary analysis and interviews with Indian teachers as research methods.

I articulated my professional objective for the Thesis as being the facilitation of a career transition from teaching at university level and working as a consultant specialising in cross-cultural training in the international corporate sector to working as a consultant in the education sector in international development. My specific objective was to work in a capacity that makes a contribution towards the education of children in India and in other developing country contexts. The professional aim of conducting the research of the Thesis was to deepen and extend my knowledge of RTE and education policy in India as preparation for fulfilling this professional objective.

### **The links between each course element**

Each course element is linked in my professional development in the following ways: my professional objectives have remained constant and my professional development has progressed within the trajectory of each course with the culmination of the Thesis. The subject matter of education and education policy in India has remained constant. The research methodology of 'intrinsic case study' turned out to be common to all the research I have conducted. I originally wanted, however, to explore other methodologies for the Thesis based on my personal and professional interests. This has resulted in a

long and complicated research journey for the Thesis. I view this as a very positive experience because it has exposed me to, and expanded my knowledge of, diverse research methodologies. I am sure I would have missed important learning opportunities had I employed the case study approach immediately after completing the IFS. The process of exploration was very important in the journey.

### **How the EdD has contributed towards my professional development**

It became clear to me that I wished to continue my teaching at university level and was able to start working at the UCL Institute of Education in 2015. I am currently a tutor on the MA in Education programme and my work at doctoral level has enabled me to fulfil this role with increased confidence. I plan to continue teaching part time at university level.

I have developed my identity as a researcher as well as specific skills through work conducted for both the IFS and the Thesis. In particular, I have gained advanced understanding of qualitative research and qualitative case study research methodology and methods in particular.

During this period I have disseminated research conducted for the IFS and for the Thesis in the following ways:

#### *IFS:*

I presented aspects of the research at a conference held by the Comparative and International Education Society and hosted by the University of California, Los Angeles in November, 2013.

Aspects of the research formed the basis of an article entitled 'Quality Education for All?: Case Study of a New Delhi Government School', which was published in Policy Futures in Education, Volume 13, Number 3 in 2015.

#### *Thesis:*

I have presented aspects of research conducted for the Thesis at the following conferences:

- Institute of Education Poster Conference, March 2015

- Institute of Education Doctoral School Summer Conference, June 2015
- The EdD Colloquium on Global and Local Perspectives on Education at Oxford Brookes University, June 2015
- The 14<sup>th</sup> Education Research Conference, The School of Education, University of Birmingham, November 2015

Knowledge and understandings gained from the different components of study have also furthered and supported my professional development. My central interest and research focus of the taught-course assignments, the IFS and the Thesis have been that of education and education policy in India.

The professional aim of the Thesis - to deepen my knowledge of RTE and education policy in India to achieve my professional objective of working in a capacity that makes a contribution towards the education of children in India and internationally – has been fulfilled. Through this process I have been able to identify specific areas of future work in the field of education both in India and internationally as those of child-centred and learner-centred education as well as teacher education and training. Hence my professional objective for undertaking the Degree, to facilitate the transition from working in the field of cross-cultural training to that of international education, has been achieved, and my practice as an educator has been enhanced.

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**Appendix One:  
The teachers interviewed July to September 2015**

NAME	MALE/ FEMALE	LOCATION	SUBJECT TAUGHT	CLASSES TAUGHT	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
Savita	Female	Delhi/UP	Home Science	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	25 years
Pushpa	Female	Delhi/UP	Home Science	Unknown	24 years
Sonia	Female	Delhi/UP	Economics	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	16 years at same school
Suneeta	Female	Delhi/UP	English	8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	1 year
Sudesh	Female	Delhi/UP	Unknown	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	Unknown
Preeti	Female	Delhi/UP	Art	6 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	Unknown
Alia	Female	Delhi/UP	Maths	6 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup>	20 years
Indira	Female	Delhi/UP	Art	Unknown	Unknown
Sapna	Female	Delhi/UP	Home Science	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	21 years
Nirmal	Female	Delhi/UP	English	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	17 years
Ayushi	Female	Punjab	Maths	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	21 years
Prema	Female	Punjab	Chemistry	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	Unknown
Anita	Female	Punjab	Physics	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	Unknown
Rajwant	Female	Punjab	English	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	Unknown
Saroj	Female	Punjab	Geography	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	26 years
Amarjeet	Female	Punjab	Commerce	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	20 years
Kulwant	Male	Punjab	Maths	7 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup>	Unknown
Yogeshwar	Male	Punjab	Maths	6 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup>	Unknown
Narinder	Male	Punjab	Science	Unknown	Unknown
Gurmeet	Female	Punjab	Commerce	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	Unknown
Kulwinder	Female	Punjab	Maths	11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	Unknown



**Appendix Two:  
Interviews with Indian teachers July to September 2015: the detailed  
interview questions**

1. *What kinds of problems do you face in the classroom? For example, with regard to infrastructure, teacher-pupil ratio, behaviour of students?*
2. *What kinds of problems do you face in the classroom with regard to teaching socially diverse groups of students and minorities?*
3. *What do you think of the concept of RTE, that is, free and compulsory education for 6-14 year olds?*
4. *What do you think of the provision that no child will be held back or expelled from school? Does this present you with particular challenges?*
5. *What do you think of the stipulation that no child shall be subjected to physical punishment or mental harassment?*
6. *What do you think of the stipulation that the education the children receive should be in conformity with the values enshrined in the Constitution?*
7. *What do you think about the stipulation that learning should be through activities, discovery and exploration in a child-friendly and child-centred manner?*
8. *What do you think of the stipulation that the child should be free of fear, trauma and anxiety, and that the child should be helped to express her views freely?*
9. *Do you experience challenges with regard to Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation and if so, what kinds of challenges?*
10. *Do you think that Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation procedures help to promote quality education?*
11. *What do you think of the stipulation that there should be no Board Exams in primary school?*
12. *What do you think of the stipulation that no disadvantaged or minority children should be discriminated against or prevented from completing elementary education?*
13. *Do you think that relationships in the classroom should be democratic? Do you think that a child should experience democracy at school to prepare her for being a good democratic citizen outside school?*

### **Appendix Three: The literature searches**

#### *Literature search March 2017:*

I conducted searches of the British Education Index, ERIC, and JSTOR databases which were all accessible at the Institute of Education, as well as the British Library holdings, Google Scholar, academia.edu and researchgate.net.

The following search terms were employed: 'teachers' perspectives in India'; 'literature on teachers' perspectives in India'; 'teachers in India'; 'school teachers in India'; 'teachers' perspectives on RTE in India'; 'teachers' perspectives on CCE in India'; 'child-centred education in India'; 'child centred education in India'; 'No-Detention Policy in India'; 'teachers' perspectives on No-Detention Policy in India'; 'Right to Education Act in India'; 'current education policy in India'; 'problems faced by teachers in implementing CCE in India'; 'Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation in India'; 'problems in CCE pattern in India'. Only literature in English was considered.

#### *Literature search June 2018*

I conducted searches of the British Education Index, ERIC, and JSTOR databases which were all accessible at the Institute of Education, as well as the British Library holdings, Google Scholar, academia.edu and researchgate.net.

The following search terms were employed: 'analysis of Right to Education Act in India'; 'Analysis of policy of Right to Education Act in India'; 'Analysis of education policy of Right to Education Act in India'; 'Child-centred policy of Right to Education Act in India'; 'Child-centred education policy of Right to Education Act in India'; 'The child-centred education provisions of Right to Education Act in India'; 'Evaluation of the child-centred education provisions of Right to Education Act in India'; 'Evaluation of the child-centred education provisions of RTE in India'; 'Implementation of the child-centred education provisions of the Right to Education Act in India'; 'Implementation of the Right to Education Act's child-centred provisions'; 'Implementation of the Right to Education Act's child-centred education provisions'; 'implementation of the Right to Education Act's child-centred policy';

'implementation of RTE in India'; 'implementation of the Right to Education Act in India'; 'evaluation of RTE'; 'evaluation of RTE in India'; 'evaluation of Right to Education Act in India'; 'evaluation of education policy in India'; 'evaluation of current education policy in India'; 'evaluation of child-centred education policy in India'; 'analysis of the child-centred education policy of the Right to Education Act in India'; 'analysis of the child-centred education provisions of the Right to Education Act in India'; 'evaluation of the child-centred education policy of the Right to Education Act in India'; 'analysis of the child-centred education policy of RTE in India'; 'analysis of the child-centred education provisions of RTE in India'; 'analysis of the child-centred education provisions of the Right to Education Act in India'; 'analysis of child-centred education in India'; 'implementation of RTE in India'; 'Right to Education Act in India'; and 'child-centred education policy in India'.

**Appendix Four:**

**THE TRAJECTORY OF 'COMPULSORY EDUCATION'  
AND 'FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION' IN INDIA  
1882-2009**

<b>COLONIAL INDIA: 1882-1947</b>	<b>Year</b>
Demand for 'universal elementary education' put forward before the Indian Education Commission	1882
Gokhale's plea before the Imperial Legislative Council for the introduction of <i>free and compulsory education</i> .	1906
Gokhale's Resolution for <i>compulsory education</i> in the Imperial Legislative Council.	1910
Gokhale's proposed Elementary Education Bill to establish <i>compulsory education</i> as a state responsibility. It was rejected.	1911
Patel Act: <i>compulsory education</i> introduced in areas of Bombay.	1918
<i>Compulsory education</i> laws passed in all British Indian provinces. They placed control of primary education in the hands of local authorities.	1918-1930
The Post-War Plan for Educational Development Committee (Sargent Plan) to introduce universal <i>free and compulsory education</i> for children aged 6-14 by 1984.	1944
<b>INDEPENDENT INDIA: 1947-1992</b>	
Article 45 of the Indian Constitution: the state will endeavour to provide <i>free and compulsory education</i> by 1960	1950
Article 21A: Constitutional Amendment making <i>free and compulsory education</i> a Fundamental Right.	2002
The Right to Education Act: <i>free and compulsory education</i> for all children aged 6-14	2009

## Appendix Five: The theoretical framework of the Thesis

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS		
CONCEPTS	ROUSSEAU	DEWEY
<p><b>Democracy</b></p> <p><i>A concept that orients the provision and activity of teaching and learning</i></p>	<p>The student should be revered</p> <p>The student should not be judged, either positively or negatively</p> <p>The student should not be made to suffer or be made unhappy</p>	<p>A democratic society requires the following form of education:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) One that is directed towards social aims</li> <li>(2) One that fosters democratic citizenship</li> <li>(3) The school should be a manifestation of democratic ideals</li> <li>(4) The curriculum must take into account adaptation of studies to the existing needs of community life, must aim to improve it and must provide education that is based on democratic ideals</li> </ol>
<p><b>Experiential Learning</b></p> <p><i>Relates to both curriculum and pedagogy</i></p>	<p>Learning must be matched to the student's stage of development</p> <p>To do this both curriculum and pedagogy must be based on learning through experience</p>	<p>The learning process must be rooted in experience and the curriculum must arise from the activities and situations of real life</p>
<p><b>Teacher as Facilitator</b></p> <p><i>The role of the teacher</i></p>	<p>The teacher's role is to guide learning and let the student find out for herself, rather than instructing and giving precepts</p>	<p>The teacher's role is to provide the right environment for learning, one that stimulates the response and directs the learner's course. The teacher should</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Focus on the subject matter in relation to the student's present needs and capacities</li> <li>(4) Know both subject matter and the needs and capacities of the student</li> <li>(5) See his task as assisting the student to gain knowledge in relation to her activities as a developing member of society</li> </ol>

**Appendix Six:**



Leading education  
and social research  
Institute of Education  
University of London

**Ethics Application Form:  
Student Research**

*This is not a signed version because it was submitted by paper to my supervisor*

All research activity conducted under the auspices of the Institute by staff, students or visitors, where the research involves human participants or the use of data collected from human participants are required to gain ethical approval before starting. *This includes preliminary and pilot studies.* Please answer all relevant questions responses in terms that can be understood by a lay person and note your form may be returned if incomplete.

For further support and guidance please see accompanying guidelines and the Ethics Review Procedures for Student Research <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/studentethics/> or contact your supervisor or [researchethics@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:researchethics@ioe.ac.uk).

**Before completing this form you will need to discuss your proposal fully with your Supervisor/s. Please attach all supporting documents and letters.**

*For all Psychology students, this form should be completed with reference to the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics and Code of Ethics and Conduct.*

Section 1 Project details								
a.	Project title	Classroom Culture: a Qualitative Study of Caste Discrimination at School						
b.	Student name and ID number (e.g. ABC12345678)	[REDACTED]						
c.	Supervisor/Personal Tutor	[REDACTED]						
d.	Department	Curriculum, Pedagogy & Assessment						
e.	Course category (Tick one)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>PhD/MPhil <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>EdD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>MRes <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>DEdPsy <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>MTeach <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>MA/MSc <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	PhD/MPhil <input type="checkbox"/>	EdD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MRes <input type="checkbox"/>	DEdPsy <input type="checkbox"/>	MTeach <input type="checkbox"/>	MA/MSc <input type="checkbox"/>
		PhD/MPhil <input type="checkbox"/>	EdD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
		MRes <input type="checkbox"/>	DEdPsy <input type="checkbox"/>					
MTeach <input type="checkbox"/>	MA/MSc <input type="checkbox"/>							

			<input type="checkbox"/>
		ITE <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Diploma (state which) <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Other (state which) <input type="checkbox"/>	
f.	Course/module title	Thesis	
g.	<b>If applicable</b> , state who the funder is and if funding has been confirmed.	N/A	
h.	Intended research start date	July 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2015	
i.	Intended research end date	30 <sup>th</sup> June, 2016	
j.	Country fieldwork will be conducted in  <i>If research to be conducted abroad please check <a href="http://www.fco.gov.uk">www.fco.gov.uk</a> and submit a completed travel risk assessment form (see guidelines). If the FCO advice is against travel this will be <b>required</b> before ethical approval can be granted:</i>  <a href="http://ienet.inst.ioe.ac.uk/about/profservices/international/Pages/default.aspx">http://ienet.inst.ioe.ac.uk/about/profservices/international/Pages/default.aspx</a>	India	
k.	Has this project been considered by another (external) Research Ethics Committee?		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	External Committee Name:	
	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>go to Section 2</i>	Date of Approval:	
<b>If yes:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit a copy of the approval letter with this application.</li> <li>- Proceed to Section 10 Attachments.</li> </ul>			
<b>Note:</b> Ensure that you check the guidelines carefully as research with some participants will require ethical approval from a different ethics committee such as the <a href="#">National Research Ethics Service</a> (NRES) or <a href="#">Social Care Research Ethics Committee</a> (SCREC). In addition, if your research is based in another institution then you may be required to apply to their research ethics committee.			

## Section 2 Project summary

### Research methods (tick all that apply)

Please attach questionnaires, visual methods and schedules for interviews (even in draft form).

- Interviews  
 Focus groups

- Controlled trial/other intervention study  
 Use of personal records  
 Systematic review **if only method used go to Section 5.**

- Questionnaires
- Action research
- Observation
- Literature review

- Secondary data analysis *if secondary analysis used go to Section 6.*
- Advisory/consultation/collaborative groups
- Other, give details:

**Please provide an overview of your research.** This should include some or all of the following: purpose of the research, aims, main research questions, research design, participants, sampling, your method of data collection (e.g., observations, interviews, questionnaires, etc.) and kind of questions that will be asked, reporting and dissemination (typically 300-500 words).

The context of the research is the implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) and education objectives in the state sector in India. The provisions of RTE address and provide legal remedies for the longstanding and well-documented issues in Indian elementary education. Among these is the problem area of exclusionary practices on the part of teachers. Specifically, this involves teachers discriminating against lower caste children on the basis of caste. Such discrimination has been researched and documented since at least the 1970s. However, there has been little research on classroom processes or on underlying factors that contribute towards these attitudes and practices.

The research aims to add to the literature by taking a qualitative approach to increase understandings of how discrimination on the basis of caste at school takes place in practice in the context of the current phase of RTE and to highlight aspects that could inform the development and delivery of 'teacher sensitisation' training. The main research objectives are (1) to increase understandings how culture contributes towards caste discrimination at school and (2) to obtain teachers' perspectives on the problem of caste discrimination and on the 'teacher sensitisation' training they have received.

A documentary analysis will be conducted of the following: RTE; its supporting policy document, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan; the National Curriculum; Governments of Punjab and Haryana Department of Education publications; available teacher training materials and teachers' school diaries. Field research will take place at two secondary schools: one located in NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh (about twelve miles southeast of New Delhi) and the second in the town of Batala, Punjab. This will take place from mid-July to mid-September 2015 and will consist semi-structured interviews with teachers and classroom observations.

The following are some of the main questions of the research:

Documentary analysis:

- What kinds of professional knowledge, attitudes and skills are teachers required to have in order to be considered 'culturally sensitive'?

Field research:

- What forms do teachers think caste discrimination at school takes and how do they think such discrimination affects the education that these students



experience?

- What kinds of challenges to teachers experience when trying to conform to cultural sensitivity requirements and how do they manage them?
- What do teachers think about the 'teacher sensitisation' training they have attended and how do they think they have benefited from it?
- What kinds of attitudes and behaviours are teachers displaying towards lower caste students?
- How are these attitudes and behaviours towards lower caste students expressed and what form do they take?
- What kinds of 'teacher sensitisation' knowledge, attitudes and skills are teachers displaying towards students?

The final report will constitute a Thesis written for examination and degree purposes. Aspects of the proposed research were presented at a Poster Conference held at the UCL Institute of Education on March 6th, 2015. A paper based on the Study will be presented at an Ed.D Colloquium at Oxford Brookes University in Jun 2015. I plan to write an article based on the Thesis for publication in 2016.

509 Words

### Section 3 Participants

Please answer the following questions giving full details where necessary. Text boxes will expand for your responses.

a. Will your research involve human participants? Yes  No  ⇒ go to Section 4

b. Who are the participants (i.e. what sorts of people will be involved)? Tick all that apply.

Early years/pre-school

Ages 5-11

Ages 12-16

Young people aged 17-18

Unknown – specify below

Adults *please specify below*

Other – specify below

Teachers and administrators

**NB:** Ensure that you check the **guidelines** (Section 1) carefully as research with some participants will require ethical approval from a different ethics committee such as the National Research Ethics Service (NRES).

c. If participants are under the responsibility of others (such as parents, teachers or medical staff) how do you intend to obtain permission to approach the participants to take part in the study?

**(Please attach approach letters or details of permission procedures – see Section 9)**

	<p><b>Attachments.)</b></p> <p>The research participants are teachers and administrators and hence are not under the responsibility of others. However, conducting classroom observations raises the issue of whether or not my presence in the classroom would need to be explained to students and/or their parents. My access to conduct the observations will be informal and through the school principals (see below). The necessity of informing parents will be determined after discussion with the principals concerned.</p>
d.	<p>How will participants be recruited (identified and approached)?</p> <p>Two cousins who are school principals are assisting me to gain access to secondary schools and to interview teachers. One cousin, the principal of the school in Uttar Pradesh, will be available for me to interview. She will also identify teachers who are possible candidates to take part in the Study. I will then formally introduce myself to these teachers and start the initial process of providing them with information about the Study and ensuring they would be comfortable with taking part in the research.</p> <p>The second cousin, the principal of a private secondary school in Punjab, is assisting me through her contacts to gain access to a government school in Batala to interview teachers and conduct classroom observations. I will introduce myself to the school Principal and gain her/his formal permission to observe classes and interview teachers and seek her/his assistance with the process of identifying teachers to take part in the Study. I will then follow up and formally introduce myself to the teachers, provide them with information about the Study, ensure that they are happy to take part and then start the process of organising for the observations and interviews. It is hoped that the school principal will be available to be interviewed.</p> <p>Both principals, as well as the cousin in Punjab who is introducing me to the principal of the school there, will be provided with an information leaflet about the project (see attached). I will also discuss with them all the details of the project that are relevant for gaining their advice and assistance with going about interviewing and observing in the respective schools.</p>
e.	<p>Describe the process you will use to inform participants about what you are doing.</p> <p>I will provide all teachers who have agreed to be observed and/or interviewed with brief and relevant information about the purposes of the research and what it will involve in the form of an information leaflet. I will review the leaflet with them at the beginning of each interview or classroom observation. I will also discuss with them any additional necessary or helpful information about the specific part of research they will be involved in at the time of interview or classroom observation.</p>
f.	<p>How will you obtain the consent of participants? Will this be written? How will it be made clear to participants that they may withdraw consent to participate at any time?</p> <p><i>See the guidelines for information on opt-in and opt-out procedures. Please note that the method of consent should be appropriate to the research and fully explained.</i></p> <p>I will obtain written consent from the Principals, as the main gatekeepers, to conduct the research at their respective schools. I will also obtain written consent from both of them to be interviewed. I will obtain written consent from each teacher who will be interviewed or</p>

	<p>observed before work with them begins that they agree to take part in the interviews and/or observations. This consent form will also serve the purpose of documenting their consent. Participants will complete the form only at the outset of the project.</p> <p>The consent form will make clear that all participants' names will be changed and that the content of each session will remain confidential. It will also indicate the participants' consent to the following: to be observed, interviewed and recorded, to transcriptions being made of such recordings, and to their school diary being reviewed. It will also indicate their understanding that they may withdraw their consent to participate at any time and that they are consenting to the possible use of any information they offer for the writing of additional future material.</p> <p>Participants will be provided the opportunity of reading the transcript of their interview if they wish, so that they can check for accuracy and inform me if there is any material they do not wish to be included in the Thesis or in any future written material.</p> <p>Although teachers would be providing their 'informed' consent, an ethical issue may arise if teachers are not clear about what they are in fact consenting to. I will make sure that I explain the research intentions and process sufficiently enough so that participants will be able to anticipate the consequences to them of their participation.</p>
g.	<p><b>Studies involving questionnaires:</b> Will participants be given the option of omitting questions they do not wish to answer? N/A</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>If <b>NO</b> please explain why below and ensure that you cover any ethical issues arising from this in section 8.</p>
h.	<p><b>Studies involving observation:</b> Confirm whether participants will be asked for their informed consent to be observed.</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>If <b>NO</b> read the guidelines (Ethical Issues section) and explain why below and ensure that you cover any ethical issues arising from this in section 8.</p>
i.	<p>Might participants experience anxiety, discomfort or embarrassment as a result of your study?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>If <b>yes</b> what steps will you take to explain and minimise this?</p> <p>If <b>not</b>, explain how you can be sure that no discomfort or embarrassment will arise?</p> <p>Teachers might feel anxiety or discomfort about taking part in the research if they feel they would be incriminating themselves or others as having discriminated against students. While it is unlikely that teachers would openly reveal that either they or their colleagues have discriminated or that they would behave in a discriminatory manner during classroom observations, participants' possible anxiety or discomfort still needs to be addressed. The</p>

	<p>research will therefore be structured to reflect that the objective is not to determine whether any individual teacher being interviewed or observed is discriminating against students, but that its purpose is to shed light on underlying factors that contribute towards discrimination, to understand the individual teacher's perspectives on the problem itself, to learn about the challenges the teacher experiences while teaching to required 'sensitisation' standards and about his or her experience with 'teacher sensitisation' training. I will conduct the interviews and observations from the starting point that the participant does not wish to cause emotional hurt to or undermine the education of lower caste students but wishes to improve education for the poorest children and minorities.</p> <p>Participants may also be concerned that they information they offer may be publicly available or could be traced back to them in other ways. This concern will be mitigated by maintaining the anonymity and confidentiality of all aspects of the research for the purposes of the Thesis and for any future written material based on data collected for the Study. No interview or observation material will be shared with either the principal, the authorities or with other participants. All these aspects will be on the consent form that participants will sign. If data should emerge that may lead to the school or a teacher or teachers being singled out or recognised, it will either be presented differently or left out.</p> <p>Participants may be concerned about my being a representative of the school or authorities. I will make it clear to them at the outset that my role is only that of an independent researcher and that the nature and purpose of the observations and interviews are purely for the purposes of social science research. To do this, I will establish and develop a researcher-participant relationship from the beginning. This would be an equal relationship, indicated by the fact that the participant can withdraw from the research at any time.</p>
j.	<p>Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants (deception) in any way?          Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>If <b>YES</b> please provide further details below and ensure that you cover any ethical issues arising from this in section 8.</p>
k.	<p>Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study)?          Yes X<input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>If <b>NO</b> please explain why below and ensure that you cover any ethical issues arising from this in section 8.</p>
l.	<p>Will participants be given information about the findings of your study? (This could be a brief summary of your findings in general; it is not the same as an individual debriefing.)          Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>If <b>no</b>, why not?</p>

## Section 4 Security-sensitive material

### Only complete if applicable

Security sensitive research includes: commissioned by the military; commissioned under an EU security call; involves the acquisition of security clearances; concerns terrorist or extreme groups.

a.	Will your project consider or encounter security-sensitive material?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> *	No <input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Will you be visiting websites associated with extreme or terrorist organisations?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> *	No <input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Will you be storing or transmitting any materials that could be interpreted as promoting or endorsing terrorist acts?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> *	No <input type="checkbox"/>

\* Give further details in **Section 8 Ethical Issues**

## Section 5 Systematic review of research

### Only complete if applicable

a.	Will you be collecting any new data from participants?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> *	No <input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Will you be analysing any secondary data?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> *	No <input type="checkbox"/>

\* Give further details in **Section 8 Ethical Issues**

*If your methods do not involve engagement with participants (e.g. systematic review, literature review) and if you have answered **No** to both questions, please go to **Section 10 Attachments**.*

## Section 6 Secondary data analysis Complete for all secondary analysis

a.	Name of dataset/s		
b.	Owner of dataset/s		
c.	Are the data in the public domain?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
		<i>If no, do you have the owner's permission/license?</i> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No* <input type="checkbox"/>	
d.	Are the data anonymised?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
		<i>Do you plan to anonymise the data?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No* <input type="checkbox"/>
		<i>Do you plan to use individual level data?</i>	Yes* <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		<i>Will you be linking data to individuals?</i>	Yes* <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
e.	Are the data sensitive ( <a href="#">DPA 1998 definition</a> )?	Yes* <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
f.	Will you be conducting analysis within the remit it was originally collected for?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No* <input type="checkbox"/>

g.	<b>If no</b> , was consent gained from participants for subsequent/future analysis?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No* <input type="checkbox"/>
h.	<b>If no</b> , was data collected prior to ethics approval process?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No* <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>* Give further details in <b>Section 8 Ethical Issues</b></p> <p>If secondary analysis is only method used <b>and</b> no answers with asterisks are ticked, go to <b>Section 9 Attachments</b>.</p>			

## Section 7 Data Storage and Security

Please ensure that you include all hard and electronic data when completing this section.

a.	Confirm that all personal data will be stored and processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA 1998). (See the Guidelines and the Institute's Data Protection & Records Management Policy for more detail.)	Yes X <input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Will personal data be processed or be sent outside the European Economic Area?	Yes X *
<p>* <b>If yes</b>, please confirm that there are adequate levels of protections in compliance with the DPA 1998 and state what these arrangements are below.</p>		
c.	Who will have access to the data and personal information, including advisory/consultation groups and during transcription? Myself only. I plan to conduct all transcription myself.	
<b>During the research</b>		
d.	Where will the data be stored? On my personal laptop and backup devices. My laptop will be password protected and only I will have access to it.	
	Will mobile devices such as USB storage and laptops be used?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> * No <input type="checkbox"/>
	* <b>If yes</b> , state what mobile devices: My personal laptop and USB storage devices.	
e.	Only I will have access to them. * <b>If yes</b> , will they be encrypted?: No.	
<b>After the research</b>		
f.	Where will the data be stored? On my personal laptop and backup devices. All hard copy data will be kept in file storage at home and only I will have access to both electronic and hard copy data.	
g.	How long will the data and records be kept for and in what format? All electronic and hard copy data will be retained for 10 years, for the purposes of writing additional material based on the data, archiving and possible further analysis. The hard copy data will be shredded after this period while the electronic data will be retained for continued	

	archiving.	
h.	Will data be archived for use by other researchers? <b>* If yes, please provide details.</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> * No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## Section 8 Ethical issues

Are there particular features of the proposed work which may raise ethical concerns or add to the complexity of ethical decision making? If so, please outline how you will deal with these.

It is important that you demonstrate your awareness of potential risks or harm that may arise as a result of your research. You should then demonstrate that you have considered ways to minimise the likelihood and impact of each potential harm that you have identified. Please be as specific as possible in describing the ethical issues you will have to address. Please consider / address ALL issues that may apply.

*Ethical concerns may include, but not be limited to, the following areas:*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Methods</li> <li>- Sampling</li> <li>- Recruitment</li> <li>- Gatekeepers</li> <li>- Informed consent</li> <li>- Potentially vulnerable participants</li> <li>- Safeguarding/child protection</li> <li>- Sensitive topics</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International research</li> <li>- Risks to participants and/or researchers</li> <li>- Confidentiality/Anonymity</li> <li>- Disclosures/limits to confidentiality</li> <li>- Data storage and security both during and after the research (including transfer, sharing, encryption, protection)</li> <li>- Reporting</li> <li>- Dissemination and use of findings</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

My relationship with the principal of the school in Uttar Pradesh, as a cousin, may raise ethical concerns since she will be choosing and approaching teachers to take part in the Study. This in itself may cause teachers to feel singled out. Participants might also feel pressured or obliged to agree to being interviewed or observed, and concerned about whether their involvement could result in any negative consequences. They may therefore be guarded or inaccurate in their responses or remarks to me. It is hoped that these concerns will be mitigated by the assurance of complete maintenance of anonymity and confidentiality.

Since my other cousin is only facilitating access to the school in Batala and I would not have a direct relationship with the school Principal, I do not foresee any particular ethical issues arising as the result of her cousin's involvement.

While I have a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for the UK, I will have to find out whether there is an equivalent in India that needs to be applied for before beginning the field research. If an official check is not required or possible, I will at all times be cognizant of the need for the safeguarding of children. A limit to confidentiality will lie in my decision to place the interests of the child before that of mine, as researcher, should there be any need to disclose any harm to a child or children. If anything of this nature occurs I will report this to authorities, having first checked on what the required process is.

I will need to determine on site in India whether parents' consent would be required to conduct





**I confirm that to the best of my knowledge:**

The above information is correct and that this is a full description of the ethics issues that may arise in the course of this project.

Name	Meera Nath Sarin
Date	April 15th, 2015

**Please submit your completed ethics forms to your supervisor.**

## Notes and references

### Professional code of ethics

You should read and understand relevant ethics guidelines, for example:

[British Psychological Society](#) (2009) *Code of Ethics and Conduct*, and (2014) *Code of Human Research Ethics*

or

[British Educational Research Association](#) (2011) *Ethical Guidelines*

or

[British Sociological Association](#) (2002) *Statement of Ethical Practice*

Please see the respective websites for these or later versions; direct links to the latest versions are available on the Institute of Education <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/ethics/>.

### Disclosure and Barring Service checks

If you are planning to carry out research in regulated Education environments such as Schools, or if your research will bring you into contact with children and young people (under the age of 18), you will need to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) CHECK, before you start. The DBS was previously known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). If you do not already hold a current DBS check, and have not registered with the DBS update service, you will need to obtain one through at IOE. Further information can be found at

[http://www.ioe.ac.uk/studentInformation/documents/DBS\\_Guidance\\_1415.pdf](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/studentInformation/documents/DBS_Guidance_1415.pdf)

Ensure that you apply for the DBS check in plenty of time as will take around 4 weeks, though can take longer depending on the circumstances.

### Further references

The [www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk](http://www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk) website is very useful for assisting you to think through the ethical issues arising from your project.

Robson, Colin (2011). *Real world research: a resource for social scientists and practitioner researchers* (3rd edition). Oxford: Blackwell.

This text has a helpful section on ethical considerations.

Alderson, P. and Morrow, V. (2011) *The Ethics of Research with Children and Young People: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage.

This text has useful suggestions if you are conducting research with children and young people.

Wiles, R. (2013) *What are Qualitative Research Ethics?* Bloomsbury.

A useful and short text covering areas including informed consent, approaches to research ethics including examples of ethical dilemmas.

## Departmental use

If a project raises particularly challenging ethics issues, or a more detailed review would be appropriate, you **must** refer the application to the Research Ethics and Governance Coordinator (via [researchethics@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:researchethics@ioe.ac.uk)) so that it can be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee for consideration. A Research Ethics Committee Chair, ethics department representative and the Research Ethics and Governance Coordinator can advise you, either to support your review process, or help decide whether an application should be referred to the REC.

Also see 'when to pass a student ethics review up to the Research Ethics Committee':  
<http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/policiesProcedures/42253.html>

Student name	Meera Sarin
Student department	CPA
Course	EdD (International)
Project title	Classroom Culture: an Ethnographic Study of Social Inequalities
<b>Reviewer 1</b>	
Supervisor/first reviewer name	
Do you foresee any ethical difficulties with this research?	
Supervisor/first reviewer signature	
Date	
<b>Reviewer 2</b>	
Second reviewer name	
Do you foresee any ethical difficulties with this research?	
Supervisor/second reviewer signature	
Date	
<b>Decision on behalf of reviews</b>	
Decision	Approved <input type="checkbox"/>
	Approved subject to the following additional measures <input type="checkbox"/>
	Not approved for the reasons given below <input type="checkbox"/>
	Referred to REC for review <input type="checkbox"/>
Points to be noted by other reviewers and in report to REC	
Comments from reviewers for the applicant	
<b>Recording – supervisors/reviewers should submit all approved ethics forms to the relevant course administrator</b>	
Recorded in the student information system	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If the proposal is not authorised the applicant should seek a meeting with their supervisor or ethics reviewer.]**